

# Delex Systems, Inc.

## Consulting, Studies, and Analysis: Current Issues Brief

No. 20: "NATO Beyond the Lisbon Summit" with ADM Stavridis—CSIS (30 November 2010)

### 29 November 2010—8:30am—CSIS

The Center for Strategic and International Studies, in conjunction with the Polish Institute of International Affairs, held a conference exploring critical issues facing NATO after the Lisbon Summit. Supreme Allied Commander and Commander US European Command, Admiral James G. Stavridis delivered the opening keynote address on NATO's new Strategic Concept. The rest of the conference consisted of various panels and a luncheon keynote by Undersecretary of Defense for Policy Michelle Flournoy.

### Key Points

- \*\* NATO adopted its third Strategic Concept at the Lisbon Summit.
- \*\* With the right plan, the Summit endorsed a 2014 conditions-based transfer of responsibilities and force draw-down in Afghanistan.
- \*\* Applying intellect to the challenge of diminishing resources, NATO can successfully face its numerous challenges.



Supreme Allied Commander and Commander US European Command, Admiral James G. Stavridis

### NATO's New Strategic Concept

The Strategic Concept focused on collective defense and deterrence, crisis management, and cooperative security. Other issues examined were missile defense, progress on transition in Afghanistan, relations with Russia, and a "comprehensive approach" to security challenges calling for greater cooperation with partners. The Summit also explored a new "critical capabilities package" of vital NATO equipment, together with a new acquisition process; and the reform of military command structures and agencies.

### Challenges Facing the Alliance

Recounting the Nobel Prize-winning novel The Bridge on the Drina, ADM Stavridis likened NATO to "a bridge in time", temporally connecting North America, Europe, and other partners such as Japan, in addressing crucial challenges.

Assessing demographic trends in Europe and Russia, states will face increased difficulty recruiting troops for volunteer armies and apportioning sufficient funds to military costs while the welfare costs of an aging population rise.

Cognizant of continuing tension, great progress in stability and security has occurred in the Balkans. Given the relatively peaceful situation ADM Stavridis recommended the number of peacekeepers further drop from the original 15,000 and current 10,000 to 5,000.

Cybersecurity, cyberdefense, and protection of information from leaks is another NATO challenge.

ADM Stavridis also discussed several challenges in which NATO can play a supporting role, such as terrorism in Europe, trafficking of narcotics,



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weapons, and people, responding to natural and man-made disasters, and ensuring the High North remains a zone of cooperation (while allowing the Arctic Council to take the lead). In addition to the security dimension, ADM Stavridis is tracking the “billions of dollars of cost added to our budgets as a result of the counter-piracy mission.”

### **Afghanistan Effort**

The Summit endorsed a plan of conditions-based transfer of responsibilities and force draw-downs for Afghanistan with an “aspirational goal” of 2014. ADM Stavridis, as Undersecretary Flournoy later did as well, emphasized the right strategy and tactics are now in place for success.

He lauded improvements in various metrics such as the training of Afghan soldiers and police and enrollment of seven million children in schools, including 3 million girls. He also noted the reality that as 80% of Afghans are illiterate, NATO, through the International Security Force in Afghanistan (ISAF), is delivering literacy training to Afghan soldiers. The number enrolled will reach 100,000 by next summer, and “that may be the most lasting thing that we do in Afghanistan in the end.” ADM Stavridis characterized this program as an element of the essential “comprehensive approach” to security that involves “international, interagency, private-public, diplomatic, economic, cultural, and linguistic” efforts. He emphasized: “we will not deliver security in Afghanistan solely from the barrel of a gun.”

During a later panel discussion, Dr. Anthony Cordesman of CSIS refuted ADM Stavridis’ sanguine review of Afghanistan metrics. Instead, he called for realistic readiness assessments of Afghan forces (in order to form accurate expectations), realistic numbers of trainers, and a shift away from regular (national) police to more effective local police and local authorities.

### **BMD, Russia Relations, and New START**

Facing the threat of ballistic missiles, NATO adopted BMD as an Alliance mission for the first

time. ADM Stavridis, per Administration guidance, will explore linking the Phased Adaptive Approach with NATO command and control systems and then pitching the idea to other NATO states.

With Russian President Medvedev in attendance, the Summit affirmed Russia’s role as a “true strategic partner” on a range of concerns including piracy, counterterrorism, counternarcotics, Afghan logistics, and potential BMD cooperation.

Lastly, ADM Stavridis reiterated his support for New START, arguing it will advance US interests and have a salutary effect on US-Russia relations.

### **Succeeding in an Era of Declining Resources**

Quoting ADM Sir Jackie Fisher, “now that the money has run out we must start to think”, ADM Stavridis called for applying intellect to the challenge of diminishing resources. In a later panel, Professor Julian Lindley-French noted most Europeans are now focused on the Irish debt crisis, leading him to posit that the real test of the Concept will be Europe’s ambition, especially in smaller states such as the Netherlands.

According to ADM Stavridis, efforts such as slimming NATO’s command (cutting to six HQs and 40% of command personnel) and cooperating on investment and procurement will be essential. Ultimately, though, ADM Stavridis expressed confidence that with a collective GDP of \$31 trillion, 7 million troops, and 3,400 ships, NATO will fulfill its varied missions, never undervaluing the “bedrock of the alliance”, Article V: “an attack on one nation is an attack on all.”

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### **Further Reading**

1. Online Access to the Conference’s Video Recording, CSIS, 29 November 2010. <<http://csis.org/event/nato-beyond-lisbon-summit>>
2. President Barack Obama. “Europe and America, Aligned for the Future”, New York Times, 18 November 2010. <<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/11/19/opinion/19iht-edobama.html>>
3. NATO’s new Strategic Concept adopted at the Lisbon Summit: <<http://www.nato.int/strategic-concept/index.html>>