Portugal and the new NATO Strategic Concept

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The new Strategic Concept of 2010

Lord Ismay, first Secretary-General to NATO, once stated that its goal was to keep the Russians out, the Americans in, and the Germans down. If indeed this correctly depicted NATO during the Cold War, nowadays the Atlantic Alliance's goals and strategy are certainly quite different. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, NATO has had two strategic concepts, one enlargement, and has redefined its area of intervention more broadly since the terrorist attacks against the United States in September 2001.

The 1991 Strategic Concept was written even before the collapse of the Soviet Union, which was largely unexpected, thus making the document immediately obsolete. When NATO had to deal with the war in Bosnia between 1992 and 1995, the Atlantic Alliance's overall strategy showed serious structural problems. NATO experienced a period of uncertainty, but the waves of instability and democratization that took place in Central and Eastern Europe after the collapse of the Soviet Union served as a reminder of the importance of the Atlantic Alliance's contribution to the region, and underpinned the future existence of the trans-Atlantic alliance.

The 1999 Strategic Concept amended and updated the 1991 document by taking into consideration new challenges to Atlantic security and to its areas of interest. Major changes between the two concepts resided in the redefinition of NATO's area of intervention, introducing what NATO officials call the 'out-of-area' doctrine. While in 1991 the biggest threat to NATO members was the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact, in 1999 the adopted rhetoric emphasized multidimensional risks and threats often difficult to predict.

Consequently, the geographic scope of NATO's intervention was expanded to include "instability in and around the Euro-Atlantic area and the possibility of regional crisis on the Atlantic's periphery".[1] Rather than facing a one-dimensional threat from an identified enemy, NATO faced a multiplicity of risks, many of which resided around its borders.

In a broader sense, the 1999 document reflected a geographic shift away from Central and Eastern Europe to areas identified as containing more diversified risks, out-

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1 See NATO Strategic Concept of 1999.

side its traditional area of intervention, mainly located in NATO's southern borders.

While redirecting its geographic focus, NATO moved to add Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic to its 'roster' the same year, despite facing strong opposition from Russia. Another enlargement followed in 2004, with the accession of seven more states into the Atlantic Alliance, all of them previously under communist grasp.

But NATO's most significant change occurred when one of its founding and most proponent member was attacked in its own territory. The events of 11th September 2001 were seminal in this regard, demonstrating that the most important security threats to NATO members, military or otherwise, emanated from outside of Europe, and that NATO was ill-equipped and prepared to address them. Ever since, challenges and threats against NATO will more likely come from groups or non-state actors than from traditional conventional armies in a classic state-to-state conflict.

In 1991, the Portuguese strategic concept of national defense integrated NATO's 1991 Strategic Concept underpinnings, while understanding that military missions within the NATO framework would serve to sustain the Portuguese position, contribution and capacity of action in the world as a fully integrated actor in the international community. The presence of Portuguese troops in Bosnia represented the country's intention and willingness to contribute towards security and defense in Europe. Ever since, Portugal has paid an active contribution of human resources and military equipment to all major NATO operations: Kuwait (1991), Kosovo (1999), Afghanistan (2001), Iraq's training mission (2004), Darfur (2005-2007), and anti-piracy operations in and around the Gulf of Aden and Somalia since 2009.

Portugal in the new concept

NATO's new Strategic Concept is still shadowed by a mist of uncertainty about its final result. The Group of Experts report, several speeches and known positions from both NATO officials and member state leaders suggest a broader area of activity and deeper cooperation and collaboration between NATO, the EU and the United Nations, as well as a clear shift from its area of intervention. Anders Rasmussen, NATO's Secretary-General, Madeleine Albright, leader of NATO's Group of Experts, and several Foreign Affairs and Defense Ministers including Portugal's, have not only pointed to the role of missile defense, prevention of ethnic conflict, the issue of Afghanistan and the fight against terrorism, but also to new challenges such as climate change, energy security, cyber attacks and a new post-conflict civilian capabilities component.[2] Here lies sufficient evidence of the new framework this new Strategic Concept might dictate.
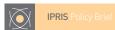
In order to be fully operational, this new level of participation must integrate security and defense efforts by individual member states with the Atlantic Alliance's own efforts. This translates into a deeper-than-ever convergence of security and defense frameworks, intelligence sharing and risk assessment. Therefore, one can predict that the Atlantic Alliance's principle of indivisibility of security characterized in the Article V of NATO's charter will become ever more central to its functioning, while bringing together national Parliaments, Governments and supranational and international organizations.

With this pooling together of resources, Portugal's security will become even more intertwined with NATO security alongside with the security of all of its members. Given the recently released Group of Experts report which advises NATO's Secretary-General on matters regarding the new Strategic Concept, only some considerations specific to Portugal will be taken into account in explaining the new role of the country in this Strategic Concept and how it can shape the new NATO.

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2 For more information about the threats NATO faces today see the Group of Experts report.

Converging security and defense efforts

The new Strategic Concept will need to provide guidance to NATO governments on how they need to further transform the alliance and their own national defense structures and capabilities to address the new threats of the 21st century.[3]

Portugal will have to try to influence and shape this new NATO by focusing on its interests in the Mediterranean and South Atlantic, especially regarding the Portuguese-speaking countries. As Augusto Santos Silva, Portugal's Defense Minister has said, Portugal can play a critical role in the new Strategic Concept by leading the Alliance towards the southern hemisphere.[4] This can be achieved by firstly understanding the perils and gains that come together with this region and how NATO can be a force for development and stability. Therefore it is highly necessary that Portugal mildly links its security risks not only to those of its European partners within the EU framework, but also to those of Portuguese-speaking countries in Africa and South America. By identifying and understanding that several risks – specially illegal immigration flows carrying drugs, arms, human traffic and terrorism – might emerge from Western and Southern Africa and South America, NATO would be playing a sufficiently important role in securing its internal space, but at the same time projecting sufficient influence to change these areas both domestically and regionally. This can be achieved by proposing a complete integration of NATO's systems with Portugal's own security and defense systems while using its knowledge of regions and elites to develop the new civilian capabilities component, which should largely focus on social and economic development and immigration aid and control.

Sharing important information about key perils along and outside its borders, its economic exclusive area and its regions of influence thus become a crucial element in cooperating with the new NATO. On the other hand, NATO must also ensure that significant support is given

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towards this component and most importantly, that resources are secured and well distributed, so as to avoid over burdening the Alliance. Moreover, while underlining the importance of information flows between the Atlantic Alliance and Portugal due to the latter's extensive exclusive economic area and privileged geographic location, the consequence of this new framework would translate into a deeply significant increase of security in the peninsula and in the rest of Europe, not only avoiding major threats, including those linked to terrorism, to Atlantic security and defense in the country – as these would trigger Article V measures – but also allowing for a much closer and deeper monitoring of threats to and emanating from Europe.

In order to guarantee the mentioned conditions, the new Strategic Concept must focus on the inseparability of security to each individual member state, which includes acknowledging different threats to each country's security, something that has been referred to and suggested by the Group of Experts' report.[5]

The common challenge of cyber attacks

"Cyber strategies are designed to impact an enemy's command and control structure, logistics, transportation, early warning and other critical, military functions. As computer technology has become increasingly integrated into modern military organizations, military planners have come to see it as both a weapon and a target, exactly like other components and forces".[6] While preparing for the new Strategic Concept, both NATO's Secretary-General and the Group of Experts' report refer to specific and new challenges, among them the cyber attacks dilemma. In order to have a fully integrated defense capability and secure information and intelligence flows, not only NATO but all of its members must acknowledge the importance of virtual information and the threat of cyber attacks in order to prepare for eventual risks and exposure of its vital information.

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3 The idea is well described on NATO's website, under the New Strategic Concept information.

4 "Fórum Roosevelt: Portugal tem capacidade para ajudar a NATO a olhar para o Sul" (*Lusa*, 16 April 2010).

5 See the Group of Experts report.

6 This is a small transcription about the uses of computer technology which figures on NATO's website.

Several reports have appeared concerning cyber attacks. Many of them point to Chinese and Russian misconduct in this area, relating several cyber attacks to NATO and EU networks. Following an attack against Estonia's network in 2007, the government restricted the flow of information materials in its networks, obliging its officials to communicate by radio.[7] This is exactly what cyber attacks are aimed for, i.e. spreading concern and fear of vital information leaks, while constraining the whole functioning of the network.

While the US and the UK appear to have sufficient means to avoid falling victim to cyber attacks, most EU and NATO members seem to be lagging behind. Hence, European allies must update their competencies in terms of cyber security, with NATO members playing a significant role by pooling and sharing their know-how on this particular issue, and helping upgrade their European allies' network.

Portugal is now awakening to matters of security of information. All of the country's efforts are EU-based directives and singular efforts by individual companies to control access to its information. The last EU directive adopted by Portugal dates back to 1998 and concerns protection of personal data, specifically how it should be treated and transmitted. However, the International Standards Organization (ISO) and the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) have reviewed and adopted a norm of good practices regarding security of information.[8] This norm was taken from the British norm BS7799-1, and represents a very significant upgrade to Portugal's legislation and conduct in matters of securing its information.

Extremist groups with extremist agendas have a single goal of disrupting western societies, their institutions,

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their armed forces and their entire daily functioning. If not aimed at state-owned enterprises, private companies may also fall prey to the complex web of cyber attacks. As a result, Portugal must update its components and practices with the latest upgrades on this sphere. While sharing its achievements in this area, Portugal should be involved in the discussion when debating NATO's new Strategic Concept. One of the first steps should be to discuss the adoption of the security information norm mentioned above with its allied partners, and debate the possibilities of sharing know-how and joint implementation in Portuguese legislation. Moreover, other initiatives should also be taken into account. Portugal should provide training to its officials and civil servants by pushing for NATO based formation courses regarding security of information and legislation implementation.

NATO must develop an integrated system of cyber defense, where all of its members have the same functioning norms and legislation, while jointly monitoring each other's networks, all in close coordination with the EU's efforts and directives.

Climate change

In regards to climate change, NATO should not overburden its members with a threat that although significantly challenging, lies beyond its sphere of intervention and requires the collaboration of the entire international community. Climate change as a concept and as an occurrence represents a global threat, to be analyzed and debated in global forums such as the United Nations, or the OSCE. However, since the theme is recurrent and might be addressed during the Lisbon Summit late this year, Portuguese officials should evaluate their gains by attempting to establish an active position on climate change with NATO members and with the Atlantic Alliance itself. Thus, while gaining ground within NATO and then participating in other international summits regarding this topic, Portugal would be able to capitalize by gathering know-how at lower prices with little compro-

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7 See Duncan Gardham, "NATO help needed to fight cyber war" (*Telegraph*, 17 March 2010).

8 Norm ISO/IEC 27002:2005. See Catarina Botelho Torres, Pedro Tavares Silva, Hugo Carvalho, *Segurança dos Sistemas de Informação*, (Centro Atlântico, 2003), pp. 165-166.

mise, and be able to use NATO as a privileged platform. Nonetheless, if Portuguese officials see no significant gains in this area, they should remain focused on security and defense, both military and on the web, while avoiding other themes that fall outside NATO's traditional area of expertise.

Policy recommendations: What should Portugal achieve?

For Portugal, NATO has so far been central to its foreign policy and image projection in the world. Within NATO, Portuguese power projection largely exceeds reality, and expectations are far greater than the actual possibilities of the Portuguese state. Therefore, it is crucial that Portugal continue to collaborate in every NATO operation and mission in the future. The choice between having to assure its security and defense individually, or being able to cooperate with a larger organization to do so, largely benefits Portugal. By paying a small contribution to every NATO mission, Portugal will be gaining much more than it is giving, while assuring the security of its territory as well as its presence in other international forums.

So far, Portugal's willingness to cooperate and recorded collaboration in the Atlantic Alliance underpins a predisposition for deeper engagement and association in the future. With the new Strategic Concept, Portugal will have the chance to enhance its position in the Atlantic Alliance and explain its concerns and interests.

On top of the priority list is the need to maintain, and possibly regain, command of the Joint Force Command Lisbon (JFCL) Headquarters, based in Oeiras. Moreover, partnerships with the African Union (AU) and the Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries (CPLP) should be considered. Here follow a few policy recommendations that Portuguese officials should consider in order to strengthen Portugal's position, and to defend both its economic and policy interests in the world, while main-

The South Atlantic is a space of crucial importance for Portugal's national interest. Due to its enormous sea territory, which ranks Portugal as having the 11th largest exclusive economic area in the world, the sea still remains the country's most vulnerable element and the central concern of its national security.

taining its image of an open, respectful, democratic, and law-abiding country.

• *Top priority: maintain and attempt to regain leadership at NATO's Joint Force Command Lisbon.*

1. Maintaining JFCL:

The JFCL is Portugal's most valuable asset in and to the entire Atlantic Alliance. It allows allied states to work together and maintain contact in the military operations currently under JFCL's responsibility. It critically enhances compatibility between Atlantic Alliance members states, and heavily improves inter-operability between member states, and more importantly, between NATO and the Portuguese Armed Forces. Maintaining the JFCL Headquarters in Portugal is therefore top priority and the one point Portuguese officials must preserve.

2. Regaining second in command:

As France rejoined NATO's integrated military structure and was granted the command of the Oeiras JFCL NATO Headquarters, Portugal must reinforce its position and possibly regain a position of substantial representation. Portugal must push to regain deeper representation in the command of the JFCL. Despite the fact that Portugal had previously held the position of first and second in command of JFCL, NATO downgraded its position to third in command. Headquarters are now being led by the Commander of JFCL, French Lieutenant General Phillipe Stoltz, Deputy Commander of JFCL, Spanish Lieutenant General Manuel Mestre, and ranking third, Chief of Staff JFCL, Portuguese Rear Admiral Fernando Manuel de Macedo Pires da Cunha.

NATO commands are distributed taking into consideration the geographic division of responsibilities, while assuring the integrity of each allied state's national interest. However, due to France's reintegration in NATO's military structure in 2009, Portugal lost the position of Deputy Commander of JFCL (second in command), as the Commander position was in the hands of the US, and was down ranked to the post of Chief of Staff (third in

command), subject to French and Spanish participation in the JFCL.

Although the JFCL Headquarters are now one of NATO's most important alongside the Allied Joint Force Commands in Naples and Brunssum, Portugal must reiterate its position in the Atlantic Command stationed in Oeiras and push for the position of second in command to be given to a Portuguese officer, thus rewarding the significant effort of the Portuguese Navy in recent years and demonstrating that Portugal is fully capable of assuming a leadership position in this Allied Command.

During the Cold War, the Lisbon Command covered the South Atlantic, which still represents a vital lane of supply for Europe and an important point of entrance to the Mediterranean. The South Atlantic is a space of crucial importance for Portugal's national interest. Due to its enormous sea territory, which ranks Portugal as having the 11th largest exclusive economic area in the world, the sea still remains the country's most vulnerable element and the central concern of its national security. Therefore, having a preponderant position in the only Allied Headquarter in Europe directly facing the Atlantic Ocean is both a matter of national sovereignty and of natural predisposition.

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• *Export technical know-how to areas of Portuguese economic interest and concern – partnerships with the African Union/CPLP members.*

1. Rule of law:

By relying on NATO's power projection platform and strong image, Portugal should push for the transfer of know-how and development investment in areas where it possesses economic interests. If NATO is willing to develop a proper participative civilian capabilities component, Portugal should use the argument to secure its interests in Western and Southern Africa. Therefore, pressure should be directed at strengthening the rule of law in specific countries by offering technical assistance to national courts and to the judiciary as a whole. Having previously consulted the local authorities, by pointing

to Guinea-Bissau as a prime contender for the very first civilian-oriented assistance mission – which should be based on continuing to fortify the rule of law over society and Government – Portugal could be capitalizing both economically and politically, while helping to disrupt an important platform of drug-trafficking oriented towards Europe.

2. Police forces:

Most countries in the southern hemisphere have police forces which are often ineffective, poorly equipped, and lacking in proper information flows and surveillance capacities. Growing instability in regional politics and markets due to poor policing may disrupt western investment and financial flows. In order to assure Portuguese and other NATO members' interests, police mentoring courses should be set up with the target countries. These types of initiatives are not new to countries like Angola[9] or Timor Leste,[10] and although substantially active, they lack proper funding, organization and expertise. By pushing for NATO intervention in this topic, the targeted countries would benefit from the best police training in the world, which would in the end ensure stable economic growth, viable opportunities for foreign direct investment and societal development, while at the same time improving political ties and reinforcing partnerships.

3. Armed forces:

Armed forces are always the strongest, most viable partner when rogue leaders and rebel movements attempt a military coup, as it was lately witnessed in Guinea-Bissau.[11] When such events occur, not only are economic and political interests endangered, but the security of diplomatic personnel and integrity of foreign-owned structures (i.e. oil platforms, gas pipe-lines, embassies,

9 The International Committee of the Red Cross has held such courses in Angola in 2001. Its main purpose was to raise awareness of international law and human rights law within the police forces.

10 Portugal has led the UNPOL mission in Timor Leste since 2009, a UN program under UNMIT, mainly monitoring human rights issues in areas of Timorese police responsibility.

11 See Paulo Gorjão, "Guinea-Bissau: The Inescapable Feeling of Déjà Vu" (*IPRIS Policy Brief*, No. 2, April 2010).

etc.) are put in danger as well, elements that must also be taken into account. The solution to this problem lies in restructuring and reforming local armed forces. For that reason, Portugal should propose that NATO establish partnerships between the Atlantic Alliance, the African Union and targeted countries, provided that the latter are willing to do so, in order to reform their military structure into a more western-oriented functioning of armed forces, critically acting under civil society and Government, a measure which has proven throughout times to be a successful formula.

• *Monitor terrorist activities and other extremist agendas directed at Portugal and Europe, in Portuguese areas of influence and economic interest.*

Because economic and social development is the most effective weapon against terrorism and other extremist agendas, Portugal should propose a larger, more intervening NATO capability regarding this criterion.

A system of surveillance and constant sharing of information of several services operating in sensitive areas in northern, western and southern Africa, would allow NATO and its members states to become ever more aware of several perils targeting their societies. Not only are there terrorist attacks aimed at the latter, but civilians in places like Sudan, Somalia, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Uganda, Sierra Leone, etc. are also targeted by extremist groups. As a result, these acts against the populations in these countries provoke mass waves of immigration towards Europe, higher inflows of financial aid, and the disruption of local and international trade in the region, sometimes even triggering EU and United Nations-led peace-keeping and peace-building operations which come at high financial and material costs.

Recent events regarding piracy around the Mozambican channel are threatening to disrupt important sea-borne trade in the region.[12] Accordingly, transportation companies are avoiding Mozambican ports and alternative routes are being taken. This translates into a huge loss in terms of revenue for the region, and to the country in general, which in turn increases poverty, and as a consequence, immigration and perhaps radicalism, thus draining the work force of coastal cities and overburdening European markets with non-qualified workers.

Portugal should have a word to say in these matters. The use of the Portuguese language, knowledge of regions,

markets and more importantly elites, creates favorable conditions to celebrate partnerships and intervene in cases where countries with official Portuguese language are targeted by any of those elements. Moreover, and because of the mentioned conditions, Portugal would be able to create communication channels with its Portuguese speaking partners, which would as a result create extraordinary conditions for a sustained and functional NATO intervention in case the Atlantic Alliance decides to act. This would save enormous amounts of financial resources, as solid intelligence would already have been collected.
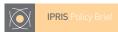
• *NATO and Portugal's relations with the Russian Federation.*

Recent events have exposed the frailties still looming over Central and Eastern Europe. A renewed focus on these traditional areas of responsibility is thus necessary, as well as further engagement and proper discussion with the Russian Federation, in order to assure a completely functional security architecture environment in Europe.

Although NATO already possesses its security architecture, Russian President Dmitry Medvedev's security proposal should not be dismissed, as there still exists a possibility of integration and collaboration. Despite relations that are far from being stable, there remain several issues in which both NATO and Russia can cooperate. Terrorist activities, energy security, climate change, nuclear weapons proliferation and control, are just a few examples of some of the many topics that both actors understand as posing threats to their security. They constitute important grounds for cooperation, which would in the end bring the Atlantic Alliance and Russia closer. Compromise is of the utmost importance in this matter. If there exists a platform for understanding and cooperation it must be used to all its extent in order to fully assure a climate of security and responsibility in the European continent.

Portugal should promote this view and renew rapprochement towards the Russian Federation. Russia is largely unknown to Portugal, and although it does not rely on the former to provide its energy necessities, relations between Russia and the western bloc, composed by NATO and the EU, affect Portugal more than it is usually acknowledged.

• *Natural disasters and other non-man made issues.*

As a side note, Portugal should try to use NATO's capabilities to its own advantage in terms of civilian protection. Sea-borne risks are not necessarily man-made. By

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12 See Vasco Martins, "Marine management: Combating piracy in the Mozambique Channel" (*IPRIS Lusophone Countries Bulletin*, No. 4, February 2010): 3-4.

making use of NATO's satellites and other surveillance systems, Portugal could further guarantee the safety of all those who use and navigate in its waters. If these satellites were to be integrated with the Portuguese naval system of surveillance, illegal traffic could be prevented and sea activity could be monitored, so that winds and sea currents would not affect the safety of fishermen and all those who navigate and work in Portuguese waters. Furthermore, by pooling resources together, Portugal could call on NATO members to help provide equipment for and expertise in fighting forest fires, floods and other such natural disasters in its territory.

Conclusions

With every piece of information pointing to a closer integration of the operation systems of NATO member states, Portugal must give its contribution to the new project and not lag behind. As one of the oldest and most dedicated members of the Atlantic Alliance, Portugal assumes a position that has continually favored it throughout most of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st. But understanding the forthcoming changes is highly relevant to the future participation of the country in the reformed NATO. As most small states, Portugal needs to become further integrated in the Atlantic platform in order to see its national interests fulfilled.

The lack of a highly modern 21st century military is not directly linked to the absence of active participation.

A deeper commitment to Atlantic security is thus necessary, notwithstanding the recognition of today's differentiated threats to the latter. Although nuclear weapons still pose potential risks, today's perils range from armed extremist groups, to everything that is aimed at disrupting western societies. Significant steps must be taken by all member states in order to become fully protected against such new perils, ranging from terrorism, cyber attacks, climate change, energy security, while understating the gains of the projection of power to places where these threats emanate from, such as Afghanistan.

On its way to assure its security and defense in November, Portugal must make sure the JFCL Headquarters remain in Lisbon, which gives it a significant boost in terms of responsibility and power projection within NATO, enough to assure its interest in other places, especially in the South Atlantic and the Mediterranean.

The enemy of today is much different from everything NATO has had to face in the past. The answer to these questions lies in unity and integration, as one must not forget that in a globalized world, targeting Europe is nothing more than targeting the entire international community.