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**THE JUNE 29th – 30th, 2022 NATO SUMMIT
AN ASSESSMENT OF THE ALLIANCE’S NEW
STRATEGIC CONCEPT AND FUTURE
SECURITY CONCERNS**

By

Georgios Koukakis

Research Associate of “HERMES” I.I.A.S.GE

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Introduction

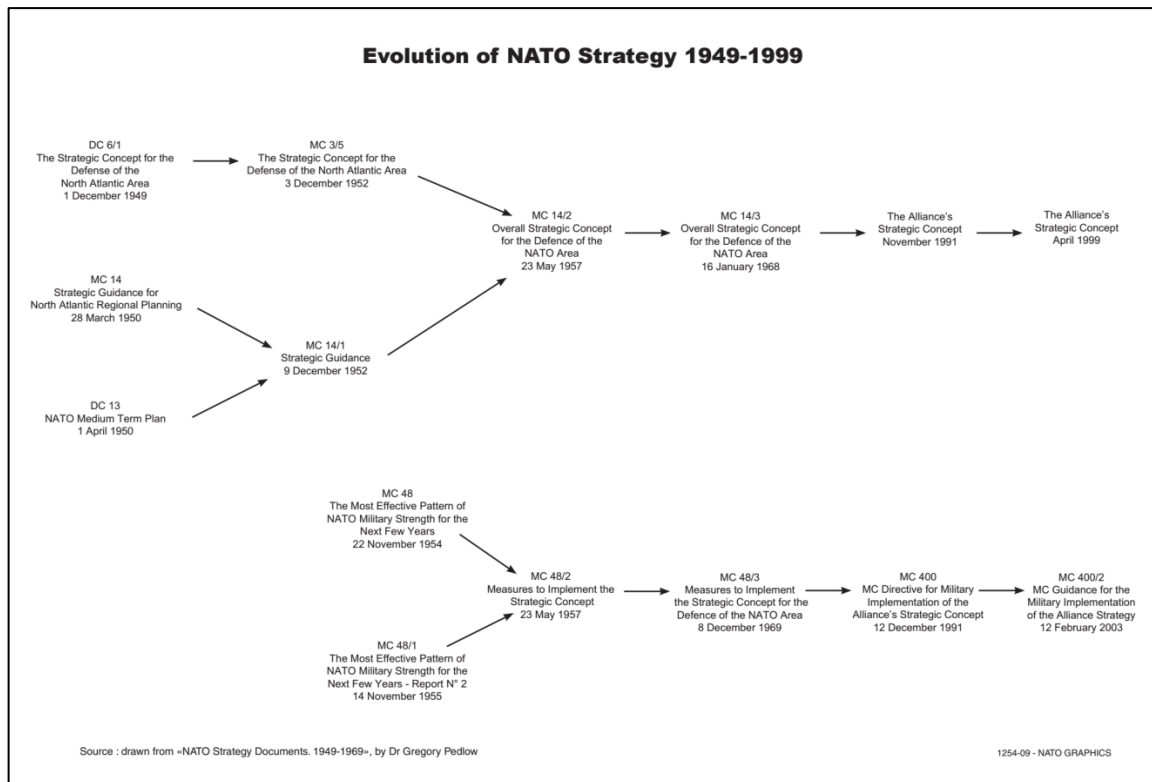
NATO's 2022 summit has been scheduled for June 29th – 30th in Madrid, where the leaders from NATO's member states - along with key partners - are going to meet to discuss major security issues. This year's summit is crucial not only for member states but also for international stakeholders, since the endorsement of NATO's new **Strategic Concept** is one of the main topics of the 2022 agenda. The Strategic Concept is NATO's main document for setting the Alliance's strategy, affecting the foreign policy of its members. Understandably, the 2022 NATO summit will be decisive for the Organization's future, affecting the security environment both on a European and International level, as described by NATO's Secretary General, Jens Stoltenberg *"The Madrid Strategic Concept will reflect the new security environment, recommit to our values, and reaffirm our unity, ensuring that our Alliance is fit for the future."*

The Evolution of NATO Strategic Concepts

NATO's Strategic Concept is a formal policy document of strategic nature that provides all member states with the necessary guidelines in order to adjust their foreign policy. Plainly, *"... It outlines NATO's enduring purpose and nature, its fundamental security tasks, and the challenges and opportunities it faces in a changing security environment. It also specifies the elements of the Alliance's approach to security and provides guidelines for its political and military adaptation."* NATO Strategic Concepts are renewed each time the security environment undergoes through major changes, usually every 10 years, to better prepare member states in executing the organization's core tasks.

During the Cold War (1949 - 1991) NATO maintained a defensive strategy based on deterrence outlined in four classified Strategic Concepts. The Strategic Concept for the Defense of the North Atlantic Area of 1950 or DC 6/1 and the same-titled one of 1952 or MC 3/5, both based on the principal that *"... the primary function of NATO was to deter aggression and that NATO forces would only be engaged if this primary function failed and an attack was launched"* and the Overall Strategic Concept for the Defense of the NATO Area of 1957 or MC 14/2 which *"... advocated massive retaliation as a key element"* and the same-titled one of 1968 or MC 14/3 which *"... identified three types of military responses against aggression to NATO: Direct defense, ... Deliberate escalation"*

and ... *General nuclear response ...*” based on flexibility and escalation.



(Photo Source: www.nato.int)

During the post-Cold War period (1991 - 2001), NATO maintained a defensive strategy based on cooperation and crisis management operations represented in two unclassified Strategic Concepts, the Alliance’s Strategic Concepts of 1991 and 1999 accompanied by the classified documents MC 400 (1991) and MC 400/2 (2003) correspondingly. Besides the fact that – for the first time in NATO’s history - both Strategic Concepts were open-access documents, they were less confrontational. The first one stated that “... *The Alliance’s security policy is based on dialogue; co-operation; and effective collective defense as mutually reinforcing instruments for preserving the peace,*” while the second one emphasized crisis management and partnership stating that “... *the Alliance’s fundamental tasks were security, consultation, and deterrence and defense*”

The Current Strategic Concept of 2010

During the post-9/11 period (2001 - present), NATO maintained an offensive strategy based on countering terrorism and the proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD). In order to support its new strategy, NATO issued in 2006 a policy

paper called Comprehensive Political Guidance followed by the 2009 Declaration on Alliance Security at the Strasbourg-Kehl NATO summit. Finally, during the November 19th – 20th, 2010 NATO summit in Lisbon, the Heads of member states adopted NATO's fifth unclassified Strategic Concept, the Active Engagement, Modern Defense, accompanied by the classified document MC 400/3 (2012), stating that “... *NATO will continue to play its unique and essential role in ensuring our common defense and security. This Strategic Concept will guide the next phase in NATO's evolution, so that it continues to be effective in a changing world, against new threats, with new capabilities and new partners.*”

The 2010 NATO Strategic Concept stated that “*NATO's fundamental and enduring purpose is to safeguard the freedom and security of all its members by political and military means,*” referred to the member states' common values and principles such as “... *individual liberty, democracy, human rights and the rule of law ...*,” emphasized on the “... *political and military bonds between Europe and North America ...*” and underlined the evolving security environment challenges that the Alliance must and will confront by fulfilling effectively the essential core tasks of collective defense, crisis management and cooperative security following “... *a continuous process of reform, modernization and transformation.*”

The main security threats described inside the 2010 NATO Strategic Concept include proliferation of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, terrorism, cyber-attacks, energy dependence, technology-related weapons using the electromagnetic spectrum and space and environmental issues, stating though that “... *the conventional threat cannot be ignored.*” Under these circumstances, the member states concluded that deterrence played a significant part in their overall strategy as long as it is “... *based on an appropriate mix of nuclear and conventional capabilities...*” and combined with crisis management system focusing on prevention through intelligence, doctrine and military capabilities development, training, integrated civilian-military planning and political consultation.

As far as promoting international security through cooperation is concerned, NATO's strategy includes arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation, further enlargement also known as open door policy, partnerships through flexible formats “*across*

and beyond existing frameworks” among member and non-member states - such as Ukraine and Georgia - but also with the UN, the EU, Russia, the countries of the Western Balkans, the Mediterranean and the Gulf region. Finally, as far as the Organizations’ desired Reform and Transformation is concerned, it will be achieved by integrated command structure and sufficient resources through “... maximizing the deployability of our forces and their capacity to sustain operations in the field, ... ensuring the maximum coherence in defense planning, ... developing and operating capabilities jointly, ... preserving and strengthening the common capabilities, standards, structures and funding and ... engaging in a process of continual reform, to streamline structures, improve working methods and maximize efficiency.”

The 2030 Agenda: Why Does NATO need a New Strategic Concept?

In December 2019 the leaders of NATO member states decided that the Alliance needed to be strengthened - both militarily and politically - in order to adapt to the rapidly changing security environment. Having that in mind, NATO’s Secretary General has led a process that involved consultation with Allies along with input from security experts, member state top officials and civil society resulting in the formulation of the NATO 2030 agenda that was endorsed during the 2021 NATO summit held in Brussels on June 14th. As stated by NATO’s Secretary General, *“By agreeing the NATO 2030 agenda, leaders have taken decisions to make our Alliance stronger and better fit for the future.”* Upon concluding the summit, NATO issued a 25 pages long communiqué addressing key issues concerns.

The communiqué stressed the continuing Russian actions that breach NATO’s values despite the Alliance’s efforts to build a relationship, addressed terrorist issues, referred to the withdrawal of NATO troops from Afghanistan, the importance of NATO’s Missile Defense capability, cybersecurity issues, the Emerging and Disruptive Technologies (EDTs), the continuing effort of preventing the proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NW), WMD and Chemical Weapons (CW), the ongoing conflict in Syria and Libya, China’s ambitions and assertiveness, climate change, energy and human security, the essential NATO - EU strategic partnership along with NATO’s “Open Door Policy” (referring to Georgia’s accession) and the NATO’s engagement in the Middle East and North Africa

(MENA).

The NATO 2030 agenda (or initiative) came “... *at a pivotal moment for the Alliance, as NATO adapts to growing global competition and more unpredictable threats, including terrorism, cyber-attacks, disruptive technologies, climate change, and Russia and China’s challenges to the rules-based international order.*”

Related Events and Present Political Situation

In order to facilitate the development process of the 2022 Strategic Concept, NATO organized several events aiming at both “... *internal consultation with Allies and external engagements with partner countries, organizations and civil society.*” As far as internal consultation is concerned, NATO organized four seminars in Allied capitals, where NATO officials met - both in public and private - with experts, to discuss matters related to NATO’s new strategic concept. During the last seminar held in Prague on March 28th, 2022 NATO’s Deputy Secretary General indicated the Organization’s response to Russia’s invasion of Ukraine stating that “*We are at the historical turning point where we face a more fundamental struggle for our values and our way of life. Freedom over oppression, democracy over autocracy, and the rule of law over the rule of brute force. We must adapt to this new global reality, and we are.*”

As far as external engagements are concerned, NATO organized 37 events hosted by different states from September 29th, 2021 to May 10th, 2022 in order to engage with partner countries and examine multiple perspectives of the ongoing and future security issues and enrich the new strategic concept development. The events included roundtables, workshops, presentations and meetings regarding NATO’s key security issues such as Emerging and Disruptive Technologies (EDT), NATO’s future role in the southern neighborhood, new challenges for international security, the new European security environment, future-proofing NATO for the next decade, the role of industry, deterrence and defense posture on NATO’s Eastern flank, recapping the decade for the Western Balkans and the role of climate security.

Some of the most interesting roundtable discussions about NATO’s Strategic Concept were held in Ukraine (January 21st, 2022), Georgia (February 7th, 2022), Sweden (March 8th, 2022) and Finland (May 10th, 2022) indicating the Alliance’s intention to focus

on NATO's "Open Door" Policy and the Membership Action Plan (MAP) concerning the Alliance's enlargement. As it is widely known NATO maintains strong relations with both Georgia and Ukraine, while Finland and Sweden have applied for NATO membership in May 2022. As far as Ukraine and Georgia are concerned, their aspiration to become NATO members sprung mainly from Russia's aggression.

Another matter that will be in the spotlight of the coming summit is Türkiye's veto on the NATO application from Sweden and Finland. As the Turkish President, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, stated *"We will say no to Finland and Sweden joining NATO. Sweden is a real terror nest... NATO is a security organization. It is unacceptable to have terrorist groups in such an organization»*. Türkiye's decision forced Sweden to publish an anti-terrorism policy paper and issue a relevant anti-terrorism law in order to appease Turkish officials and make them change their mind but, as the Prime Minister of Finland stated *"... the two nations' NATO applications could stall if the issue is not resolved before a vital NATO summit due to start in Madrid on 29 June."*

Another significant NATO "internal" security issue is Türkiye's aggressive policy towards Greece. The most recent incident between the two countries is Ankara's demands for the demilitarization of most of the Greek islands of the eastern Aegean Sea. The Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mevlut Cavusoglu stated that *"Greece was violating international agreements that determine the demilitarized status of islands in the Aegean, warning that if Athens did not change course Ankara would launch challenges over the islands' status"*; an action prompting the Greek Minister of Foreign Affairs, Nikos Dendias to release 16 maps *"In an effort to increase the wider public's awareness of Turkish revisionism,"* demonstrating *"in a vivid and irrefutable way the Turkish illegal unilateral actions and claims."*

Assessment

Transatlantic relations have become more complex than ever, since the main actors' political behavior and decision-making is influenced by several security factors. The forthcoming NATO summit is crucial for the Alliance's future, as it will address two vital security issues, NATO's enlargement policy and the endorsement of its new Strategic Concept. As far as the first issue is concerned, pressing consultation between member

states and the interested parts is expected to take place to overcome Turkiye's veto, since both the Finnish and Swedish Heads of states and most probably the Ukrainian one, will join the Madrid summit. The Japanese Prime Minister and the President of South Korea also announced their participation in the NATO summit for the first time of the Alliance's history - in a total number of around 50 delegations - depicting NATO's attempted to extend its influence in Asia; an act that may cause China's and/or Russia's reaction.

As far as the second issue is concerned, NATO's Secretary General stated that "*The Madrid Strategic Concept will reflect the new security environment, recommit to our values, and reaffirm our unity, ensuring that our Alliance is fit for the future*". NATO's three core tasks are not expected to change; a slight modification though will probably be the case in NATO's new Strategic Concept. According to the document titled "One Plus Four: Charting NATO's Future in an Age of Disruption" issued after the April 11th, 2022 meeting of NATO's Advisory Group on Emerging and Disruptive Technologies, held in Brussels, **Collective Defense** must become NATO's primus inter pares (first among equals) core task. NATO needs to "*Improve conventional deterrence and defense, ... bolster deterrence and defense against hybrid threats, ... enhance nuclear deterrence, ... deter and defend in outer space, and ... be prepared to engage with Moscow,*"

As far as Crisis Management - NATO's second core task - is concerned, it will probably continue to address issues such as "*... armed conflicts, further displacement, persistent terrorist threats, and security challenges arising from political, economic, and environmental instabilities ...*" future NATO engagement though might be limited. The Organization is trying to balance between operational engagement and national reluctance, a situation that leads to a new southern approach, meaning that "*In some circumstances NATO may lead, but in most situations, it is more likely to play a supporting role. ... that should include: NATO backing for lead nation and coalition operations undertaken by NATO members, ... encouragement of European strategic responsibility ...*" At this point we must stress that this specific approach streamlines with the EU's effort to become more independent by 2025, as far as Security and Defense are concerned, by implementing its own new strategy called the Strategic Compass.

Cooperative Security - NATO's third core task involving partners seeking NATO membership, partners along NATO's periphery that are not likely membership candidates

and like - minded countries around the globe, including in the Indo-Pacific region - will most probably emphasize in the first category of partners. As stated in the document “One Plus Four: Charting NATO’s Future in an Age of Disruption” the Organization should “... *prioritize mechanisms to assist Jordan and inject life in bilateral partnerships with Israel, Morocco and Tunisia. ... NATO should forge a true strategic partnership with the EU; extend elements of the Deterrence Initiatives to Finland and Sweden if requested; strengthen its Enhanced Operational Partnership with Australia; and pursue similar arrangements with Japan and South Korea.*”

A fourth core task that is expected to be added in 2022 NATO’s Strategic Concept is Comprehensive Resilience identified in the April 11th, 2022 meeting as previously mentioned. According to the relevant document, Comprehensive Resilience is defined as the ability “... *to anticipate, prevent, and, if necessary, protect against and recover quickly from disruptions to critical functions of our societies. ... It is foundational to the other three, yet it is distinctly separate from them and equivalent to them as well*” dealing with “... *a spectrum of challenges that are not addressed adequately by the other core tasks*» and comprises of democratic, shared and forward resilience.

In conclusion, NATO’s 2022 strategic concept is also expected to address new and emerging security challenges such as hybrid threats, energy security, food security, biological security, cybersecurity, climate security, information security and migration issues along with “traditional” threats, since Russia’s invasion in Ukraine, has brought conventional war back on the table. As far as military operations are concerned, special operations and defense technology capabilities development will probably be a key-issue of NATO’s new Strategic Concept in order to conduct effective operations in the new multi-domain operational environment (land, air, maritime, space and cyberspace), along with an increase in the defense budget, in order to establish “... *vibrant connections with industry partners and with EU institutions.*”



Georgios Koukakis

Georgios has graduated from the Hellenic Military Academy and holds an MA in “Governance, Development and Security in the Mediterranean” from the Department of Mediterranean Studies of the University of the Aegean (Rhodes, Greece). His master thesis focused on the Hellenic National Security Council. In 2006 he worked in Kosovo as a Battalion Intelligence Officer of the Hellenic Armed Forces as part of the KFOR that was deployed at the region under the NATO mission “Joint Enterprise” focusing on security issues. He is currently a member of the Hellenic Institute of Strategic Studies (HEL.I.S.S.) and an Analyst in the Center for International Strategic Analyses (KEDISA). In summer 2020 Georgios graduated from the Hellenic Army War School and he will attend the 2022 - 2023 class of the Hellenic Supreme Joint War School. He has attended several seminars and conferences regarding international relations and more specifically in the field of defense and security. He speaks excellent English, Greek (mother tongue), Turkish (elementary level) and Italian (elementary level).

Email: g_k_koukakis@yahoo.gr