

Summary

The United States and its allies face a host of challenges in the international sphere, including the looming threats of proliferation, regional conflict, terrorism, and the manifold problems associated with the failure of regimes to meet the needs of their populations. As daunting as these challenges are, veterans of the Cold War will be quick to point out that things could be worse. After all, NATO's member nations no longer face a plausible threat to their survival, as they did throughout the Cold War when Soviet military forces were deployed in the heart of Europe. Although some observers in recent years have bemoaned the loss of "certainty" and "predictability" that they (erroneously) think characterized the Cold War geopolitical situation, there should be no nostalgia for a period in which two nations with the power to destroy much of civilization pursued antagonistic security agendas.

The chief goal of the United States and its allies today, therefore, should be to preserve and consolidate an international situation in which no major power opposes or threatens their most important interests. They should pursue a security strategy whose core elements are intended to shape the behavior and expectations of key actors in ways favorable to the West's long-term interests. Of course, from time to time, NATO nations will have to employ their military and other assets to cope with challenges to their interests, and they will want to take steps to hedge against the possible emergence of serious new threats over the longer term. Across all three of these dimensions—shaping, coping, and hedging—the vast majority of challenges to the interests of NATO member states will arise from the periphery of the Alliance's enlarged treaty area and beyond.

There is no longer much debate about whether NATO should embrace new missions in addition to its traditional focus on territorial defense. Chief among the new missions are power projection (at least

to the periphery of the treaty area, if not beyond), crisis management (or the ability to intervene effectively in smaller-scale conflicts), and countering weapons of mass destruction. For military planners, the key questions are: To what degree should their efforts focus on these new missions? What sorts of military capabilities are required to accomplish such missions? And what are the implications for U.S. and allied force planners? The following general findings emerge from our analysis:

- **The military forces of NATO's member states should be structured and postured for expeditionary operations.** Achieving a more expeditionary posture entails expanding and modernizing transportation fleets (principally military airlift, but also sealift), acquiring more mobile logistics assets, upgrading infrastructure in selected countries, and modernizing the forces themselves so that lighter, more mobile units can be more effective in a wide range of missions. This will entail, among other things, exploiting recent advances in surveillance, information processing, communications, and precision weapons so that the military assets of adversaries can be rapidly located, identified, and destroyed with minimal collateral damage.
- **The ability to deter and defeat chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons will become a growing preoccupation of the Alliance.** In addition to improving defenses against ballistic and cruise missiles, this implies that NATO should preserve the basic elements of the U.S. nuclear posture in Europe.
- **U.S. forces stationed in Europe are invaluable assets for shaping behaviors and expectations in the region and for responding to challenges in and around Europe.** The nature and locus of likely future challenges suggest that air bases in Italy and Turkey are particularly important strategic assets. Given the mix of peacetime and crisis response missions we foresee, the Department of Defense (DoD) should explore the idea of replacing at least one of the four U.S. heavy Army brigades in central Europe with a light infantry brigade, an air assault brigade, or some hybrid formation with greater strategic mobility and tactical flexibility.

The challenges of the future demand effective and coordinated action by nations with common interests. For the United States and its allies, NATO is by far the best vehicle available for organizing such action. NATO has made impressive strides toward adapting itself to the demands of a changed and changing world, but its members should recognize that neither the Alliance nor their own military establishments are yet perfectly suited to these demands. Fielding the requisite military capabilities will not come cheaply, nor will further institutional changes within NATO be cost-free. But it is well worth the effort.