



COMMITTEE ON PROLIFERATION

TOPIC A: THE NATO EUROPEAN MISSILE SHIELD

The design and construction of a ballistic missile defence system in Europe has been an important policy issue for NATO since the Prague Summit of 2002.¹ In 2007, the North Atlantic Council agreed that the development of a NATO European missile defence system should proceed. The following year, the United States announced its plans to install a missile defence system with Patriot missiles located in Poland and air radar in the Czech Republic. The Russian Federation strongly condemned these plans, arguing that a NATO missile defence system based in Central Europe could alter the balance of power in Eurasia and lead to rearmament.

An alternative proposed by the Obama administration in 2009 – the European Phased Adapted Approach (EPAA) – has been functional in early phases since 2012 and is currently scheduled to be completed by 2022. According to the White House, this missile shield “is neither capable against nor directed at Russia’s strategic nuclear deterrent, but focuses instead on ballistic missile threats from outside the Euro-Atlantic area.”² This shift in missile defence strategy has signaled a desire to calm escalating

¹ “Prague Summit Declaration, issued by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Prague, Czech Republic,” issued November 21st, 2002, available online: http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_19552.htm

² “Fact Sheet, US Missile Defense Policy: A Phased, Adaptive Approach for Missile Defense in Europe,” The White House Office of the Press Secretary, issued September 19th, 2009, available online: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/fact-sheet-us-missile-defense-policy-a-phased-adaptive-approach-missile-defense-eur>

tensions with the Kremlin over strategic weapons while still pursuing missile defence capabilities for NATO member states in Europe.

The EPAA was first enacted by deploying US warships with Aegis missile interception technology to the European theatre, sailing out of Spain. In the most recent phase of the EPAA, the United States has implemented ground-based interceptor missiles of a similar type in Romania with plans to integrate both these systems (ground and naval) under NATO Command. The ground-based missile system is called the Aegis Ashore Missile Defense System (AAMDS), or more informally, Aegis Ashore. The United States and NATO have claimed that this system is not capable of intercepting Russia's strategic nuclear arsenal, as it is too technologically advanced. Rather, Iran's ballistic missile program has been identified as a primary threat that the NATO missile shield is intended to counter.³

Russia had originally welcomed the EPAA as a more acceptable alternative to the Bush Administration's plans for basing Patriot missiles in Poland. They have, however, voiced concern over Aegis-equipped warships sailing in the Baltic Sea and, in light of the Ukraine and Syria conflicts and chilly Russia-NATO relations, over the ground-based Aegis Ashore program in Romania. Russia has argued that a European missile shield would give NATO a significant strategic advantage in the event of a hypothetical conflict, and could enable the United States and NATO to pursue a more aggressive military program against Russian interests in Eurasia. They have also argued that the ground-based Aegis missile system in Romania, which can fire (but is not equipped with) cruise missiles, is a violation of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty. In response to Aegis Ashore, Russia has threatened to withdraw from this and other arms control treaties.⁴

NATO's European missile defence shield currently consists of Aegis Ashore in Romania, early warning radar in Turkey, and American Aegis-equipped ships sailing out of Spanish ports. Aegis Ashore, the latest addition to the system, has been active since the summer of 2016. The next phases of the plan include replacing the interceptor missiles with more sophisticated models as they become available for deployment and building a second Aegis Ashore site in Poland.⁵

Questions for Discussion

- 1) What should be the future of the NATO missile defence shield in Europe? In practical terms, from whom will it be meant to protect NATO members? Should it continue to concentrate solely on threats from outside the Euro-Atlantic region?

³ "What You Need to Know About Aegis Ashore Romania," U.S. Naval Forces Europe-Africa/U.S. 6th Fleet Public Affairs, accessed December 1st, 2016, <http://www.c6f.navy.mil/news/what-you-need-know-about-aegis-ashore-romania>

⁴ "Russia Calls New U.S. Missile Defense System a 'Direct Threat,'" The New York Times, accessed December 1st, 2016, http://www.nytimes.com/2016/05/13/world/europe/russia-nato-us-romania-missile-defense.html?_r=0

⁵ Ibid., "Fact Sheet, U.S. Missile Defense Policy."

- 2) What political, strategic, and technical obstacles must be overcome to de-escalate and avoid escalating tensions with Russia over the European missile shield? What changes, if any, must be made to the missile defence program?
- 3) Does the NATO European missile defence shield act as an effective deterrent to nuclear and ballistic missile proliferation by states and non-state actors? If not, how can it be adapted to better fulfill that role?
- 4) In light of US congressional budget cuts to the European missile defence system in recent years, should NATO member states in Europe bear more fiscal responsibility for the system?

Further Reading

Arms Control Association. "The Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty at a Glance." Last updated October 2016. Available online: <https://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/INFtreaty>

Associated Press. "China, Russia consider joint defense response to U.S. missile shield." October 11th, 2016. Available online: <http://www.cbsnews.com/news/china-russia-consider-defense-response-us-missile-shield/>

Browne, Ryan. "U.S. launches long-awaited European missile defense shield." *CNN*. May 12th, 2016. Available online: <http://www.cnn.com/2016/05/11/politics/nato-missile-defense-romania-poland/>

NATO. "Active Engagement, Modern Defence: Strategic Concept For the Defence and Security of The Members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation." November 19th, 2010. Available online: <http://www.nato.int/lisbon2010/strategic-concept-2010-eng.pdf>

NATO. "Ballistic Missile Defence." Last updated July 25th, 2016. Available online: http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_49635.htm

NATO. "Deterrence and Defence Posture Review." Issued May 20th, 2012. Available online: http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_87597.htm

NATO. "Prague Summit Declaration, issued by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Prague, Czech Republic." Issued November 21st, 2002. Available online: http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_19552.htm

U.S. Naval Forces Europe-Africa/U.S. 6th Fleet Public Affairs. "What You Need to Know About Aegis Ashore Romania." May 11th, 2016. Available online: <http://www.c6f.navy.mil/news/what-you-need-know-about-aegis-ashore-romania>

White House Office of the Press Secretary. "Fact Sheet, US Missile Defense Policy: A Phased, Adaptive Approach for Missile Defense in Europe." Issued September 19th, 2009. Available online: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/fact-sheet-us-missile-defense-policy-a-phased-adaptive-approach-missile-defense-eur>

Topic B: A THREAT FROM TEHRAN

The threat of a nuclear Tehran has long been the subject of much scrutiny, pressure, and geopolitical interest. The subject has been used as a political football by actors in the domestic affairs of NATO member states, at times perhaps blurring the line between what's in the national interest, and what's in the *international* interest. A nuclear Tehran is a hot button issue which has led to strategic partnerships with the United States (prior to 1979), Russia and others. Iran's attempts to develop a 'peaceful' nuclear energy program has ultimately led to broken promises; clandestine development operations; and significantly, International Atomic Energy Agency reactivity and investigation.

However, for all the rhetoric around the issue of a nuclear Islamic Republic, a Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) was reached in July 2015 after years of contentious negotiations and mistrust, through multilateral negotiations with the United States, Russia, China, the United Kingdom, France, and Germany (the P5+1, or EU3+3). It was a deal that was both hailed and mocked, both claiming to stem the flow of nuclear proliferation and to give the revolutionary republic carte blanche with regards to nuclear development. Whether or not the deal ultimately is successful, it will forever be seen as a benchmark, a model for constraining the nuclear aspirations of future nuclear seeking states globally, but particularly in the tumultuous Middle East region.

To date, no evidence has been put forward or substantiated to suggest Iranian non-compliance. Quite to the contrary - the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has had access to monitor and verify the activities at Iranian nuclear facilities in an unprecedented scope relative to IAEA activities in Iran prior to the JCPOA.⁶ Indeed, according to the IAEA, Iran has not pursued construction of the Arak heavy water facility, has not installed new centrifuges, has not enriched uranium above 3.67% U-235, and has not exceeded limitations on its stockpiles among many of the other stipulations in the agreement including information sharing, and transparency.⁷

Now, over a year since the implementation of the JCPOA went into effect, questions and uncertainty regarding not only the true intentions of the Iranian leadership but also the political commitment and willingness to 'see the deal through' is strong. While in its first year, the P5+1 can boast a year of successful compliance, future compliance is in no way guaranteed. The largest variable, perhaps, is the change in political stripe of the administration in Washington, with many who were exceptionally critical and vocal in their opposition to a deal with Iran now in the ruling party caucus in Congress and the White House.

⁶ International Atomic Energy Agency. Director General. Verification and Monitoring in the Islamic Republic of Iran in Light of United Nations Security Council Resolution 2231 (2015). November 9, 2016.

⁷ *ibid*

The threat of new sanctions on the Iranian regime may incentivize members of the ruling elite in Tehran to head down the path of non-compliance, or, perhaps worryingly, to return to clandestine operations advancing nuclear ambitions. Geopolitical posturing between Russia and the United States over a resolution in Syria and Iraq, in many ways Iran's 'backyard', could also force Iranian action should the wider security conditions in the region continue to deteriorate, or if the opportunity for Iran to project its power regionally be impeded by unfavorable governments rising in Syria and Iraq.

NATO member-states, and the Committee on Proliferation, must remain proactive and forward-thinking with regards to a nuclear Iran. While the JCPOA has restrained the development of such a scenario, a nuclear Iran must be accounted and prepared for. Several NATO member-states, in addition to regional actors, are within range of Iranian ballistic missiles. Previously, in a Strategic Concept, NATO reaffirmed its commitment to explore "political means and military capabilities to contribute to international efforts to fight proliferation"⁸.

Questions for Discussion

- 1) What is NATO's contingency plan should the Islamic Republic prove to be in non-compliance of the JCPOA?
- 2) What will NATO's response be should one of the signatories of the JCPOA, such as the United States, withdraw support?
- 3) Should NATO seek increased engagement with Iran, a relative pillar of stability, on regional security issues as a 'soft-power' deterrent from future non-compliance?
- 4) Given the extensive scrutiny to the Islamic Republic, what should be made of Israel's alleged and suspected nuclear capacity and what other steps can NATO take to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons in the Middle East region in particular?

Further Reading

Bermant, Azriel. The Russian and Iranian Missile Threats: Implications for NATO Missile Defence. Report no. 143. Institute for National Security Studies, Tel Aviv University. 2014. <http://www.inss.org.il/uploadImages/systemFiles/memo143.pdf>

"Iran Country Details." IAEA.
<https://ola.iaea.org/ola/FactSheets/CountryDetails.asp?country=IR>.

⁸ North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Strategic Concept. 2010. http://www.nato.int/strategic-concept/pdf/Strat_Concept_web_en.pdf

Iran Nuclear Power Profile." IAEA.org. <http://www-pub.iaea.org/MTCD/publications/PDF/cnpp2009/countryprofiles/Iran/Iran2008.htm>

International Atomic Energy Agency. Director General. Verification and Monitoring in the Islamic Republic of Iran in Light of United Nations Security Council Resolution 2231 (2015). November 9, 2016. <https://www.iaea.org/sites/default/files/16/11/gov2016-55.pdf>

North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Strategic Concept. 2010. http://www.nato.int/strategic-concept/pdf/Strat_Concept_web_en.pdf

United States. State Department. Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. July 14, 2015. <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/245317.pdf>.

Topic C: ACCESS TO WMD'S AND WEAPONS DELIVERY SYSTEMS FOR NON-STATE ACTORS

The landscape of intrastate and interstate conflict has constantly evolved over the decades, yet its recent evolutions prove especially worrying. The role of non-state actors has been magnified, and in some cases, these groups have been able to act in a manner of a quasi-state, providing resources and protection of residents within large swathes of territory, and are able to act with significant military capabilities. For much of its history, the proliferation movement has been centered on preventing the proliferation and use of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) by states. However, the evolution, growth and popularity of non-state actor groups with vast financial resources and organizational capacity necessitates an alternative approach moving forward.

While the doomsday scenario has always been the ability for a transnational terror group, or a non-state actor to acquire a WMD and employ its use to achieve its aims, new terrors and challenges have emerged. The downing of civilian passenger jet MH17 over Eastern Ukraine presents these new challenges. While the details of the incident remain muddled, what is clear is the ability for non-state actors and transnational groups/organizations to exert formative influences on conflict, particularly magnified when they gain access to more sophisticated weapon delivery systems and technology. Not only can the employ of WMD wreak havoc, but also access to weapons delivery systems can cause a large scale loss of life.

Given the rise of global armed insurgencies, either as 'rebel movements' who have taken control of territory within a state or transnational organizations such as the *Islamic State in Syria and the Levant (ISIL, ISIS)*, or *Da'esh*, the ability to combat the proliferation of weapons, particularly weapons of mass destruction and restricting the ability for these groups to access weapons delivery systems is paramount. A consideration that should be noted, however, is that not all 'non-state actors' are in reality, acting entirely autonomously. Non-state actors can be utilised as a means to carry out the ambitions or desires of a State at arm's length.

In its 2016 Warsaw Summit Communiqué, NATO acknowledged that there exists an arc of instability along NATO's periphery, which includes challenges from non-state actors. The need to defend against non-state actors that "have state-like aspirations, capabilities, and resources" was reaffirmed, and the threat their access to weapons delivery systems and WMDs was starkly reconfirmed.⁹

While this topic area may be broad, it explores in what areas states can cooperate to ensure tighter security on stockpiles of WMD, information sharing, and coordinated action to prevent transnational terror groups and non-state actors from gaining access to these weapons. It presents an opportunity for a forward-looking debate, one which acknowledges the need for security alliances to evolve and adapt to the changing forms of conflict. There has been a growing number of voices seeking more flexibility in NATO responses and a need to adapt to the hybrid warfare that has emerged as the norm.¹⁰

Questions for Discussion

- 1) What steps can NATO take to ensure an appropriate, united response should a non-state actor or transnational organization obtain WMDs? Under whose jurisdiction does recovering the weapons fall under?
- 2) When restricting access to weapons delivery systems and WMDs, how should Private Military Contractors be classified and approached?
- 3) What is the security of your states weapons delivery systems and stockpiles of weapons of mass destruction (if applicable)?
- 4) To what extent can member-states enhance information sharing about vulnerabilities to security and storage of weapons to prevent non-state actors from gaining access to them?

Further Reading

Bunker, Robert. "Defeating Non-State Actors." Parameters 43, no. 4 (2013).
http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pubs/parameters/issues/Winter_2013/6_Bunker.pdf

⁹ North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Warsaw Summit Communiqué. 2016.
http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_133169.htm

¹⁰ Drent, Margriet, Rob Hendriks, and Dick Zandee. New Threats, New EU and NATO Responses. Report. Clingendael Netherlands Institute for International Relations. 2015.
https://www.clingendael.nl/sites/default/files/New%20Threats_New%20EU_Nato%20Responses_Clingendael_July2015.pdf

Chatham House. NATO: Warsaw and Beyond. 2016

https://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/files/chathamhouse/events/2016-09-06-nato-warsaw-beyond-meeting-summary_0.pdf

Drent, Margriet, Rob Hendriks, and Dick Zandee. New Threats, New EU and NATO Responses. Report . Clingendael Netherlands Institute for International Relations. 2015.

https://www.clingendael.nl/sites/default/files/New%20Threats_New%20EU_Nato%20Responses_Clingendael_July2015.pdf

North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Warsaw Summit Communiqué. 2016.

http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_133169.htm

Use of Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Weapons by Non-State Actors. Report. Lloyds. 2016.

<https://www.lloyds.com/~media/files/news%20and%20insight/risk%20insight/2016/cbrn.pdf>

Rosen, Armin. "Stratfor Predicts Loose Nukes in Russia Will Be 'the Greatest Crisis of the next Decade.'" Business Insider, 2015.

<http://www.businessinsider.com/russia-nukes-could-be-a-huge-crisis-2015-3>

Rudischhauser, Wolfgang. "Could ISIL Go Nuclear." Nato Review, 2015.

<http://www.nato.int/docu/review/2015/ISIL/ISIL-Nuclear-Chemical-Threat-Iraq-Syria/EN/>.

Zugravu, Andreea. Non-State Threats and the New Security Paradigm: Armed Groups in Romania's National Security Strategy. Tufts University. 2010.

<http://fletcher.tufts.edu/~media/Fletcher/News%20and%20Media/2010/May/Op-Ed/Zugravu%2005%2010.pdf>