

# EURASIA TASK FORCE

**Marc Grossman**

*Former Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs*

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DINU PATRICIU EURASIA CENTER

## Triple Crown 2010: Can the Transatlantic Relationship be Strategic?

A test of global leadership in the twenty-first century will be how nation states perform in the face of threats that defy borders. As the Brookings Institution's report *Managing Global Insecurity* concluded in 2008, a "new approach is needed to revitalize the alliances, diplomacy and international institutions central to the inseparable relationship between national and global security.<sup>1</sup>

A year earlier, the Center for Strategic and International Studies' *Commission on Smart Power* described the options the United States has in responding to global challenges:

- proceed unilaterally;
- assemble ad hoc coalitions; and
- work through treaties, alliances and multilateral organizations.<sup>2</sup>

American administrations in the early twenty-first century will need to make the right choice among these three possibilities in order to meet the specific task at hand. For example, although the United States should always look first for partners, there will be times when America will need to act alone, including militarily. In some cases, acting with others will be best done through ad hoc coalitions; the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) and the informal

organization of the international response to the southeast Asia tsunami in 2004 are both examples of how coalitions of the willing constitute the best course of action. And American administrations will often seek to galvanize multilateral organizations into action. Some of these organizations will be global, such as the United Nations, and others regional, including NATO, the European Union, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the African Union (AU), the Organization of American States (OAS) or the Association for South East Asian Nations (ASEAN).

The focus in this brief is on U.S. policy towards three organizations that are the foundation of America's political, economic, social and moral connections to wider Europe: NATO, the EU and the OSCE.

### A Triple Crown Strategy for Today's Challenges

In the coming months, the Obama Administration will participate in three important summits that could shape the future Euro-Atlantic security environment. The Administration needs to connect the three intellectually and strategically lest they become separate and unwelcome chores for the President.

<sup>1</sup> Brookings Institution, "A Plan for Action: A New Era of International Cooperation for a Changed World," *The Managing Global Insecurity Project*, Washington: 2008.

<sup>2</sup> Center for Strategic and International Studies, "CSIS Commission Report on Smart Power," Co-Chairs: Richard L. Armitage, Joseph S. Nye Jr., Washington: 2007, 27.

**Marc Grossman** is a Board Director of the Atlantic Council and a member of the Council's Strategic Advisors Group. He was a Foreign Service officer from 1976 to 2005, served as U.S. Ambassador to Turkey (1994-1997), Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs (1997-2000), Director-General of the Foreign Service (2000-2001), and Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs (2001-2005), retiring with the rank of Career Ambassador. He is now a Vice Chairman of The Cohen Group, a consulting firm. He is a Board Director of the Atlantic Council. Ambassador Grossman wishes to thank the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars and the Harvard John F. Kennedy School Program on the Future of Diplomacy for their support in thinking about these issues. The views expressed here are his own and do not necessarily represent the views of the Atlantic Council.

On November 20th in Lisbon, NATO heads of state and government will meet to discuss Afghanistan, and to debate and approve a new NATO Strategic Concept, which will define the way NATO allies think about global security challenges for years to come (the last Strategic Concept was adopted in 1999). Just after the NATO summit, most of the heads of state and government will stay in Portugal for the long-postponed U.S.-EU summit. Finally, in early December, the OSCE will host its first summit since 1999 in Astana, Kazakhstan, where leaders will consider the broader questions of European security and Eurasian security. With U.S. Congressional elections scheduled for November, a Presidential calendar that already includes commitments to visit India in early November and the need to reschedule the twice-postponed visit to Indonesia, the President will surely ask if there is any point in participating in all three European security get-togethers.

This is not the first time an administration has faced the prospect of three summits focused on Europe in one year. The question for this issue brief is whether, recognizing that we should reason from the right analogies, there are any relevant lessons for the Obama Administration in the approach President Bill Clinton took to European security and summitry in 1999?<sup>3</sup>

That year, I had the good fortune to be the Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs, supporting Secretary of State Madeleine Albright and President Clinton. In mid-1998, we looked at the prospects for NATO, EU and OSCE summits in 1999 and recognized that selling the President and the Secretary on all three of these trips would be an uphill battle.

Together with my colleagues in the European Bureau, superbly led on these issues by Anthony Wayne and Ron Asmus, we set out to try to convince our leaders that all three meetings were worth doing because they could – if strategically conceived as three parts of one whole and galvanized by U.S. leadership and agenda-setting – produce a unified, strategic result for the United States and the larger U.S.-European relationship. At a minimum, we wanted an intelligent reader in December 1999 to be able to lay out the NATO, U.S.-EU and OSCE summit communiqués, side by

side, and (if they could stand it) read all three and recognize that there were common themes throughout, and that America had provided a strategic vision to give operational life to the often tedious protocol of summitry. We experimented with various names for our idea. “Trifecta” sounded like a low-end horse race; “Triple Crown” had a more up-market ring.<sup>4</sup>

While the world is certainly a different, more complicated place than it was even in 1999, **the Obama Administration might also find it useful to design a strategy that creates a coherent approach toward the President’s involvement in the NATO, U.S.-EU and OSCE summits.**

The significant difference in 2010 could, if creatively managed, be that while the 1999 summits were consumed with the tactics of NATO’s military engagement in Kosovo (although the NATO Strategic Concept of 1999 did foresee the challenges of terrorism, non-proliferation and conflicts within societies), the Iran-Libya Sanctions Act which dominated the U.S.-EU summit, and at the OSCE summit in Istanbul, the need to get Russian troops out of the Caucasus and Moldova, this year’s three summits could lift everyone’s sights and be the start of a strategic transatlantic relationship. NATO, the U.S.-EU relationship and the OSCE can become the pillars for a problem-solving connection of global consequence offering leaders the opportunity to better connect the capacities of these institutions to twenty-first century global challenges.

An Obama Administration agenda for a 2010 “Triple Crown” should of course build on the Administration’s six principles for European security, outlined by Secretary of State Hillary Clinton in her speech on European security in Paris in January:

- 1) The cornerstone of security is the sovereignty and territorial integrity of states;
- 2) Security in Europe must be indivisible;
- 3) The United States will maintain an unwavering commitment to its Article 5 Treaty commitments to NATO;

<sup>3</sup> Richard E. Neustadt and Ernest R. May, “Thinking in Time,” *The Free Press*, New York: 1986.

<sup>4</sup> Marc Grossman, “Building a New U.S.-European Partnership for the 21st Century,” *Olin Lecture*, U.S. Military Academy at West Point, 14 September 1999.

- 4) The United States remains committed to transparency in its dealings with Europe and calls on others to do the same;
- 5) People have a right to live free of fear of nuclear destruction;
- 6) True security entails not only peaceful relations between states but opportunities and rights for individuals who live within them.<sup>5</sup>

While these principles are similar to the Clinton Administration's objectives in 1999, the current administration's three-summit strategy must take into account the important evolution which has taken place in the Euro-Atlantic security environment over the last decade.

#### • NATO

- NATO has enlarged three times since the end of the Cold War (1999, 2004, 2008), taking in a total of 12 new countries and moving the Alliance's center of gravity further to the East.
- France has returned to the NATO integrated command structure, removing a major block to NATO-EU relations.
- NATO has undertaken a growing number of operations, including the 130,000 troop ISAF mission in Afghanistan.

#### • European Union

- The EU expanded in 2004 and 2007 to take in a total of 12 new countries.
- The EU is implementing the Treaty of Lisbon, creating the posts of President of the European Council, Foreign Minister and a European diplomatic corps called the External Action Service.
- The Euro has been adopted by a growing number of countries and is weathering a severe test of confidence by North/South fiscal divisions in Europe.

#### • OSCE

- Kazakhstan is the first former-Soviet country and Central Asian republic to chair the OSCE, and the organization has agreed to hold its first summit since 1999 in Astana.
- President Medvedev has challenged the existing security architecture in Europe by proposing a new European security treaty, leading to the beginning of the launch of the Corfu Process on the future of European security.
- The Russia/Georgia war and the Russian suspension of the Treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE Treaty) call into question the effectiveness of existing OSCE first basket (hard security) instruments and agreements.
- Other regional institutions have emerged on the Eurasian landscape that challenge the OSCE and its norms, including the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), and the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA).

## Creating a Coherent U.S. Strategy for NATO, the EU and the OSCE

How might each of the main European and transatlantic institutions contribute to a new strategic transatlantic relationship?

### NATO

I confess my bias: I believe NATO is the most successful alliance in history. NATO's military and political strength made possible the opportunities Europeans have embraced after World War II. I was proud to have served at NATO Headquarters in Brussels in the early 1980s and to have played a modest role in both rounds of NATO expansion in 1999 and 2004. NATO still has a crucial role to play in the effort to complete and then secure over the longer term a Europe whole, free and at peace. The Alliance can also contribute to meeting security challenges outside of Europe, most critically in Afghanistan, but potentially in the greater

<sup>5</sup> Hillary Rodham Clinton, "Remarks on the Future of European Security," *L'Ecole Militaire*, Paris, France, 29 January 2010.

Middle East as part of an effort to deter Iran from pursuing its nuclear weapons ambitions, and perhaps someday as a guarantor of an Israel-Palestine peace.

But NATO faces an existential question highlighted in the German Marshall Fund's Transatlantic Trends Report 2009. According to the survey, 71 percent of Americans believe that, under some conditions, war is necessary to obtain justice. Yet a similar percentage of Europeans – 70 percent – disagree with that statement.<sup>6</sup> There are two other contemporary differences among America's NATO Allies. First, there is a divide between countries willing actively to take on the Taliban in Afghanistan and other global extremists militarily and most of the others. Second, there is the debate between those who believe the main threats to NATO are global extremism, popular unrest and the growing accessibility of weapons of mass destruction, and those who see the main problem as a resurgent Russia.<sup>7</sup>

Faced with these challenges and divisions, is there a future for NATO? While France's decision in 2009 to return to full participation in NATO's integrated military structure 40 years after kicking the Alliance out of Paris went mostly unnoticed by most Americans, this was a big decision. France has chosen to rejoin NATO's military structure at a time of multiplying security pressures in the world. It also comes as America has shifted from anxiety to support for a real European defense effort.<sup>8</sup>

The twenty-first century diplomatic opportunities created by a future-oriented NATO will be both complex and potentially full of useful interconnections. As Zbigniew Brzezinski notes, the relevant early questions for a twenty-first century NATO are how to succeed in Afghanistan and Pakistan; how to update the meaning and obligations of "collective security" as embodied in Article 5 of the NATO Treaty; and how to

engage Russia.<sup>9</sup> At the same time, NATO allies must look to engage those outside of Europe willing to work with NATO. There is also a very large public diplomacy effort to be made. Many young people, especially Europeans, ask "What is NATO for?" The effort to update NATO's Strategic Concept, which was led by a Group of Experts chaired by former U.S. Secretary of State Albright, should be a useful tool in answering this question and in conveying NATO's centrality to a younger transatlantic generation.

There are two other important potential unifying points for a twenty-first century NATO. The first is to emphasize homeland security so that allies are ready to defend these societies against terrorist attacks, including potentially catastrophic attacks involving weapons of mass destruction. As Ron Asmus notes, the first and most important step in this arena is not the willingness to intervene abroad, but rather the determination to build up our defenses against such threats at home.<sup>10</sup> Second, NATO has an important role to play in promoting energy security among its members.<sup>11</sup>

**Energy security should be an important part of NATO's new Strategic Concept, to be issued in Lisbon in November 2010.** In a February 2010 speech on the future of NATO, Secretary Clinton said, "In the twenty-first century, the spirit of collective defense must also include nontraditional threats: We believe NATO's new Strategic Concept must address these new threats. Energy security is a particularly pressing priority. Countries vulnerable to energy cut-offs face not only economic consequences but strategic risks as well."<sup>12</sup> Madeline Albright's Group of Experts also included energy security in their recommendations for the new Strategic Concept.

As Senator Richard Lugar argued in Riga in December 2006, energy issues could be the most likely source of

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<sup>6</sup> The German Marshall Fund of the United States, *Transatlantic Trends 2009 and 2010*, 17. Accessed [http://www.gmfus.org/trends/2009/docs/2009\\_English\\_Key.pdf](http://www.gmfus.org/trends/2009/docs/2009_English_Key.pdf).

<sup>7</sup> "Have Combat Experience Will Travel," *The Economist*, Vol. 390 Issue 8624, 28 March 2009, 69.

<sup>8</sup> Zbigniew Brzezinski "An Agenda for NATO," *Foreign Affairs*, (September-October 2009), 10.

<sup>9</sup> Brzezinski, *An Agenda*, 3.

<sup>10</sup> Ronald D. Asmus, "New Purposes, New Plumbing," *The American Interest*, (November-December 2008), 3.

<sup>11</sup> Marc Grossman, "Challenges to Diplomacy and the U.S. State Department," in *The Impact of 9/11 on Politics and War*, ed. Matthew J. Morgan. (Palgrave Macmillan: New York, 2009) 24. Marc Grossman, "What Next for Energy and Environmental Diplomacy?" Policy Brief, *The German Marshall Fund of the United States*, Washington: July 2010, 3.

<sup>12</sup> Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, "Remarks at the NATO Strategic Concept Seminar," (speech delivered at the NATO Strategic Concept Seminar, Washington: 22 February 2010). Accessed <http://www.state.gov/secretary/r/2010/02/137118.htm>.

armed conflict in Europe and the surrounding regions in the near future.<sup>13</sup> The 2010 Strategic Concept can lay out a path that NATO, in consultation with the European Union, might take if Poland, Germany, Hungary, Latvia, or any other member state is threatened by energy cut-off. The potential threat from terrorism or natural disaster to NATO member states' energy infrastructure – back to homeland security as a priority – is another reason for the organization to review what Alliance obligations would be in such cases, since sufficient investment and planning will not happen overnight.

## The EU

The EU has been a remarkable success since its creation as the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) in April 1951. The greatest compliment to the EU is the reform it has inspired in aspiring members from the Baltics, through Central Europe, to the Balkans and to Turkey.

The EU has transformed itself from a modest community for the regulation of coal and steel tariffs into an economic powerhouse and the most important trading and investment partner of the United States. In 2009, the EU ranked as the world's largest economic entity, with an annual GDP of \$14.3 trillion, slightly ahead of the United States at \$14.1 trillion. Despite China's impressive double-digit growth rates and rapidly growing geopolitical clout, even at purchasing power parity, the People's Republic's \$8.7 trillion GDP still lags far behind both the United States and the EU.<sup>14</sup> Transatlantic trade remains an engine of the global economy, with estimates showing that the transatlantic economy generates \$3.75 trillion in total commercial sales per year and employs up to 14 million workers.<sup>15</sup> But in the face of these staggering numbers, the U.S.-EU relationship

is still not strategic. Policy-makers in both Brussels and Washington must focus on ways to enhance the U.S.-EU relationship, but this can only happen if the EU commits to a global vision.

**The ratification of the Lisbon Treaty in 2009 and the appointment of a President and Foreign Minister for Europe call attention both to the EU's great promise and its greatest question mark as a partner for the United States in meeting twenty-first century challenges: can the EU become a unified, serious leader in security and defense policy?** While the EU is

establishing its own diplomatic corps, its constituent member states are almost uniformly slashing their annual defense budgets; the European Defence Agency (EDA) reported a net decline in real defense budgets of 0.9 percent from 2006-2007, and a further decrease of 4.3 percent in 2008.<sup>16</sup> This trend is accelerating dramatically in 2010 budget cycles. Moreover, only five of the 28 members of NATO are currently reaching the established target for defense spending, two percent of gross domestic product, and only three of these contributors are EU member states.<sup>17</sup> Poland scrapped its entire FY2009 defense procurement budget, valued originally at \$2 billion – part of the nation's 7.8 percent total defense budget cut prompted by the financial crisis.<sup>18</sup> Italian defense spending contracted by four percent in 2009, Spain cut military research and development by 12 percent that same year and the Czech defense budget dropped by 12.5 percent in 2010.<sup>19</sup> In Germany – where the Ministry of Defense has recently announced its transition to an all-volunteer force, therein cutting its standing force by almost a third – the government is considering budget reform that would cut defense spending by 8.3 billion Euros (\$10.7 billion) by the year

<sup>13</sup> Richard G. Lugar, "Energy and NATO" (speech delivered at a GMF conference in Riga, Latvia) 27 November 2006.

<sup>14</sup> Central Intelligence Agency. "The World Factbook." Accessed <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-worldfactbook/rankorder/2001rank.html?countryName=United%20States&countryCode=us&regionCode=na&rank=2#us>.

<sup>15</sup> Hamilton, Daniel and Joseph Quinlan, "The Transatlantic Economy 2009." *Center for Transatlantic Relations*. Accessed [http://transatlantic.sais-jhu.edu/publications/books/TE\\_2009\\_finaltext.pdf](http://transatlantic.sais-jhu.edu/publications/books/TE_2009_finaltext.pdf).

<sup>16</sup> European Defence Agency. "Defence Data 2008: Building Capabilities for a Secure Europe." <http://www.eda.europa.eu/defencefacts/>. NOTE: These figures reflect data collected from the defense ministries of the 27 EU member states, excluding Denmark.

<sup>17</sup> North Atlantic Treaty Organization. "Financial and Economic Data Relating to NATO Defense." *Table 3: Defense expenditures as a percentage of gross domestic product*, 10 June 2010, accessed [http://www.nato.int/nato\\_static/assets/pdf/pdf\\_2010\\_06/20100610\\_PR\\_CP\\_2010\\_078.pdf](http://www.nato.int/nato_static/assets/pdf/pdf_2010_06/20100610_PR_CP_2010_078.pdf).

<sup>18</sup> Daniel Fata, "Euro Defense Spending and NATO." *German Marshall Fund/GlobalBrief*. 20 October 2009, accessed [http://www.tradepovertyforum.org/publications/article.cfm?id=678&parent\\_type=P](http://www.tradepovertyforum.org/publications/article.cfm?id=678&parent_type=P).

<sup>19</sup> Hugh Bayley, "The Global Financial Crisis and its Impact on Defence Budgets." *NATO Parliamentary Assembly, Information Document*. 2009, accessed <http://www.nato-pa.int/Default.asp?SHORTCUT=1928>.

2014.<sup>20</sup> Even the UK, America's most important European partner in global operations, is projected to make substantial cuts. The new coalition government in London has told the Ministry of Defense to expect budget cuts of up to 20 percent, causing military planners to examine radical cuts and reorganization possibilities.<sup>21</sup>

The troubled A400M project is a metaphor for Europe's inability to emerge as a strategic force equivalent to its weight as an economic powerhouse. The Airbus A400M, designed to be Europe's homegrown military transport aircraft and a competitor to Boeing and Lockheed Martin, has been stalled and over-budget since the announcement of its creation in 2003. Intended to have been airborne by 2009, the A400M will be delivered in 2012 at earliest, according to Airbus parent company EADS.<sup>22</sup> Commenting on the trend of declining defense budgeting and procurement in Europe, Secretary of Defense Robert Gates noted in February 2010 at a NATO Strategic Concept Seminar co-hosted by the Atlantic Council, "The demilitarization of Europe – where large swaths of the general public and political class are averse to military force and the risks that go with it – has gone from a blessing in the twentieth century to an impediment to achieving real security and lasting peace in the twenty-first."<sup>23</sup>

**Just as American diplomacy is only as strong as the fundamental political, economic and military power and resilience of our nation, so too will the EU's experiment in multinational diplomacy be dependent upon strong institutions, a strong currency and the willingness to invest in collective defense.** There is also a need to focus urgent attention on the so far unexploited opportunities for military cooperation between NATO and the EU. This cooperation is blocked by Turkey; creative diplomacy will be needed (perhaps by having France and Germany be more positive about Turkey's future capacity to become a full member of the European Union in exchange

for Turkey's end of the damaging hold on NATO-EU military cooperation) to end this stalemate.

Just as NATO has its existential questions, *The Economist* noted in July 2010 that, "The EU was once a cozy club of Western European countries. Now 27 strong, stretching from the Baltic States to Cyprus and taking in 10 ex-Communist countries, the Union's best justification may be as a means for managing globalization. For free market liberals, the enlarged Union's size and diversity is itself an advantage. But, for another camp, involving Europe's left (and more or less the entire French political class), the point of Europe is to keep globalization at bay, or at least to curb its power."<sup>24</sup>

This is a question EU leaders must confront. Left unanswered, the U.S.-EU relationship will remain essentially non-strategic. Asmus notes that, while NATO epitomizes the American presence in Europe and remains critical, a growing share of what the United States needs to do with Europe today falls outside NATO's realm. Asmus argues that during the Cold War, what was military in nature was strategic in consequence, and everything else was or seemed to be secondary. That is no longer the case. The functioning of global financial structures, problems of failed states and economic development, the ability to promote democracy and good governance, global health and environmental issues all have clear strategic consequences. The result is a mismatch between problems and problem-solving systems.<sup>24</sup> The development of a more focused and powerful EU could increase the areas in which consultation and cooperation with the United States are front and center. Unfortunately, the appointment of two relatively obscure European politicians for President and Foreign Minister of the EU disappointed Americans interested in a more strategic U.S.-EU relationship.

The United States can still look to act in concert with the European Union on several key issues of mutual interest to both sides of the Atlantic. The agenda for a 2010 U.S.-EU Summit should include:

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<sup>20</sup> Daniel Dombey, "US fears scale of European defence cuts," *Financial Times*, 16 September 2010.

<sup>21</sup> Alex Barker and James Blitz, "MoD looks at cutting 30,000 troops," *Financial Times*, 20 July, 2010.

<sup>22</sup> Matthew Potter, "Europe Breathes New Life, Again, into the Airbus A400," *Bnet*, 24 February 2010, accessed <http://industry.bnet.com/government/10005422/reportedly-the-a400m-transport-aircraft-will-be-saved/>.

<sup>23</sup> Brian Knowlton, "Gates Calls European Mood a Danger to the Peace," *New York Times*, 23 February 2010, accessed <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/02/24/world/europe/24nato.html?ref=global-home>.

<sup>24</sup> "The Future of Europe," *The Economist*, Vol. 396 Issue 8690, 10 July 2010, 25.

<sup>25</sup> Asmus, *New Purposes*, 2.

- **Iran.** As the United States and the EU work together diplomatically to eliminate the threat of Iranian nuclear capabilities, Washington and Brussels should continue specific, joint efforts to implement stringent financial and investment measures to ensure that pursuing a nuclear agenda becomes clearly unprofitable for Tehran. This cooperation can take place both within the context of existing UN resolutions, as well as in the context of additional, broader U.S.- EU sanctions.
- **Afghanistan and Pakistan.** The EU can more broadly support the international coalition in Afghanistan by providing humanitarian assistance to Afghans, promoting economic development and training Afghan national police forces. The EU also can take on a more ambitious agenda for lowering tariff barriers with Pakistan to create Pakistani jobs, as well as take on a much larger role in assisting Pakistan in the aftermath of August's catastrophic floods.
- **Cyber Security.** The impact of cyber attacks came into sharper focus for the EU in 2007 when cyber attacks crippled Estonia's infrastructure. The United States too, has come under increasing cyber attack in the past three years. Working with NATO, the United States and the EU should launch a joint cyber security initiative to protect against future threats. While NATO has an important role to play in cyber security from an Article 5 perspective, the EU and the United States can together involve the private sector, which owns the dominant share of cyber infrastructure. The EU has been an important leader on information security and cyber security, notably by creating the European Network and Information Security Agency to assist the European Commission in maintaining security within the networks of the EU. The EU's broader powers and capacities make it a more ideal partner for the United States in matters of cyber security.
- **Energy and Climate Change.** The EU has taken important steps to reduce greenhouse gas emissions with a stated goal of 20 percent reductions by 2020. While NATO will have a role to play, transatlantic energy security could be a powerful U.S.-EU strategic connection because the EU has the authority and ability – if not yet the will – to develop a common energy policy. For example, America and Europe can again pay sustained diplomatic attention to the politics of oil and gas pipelines from Central Asia and the Caucasus, which are needed to diversify energy supplies. We could together actively support what was once a major Western objective: creating an East-West energy corridor, including joint promotion of one of the big infrastructure projects in the world today: the construction of the Nabucco gas pipeline, designed to stretch 2,000 miles to bring natural gas from the Caspian Sea through Turkey to Austria. The goal in building Nabucco is to diversify Europe's natural gas supplies by using Middle Eastern and Central Asian gas reserves that would not pass through Russia or be controlled by Russian energy giant Gazprom.<sup>26</sup> There are other possibilities as well. The United States and the EU should be in leadership positions to keep diplomatic energy focused on climate change. The EU, the United States, China, Japan, India and Australia should seek ways to create and then make commercially-viable clean coal technology. Finally, NATO and EU members have important interests in the Arctic which may come into sharper focus if the icecap continues to melt.

## The OSCE

In early December, the OSCE will hold its first summit meeting since the Istanbul gathering of late 1999. After years of stalemate in Vienna, the summit and the recent thaw in relations between Moscow and Washington offer an opportunity for renewal and rejuvenation of the OSCE. The

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<sup>26</sup> Marc Grossman and Simon Henderson, "Foreign Pipeline Plan Matters," *Dallas Morning News*, 20 July 2009. Marc Grossman, *What Next for Energy*, 6.

OSCE stands at an important turning point in the organization's history and has an opportunity to enhance its relevance. After engaging extensively in the Balkans in the 1990s, the OSCE needs to shift its focus, budget and activities to the Caucasus and Central Asia where there are more threats and opportunities.

Can the OSCE be as effective in Central Asia as it was in promoting democracy and security in Europe in the 1990s? Just as NATO and the EU face questions over their purpose in today's world, the OSCE faces its own questions about its relevance and utility in today's security environment. In addition to Russia's challenge to the existing European security architecture, some in the OSCE warn that Russia and Central Asian states do not share the same commitment to preserving the OSCE's obligations on promoting third basket issues such as democracy and human rights, a crucial pillar of the organization.

This December's summit in the heart of Eurasia offers the OSCE an opportunity to take on new tasks and challenges to make it relevant. To encourage European nations to perceive the OSCE as a trusted institution capable of taking action, a proposal for conflict prevention that pre-approves the OSCE to dispatch fact-finding teams to rapidly respond to crises is an important step. Instead of stalemate after a crisis, the OSCE would have been able to react more quickly to address the Kyrgyzstan crisis. There are some additional topics for the 2010 Summit:

- The OSCE should be a core mechanism for discussions concerning resurrecting the CFE Treaty.
- Second basket issues concerning economics and the environment are of particular concern to Eurasia, where economic integration is lacking and states bear a heavy burden of the economic legacy of the Soviet Union. The OSCE might strengthen its second basket activities by serving as a forum for best practices in mitigating and handling environmental disasters as a result of resource extraction.

- The summit must address the continuing political instability in Kyrgyzstan and assess ways the OSCE itself or individual member states can work together to ensure stability and good governance in Kyrgyzstan. Further turmoil in Kyrgyzstan poses a threat to Central Asian, Russian and American interests in the region and provides a strong incentive for cooperative action.
- Finally, the OSCE summit has additional potential to impact both present and future U.S., European and Eurasian security interests. For example, in Afghanistan – neighbor to Central Asia and a vital U.S. interest – an OSCE summit could provide an opportunity to strengthen border security and provide mentoring to Afghan civil servants.

There is one other important reason for President Obama to take this OSCE summit seriously: Russian President Medvedev's calls in 2008 for a "new legally binding treaty on European security in which the organizations currently working in the Euro-Atlantic area could become parties."

**While there is a lack of clarity about the Russian President's ideas and about Moscow's enthusiasm for its own proposal, we ought to respond as if there were no ambiguities about Russia's motives, which are to weaken NATO, diminish the possibilities of stronger and more strategic U.S.-EU relationships and to divert the OSCE from its focus on supporting democratic forces in the larger Europe.** The creation of new security organizations in Eurasia since 1999, such as the CICA, the SCO, the CSTO and the recent customs agreement among Russia, Kazakhstan and Belarus also change the makeup of European security institutions.

The United States has taken the position that existing European security institutions remain adequate for addressing today's security challenges. Washington needs to provide a substantive response to the Medvedev security treaty proposal by leading an effort to strengthen the OSCE, the most inclusive transatlantic security institution. Creating a unified, coherent approach to



European and Eurasian security (thinking strategically about the three 2010 summits provides such an opportunity) spells out where these institutions fit into the overarching security framework and provides an answer to charges that the current security system is broken. The OSCE would prove itself as the regional forum to which states turn, outflanking exclusively Eurasian and Russian organizations such as CSTO, CICO and SCO that have formed to balance the weaknesses of the OSCE.

## Conclusion

Thinking strategically about the three summits in 2010 will help the Obama Administration better face the global threats that defy borders and could take the transatlantic relationship to a new level. This would be consistent with President Obama's May 2010 National Security Strategy which emphasized the need to confront new threats and revitalize relationships.<sup>26</sup> The "Triple Crown Strategy" of 1999 was worth pursuing. What will people say eleven years from now about the triple summits of 2010? They should say that the administration was bold in its concept and successful in its execution. One real possibility to meet this standard is for the Obama Administration to follow the advice of thinkers such as Ron Asmus, Hans Binnendijk and Richard Kugler who have all written about the need for a "transatlantic compact," perhaps leading to a treaty or a formal agreement, in order to provide another legal anchor for U.S.-European cooperation.<sup>27</sup> Managing the many complications – figuring out, for example, what to do about Article 5 for those EU nations that are not members of NATO or what "security" can really mean within the OSCE's title – will not

be easy. But it is precisely the kind of challenge that will make operational the broad policy visions in President Obama's National Security Strategy of May 2010.

A more formal, strategic transatlantic relationship would allow European and American leaders to assess the challenges they face and then call upon the transatlantic institution best suited to meet them, whether at home or abroad. For example, in the broad category of energy security, transatlantic leaders might task NATO to protect critical infrastructure and promote transatlantic dialogue with the EU on issues such as climate change and pipeline politics. In Afghanistan, while NATO continues to carry out its crucial military mission, the EU and OSCE can offer different instruments for nation building and political reconciliation. In continuing to pursue a unified response to Iran's effort to acquire nuclear weapons, leaders in the larger transatlantic community could ask NATO to consult now with Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries while the EU can continue to lead in negotiations with Iran, while simultaneously implementing United Nations and their own more stringent economic sanctions. In Kyrgyzstan, the OSCE can take the lead on police advisory and other field missions, while the EU can provide development assistance and advance reforms in education and rule of law programs. Such a new division of labor could create a new dynamic in the Euro-Atlantic space and create more partners ready to meet twenty-first century challenges.

*September 2010*

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<sup>26</sup> "President Obama's May 2010 National Security Strategy," *The White House Press Room*, 27 May 2010, accessed <http://www.whitehouse.gov/blog/2010/05/27/a-blueprint-pursuing-world-we-see>.

<sup>27</sup> Richard L. Kugler and Hans Binnendijk, "Toward a New Transatlantic Compact," *The National Defense University*, Defense and Technology Paper Number 52, Washington: August 2008.

## Eurasia as Part of Transatlantic Security

In the spring of 2010, the Atlantic Council launched a task force on “Eurasia as Part of Transatlantic Security” with the task of developing a coherent, effective U.S. strategy toward Eurasia. Chaired by Atlantic Council Chairman Senator **Chuck Hagel**, who as a U.S. Senator visited all five Central Asian republics, the project draws on experts from the Atlantic Council network with deep experience in Eurasia, transatlantic security and OSCE matters. To inform the task force’s policy recommendations, Atlantic Council President and CEO **Frederick Kempe** led a delegation consisting of Ambassador Ross Wilson, Damon Wilson, Boyko Nitzov and Jeff Lightfoot to Vienna, Austria, Astana, Kazakhstan and Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan in June to meet with government representatives, OSCE officials and members of civil society. This project seeks to shape the transatlantic debate on security in Eurasia and the future of the OSCE by publishing policy-relevant issue briefs, organizing strategy sessions with senior officials and issuing a task force report.

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