
INTERNATIONAL REPORTS



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Editorial

Dear Readers,

It is back: thirty years after the end of the Cold War, the issue of armament and arms control is once again playing an important role, as the recent failure of the INF Treaty, the last mainstay of nuclear arms control, clearly showed. It is a symptom of a new great-power politics that is increasingly shaping the international system. Russia, with its construction of intermediate-range missiles, and China, which increases its military spending each year and has reached parity with the US in some areas already, are contributing to this trend. Not to mention the dangers of an arms race in cyberspace or outer space, or of weapons of mass destruction in the hands of non-state actors, in other words, terrorists.

This means that the tasks that fall to us Europeans are growing. In the face of such threats, we can no longer delegate the responsibility for our security to others; we must contribute more with respect to security policy, and find our own answers to the strategic, military, and technological challenges of the 21st century. That is the message of Carlo Masala's call for action in this issue. The European Union must significantly expand its strategic autonomy without alienating its transatlantic allies. This is especially important in times when proven forms of arms control are dissolving. In his article, Philipp Dienstbier analyses the reasons for the failure of the INF Treaty between Russia and the US. It is to be feared that we are facing a new arms race.

In other regions, rearmament has already had destabilising effects. In their article, Romina Elbracht and Ann-Margret Bolmer outline one example, that of Indian armament policy. For decades, Pakistan has been perceived as one of the central threats to Indian security. China is now becoming an important player and increasing its military involvement in the region. This has massive consequences, not only for Indian trade policy, but also for the regional arms race. The article clearly shows that global conflict lines have long ceased to be drawn along alliances of individual countries with the US and Russia.

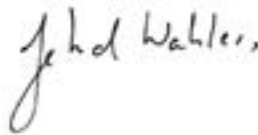
Russia continues to strive to expand global arms partnerships. In sub-Saharan Africa in particular, Putin's Russia is building on former Soviet relations with African states, as Benno Mühler describes in his article. Russia not only has access to African markets in mind, but is also keen on restricting European access to African resources.

Russia is also active in its immediate European neighbourhood. The sale of a Russian air defence system to Turkey is seen as an attempt to prise the country out of existing NATO structures. Michael Doran and Peter Rough argue that Turkey is buying the weapons in order to keep all its cooperation options open, and thereby put pressure on the US. Despite all the difficulties, it is important for the US, but also for Germany, to retain Turkey as an ally, given its importance for the Near and Middle East.

Beyond classical armament issues, it should be remembered that progress in the area of digitalisation and artificial intelligence is playing an increasingly important role in weapons technology as well. This is where technical, ethical and moral, as well as arms control policy questions intertwine. In an interview, Frank Sauer argues that in all discussions about the pros and cons of new technologies, humans must retain moral responsibility for life-and-death decisions.

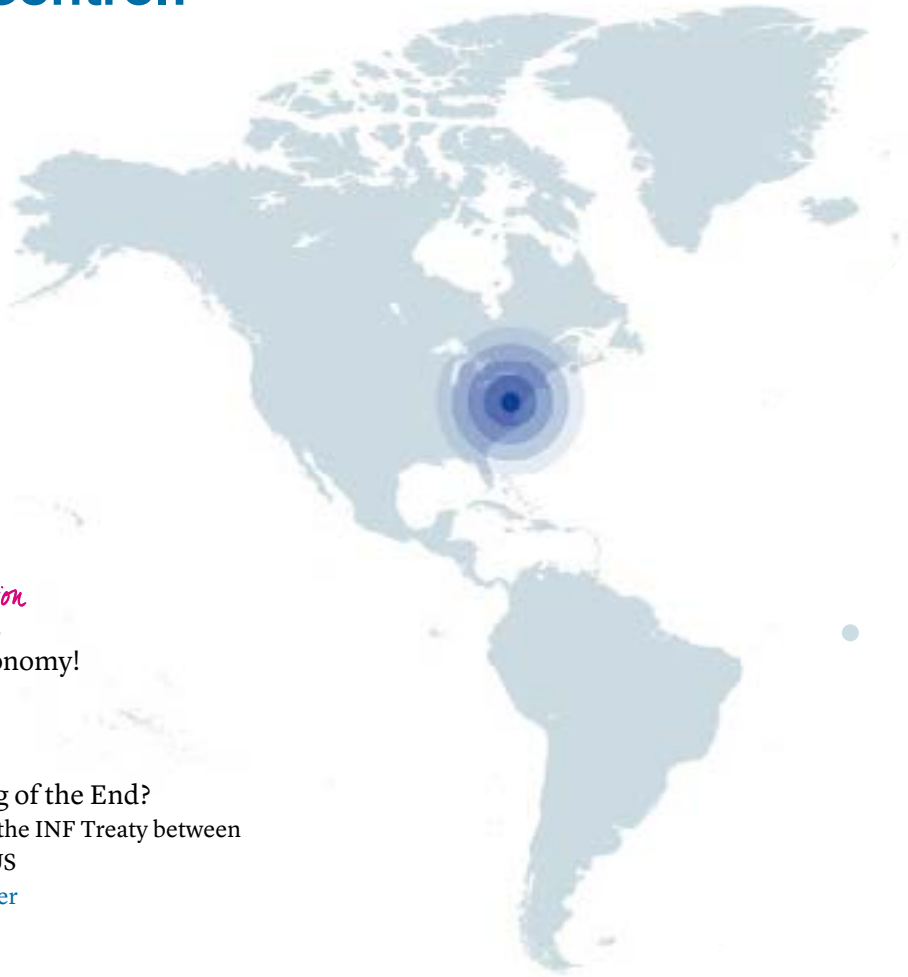
I wish you a stimulating read.

Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gerhard Wahlers". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped initial 'G'.

Dr. Gerhard Wahlers is Editor of International Reports, Deputy Secretary General and Head of the Department European and International Cooperation of the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (gerhard.wahlers@kas.de).

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Interjection

The End of Arms Control?

Europe Needs Strategic Autonomy!

Carlo Masala

If the EU wants to be more than a mere accessory of one of the new superpowers in today's international system, and is not only determined to protect itself from the effects of a new political bipolarity, but also to have and develop its own sphere of influence and action in this new world order, then it needs the capabilities, processes, instruments, and mechanisms to make this happen – it needs strategic autonomy.

For the last six months, a spectre has been haunting Europe: The spectre of strategic autonomy. Just like talk of a “European army”, the term “strategic autonomy” is shrouded in myth and misunderstanding. This is partly the fault of stakeholders involved. When French President Emmanuel Macron defines the term as the necessity and capacity of the European Union to defend itself against Russia and China, but also potentially the US, this suggests that strategic autonomy is about preparing Europe to play a military role in future disputes. However, when we take a closer look at the military realities of the EU member states, it quickly becomes clear that this cannot be the case. If the EU sought to become a military force with the capability to single-handedly repulse a hypothetical attack on an EU member state by six Russian tank divisions, then we would have to admit that strategic autonomy is a very distant objective. In fact, so distant that current EU policymakers would not even experience it during their lifetime. The capability gaps of European states are too wide to be closed in the short or medium term, so if strategic autonomy is understood in the military sense, we should abandon this idea right now. The inevitable disappointments linked to attempts to achieve this would only damage the idea of European defence integration, and European integration as a whole. Strategic autonomy should, therefore, not be viewed in the context of the debate on increasing the EU's defence capabilities.

But if the concept of strategic autonomy should not be understood in the military sense, then how do we interpret it? To find an answer, we

first need to take a closer look at the international context in which the European Union operates, both now and in the future.

For the European Union, the 21st century is marked by three major trends. The first of these is the erosion of the liberal international order. The institutions, norms, principles, and practices that have largely governed international politics since 1945 are increasingly being called into question or even reduced *ad absurdum* by the US, and more particularly by Russia and China. Notwithstanding, the vast majority of EU member states have an interest in ensuring that at least some of these principles, practices, rules, and norms continue to apply, both between themselves and in their relations with the outside world.

Secondly, we find ourselves in a phase where a new bipolarity is emerging. Even today, the structure of the international system is being determined by global competition between China and the US. As far as America is concerned – and there is a consensus between the Republicans and Democrats on this –, China is the country's number one challenge. And from the Chinese perspective, as made clear at the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, the US is China's main problem in its rise to becoming a global power. This new bipolarity will look very different to the old one that existed between the US and USSR. Although military and strategic nuclear capabilities will still play a part, it will be primarily dominated by technological and economic aspects. For the EU, the question is how it should behave within this new polarity as a

community of states, and how it can protect itself from precisely these negative effects.

Thirdly, Europe will only be able to deal with many of the new challenges facing security policy emerging from its southern and eastern neighbours (such as collapsed states, migration, and repercussions of the climate crisis) if it has recourse to its own economic, military and political capabilities. The US will no longer be a reliable partner.

In light of these challenges, it quickly becomes clear that the main political problem for Europe in the 21st century is the risk of being relegated to the sidelines in international affairs due to a lack of political, economic, and military decision-making power, or else having to choose between the two superpowers in the emerging new world order. Neither of these alternatives is in Europe's interest. Therefore, the EU must not, in Kant's words, revert to a "self-imposed immaturity", as was the case at the end of the Second World War.

However, it is only possible to shape international politics if one possesses the instruments of power and political ability to withstand external pressures. They are mutually dependent: The more power one has, the more effectively one can exert influence and resist external constraints. The European Union's ultimate goal should be to maintain its capacity to act and to influence global politics in the 21st century, and to actually enforce it.

This is where strategic autonomy comes to the fore. If the EU wants to be more than a mere accessory of one of the two new superpowers in today's international system, and is not only determined to protect itself from the effects of this new bipolarity, but also to have and develop its own sphere of influence and action in this new world order, then it needs the capabilities, processes, instruments, and mechanisms to make this happen.

Under these future conditions, strategic autonomy would mean that the EU and its member



states must continue to possess and secure the "freedom to develop one's own society" (to quote Richard Löwenthal), enabling them to live and conduct politics in a way that corresponds to the political and social wishes of the nation states. When transposed to the EU, this "freedom to develop one's own society" implies safeguarding the continuation of internal



A peek into the future? A strategically autonomous Europe would be far more capable of reacting to international developments. Source: © Yves Herman, Reuters.

self-determination. In a nutshell, this means that the internal and external aspects, organisation, and future of the European Union are determined first and foremost by its member states, taking their national and European interests into account, and not by external pressures. We could say that the concept of strategic autonomy is all about *European resilience*.

However, this definition does not mean that strategic autonomy results in decoupling from global developments. Indeed, the opposite is the case. A strategically autonomous Europe would be better and more consciously positioned to tackle international developments and external challenges and constraints. This is because its responses would be based on the confidence

that they are European responses to these challenges, rather than adaptations to the policies of potential protecting powers or strategic contenders, which are born out of weakness. Consequently, a politically understood concept of strategic autonomy is characterised by a “defensive ambition” (Raymond Aron) to take part in shaping international politics in the 21st century.

Europe should not take strategic autonomy to mean autarchy, as it could isolate the community of states.

To sum up, strategic autonomy is not tantamount to autarchy or decoupling, but rather to creating the ability to better absorb the potential “negative effects” of existing (economic, political, and military) interdependencies with the US and other major powers, while also being in a position to maintain one’s own autonomy of action, even under difficult conditions. With regard to the US, which – even in the 21st century – has been such an important protecting power for Europe, establishing strategic autonomy is a prerequisite for a “balanced partnership” (Werner Link).

Strategic autonomy should, therefore, be primarily understood as a political concept that has to be underpinned by military and economic means. Yet, it also involves the political will for the EU to continue to play or share a leading role in shaping certain areas of international politics (such as world trade and international standards).

Without such strategic autonomy, the EU will, sooner or later, become merely a pawn in the hands of the US and China, and in the long run, it will be marginalised by these two adversaries in the international system. If, however, Europe wants to redeem its own claim to co-determination in the currency of *realpolitik* over the coming years, it will have no choice but to establish a certain degree of strategic autonomy. Strategic

autonomy and the resulting political independence of the EU is also the only way of preserving the remnants of the liberal international order with its values, norms, and rules for how EU member states deal with each other and particularly for how the EU deals with its external, democratic partners (such as Japan, Australia, New Zealand, and South Korea, to name but a few). The alternative would be for the EU to participate in the nascent world of zero-sum games, where the “rules of the jungle” (Robert Kagan) apply. As a multinational union of European states, its internal rules would not allow it to survive in such a world.

In this respect, strategic autonomy is the right model for ensuring the EU remains a powerful and effective player on the global political stage in the 21st century. But we need to make sure that the meaning of the term “strategic autonomy” is communicated more clearly. Its aim should not be a decoupling of transatlantic security, nor excessive armament for defence purposes. Quite simply, it refers to Europe’s political survival and influence going forward. But this requires political will, economic and military capabilities, and appropriate institutional structures.

–translated from German–

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[The End of Arms Control?](#)

The Beginning of the End?

The Collapse of the INF Treaty between Russia and the US

Philipp Dienstbier

It sounds like the 1980s all over again: Russia has in all likelihood breached its treaty obligations by deploying intermediate-range missiles, and now Europe is talking about an increased security threat. The US also seems to have lost interest in nuclear arms control. This means it is probably unrealistic to expect a successor to the INF Treaty, but there are some pragmatic solutions that could prevent a resumption of the arms race.

The termination of the INF Treaty has torn down one of the last pillars of nuclear arms control.¹ In February 2019, the US announced it was suspending the 1987 treaty, an announcement that was echoed by the Russian Federation the following month. By August, after a six-month notice period, the treaty was no longer legally binding. Germany has also been caught off guard by the almost casual termination of this treaty. Although NATO stated its commitment to preserving the INF Treaty in July 2018, President Donald Trump surprised his allies in October with the announcement of a planned withdrawal. While the chimera of a “return of nuclear missiles to Europe”² went around, Germany’s Chancellor Angela Merkel and Foreign Minister Heiko Maas hastily joined forces with their French counterparts to try to save the treaty through mediation – but without success.³ So why has a key element of Europe’s security architecture fallen apart so easily?

There is no conclusive evidence, but it seems highly likely that Russia has developed a weapons system that violates the INF Treaty. However, this is only the trigger for the collapse of the treaty, and it should be noted that the US made no serious efforts to salvage it. Both sides decided to terminate the INF Treaty without exhausting the entire potential for verification and arbitration. This is indicative of the disdain for nuclear arms control and highlights the power politics mindset that now seems to dominate strategic decisions in both Moscow and Washington. It is likely that these are the real reasons for the demise of the INF Treaty.

The withdrawal from the treaty has been accompanied by a political debate on the consequences for Europe’s security and future arms control scenarios. On the one hand, fears have been expressed that it significantly increases the threat to Europe, and that it could lead to a new arms race similar to that experienced during the last critical phase of the Cold War. On the other, there is the desire to negotiate a follow-up treaty, more specifically a multilateral agreement that also includes China. However, as things stand, both of these scenarios seem unlikely.

A new arms race is unlikely to occur because the state of nuclear deterrence is now much more complex than it was when the INF Treaty was negotiated, mainly due to the evolution of different types of air- and sea-launched missiles. This means the termination of the INF Treaty will not inevitably result in a radical deterioration in the security situation. There are also technical and political hurdles to an accelerated arms race. However, a limited rearmament in the medium term does appear to be a plausible scenario. The negotiation of a new treaty is also improbable due to the lack of trust between Russia and the US – which, indeed, is also the case with regard to China. Actors on both sides, however, advocate for an informal agreement on self-restraint, at least between NATO and Russia. Nevertheless, this will only succeed if verification mechanisms are put in place and steps are taken to build confidence.

Was the INF Treaty Breached?

The INF Treaty banned a destabilising class of weapons from Europe and other regions. The

treaty prohibited Russia, eleven other former Soviet republics, and the US from owning, producing, and testing ground-launched ballistic missiles and cruise missiles with ranges of 500 to 5,500 kilometers, along with their launchers. The treaty did not apply to air- or sea-launched missiles.⁴ When deployed in Europe, these systems could reach their target in just a few minutes. Experts believed that the short reaction time available for taking military and political decisions to respond effectively to an attack increased the risk of misunderstandings, miscalculations and the incentive for preventive strikes. The Soviet Union's former president, Mikhail Gorbachev, described the US intermediate-range missiles as "like [someone] holding a gun to our head". The short warning time "increased the risk of nuclear war, even one that was the result of an accident or technical glitch."⁵ Banning this type of weapon thus removed a destabilising factor from the deterrent balance between the Soviet Union – later Russia – and the US.

Russia's possession of SSC-8 missiles probably breaches the INF Treaty. However, no conclusive evidence of this has been made public.

Since 2014, and with increasing vehemence, the US has accused Russia of once again developing, testing, and installing this kind of missile.⁶ Russia has always denied this allegation, but for the Western public the situation remains unclear. This is primarily because the US has released very little information about the system concerned and Russia's treaty violation. After many years, the Trump administration finally named the missile in question: the land-based Novator 9M729 cruise missile (NATO designation SSC-8 Screwdriver).⁷ In November 2018, US Director of National Intelligence, Daniel Coats, provided the first details and announced that Russia had already equipped several battalions with the

missile, which had been tested at ranges of "well over 500 kilometers".⁸ There is, however, little official evidence to substantiate these allegations. Russia only admits to owning the SSC-8 but claims that its range is a mere 480 kilometers.⁹

However, the lack of available information does not exclude the possibility of a treaty violation. The vehemence of the US's accusations, not only in public but also at NATO summits and in meetings of the Special Verification Commission (SVC), an organ of the INF Treaty, suggests that it has clear intelligence that cannot be made public. Other NATO members share the US's belief that Russia is violating the INF Treaty. In November 2018, Chancellor Merkel remarked: "We know that Russia has been failing to comply with requirements for a long time."¹⁰ It seems unlikely that America's allies would stand by the allegation unless they had been presented with conclusive evidence.

For its part, Russia has countered the US's accusations with allegations of its own, of which at least one seems reasonably plausible.¹¹ Since August 2014, Russia has been claiming that the US is in violation of the INF Treaty with parts of its European Phased Adaptive Approach (EPAA). The EPAA is based on Aegis Ashore, a missile defence site commissioned in Romania in 2016 and a second site that is planned for Poland, which will both house MK-41 VLS land-based vertical launching systems.¹² The Aegis system, which is also used on US naval vessels, is capable of firing Tomahawk cruise missiles with a range of 2,500 kilometers, but this sea-launched variant is exempt from the INF Treaty. Russia argues that although the sites in Poland and Romania are not equipped with cruise missiles but with SM-3 anti-ballistic missiles, the ground-launched MK-41, like its seaborne counterpart, is capable of firing Tomahawks and is therefore a launching system for intermediate-range missiles, which is prohibited by the INF Treaty.¹³ The US argues that the land-based MK-41 launching system differs from the sea-based system because it lacks the software, fire control hardware, and other infrastructure needed to launch cruise missiles, and

is therefore compliant.¹⁴ No official, independent evidence has been made available to support Russia's argument, either.

Although this account does not rule out the possibility of a violation by the US, the allegation of Russian non-compliance is more credible. The allegation against the US remains somewhat vague and is based on arguments about hypothetical capabilities due to potential similarities with other systems. Meanwhile, the accusation against Russia is more specific and substantive, particularly if the missile has actually been

tested at ranges prohibited by the treaty. The fact that the intelligence that backs this up cannot be made available to the public is not unusual, and is indeed often the case in areas that are vital for national security.

Arms Control Casually Discarded

In view of the above, Russia has to shoulder more responsibility for the failure of the INF Treaty, but it would be too simplistic to attribute all the blame to the country. Neither of the contracting parties, be it Russia or the US, have



Tensions rising? Neither the USA nor Russia had any interest in the continuation of the INF Treaty.
Source: © Maxim Shemetov, Reuters.

exhausted all possible avenues for dealing with the mutual accusations in a cooperative way. To some extent, this is also one of the weaknesses of the INF Treaty, as it allows for discussion of treaty violations in the SVC but fails to provide a procedure for proving or refuting allegations, such as inspections. Its verification regime, which monitored the dismantling of the formerly stationed intermediate-range missiles, ended in 2001.

No party to the INF Treaty has exhausted all options for verification.

Nevertheless, with sufficient political will, it should be possible to find ways and means of designing new reciprocal steps as part of a verification strategy. For example, the operational range of missiles could be checked by examining telemetric data, and it should be possible to inspect the systems and observe missile tests. However, Russia refused to allow the US to inspect the SSC-8 in 2018. By the time Moscow finally agreed to an inspection in January 2019, Washington declared that this was insufficient to verify the missile's range and instead called for the missile system to be destroyed.¹⁵

The US could also have offered to allow Russia to inspect its Aegis missile defence systems in Poland and Romania in order to demonstrate that the MK-41 VLS vertical launch systems installed there are not suitable for launching cruise missiles and that these sites do not house these types of missiles. However, this option was also ignored.¹⁶

Strategic Considerations and Political Motives

It should be noted that neither party has displayed any interest in preserving the INF Treaty. The reasons for this lie in the alarmingly similar strategic mindsets that exist in Washington and Moscow. Both sides believe international arms

treaties have no benefit – and could even be a disadvantage – for their national security.

The current US administration initially indicated it wanted to encourage Russia to comply with the INF treaty, suggesting that Washington believed the treaty was in the US's security interests. However, in October 2018, President Trump abruptly changed course and announced that the US would withdraw from the INF Treaty, citing not only Russia's non-compliance but also China's arsenal of intermediate-range missiles: "If Russia's doing it and if China's doing it and we're adhering to the agreement, that's unacceptable."¹⁷

President Trump's withdrawal is, thus, not only based on Russian violations, but also the fact that China, as a strategic competitor, has a weapons system that the US is deprived of – regardless of the fact that China was never party to the treaty.

Statements made by senior US military officials suggest that ground-launched intermediate-range missiles do not necessarily provide a military advantage. The US has a large number of air- and sea-based intermediate-range systems, all of which are compliant with the INF Treaty. With these missiles, the US is already creating an adequate balance in East Asia to the Chinese arsenal of fourteen types of missiles (twelve of which are land-based).¹⁸ In Europe, four US Navy vessels equipped with Aegis combat systems are permanently stationed at the Naval Station Rota in Spain and can reach Russia with their cruise missiles from European waters. In addition, submarines of the United States Sixth Fleet regularly patrol along European sea routes.¹⁹ So it is not surprising that the Vice-Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Paul Selva, told the US Congress in 2017: "There are no military requirements we cannot currently satisfy due to our compliance with the INF Treaty."²⁰

Rather, President Trump's decision once again highlights his belief that the US is disadvantaged by international treaties, or at least his

scepticism with regard to their added value. This mindset was also reflected in his approach to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) with Iran. However, it should be kept separate from a sober examination of military requirements, because pulling out from the treaty does not necessarily provide a military benefit.²¹

Trump's decision to withdraw from the INF Treaty is based on his general scepticism of international treaties.

The president's change of course also coincided with the ascent of former National Security Advisor John Bolton, who was in office from April 2018 until September 2019. In August 2018, Bolton appointed Tim Morrison as Director for Weapons of Mass Destruction and Bio-defence on the National Security Council, and he has subsequently taken over as the NSC's new director for Europe and Russia.²² Both men are regarded as outright sceptics of international treaties, particularly those relating to arms control. In a 2014 opinion piece, Bolton wrote: "Moscow's arms-control treaty violations give America the opportunity to discard obsolete, Cold War-era limits on its own arsenal, and upgrade its military capabilities."²³ Morrison is also considered to be an out-and-out hardliner when it comes to Russia.²⁴ Even though President Trump often takes uncoordinated and impulsive actions, the influence of Bolton and Morrison may have been an explanation for the US's decision to withdraw from the treaty.

On the Russian side, the reasons for abandoning the INF Treaty must be sought earlier. It seems likely that Russia began deliberately subverting the treaty when it developed the SSC-8 in the late 2000s. It is, therefore, necessary to examine the political discourse in Moscow at that time.

One of Russia's key concerns since the mid-2000s has been the proliferation of cruise missiles and intermediate-range ballistic missiles

in its immediate neighbourhood. In 2007, Russia's former Defence Minister Sergei Ivanov is said to have told his American counterpart that Russia intended to withdraw from the INF treaty so that it could counter the mid-range missiles being developed in China, Iran, and Pakistan.²⁵ In the same year, Russia launched an initiative at the UN aimed at making the INF treaty multi-lateral, but the proposal came to nothing.²⁶ In 2007, President Vladimir Putin declared: "It will be difficult for us to keep within the framework of the treaty [meaning the INF Treaty] in a situation where other countries do develop such weapons systems, and among those are countries in our near vicinity."²⁷ These statements reveal that the Russian leadership viewed the INF Treaty as an obstacle to the country's security – the proliferation of weapons systems that Russia was itself not allowed to deploy was clearly viewed as a problem.

As with the US, this view does not necessarily result from compelling military requirements. Russia also has at least nine air- and sea-based missile systems that comply with the INF Treaty. In the course of its intervention in Syria, Russia has actually massively increased its capabilities for the deployment of seaborne cruise missiles, such as the *Kalibr* (NATO designation SS-N-30), which is launched from ships in the Caspian Sea and the Mediterranean. That is why the need for additional ground-based intermediate-range missiles as deterrents is also disputed in Russian military circles.²⁸ But the view being driven forward by the country's president and defence minister is more rooted in power politics. President Putin's thinking is not dissimilar to that of the White House in this respect. He sees his country as a global power that should not be restricted by international treaties to which other countries are not a party.

Another dominant view in Moscow in the 2000s, which could have been one of the main reasons why Russia subverted the treaty, was scepticism about US anti-ballistic missiles – not initially in the sense of its later accusation that the launch pads violated the INF Treaty, but based on Moscow's belief that the defensive shield

was directed against Russia.²⁹ In 2007, once it became known that the US was planning to deploy missiles in Europe, and Russia's idea of a joint defence system with NATO came to nothing, Moscow feared that the defence shield could curtail Russia's strategic nuclear capability.

This consideration may also have been the motivation for developing a cruise missile such as the SSC-8. For defence systems, it is difficult or impossible to counter this type of missile, so Moscow could view it as a suitable weapon in the face of US territorial missile defence systems. However, this strategic advantage is already provided by Russia's current stock of sea- and air-launched cruise missiles, so there is no need to develop a ground-launched missile. Nevertheless, it seems unlikely that President Putin will make such a compromise when maintaining a symbol of Russian power – its nuclear capability. It is more likely that he wants to send a signal that Russia is on a par with the US and has accepted that breaching the INF Treaty is part-and-parcel of this.³⁰ Indeed, President Putin is said to have threatened to withdraw from the INF Treaty as early as 2007 in light of US plans to deploy a missile defence system in Europe, so that Russia would be in a position to attack the US systems with mid-range weapons if necessary.³¹

Impact on the Security Situation

When, in early 2019, it became increasingly clear that the INF Treaty was set to collapse, talk immediately turned to a new arms race and a massive increase in the security threat. Yet, it is unlikely that the security situation will rapidly deteriorate, at least in the near future, because the military situation of today differs vastly from that of the 1980s. It is, however, conceivable that the US and Russia will gradually build up their intermediate-range weapons, including limited deployment in Europe.

From the West's perspective, the arms build-up during the last critical phase of the Cold War fulfilled the essential purpose of preventing the decoupling of European allies from the US by Russian intermediate-range missiles. At the

end of the 1970s, the Soviet Union deployed the RSD-10 Pioner intermediate-range ballistic missile (NATO designation SS-20 Saber). With a range of 5,000 kilometers, it was capable of reaching Europe and East Asia, but not North America. As far as Germany's Chancellor Helmut Schmidt and Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher were concerned, the lack of a comparable intermediate-range missile in the West led to a gap in the spectrum of NATO's available nuclear response to aggression.³² NATO was thus worried that it would "cast doubt on the credibility of the Alliance's deterrent strategy" – and promptly upgraded its own systems.³³

At first glance, history appears to be repeating itself. In August 2019, the US tested a ground-launched cruise missile based on the Tomahawk, which should be ready for deployment by early 2021. Until the end of the year, a ballistic missile with ranges of 3,000 to 4,000 kilometers should be tested. Additionally, the Pentagon has earmarked a 100 million US dollars budget for 2020 for the development of three conventional intermediate-range missiles, and expenditure is set to increase significantly in subsequent years.³⁴ Russia, for its part, has announced that it is developing a launcher for a ground-based cruise missile based on the SS-N-30 by 2020, and that further missile projects are set to follow.³⁵

Despite rearmament on the part of Russia and the US, a comparison with the arms race of the 1980s is too simplistic.

However, these recent developments cannot really be compared with the Cold War arms race. They no longer involve the introduction of a completely new type of weapon that, depending on one's perspective, either opens or closes a gap in the nuclear capability spectrum. Unlike the situation in the late 1970s, both sides now have many different types of nuclear

and conventional intermediate-range missile types. Numerous sea-launched mid-range systems exist, such as the Russian SS-N-30 and the American Tomahawk. According to experts, these conventional guided missiles can be equipped with nuclear warheads, are extremely accurate, and have a long range. On top of this, air-launched nuclear cruise missiles such as the Russian Kh-102 Kodiak (NATO designation AS-23B) and the American AGM-86 can be deployed rapidly from bombers like the Russian Tu-95 Bear and the US B-52 Stratofortress in each country's own airspace.³⁶

This broad spectrum of military capabilities means there is already a multi-layered deterrent potential in place. This will become more complex with the introduction of the Russian SSC-8 and other US and Russian systems, but will not change fundamentally as long as there is no mass deployment of new missiles. So the nuclear balance will not be shaken to the same extent as it was in the late 1970s, nor will a qualitatively different threat be created that was not already in existence.³⁷ In addition, many of the arms projects that have been announced will require years of development and testing before they are ready to be deployed and can actually have an impact on the security situation.

However, this does not mean that the termination of the INF Treaty is without consequences. Experts believe that the US Department of Defence is keen to station new American intermediate-range missiles in Europe, which remains a realistic option. At present, these would only be equipped with conventional warheads, but since nuclear rearmament is technically possible, the willingness of many European NATO allies to allow these systems on their territory is likely to be low. However, Eastern European allies, especially Poland, have a more acute perception of the threat posed by Russia and as a result are more open to stationing. The US Congress is also exerting pressure on the administration to first identify allies who would be willing to accept these missiles before approving funding for developing new missile systems. If Washington and certain receptive Eastern



European partners were to seek bilateral, stop-gap solutions in this situation, this could lead to clashes within NATO that would paralyse the Alliance. This is a political risk that should be taken seriously.³⁸

Potential for Future Arms Control

In parallel with these considerations, all parties say a new nuclear arms control treaty for intermediate-range missiles would be a desirable



Bone of contention: Russia has most likely laid the basis for the end of the INF Treaty by developing its banned medium-range cruise missile. [Source: © Mikhail Voskresensky, Reuters.](#)

target scenario. As mentioned earlier, Russia and the US are both insisting that China and possibly other states should be parties to a new treaty. However, as things stand, such an outcome seems unlikely. As discussed earlier, it is made more difficult by the unwillingness of Russia and the US to work together to find solutions within the framework of the INF Treaty, which indicates a lack of trust and represents a burden on future negotiations. It is also unlikely because China will not allow itself to be bulldozed into signing

a successor agreement to the INF Treaty.³⁹ For many years, Beijing has maintained its position that it will not consider participating in talks on arms control until Russia and the US have disarmed to the same level as the other nuclear states. However, Russia currently has more than 6,850 nuclear warheads and the US over 6,450, while China's arsenal consists of 280 nuclear warheads.⁴⁰ There is no sign that Moscow or Washington have the political will to make drastic cuts to their arsenals. China also insists on

the inclusion of other types of weapons, such as heavy bombers and sub-strategic weapons, in any treaty.⁴¹ Under these conditions, a comprehensive arms control treaty appears utopian for the foreseeable future and would not be feasible without a fundamental rethink or a change in the current political leadership.

China would only agree to sign a successor to the INF Treaty if Russia and the US drastically reduced their arsenals before. This is currently unrealistic.

It would be more realistic – and politically desirable from a German point of view – to establish an informal, flexible control mechanism, now that treaty-based controls on intermediate-range missiles have ended. It should be noted that neither side initially declared the deployment of mid-range missiles as one of their political objectives. In February 2019, President Putin stated that Russia would not deploy intermediate-range missiles in Europe or other parts of the world as long as the US did not. NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg also gave an assurance after the end of the INF Treaty in August 2019: “We will not mirror what Russia is doing [...] we have no intention of deploying ground-launched nuclear missiles in Europe.”⁴² But Russia’s assertion is devalued by the fact that, according to all indications, it has already deployed SSC-8 cruise missiles on the Caspian Sea, ergo in Europe. On the other hand, the current discussions in Washington on upgrading weapons systems demonstrates that there, too, people are not willing to allow Russian deployment to go completely unanswered.⁴³

In order to make the goal of an informal agreement on the non-deployment of ground-launched intermediate-range missiles in Europe feasible, Roderich Kiesewetter (CDU) and Rolf Mützenich (SPD), both members of the

Bundestag, have tabled a proposal to relocate the Russian SSC-8 missiles east of the Urals. Compliance with this relocation could be verified by using technical means and intelligence.⁴⁴ However, whether this would create the conditions that would make it unnecessary for NATO to upgrade its intermediate-range weapons in Europe depends crucially on whether Moscow declares itself willing to do this without being forced into it by Western missile deployments, as was the case with the Soviet Union in the wake of NATO’s double-track decision.

At the moment, it is hard to imagine that Moscow would accede to this proposal of its own volition, and Germany only has limited diplomatic means to persuade Russia to accept such a proposal. Nevertheless, the German government should insist that the two parties stand by their declarations that they will not deploy intermediate-range missiles in Europe and work towards the implementation of the concrete proposal that exists on this issue. Even in Washington, some in Congress are sceptical about new missile deployments, and Russian foreign ministry officials have expressed an interest in self-restraint with regard to deployment.⁴⁵ Germany should support this and promote its own position.

And finally, it is important not to neglect confidence-building measures, which would be a basic prerequisite for an informal agreement. The erosion of trust between both sides is ultimately the root cause of the problem and this can only be rebuilt through dialogue and cooperation at all levels. This includes intensive political dialogue among the five permanent members of the UN Security Council and the NATO-Russia Council. But even more important than political dialogue – which is deadlocked in some of these organisations – is contact and cooperation at the military level. Military personnel stress the importance of this direct contact for improving transparency and reducing misunderstandings, which in turn builds confidence.⁴⁶ Within the framework of the Vienna Document of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE),

this instrument should be used more.⁴⁷ The military-level exchange under the framework of the NATO-Russia Council, which is currently shelved, would also have to be taken up again to regain trust.

Even if it can only have an effect in the medium term, such confidence-building would provide a foundation for implementing the aforementioned self-restraint in the deployment of ground-based intermediate-range missiles in Europe. The Presidential Nuclear Initiatives (PNIs) of 1991, under which President George H. W. Bush voluntarily reduced tactical nuclear weapons and President Gorbachev followed suit, show that informal, reciprocal approaches to arms control can work. But this requires the right basis of trust.

Conclusion

Russia probably laid the foundations for ending the INF Treaty when it developed its banned intermediate-range missile. Although Russia has to shoulder a greater share of the blame, the US has also failed to make any serious efforts to preserve the treaty. Washington and Moscow both believe the INF Treaty is no longer up to date. Their reference to the widespread possession of intermediate-range missiles, particularly by China and some of Russia's other neighbours, and their conclusion that the INF Treaty is no longer in the security interests of either country, allow us insights about the mindset of the two presidents and of their advisors, which is focussed on power politics, rather than the withdrawal from the treaty being justified on strategic military grounds. The fact is, any additional development of ground-launched intermediate-range weapons systems will provide little military advantage for either Russia or the US in light of the air- and sea-launched systems that they already have in their arsenals.

The distribution of intermediate-range weapons is now so widespread and the deterrent balance so multi-layered and complex, that the introduction of the Russian missile and its possible US counterparts does not necessarily exacerbate

the security threat. Nevertheless, the question of limited missile development and deployment could split NATO. In parallel, it is currently not possible to foresee how the desire to negotiate a follow-up treaty could realistically come to fruition, particularly if China is to be part of the equation.

Politicians should, therefore, focus on coming to an informal agreement on self-restraint in the deployment of intermediate-range systems, at least in Europe. Germany has already submitted initial proposals, and it should continue to work on these through diplomatic channels. In light of this, it is especially important to support the US House of Representatives, which has recently blocked funding for the development of land-based intermediate-range missiles.⁴⁸ However, implementation also requires an increase in confidence-building measures, above all through military contacts and cooperation. However, the impact of this should not be overstated, as this kind of confidence-building can only happen gradually and in the medium term.

A functioning relationship based on trust is also vital, because the collapse of the next and most recent nuclear arms control treaty is already looming: the New START Treaty on the Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Nuclear Weapons expires in February 2021. Without the political will to renew this treaty, we could see a repeat of the collapse of the INF Treaty. If this happens, nuclear arms control will finally be consigned to history.

—translated from German—

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- 1 INF stands for Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces.
- 2 Cf. Graw, Ansgar / Jungholt, Thorsten 2019: Die Rückkehr der Atomraketen nach Europa, *Welt am Sonntag*, 10 Jan 2019, in: <https://bit.ly/2YQatWO> [12 Aug 2019].
- 3 Cf. Kubiak, Katarzyna 2019: Schauplatz statt Akteur: Europa zwischen zwei Nuklearmächten, in: *Osteuropa* 69: 1–2, pp. 113–118.
- 4 For the text of the treaty see: Treaty Between The United States Of America And The Union Of Soviet Socialist Republics On The Elimination Of Their Intermediate-Range And Shorter-Range Missiles (INF Treaty), 1987, in: <https://bit.ly/2Kv4woI> [12 Aug 2019].
- 5 Lifflander, Justin 2012: 25 Years On, Gorbachev Recalls Nuclear Milestone, *The Moscow Times*, 6 Dec 2012, in: <https://bit.ly/2KJDgnH> [28 Jun 2019].
- 6 Cf. U.S. Department of State 2014: Adherence to and Compliance with Arms Control, Nonproliferation, and Disarmament Agreements and Commitments, Jul 2014, in: <https://bit.ly/2KJFDHa> [12 Aug 2019].
- 7 Cf. Kühn, Ulrich 2019: Das Ende des INF-Vertrags: Folgen für die nukleare Rüstungskontrolle in Europa, in: *Osteuropa* 69: 1–2, pp. 89–101.
- 8 Cf. Coats, Daniel 2018: Director of National Intelligence Daniel Coats on Russia's Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty Violation, Office of the Director of National Intelligence, 30 Sep 2018, in: <https://bit.ly/2Q7MDRo> [23 Jul 2019].
- 9 Cf. Hegmann, Gerhard 2019: Die Waffe, die das atomare Gleichgewicht erschüttert, *Die Welt*, 10 Jan 2019, in: <https://welt.de/186641682> [23 Jul 2019].
- 10 Cf. Merkel, Angela 2018: Press statements of Chancellor Merkel and Danish Prime Minister Rasmussen, 20 Sep 2018, in: <https://bit.ly/2DSHDt6> [23 Jul 2019].
- 11 Russia also accuses the US of (1) using missiles with prohibited ranges for testing missile defence systems and (2) possessing unmanned drones. However, it is debatable whether the definition of prohibited weapons systems, as referred to in the text of the treaty, actually applies to these two cases, so they will not be discussed further at this point.
- 12 Cf. Kubiak, Katarzyna 2017: Rakettenabwehr: Potentiale einer Kooperation mit Russland, *Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, SWP-Studie 2017/S 13*, Jul 2017, in: <https://bit.ly/2H6LS4e> [23 Jul 2019].
- 13 In future, the Aegis Ashore sites in Poland and Romania will also be equipped with the SM-6 hybrid missile, which can be used both defensively and offensively. This would raise even more questions about whether the system is for purely defensive purposes.
- 14 Cf. Woolf, Amy 2019: Russian Compliance with the Intermediate Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty: Background and Issues for Congress, *Congressional Research Service*, 2 Aug 2019, in: <https://bit.ly/2kwmXwW> [23 Jul 2019].
- 15 Cf. Zagorskij, Andrej 2019: Le roi est mort, vive le roi? Die Zukunft der Rüstungskontrolle nach dem INF-Aus, in: *Osteuropa* 69: 1–2, pp. 79–87.
- 16 Cf. Richter, Wolfgang 2019: Europa und der INF-Vertrag: Verdammte Zuschauerrolle?, *Federal Agency for Civic Education (bpb)*, 26 Apr 2019, in: <http://bpb.de/apuz/289943> [12 Aug 2019].
- 17 Quoted in Borger, Julian / Pengelly, Martin 2018: Trump says US will withdraw from nuclear arms treaty with Russia, *The Guardian*, 21 Oct 2018, in: <https://bit.ly/2IXzLS7> [23 Jul 2019].
- 18 Cf. Kristensen, Hans 2018: INF Weapons: Status, Modernisations, and Arms Control Prospects, *Toda Peace Institute, Policy Brief No. 25*, Nov 2018, in: <https://bit.ly/2LsoJfU> [23 Jul 2019].
- 19 Cf. Richter 2019, n. 16; cf. LeGrone, Owen 2019: New U.S. Intermediate-Range Missiles Aren't Needed for Precision Strike in Europe, *Arms Control Association*, 27 Aug 2019, in: <https://bit.ly/2ky6I4v> [6 Sep 2019].
- 20 However, some experts believe that ground-launched intermediate-range missiles offer a military advantage because they are slightly more precise than air- and sea-launched variants and have better survivability because they are more difficult to detect. General Selva has also stated that one of the strategic advantages of ground-based systems for the US armed forces is greater operational flexibility. Cf. US Government Publishing Office 2017: *Military Assessment of Nuclear Deterrence Requirements*, 8 Mar 2017, in: <https://bit.ly/2IX4Imo> [23 Jul 2019]; cf. Kühn, Ulrich 2018: *Geht es eigentlich um China?*, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 26 Oct 2018, in: <https://faz.net/-gg5-9fw0o> [23 Jul 2019].
- 21 Cf. Alcaro, Riccardo 2019: Ideology, Not Russia or China, Explains US Pullout from the INF, *Istituto Affari Internazionale*, 5 Feb 2019, in: <https://bit.ly/2Ls5ZNo> [23 Jul 2019].
- 22 Cf. Ackerman, Spencer 2018: John Bolton Brings a Nuclear Superhawk Into the White House, *The Daily Beast*, 8 Feb 2018, in: <https://bit.ly/2XciqiL> [23 Jul 2019].
- 23 Cf. Bolton, John / Yoo, John 2014: An Obsolete Nuclear Treaty Even Before Russia Cheated, *The Wall Street Journal*, 9 Sep 2014, in: <https://on.wsj.com/2XiZX99> [23 Jul 2019].
- 24 Cf. Gramer, Robbie / Mackinnon, Amy 2019: Trump's Top Russia Aide to Depart, *Foreign Policy*, 18 Jun 2019, in: <https://bit.ly/2lPOYLY> [23 Jul 2019].
- 25 Cf. Gates, Robert 2014: *Duty: Memoirs of A Secretary at War*, New York.
- 26 However, the initiative was not approved by the UN General Assembly, despite being backed by the US. Cf. US Department of State 2007: *Joint U.S.-Russian Statement on the Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles at the 62nd Session of the UN General Assembly*, 25 Oct 2007, in: <https://bit.ly/2xjxWib> [23 Jul 2019].

- 27 Cf. Harding, Luke 2007: Putin Threatens Withdrawal from Cold War Nuclear Treaty, *The Guardian*, 12 Oct 2007, in: <https://bit.ly/2xknruZ> [23 Jul 2019].
- 28 However, it is likely that Russia is also concerned about the fact that sea- and land-based missiles and the platforms that carry them are more expensive to produce and maintain than ground-based missiles. In absolute terms, Russia's defence budget is only one-tenth of the US budget, yet it accounts for 3.9 per cent of GDP, compared to 3.2 per cent. So in terms of its industrial policy, ground-based systems have cost benefits for Russia. Cf. Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) 2018: SIPRI Military Expenditure Database, in: <https://sipri.org/databases/milex> [23 Jul 2019]. The assessment was carried out by participants at a workshop on "Security Disorder: Conflict Lines and Scopes of Action" organised under Chatham House Rules by the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung from 25 to 28 Mar 2019 in Cadenabbia, Italy.
- 29 The US insisted that the missile defence systems were not directed at Russia. Although the original declarations made no reference to specific nations, as far as NATO was concerned the missile system was intended to defend against the threat of ballistic missiles from the Middle East – so mainly Iran. Cf. Kubiak 2017, n.12.
- 30 Ibid.
- 31 Cf. Woolf 2019, n.14.
- 32 However, the theory of a European decoupling did not go uncontested at the time – for example, it ignored the role of British and French nuclear weapons in the European nuclear deterrent. Cf. Gassert, Philipp 2019: *Rüstung, Bündnissolidarität und Kampf um Frieden: Lernen aus dem Nato-Doppelbeschluss von 1979?*, bpb, 26 Apr 2019, in: <http://bpb.de/apuz/289939> [12 Aug 2019].
- 33 Cf. NATO 1979: Communiqué of a Special Meeting of Foreign and Defence Ministers Brussels ["NATO Double-Track Decision"], 12 Dec 1979.
- 34 Cf. Reif, Kingston 2019: Trump Increases Budget for Banned Missiles, Arms Control Association, May 2019, in: <https://bit.ly/2W8K1Bu> [23 Jul 2019]; cf. idem 2019: Treaty Withdrawal Accelerates Missile Debate, Arms Control Association, Sep 2019, in: <https://bit.ly/2LHDwbt> [6 Sep 2019].
- 35 Cf. Zagorskij 2019, n. 15.
- 36 Cf. Podvig, Pavel 2018: Who lost the INF Treaty?, *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, 26 Aug 2018, in: <https://bit.ly/2Njp72I> [23 Jul 2019].
- 37 Cf. Podvig, Pavel 2019. *Fahrlässig verspielt: Das Ende des INF-Vertrags*, in: *Osteuropa* 69, 1–2, pp.103–107; cf. Richter 2019, n.16.
- 38 Statement by Dr. Ulrich Kühn on the public hearing entitled "Regional stability? Conventional and nuclear arms and deterrence in Central and Eastern Europe today: Possibilities for Arms Control and Disarmament" at the 10th session of the Subcommittee on Disarmament, Arms Control and Non-Proliferation of the German Bundestag (18th legislative period), 15 May 2019.
- 39 Cf. Spiegel Online 2018: U.S. Withdrawal from Nuke Treaty Worries Europeans, 30 Oct 2018, in: <https://spon.de/aflF8> [23 Jul 2019].
- 40 Cf. SIPRI 2018: SIPRI Yearbook 2018, Oxford.
- 41 Cf. Zagorskij 2019, n. 15.
- 42 Cf. NATO 2019: Secretary General: NATO response to INF Treaty demise will be measured and responsible, 2 Aug 2019, in: <https://bit.ly/2lB7E8w> [6 Sep 2019].
- 43 Cf. Zagorskij 2019, n. 15.
- 44 Kiesewetter, Roderich 2019: Kiesewetter zu Chancen, den INF-Vertrag zu retten, 28 Feb 2019, in: <https://bit.ly/2lZ2rRf> [23 Jul 2019].
- 45 Cf. Kühn 2019, n.38.
- 46 This assessment was carried out by participants at a workshop on "Security Disorder: Conflict Lines and Scopes of Action", n.28.
- 47 For the content of the agreement, see OSCE 2011: Vienna Document 2011: On Confidence- and Security-Building Measures, 30 Nov 2011, in: <https://bit.ly/2ZXwCxU> [23 Jul 2019].
- 48 Ali, Idrees / Stewart, Phil 2019: After INF treaty's demise, U.S. seeks funds for missile tests, *Reuters*, 2 Aug 2019, in: <https://reut.rs/2KdH0fN> [6 Sep 2019].



Source: © Ahdan Abidi, Reuters.

[The End of Arms Control?](#)

Between Arms Race and Alliance

How Pakistan and China Are Driving Indian Defence Policy

Romina Elbracht / Ann-Margret Bolmer

Although India's national security has since its independence in 1947 been endangered by conflicts with its neighbours, Pakistan and China, above all others it is the latter that has become the benchmark of Indian defence measures. The Indian military must undergo extensive reforms if it is to remain prepared for future challenges. Internationally, ambitious India hopes to maintain its strategic autonomy and avoid dependence on world powers.

Public discourse in India often focuses on Pakistan and the danger of terror that, as alleged by India, the country represents. At the same time, India's conventional superiority, demonstrated by victories in all wars against Pakistan, is omnipresent. While Pakistan remains a tactical problem for India in the short term, it is China that is increasingly becoming the decisive parameter of Indian defence modernisation, and will be a crucial factor in shaping the balance of power in the region. Another factor here continues to be the tense situation in the Kashmir region, to which both India and Pakistan lay claim. In February 2019, this conflict reached a new apex during the terror attack in the Pulwama district. India's governing Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) then shifted its political election campaign to the issue of national security. This enabled it to achieve a better result at this year's parliamentary elections than was even the case in the 2014 elections, in which it received an absolute majority in the Indian Lower House. Any dialogue between India and Pakistan now seems to be a distant prospect. China, meanwhile, is proving to be a supporter of Pakistan and aiming for further investments as part of its Silk Road initiative.

India shares contested borders with both Pakistan and China that emphasise the countries' conflicting territorial claims. The Line of Control (LoC), a de facto border with Pakistan, and the Line of Actual Control (LAC), which separates the Indian-controlled territory from the Chinese-controlled territory in the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir, have been the source of numerous conflicts for decades. India is in a

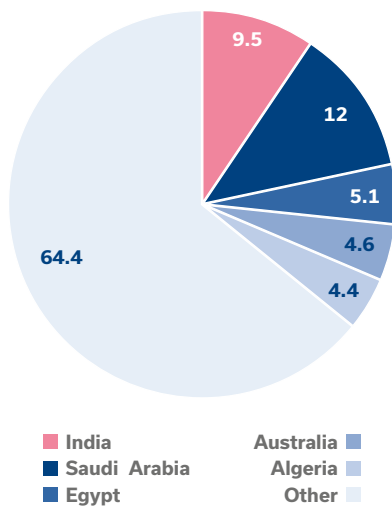
challenging security policy environment, facing off the two countries mentioned above, both of whom are now decisively modernising their military capacities.¹

The analysis below is based on the following thesis: Although Pakistan is a factor that continues to have a decisive effect on India's defence procurement and represents a focus of Indian foreign policy, China is quickly becoming a long-term strategic challenge, especially in the area of defence. This development raises the question of whether, in the face of military pressure, India is more likely to prefer bandwagoning with the US or continuing its longstanding alliance with Russia. At the same time, a central question is what role is played by defence policy dynamics between world powers and aspiring world powers. According to analysis by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), between 2014 and 2018 India was the second-largest weapons importer (after Saudi Arabia) while the US occupied an uncontested first place in weapons exports, followed by Russia, which, despite declining exports, remains India's largest arms supplier.

India's Constant Race against China

China continues to be a key issue for the Indian Prime Minister with respect to security and defence strategies, but in a much more multi-dimensional form than in the 1960s. Two years after its victory in the 1962 border war, China conducted its first nuclear test, causing great concern in India.

Fig. 1: Share of Largest Importers of Weapons Worldwide 2014–2018 (in Per Cent)



Source: Own illustration based on SIPRI database 2019, SIPRI Arms Transfers Database; in: <https://bit.ly/2p16QKG> [27 Jun 2019].

The danger that India currently fears from China can be summarised in the following points:

1. A long Indian-Chinese border along which China maintains the upper hand in ground offensive capability,
2. Continued Chinese support of Pakistan,
3. China's industrial and economic dominance over India,
4. Increasing Chinese naval power, which could play a crucial role in challenging India in the Indo-Pacific.

India's air force is currently distinguished primarily by a variety of types so great as to impede interoperability among the systems and by the rapid ageing of the single-engine Indian fleet, Such as the Russian single-engine MiG-21 interceptor. Other models, such as the French Mirage 2000 and Rafale multi-role combat aircraft, are

in short supply. Security concerns on the part of countries supplying India preclude the provision of codes that would allow Russian systems to communicate with Western data. This prevents India from generating synergies among its fleets.

The Indian answer to increasing Chinese capacities, from nuclear submarine fleets to modern aircraft carriers, appears insufficient thus far. One reason for this is the small Indian budget, while another is insufficient access to Western technology that, experience has shown, is superior to Chinese technology. Instead of choosing a uniform programme based on submarines, surface ships, electronics, and databases from the West, India is selecting a strategy for the future based on three different aircraft carriers, each carrying a different type of aircraft. Despite its fundamental access to superior technology, India's current procurement strategies mean that it has achieved no technological advantage, and that the massive Chinese military-industrial complex gained a significant head start on the fractional and incompatible Indian fleet. In a nutshell, China represents a significant long-term threat to India, especially since India has no clear strategy for dealing with China.²

Chinese Ambitions in Pakistan

The strategic cooperation between China and Pakistan may pose more of a military challenge to New Delhi than anything else. In addition to naval cooperation, it has increased on other fronts and benefitted from improved interoperability between the armed forces of both countries. This interoperability extends to military hardware as well, with increasing compatibility in accoutrement. The Pakistani air force is deploying jets built in China and is conducting joint exercises with the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) air force.³

The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is an important part of China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and runs through the part of Kashmir controlled by Pakistan. A Chinese-funded motorway is situated only 50 kilometers from the location of the most recent attack. It is

Table 1: Armed Forces of India and China in Comparison (by Branches of Service, Classes or Soldiers, as of 2019)

	India	China
Air forces		
Interceptor and air dominance fighters	62	759
Fighter bombers	561	702
Close air support aircrafts	117	240
Spy, reconnaissance and surveillance aircrafts	3	51
Airborne Warning And Control System (AWACS)	4	13
Tanker aircrafts	6	13
Bombers	0	172
Naval forces		
Submarines	16	59
Aircraft carriers	1	1
Destroyers	14	27
Frigates	13	59
Patrol and coastal ships	106	205
Ground forces		
Army	1,237,000	975,000
Battle tanks	3,565	5,800
Armoured personnel carriers	3,100	5,000
Artillery pieces	9,719	8,954
Self-propelled artillery	2,395	7,396

Source: Own compilation based on The International Institute for Strategic Studies 2019, The Military Balance 2019, London, cited in: Pant/Bommakanti 2019, n. 1.

therefore hardly surprising that China has a great interest in de-escalating the conflict, especially since it is pursuing its own interests and intends to secure the Economic Corridor as a whole. On 13 March 2019, China also used its Security Council veto to once again block placing the leader of the *Jaish-e Mohammed* (JeM), Masood Azhar, who is thought to be living freely

in Pakistan, on the United Nations' terror list for the time being. On the one hand, China has now reversed this decision, a move that New Delhi has interpreted as a positive signal.⁴ While on the other hand it is clear that China cannot solve Pakistan's domestic policy problems, yet the interests and potential financial opportunities in Pakistan are currently too great to ignore.

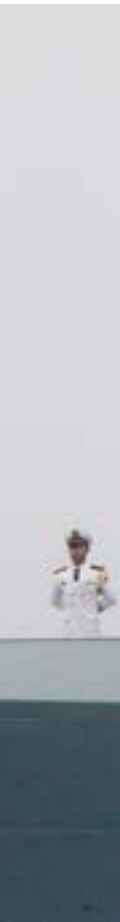
India Strives for Military Strength

From 2014 to 2018, 40 per cent of all global arms purchases went to the Asia and Oceania region – an indicator that the continent is becoming increasingly militarised. Especially in the area of nuclear weapons, significant levels of armament were witnessed on the part of Pakistan, China, and India in 2018. While China has invested in expanding and diversifying its nuclear arsenal, both India and Pakistan have increased the quantity of fissile material, which could lead to a significant rise in the number of nuclear weapons over the next decade.⁵ The primary purpose of the weapons is not for actual deployment, but rather as a deterrence so as to maintain the status quo between India on one side and China and Pakistan on the other. For even though India is the only country in the world to be confronted by two nuclear-armed opponents at its borders, it does not necessarily expect nuclear escalation on the part of the Chinese. Similar to India, China, too, pursues a no-first-use policy: It condones nuclear weapons use only in the event of a nuclear attack and not as a defence against conventional weapons. But why are all three – China, Pakistan, and India – still investing in nuclear armament? China is driven by the desire to match its omnipresent rival, the United States. India is pursuing a similar goal with the motivation of drawing even with the Chinese arsenal. For comparison: In 2018, India had 130 to 140 nuclear warheads, China more than 290, and the United States more than 6,185.⁶ Even the construction of India's first nuclear weapon, Smiling Buddha, was motivated by the Chinese atomic weapon test in 1964. Following the Indian nuclear weapons test in 1974, Pakistan argued that it, too, was now compelled to build a nuclear weapon for defence purposes. From that point onwards, there was mutually assured destruction between India and Pakistan: A dynamic that was all too familiar during the Cold War. Indian defence expert Harsh V. Pant of King's College London describes India's nuclear aspirations as follows: "Security and status will continue to guide India's nuclear policy in the future."⁷

In addition to nuclear policy, India's military inferiority compared with China on land, in the air, and at sea has a major impact on the Indian defence sector. In this context, the long border with China in the northwest of the state of Jammu and Kashmir and the north-easterly border in the state of Arunachal Pradesh, are of great importance. In the summer of 2017, there was a standoff between the Indian and the Chinese armies in the region of Doklam in Bhutan, near the so-called "Chicken's Neck", a narrow land corridor bordering Nepal and Bangladesh, connecting India's northeast with the rest of the subcontinent, which is important for Indian infrastructure.

Nuclear weapons buildup in India, Pakistan, and China is intended less for actual use than for deterrence.

The military bases forming part of the String of Pearls that China has established around the Indo-Pacific and the Indian subcontinent in particular, mean that India also needs to be vigilant about its maritime borders. This policy of encirclement by its rival, as New Delhi perceives it, is part of China's BRI. It has already prompted the Chinese to develop close relationships with India's neighbours, including Sri Lanka, the Maldives, Pakistan, Nepal, Bangladesh, and Myanmar and demonstrate a strong presence in key regions of the Indian Ocean that India has traditionally considered to be within its sphere of influence. Depending on how the relationship between India and China develops in the near future, the Chinese approach may lead to India suffering great losses, particularly economic ones, and ceding a great deal of power and influence in a region that India considers to be its backyard. The ambivalent India-China relationship is fundamentally shaped by both cooperation and rivalry. One indication of this is the comment by Subrahmanyam Jaishankar, the new Indian Foreign Minister, two weeks after the Pentagon published its new Indo-Pacific



Strategy Report: “[T]he Indo-Pacific is for something, not against somebody.”⁸ Another is the neutral noises China made concerning India in its latest Defense White Paper. In spite of the territorial conflict along the 3,400 km India-China border, over the last 20 years China has become India’s most important trade partner. Nevertheless, India’s strategy experts urge caution. Unlike the US, China threatens India’s national security with persistent border disputes.

In March 2019, India’s Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) successfully launched its own satellite into low-Earth orbit. With the so-called Mission Shakti, Indian space technology managed to provide an example of its strength and now perceives itself as

being on the same level as the only other three countries to have succeeded in such an effort – the US, China, and Russia.⁹ The Indian Space Research Organisation scored another success in July 2019. By launching the Chandrayaan-2 lunar probe, India intends to complete its first mission to the moon in September. India is not the only major Asian power to embark on a journey to space this year: At the beginning of the year, the Chinese landed a probe on the far side of the moon. If a space race develops between the two countries, China will remain in the lead despite all of India’s successes. The Chinese space budget is almost double that of India, and the advanced Chinese technology allowed China to launch a satellite as early as 2007.¹⁰



A real threat? The Indian answer to increasing Chinese military capacities appears insufficient thus far.
Source: © Jason Lee, Reuters.

Deficits in Budget and Procurement

Ministry of Defence reforms currently being called for by Indian policymakers are very difficult to implement because of financial bottlenecks. Despite the increase in the defence budget over past years, funding for modernisation is continually decreasing. India is among the five nations in the world with the highest defence spending, yet more than half of the total defence budget for 2017/2018 went to personnel and pension salaries. What is more, India still lags far behind China: In 2018, Chinese defence expenditure amounted to 250 billion US dollars, while India's were only 66.5 billion US dollars.¹¹ Moreover, structural weaknesses cause problems for domestic armament production and the procurement of new military equipment.¹²

Although during his first term Prime Minister Modi promised to make defence the central component of his "Make in India" campaign and promote national weapons production, little has been done on that score. Domestic defence production is of insufficient quality. And it is difficult to guarantee on-time delivery. The attempt to encourage foreign armament companies to manufacture their products for the Indian military, has also only witnessed modest success to date. The only large bilateral procurement measure to be agreed during the last legislative period was the Indian-Russian production of AK-203 guns in the Indian state of Uttar Pradesh.¹³

The purchase of a few Rafale aircraft fighters illustrates problems symptomatic of the long, obscure Indian procurement measures.¹⁴ While the United Progressive Alliance, which was in power in 2012, initially agreed upon procuring 126 aircraft from Dassault, a French manufacturer, the National Democratic Alliance reduced the deal in 2016 to 36 aircraft – at a higher price than the 2012 purchase. In public, the government defended this decision by saying that it had purchased a larger weapons package.¹⁵ But it was not just the high price that triggered outrage; the renegotiations delayed delivery, placing an even greater load on an already weakened air force.

Strategic Partnerships That Must Be Cultivated

In view of the increasing geopolitical and military threat posed by China, a closer alliance with the US seems to be attractive for India at first glance. However, viewed historically, bilateral relations between the two countries have not always been friendly. After its independence in 1947, India consistently refused to enter the orbit of Western alliances around the US. Although India was considered bloc-free, there was a close military cooperation with the Soviet Union. The end of the Cold War and India's economic development greatly influenced the country's foreign policy. The Russian Federation of the 1990s no longer represented the strategic support for India that the Soviet Union had been during the two wars with Pakistan (in 1965 and 1971). India's regional initiatives following the Cold War and its nuclear weapons programme were expressions of a more independent foreign policy. It was also this nuclear weapons programme that briefly poisoned relations with the US before the turn of the millennium. The United States responded to India's 1998 nuclear test with sanctions. Under George W. Bush, sanctions were lifted, and Indian-American cooperation deepened, ultimately resulting in the nuclear deal signed by the two countries in 2005.

Relations between India and the US have historically been ambivalent and currently remain so because of the situation with Pakistan and Russia.

The closing remarks of the last 2+2 dialogue (2018) between the Indian and American foreign and defence ministers emphasised India's status as a major defence partner (MDP) for the US. In future, the militaries of the two countries are to engage in more joint training exercises.

At the same time, the signing of the Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement (COMCASA) was viewed as a security policy milestone. Its goal is to facilitate India's purchase of certain military technologies from the US, thereby allowing India to purchase US encryption technology that can be used in military and security agency communications.¹⁶

US Secretary of State, Mike Pompeo, called the Indian air strikes following the terror attack of February 2019 an "anti-terror operation", for which he was criticised by Pakistan. The statement was viewed in the context of America courting India with the goal of creating a counterweight to China's growing influence in the region. The most recent conflicts between India and Pakistan left behind a wide range of open questions. One question concerns the deployment of F-16 combat aircraft produced in the US. If they were actually used, Pakistan would have violated restrictions imposed upon purchase, especially since the US clearly stated that the aircraft were not to be used against India, but only for defence or anti-terror operations.¹⁷ For India, a major problem is that the plane shot down by Pakistan was an obsolete MiG-21 from Russia which was greatly inferior to the cutting-edge F-16, raising questions about the current state of Indian combat aircraft. Based on information provided by India, only the F-16 is capable of carrying the Advanced Medium Range Air-to-Air Missile (AMRAAM), residue of which was found according to the Air Force.¹⁸ In the last week of July 2019, it was revealed that the US will continue to provide an estimated 125 million US dollars of technical and logistical support to Pakistan's F-16 programme. This entails 60 agents who will perform on-the-ground 24/7 end-use-monitoring. In its report on the arrangement, the Pentagon said that the fundamental military balance of power in the region would not be changed by the most recent sales deal, however. Another factor impeding the deepening of Indian-American relations is current trade disputes between the two countries.¹⁹ Another problem for the US is that in October 2018, Moscow and New Delhi agreed to terms governing the sale of the Russian S-400

"Triumph" long-range ground-to-air missile system. The latter provides defence against combat aircraft and cruise missiles and is likely to be installed primarily along the Chinese border. The US Senate has demanded that India refrain from purchasing any more weapons from Russia as long as sanctions against Russia remain in force.²⁰

From the point of view of India's Prime Minister Modi, at present nothing could be as interesting as alliances developing both between Pakistan and China and between China and Russia and the meaning of these alliances for India's international relations. India considers itself to be in a watchful observer role, especially since the traditional (armament) partnership with Russia is an important one for India, and Chinese ambitions for improving Chinese-Russian relations are perceived to threaten the status quo. Nevertheless, in mid-June 2019 Modi met with Chinese President Xi during the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation Summit (SCO) and agreed to enhance the bilateral dialogue concerning controversial border issues. During that meeting, Modi emphasised that Pakistan would be forced to undertake specific activities to counter cross-border terrorism before India could engage in dialogue on other bilateral issues.

During his first term of office, it was comparatively easy for Modi to build on the cooperation opportunities with all world powers, having inherited these relations from his predecessors since the end of the Cold War. But this phase of relative harmony is over. Moscow and Beijing are eager to limit US influence in what they consider their backyard (for Russia, inner Eurasia and for China, the western Pacific). At the same time, the joint goal is mutual support in conflicts with the US.²¹

Outlook

If India does not want to serve as a junior partner in an alliance, it must heavily invest in improvements to its national military capacity. Entirely in line with the "Make in India" slogan evoked by Narendra Modi in the last legislative



Increasingly self-confident: India's regional initiatives following the Cold War and its nuclear weapons programme were expressions of a more independent foreign policy. [Source: © Adnan Abidi, Reuters.](#)

period, defence issues will increasingly involve joint international initiatives in which domestic production and the opportunity for technology transfer will be essential Indian requirements in granting military contracts. India will continue

to insist on its strategic autonomy in future and make its decisions on a case-by-case basis. With respect to India's military acquisition strategy, there are recommendations to set up a separate Department of Defence Acquisition (DDA), with



the goal of centralising all procurement-related administrative measures. At the same time, regular training measures are to be offered to Indian acquisition personnel so that those trained can work more efficiently on procurement issues.

Indian media have recently reported that, by the end of 2019, a modernised Indian submarine and appropriate Shyena light torpedoes will be transferred to Myanmar's navy. The deal is part of a long-term plan that also involves training measures with India and Russia. This is in response to China's offer, such as that made to Bangladesh in 2017, to provide used submarines to Myanmar's navy. India is reacting to a fear that smaller nations in its immediate sphere of influence, such as Myanmar, could become too dependent on China through defence cooperation with Beijing.

Can Germany and the EU Function as a Strategic Anchor?

The US, which is currently an unpredictable partner for India, and the expansionist policies of India's neighbour, China, currently provide a window of opportunity for more intensive EU involvement in India. To date, it is France that has played a pioneering role. The most promising area of this cooperation is maritime security in the Indo-Pacific. Up to 8,000 French soldiers are stationed in the region. At the same time, France has paid much attention to improving its relations with India. India's purchase of French Rafale combat aircraft is a symbol of the deepening of strategic relations between India and France. During Macron's visit to New Delhi in March 2018, both states signed an agreement concerning the logistical support between their militaries, including provision of refuelling, repairing, and docking facilities for warships and aircraft by each side for the other. Indian-French military exercises have also become more frequent. During his visit to India in March 2018, German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier said that, in concert with France, Germany could serve as "a new strategic anchor" for India.²² Germany is already India's most important European trade partner. The challenge now is to intensify exchange in other areas, including defence, to influence the balance in Asia, which is also one of Germany's interests.

India finds itself in a difficult security environment that requires increased focus on the

immediate and broader vicinity in the region. It must assume a key role here and take the initiative in its direct competition with China in lieu of simply reacting. India will decide its strategic cooperation with known world powers on a case-by-case basis depending, among other things, on whether the potential partner in question understands the maritime dimension of South Asian security policy. The Indo-Pacific continues to be a fascinating place – especially for the world’s largest democracy.

–translated from German–

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[The End of Arms Control?](#)

An Old Friend Is Back

Russian Military Cooperation in Africa

Benno Mühler

Russia's military cooperation in Africa has hit the headlines over recent months. Since 2009, the former Soviet power has shown renewed interest in Africa and has begun to restore its old ties on the continent. Moscow's aim is to gain access to Africa's energy and raw material markets in exchange for arms. A glance at its engagement on the continent quickly reveals that Russia is now a force to be reckoned with in the global competition for influence in Africa.

Murder in Africa. Three journalists are killed. On a remote road, they are stopped by strangers and riddled with bullets. Only the driver survives – a suspected accomplice.

It would be easy to think that this is a scene from a crime movie. In reality, this, or something very similar, took place last year outside the city of Sibut in the Central African Republic (CAR). The world sat up and took notice. The journalists were Russian nationals. They were working for a Russian investigative media outlet, which confirmed that they were in the CAR investigating *Wagner*, a private security firm with ties to the Kremlin. The outlet is run by Kremlin critic Michael Khodorkovsky.¹ A few months earlier, Moscow had announced that it had 175 military advisers residing in the CAR.²

News of the killing was met with disbelief. Not so much because of the “movie-style” murder – after all, these kinds of operations have become all too familiar after the assassination of Alexander Litvinenko in London and the attack on Sergei Skripal in Salisbury – but rather because of Russia's presence in Africa. After annexing Crimea and intervening in Syria, was Moscow now trying to gain a foothold on African soil and expand its global influence? The answer was clear: Of course! But people had only just realised this.

Russia Returns to Africa

Few parts of the world have gained as much strategic importance over recent years as Africa.

Russia, too, is striving to exert an influence on the continent. While the West focuses on development aid and China builds roads, railways, and IT infrastructure, Russia is providing one thing above all: Arms. Russia is reported to have signed 19 military agreements with African nations since 2015.³ The advantage that Russia has over its competitors is that it sets no ethical or moral conditions. Its aim is to gain access to Africa's raw materials in order to build on its position as the world's leading energy exporter. To that end, it hopes to make Europe dependent on its exports and establish political alliances so that it can influence decisions at the United Nations. Russia has no problem finding buyers among the autocrats and dictators who continue to rule the majority of the 54 countries on the African continent. Russia's strategic involvement in Africa already began in 2009, after relations with its former socialist sister countries had almost completely ground to a halt under Boris Yeltsin. Although Russia's influence in Africa is still fairly limited, it has grown to a point where it can no longer be ignored. Once again, Russia is challenging the West – perhaps with less aggression, but still in an ideological way.

And They Danced a Rumba...

It doesn't take much digging to find the first traces of Russian influence in Africa, which began during the Cold War. In the Ethiopian capital of Addis Ababa, a large bust of Karl Marx stands proudly at the entrance to the university. Russian ships can still be seen rusting away in

Berbera, a major port city in Somaliland. Many older, well-educated African elites recount stories about studying in Russia. They also came to Germany – people from Angola and elsewhere were a regular sight on the streets of the GDR. Karamba Diaby, an SPD member of the *Bundestag*, originally hails from Senegal and studied in Halle in the 1980s.

The Afro-Soviet relationship is symbolised by one man above all: Patrice Lumumba, the flamboyant first prime minister of the newly independent Democratic Republic of the Congo. In today's Germany, his name is often associated with a drink (hot chocolate with a dash of rum), and some of the older generation even recall how the lyrics of a carnival song were rewritten: "And they danced a rumba, Kasavubu, and Lumumba."⁴ Yet for Moscow, Lumumba, a young freedom fighter who was assassinated with Belgian involvement in 1961, acted as a beacon against the West. Shortly afterwards, a university opened in Moscow bearing Lumumba's name. For years to come, it served to educate the elites of third world countries. By the end of 1991, around 50,000 Africans are estimated to have studied in the Soviet Union, and another 200,000 to have received training.⁵

Politically, Moscow intervened directly in countries such as Ethiopia, where it supported the country's communist military dictatorship *Derg*, supplied arms, and trained agents in Russia. It was also involved in Angola, where the MPLA party (*Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola*) established a one-party state. Agostinho Neto, Angola's first president after gaining independence from Portugal, died in a Moscow hospital in 1979.

Revival of Russian Economic Initiatives in 2009

Russia's relations with Africa largely came to a halt with the collapse of the Eastern Bloc. The country had enough to worry about at home. It was Vladimir Putin who finally took the initiative and revived relations with Africa, restoring old ties and creating new ones. His systematic

approach began to emerge in 2009 with the creation of Afrocom, the Coordinating Committee for Economic Cooperation with Sub-Saharan Africa. Russia's government-owned development bank *Vneshekonombank* has a stake in this state-run institution which is intended to promote investment by Russian companies in Africa.⁶ At the same time, new life was breathed into the Russian Academy of Sciences' Institute for African Studies, which was originally founded in 1959. It now provides expert advice about countries and markets on the African continent.

Russia's renewed interest in Africa in 2009 came at a time when the continent was finally generating positive news after years of press reports dominated by war and disaster. While in 2000, "The Economist" caused a stir when it published a controversial issue entitled "The hopeless continent", by December 2011 the headline had changed to "Africa rising". After years of war and famine, numerous African countries seemed to be gaining greater political stability. As wars and coups diminished, parliaments were elected and stayed in power. Countries such as Ghana, Rwanda, and Ethiopia recorded double-digit growth, fuelling hope that the "lion economies" of a continent that had largely been written off, could achieve a similar breakthrough to that of Asia's tiger economies a few years earlier. Hence, Putin believed that presence in Africa was essential for Russian business, and its abundance of natural resources was simply too good to resist.

Interest in Africa's Raw Materials

Russia's economy is mainly driven by the energy and natural resource sectors. The most important Russian companies actively engaged in Africa include *Rosatom*, *Gazprom*, *Alrosa*, and *Renova*.⁷ According to the African Development Bank, Russian investment was in the region of 20 billion US dollars in 2013.⁸ It is split on the one hand between tapping key metals and precious stones, and importing and exporting sources of energy such as gas and uranium on the other.





Europe challenged by Russia: The Russian strategy aims to open up energy markets abroad in order to make its main customer Europe even more dependent. Source: © Benoit Tessier, Reuters.

Metal and precious stones such as gold, diamonds, manganese, chromium, titanium, mercury, copper, nickel, and aluminium are all of interest to Russia. Either Russia does not possess these resources, they have already been depleted, or are so difficult to mine in the Urals and Siberia that it is more profitable to import them from Africa. The Russian company *Alrosa* mines diamonds in Angola, Botswana, and Zimbabwe.

As a leading energy exporter, however, Russia is not dependent on imports of gas and oil. Instead, its strategy is to use Russia's current strength to develop other foreign energy markets in order to remain the sector's global leader and ensure that its main customer – Europe – remains reliant on its supply. Algeria is a key country for Russia in this regard. In 2009, Russia entered into a strategic partnership with *Sonatrach*, Algeria's state-owned oil and gas company to open an oil and



Influence through weapons and training: Russia has strategically expanded its military cooperation with Africa.
Source: © Goran Tomašević, Reuters.

gas field in eastern Algeria. It also expressed an interest in future partnerships with the Algerian gas exporter which is strategically important for Europe.⁹

Russian Supremacy as an Energy Exporter

The second strategic energy source for Russia is uranium. To date, South Africa is the only African country with a nuclear power plant. However, since 2016 Russia's *Rosatom* has signed contracts with seven African countries including Ethiopia, Zambia, and Kenya, all of which need electricity for their economic growth, in order to

build nuclear power plants.¹⁰ Russia is in a position to supply both the technical know-how and the fuel for the plants. Together with its former federated states, including Kazakhstan, Russia is the world's largest producer of uranium alongside Australia. Russia is also keen to invest in Africa to further strengthen its supremacy in the global uranium market. South Africa, Namibia, and Niger alone account for some 17 per cent of global uranium production.¹¹ Russia's engagement in the CAR should be understood in the same way. Even though the former French colony only has a fraction of Kazakhstan's uranium deposits, its resources are by no means

negligible. France's nuclear power group, *Areva*, has been active in the CAR for many years and must be feeling challenged by Russia's growing influence.

Russia Uses Arms Exports to Gain Access to Africa's Raw Materials

When it comes to trading competition on the African market, Russia is unable to compete with the high standards of German engineering, American software and hardware, and the low prices offered by China. Nevertheless, Russia's niche lies in arms production and military intelligence – largely because it does not attach any moral conditions, so they are more accessible for African dictators who are looking to consolidate their power in the face of rebel groups and civil opposition.

The link between military cooperation and access to Africa's markets is illustrated by the example of Algeria. According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), Algeria accounted for precisely 14 per cent of all Russian arms exports between 2014 and 2018.¹² Another important country is Egypt. According to SIPRI, Russia tops the list of arms exporters to Africa at 35 per cent. It supplies submarines, tanks, and helicopters to Algeria and combat aircraft and missile defence systems to Egypt. According to reports, this year it will deliver six SU-30 fighter jets to Angola.¹³

Russia not only supplies Africa with arms, but also with military expertise in the form of Russian advisers, some in high-ranking positions.

Russia has been strategically expanding its military cooperation with Africa since 2015. It has signed agreements with 19 African countries. Photos of Vladimir Putin with his African

counterparts in the Kremlin or in Africa have now become a familiar sight. Angola's new president, João Lourenço, visited Moscow in 2018 and Russia recently signed a deal with the Republic of the Congo and President Sassou Nguesso. What is more, it is thought to have signed a cooperation agreement with the Republic of the Congo's huge, resource-rich neighbour, DR Congo.¹⁴ The Kremlin has confirmed that it sent military advisers to Sudan, and there are said to be approximately 200 Russian advisers now deployed in the CAR. The top security adviser to Faustin-Archange Touadéra, President of the CAR, is a Russian, Valery Zakharov. A key role is also played by Mikhail Bogdanov, Vladimir Putin's personal Africa representative, who establishes contacts for the Kremlin on the continent.¹⁵

Building an Alliance: the Russia-Africa Economic Summit in Sochi

The first Russia-Africa economic summit is expected to take place in October this year in Sochi, Russia.¹⁶ In addition to its economic interests, it is clear that Russia's engagement in Africa is also politically motivated. With 54 countries, Africa is the most important bloc in the United Nations. Russia is hoping to gain its backing in the event of dissent with the other four permanent members of the UN Security Council: The West on one side and China on the other. Russia could come into conflict with China if the Kremlin expands its involvement in Africa.

J. Peter Pham is a former Africa expert at the American think tank, Atlantic Council, and was recently appointed US Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Region of Africa by President Donald Trump. He agrees with the majority of Russian analysts that Russia's engagement in Africa is currently minor when compared to that of the West and China. However, its growth can no longer be ignored by the other powers.¹⁷

The Trump administration's new Africa Strategy, as outlined by former US Security Advisor John Bolton in a speech in December 2018, focuses

on American security, promoting US investment and the effective use of its development aid funds. It clearly views both China and Russia as a threat: “In short, the predatory practices pursued by China and Russia stunt economic growth in Africa; threaten the financial independence of African nations; inhibit opportunities for US investment; interfere with US military operations; and pose a significant threat to US national security interests.”¹⁸

A Clear Strategy

In the global contest for influence in Africa, Russia has a clear strategy, as do China, the US, and other actors such as Turkey. This is not yet the case for Germany and the EU. With its Marshall Plan, the German government is moving away from the traditional development aid approach, as is also the case with the EU’s new Africa-Europe Alliance.¹⁹ This is the right move, and it is long overdue. However, the European approach continues to be dominated by development aid and the promotion of democracy. This approach is particularly vulnerable at a time when Europe’s democracies themselves are not in the best of shape – a fact that has not gone unnoticed in African capitals. Nowadays, in conversations with African elites about the advance of China on the continent, a knowing smile tends to cross their lips when the discussion turns to the current weakness of Europe.

However, in the global contest between powers, the German government and the EU could happily further promote their economic interests and adjust their development aid accordingly. The economic strength and quality of life of Europe’s democracies are far more attractive than any programme for promoting democracy, so good relations with Europe will always be in the interest of African countries.

The advance of Russia has accelerated the race in Africa still further. The German government does not have to play a role here. Because just as increased economic engagement in Africa would bring opportunities, it also poses the question: What would happen if Germany

clashed with other major powers in the economic competition on African soil? What would Berlin do then?

–translated from German–

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Source: © Jorge Silva, Reuters.

[The End of Arms Control?](#)

Too Big to Fail

Toward a US-German Partnership on Turkey

[Michael Doran/Peter Rough](#)

Recep Tayyip Erdoğan is often cast as a black-and-white villain rather than an actor in a complex story. Lost in the simplification are key questions about the relationship between Turkey and the West. To stabilize the Middle East, the West needs Turkey now more than ever. In the foreign policy realm, there are few areas in which President Donald Trump and Berlin are as closely aligned as in their assessment of the alliance with Turkey as “Too Big to Fail”. However, the United States and Germany have thus far moved in parallel rather than in combination in their diplomacy with Turkey, leaving an integrated strategy out of reach.

US-Turkish relations are in crisis. On July 12, Turkey’s Ministry of National Defense announced that it had taken delivery of the first elements of the S-400 system from Russia. The S-400 is no ordinary weapon but an advanced air defense system whose capabilities have worried American military planners. Well before the first components arrived, the Trump administration warned that such a step would jeopardize Turkey’s purchase of the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter, the most advanced plane in the world today. American officials informed their Turkish counterparts, repeatedly and unambiguously, that it could not acquire, simultaneously, state-of-the-art American stealth jets and the Russian weapon designed to shoot them from the skies.

The American decision to deny Turkey the F-35, which is almost irreversible at this late stage, is a major blow to the Turkish air force, which had ordered 100 planes as its combat fighter of the future. This is only the beginning of the story, however. As the largest weapons program in the world, the F-35 is being co-produced by an international consortium of countries, of which Turkey was an early member. Over the lifetime of the F-35, Turkey’s defense industry was banking on producing major components worth millions of dollars per plane for thousands of planes – and subsequently performing maintenance and repair work on them. The lost F-35s will create a gaping hole in Turkey’s industrial balance sheet,

which Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan is talking about filling, in part, by co-producing the S-400 with Russia.

This is not an isolated commercial transaction, the mere purchase of a single weapon. It is a repositioning of Turkey in international politics. Turkey’s decision to go through with the deal will trigger the application of the Countering America’s Adversaries through Sanctions Act (CAATSA), which the US Congress passed in 2017 to punish Russia for its military interventions in Ukraine and Syria, and its meddling in the last American presidential campaign. While the administration has a strong inclination to mitigate the force of these retaliatory measures, it has no choice but to go through with them, if for no other reason that it fears a parade of countries, including, among others, the Egyptians, Saudis, and Indians, will line up to acquire the S-400. Moreover, if it does not act, the administration would lose control of its policy to Congress, which has expressed very strong, bipartisan feelings on this subject.

It is difficult at this stage to predict the second and third order effects of the American retaliation. Will the Turks accept being sanctioned as their just deserts, or will they find some way to respond aggressively? And what of the lost F-35s? Will Russian President Vladimir Putin step forward to offer a replacement program, and, if he does, how will Erdoğan reply?

What is also clear is that Turkey's purchase of the S-400 is not the whimsical move of a mercurial leader. Erdoğan means for this to register in the West as a turning point, one that did not arrive out of the blue but came after a long and steady deterioration in ties. He is playing Moscow off against Washington so that Turkey can no longer be taken for granted by either. The move is designed to increase Turkey's options. In the United States it is uniformly described as a blunder of monumental proportions. Whether history will actually judge the move as such, however, remains to be seen. At a minimum, the West should weigh its responses very carefully. Nothing less than Turkey's Western orientation hangs in the balance.

A Dangerous Doctrine

Alas, the S-400 crisis comes at a moment when tolerance for the government of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan is in very short supply. In Washington, it will doubtlessly strengthen a dangerously self-fulfilling doctrine that took root several years ago among key constituencies, namely, that Turkey is no longer an ally. While the president and his advisors do not share this assessment, it is a virtual consensus in think tanks and on Capitol Hill, where people are commonly heard to remark that Turkey no longer belongs in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

When pressed to justify this position, they quickly tick off a list of sins, real and imagined, of President Erdoğan: he's a member of the Muslim Brotherhood, seeking to spread an intolerant conception of Islam around the Muslim world; he tacitly supported the Islamic State, allowing it to funnel recruits across Turkish territory; he's an authoritarian demagogue, undermining democracy and promoting mob rule; he's an enemy of the Kurdish people, ethnically cleansing villages in Syria; he's an anti-Semite, dedicated to weakening or destroying Israel; and, under him, Turkey has become a Trojan Horse for Moscow inside NATO, as evidenced by his recent courtship of Russia.



This is a “witness for the prosecution” analysis of Turkish foreign policy. While some of the charges against Erdoğan are not entirely groundless, they are invariably presented without context and analysis. Erdoğan is cast as a cartoon villain rather than as one actor, albeit the leading one, in a complex story. Lost in the simplification are key questions about the relationship between Turkey and the West. What is Erdoğan trying to achieve with his troubling tactics? How incompatible are his strategic goals from those of the Western alliance? And why are American policies so much more unpopular in Turkey than Erdoğan himself?

Germany has been wrestling with similar questions for years, if not decades. Officials in Berlin do not endorse the idea that the alliance with Turkey is finished. They recognize that a difficult ally is eminently preferable to



Risky strategy: The arms deal will doubtlessly strengthen a dangerously self-fulfilling doctrine that Washington will consider Turkey no longer an ally. Source: © Francois Walschaerts, Reuters.

The Real Roots of Turkish Disaffection

It is hard to defend Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's record. Crackdowns on the press and political opponents have marked his nearly two decades in power. The harsher sides of Erdoğan's authoritarian ways were on full display for Americans when he unleashed his bodyguards on peaceful protestors in Washington D.C. in May 2017. As a consequence, it is common today for American observers to roll their eyes in despair whenever Erdoğan's name is mentioned. It's easy to forget that, not that long ago, many of those same Americans regarded Erdoğan as the great white hope of the Middle East.

In the aftermath of 9/11, the US cast about for allies in the project of Islamic modernization – and quickly landed on the promising mayor of Istanbul. A pious Muslim from a working-class district of the city, Erdoğan appeared to be the poster boy for enlightened Middle Eastern leadership. In 2002, as he rallied his Justice and Development Party (AK Party) to victory, he spoke devoutly of his desire to lead Turkey into the European Union. The United States could hardly believe its luck. “When looking for hopeful signs that Islam and democracy can indeed coexist, the international community turns to Turkey”, “The New York Times” editorialized in 2004. As late as 2012, President Obama was listing Erdoğan as one of five international allies he trusted most.

How quickly attitudes change. It is hard to escape the feeling that Americans feel betrayed by Erdoğan because they expected too much of him to begin with. Erdoğan was never going to lead America's effort to democratize the Middle East. He couldn't do so even if he wanted to. He is the leader of a complex country with its own unique history and challenges. The idea

a disillusioned foe, especially one that stands astride the crossroads between East and West. Germany is prepared to support a sustained American effort to understand and ameliorate Turkey's key grievances – an effort, if conducted thoroughly, that may yet bear fruit.

Such an effort would constitute a positive, common agenda for the United States and Germany in an era of deep disagreements. As transatlantic waters grow ever more turbulent, this is no small matter. There are few areas in which President Donald Trump and Berlin are as closely aligned as in their assessment of the alliance with Turkey as “Too Big to Fail”. Germany can play an important role in countering the prevailing view of US-Turkish relations as doomed and can help guide the US as it seeks to manage the fallout from the S-400 crisis. In the process, it can remind both American and German policymakers of the value of the other.

that Turkey is no longer an ally is, in part, the product of unrealistic expectations.

Furthermore, it equates Turkish society with just one man. To be sure, Erdoğan is a uniquely powerful and influential actor in Turkish politics, but his power is hardly absolute, as the reversal he recently suffered in the Istanbul mayoral election reminds us. Battered though it may be, Turkish democracy is more resilient than some analysts suggest. Today, the popularity of the ruling AK Party has crested; Erdoğan, one day, will step aside. When he does, what state will American-Turkish relations be in? A very bad one, if public opinion surveys are anything to go by. Polls indicate that the vast majority of Turks now regard the United States as a hostile power. Erdoğan's approval, by contrast, fluctuates between 40 and 50 per cent – meaning that distrust of America is widespread, by no means limited to Erdoğan supporters. American decision-makers should worry as much if not more about this broad distrust than they do about Erdoğan's challenging characteristics.

The United States chose to treat the 2015 clashes on the Turkish border more as a disinterested bystander than as the ally of Turkey.

The roots of Turkish disaffection are easy to identify. For the last eight years Turks have been developing their own “witness for the prosecution” list of American misdeeds. It begins with the failure of the United States to aid Turkey in securing its border during the worst of the Syrian civil war. In June 2012, a Syrian ground-to-air missile shot down a Turkish reconnaissance plane and, in November 2015, a Turkish fighter jet downed a Russian warplane. In the period between these episodes, Syrian forces repeatedly violated Turkish territory. The most alarming incident took place in October 2012, when the Syrian army fired

an artillery shell into Turkey, killing five people and wounding at least ten more.

Today's S-400 crisis has roots in American decisions taken during this period. The United States chose to treat these border clashes more as a disinterested bystander than as the ally of Turkey. The aloof American attitude contrasted sharply with that of Russia, which staunchly supported its Syrian client and aggressively sought to tilt the regional balance of power to its advantage. The failure of the United States to treat Turkey in a comparable manner was especially noteworthy after the shoot down of the Russian warplane in 2015. For some time previous, the Russian air force had been testing the limits of American deterrence all along the Russian-NATO frontier, so the United States might have exploited the incident as the perfect opportunity to demonstrate resolve – and, in the process, to keep Turkish security policy anchored to the West.

In the event, an anemic American response gave Erdoğan no choice but to address the challenge that Russia posed on the Turkish-Syrian border through bilateral negotiations with Moscow that sidelined the United States. Even worse, it strengthened the voices of those Turks arguing for a policy of playing Moscow off against Washington. In short, American influence suffered.

The second item on the Turks' list of American misdeeds is the harboring of Fethullah Gülen, the 78-year old cleric living in exile in Pennsylvania in the Poconos. According to Erdoğan, the rebels who carried out the foiled coup attempt of July 2016 “were being told what to do from Pennsylvania”. Even Erdoğan's political foes concede that Gülen's organization was behind the coup. Evidence of Gülen's direct involvement may be hard to produce, but Turks with knowledge of the inner workings of this secretive, hierarchical organization reasonably assume that such a consequential operation would require a personal order from its charismatic founder. Turks, therefore, do not understand why the United States has failed to respond favorably to their request for Gülen's extradition.

In their most suspicious moods, they wonder out loud whether the United States might actually be using Gülen to topple Erdoğan and destabilize Turkey. It was not that long ago when such conspiratorial thinking was confined to the fringes of Turkish politics. Today it is much more mainstream.

The third and by far the most important item on the Turks' list of American misdeeds is US support for the People's Protection Units (YPG), the Syrian Kurdish organization that Washington turned into its primary partner in defeating the Islamic State in Syria. The YPG is the Syrian wing of the Kurdistan Worker's Party (PKK), the Kurdish separatist organization in Turkey that most Turks regard as a mortal enemy. In the long war with the PKK, some 30,000 lives have been lost. By mid-century, Kurds are estimated to make up over one-third of Turkey's population. The Kurdish question, therefore, is existential for the Turkish Republic. By entering into this partnership, the US, in Turkish eyes, betrayed a treaty ally. Can a fair-minded observer dismiss the point?

The American alignment with the YPG has weakened under Trump somewhat, but it has not ended, and it has done more than anything else to drive Turkey toward Moscow. It has even led Turks to wonder whether the US has a plan to break up Turkey. To Americans with knowledge of how the YPG alliance developed, such conspiratorial musings sound absurd. The US, they understand, has been confused now for many years about its role in the Middle East. In the absence of a clear strategic plan for the region, counterterrorism – the narrow fight against, first, al-Qaeda and, later, the Islamic State – has become a substitute for sound strategic thinking. It was a set of purely tactical considerations based on a counterterrorism mindset that led to the alliance with the YPG, not some sinister design against Turkey.

Be that as it may, Turkish suspicions of American intentions are anything but groundless. They are, moreover, a potent reality that explains much about the decision to acquire

the S-400s. To justify the deal to their American counterparts, Turkish officials emphasize practical considerations, such as costs, terms of service, and delivery dates, as if it is a purely commercial transaction with no broader political or strategic significance. But it is clearly a power play. The goal of the exercise is to prove to Washington that Turkey will not be taken for granted – that it intends to demand satisfaction on the Gülen and, especially, the YPG questions, or it will reconsider its fundamental alignment in international politics. “We have other options”, Erdoğan is signaling to Trump.

One can argue that this is an unwise message, that it is counterproductive and will make it harder, not easier, for Erdoğan to achieve his aims. It is a message, however, that resonates not just with Erdoğan's staunch political followers but also with a broad range of Turks. Dealing with that resonance, not with the prickliness and unpredictability of the Turkish president, is the true challenge that stands before America and the West today.

Turkey Is More Important than Ever

How the United States responds to this challenge will shape US-Turkish relations for decades to come. Erdoğan has taken delivery of the S-400s at a moment when Turkish and American negotiators are working on a “safe zone” for Turkey's southern border. This is one of the most consequential issues in the Middle East today – but one whose importance is not fully recognized among the policy community in Washington. At stake is not just the narrow question of whether a stable arrangement can be found between Turkey and the YPG-controlled areas in Syria, but the larger strategic question of who will be the primary arbiter of that arrangement: the United States or Russia (and, with Russia, Iran).

The negotiations are being conducted under the clear desire of the Americans to withdraw forces from Syria. Although the current American policy, formally, is to keep forces in Syria

indefinitely, the US is drawing down their numbers rapidly while seeking to find European partners to fill the gap. Meanwhile, Trump has repeatedly stated his intention to withdraw. If the US were to retreat before a stable arrangement is concluded, Moscow will work to scoop up the YPG as an ally, thus becoming the manager of the Kurdish-Turkish negotiations and accruing in the process direct leverage over Ankara. As for the Turks, the rise of an autonomous Syrian Kurdish statelet run by an arm of the PKK would be a threat both foreign and domestic. If Ankara were to manage it through Moscow, Turkey would move closer to Russia in general, and ever farther away from Turkey's NATO partners.

Turkey's continued Western alignment will require the West to honour Turkey's major strategic concern, its fear of a PKK-safe haven in Syria.

The implications for stabilizing the Middle East in a manner conducive to Western interests are grave – and they point to the most glaring flaw in the “Turkey is not an ally” doctrine. Proponents of the doctrine start from the assumption that, the Cold War being a thing of the past, Turkey is not as important to Western strategy as it used to be. In fact, the exact opposite is true: Turkey is more important than ever. Recent history has taught us two irrefutable but competing facts: the American public has no appetite for large-scale military operations in the Middle East; and yet, a precipitous withdrawal from the region will create disorder that will rebound to the disadvantage of both Europe and the US. The only way to balance these two facts is by relying more on allies.

Historically, Turkey has been among the most stable and reliable allies of the West, and it has been indispensable in shielding Europe from

the worst aspects of Middle Eastern power politics. There is no reason that it cannot continue to play that role. Convincing it to do so, however, will require paying deference to its major strategic concern, namely, its fear of a PKK-safe haven in Syria. This is hardly a frivolous or, as many in the US suggest, a bigoted fear. It is merely the common sense of an informed people.

There is no doubt that the Trump administration takes this fear seriously and has been working to come to an agreement on the Syrian safe zone. Negotiators claim that progress has been made but that the challenges remain. On the basis of published accounts, it is hard to discern exactly what disagreements remain and how deep they are.

But one suspects that they are more fundamental than negotiators will allow. The Turkish strategy is designed to wait out the Americans. The presence of US forces in Syria represents the main obstacle to Turkey achieving its core interests in northern Syria, namely, preventing the rise of an autonomous YPG-led Kurdish statelet, and creating a buffer zone, which, by stretching along the entire Syrian-Turkish border, would prevent YPG forces from having easy access to Turkish territory at any point. Given Trump's obvious desire to withdraw troops from Syria, Erdoğan sees no reason to cut a deal with the Americans now, if it means compromising on these core interests.

Turkey's S-400 deal is a hedge toward Russia that readies Turkey for the two most likely eventualities. On the one hand, if the Americans were to withdraw their forces from Syria before a final settlement to the civil war, then any agreement with Washington would be rendered worthless. Russia, in this scenario, would become the main arbiter of a settlement in northeastern Syria. Putin would position himself as the main intermediary between, simultaneously, the Assad regime and the YPG, the Turks and the YPG, and the regime and the Turks. The S-400 deal, in that case, would become the first step toward a new era of Russian-Turkish understanding.

On the other hand, if the Americans, despite their obvious impatience to withdraw from Syria, decide to station forces in the country indefinitely, then Erdoğan's goal is to force Washington to move away from its current pro-YPG position and to become more deferential to Ankara. In this scenario, the S-400s will serve as a goad to push the Americans to settle northern Syria on Turkish terms. From the point of view of the Trump administration, Erdoğan's calculations look woefully shortsighted and counter-productive. "Wouldn't you prefer to work with us than the Russians to secure your border?" the Americans ask the Turks, failing to recognize a simple fact: Russia has made it clear that it is in Syria for good, whereas America looks ever prepared to race for the exits.

In short, until the US adopts a long-term strategic posture designed to safeguard Turkey's core interests, Erdoğan intends to play Moscow off against Washington. The White House appears prepared to take this reality in stride – or so one might conclude from the remarks of Donald Trump at the G20 in Osaka. Trump evinced a sympathetic understanding of Erdoğan's decision to take delivery of the S-400s, blaming the Obama administration for creating the "mess" in the first place by, supposedly, not allowing Turkey to purchase Patriot missiles. "It's a problem, there's no question about it", he conceded. "We're looking at different solutions", he continued, but then quickly changed the subject to bilateral Turkish-American trade, expressing a desire to quadruple it to 100 billion US dollars per year.

The size of the number came as a relief to the Turks. Let's not quibble about whether it is actually a realistic target. The Turks interpreted the large number, no doubt correctly, as a statement of intention to avoid punishing Turkey economically for the S-400 deal. With the Turkish economy already in recession and foreign currency reserves at very low levels, Turks feel especially vulnerable to American sanctions. Trump's goal, we can infer, is to land a blow that will be corrective to Turkey and instructive to other countries contemplating

similar deals but not so broadly and deeply damaging that it will drive Turkey further into the arms of Moscow. He is well aware that if he cuts Turkey off from Western defense supplies he will simply provide the Russians with an opportunity to supplant the West. He is also aware that if sanctions are too draconian, he will alienate a younger generation of Turks who are broadly pro-Western but also intensely nationalist. It is this audience that Americans and Europeans should hold squarely in their sights.

Trump's goals are the correct ones, but there is a fine art to being just tough enough to send the right message but not so tough as to drive the Turks away. And it is especially difficult to deliver when, on Capitol Hill and in the policy world, there are many who think that the time has come to teach Turkey a lesson.

The German Factor

More than any other partner of the United States, Germany has a key role to play in helping Trump to get the balance right. This is true for two reasons: of all the countries of Western Europe, Germany is the most familiar with, and exposed to, all things Turkish. If the Turkish-American alliance is a one-lane freeway of security issues handled by the Pentagon, the Turkish-German relationship is a multi-lane highway of crisscrossing issues affecting all segments of society.

Germany has not entertained illusions about Turkey as a beacon of democracy to the same extent as the United States, thanks to the breadth and depth of its ties to the country, which date back decades. Those ties have brought Turkey, in all of its complexity, closer to the German than to the American people. In Berlin, the future of Turkey is not merely debated in erudite journals but by the man in the street.

Beginning in the 1960s, hundreds of thousands of Turkish guest workers moved to Germany, forming the backbone of the over three million



Interconnected: So close are the relations between Turkey and Germany that Turkish internecine conflicts are now conflicts in German society. Source: © Thilo Schmuelsing, Reuters.

ethnic Turks, including hundreds of thousands of Kurds, who live in the country today. Over time, these ties have flourished into a major trading relationship. Germany has made huge foreign direct investments in Turkey, setting up or investing in over 7,300 businesses; moreover, at nearly 38 billion euros annually, Germany is Turkey's largest trading partner. Since 1995, Turkey and Germany are linked through

a customs union agreement, which covers all industrial goods.

So close are the relations that Turkey's internecine conflicts are now conflicts in German society. While the PKK is banned as a terrorist organization in Germany, for example, its sympathizers and other Kurdish groups often march in major cities. Germany is also regularly pulled



into the vortex of Turkish politics. Erdoğan and his ministers have campaigned aggressively in Germany in the lead-up to elections, angering many Germans in the process. When Turkey brawls, it is Germany that often catches a black eye.

The relationship with Turkey is too big to fail for another reason, however. Turkey plays a special role in insulating Germany from the worst aspects of the Middle East. Germany is an economic powerhouse but, for historical reasons, has no appetite for military leadership. Thus, in early July it declined an American request to deploy ground troops in northern Syria. At the same time, however, the stakes for Germany in Syria could not be higher. In the fall of 2015, hundreds of thousands of Syrian refugees flooded Europe, and especially Germany, roiling the country in the process. While Germany will not take a direct role in the security arrangements on the Turkish-Syrian border, it will be more influenced by developments there than any other European country.

In retrospect, the fall of 2015 is a watershed moment in German politics. The refugee crisis damaged the establishment center and supercharged the populist right. To arrest this trend, the German government turned to Turkey. In March 2016, the EU, led by Germany, and Turkey struck a deal to stop the flow of migrants into Europe in exchange for billions of euros in aid. Despite enormous strain, the agreement has held to this day: Turkey offers protection to approximately 3 million refugees, whose well-being is financed in large part by German taxpayers.

For the German government, it is essential to keep Turkey in the Western fold. Unwilling to deploy force itself but deeply invested in the future of the Middle East, it must rely on allies to secure its interests. This perspective puts it in natural alignment with the Trump administration. To date, however, the United States and Germany have moved in parallel rather than in combination in their diplomacy with Turkey. An integrated strategy has not been tried.

Germany has already made clear that it will not help adjudicate the future of northern Syria, which requires the willingness to deploy military assets. This duty is more properly understood as the domain of the United States, but Germany has major economic tools in its arsenal that it can contribute. It can help demonstrate to Turkey that its future in the West will be far more prosperous than any alternative. At a time when US-German relations are strained over so many issues, including trade policy, Iran, NATO contributions, and populism, Turkey offers an opportunity for Germany to work closely with the Trump administration.

This requires the type of steady, dogged diplomacy in which Germany prides itself. Berlin should exercise its diplomatic muscle on two fronts. In Ankara, it should use its weight and ties to counterbalance Turkey's worst inclinations. If Germany's efforts are understood to include close coordination with America, the opportunity for success will increase markedly. But in Washington, too, Germany should be driving the message that Turkey is too big to fail, and that it has not, in fact, abandoned the West.

The differences between Turkey and its Western allies are the consequence of their lack of a clear vision of the Middle East.

At the deepest level, the differences that have emerged between Turkey and its Western allies are not the product of any individual leader or set of leaders. They are in fact a consequence of the fact that neither the United States, nor the Western powers, nor Turkey have a clear vision of the new Middle East order they seek to build. With no shared plan, they are groping around in the dark, blaming each other for the resulting collisions. If the necessary vision ever does arise, it will not come quickly and it will not

emanate from the mind of any one leader. It will be, rather, an act of co-creation. What is needed most at this stage is a firm commitment to work together closely, in the expectation that a shared vision of regional order will eventually emerge.

A Failure of Imagination

Indeed, a viable new regional order is precisely what is at stake. Those in America who argue that we have already lost Turkey and that devoting time to courting an unpredictable leader like Erdoğan will simply empower his worst inclinations seem to assume that Turkey can be banished from NATO or simply treated as a second-class member of the alliance with no adverse consequences for the West. This is a monumental failure of the imagination. It is, in addition, a failure to recognize that Turkey, so far, has acted with restraint as the United States and other members of the Western alliance have empowered Turkey's most feared enemy.

Imagine if Turkey were to lose that restraint. At the most unrestrained end of the spectrum, Turkey could align with Russia and Iran and actively seek to undermine the Western alliance in the Middle East. Mustafa Kemal Pasha, the founder of modern Turkey who is now known to the world as Atatürk, did just that between 1919 and 1921, during the Turkish war of independence. While repelling the Greek invasion, and in an effort to prevent the British and French from using the invasion to partition Turkey, he aligned with Moscow and supported jihad against the Western powers throughout the Arab world. Yes, Mustafa Kemal, the founder of *secular* Turkey, aligned with the nascent Soviet Union while simultaneously supporting anti-Western jihad – because the national interest, at that moment, called for such methods.

The support that the Western powers give to the YPG in Syria today once again raises the specter of partition in the Turkish psyche. It is highly unlikely that relations with the West will deteriorate to such a point that Turks would provoke an all-out effort to undermine the Western order in the region. Turkey is too tied to the West

economically and culturally, and it is too threatened by Russian encroachment to embrace a full-blown anti-Western policy. But such a possibility should not be beyond the realm of our imaginations. More to the point, there are many gradations of opposition to the West between Erdoğan's current policy and a policy of total resistance. Any number of points along the scale would make it nearly impossible for the West to stabilize the Middle East.

Let's tread carefully – and let's tread together – lest the chant, "Turkey is not an ally", becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy.

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Ai: *Dr. Sauer, supercomputers that take on a life of their own, robots that rise up against their creators and an earth devastated by killer machines – these scenarios have been the stuff of science fiction for years. In your research, you focus on the nexus between security and technology, such as the military-technological implications of artificial intelligence (AI). Just how far removed are we from science fiction in this area?*

Frank Sauer: That depends on the kind of science fiction you mean. For example, if you take a

novel like *Kill Decision* by Daniel Suarez, some of the ideas in it no longer seem so far-fetched. On the other hand, apocalyptic scenarios such as those in the *Terminator* films are still a long way off, or will never actually happen – or so we hope. I myself enjoy reading science fiction, but I’m not too worried about robot uprisings, terminators and artificial super intelligence. I’m concerned with more mundane things in the here and now.

Ai: *Such as what?*

Frank Sauer: I’m currently looking at the risks of the short-sighted application of technology in security contexts – technology that is currently available and, relatively speaking, quite

“dumb”. Especially, as you rightly point out, when it comes to the military and the use of these applications in weapons systems.



Despite all reservations: The military should not forego technology. Source: © Charles Platiau, Reuters.

Ai: Can you give us an example of the short-sighted application of comparatively “dumb” technology in weapons systems?

Frank Sauer: Take automatic image recognition systems. They are at the forefront of current break-

throughs in the area of artificial intelligence. If you save your photos in Google Cloud, you can ask Google to sort them for you – say, all the photos of your last beach holiday, your new car or Grandma Erna. All well and good. Or take autonomous driving. Tesla is so convinced of the capabilities and potential of automatic image recognition that it is committed to using it to produce a self-driving car at some point. Tesla simply does away with other components that most other car manufacturers consider indispensable, such as lasers for measuring distance. And it’s true that automatic image recognition is amazing. But it has nothing to do with intelligence. Unfortunately, the terms “artificial intelligence” and “machine learning” are very misleading for the majority of people. The neural networks trained for image recognition based on machine learning are developed for a single, extremely limited purpose. They are competent, but not intelligent. They can recognise cats in photos – in some cases more reliably than a human. But that’s it. And they can only do this under certain conditions; if they are faced with inputs that they haven’t been optimised for, they fail spectacularly. Therefore, we are not dealing either with intelligence or learning, at least not in the way that we humans have previously understood these terms, and how they can make sense for a species such as ours, which is so much more capable and adaptable. This is what I mean when I say that a modern image recognition system is, relatively speaking, “dumb”, even if it performs extremely well in certain applications.

Ai: What does this mean for the use of such technologies in weapons systems?

Frank Sauer: It would be dangerous to rush into recklessly using automatic image recognition technology

in weapons systems. This doesn’t require much imagination, as we have had examples of this for some time now. Last summer, for example, Kalashnikov came out with an autonomous gun turret that combined an image recognition system with a weapon – this is all current technology, not science fiction. But, of course, the Kalashnikov image recognition system cannot understand a battlefield like a human can. This turret would probably have difficulty distinguishing soldiers from civilians. And with a probability bordering on certainty, it wouldn’t be able to recognise and understand whether a soldier is trying to surrender, or is perhaps injured and therefore no longer constitutes a legitimate target. Which brings us to the risks. If the weapon were fired automatically, because the algorithm can only identify basic patterns and not interpret what is actually happening in a given situation, then this would be a violation of international law governing the conduct of war. And on top of that, it would be difficult to determine who should be held criminally responsible for such a violation. But this doesn’t mean that the military should forego technology. What it means is that we first have to think very carefully about when and how much decision-making power can be delegated from human to machine. This will vary according to context and – also dependent on this context – the military will need a few new rules. This is no big deal, after all the military are very good at drawing up and obeying rules. But unfortunately, the many misunderstandings surrounding the terms “artificial intelligence” and “machine learning” and all the hype about “AI in the armed forces” in general is



currently making it difficult to implement this kind of common-sense approach. Drawing up new rules for dealing with autonomy in the weapons systems of today is a lot of work, and not as sexy as the continued dreaming of tomorrow.

***Ai:** But one could argue that, particularly in the military sector, it's not so much dreaming of tomorrow as focussing on very real security issues. Or would you say that there's no justification for worrying that we might end up lagging behind China, for example, the longer we continue to dwell on the risks of new technology? It's painful enough to lag behind in economic terms, but when it comes to the military this can quickly take on an existential dimension.*

Frank Sauer: It's interesting that you specifically mention China. China is well aware of the secu-

urity risks associated with an unregulated, offensive use of weapons systems that "autonomously" select and engage targets, i.e. without effective or meaningful human



Looming threat? When humans are totally removed from the decision cycle, the humanitarian risks rise significantly.
Source: © Ognen Teofilovsk, Reuters.

control. One of the main effects of having a completely automated decision cycle would be the enormous acceleration of operations. The Chinese have coined the eerily beautiful term “battle-field singularity” to describe the point at which human cognition can no longer keep pace with developments on the battlefield. Everyone – and above all the countries at the forefront of technology – is well aware that this entails considerable risks of escalation.

***Ai:** Comparisons are often drawn between a hand-wringing West, which allows itself to be held back by ethical and regulatory issues, and China, which forges ahead without hesitation. Do you think that’s fair?*

Frank Sauer: Don’t get me wrong, there’s definitely an element of truth in that. We only have to look at the latest developments in China with regard to human germline engineering, which clearly breaches existing taboos. And I still have my doubts about the willingness expressed by China at the United Nations in Geneva to sign up to an international

treaty banning the use of fully autonomous weapons systems. China loves to create this kind of diplomatic smokescreen. The point I was trying to make was that, despite this, there is a general awareness of the risks on all sides. Not only in China, but also in the US. The former US Deputy Secretary of Defence Bob Work, for instance, who was responsible under Obama for promoting the issue of AI and robotics in the US armed forces, made it abundantly clear that the US was not willing to be the first to cross the Rubicon, but that it had to be prepared to be the second across in an emergency. So risk awareness is one thing, but internationally binding political agreements are another. This brings us back to the dilemma addressed by your question – the classic security dilemma in the international system, including all the associated incentives offered by unregulated arms. To put it in a nutshell: “Since I can’t be sure my opponent won’t build killer robots, I’d better build them myself.” But in addition to this individual risk, there are collective risks, which are now well understood. Just think of the implications for international security and stability. When humans are totally removed from the decision cycle, there’s a danger that things operating at machine speed could spin furiously out of control and escalate unintentionally. There are also significant humanitarian risks, such as civilian suffering, not to mention the key ethical question of whether we want future wars to involve this kind of “automated” killing, thereby uncoupling it from our judgments, decisions and consciences. The German government uses this risk of crossing an ethical red line to justify its negative attitude towards delegating kill decisions to machines in wartime – an attitude that former Defence Minister Ursula von der Leyen and the German Ambassador to the United Nations in Geneva, Peter Beerwerth, recently publicly reiterated. Recognising these risks should not be dismissed as simply hand-wringing on the part of the West. On the contrary – who else is supposed to stand up for the values and standards affected by these developments on the international stage? It’s not likely to be China.

***Ai:** In the end, then, it comes down to a classic risk assessment: how highly do I rate the risk of the unregulated use of autonomous weapons systems as compared to the risk of lagging behind on military technology, perhaps because I misjudged the intentions of my counterpart? Is that right?*

Frank Sauer: Yes, that’s right.

***Ai:** Given this kind of risk assessment, do you believe it’s realistic to expect the stakeholders involved to come to some kind of agreement on effective arms control in this area?*

Frank Sauer: In principle, it’s possible. That’s how we ended up with agreements between

the superpowers on things like nuclear arms control. If the collective risks are understood and taken seriously, then it should be possible to steer particular developments on arms control in other fields too, and in this way limit a potential arms race. That’s obvious, as otherwise we wouldn’t have any form of arms control at all, neither for nuclear, chemical or biological weapons, nor for anti-personnel mines, cluster munitions or blinding lasers. But we do have these controls, so I think it’s too early to throw in the towel in this case. As a community of states, we can still insure ourselves against these collective risks, which are far greater than the risks posed to the individual state.

This would above all benefit the countries that are at the forefront of technology, as the kind of technology that is used for autonomy in weapons systems has largely been borrowed from the civilian sector, and so it diffuses much more quickly than the sophisticated military technology of the past. This means there will not be a monopoly on autonomy in weapons systems, such as that enjoyed for a while by the US with its stealth technology. Nevertheless, we are currently in a political phase in which enthusiasm for international arms control is on the decline rather than on an upswing. Existing treaties and agreements are being eroded, and urgently needed new ones are not being negotiated. At the UN in Geneva, talks on autonomy in weapons systems are progressing slowly, to put it mildly. This is why – although I believe arms control is both possible and necessary – I think we can't realistically expect to see any great progress in the near future. We will probably have to put the “arms control winter” of the Trump-Putin-Xi-era behind us first.

Ai: To what extent is it possible to control these new technologies? You say these technologies are spreading much faster than in the past, so what are the possibilities for effectively preventing this spread, or for identifying potential violations and then imposing sanctions where necessary?

progress being made in technology is in the civilian sector, where we hope to take every imaginable advantage of the developments being made. We shouldn't try to stop progress and anyway we probably can't. But we need rules for dealing with this kind of technology. Our best chance of developing such rules is to stop talking about technology and instead to take a differentiated look at humans and their potential future role in warfare. How should we design meaningful human control over weapons systems, and when should it be used? Do we need to intercept projectiles approaching at lightning speed? If so, then humans can confidently be taken out of the decision cycle and the task delegated to a defensive machine. If, on the other hand, it's a matter of planning and deliberately carrying out an attack that may cost human lives, then humans should continue to decide on the selection and engagement of targets, take legal responsibility for the decision and bear it on their consciences. So we are basically talking about the regulation of military practices and the context-specific adjustment of the man-machine relationship in the military.

Frank Sauer: It cannot and should not be about controlling technology. Especially as most of the

Ai: This sounds like an enormous challenge in itself – not to mention the question of how to effectively verify compliance with the rules once they have finally been agreed.

the area of arms control. Not constantly and everywhere, but now and then, in specific cases. But that's not a reason to have no rules at all. It's only on this basis that sanctions can be legitimately applied. It is indeed difficult to verify the retention of meaningful human control over weapon systems as a general rule, with the exception of defending against incoming munitions. This is a much greater challenge than monitoring compliance with arms control treaties in other areas, such as nuclear weapons, where we can

Frank Sauer: Of course this is no easy task; and of course we know that rules are broken, including in

for example count warheads and delivery systems. Yet when it comes to new technologies and domains – including cyberspace and space – there are no comparable, quantitative, monitoring procedures. And research into new instruments for qualitative arms control is still in its infancy. As things stand, I simply don't know whether, or how, we can ensure verification – i.e. the monitoring of rule-compliant behaviour in future arms control. This has not yet been seriously or adequately researched and attempted, so it is too early for a final verdict.

The interview was conducted by Sebastian Enskat.

–translated from German–



Interjection

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2030 Agenda: The Courage to Achieve Sustainability

Sabina Wölkner

Germany needs a public discussion on a broad approach towards sustainability. This is not a call for a backward-looking “ecological agenda”, but instead for overdue reforms regarding economic modernisation, climate protection, and innovation so that more people can live in peace, liberty, and prosperity. The courage to achieve sustainability is necessary if we are to look boldly to the future. The 2030 Agenda shows us the way.

Greta Thunberg and the “Fridays for Future” demonstrators are not the first to insist that we must respect the limits of our planet. The extreme drought and heat that affected even the northernmost parts of Germany and Europe in the past years are underscoring the importance of this demand. No wonder then, that the discussion on sustainability in Germany is dominated by climate protection concerns. Yet, an exclusive focus on climate creates a distorted view of sustainability. Nor is it helpful when climate activists compete for the moral high ground and engage in activities such as harassing passengers at airports in an attempt to shame them for flying – as though blaming and shaming would disguise the fact that airlines all over the world are carrying more passengers today than ever before, and the number of passengers is rising.¹ Although the primary concern of climate protection activists, that CO₂ emissions be reduced, is valid, the number of airline passengers alone suggests that a different approach is needed to save the world. Whether it be abstaining from flying, driving, or eating meat: Given the rise of Asian nations and the growth of other regions around the world, asceticism by itself is no panacea. A far-reaching approach that looks beyond the national context is absolutely essential if we are to find a solution.

In this context, it is worth examining the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which was adopted by the United Nations in 2015. The Agenda requires nothing less than the transformation of our world.² Its understanding of sustainability is underpinned by three elements: It is based on a robust global economy with

technological progress that operates in harmony with the environment and is socially responsible. All states, both developing, emerging and developed nations alike, are called upon to play an equal role in its implementation. The Agenda also challenges citizens. We all need to play our part. However, while one-third of the time allocated to reach the sustainability goals has already elapsed, the 2030 Agenda has received little attention in Germany; only ten per cent of the population are acquainted with the term. And yet, Germans often advocate sustainability.³ How can this contradiction be explained? Why is the Agenda so obscure in Germany?

The Agenda Is More than Climate Protection

One reason is that the 2030 Agenda with its 17 sustainability goals, 169 sub-objectives, along with a multitude of indicators, is not particularly user-friendly. The topics are too complex, “everything is related to everything else”, and a holistic approach is a prerequisite for progress towards the frequently invoked sustainability revolution. Trying to simultaneously achieve the ecological, economic, and social dimensions of the sustainability principle is like squaring a circle. Moreover, no one should be left behind in this process. This doesn’t mean that implementation is impossible. But it will require prioritisation, whose impacts will differ depending on the emphasis. Addressing this issue requires confronting sustainability in all of its facets. For instance, it is only logical that a one-sided focus on climate change means neglecting other elements, be they social or economic. This is why the appeal by Rüdiger Kruse, member of the

Bundestag, for fellow MPs to follow “Nine rules for political work that will make Germany more sustainable”⁴ is a welcome development. He advocates an approach that would reconcile environment, economy, and social concerns. Sustainability is by definition such an approach and Germany’s Christian Democratic Union (CDU) is best positioned to bring it about. As evidenced by its “safeguard creation” slogan, the party’s tradition is no stranger to the idea of sustainability. However, given the emergence of specific ecological movements and interest groups in Germany during the 1980s, the term has become strongly associated with ecological content. Still, only those who deem ecological sustainability to be synonymous with economic performance and social justice, have understood the 2030 Agenda and the course it sets for the future.

Hence, a genuine sustainability revolution cannot be achieved by simply protecting the climate alone. The general, legally binding global climate agreement resulting from the UN Climate Change Conference in Paris, as it was adopted in the post-2015 Development Agenda, certainly represents a giant leap forward. There is a reason why that year is considered the apogee of multilateral cooperation. Yet, even though Germany is demonstrating its commitment to multilateralism in times of increased protectionism and nationalism, not much has been said about the Agenda. Germany has a sustainability strategy. It was revised in 2016 on the basis of the Agenda and updated in 2018 to incorporate the input of non-state actors.⁵ It is a cross-cutting strategy that is present in all departments and has an international dimension. Nevertheless, outside the group of “usual suspects”, little is to be heard about any progress or problems emerging in practice. Last year, a group of experts reached the conclusion that the term of sustainability is omnipresent in politics, but it is not always clear what it entails.⁶ Criticism was not only levelled against the government. Given that there is more than one way to implement the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the parliament would be the place to discuss such approaches. Since this discussion rarely takes

place, sustainability policy degenerates into little more than a technical exercise. This also explains the public’s lack of interest.

CDU members of the *Bundestag* are already calling for the principle of sustainability to be anchored in Germany’s Basic Law.

What counts now is action. In view of an imminent extension of the sustainability strategy, the German Council for Sustainable Development recommends raising the bar. The strategy must not only sound good, it also needs to ensure that goals are achieved. Increased involvement on the part of civil society is the key here. The emphasis is placed on networking between local and regional actors.⁷ *Bundestag* members Kai Whittaker and Andreas Lenz go a step further, calling for the principle of sustainability to be anchored in Germany’s Basic Law.⁸ That would represent a seismic shift, but according to the former President of Germany’s Federal Constitutional Court, Hans-Jürgen Papier, it is the right course. Papier believes that the system of parliamentary democracy means that insufficient attention is paid to precautions. There needs to be a social balance not only within generations but between them, too.⁹ CDU Chairwoman Annegret Kramp-Karrenbauer also wants to elevate sustainability to constitutional status, calling for a specific implementation of policies that ensure ecological sustainability in addition to economic sustainability. Her aim is leaving neither piles of rubbish nor debts to the future generations.¹⁰ One thing is certain: This effort will be binding only if sustainability becomes a guiding budgetary principle; this would mean budgets systematically taking SDGs into account as early as draft form, and the parliament conducting effective sustainability checks on the government. The first step must therefore be to expand the authority of the Parliamentary Advisory Council on Sustainable Development, making

it equal to that of *Bundestag* committees.¹¹ The Federal Ministry of Finance is considering how budget checks could take sustainability criteria into account.¹²

The Agenda Is Not an Elite Project

We must also actively contribute to shaping the SDG process at the global level. It is true that many German citizens perceive the UN to be out of touch with reality, but it is essential for the global sustainability revolution. It is the only place where all nations come together, and the Agenda itself is the embodiment of multilateralism. Its portfolio provides a foreign policy coordinate system and covers the forward-looking issues of our time. Nevertheless, the effectiveness of the UN's process can be improved. For instance, progress in implementing the SDGs is discussed annually at the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF). Still, the Forum can be successful only if it has genuine support. This stance is not shared by all actors involved. The Voluntary National Reviews discussed at the HLPF are an example of this. Here, governments voluntarily submit their implementation reports. The instrument is enjoying growing popularity. This year, 47 states (seven of them for the second time), submitted reviews under the motto "Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality".¹³ By way of comparison: In 2017, there were 43. But the fact that even Russia announced a report clearly shows that the texts have little to do with reality. There are limits to comparing the reports of different countries. Despite guidelines and minimum standards, the reports can differ quite considerably – not only in scope, but also in quality. The gravest deficiency, however, is that insufficient HLPF authority has meant no binding consequences. The manner in which the forum works impedes its success. Experts are calling for structural reforms, a political upgrade to the forum, and more effective involvement of civil society.¹⁴ There is much at stake. At the forum, and especially at the SDG summit, it is not only about exchanging experiences, but also about political momentum, too. That is why it is currently in such a poor state. The highly charged

atmosphere and conflict between the leading powers make global governance appear weak. In spite of that, the 2030 Agenda and the commitment to sustainable development were mentioned in the final communiqué of this year's G20.¹⁵ The sustainability revolution will require more dedication. This fact is underscored by the poor interim results presented at this year's Sustainability Summit in New York. Countries such as Denmark, Sweden, and Finland are in the top ten when it comes to implementing SDGs, and Germany is in sixth place. But they and the rest of the G20 countries (the US is ranked 35) must increase their commitment.¹⁶ Or formulated differently: At the current pace, even the Nordic countries will be unable to reach the goals by 2030. A primary point of criticism is consumption behaviour on the part of rich industrialised countries (SDG 12). The UN warned that without an improved performance by the G20, which makes up two-thirds of the world's population and is responsible for 75 per cent of global CO₂ emissions, the Agenda will fail. China, India, and the US are in large part responsible. But Australia and the United Kingdom, too, are not doing well with respect to "negative spill over effects".¹⁷ That is why international organisations such as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) argue that governance structures should be arranged strictly according to sustainability criteria to accelerate internal transformation processes.¹⁸

The Agenda Is More Than Development Policy

It is also important not to get caught up in standard viewpoints. A hyper-connected world with a variety of demographic developments and growing migratory movements, will result in geopolitical shifts. If the estimates forecasting a rise in global population from 7.1 billion to 9.7 billion by 2050 are correct, humanity and the planet will face immense challenges. While Africa's population will double by 2050 and rise to four billion by 2100, Europe's population will decline sharply.¹⁹ In Africa's dry regions, the great population growth will go hand in hand with pressure on already scarce resources such as water or





Not on their own! Industrial nations have a duty to help out developing countries reach their sustainable development goals. Source: © Jianan Yu, Reuters.

fertile areas of cultivation. The UN warned that the planet loses 24 billion tonnes of fertile land due to land degradation each year.²⁰ The effects on security and stability in the affected countries, especially those with weaker state structures, are easy to imagine. Having said this, the risk of instability and conflict will not only apply

to poor countries. The conversion to regenerative forms of energy may deprive prosperous countries dependent on fossil fuel exports of essential sources of income, and hence trigger a spiral of destabilisation. A rapid socioeconomic revolution could also accelerate the erosion of state institutions.²¹ This risk primarily affects

countries in the Middle East and Africa, but Latin America is also greatly dependent on fossil fuel exports.

At the same time, the Agenda addresses competition and the question of who will be the leaders in future technologies. Among these technologies is renewable energy. Germany's energy revolution has put it in a favourable position, and German companies have gained valuable experience to conquer the markets. Yet, it is China that now leads the way when it comes to expanding its renewable energy capacities. Other growth centres in Asia also need to be taken into account.²² As early as 2027, India may overtake China as the most populous country in the world. According to forecasts more than 60 per cent of the global middle class will live in Asia. In 2015, the number was only about 46 per cent.²³ In the 2018 Fortune Global 500 Ranking, 210 of the 500 largest companies (by earnings) came from Asia. One consequence of growth could be that the global value chain, in which many Asian countries and local companies are still at the bottom of the prosperity ladder, could soon reverse. Asia's rise will certainly lead to greater energy demand, consumption, and production. Viewed globally, this could wipe out the climate protection progress achieved by the West.

The transition to a resource-saving, environmentally-friendly growth model requires a financial sector that is oriented towards sustainability.

In order to keep pace with economic and technological developments in the West, more attention must be paid to the SDGs. They are the engine of modernisation and innovation. This implies placing more emphasis on sustainability principles in agriculture, transport, trade policy, and when shaping the single market. We

need the relevant European framework in order for this to work. So far, however, the European Consensus on Development has only adjusted development policy cooperation.²⁴ Much hope is on the president-elect of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, to focus on this task. She recently announced a "Green New Deal", which aims at the EU's carbon neutrality by 2050. At the same time, capital is necessary for a transition to a resource-saving, environmentally-friendly growth model. This involves aligning the financial sector as a whole. The European Commission has recently proposed legislation to that end.²⁵ In the limelight of the proposal stands a classification system that allows to clarify which activities can be labelled as sustainable. The Federal Ministry of Finance has initiated a "sustainable finance" strategy process.

The Agenda Means Taking Responsibility

It is important to have an honest discussion. Not everyone will automatically be a winner in the revolution that has been set in motion. The transition stage is fraught with risk of instability and crisis, to which the weakest are most susceptible. At the global level, the weakest are fragile countries, and according to the World Bank this applies to 36 countries with slightly more than half being located in Africa. Their fragility does not manifest itself in war and other prolonged conflicts of a violent nature, but instead affects all countries in which people live in extreme poverty or are exposed to unbearable levels of crime, weak state institutions, or natural disasters.²⁶ It is obvious that these countries will face the greatest challenge when it comes to achieving the sustainability goals. Not surprisingly, in many places women and children will bear the brunt of this. At the moment, 15 countries, including Niger, Nigeria, and Afghanistan, are far "off track".²⁷ Nor are there reliable data that would more accurately determine the deficits. The industrialised nations are therefore obliged to assist these countries in achieving the SDGs by providing humanitarian aid, engaging in economic and development cooperation, and lending support in establishing statistical

and monitoring systems. To date, few countries, even in the EU, have allocated the agreed-upon 0.7 per cent of GDP for official development assistance (ODA). However, it would be a mistake to focus on market forces alone. Both public and private investment are necessary in order to tackle the challenges in these countries. Smart regulation can help set the right course; global value-added chains are an example of this. In the past, developing and emerging countries benefited from these chains owing to their low wages. While in turn consumers in rich countries benefited from low prices. Yet, the internationally interwoven economy is exerting high levels of competitive pressure.²⁸ Whereas in developing countries this pressure has often manifested itself in the form of poor working conditions and greater pollution, in industrialised states competition with low-wage countries translated into stagnating wages and unemployment within several industries. Consumers can support sustainability as well as making their decisions to purchase goods conditional upon social and ecological criteria; however, that is not enough to correct social disparities within societies or abuses at local production sites. Companies must also assume responsibility. In 2016, Germany adopted the National Action Plan for Business and Human Rights, requiring all actors in a supply chain to adhere to the UN's Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.²⁹ Nevertheless, it is proving difficult to implement the plan on a manufacturing process that is distributed across a vast number of countries and producers. Still, the obligation of business to fulfil this is only one side of the coin. Governments in developing countries must do more, too. If the vicious cycle of poverty and precarious employment conditions is to be broken, there needs to be an increase in productivity. Providing better framework conditions and market access to the private sector are just as important. Given that national efforts often fall short of the mark, international cooperation and financing are essential. It was against this background that the UN adopted the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. Unlike earlier development financing, ODA and private investment is to be supplemented by increased tax revenues

in the developing countries themselves in order to pave the way for SDG implementation. Experts point out, however, that little has been accomplished so far. The existing gaps in financing cannot be closed this way, especially not in low-income countries.³⁰

There is therefore no doubt that “business as usual” will not achieve anything in regards to the 2030 Agenda. Without decisive action, no country, not even Germany, will achieve the SDGs by 2030. Such action will require public discussion of a broad approach to sustainability. This is not a call for a backward-looking “ecological agenda”, but instead for overdue reforms regarding economic modernisation, climate protection, and innovation so that we can continue to live in peace, liberty, and prosperity as well as enabling other people to do so in the future. Germany's Chancellor Angela Merkel recently called on Germany to “make the future its home”³¹. We should take this challenge to heart. The courage to achieve sustainability is necessary, if we are to look boldly to the future. The 2030 Agenda shows us the way.

—translated from German—

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Environmental Migration: A Challenge for Security Policy

Franziska Fabritius

It is generally well known that people may be forced to leave their homes due to violent conflict or a lack of economic prospects. But what about droughts, water shortages, and the impact of rising sea levels on islands and coastal areas? From a security policy perspective, it is advisable to take a closer look at migration movements that are directly or indirectly linked to climate change, the effects of which can be observed worldwide. After all, these effects have the potential to exacerbate current instabilities and to destabilise other countries and regions.

The oasis towns of southern Morocco are gradually disappearing.¹ Soil erosion, rising temperatures, and lack of rainfall are causing the surrounding desert to spread, and local people are already being deprived of their livelihoods. Meanwhile, hurricanes and cyclones are sinking entire regions beneath floodwaters, as occurred in Mozambique, Zimbabwe, and Malawi in March 2019 in the wake of Cyclone Ida. Hundreds of thousands of people suddenly lost everything. These two examples highlight the impact of climate change on people in vulnerable regions, and the global threat to security and peace it poses, as well as its resultant migration flows.

Environmental migration can pose a security risk in the short or long term, in the countries of origin, transit, and destination. The situation is further exacerbated by the fact that climate change is closely interconnected with socio-economic factors. In the countries of origin of environmental migrants, it is mainly an issue of increasingly scarce resources. Gradual or sudden changes to the environment, such as a decline in sources of drinking water, soil degradation, increasing desertification, and habitat loss are intensifying competition between people. This makes it more likely that disputes will arise over resource distribution, or even violent clashes about existing resources. People decide to leave their home countries, or are forced to do so by circumstances. Others remain in their country but move elsewhere as internal migrants. However, environmental change is not the only reason why people decide to

migrate. It can be a combination of many factors, such as a lack of economic opportunities.

Internal Migration

Migration may occur within the country of origin (internal migration) or to neighbouring countries (cross-border or transnational migration). If long distances are covered, for example across continents, this is known as international migration. It is interesting to take a look at the figures for the last few years: in 2015, 8.6 million people fled violence and conflict. In the same period, the International Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) noted that there were more than twice as many displacements due to extreme weather events and environmental disasters (19.2 million people).² By 2016, the gap had grown still further, with 24.2 million people fleeing extreme weather events and environmental disasters and 6.9 million fleeing violence and conflict. These figures only refer to internal migrants as a subgroup of the 65 million refugees counted worldwide in 2015 and 2016.

Deep inequalities between regions are one reason why people decide to migrate and seek a new place to live. In North Africa, for example, nomadic tribes are abandoning the deserts and settling in inhabited areas or moving closer to the cities.³ In Morocco, rural-urban migration is already occurring because of changes to the environment. This rural exodus occurring worldwide is likely to be exacerbated by climate change and its consequences, posing major challenges for

cities in the affected regions. Additional people results in additional pressure on urban infrastructure (housing, health care, jobs, schools, etc.) in these countries. These cities are often already being pushed to breaking point and unable to cope with these additional pressures.

Planned migrations are often determined by push and pull factors: those factors which attract migrants to a particular region, and those which deter them from staying in their home region. Unexpected environmental changes are not part of the equation, as hurricanes, heavy rain, and flooding leave no time for considered decisions about whether or not to migrate. People who leave their homes under such circumstances are simply seeking to survive and looking for shelter. According to the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), today's environmental migration mainly constitutes of internal migration.⁴ This trend is likely to intensify. For many people, cross-border migration is not an option due to their personal circumstances.⁵

Unlike war refugees, environmental migrants continue to have no legal recognition.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) is responsible for the worldwide census of refugees and migrants. However, this only counts people who have crossed a state border, because these are the only ones who can claim a degree of legal protection.⁶ This practice has serious consequences for the care of the people affected. In the wake of a sudden natural disaster, they usually receive international emergency aid, but their long-term needs are not secured, particularly in light of ongoing climate change.

Moreover, environmental migrants have not yet been given legal recognition, and there is no compulsory recording. Migration or flight due to environmental or climate change is not

covered by international or national legislation. Since 1951, the Geneva Convention on Refugees has regulated the legal status of refugees under international law, but this also offers no help, and in fact it completely excludes the protection of internal migrants. Today, environmental migrants are often lumped in with economic migrants, a practice that appears somewhat short-sighted. For the one part, it does not correspond to the facts, and for the other, it offers no prospect of the legal status of environmental migrants being clarified.⁷

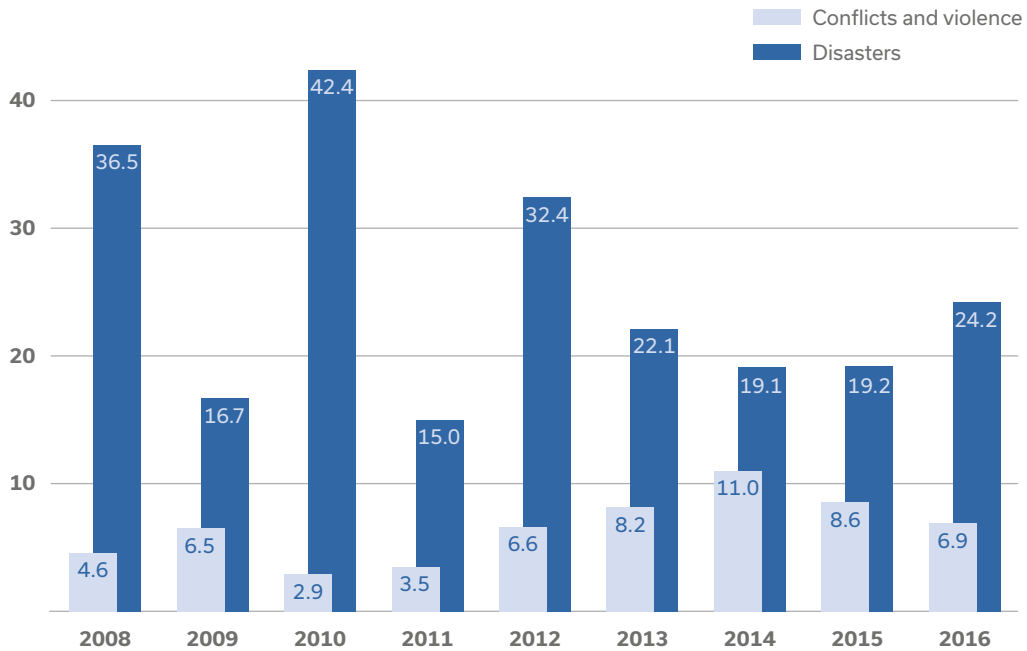
A solution is urgently needed in light of the fact that environmental migration is expected to increase in the coming decades. This means a binding approach under international law must be created for this new generation of refugees. They need to be provided with a legal status that is commensurate with their situation, otherwise there is potential for a significant risk to security in the broader sense of the word. The human dimension of security needs above all to be taken into account, that is ensuring the security of the individual, as well as ensuring public order and promoting a peaceful society.

Useful initial steps were taken in this direction when the Nansen Initiative was set up by Norway and Switzerland in 2012. It focusses on developing appropriate solutions to this issue, and is supported by funding from Germany and the EU, among others. Its agenda is currently being advanced by the Platform⁸ on Disaster Displacement.⁹ Another positive step is the inclusion of environmental factors and climate change as causes of migration in the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants, as agreed at the UN Summit for Refugees and Migrants on 19 September 2016.

One Cannot Know How Many There Will Be

Although we understand the challenge, we are not currently in a position to make an accurate assessment of the likely scale of environmental migration.¹⁰ Most of the figures being bandied about are mere guesstimates, i.e. rough estimates or speculation.¹¹ This is mainly because

Fig. 1: Total Number of New Annual Displacements Since 2008 (in Millions)



Source: Own illustration based on IDMC/NRC 2017, n. 2.

there is no agreement on what constitutes a generally accepted definition of the phenomenon, nor upon the method for collecting figures and data. On top of this, the manifold causes of environmental migration make it difficult for experts to base their estimates on reliable research.¹² It seems likely that the figures suggested by Professor Norman Myers of Oxford University are the most accurate. In the early 2000s, he stated that if global warming continued, the world could expect to see around 200 million migrants by 2050 as a result of climate change.¹³ In late 2017, the President of the Federal Intelligence Service, Bruno Kahl, said that the global scale of environmental migration would grow “dramatically” to reach the hundreds of millions.¹⁴

In light of the current political situation around the globe, it seems likely that migration is set to increase rather than decrease. The effects of climate change will only be clearly felt in the coming years and decades if decisive steps are not taken to tackle global warming.

Environmental Migration as a Security Risk

North Africa, the Sahel, the Caribbean, the Gulf of Mexico, and South and East Asia are all particularly vulnerable to climate change and its impacts. Migration within and from these regions can also have a significant impact on neighbouring countries and continents.

The potential for conflict is exacerbated by internal migration or by unregulated movements of environmental migrants to transit and destination countries. The following are key questions in this respect:

1. Do countries have sufficient capacity to adequately meet the basic needs of migrants in terms of food, medical care, housing, jobs, etc. in their new place of residence?
2. Could the influx of migrants lead to ethnic or religious tensions in transit and destination countries?

3. How likely is it that parallel societies will develop in the transit or host country?
4. What is the host country willing and able to do with regard to granting migrants the right of residence and basic rights?
5. Can government bodies in the countries of origin, transit, and destination meet this new challenge within a reasonable timeframe and with adequate resources, if such resources are even available?
6. Is the political system in the transit or destination country sufficiently stable to deal with a large influx of migrants (possibly within a short period of time)?¹⁵

Whether migration ends up being a destabilising or stabilising factor largely depends on the political situation in the countries of origin and destination. If entire regions become uninhabitable and their inhabitants have to move elsewhere, this will be on a scale that we have never seen before. This is where environmental migration has to be considered from a security perspective. In particular, migratory flows involving “mass and sudden cross-border migration”¹⁶ would trigger a reaction in the host countries concerned and place a severe burden on their local infrastructure and supply systems. In general, people in host countries are prepared to accept the short-term admission of migrants, viewing the provision of emergency aid as a humanitarian duty. However, the situation is different when it comes to accepting migrants on a long-term or permanent basis. This is where the focus is likely to shift towards a mindset of competition between migrants and the local population, particularly with regard to the availability of resources in the host country, such as water, food, energy, housing, and jobs. These cannot simply be expanded *ad infinitum*, so it would be necessary to share out the existing resources. It is hard to imagine that the local population will accept a drop in their own standard of living. As such, this could potentially lead to conflict between the different social groups, or indeed to demarcation from each other.

Uncontrolled mass migration can also pose a threat to external security for the respective countries of origin, transit, and destination. If a state is unable to control or regulate the influx of migrants and thus loses control over its external borders, it loses its territorial sovereignty. This has a considerable impact on its own stability and on the stability of the neighbouring region or federation of states to which it belongs.¹⁷ Further tensions can also be exacerbated if divisions emerge in society. These might involve the following: migrants who increasingly align themselves with their network or religion; militant extremist groups that seek to mobilise migrants for their own ends; and refugees and asylum seekers who are specifically smuggled in to carry out violent actions in transit or destination states.¹⁸ Furthermore, right-wing and xenophobic groups in the indigenous population may win increasing numbers of supporters. All these trends may lead to an erosion of the host state’s democratic structures. If the political system is undermined to the point where a country is no longer able to act, this would pose a major security risk both for the host country and the international system.

Fragile states are particularly vulnerable to the effects of climate change.

Other country-specific factors that intensify conflict in both the countries of origin and destination also have to be considered. These include economic output, raw material resources, population size and expected population growth, and the natural environment. In addition, if there is already conflict in the immediate vicinity of states affected by environmental change, the risks of contagion and destabilisation are high. It has been shown that environmental migration can trigger a real chain reaction. It fits into the dense web of “undesirable socio-economic trends such as overpopulation, poverty, [...] famine, political instability and ethnopolitical tensions”¹⁹, the negative impacts of which are often exacerbated by environmental change.

BORDER CON



Uncertain future: Whether migration ends up being a destabilising or stabilising factor largely depends on the political situation in the countries of origin and destination. [Source: © Guglielmo Mangiapane, Reuters.](#)

As a result, efforts in the area of environmental and climate policy must also be understood and advanced in the sense of preventive security policy. A collapse of, or non-compliance with, climate change agreements would have a major impact on international security and stability.

Recommended Action and Future Prospects

One thing is certain – environmental migration is set to increase. It is similarly clear that environmental migration poses considerable security challenges, which can have global impacts,

be they direct or indirect. This kind of migration initially destabilises the countries of origin. In the case of cross-border migration, this instability can spread to neighbouring countries, or to entire regions. Fragile states are at particular risk of destabilisation when faced with the effects of climate change and the resulting environmental migration.

The events of 2015/2016, involving partly uncontrolled migration to Europe in general and Germany in particular, drew the attention of the public and of politicians to the consequences



of mass migration. In order to avoid a similar scenario in the future, the international community, and more specifically Germany and the EU, should intensify their support to the regions concerned. This could help to prevent the destabilisation of these regions and counter another massive flow of migrants to Europe. With regard to the climate change – migration – security nexus, this means there must be a much stronger focus on prevention.

Regions in the vicinity of Germany and the European Union, such as North Africa, sub-Saharan

Africa, and the Middle East, are particularly vulnerable to the consequences of climate change. Germany and the EU could conceivably continue to pursue their current path of combatting the acute effects of displacement and migration and their causes, for example within the framework of the three special initiatives of the German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). The aim should be to create opportunities at the local level by focussing on the economy, trade, education, and employment. This includes encouraging private sector investment in their own countries and the creation of incentives for foreign investment in the region. At this stage, it would be short-sighted to concentrate solely on increasing incomes, as this would probably only fuel migration further. As things stand, cross-border migration is not an option for many people because they cannot afford it. Therefore, the focus must also be on improving people's lives in the affected regions as a whole (e.g. health care, schooling, housing) in order to prevent emigration. Training programmes are vital for harnessing the potential of the local workforce. There is also an urgent need for educational programmes for the entire population of the regions concerned, in order to raise awareness and increase their understanding of the situation. Many people in the region work in agriculture, and they need to be supported with adaptation measures to climate change, such as through introducing them to new methods of cultivation or by providing them with more resilient seeds. This would provide small-scale farmers with long-term income prospects.

However, steps to protect the environment and adapt to climate change have to go far beyond the agricultural sector. Funding, technology, and expertise in the field of renewable energies, water supply, coastal protection, etc. will be required to support the affected regions, as stated in the final reports of the UN climate conferences. Germany and the EU need to come up with realistic action plans and implement them promptly and comprehensively. This kind of preventative action will strengthen the resilience of affected populations, countries, and political institutions. In

host countries, it is vital to take targeted action that cuts across policy fields in order to counteract the destabilising effects of a mass influx of environmental migrants. To this end, the instruments of development cooperation and economic, climate, and security policy must be linked together.

In all such efforts to support the economy and protect the environment, it is important not to neglect the fact that countries in the region are required to comply with international law, such as human rights legislation. It is also important to support the opening up of political systems in the region, as this plays a key role in stabilising the region and, in turn, helps to curtail the potential for security problems. Some dictatorial regimes lack the will to restrict emigration from their countries and effectively counter security risks in this way. They often view emigration as a way of mitigating domestic problems, such as high youth unemployment, while reaping the benefits of remittances that migrants send back to their home countries. Worldwide private money transfers by migrants and refugees to their home countries now far exceed global state development aid.²⁰

In addition to the approaches described above, it is also important to expand research into environmental migration. This is the only way to gain a better understanding of the impact of and challenges posed by environmental migration, along with more clarity about its scale. Only when we understand what we need to prepare for can we develop targeted strategies for the countries of origin, transit, and destination. Existing platforms and databases relating to climate events should be involved much more in prevention work. For example, the FEWS NET early warning system could be used to predict possible droughts, so that the impact of an incipient drought on the local population could be mitigated. This kind of action, along with prevention in general, would cost the international community much less than responding to natural catastrophes after the event. If climate change continues to advance as expected, the international community must recognise

environmental migration as an adaptation strategy. The people affected should be provided with an appropriate and orderly system to help them adapt to climate change. This should include setting up legal structures and providing opportunities for legal cross-border migration. If migration is to be an effective adaptation strategy to climate change and other environmental changes, the global migration process has to work in a structured manner.

In the short term, German and European leaders should focus on prevention and adopt a more networked approach in view of Africa's demographic development, the consequences of climate change, and growing migratory pressures. This approach should combine development policy, and humanitarian, economic, diplomatic, and security aspects in order to deal with security risks at source. Quite apart from environmental migration, the advance of globalisation, and the growing inter-connectedness of so much of the world, along with the ever-growing flood of available information all provide for an increased mobility of people. Governments need to pay heed to these changes and take them into account when drawing up specific legislation. For example – particularly for Germany –, this might include a modern situation-oriented immigration law with a range of transfer options enabling the profitable usage of the potential created by migration in order to benefit the migrant's host country. In times of globalisation, we are all aware of the devastating effects – particularly for the economy – of adopting an anti-immigration policy.²¹ However, every action is not only determined by the way in which it is carried out, but also by the question of legitimacy. We cannot ignore that fact that society's values and interests are often diametrically opposed on issues such as climate, migration, and security. Faced with these differing opinions, it is vital to involve the public in the decision-making process if potential actions are to succeed. Involving the public in the processes of political decision-making processes, whether in Germany or in another country, strengthens the legitimacy of these decisions and leads to

greater social acceptance. This involvement is essential in light of the challenges we face in the 21st century.

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-translated from German-

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