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Key Points

Four growing near-peer and regional competitors – Russia, China, North Korea, and Iran – will continue to complicate the global security environment. US and partner military forces are not as prepared as they need to be to respond to these challengers.

These competitors will deploy systems that will challenge US access to operational theaters, employ "gray zone" and hybrid warfare tactics to confuse policy responses, and, in some cases, could make assertive use of nuclear weapons as bargaining tools.

The US and its partners need to reform their defense policies to prepare for these challenges. Reforms should include improving readiness and capacity, preparing for theater access challenges, increasing ISR assets in EUCOM and PACOM, and increasing attention to nuclear deterrence.

Memo to Washington: Reforming National Defense to Meet Emerging Global Challenges

By Gen Philip Breedlove, USAF (Ret.)

Abstract

The United States and its security partners around the world face increasingly complex challenges. While the long struggle against Islamic extremism continues, near-peer and regional competitors – Russia, China, North Korea, and Iran – are increasing their capabilities to contest US interests and those of its allies and partners. However, the intense focus over the past decade and a half on security problems in the US Central Command (CENTCOM) region has resulted in a military force that is not as prepared as it needs to be for these emerging competitors.

These four challengers present some common military characteristics for US and partner nations to consider. These include "anti-access" capabilities such as advanced surface-to-air, anti-ship, and ballistic missile technologies; quiet submarine and advanced sea mine weapons; "gray zone" and hybrid warfare tactics designed to flummox US and allied responses; and in some cases, an assertive role for nuclear weapons to manage crisis escalation and bargaining.

The military power of the United States and its partners is substantial. Even so, significant defense reform is needed to address the current security environment. Increased funding for readiness and capacity, without sacrificing critical modernization programs, would do the most to expand overall US and coalition military power. Specifically, the US European Command (EUCOM) and US Pacific Command (PACOM) regions require an increased allocation of global intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) assets to meet these requirements. The US and its partners must prepare for theater access challenges, and policymakers must also give greater attention to nuclear deterrence and planning.

Introduction

The United States and its security partners around the world face growing challenges from emerging great power and regional competitors. These increasingly aggressive actors – the returning great powers Russia and China and regional opponents North Korea and Iran – are adding their growing threat capabilities to a global security picture still encumbered by instability and terrorism coming from parts of the Islamic world. However, the force structure and readiness of United States military and its partner military forces are not well matched for the more complicated and numerous challenges that lie ahead. This lack of preparedness is a consequence of the very different fights to which these forces have adapted over the past fifteen years, exacerbated by a shortage of resources for readiness and modernization as a result of fiscal austerity.

Under the leadership of President Vladimir Putin, Russia's geostrategic activity over the past decade has demonstrated renewed confidence and aggressiveness.

Defense policymakers here in the US and abroad need to reform their defense enterprises to adapt to these new challenges. Reforms will require new, and frequently uncomfortable, decisions on capability, capacity, and readiness tradeoffs; new priorities for training; and new global allocations of intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) resources.

The United States and its security partners have impressive military forces that should be capable of bolstering deterrence against these new challengers. But achieving this favorable outcome will require policymakers to implement critical reforms in order to prepare their forces for a more diverse and challenging future.

The Return of Great Power Challengers

Under the leadership of President Vladimir Putin, Russia's geostrategic activity over the past decade has demonstrated renewed confidence and aggressiveness. Russia has employed a wide variety of tools including diplomacy, leverage created by Russia's energy sector, information operations, covert action, special operations forces, and overt conventional military power.

Russia's aggression during this period has targeted neighboring former Soviet republics. It invaded Georgia in August 2008, and broke off two of Georgia's provinces into separatist enclaves.[1] Over the past decade, Russia has subjected the Baltic states of Lithuania, Estonia, and Latvia to occasional cyber disruptions and military intimidation.[2] In March 2014, Russia conducted a brazen covert action, when special operations forces seized Crimea from Ukraine. Russia continues to provide clandestine support to a pro-Russian insurgency in the Donbas region of eastern Ukraine, and Russian airpower, artillery, electronic warfare assets, and combat advisers have supported these insurgents.[3]

Russia's air and naval forces are also present and active in the Syrian civil war, supporting the Bashar al Assad regime.[4] Russia supplies advanced military equipment to Syria's ally Iran as well, including the sophisticated SA-20 (S-300) surface-to-air missile (SAM) system.[5] Russia's present day intelligence and information operations extend into the West. The Russian government has reportedly provided financial support to the National Front political party in France, in an effort to influence that country's internal political process.[6] Finally, US intelligence officials believe that Russian cyber-intelligence units, likely operating through deniable "cut-outs," have stolen internal records from the Democratic Party and made them available to various media outlets in an effort to create controversy and influence the internal political process of the United States.[7]

In the Asia-Pacific region, China is rapidly expanding its influence, and like Russia, is employing many levers of national power to do so. It has employed its trade and investment capacities to bend countries such as Laos, Cambodia, and the Philippines to its favor. China is similarly a major diplomatic and economic player in Central Asia, a region it hopes to use to diversify its trade routes and its energy supplies.

However, it is China's employment of its rapidly growing military and paramilitary power over maritime sovereignty disputes in the Western Pacific littoral region that is most notable. China's defense budget has grown at almost a ten percent annual rate – after adjusting for inflation - over the past decade.[8] According to the US Department of Defense (DOD), China has the most active missile development and acquisition programs in the world, and is cleverly using its rapidly expanding missile power to challenge US and allied military power in the Western Pacific.[9]

China is showing its confidence with its actions in the East and South China Seas. It claims sovereignty over the Senkaku Islands, which are administered by Japan, and in November 2013 declared an Air Defense Identification Zone over them, without consultation with neighboring countries. China's coast guard and fishing fleets frequently encroach on Senkaku territorial waters, forcing responses by Japan's self-defense forces.

In July 2016, the Permanent Court of Arbitration at The Hague rejected China's so-called "nine-dash line" claim to over 80 percent of the South China Sea.[10] China immediately rejected the court's ruling, and continues to build militarily useful facilities such as aircraft hangars, wharfs, desalination plants, electrical power stations, radars, warehouses, offices, barracks, concrete emplacements, and other structures on the seven rock features it occupies in the Spratly Island chain.[11] In the Paracel Island chain, which China seized from Vietnam in a military clash in 1975, China has built full basing structures, which now frequently host squadrons of J-11 Flanker-variant strike fighter aircraft. It has also installed the highly capable HQ-9 SAM system in the Paracels.[12] China's aggressive behavior in the South China Sea could hold at risk over five trillion dollars in commerce that passes through that sea every year. And China's low level confrontation with Japan over control of the East China Sea risks the start of a new military conflict between those two Asian powers.

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If these current trends hold, Russia and China will soon be near-peer competitors of the United States. Their return as great power players adds substantial stress and complexity to the security situation the United States and its partners will face in the years ahead.

The Continued Rise of Regional Challengers

Both Iran and North Korea continue to challenge US interests, and their capabilities and capacities to do so are expanding.

North Korea's nuclear weapon and ballistic missile development programs appear to be accelerating. In September 2016, the country tested its fifth nuclear device, the third such test since Kim Jong-un came to power in 2011.[13] North Korea's production of weapons grade uranium and plutonium appears sufficient to support an accelerating test program and, presumably, a future inventory of fielded nuclear weapons.

North Korea's ballistic missile program is similarly accelerating. Through the first nine months of 2016, the North tested 22 ballistic missiles. The tests included its first launch of a ballistic missile from a submarine, a missile that impacted in Japanese territorial waters. North Korea is now developing a road-mobile long-range missile and is testing a rocket motor suitable for an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM).[14]

The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action agreement (JCPOA), signed in 2016 by Iran and the major powers, required Iran to ship away its most highly enriched uranium and brought Iran's nuclear program under much greater international supervision for the next decade. In spite of these benefits, Iran will receive a large financial windfall that it will be able to expend on developing and expanding its conventional military forces, its ballistic missile programs, and its unconventional warfare and covert action capabilities.

Iranian naval forces have escalated harassment of US warships in the Strait of Hormuz since the agreement's signing as well. More worryingly, Iran is acquiring sophisticated long-range anti-aircraft and anti-ship missile systems from Russia.[15] As it develops these capabilities, Iran could hold the ability of US and partner military forces to obtain access to the Persian Gulf and Arabian Sea at risk. These military capabilities and capacities brought to bear by North Korea and Iran add to the challenges facing the United States and its interests in northeast Asia and the Persian Gulf.

Meanwhile, the long post-September 2001 campaign against Islamic terrorism continues. Indeed, the boundary of this battlefield has expanded, with a surge of Islamist-inspired attacks recently occurring in Western Europe and the United States. The battle against the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria continues to draw in US and allied air, naval, and ground combat resources. Just as significant, this campaign has required a large-scale engagement of ISR assets and analytic

capacity. The draw on these resources has incurred a serious consequence: these valuable assets have been diverted from their employment against the great power and regional challengers mentioned above.

Common Military Characteristics of the Challengers

Technological improvements in missiles, computer processing power, and sensors have created opportunities for great power and regional challengers to contest US and partner military forces and their long-standing concepts of operation. These developments are exhibiting common features across the world.

Advanced, highly precise, and long range anti-aircraft, anti-ship, and land-attack missiles are threatening US and partner access to potential areas of operation: In the Western Pacific, China has deployed air, surface, and submarine-launched anti-ship missiles such as the YJ-12 and YJ-18, which possess multi-mode targeting sensors and ranges exceeding 400 kilometers. China's intermediate range DF-26 anti-ship ballistic missile, which will likely enter service in the next decade, will be able to attack warships underway east of Guam from firing positions inside China.[16]

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Russia has also deployed several cruise missile types in its campaign in Syria, launching these weapons from surface ships, submarines, and aircraft. Russian warships in the Caspian Sea launched one notable cruise missile attack on Syrian targets, from over 1,000 miles away.[17] These Russian anti-ship and land-attack cruise missiles could pose a threat to NATO and US naval forces and garrisons in Europe and the Middle East.

Russia has developed and deployed the advanced Iskander-E ballistic missile, with a range up to 280 kilometers. Russia recently redeployed this missile to its Kaliningrad enclave on the Baltic Sea, adjacent to Poland.[18] The Iskander features terminal guidance and threatens specific facilities, such as NATO bases in Eastern Europe.

Russia has deployed the SA-20 (S-300) and SA-21 (S-400) long-range SAM systems, perhaps the most sophisticated air defenses in the world. These systems include advanced radars, signal processing, and guidance capabilities. Missiles for the SA-20 have a range of up to 195 kilometers and have been tested against aircraft and ballistic missile targets (the Chinese version is called HQ-9). The SA-21 is more advanced, with an engagement range up to 400 kilometers, and features radars and signal processors designed to degrade adversary stealth and electronic countermeasures.

As mentioned earlier, North Korea and Iran are aggressively pursuing ballistic missile programs at all ranges, including ICBMs. For North Korea, such missiles, when armed with nuclear weapons, would threaten civilian population centers and US and allied bases in South Korea, Japan, and Guam. Iran's ballistic missiles prospectively hold at risk the large base complexes used by the United States and its partners in the Persian Gulf region.

Submarines and advanced sea mines threaten the ability of the United States to employ maritime shipping to reinforce its forces in Europe and Asia: The renewal of Russia's submarine force has been a major focus of the country's military modernization program.[19] Russia's resurgent undersea forces now regularly deploy to the Mediterranean Sea and Atlantic Ocean. US military logistics planners should anticipate that during a crisis, sea-borne resupply operations to Europe might face contested waters while attempting to cross the Atlantic.[20]

US adversaries now routinely employ "gray zone" and "hybrid warfare" tactics in order to disguise their offensive operations and flummox US and partner policy responses: The tools of hybrid warfare - such as covert action, unconventional operations, information operations, and even support from criminal organizations – are ancient, but have been repackaged for modern times. Russia employed "little green men," who were actually special operations personnel in unmarked uniforms, during its seizure of Crimea, in order to create deniability for the military operation. In December 2015, President Putin admitted

Russian military "specialists" were in eastern Ukraine, while insisting this was not the same as regular Russian soldiers. This admission occurred after two Russian military intelligence officers were captured in Ukraine while supporting anti-Kiev insurgents.[21] Without clear, visual casus belli to point to, Western policymakers are frequently left unable to mobilize either political will or their potential military advantages in response to these various forms of "gray zone" aggression.

Russia is modernizing its conventional ground combat power, along with the readiness and responsiveness of these forces: Russia is introducing a new generation of tanks and armored fighting vehicles that will compete with aging Western models. The Russian army has synthesized targeting using remotely piloted aircraft (RPAs), battlefield electronic intelligence, and artillery and rocket fire to devastating effect against government forces in eastern Ukraine. And the Russian army has utilized "snap exercises" to demonstrate its ability to rapidly mobilize and concentrate its maneuver brigades along its periphery.[22]

Less than 50 percent of the US Air Force's combat force is ready for full-spectrum operations and on current trends, it will take a decade to increase readiness to the service's 80 percent goal.

Russia (and even North Korea) view nuclear weapons not merely as a strategic deterrent, but as practical weapons for employment to control escalation to Russia's advantage and to quickly terminate conflicts on Russia's terms: Russian military doctrine, accompanied by statements from senior Russian officials, display a functional and more aggressive role for nuclear weapons compared to Western views and doctrine.[23]

These technological and conceptual developments now increase the strain on US and partner military forces and their operational planners. Policymakers and military commanders face a multifaceted and complex operational environment. As the next section shows, operational experiences over the past fifteen years have steered US and partner militaries away from the preparations they will need to succeed against these emerging challengers.

The Starting Point for Reform: How We Got to Now

The emerging security environment is adding new and difficult challenges to US and partner military forces, which remain engaged in low-level stabilization efforts in the US Central Command (CENTCOM) region, as well as with counterterrorism operations globally. However, the problems presented by great power and regional challengers will require military skills and capabilities that have atrophied over the past 15 years.

The ongoing operations in CENCTOM have inexorably reshaped US military power from a force in 2001 that was prepared for large-scale maneuver operations against similarly matched opponents to a force that has adapted itself to counterinsurgency (COIN) patrolling and counterterrorism (CT) raiding in an uncontested air, space, and naval environment. The continuous demand for forces in CENTCOM, unit rotation policies, and the resulting adaptation to the COIN/CT fight has resulted in US and partner forces that have no real experience and comparatively little training in high-end maneuver warfare operations.

For example, the vast majority of field-grade US Army officers, the current commanders of maneuver brigades and battalions, have never commanded field units during high-end decisive training rotations at the Army's national training centers.[24] Less than 50 percent of the US Air Force's combat force is ready for full-spectrum operations and on current trends, it will take a decade to increase readiness to the service's 80 percent goal.[25] The Chief of Naval Operations recently testified the Navy is falling behind in the upkeep of its ships and aircraft.[26] And the sharp decline in the availability of US Marine Corps aircraft, the result of maintenance shortfalls, is lowering readiness, training levels, and flight safety.[27] The US military is also suffering a readiness crunch, which would likely translate to an emergency if forces were pressed on short notice into high-end combat against one or more of the four emerging challengers.

Counterinsurgency and counterterror operations over the past 15 years have required, and absorbed, a very large proportion of the US military's joint ISR capacity. COIN and CT

operations have demanded huge portions of overhead imagery, RPA assets, full motion video (FMV) capacity, signals intelligence assets, human intelligence collectors, and intelligence analysis capacity from across the government's intelligence enterprise. As a result, critical theater commands such as US European Command (EUCOM) and US Pacific Command (PACOM) have received only slivers of the country's overall national intelligence capacity to support their own needs. By one estimate, EUCOM and US support to NATO has received less than five percent of the US military and intelligence community's overall ISR capacity. And a large amount of that tiny sliver has subsequently been absorbed in monitoring the Turkish-Syrian frontier, in EUCOM's case—effectively reallocating these assets to CENTCOM needs.[28]

The limited readiness funding the US military has received in these years has gone first to prepare forces for operations in CENTCOM, leaving very little remaining to train for high-end maneuver operations…

Because of this massive ISR focus on CENTCOM, the intelligence community and responsible field commanders in Europe possess very little insight into the operational and tactical levels of Russian military operations, readiness, plans, and intentions. Without a baseline of knowledge about Russian operational and tactical actions and responses, the relatively few US intelligence analysts assigned to European military analysis will have great difficulty formulating reliable indicators and warnings (known as I&W) about Russian military activities. Such a shortfall in Russian military I&W analysis could become dangerous, should military analysts and advisers lack the knowledge and tools necessary to give accurate assessments to policymakers during a crisis.

Finally, fiscal austerity imposed after the "great recession," in particular the budget caps of the 2011 Budget Control Act and its successors, inflicted great damage on the readiness of US military forces by deeply cutting funds for maintenance and training.[29] The limited readiness funding the US military has received in these years has gone first to prepare forces for operations in CENTCOM, leaving very little remaining to train for high-end maneuver operations, the kind of joint force operations the US would have to execute against great powers and regional challengers.[30]

US military forces remain committed in Afghanistan and Iraq, albeit at much reduced levels, compared to six years ago. Even so, the manning levels and force structure of all the services have also declined during this period, meaning the operational tempo demand on the current force remains high, consuming a proportionally greater amount of the forces available to conduct joint operations. The net result is little slack capacity for rebuilding full spectrum combat readiness, the kind that will be required to deter and defeat high-end challengers. At the current pace, it will take many years to rebuild the full spectrum readiness of US military forces. That is a danger, and a consequence of the past operating environment and policy decisions made during this period.

How to Prepare for Great Power and Regional Challengers

The emerging problems presented by resurgent great powers and rising regional challengers will require US and partner military forces to be masters of the full spectrum of military operations, from missions other than war, through counterterrorism, hybrid warfare, and high-end, large-scale joint and combined maneuver warfare. Military commanders in each region where the US conducts operations and maintains a presence of forces will face many of the same challenges and will need to adopt similar responses. Examining what NATO members should do to prepare for a resurgent Russia, for example, illustrates some of these necessary adaptations.

For the security environment in Europe, NATO members should recalculate how they allocate defense resources among capability investments, military capacity, and readiness: Allocating resources among these three priorities is a never-ending challenge for policymakers and planners, to begin with. But Russia's return as a military challenge should cause NATO planners to revise previous assumptions and calculations for allocations across capability, capacity, and readiness accounts. NATO policymakers and planners must address the Alliance's readiness and responsiveness shortfalls. Russia's military forces have recently increased their own readiness,

and their ability to quickly generate capacity and deploy units to staging areas around Russia's periphery. US policymakers and NATO members need to match this growing hazard with their own increases to capacity and responsiveness.[31]

NATO's overall military potential is large. Even so, much of this potential is dormant due to a lack of funding for training time, maintenance, improvements to training ranges, and ammunition stocks for training. Stepped-up funding for readiness and capacity would do the most to boost the Alliance's military power and thus bolster deterrence. Given NATO's large but mostly inactive military force structure, small incremental increases in readiness spending by Alliance members would result in a large increase in combat power.

Increased attention to readiness needs to occur alongside critical modernization initiatives. The deployment of advanced military capabilities by the challengers, some of which are described above, reinforces the necessity for the United States and its partners to replace aging inventories of aircraft, warships, ground combat vehicles, and munitions with modern, competitive designs. Policymakers will need to fully fund both readiness and modernization if they are to maintain deterrence against potential adversaries. For example, Sen John McCain's "Restoring American Power" proposal lists specific capacity, training, and modernization actions the US Congress could fund that would achieve many of these important goals.[32] Increased funding for the US government's European Deterrence Initiative (recommended by McCain, who is the current chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee) would further improve the alliance's readiness and responsiveness.[33]

Stepped-up funding for readiness and capacity would do the most to boost the Alliance's military power and thus bolster deterrence.

Each NATO country should reexamine its military capability, capacity, and readiness allocation in the context of that member's particular advantages and how that country can best contribute to the Alliance's overall military power. For example, wealthy and technologically advanced members could make their best contributions focusing more resources on addressing critical shortages in ISR assets, long range strike systems, and other advanced modernization initiatives. Special operations forces may be the strong suit for other members, while conventional ground forces might be the best contribution for others. NATO will make the greatest gains to its combat power for the least investment when members specialize in their strengths and trust the other members to protect them in other areas.

The US European Command region and NATO should receive a greater proportion of ISR and intelligence analysis capacity: The sliver of ISR support EUCOM currently receives, less than five percent of the US' collective ISR capacity, is inadequate for the looming challenge presented by Russia, and risks a potential intelligence failure during a crisis. EUCOM and NATO should use increased ISR resources to build a deeper awareness of the Russian military's operational and tactical levels of operations. This will build a baseline of knowledge that will be critical for establishing reliable indication and warning of potentially provocative Russian military behavior. NATO's North Atlantic Council (NAC) and the Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR) will need a reliable I&W process in order to make high quality decisions during a crisis. Such a process will be especially critical for defense planning and deterrence in the Baltic region. To accomplish this, NATO policymakers and planners will require greater ISR resources if they are to build a warning system that will reduce risk and improve crisis decision-making.

NATO policymakers and military planners must accept that the entire Atlantic and European region will be an "anti-access" contested theater: It is likely that Russia's nuclear-powered attack submarines will contest maritime resupply shipping beginning at US east coast ports, with interdiction continuing all the way to Europe in the event of a crisis. The Russian military bastion in Kaliningrad, together with Russian naval, air, and missile forces in the Baltic region, will threaten the ability of NATO naval power and airpower to operate freely in the surrounding area. NATO forces in eastern and central Europe will also begin any conflict with their operational bases and logistics hubs under threat from Russian missile forces.

That said, in contrast to the anti-access challenge faced by US and partner forces elsewhere in the world, NATO, like Russia, is a continental alliance and thus is positioned to employ substantial military power from all domains, including land power, against the "access-denial" challenge. Thus, NATO's ground maneuver and surface-to-surface missile forces could play an early and decisive role against Russia's anti-ship and counter-air capabilities, helping open the naval and air domains for Alliance use.

Theater access will be a problem perhaps unfamiliar to personnel who have fought in the CENTCOM region for the past 15 years. On the other hand, NATO commanders will have tools from all domains available to respond to the problem of securing access. Planners need to account for this challenge and prepare for it in their plans and training exercises.

Finally, NATO policymakers and planners must recognize that their Russian counterparts view nuclear weapons as practical tools for gaining tactical advantage on the battlefield, escalation control, and for intimidation during conflict termination: Russian views on the utility of nuclear weapons are a sharp departure from most Western thinking and thus represent a potentially dangerous risk during a crisis.[34] The more Russian decision-makers believe this gap in perceptions exists, the more tempted they could be to threaten the use of nuclear weapons during a crisis, or actually employ them to shock Western policymakers into compliance with Russian political objectives.

For a relatively modest investment, the four reforms described above would boost the Alliance's combat power and increase its responsiveness to emerging challenges.

To ward off this possibility and thus bolster deterrence, NATO should strengthen its own nuclear deterrence doctrines and support those stronger doctrines with renewed investments in nuclear operational planning and training. NATO should ensure that its facilities for nuclear operations are modern and secure. NATO should also upgrade its nuclear-capable aircraft and bring the F-35A aircraft, which numerous member states are acquiring, up to nuclear certification as quickly as possible. Finally, the Alliance should send a strong deterrent message by visibly training for nuclear operations.

Conclusion

Some members on NATO's eastern flank and from southern Europe harbor concerns over the Alliance's commitment under Article 5 of its founding treaty, to come to the defense of any member under attack. Russia's information operations are seeking ways to create political fissures within NATO by accentuating these concerns. For a relatively modest investment, the four reforms described above would boost the Alliance's combat power and increase its responsiveness to emerging challenges. A stronger and more responsive Alliance would be more effective at answering the Russian challenge. These proposed reforms would thus go a long way toward easing member concerns about NATO's ability to fulfill its commitments.

Reforms to intelligence collection, analysis, and warning processes will greatly improve the speed and accuracy of NATO's decision-making during crises. Preparing for an "anti-access" environment and developing robust doctrine and operational planning to counter Russia's efforts to deny US and NATO access to crises will increase the credibility of NATO war plans. Developing effective options to counter Russia's "gray zone" and hybrid tactics will provide NATO policymakers and commanders with the confidence to decisively respond to these tactics in a manner that maximizes NATO's competitive advantages. Finally, renewed attention to nuclear readiness and deterrence will be the best way to remove this form of escalation as a potential source of leverage for Russian decision-makers.

Some of the reforms may not be politically popular, which may explain why they have not yet been pursued. But the security situation facing NATO is changing, which is why the Alliance's policymakers and planners must also change their assumptions and strategies. When they do, and implement these proposed reforms, the result will be a European continent that is more stable, secure, and peaceful. But these reforms will also have impact beyond Europe and the North Atlantic community, if adopted, and will aid the US and our allies in meeting challenges in regions across the globe.

Preparing NATO for the future will support Europe and the North Atlantic community in their quest for greater prosperity, and the protection of their freedom and heritage from aggression and intimidation. ✪

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