

A GLOBAL SPRING – WHY NATO NEEDS TO GO GLOBAL

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Abstract

Much ink has been spent on the question in which direction NATO should develop in the future. Although a consensus among its members is still lacking, this article argues that NATO should open its membership to all consolidated democracies and hence turn into a global organisation. This thesis is supported by historical evidence on the nature of international organisations and the lack of a thorough rearrangement of international organisations following the end of the Cold War. It outlines a theoretical formula to guide a global enlargement in practical terms, calling to invite those countries that would add to NATO's capabilities without adding a potential in new conflicts.

Key Words

International Organisations, NATO, Enlargement, New World Order, Promotion of Democracy.

1. Introduction

Security alliances are built to defend a group of countries against a shared perception of threat. This threat, commonly referred to as the *casus foederis*, defines the core function of the alliance. In contrast to regional organisations which aim to establish an unlimited and intensifying integration over time, historically security alliances end as soon as the threat ceases to exist. Today, NATO seems to be uniquely institutionalised, cooperation has been so intense and so successful that even though the danger is gone, the member states nonetheless want to continue to find shelter and defence under the common umbrella. International alliances, on a more general note, refuse to die. The demise of the threat or the declining importance of the common cause is expressed only by the declining importance of the organisation in the foreign policy priorities of the member states. The North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, by far the world's most important security

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alliance, was established to defend Western Europe and the United States against the Soviet Union. Since the breakdown of the Warsaw Pact it has looked for a common course, while all the time attracting more and more members. It prevented genocide in Kosovo in 1999, helped the victims of natural disasters as in Pakistan at the close of 2005 and is currently fighting the Taleban and rebuilding Afghanistan. This wide range of activities could indicate that the organisation is simply more ambitious than ever before or is lost while it looks for a new common denominator among its members for what it actually stands.

As the *casus foederis*, the threat posed by the Warsaw Pact, ceased some authors question the need for NATO to stay in business altogether, citing distinct strategic cultures to underscore that Europe and the United States have evolved into allies that do not fit together any longer.² A consensus has nonetheless developed in the academic literature that NATO should remain in business, although disagreement persists whether the alliance should turn into a global or rather a political alliance.³ How to involve international partners into the organisation is another major issue in the debate: while those who want to preserve the alliance as a mere transatlantic organisation would give international partners such as Australia the status of partners at maximum,⁴ full membership for democratic states is a viable option as this article intends to show.

In order to show that an international expansion of NATO would be an adequate response to the changing geopolitical landscape, the paper will make some remarks on the role of international organisations from this perspective of contemporary history. The aim is to explain that global power changes after the end of world wars historically translated into a new international institutional system that mirrored these changes. Such a rearrangement of global institutions has, this paper argues, not materialised since the end of the Cold War. In its third section the paper will tackle some of the threats to the security of NATO that emerged after the end of the Cold War; though these challenges are now commonly known, it develops the impact these threats might have as potential criteria for the next round of NATO's enlargement

² Wyn Rees and Richard J. Aldrich, "Contending Cultures of Counterterrorism: Transatlantic Divergence or Convergence?", *International Affairs*, Vol. 81, No. 5 (2005), p. 906 and Helga Haftendorn, "Transatlantic Stress. Power and Vision Asymmetries complicate US-EU relations", *Internationale Politik Global Edition*, Vol. 9, No. 1 (2008), pp. 68-73.

³ Vincent Pouliot, "The Alive and Well Transatlantic Security Community: A Theoretical Reply to Michael Cox" *European Journal of International Relations*, Vol. 12, No. 1 (2006), pp. 119-127; Jolyon Howorth, "ESDP and NATO. Wedlock or Deadlock?" *Cooperation and Conflict*, Vol. 38, No. 3 (2003), p. 235 and Patrick Keller, "The Future of NATO: Between Overstretch and Irrelevance" *American Foreign Policy Interest.*, Vol. 29, No. 3 (2007), p. 208.

⁴ Karl-Heinz Kamp, "The NATO Summit in Bucharest: The Alliance at a Crossroads", *NATO Research Paper*, Vol. 33, No. 11 (2007).

and to show how these threats might replace the former *casus foederis*. The following section will analyse which countries should be invited to join the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, followed by some preliminary remarks in the conclusion on NATO's role in the twenty-first century.

2. The End of the World As We Know It? – Two Decades without a Post-War Order

Historically, international institutions mirror the distribution of power in international politics. Security alliances, regional organisations and even the United Nations all expressed a specific balance of power, usually the prevalent distribution of power at their foundation. Against this backdrop it is striking how many institutions have been built after the end of World War II and how little effort has been undertaken to establish new institutions or adjust the existing ones to the changing international environment following the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War. The United Nations, NATO, World Bank and the Warsaw Pact all were pillars of a world order established shortly after the end of World War II; at the close of the second decade after the demise of the Warsaw Pact, not a single institution of the same importance has been founded that could effectively reflect the changing balance of power.⁵ This striking lack of efforts to build a new world order stems from two major sources: Firstly, new power centres did not form immediately after the end of the Cold War, quite on the contrary: the breakdown of the Soviet Union and its satellites led to the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact, international institutions and organisations, in which the West had assembled survived. The foundation of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) was neither a new start nor the expression of a changing international power balance, but rather a means to peacefully end the Cold War and the inherent confrontation. Secondly and perhaps more importantly, states that gained international weight following the end of the systemic conflict and the spread of globalisation were not yet as powerful as they are today. Or to put it differently: they were not yet powerful enough to leave their footprint in the international order.⁶ At the same time, the United States wanted to use the unipolar moment without restricting itself through international institutions.⁷ Nevertheless, one could argue that new or

⁵ Francis Fukuyama made a similar case recently: "Given the success of these multilateral institutions [those formed after World War II, D.D.] in promoting democracy, it is striking how little effort has recently been devoted to creating new multilateral institutions or reforming existing ones to advance freedom." Francis Fukuyama and Michael McFaul, "Should Democracy Be Promoted or Demoted?", *The Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 31, No. 1 (2008), p. 42.

⁶ James F. Hoge, "A Global Power Shift in the Making", *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 83, No. 4 (2004), pp. 2-7.

⁷ Richard Higott, "US Foreign Policy and the 'Securitization' of Economic Globalization", *International Politics*, Vol. 41, No. 2 (2004), p. 155.

reformed international institutions would have contributed to a sustainable spread of globalisation and democratisation. While after the end of World War I, for instance, the League of Nations was at least an attempt to build a sustainable international order. This attempt was far more successful after the end of World War II with the establishment of the United Nations, NATO, OSCE to name but a few, no such project, however, was endorsed following the end of the Cold War. The conditions that allowed for the perpetuation of the international order changed considerably and sustainably over the course of the past two decades. The economic rise of China and India will be of lasting nature and has contributed to a global power shift to the East. These countries will gather even more importance in the upcoming years, weight that is not mirrored by the international institutions. But, both Beijing and Delhi will rightly demand that their political leverage is going to be reflected in the international framework.⁸

For these states the only viable alternative to a reform of international institutions will lie in the temptation to build new organisations, which could eventually lead to an erosion of the traditional international order. Against the backdrop of continuing scepticism in the United States against the United Nations, it is becoming even less tempting to increase their influence in the traditional framework of international institutions, such as the UN. Both India and China will find it even more desirable to establish new institutions if the United Nations Security Council finds itself unable to uphold its authority as the sole international legal body to authorise military interventions.⁹ Washington already perceives ideas as compelling that offer international legitimacy for interventions even if the United Nations Security Council decides not to act, especially as the United Nations are rightly viewed as being undemocratic. This vision described by some analysts is best characterized in the phrase of *competing multilateralism*.¹⁰ The United States has, however, done nothing to further develop this idea and to establish institutions that could provide the legitimacy they are seeking. While the World Trade Organisation (WTO) is responsible for harnessing the agenda of global trade and hence globalisation, Washington seemed to believe that the international legitimacy it called for could be provided by NATO only, as in the Kosovo War in 1999. Nonetheless, the floating of such ideas always reflects the deficiency of the current situation.

⁸ Daniel W. Drenzer, "The New World Order", *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 86, No. 2 (2007), p. 36.

⁹ Justin Morris and Nicholas J. Wheeler, "The Security Council's Crisis of Legitimacy and the Use of Force", *International Politics*, Vol. 44, No. 2-3 (2007), pp. 214-231.

¹⁰ Josef Braml, "UN-engagiertes Amerika?", *Internationale Politik*, Vol. 61, No. 12 (2006), pp. 40-47.

Efforts to add additional permanent members to the United Nations Security Council are perhaps the most visible attempt to reform the international institutions, which is in this particular case is also an attempt to regain lost legitimacy.¹¹ While the Security Council was the single most important body to uphold world peace during the Cold War, the international framework changed considerably since the Soviet Union collapsed. During the Cold War the United States and the Soviet Union practically decided what was considered to be a breach of international security due to their status as veto powers in the UNSC. Because the confrontation of the super powers ended, but their special status as veto powers in the Security Council continued, it is hardly surprising that the Council lost influence and importance in the first decade after the end of the Cold War. If a conflict does not necessarily involve one of the two super powers, not every conflict would have to be solved through the United Nations. While the Ogaden War in 1978, for instance, brought Washington and Moscow to the brink of war, such an escalation due to a war on the periphery seems unlikely today, as the 1998 war between Eritrea and Ethiopia clearly illustrates.

Institutions are, roughly speaking, inadequately shaped to face the challenges from the very moment of their foundation. First, the attempt to form a large base of member states usually leaves the organisation less efficient. Because so many international institutions and regional organisations are founded at the expense of efficiency to gain legitimacy, they are extraordinarily static, which makes it difficult to reform or adjust them to a changing international environment.

Although member states may have concurrent interests at the time they come together, they might find themselves with prevailing competing interests over the course of years. International institutions are static elements, while the frameworks in which international politics are conducted are fluid and international politics itself is rather dynamic. This dualism of static organisations and dynamically changing frameworks is accelerated by globalisation's current pace.

Taken together, these changes in the international frameworks and the global power shifts are not mirrored in the current system of international institutions, although this did not lead to a vacuum so far. The most powerful countries, however, are not the most influential in the international

¹¹ Jane Boulden, "Double Standards, Distance and Disengagement: Collective Legitimization in the Post-Cold War Security Council", *Security Dialogue*, Vol. 37, No. 3 (2005), pp. 410, 411-415 and Conflict, Security and Development Group, *A Review of Peace Operations – A Case for Change*, London, King's College London, 2003.

organisations, rendering these institutions increasingly meaningless. As India and China are not yet as powerful as they will be in the upcoming decades, the United States and the West have a time limited window of opportunity not only to reform these organisations, but to create the sort of international environment that would fit the West's vision of a new international order. The West, however, has never developed a vision of a post-World War order although a few pillars of such an order could easily be envisioned. The North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, the most important security alliance in the world, in particular could be one of these pillars if reformed and expanded globally. To illustrate that point the security challenges should be more closely examined in the following section with the intention to show the vision it could carry to form the framework of the international order into the twenty-first century, and to make it even more important than it already is today.

3. Various Global Threats and a Single Response

Thoughts about shaping a post-War order after the end of the Cold War are of paramount importance for the member states of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, although they have not yet been formulated in a systematic fashion. One reason why NATO member states have so far been reluctant to engage in a thorough debate about shaping the future and building a global alliance is that the debate about the expansion of NATO has not been connected to the debate about a new *casus foederis*. Although it has become a common feature of the current discussion to point to international terror networks and failed states, NATO could not find a consensus on how to respond to these threats and what exactly could replace the now outdated *casus foederis*, the defensive alliance against the Soviet Union. The debate on a new consensus on what the new threats to international security constitute, and how to formulate a response, is strikingly unconnected to the debate about whom to invite to join NATO. Quite to the contrary, the only guiding principle for the next round of expansion has been which countries could use a membership in the alliance to consolidate their Western alignment, most visible when the prospective memberships of Georgia and Ukraine are discussed.¹² The debate about the expansion of NATO would be more fruitful if it would be realigned with the basic task of the alliance: its defence. Historically, alliances were formed to counter a specific threat and the current debate should therefore also be centred on the present security challenges.

¹² One of the reasons why many, especially in Washington, want to expand NATO to cover Ukraine and Georgia is that they want to accomplish its Eastern enlargement before Russia would eventually regain the power necessary to drag these countries back into its sphere of influence. Ronald D. Asmus, "Europe's Eastern Promise. Rethinking NATO and EU Enlargement", *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 87, No. 1 (2008), pp. 95-100.

Next to the classical defence of its territory, two challenges are of particular importance: the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and their missile delivery systems on the one hand, and global terror networks on the other. What roles these threats could play in replacing the old *casus foederis* determines the responses to what direction the development of the alliance ought to take; inadequately reflected so far in the debate about whether the alliance could become a tool-box for coalitions of the willing. The proliferation of WMD, for instance, means that even wars with only regional powers could affect the NATO on its own territory.¹³ A threat that is as real to North America as to its European allies. Ballistic missiles fired from North Korea could eventually reach the United States, whereas Iran's missiles are more likely to hit Europe rather than the United States. Non-proliferation policy is hence in the genuine interests of Europe as well as of the United States:

“Hence pre-emptive war against rogue states is nothing but the continuation of arms control policy by other means. Both the military and political objectives are the same: to disarm an adversary that is threatening international security. This matching political and military objective is the uniqueness of the war against the rogue states.”¹⁴

International terrorism is the second challenge that is generally perceived as a threat to the alliance. NATO's members did by no means agree on just how dangerous international terrorism might be and what role NATO should play in fighting it. Its potential role has been discussed at two distinct levels: First, member states disagree on just how important military means are in countering terrorist networks. Second, they question whether NATO is the appropriate tool to fight it. Remarkably though, the discussion focused on how to counter a strategy rather than an enemy. The war is not simply being fought against al-Qaida, but against radical Islamic groups that resort to violence in order to stop the Middle East from catching up not only to the West's material wealth, but also to its values. As a matter of fact, these groups fight democracy, Western values and the harnessing of free market economies by violently promoting their rival utopia, which is strikingly more diffuse and backward than communism.

¹³ Kamran Taremi, “Beyond the Axis of Evil: Ballistic Missiles in Iran's Military Thinking”, *Security Dialogue*, Vol. 36, No. 1 (2005), p. 94.

¹⁴ Glen Segell, “Counter-Proliferating the Rogue States”, *Defense & Security Analysis*, Vol. 20, No. 4 (2004), p. 347.

The discussion about the role of international terror networks is, however, only a symptom of a more fundamental problem: Non-proliferation and the fight against radical Islamic groups can be seen as the two different sides of one coin. Both dangers are asymmetrical in nature and challenge conventional thinking about the alliance's security. Although these challenges might help to agree on what kind of dangers the alliance is going to face, it does not, however, help to formulate what kind of vision of the future the alliance is going to inherit. The missing vision of a post-World War order is prolonged in this debate: on the one hand, because there never was a vision of how the world order should be shaped after the end of the Cold War, no debate could ever unfold about which parts of the current order and hence the institutions it created should be part of the world once the war against radical Islamic groups has been won. And on the other hand, the very notion of Francis Fukuyama's end of history dictum indicates that the international system did not need to be overhauled after the end of the Cold War. Fukuyama's end of history thesis carried a strong teleological moment, in which the forces of the West could be equalled with the forces of modernism and globalisation; they simply had to win over communism and doing so would establish their global lead.¹⁵ A debate about how to shape international institutions and already existing ones was simply unnecessary given that they just triumphed over the only rival concept in place. International institutions, such as the United Nations and NATO were only needed to deal with the complete settlement of conflicts in the world's periphery to materialise the peace dividend in these regions too. The debate about how to shape the world after the end of the Cold War needs to be amplified because it is a prerequisite for the debate on how to refocus NATO and international institutions in the ongoing conflict and how to integrate them into a viable international system once the war against radical Islamic groups is won.

Both, World War II and the Cold War were conflicts over ideas, at their heart was the question whether democracy and the West would prevail and develop so much attraction that the non-integrated parts of the world would eventually seek to enter the West. Backed up by its increasing prosperity, its most attractive and compelling offer was its mixture of democracy and free market liberalism, which proved to be the superior model of society over the course of the Cold War. To gain access to this form of society was the primary motivation for many in the East to overthrow their communist governments and bring down the Warsaw Pact. To win the war against

¹⁵ This understanding of globalisation seems to be widespread in the parts of the defense establishment in the United States. Ian Roxborough, "Globalization, Unreason and the Dilemma of American Military Strategy", *International Sociology*, Vol. 17, No. 3 (2002), pp. 341, 353.

radical Islamic groups, the West has to embrace a similar strategy; it has to reinforce its narrative as the superior one.¹⁶ The West won the Cold War because it basically offered the most attractive model of society and fought the war against communism militarily only at the periphery. The war against the ideology of radical Islam should be easier to win. First while communism held the promise of egalitarian progress, radical Islam certainly does not. And second, the West today is bigger, more consolidated and even more advanced than at the times it fought communism. The strategy of containment, developed by George Frost Kennan in his famous X-article that was leading the struggle against communism was, as Haass rightly pointed out, a strategy of regime change.¹⁷ The current struggle can only be won, if the West reinforces the promise of personal prosperity and links it to the spread of democracy that it is willing to defend, which is one of the most important arguments to expand NATO globally: If the promise of accumulating personal wealth can be materialised outside NATO's defensive structures, as China currently is trying to demonstrate, the West would inevitably lose much of its attractiveness and political coherence. At the same time, globalisation as such has to be promoted. Globalisation could be the catch-phrase for the spread of democracy and free market liberalism alike, but too many outside the West and especially in the countries where the struggle against an anti-modern, radical, and anti-secular ideology is taking place, rather see it as something that would deliberately leave them to exploitative market forces.¹⁸ As Barnett underscored, the United States explained why the war is necessary, but not what the world should look like once the war is over;¹⁹ which again illustrates how desperately a vision for post-World War order is needed. The aforementioned thoughts suggest one conclusion: terrorism and proliferation are the current military challenges for NATO, but NATO's *raison d'être* is the defence of globalisation. To reconcile global economic integration with a global promise of democracy is the core challenge of the upcoming years. Every society that decides to introduce democracy must have the chance to join the protecting umbrella of NATO. Eventually NATO would become a global alliance of democracies that would promise to harness globalisation. This would be a tremendous promise to make to the world and NATO certainly would need help in realising it. Which countries could hence be invited to shape that global alliance?

¹⁶ David Omand, "Countering International Terrorism: The Use of Strategy", *Survival*, Vol. 47, No. 4 (2005), p. 109.

¹⁷ Richard N. Haass, "Regime Change and Its Limits", *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 84, No. 4 (2005), p. 68.

¹⁸ The risks involved when globalisation is not being spread have already been named: "The risks involved are not limited to the extreme case of the second collapse of globalization. Already, the criminalization of economies in many countries is perversely connected to globalization, enabling nimble criminal networks to take advantage of liberalization and deregulation." Ashraf Ghani and Clare Lockhart, "An Agenda for Harnessing Globalization", *The Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 29, No. 4 (2006), p. 68. How negative it is perceived is illustrated by the following examples: Ian Jackson, "The Geopolitics of President George W. Bush's Foreign Economic Policy", *International Politics*, Vol. 44, No. 5 (2007), pp. 572-595 and Higott, "US Foreign Policy and the 'Securitization' of Economic Globalization", pp. 147-175.

¹⁹ Thomas P.M. Barnett, *The Pentagon's New Map. War and Peace in the Twenty-First Century*. New York, 2004, p. 178.

4. Shaping the Future – Building a Global Alliance

If it is true that the challenges of the twenty-first century are of global nature, then it is unlikely that a security alliance such as NATO will survive if it voluntarily confines itself geographically. Allies and the possibility of easy military build-ups around the globe at the organisation's disposal are desirable, as the burden of NATO's mission will increase in the upcoming years in what is underlined by the current debate on the allied engagement in Afghanistan and a possible deployment of NATO troops into the Gaza-Strip. Although a move to expand the alliance globally would necessarily put an end to the current principle of a coherent territory for the alliance, it is becoming increasingly clear that the alliance's burden should be carried by more shoulders. It would certainly be difficult for many politicians in the public sphere to abandon the principle of a security alliance confined to Europe and North America, mainly because during the Cold War the defence of the alliance was widely understood as the defence of the alliance's territory. To a certain extent, this view is carried in NATO's previous rounds of expansion. The countries invited to join the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation were mostly Eastern European countries that belonged to the Warsaw Pact prior to the breakdown of the Soviet Union. It was in East Europe that the alliance developed its attracting aura. The inclusion of these countries into the alliance did not alter the basic defensive rationale of NATO, quite the contrary, the alliance would still be defended on its Eastern boundaries; and although the new member states did not have as effective militaries as the traditional Western European and North American had, their troops were simply added to the alliance. This basic rationale changes as soon as the different nature of the current security challenges is brought into the equation: As the security of the alliance's member states can now be challenged globally, a coherent territory loses its strategic value. Military capabilities can no longer be measured in their sole numerical strength. Military capabilities are added by those that can provide rapid reaction forces or strategic airlift capabilities. Recent rounds of NATO enlargement have thus led either to a decline in importance of military capabilities or to a decline of the military readiness of the alliance.²⁰ Critics argue that against this backdrop, NATO did not gain military abilities from its enlargement, only a vague additional weight in the international arena due to the increased number of member states.

This additional political strength is jeopardised by developments within NATO that point into the direction of a political marginalisation of NATO's

²⁰ Howorth, "ESDP and NATO. Wedlock or Deadlock?", p. 236.

role. Since the end of the Cold War, the alliance's missions are put together by coalitions of the willing, a trend accelerated by programs such as the Partnership for Peace (PfP).²¹ These coalitions of the willing were determined by those willing to deploy troops in the respective mission. The Kosovo as well as the Iraq War indicated that all NATO missions since the end of the Cold War are interventions by those member states willing to get engaged. Or as the recent debate on allied engagement in Afghanistan illustrates the not so willing. Roughly speaking, NATO gained a bit of political weight by its enlargement, but the nature of the interventions undertaken led to a decline of its political coherence. NATO expanded, but it did not grow on a global level. These experiences also indicate that a loose connection of global partners to NATO would not be desirable; such a loose connection would certainly lead to an even greater decline in political comprehensiveness.

The central promise of a global NATO is that it would realign the vision of a globalised military alliance to defend the harnessing of economic, and more importantly, democratic globalisation with a military strengthening of the alliance. Because NATO is still attractive and its member states are still embracing its potential expansion, the question is which guidelines will lead the next round of expansion. All states that could be invited to join NATO must of course share the West's guiding ideas and values and moreover be democratically consolidated; especially as security regimes are not simply made between different governments, but between different people that have to share the same basic ideals.²² Domestic consolidation is of particular importance under the circumstances of globalisation that undoubtedly put more pressure on governments to adjust to foreign and economic pressures, but also underscore the linkages between domestic and foreign security. Precisely because so many Eastern European and Central Asian states haven't yet completed their transition period, it should not be the first priority to offer them membership. Both Georgia and the Ukraine have democratic constitutions, but they are still far from being consolidated democratic cultures. Moreover, neither of these states could offer NATO significant military capabilities. Hence, the leading principle for the next round of enlargement should be that potential members' military capabilities outweigh the potential security risks they would add to the alliance, as military

²¹ Helga Haftendorn, "Koloss auf tönernen Füßen", *Internationale Politik*, Vol. 60, No. 4 (2005), p. 83 and Helga Haftendorn, "Für einen neuen strategischen Dialog im Bündnis. Dialogfähigkeit als Anpassungsaufgabe der NATO". In Henning Riecke, *Die Transformation der NATO. Die Zukunft der euro-atlantischen Sicherheitskooperation*. Baden Baden, Nomos, 2007, pp. 141-154.

²² Laurie Nathan, "Domestic Instability and Security Communities", *European Journal of International Relations*, Vol. 12, No. 2 (2006), pp. 279-281 and Christopher Hill, "Bringing War Back Home: Foreign Policy-Making in Multicultural Societies", *International Relations*, Vol. 21, No. 3 (2007), p. 260.

alliances have to be able to meet their very *raison d'être* – the defence of the organisation, especially against the backdrop of current threats and the current level of ongoing military engagement.²³ Prospective and current members, therefore, should likewise be convinced of the added value in the expansion.

The principle of capabilities – and the willingness to use them – outweighing the potential threats added to the alliance already existing challenges are hence a practicable measure to decide which countries should be invited: New Zealand for instance, with virtually no enemies and no threats but a military with comparable abilities could easily join NATO. South Korea on the other hand, which possesses an army that could easily interoperate with NATO's forces and has the tenth largest economy in the world, should not be invited, simply because the threat of a potential conflict with North Korea is by far outweighing the added value. India and South Africa offer comparable examples. India's ongoing quarrel with Pakistan over Kashmir, while currently being held at a tolerable status quo, led to various wars in the past and as long as the conflict is looming, India would bring too much conflict potential into the alliance. Furthermore, India does not yet possess a military that would easily be able to interoperate with NATO forces, although that will certainly change over the course of the next two decades. If the conflict over Kashmir can be solved in due course, the question might rise in about twenty years and India could well become a member of the world's biggest military and democratic alliance. South Africa could join NATO sooner; a state being democratically consolidated and currently well underway to modernise its armed forces has no real enemies and its neighbourhood is, with the notable exception of Zimbabwe, relatively stable. Namibia and Botswana, alongside South Africa, are already an anchor of stability in Sub-Saharan Africa. With the rising strategic importance of Africa in the global geopolitical landscape, South Africa might very well be an attractive member for NATO in about five to ten years. Australia, also usually named as a potential member of the alliance, could easily fit into the organisation. It shares NATO's values and ideas, and has a military that is highly flexible and proved its abilities in a couple of interventions in the Southern Pacific. Australia is exactly the kind of member state NATO would need. It is already contributing to NATO's mission in Afghanistan and would hence be the ideal partner to jumpstart a global enlargement of NATO. Japan, another state repeatedly mentioned as a member in a global military alliance, is the most difficult potential ally.

²³ Dana H. Allin, Gilles Andréani, Philippe Errera and Gray Samore, *Repairing the Damage. Possibilities and Limits of Transatlantic Consensus*. Adelphi Paper 389, London, 2007, p. 41.

Tokyo just started to get involved in military operations abroad and it is hard to say how real the threat of a potential conflict with North Korea really is. But membership in NATO could provide the security it needs. With Japan, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa in due course, NATO would have the ability to project the promise of peace and prosperity into the Pacific and into Africa, and it would prove that the values it shares would not only be truly global, it would make NATO the most important international organisation apart from the United Nations.

5. Conclusion

NATO will remain the most important security alliance of the West in the twenty-first century. Just how important it will be in the international arena will be determined by its ability to reform itself in light of the new challenges it will face. The recent split in transatlantic relations prior to the intervention in Iraq is hence only superficial.²⁴ Firstly, it cannot be expected that the United States would be willing to stage an intervention of that scope again in the next several years. And secondly, so many European allies entered the coalition of the willing to overthrow Saddam Hussein that it cannot convincingly be said that the invasion of Iraq was a unilateral undertaking. The split may at best indicate that a strategic consensus in Europe is missing.²⁵ Against the backdrop of European history, this split can easily be understood. For most of the Eastern European states defence to the east is still the single most important motivation to join the alliance. Hence a new strategic consensus within the alliance is needed: Although the defence of territorial integrity of its member states should remain NATO's paramount *raison d'être*, the defence, however, only makes sense in the context of the rise of globalisation.²⁶ Not every conflict would have to be linked to the war on terror,²⁷ but every mission would have to be linked to the West's overall goal: Globalisation's peaceful spread and the expansion of democracy. The very core of freedom's promise would be in reach for all nations on the planet if this goal would be achieved.

²⁴ Christian M. Schweiss, "Sharing Hegemony: The Future of Transatlantic Security", *Cooperation and Conflict*, Vol. 38, No. 3 (2003), p. 231.

²⁵ Not least because of this particular split will the European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP) neither replace nor complement NATO. ESDP can be understood, however, in the context of political consolidation of the European idea. Alistair Shepherd, "Irrelevant or Indispensable? ESDP, the 'War on Terror' and the Fallout from Iraq", *International Politics*, Vol. 43, No. 1 (2006), pp. 71-92 and Stephanie Anderson and Thomas R. Seitz, "'European Security and Defense Policy Demystified. Nation-Building and Identity in the European Union'", *Armed Forces & Society*, Vol. 33, No. 1 (2006), pp. 25, 30.

²⁶ Christopher Rudolph, "Globalization and Security: Migration and Evolving Conceptions of Security in Statecraft and Scholarship", *Security Studies*, Vol. 13, No. 1 (2003), pp. 2-6.

²⁷ Barnett R. Rubin, "Saving Afghanistan", *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 86, No. 1 (2007), p. 72.