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SUMMARY REPORT

5th NATO-Asia/Pacific Dialogue

15-17 September 2015

Background

From 15-17 September 2015, the regional programme Political Dialogue with Asia in Singapore and the Multinational Development Policy Dialogue in Brussel of the Konrad-Adenauer Foundation organized the 5th NATO – Asia/Pacific Dialogue in cooperation with the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation in Brussels / Belgium.

Despite economic growth and an increase in trade flows within the region and with the rest of the world, Asian states face a number of significant security challenges. China's economic progress within the last decades has created increasing contention over strategic zones of influence, not only among Asian countries but also with other global players. Besides the growing tensions in the South as well as East China Sea and between US and China, intrastate conflicts persist in several Asian countries. Recent developments concerning the situation in Syria and Iraq have reestablished the fear of terrorist attacks. As some coastal areas are still characterized by a lack of governance, piracy incidents remain an issue of concern. Furthermore, cyber threats tend to occur more frequent, affecting the relations between China, the US and among Asian countries.

In order to ensure a peaceful future for Asia, strong and trustworthy structures must be established. Regional initiatives and debates on different aspects of security have to provide adequate communication and cooperation channels to enhance confidence between the parties. NATO member countries rely on peaceful processes in Asia and settlement of intra-regional differences. They understand their own security as being fundamentally linked to Asia, bound by geographic location, common vision and objectives. Therefore, NATO is committed to help its Asian partners to achieve a nonviolent environment where disagreements are solved through dialogue. In this regard, the NATO-Asia/Pacific Dialogue aims to deepen understanding, foster exchange and strengthen partnerships of NATO with states in the Asia-Pacific region.

Day I: Briefings at the NATO Headquarters in Brussels

The first day of the NATO-Asia/Pacific Dialogue 2015 was a visit to the NATO Headquarters in Brussels. The full-day programme included six briefings on current security concerns for both the Alliance and Asia.

The first briefing provided an overview of 'NATO's Current Political Agenda' and recent reforms of its structure. These include the spending pledge of the Wales Summit and the Readiness Action Plan to assure partners that NATO is ready to act. The new spearhead force is the key tool of this plan. Current activities are in place in the fields of defence capabilities, strategic communication, cyberspace security, ballistic missile defence, maritime security, women/peace and security, Afghanistan, and the Russian/Ukraine crisis. Since the Wales Summit, NATO possesses a partnerships interoperability platform. Vis-a-vis Asia, NATO has no specific strategy and offers a non-exclusive partnership. Dialogue exists with China and informal dialogues with India and ASEAN.

The next session discussed the 'Russia-Ukraine Crisis' and NATO's view on this. NATO has a more intense partnership with Russia than with any other partner. However, the strategy of inclusion has clearly failed as Russia has abandoned the Euro-Transatlantic cooperation and undermined the post-cold war order. Instead Russia wants its superpower status back and keeps looking East. For NATO it is important to not change its policy per se, but see the real Russia and not the Russia it wants to see.

Security Challenges from the South were analyzed next. The Middle East (ME) has received the most active outreach by NATO due to its strong potential. The Mediterranean Dialogue in 1994, followed by the Istanbul Summit 2004 and finally the Strategic Concept of 2010 defined NATO's means of engagement with the region. The most important current challenge coming from the region is certainly the Islamic State. Instead of sending troops itself, NATO applies the Defence Capacity Building as agreed upon in Wales which is demand-driven. This is also a lesson learned from Libya where it failed to stabilize and provide appropriate post-conflict reconstruction. Besides these changes within NATO, its partners in the region also have undergone reforms, particularly of the institutions and security sector.

The fourth session addressed 'Military Aspects of NATO Partnerships'. Over the past years, NATO has successfully conducted military cooperation with non-Alliance states. The most recent example is the cooperation with Sweden during the Libya war. Due to existing collaboration in the Partnership Interoperability Initiative (PII), the forces could be coordinated fast and effectively. In Kosovo, Austria provides 11% of the KFOR troops and 22 partners supported the mission in Afghanistan. The three strands of the PII are a toolbox, a platform and the status as Enhanced Opportunities Partners. The benefits for partners include participation in exercises, operational capacity training and participation in lessons learned activities. These new concepts prove that NATO has acknowledged the need to be more inclusive.

The fifth briefing took a look at 'NATO's WMD Non-Proliferation Policy'. NATO

possesses four major instruments to deal with Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) Proliferation – WMD Non-Proliferation Centre, Joint CBRN (chemicals, biological, radiological and nuclear weapons) Task Force, CBRN Centre of Excellence for civil protection and Dialogue with Partners across the globe. These measures aim to prevent proliferation, protect against WMD attacks and recover from the same. The basis for all this is the comprehensive, strategic-level WMD/ CBRN Policy of 2009.

The day ended with a closer look at ‘Countering Hybrid Warfare’. Hybrid warfare is certainly not a new concept, but recent developments, particularly its application by Russia, brought it to the top of the agenda. It is also not new to use all means to achieve a certain goal. However, it is necessary to review the own capacities and ensure a high level of resilience. Today’s interconnectedness through social media creates a new security environment and centralized states may have an advantage due to their faster decision making process. Democratic institutions are slower in their response and need to adapt. Key factors for NATO’ Hybrid Action Plan are prevention, deterrence and defense. Together with an enhanced decision-making and cooperation between EU and NATO, this shall complement the Readiness Action Plan.

Day II: Participation in the European Defence Summit by the Munich Security Conference

On the second day of the Dialogue, the Asian delegates attended the European Defence Summit (EDS) organized by the Munich Security Conference. The conference had a strong NATO participation. General Jean-Paul Paloméros, NATO Supreme Allied Commander Transformation, Norfolk, VA, was the key note speaker. In addition, NATO’s Assistant Secretary General for Political Affairs and Security Policy, Thrasyvoulos Terry Stamatopoulos, discussed the state and future of NATO’s posture, particularly with regard to the Warsaw Summit. During the lunch, the delegates received a personal briefing by NATO expert and long-standing NATO advisor Karl-Heinz Kamp, President, Federal Academy for Security Policy of Germany, on what kind of collaboration NATO could develop with Asia and how the security threats to both regions have an impact vis-a-vis the other one.

As this summit also included remarks and speeches by many of NATO member countries, participation in the EDS provided the Asian delegates with a very comprehensive picture of what both NATO itself and the member states are working on and their respective views on current security threats.

Day III: Semi-Public Conference

The Dialogue finished with a semi-public conference which was attended by over 75 experts and government officials.

Session I – Tensions in the Neighbourhood – The Danger of Military Conflicts in Europe and Asia

The NATO keynote speaker highlighted that many of the assumptions which were made about the peaceful security evolution have been shattered by recent incidents. The transatlantic narrative had suffered a major setback as Russia is disregarding the rules of a system that was believed to be consolidated. Following the financial crisis and the dissonance among EU Member States concerning deeper integration, the illegal annexation of Crimea has challenged the core foundations of the European security architecture. Despite its economic progress and growing interdependence, Asia, on the other hand, remains haunted by competition for regional influence, energy resources and state territory.

In the context of these increasing tensions, the 5th NATO-Asia/Pacific Dialogue is living proof that the Transatlantic Community and Asia will remain connected in many ways. The case of Afghanistan has proven that the fight against terrorism can be one of the strongest catalysts in urging nations worldwide to cooperate, particularly among forces that would probably refuse it under different circumstances. Within this environment, the NATO speaker highlighted three main security aspects. First, the violation of the established norms of behavior leads to the adoption of sanctions against the culprit. A second one is the military solidarity. In the case of Ukraine, NATO reassured support to its Eastern allies, increased the number of exercises and forces in the region and is now implementing a new Action Plan. NATO, North America and Europe consider themselves to be one single security space. A third characteristic of security in Europe is the corporative dimension. Even if Russia is in opposition to the West, NATO and the EU will continue to believe in a constructive engagement with Russia. The current security situation is a clear proof that neither Europe nor Asia has found the formula for peace and stability. This is why common challenges have to be dealt with by joining forces and working together.

Asian delegates expressed their opposition to military blocks and highlighted the advantages of a peaceful development strategy based on international cooperation. The participants addressed the danger of military conflicts and unconventional threats such as cybersecurity. The strategic competition and increasing interaction of military forces taking place in the South and East Chinas Sea may lead to serious military incidents. In some cases the interest in crises resolution remains low as states fear it might be used as a means to exercise control. Additionally, emerging internal challenges associated with governance problems, political transitions and corruption could further deteriorate the security environment. China's transformation and increasing military capabilities represent a challenge that has an effect on the security architecture of the region. A transparent architecture for mutual assurance has been proposed as a necessary solution.

Session II – Maritime Security

The second session addressed the issue of maritime security. In recent years, NATO had to adapt to a rapidly evolving, more complex maritime environment threatened by

diverse security challenges. With the approval of the Alliance Maritime Strategy in 2011, a new foundation for NATO's role in the maritime domain was provided. In full consistency with the Strategic Concept, the Maritime Strategy sets out methods through which maritime powers can meet critical challenges. It outlines the Alliance's main roles in the fight against maritime security challenges. These include appropriate contributions to collective defense, crisis management, cooperative security and maritime security in a broader sense. NATO is fulfilling generic tasks such as the reinforcement of NATO's capabilities, the improvement of maritime exercises as well as evaluation and future adaptation of NATO's maritime operations. In this regard, one of the main areas of work is to enhance NATO-EU cooperation, coordination and complementarity in the maritime domain, which is considered to be the key to effectiveness of joint efforts. Another crucial precondition to prevent conflicts is the strengthening of NATO's engagement with partners in the maritime domain.

Speakers from the Asian region stressed the importance of enhanced cooperation to ensure free and secure navigation in the extraterritorial waters. The international community is challenged in the domain of the seas as national interests threaten fundamental rights. At the same time, increasing tensions in Asian waters result in military activities pursued without consent of neighbor states. In order to overcome these challenges a comprehensive approach should be put in place. Improved navigation, surveillance and maritime awareness are areas which have to be addressed in multilateral cooperation in order to keep the Sea safe and secure. Current maritime threats are, for instance, the illegal transport of ammunition, human trafficking, crimes at Sea, drug smuggling and international terrorism. In this context, the development of multi-layered information sharing systems and continuing joint exercises with NATO are considered necessary steps to be taken.

EU's response to these challenges is the European Union Maritime Strategy (EUMSS). The strategy's main objective is the coordination of coherence between sector-specific, EU and national policies to enable all relevant authorities to operate together effectively. The European Defence Agency (EDA) will be the framework for cooperation in maritime security areas. MARSUR, the Maritime Surveillance Project of the EDA, pursues a networking approach allowing the participating 18 Member States to automatically exchange surveillance data to create an information sharing environment. Participants agreed on the importance of sharing experiences, enhancing the dialogue and promoting the partnerships, increasing transparency and strengthening trust-building measures. Moreover, the need for flexible partnerships and the necessity for better monitoring have been underlined.

Session III – Cyber Defense

NATO recognized cyber threats at an early stage, but it was not until 2007, when the first member nation became victim of cyber-attacks, that the issue was pushed to the top of its priorities. NATO underlined the importance of international cooperation and partnerships by making three fundamental points about cyber space: (1) cyber space is continuously increasing, (2) cyber threats are rapidly evolving and the number of states

investing in cyber operations is increasing, and (3) the scope of cyber-attacks is expanding, people increasingly being picked and targeted. To ensure its functionality, NATO's primary objective is to protect its own networks. Besides, it is committed to assist its member nations to develop their national cyber defense capabilities and is actively collaborating with partner countries in order to find real solutions for common challenges. The Industry Cyber Partnership is one of the main issues on NATO's agenda and will be approached in next year's summit in Warsaw.

While cyber-attacks are currently mainly economic threats, as a military tool they are a danger to be met through a whole-of-government approach. Given intensifying cyber threats in the public as well as private sector, Asian experts criticized that cyber-policy is still facing struggles to be mainstreamed. As it is a rather technical and new issue, the capacities and instruments are not yet well integrated into government and military action plans. Furthermore, the differences between the governmental or military structure and the private sector make a holistic approach to cyber defense more difficult, although both sides are increasingly threatened by attacks on critical data and infrastructure. To address cyber-defense properly, the experts agreed that the private sector has to comply actively. Hereby a lot can be learned from the flexibility of companies in adapting to the cyber revolution. Concerning international cooperation, capacities are said to be shared and criteria must be defined to provide assistance to attacked states. Moreover, strategies need to be worked out in order to strengthen resilience. Experts advised NATO to seek cooperation with the Asian region and to invest in new organizational structures to build robust partnerships including states, private enterprises and academic institutions. In order to achieve this goal, the development of a framework of common objectives is a crucial step. While some experts pointed out that a broad alliance could be complicated due to the technical development gap between states, others highlight the fact that most states have the possibility to quickly adapt to the second wave of technology and still benefit from the strong cyber-infrastructure of the other states.

Session IV – Conflict Prevention and Crisis Management

In the context of a worsening international security context, conflict prevention and crisis management are of extreme importance.

NATO outlined its main strategic concepts and affirmed that they are ready to respond quickly and firmly to any crisis. However, NATO refuses to take the role of a global fire brigade and rather seeks to engage in multilateral networks. As the Strategic Concept of 2010 acknowledges that military responses are not sufficient, NATO pursues the strategic goal to invest in crisis prevention rather than in crisis management. With the Security Capacity Building Initiative 2014, NATO supports the development of defense capacities of partner states requesting assistance at all levels. This includes institution building, logistics and education. In this regard, NATO works closely with international partners such as EU, African Union and the UN, but also with NGOs with specific expertise in democratic institution building. The mission in Afghanistan is an example for such engagement in the Asian region. It evolved from a military intervention to a training mission, aiming to develop social institutions and a security structure capable of firm

reactions to security challenges. NATO's objective is to install a civilian-led presence and to enhance a long-term partnership with Afghanistan.

From a regional point of view, experts and delegates pointed out that transition is only possible, if all stakeholders at international, national and regional level are sharing common defined objectives. The complex dynamics in Asia make it necessary to analyze all dimensions of conflicts and to realize that it is a process with cycle characteristics. This will allow the resolution of conflicts in a sustainable manner, considering all context variables. In a next step the economic survivability, political stability and effectiveness of the established security structure have to be assured to prevent countries from falling back into conflict. The conference participants agreed that sole military interventions are no solution as they create both spaces for peace and war. It is necessary to give priority to state-building initiatives. In this regard, NATO was asked to invest into trust building measures and to improve its analysis of problems of asymmetrical power relations in its partnerships. NATO acknowledged the great importance of developing effective resilience structures with partner nations in order to create trust. NATO representatives also stressed that its assistance is not being imposed but that the alliance only reacts upon request.

In a broader context, crisis management does not exclusively refer to man-made incidents. Providing assistance in case of natural catastrophes or endemic diseases is of great importance to NATO as well as the partner states. Over the past years, several countries have requested assistance from the Disaster Respond Coordination Center. Further, examples of military interventions aiming to provide humanitarian aid were discussed. Delegates from Central Asia suggested that monitoring institutions can be realized in cooperation with NATO in order to prevent conflicts and to strengthen the partnerships.

While the participants agreed on the importance of long-lasting cooperation between NATO and Asian countries, discussion arose concerning the Cold-War heritage of NATO. NATO put forward its significant evolution in the last decades by a redefinition of its goals and by the bottom-up-led untargeted enlargement process.

Session V – Enhanced Partnership and Interoperability

NATO reassured in this session its commitment to international cooperation as a response to the Alliance's reorientation towards collective defense. NATO's partnerships around the world are still growing at individual, governmental and regional level. While the focus on individual level is put on education and training programs, interoperability is the goal to achieve at governmental level. The multiple aspects of this concept, its limits and benefits were discussed by the participants. On a regional level, NATO's big tool is the 28+ N method, seeking dialogue with as much countries as possible to assure cooperation in dealing with security challenges that do not respect borders. Simultaneously, NATO is enhancing cooperation with other international and regional organizations holding a legitimate mandate. Although NATO is not planning to be directly involved in the Asia/Pacific region and is currently not cooperating intensively

with ASEAN, the work on interoperability with partner countries and the political dialogue needed in this context are priorities for the Alliance. Political dialogue is important in order to understand interconnected security challenges and react appropriately to possible changes in the security situation. It also helps to exchange military expertise for partners to adopt and include it in their strategies.

Interoperability is a necessity for an effective partnership, but also comes at a cost. It requires not only military cooperation, but a common framework and definition of political goals and enemies. Therefore, it has to be identified as long-term investment in which both sides have to recognize their strategic interests. The Afghanistan mission demonstrated some of the possible cooperation challenges. Cultural variables and the specific political context can hinder an effective interoperability. The delegates at the conference confirmed that NATO is seen as a stabilizing partner in the Asia/Pacific region. They also called for a broadening of the interoperability concept to include cyber-space cooperation, disaster risk reduction and humanitarian assistance. In this regard the demand for intensified capacity building was reiterated.

Conclusion

The 5th NATO-Asia-Pacific Dialogue provided a unique opportunity for an intensive exchange of views on NATO-Asia relations on areas of common interest. It enhanced the participants' networks, built confidence and shared expertise in order to form efficient and stable security protocols. In the fifth year of its existence, the NATO-Asia/Pacific Dialogue was lifted from a mainly academic level to a 1.5 track event. This was a proven success and established a necessary, but so far missing link. Thus, the series should continue on the 1.5 track level with a potential of being lifted even higher. All participants, experts and delegates of NATO and Asian countries agreed on the necessity of building robust partnerships to face the upcoming security challenges of an interdependent world. NATO stressed its will to assist any country that wants to cooperate. However, the Alliance does not aim to be a global one, but to engage with its expertise in multilateral networks all over the world. Common consensus was made on the importance of long-time investments in trust-building measures and in political dialogue. The latter is essential for the definition of common goals, needed for any mission to be successful. The conference participants confirmed the necessity of a comprehensive and not exclusively military approach to analyze security challenges assuring crisis prevention and readiness of all partners.

Given the deterioration of security situations in both Europe and Asia, the construction of a transparent architecture for mutual assurance and cooperation has to be considered a matter of great urgency. The Dialogue offered participants the possibility to get inside views on each other's concerns. Information sharing, defense capacity improvement and trust-building are crucial concepts to ensure crisis prevention and enable interoperability.