

“IF IT’S NOT TERRORISM, IT’S NOT RELEVANT”: EVALUATING NATO’S POTENTIAL TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE CAMPAIGN AGAINST TERRORISM

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Introduction

Lord Robertson has stated that “9/11 transformed terrorism from a domestic security concern into a truly international security challenge.”¹ In response to this new global security challenge, that of transnational terrorism, NATO is expanding its role in the realm of counterterrorism. While terrorism was a component of NATO’s enlarged post-Cold War security agenda, it is now front and center and is emerging as the principal focus of the alliance.²

In the aftermath of September 11 the emerging dominance of NATO’s counterterrorism role in determining the alliance’s policy agenda can be clearly seen. In response to the September 11 attacks the alliance invoked article 5 of the Washington Treaty for the first time in the alliance’s history stating that an attack on one member was to be considered an attack on all; fourteen of 19 NATO allies sent contingents to Afghanistan; NATO has undertaken overall command of the ISAF peace support operation in Afghanistan – its first “out of area” deployment; the alliance has developed both a Partnership Action Plan on Terrorism and a military concept for defence against terrorism for which a concept of operations is being developed to put the concept into effect; and alliance members committed themselves to developing the types of military

¹ Lord Robertson, “Transforming NATO,” *NATO Review* (Spring 2003): 3. Online: www.nato.int/review.

capabilities that will allow them to take military action against terrorism through the Prague Capabilities Commitment and the developing NATO Response Force.³ Indeed, the Prague Summit, held in November 2002, was initially scheduled to focus upon the issue of enlargement. After 9/11 the focus of the summit was changed to the issue of Alliance transformation – reflecting the need for the alliance to adapt and respond to changes in the international security environment, in particular, to respond to the heightened terrorist threat reflected by the 9/11 attacks.⁴

In many ways that the NATO agenda has been altered by the events of 9/11 is not surprising. Given that 9/11 altered the environment in which NATO operates, if the alliance did not adapt, especially in terms of its organization, roles and missions, to meet the demands of the new environment it would risk becoming irrelevant as an actor within that environment. This argument has been asserted by a number of commentators including Richard Lugar who states: “If NATO is not up to the challenge of becoming effective in the new war against terrorism, then our political leaders will be inclined for something else that will answer the need.”⁵ Gordon also reveals this line of thought, arguing that “while the anti-terrorism campaign changes NATO’s character and carries many risks, it also demonstrates NATO’s continued utility and provides an opportunity to renovate and give new life to an alliance whose future was uncertain.”⁶

² Lord Robertson, “Tackling Terror: NATO’s New Mission” Speech to the American Institute’s New Atlantic Initiative, Washington D.C., 20 June 2002). Online. Available: www.nato.int/docu/speech/2002/s020620a.htm.

³ For a good summary of recent NATO initiatives see, Christopher Bennett, “Combating Terrorism,” *NATO Review* (Spring 2003): 5-7. Online: www.nato.int/review; NATO, *NATO After Prague: New Members, New Capabilities, New Relations* (Brussels: NATO Office of Information and Press); NATO, *NATO Fact Sheet: 11 September – 18 Months on NATO’s Contribution to the Fight Against Terrorism*. Updated 4 Aug. 2003. Online: www.nato.int/terrorism/factsheet.htm; Elinor Sloan discusses the PCC and the NRF and notes their relevance to a counterterrorism role, see Sloan, “Beyond Primacy: American Grand Strategy in the post-September 11 Era,” *International Journal* LVIII, no. 2 (Spring 2003): 303-319.

⁴ See Michael Ruhle, “NATO After Prague: Learning the Lessons of 9/11,” *Parameters* (Summer 2003): 93.

⁵ Richard D. Lugar, “Redefining NATO’s Mission – Preventing WMD Terrorism,” *Washington Quarterly* 25, no. 3 (Summer 2002): 13;

⁶ Gordon, “NATO After September 11,” *Survival* 43, no. 4 (Winter 2001/02): 89.

While not all would agree with Gordon's assertion that NATO's future was uncertain, the comment raises an important point. NATO itself has a clear institutional incentive to adapt and take on a counterterrorism role in order to ensure its own survival as an international security organization. Thus, the question that must be asked is whether NATO, an alliance which developed during the cold war as a response to a state-based military threat in the form of the Soviet Union, is suited to this new counterterrorism role and whether the alliance can make a significant and lasting contribution to the campaign against terrorism. Is a NATO role in counterterrorism desirable and clearly beneficial or is this merely a quest by the organization to maintain its relevance in a changed security environment – a reflection of the mindset or the reality that “if it's not terrorism it's not relevant”?⁷

In order to answer this question this paper presents an assessment of the ability of NATO to contribute to the international campaign against terrorism. The first section outlines a number of contributions NATO could make in the campaign against terrorism. These contributions are divided into four main realms: diplomacy, military operations, intelligence-sharing, and defence cooperation. The second section outlines the two principal challenges facing NATO if it continues to develop a role in counterterrorism, a trend that by all appearances seems destined to continue. The conclusion summarizes briefly and presents a set of specific policy recommendations aimed at adapting the alliance for a counterterrorism role. The paper closes with a few comments on the prospects for a significant NATO role in the campaign against terrorism.

⁷ This quote is from a senior NATO official in a briefing regarding NATO's role in counterterrorism. NATO, Briefing to the Canadian Security and Defence Forum, Brussels, 17 June 2003.

NATO Contributions to the Campaign Against Terrorism: A Key Player

The nature of the campaign against terrorism itself facilitates a strong NATO role in that it puts a priority upon international cooperation in the realm of defence and security. If “organization, cooperation and coordination” are the keys to successfully dealing with terrorism NATO can provide all three.⁸ There are four main realms where NATO can make a significant contribution to the campaign: diplomacy, military, intelligence-sharing and defence cooperation, which suggests that NATO can make a significant contribution to a multi-dimensional campaign.

The Diplomatic Realm: A Forum for Discussion and Action

Strobe Talbot suggests that NATO’s “military and political functions have always been intertwined” and argues that “at its inception, NATO was about more than just banding together against a common enemy; it was also about creating, consolidating and expanding a zone of safety within which common values and cooperative institutions could prosper.”⁹ This fact opens room for a significant diplomatic role for NATO in fostering support for the campaign on terrorism which underpins the critical element of international cooperation - “NATO can contribute in a number of different ways. Its comparative advantage is centered on its military clout, but it is certainly not limited to it.”¹⁰ If maintaining coalition support and solidarity is a key element of the campaign against terrorism, then surely one role NATO can play is as a forum for the mobilization of such support and solidarity, especially noting the strong, shared values that unite the members of the alliance.

⁸ Frank J. Cilluffo and Daniel Rankin suggest that “organization cooperation and coordination are the keys to successfully dealing with this problem” that is international terrorism. See, Frank J. Cilluffo and Daniel Rankin, “Fighting Terrorism,” *NATO Review* (Winter 2001/2002): 12.

⁹ Strobe Talbot, “From Prague to Baghdad: NATO at Risk,” *Foreign Affairs* 81, no. 6 (November/December 2002): 50.

¹⁰ Lord Robertson, “International Security and the Fight Against Terrorism,” Speech, Vienna, Austria, 14 June 2002. Online: www.nato.int/docu/speech/2002/s020614a.htm.

The role NATO can play in this area is highlighted by the invocation of article 5 of the Washington Treaty in the aftermath of the September 11 attacks. Gordon suggests that the “political solidarity” evoked by the NATO response to the attacks was highly significant even if the NATO allies were not very active in the military campaign in Afghanistan.¹¹ Indeed NATO possesses assets beyond the North Atlantic Council in this diplomatic role. The Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council is perhaps the just as important a forum as the NAC in that it includes a wider set of states including some, such as those in Central Asia, that are key to the war on terrorism. Indeed on September 12 the members of the “Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council” condemned the terrorist attacks on the US and “pledged to undertake all efforts to combat the scourge of terrorism.”¹² The members of the EAPC have also signed a “Partnership Action Plan against Terrorism” which includes a variety of measures including commitments to sign the relevant UN conventions related to the campaign against terrorism, commitments to find ways of improving intelligence sharing and generally improve international cooperation in the campaign against terrorism. NATO also possesses key assets in the form of the Mediterranean Dialogue, an initiative developed in 1994 as a means of improving cooperation and political dialogue with countries in the Mediterranean region, and the NATO-Russia Council which was launched in May 2002.¹³

The importance of political solidarity in the campaign against terrorism is not just for its own sake; it underpins successful action in the military sphere. Discussing

¹¹ Gordon, “NATO After September 11,” 89.

¹² See NATO, *Partnership Action Plan against Terrorism*, Prague, 22 November 2002. Online: www.nato.int/docu/basicxt/b021122e.htm.

¹³ The countries involved in the Mediterranean Dialogue include Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Mauritania, Morocco, Tunisia and Algeria. See, NATO, *Handbook* (Brussels: NATO Office of Information and Press, 2001), 91-92. The NATO-Russia Council is another mechanism to facilitate cooperation at the diplomatic level. Indeed, counterterrorism is identified as one of the areas for NATO-

potential roles for the military in combating terrorism Lord Robertson has suggested that all potential roles have one thing in common: they require political support; “a broad base of support, political as well as practical.” He cites the experience of Afghanistan as an example: “The recent operations against Al-Quaida would not have been possible without the political and logistical support offered by a unique coalition – a coalition including Russia, many Central Asian countries, Pakistan and in the Gulf Region.”¹⁴ Thus, NATO contributions in the diplomatic realm facilitating international cooperation are interrelated with contributions in the military realm of the war on terror, the next subject to be discussed.

The Military Dimension: NATO Operations or NATO Toolbox?

There are two primary roles NATO can play in terms of making a military contribution to the campaign against terrorism: NATO can take military action directly, conducting operations under the command and control of NATO itself, in the manner of the Kosovo campaign of 1999, or it can facilitate operations of “coalitions of the willing” by acting as a toolbox from which interoperable forces can be drawn in order to conduct military operations.¹⁵ There are also two types of military operations in which NATO military forces may make a contribution to the campaign against terrorism: the first is by conducting combat operations against terrorist groups or their supporters directly; the second is a military operation in the form of a peace support operation designed to ensure stability, either national or regional, in an area of terrorist activity.

Russia consultation and practical cooperation. See, NATO, “11 September – 18 Months On: NATO’s Contribution to the Fight Against Terrorism,” Online: www.nato.int/terrorism/factsheet.htm.

¹⁴ Lord Robertson, “NATO Russian Cooperation in Combating Terrorism: A Good Idea Whose Time has Come,” Keynote Address at the NATO-Russia Conference on the Military Role in Combating Terrorism, NATO Defence College, Rome, 4 February 2002. Online: www.nato.int/docu/speech/2002/s020204a.htm.

¹⁵ The NATO as a toolbox concept is elucidated by a number of commentators including Michael Ruhle, “NATO after Prague,” 96. See also, Gordon, “NATO After September 11,” 89. The Partnership for Peace program is a key asset in this role as it

Based upon this analysis it is possible to categorize the possible NATO military contributions to the campaign against terrorism in a two by two matrix showing four possible types of military operations.¹⁶ Accordingly the American “Operation Enduring Freedom” can be categorized as a combat operation in a coalition of the willing operation facilitated by NATO,¹⁷ whereas the ISAF deployment is a PSO deployed under NATO command.¹⁸

While NATO has not yet conducted direct combat operations in a counterterrorism role within an operation under NATO command, NATO does seem to be putting the requisite pieces in place showing some potential to do so. NATO has developed a military concept for defence against terrorism and is currently developing an operational concept of operations to put it into effect. Critically the military concept against terrorism underlines the Alliance’s readiness to act against terrorist attacks or the threat of such attacks and to deploy forces “as and where required to carry out such missions.”¹⁹ As well NATO is developing the NATO Response Force (NRF), an elite force designed as a highly flexible, rapidly deployable, technologically advanced, elite force. This force is to be initially operationally capable by October 2004, is scheduled to reach its full operating capability by October 2006 and is reported to be well-suited to a

fosters interoperability among NATO and partner states. See, Celeste A. Wallander, “NATO After the Cold War,” *International Organization* 54, no. 4 (Autumn 2000): 728-730.

¹⁶ The two by two matrix includes the combinations: combat operation/NATO command, combat operation/NATO facilitated coalition of the willing, PSO/NATO command, PSO/NATO facilitated coalition of the willing.

¹⁷ While the operation was predominantly American a number of NATO members participated as did the Australians. See, NATO, 11 September – 18 Months On NATO’s Contribution to the Fight Against Terrorism. Online: www.nato.int/terrorism/factsheet.htm.

¹⁸ The ISAF deployment was initially a PSO in a NATO assisted coalition of the willing framework when the lead nation first the United Kingdom and then Turkey, Germany and the Netherlands. See, NATO, 11 September – 18 Months On NATO’s Contribution to the Fight Against Terrorism. Online: www.nato.int/terrorism/factsheet.htm.

¹⁹ The military concept is described in NATO, 11 September – 18 Months On NATO’s Contribution to the Fight Against Terrorism. Online: www.nato.int/terrorism/factsheet.htm.

counterterrorism role.²⁰ If this is the case, NATO may have a sound option on the table for direct counterterrorism combat operations by 2006. Until then, one should not underestimate the significance of NATO's role in conducting PSOs. Indeed, this is most likely the area where the United States needs more assistance,²¹ and an area of considerable NATO expertise where NATO can make a significant contribution to the campaign against terrorism.²²

The Intelligence Dimension: Share and Share Alike

The third major area where NATO can make a contribution to the campaign against terrorism is through participating in intelligence sharing – perhaps the single most important element of the campaign. The alliance has a long-standing intelligence sharing relationship among its members, particularly with the United States.²³ Indeed, NATO's ability to contribute in this area is reflected in the US request of 4 October 2001 for assistance from the allies in a number of areas. Significantly, increasing intelligence sharing was near the top of the list.²⁴

Nor is the potential for the alliance to contribute in this area limited to the allies only. The Partnership Action Plan on Terrorism, which was agreed upon by all members of the EAPC (the 19 NATO allies and the 27 Partner countries), includes provisions to improve intelligence sharing arrangements.²⁵ The alliance has also created an EAPC/PfP Intelligence Liaison Unit to promote exchange of intelligence

²⁰ See Sloan, 313.

²¹ On this point see Barry R. Posen, "Command of the Commons: The Military Foundations of U.S. Hegemony," *International Security* 28, no. 1 (Summer 2003): 30-36, 44. In particular Posen identifies a key shortage of military manpower in the form of infantry; those soldiers needed mostly in post-conflict PSOs.

²² The expertise of the alliance in this role is noted by Christopher Bennett, "Aiding America," *NATO Review* 49, no. 4 (Winter 2001). Online: www.nato.int/review.

²³ The relationship is noted by Steven E. Miller, "The End of Unilateralism or Unilateralism Redux?" *Washington Quarterly* 25, no. 1 (Winter 2002): 21.

²⁴ See Gordon, "NATO After 11 September," 93.

relevant to terrorist threats.²⁶ Both the Mediterranean Dialogue and the NATO-Russia Council are also being leveraged as mechanisms to contribute to the sharing of intelligence regarding terrorist threats.²⁷

However, limitations and constraints upon NATO's ability to contribute to intelligence-sharing exist – as Pillar notes, “even with an alliance such as NATO, constraints on sharing sensitive intelligence increase along with the numbers of participating countries.”²⁸ Perhaps the greatest challenge facing NATO is that of the prevailing institutional culture of the alliance regarding intelligence. Michael Herman describes the post-war alliance doctrine as regarding intelligence as “essentially a national matter” and suggests that this remains the case in the post-cold war period today.²⁹ If this is indeed the case, making the shift to where intelligence and intelligence-sharing is recognized as a main focus of the alliance may be the most significant contribution of the alliance to the campaign against terrorism.

Defence Cooperation: Enhanced Capacity through International Cooperation

NATO has a longstanding history of defence and security cooperation.³⁰ If a cohesive and capable national response is key to countering the terrorist threat, NATO can play a key role by facilitating and assisting the development of counterterrorism capacities in both its member states and in its partner countries. Enhancing partner capabilities is

²⁵ NATO, Partnership Action Plan Against Terrorism, Prague, 22 November 2002, para. 16.1.2, Online: www.nato.int/docu/basicstxt/b021122e.htm.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ This is noted in the case of the Mediterranean Dialogue by Strobe Talbott, “From Prague to Baghdad: NATO at Risk,” 54. The NATO-Russia council identifies terrorism as one of the areas of consultation and cooperation to be developed and identifies intelligence sharing and the development of common threat assessments as a possible mechanism. See, NATO, “11 September – 18 Months On”.

²⁸ Paul R.Pillar, *Terrorism and US Foreign Policy* (Brookings: 2001), 76.

²⁹ See, Michael Herman, “Intelligence Doctrine for International Peace Support,” in *Peacekeeping Intelligence: Emerging Concepts for the Future*, eds. Ben de Jong, Wies Platje, and Robert David Steele (Oakton Virginia: OSS International Press, 2003), 162.

extremely important as these countries often do not have the expertise or the resources required to develop such capacities.³¹ The potential for NATO action in this area is noted in the Partnership Action Plan on Terrorism, which is being leveraged as a mechanism to guide such practical cooperation.³²

The plan outlines cooperation on two broad fronts: developing capacities to combat terrorism directly; and developing capacities required to manage the consequences of terrorist attacks especially those utilizing weapons of mass destruction. It has also been suggested that the plan may also serve as an instrument for the dissemination and distribution of lessons learned in counterterrorism.³³ To this end the plan calls for: defence and security sector reform to aid the development of “properly structured and well-equipped forces able to contribute to combating terrorism”; force planning to that effect; information exchange about counterterrorism forces; joint inter-allied and inter-partner exercises related to combating terrorism to improve capabilities and to share experiences; and the development of enhanced capabilities to contribute to consequence management through joint exercises and the sharing of information and experience in this area.³⁴

Interestingly the plan also calls for the consideration of the establishment of a PfP Trust Fund to “assist individual member states in specific efforts against terrorism” noting that the fund may be particularly relevant to Partners from Central Asia, the

³⁰ Anthony Forster and William Wallace, “What is NATO for?” *Survival* 43, no. 4 (Winter 2001/02): 107.

³¹ Pillar notes that NATO member states are in a good position to share their lessons learned. See, Pillar, 186-187. The provision of such technical assistance is suggested, see, Harmon, 258; J. Paul DE B. Taillon, *Hijacking and Hostages: Government Responses to Terrorism* (Westport Conn.: Praeger, 2002), 73.

³² NATO, Partnership Action Plan against Terrorism, para7.

³³ Osman Yavuzalp, “Working with Partners to Fight Terrorism.” *NATO Review* (Spring 2003): 8. Indeed, the plan suggests EAPC states “will develop mentoring programmes for specific terrorism-related issues in order to share specific experiences in combating terrorism.” See para. 16.5.3.

³⁴ See, NATO, Partnership Action Plan against Terrorism, para. 16.2-16.4.

Caucasus and the Balkans and “will be implemented as a matter of priority.”³⁵ This suggests the alliance collectively understands the important contribution that can be made in this area.

Challenges Facing the Alliance: The Double Gap Dilemma

There are two primary challenges facing the alliance that may inhibit the development of a significant alliance role in the campaign against terrorism: the capabilities gap; and what can be termed the threat/response gap. The capabilities gap is best defined as “the aggregate of multiple gaps relating to the organization and conduct of large-scale expeditionary operations” between European and American military forces.³⁶ The gaps can be related to either technology, or in investment and procurement; they combine to add up to US superiority, in both qualitative and quantitative terms, especially regarding expeditionary operations, the type required to conduct most anti-terrorist type operations.³⁷ The threat/response gap is a less tangible concept than the capabilities gap; the term refers to the gap between the United States and its European allies in terms of the perception of the terrorist threat in terms of both the severity and level of threat accorded to it and the counterterrorism responses required in its management. The United States tends to favour technical responses to the problem, especially military measures, whereas the Europeans tend to stress the relevance of a “root causes approach” to the problem.³⁸

The significance of the dual gap problem is that they act to inhibit a cohesive alliance response to the challenge of terrorism and reinforces American tendencies

³⁵ Ibid., para. 16.5.2.

³⁶ This definition is put forward by David S. Yost, “The NATO Capabilities Gap and the European Union,” *Survival* 42, no. 4 (Winter 2001-2002): 97. For another definition of the gap see, Alan L. Isenberg, “Last Chance: A Roadmap for NATO Revitalization,” *Orbis* 46, no. 4 (Fall 2002): 644-647.

³⁷ Yost notes US superiority in expeditionary operation, the connection to anti-terrorism operations is mine. See, Yost, 98-99.

towards unilateralism thus undercutting an international response to an international problem.³⁹ It is likely that the capabilities gap played a large role in the US decision to go into Afghanistan under a coalition of the willing framework acting as the lead nation – the Europeans simply didn't have the capabilities required to conduct such an operation.⁴⁰

The level of threat the dual gap poses for the alliance should not be underestimated. Indeed, one commentator even goes so far to suggest that dual gap is a mortal threat to the health of the alliance: "continued gaps in capabilities and severe differences between America and its European allies in the gravity accorded to threats is relegating NATO to the graveyard of collective security irrelevance."⁴¹ While this may be an exaggeration in the short-term, unless measures are taken to mitigate the dual gap the long-term survivability of the alliance and its ability to contribute to the campaign against terrorism will be severely affected.

Conclusion

It is clear that NATO can make a significant contribution to the campaign against terrorism in four interrelated realms by facilitating diplomatic cooperation; military operations; intelligence-sharing; and defence cooperation. If the campaign against terrorism places a premium upon international cooperation in all dimensions of the campaign and upon intelligence-sharing in particular, the potential for NATO to make a significant contribution should not be undervalued.

³⁸ For a good exposition of the gap see, Nicole Gnesotto, "Reacting to America," *Survival* 44, no. 4 (Winter 2002-2003): 101-102.

³⁹ This is suggested by Miller in terms of the threat/response gap. See, Miller, "Unilateralism," 27. The US perceives itself to be at war, whereas others may not feel the same way – a fundamental gap in perception of the threat of terrorism. James Ruhle notes that the capabilities gap increases US unilateralism. See, Ruhle, "The Lessons of 9/11," 91.

⁴⁰ See, Gordon, "NATO After 11 September," 93.

⁴¹ Isenberg, "Last Chance," 641.

Indeed it appears that NATO is well placed to make a significant contribution largely thanks to the institutions it developed throughout the 1990's as it adapted to the post-Cold War period, the EAPC, the PfP, the NATO-Russia council and the Mediterranean Dialogue, as it shifted from a collective security focus to that of a cooperative security focused framework.⁴²

However this does not mean that adaptation is not required. Indeed, if NATO is to play a key role in the campaign against terrorism three key changes need to be made. First, NATO should adopt some form of joint intelligence assessment in order to undercut the affects of the threat-response gap. Herman suggests that joint assessment along the model of the British Joint Intelligence Committee can facilitate international decision-making and coalition action.⁴³ As such, instituting such a mechanism within NATO could lead to a closing of the threat/response gap and also invigorate European investment in the military capabilities required for counterterrorism operations. Second, the alliance should update its Strategic Concept so that it clearly reflects the contemporary focus upon the campaign against terrorism. This too could undercut the threat/response gap as the process of updating the concept would require a thorough discussion of the nature of the terrorist threat which could lead to a more focused and shared conception of the threat among all members of the alliance. Indeed, such a discussion could lead to a better strategy in the war on terrorism overall as inherent in the threat/response gap is a "logical complementarity" which could lead to

⁴² Allen G. Sens argues that NATO has moved from being a collective defence organization to a cooperative security organization with a collective defence foundation. See, Allen G. Sens, "From Collective Defense to Cooperative Security? The New NATO and Nontraditional Challenges and Mission," in *NATO After 50 Years*, eds. S. Victor Papacosma, Sean Kay, and Mark R. Rubin (Wilmington, Delaware: Scholarly Resources Inc., 2001), 165-190.

⁴³ See, Herman, "Intelligence Doctrine," 161.

a more multidimensional and holistic strategy overall.⁴⁴ Third, the alliance needs to improve its capacity to undertake complex peace support operations. NATO does have expertise in the area but more work needs to be done – NATO does not even have a peacebuilding unit – to institutionalize and otherwise improve the capacity to undertake such operations which may be a major contribution of the alliance to the campaign.⁴⁵ All told, these three reforms will facilitate a greater NATO role in the campaign. Together they offer a concise agenda for alliance adaptation to a counterterrorism role.

Yet what is also clear is that NATO cannot be the only international organization involved in counterterrorism; there is no one-stop shopping in counterterrorism. Other institutions such as the UN, the G8, the EU and the OSCE all have a role to play. For example, it is difficult to see NATO playing a significant role in the economic domain of counterterrorism, cracking down on terrorist financing;⁴⁶ as others have suggested, an international “coalition of coalitions” or “network of networks” is required to counter the threat of transnational terrorism.⁴⁷ Can NATO act as the key node in this network, taking on a coordinating role?⁴⁸ Answering this question is strictly beyond the scope of this paper as it involves a comparison of the attributes and strengths of various organizations. However, it is clear that NATO brings significant assets to the table, particularly in the diplomatic and military realms, including conducting operations and defence cooperation activities, which could allow NATO to play such a coordinating role.

⁴⁴ See, Gnesotto, “Reacting to America,” 102.

⁴⁵ Chester A. Crocker identifies the lack of institutionalization of expertise in reconstruction and state-building and notes that a recent bipartisan commission (US) called for the creation of dedicated staffs addressing the issue within the State Department, USAID and NATO. See, Crocker, “Engaging Failing States.” *Foreign Affairs* 82, no. 5 (September/October 2003): 41. Indeed, while on the NATO SDF Tour Summer 2003, the lack of a peacebuilding unit within NATO was noted.

⁴⁶ This is asserted by Rebecca Johnson and Mica Zenko. “All Dressed Up and No Place to Go: Why NATO Should be on the Front Lines in the War on Terror,” *Parameters XXXII (Winter 2002-03)*: 63, note 51.

⁴⁷ Kurt M. Campbell and others, suggests a coalition of coalitions is required. See, Kurt M. Campbell and Michele A. Flournoy and others. *To Prevail: An American Strategy for the Campaign Against Terrorism*. Washington DC: CSIS Press, 2001.

Ultimately however, it is likely that NATO's participation in the campaign against terrorism will largely be a function of the US choice of grand strategy.⁴⁹ In this respect an enhanced NATO role in the campaign faces a tautological dilemma. US unilateralist impulses lead to an American dismissal of NATO's potential in the campaign against terrorism, negating a significant NATO contribution, thus seemingly confirming that NATO is unable to play a significant role in the campaign.⁵⁰ If NATO is to play a significant role, US support and investment is required and will be key to the development of an enhanced NATO role in the campaign. Realizing the many assets NATO possesses relevant to the campaign, those outlined in this paper, may help to shape US grand strategy. Yet perhaps the greatest strategic advantage of NATO participation would be the institutionalization of international cooperation an enhanced NATO role would allow. If international cooperation is plagued by the "politics of the last outrage," institutionalizing support for the long-term campaign against terrorism could be the alliance's single greatest contribution and the foundation of success in the campaign; it may be that "A permanent coalition is better than a temporary one. An interoperable coalition is better than an incapable one. A value sharing coalition is better than a coalition of convenience. And a NATO coalition is better than anything else."⁵¹ While the decision to increase NATO's role in the campaign may rest with

⁴⁸ For an argument in favour of a NATO coordinating role see, Johnson and Zenko, "All Dressed Up".

⁴⁹ This idea is developed in the final part of the introduction above.

⁵⁰ This tautological problem is identified by Gnesotto in the context of the capabilities gap. I extend the concept to NATO's role generally. See, Gnesotto, "Reacting to America," 100.

⁵¹ Robertson, "Tackling Terror".

American decision-makers, the way forward may be clearer than we think; that at least, leaves some room for optimism.