**Withdrawal CP**

**2NC---NB---AT: Strategic Autonomy Fails**

**Strategic autonomy works*.***

Bruno **Tertrais, 19** (Bruno Tertais, Deputy Director of the Paris-based Fondation Pour la Recherche Stratégique, 6-28-2019, accessed on 5-21-2022, Washington Quarterly, “Will Europe Get Its Own Bomb?”, https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/0163660X.2019.1621651, HBisevac)

Would it be credible? Some claim that a France and/or UK-based **nuclear deterrent** would not have the necessary **credibility**.53 But it is **widely considered** that a **smaller arsenal** can deter a **major power** provided it has the ability to **inflict damage** seen as **unacceptable** by the other party. This has always been the premise of “deterrence of the strong by the weak”—and is not connected with the size of the other party’s nuclear arsenal as long as deterrence does not rely on a “counterforce” strategy, or on the ability to destroy the equivalent territory or population of the defender. It is also **not connected** with the size of the other party’s **conventional military capabilities** as long as one does not rely on any war-fighting or nuclear defense strategy—concepts that even NATO no longer applies. Most importantly, again, deterrence exercised by a European power might be seen as **more credible** than when it is exercised by a **distant protector**; the idea is that “be ready to die for Helsinki” could be a more credible proposition for a European nuclear power than for the **U**nited **S**tates.

**Strategic autonomy works---multiple steps already taken!**

Camille **De Sutter, 20** (Camille De Sutter, Defence Researcher at Finabel European Army Interoperability Centre, 6-3-2020, accessed on 6-8-2022, European Army Interoperability Centre, “Europe’s Road to Strategic Autonomy: Summarizing the Concrete Steps Taken”, https://finabel.org/europes-road-to-strategic-autonomy-summarising-the-concrete-steps-taken/, HBisevac)

The European Union has already undertaken various **concrete steps** towards **strategic autonomy** by creating entities that will work toward **achieving** this **objective**.

First, the **C**apability **D**evelopment **P**lan (CDP), where Member States **identify priorities** in their **national defence planning** and **streamline** the objectives into a set that all can agree on while maintaining consistency with NATO’s objectives (EEAS, 2020). The overall aim of the CDP is to enhance **cooperation** and **coherence** in Member States’ plans and to define common European priorities in **capability development** (European Defence Agency, 2020a). To streamline European countries’ objectives in this field, the CDP informs the other instruments described below: the Coordinated Annual Review on Defence (CARD), the Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) and the European Defence Fund (EDF) (EEAS, 2020). As presented above, developing common objectives **enhances** the Member States’ capacity to act **autonomously** and as **one entity**.

**CARD** is another of the EU’s major defence achievements. This mechanism was created to **centralise analysis** on the implementation of defence plans at the national level. The **E**uropean **D**efence **A**gency (EDA) gathers all the latest and the most detailed **info**rmation Member States can provide on the **results** of their **implementation** of the **CDP** to launch the **CARD process**, which is composed of four steps. First, the EDA analyses all relevant data it has gathered and all material provided – voluntarily – by the Member States. Second, the EDA engages in a bilateral dialogue with each individual participating Member State to validate and potentially consolidate the information. Third, the EDA produces a “CARD Analysis” which “presents aggregate data and [identifies] trends regarding defence spending plans, implementation of priorities”, and cooperation opportunities. Finally, a definitive CARD report drafted by the EDA presents the main findings and recommendations (EDA, 2020b). Such a document will allow Member States to streamline their objectives to identify cooperation opportunities in capability development.

**PESCO** is a legally binding framework based on Article 46 of the Lisbon Treaty. In Biscop’s (2017) words, it “formulate[s] the **level** of **ambition** for the strategic autonomy of a group of European States” who are “capable and willing to do so” (EEAS, 2019a). The PESCO framework now consists of a list of **47 projects** to which 25 European states participate; out of EU Member States, only Denmark and Malta do not participate. The aim is to “**jointly develop** **defence capabilities** and increase their **readiness** and **availability** for EU military **missions** and **operations**” (EEAS, 2020). PESCO is designed to be led by a core group of states – in which France and Germany particularly need to have a prominent role – who will take bold and concrete steps to move European defence forward, working in a “he who loves me follows me” way. The aim is for the core groups to lead others into harmonising their capability development plans and to eventually reach a point where all European states act in the same direction.

Finally, the **EDF** will foster innovation and competitiveness in the European defence market by providing the necessary funding for Research & Development (**R&D**) and by co-financing approved development projects with a contribution of up to 20% (EC, 2019 & EEAS, 2019b). For research, the level of EDF funding can be up to 100% (EC, 2019). The collaborative aspect of the R&D strand of the EDF combined with the co-financing offered by the capability strand lessens the **financial burden** that defence and capability development bears on European countries. By **alleviating** some unnecessary and duplicated **costs** across the European continent, the EDF initiative **contributes significantly** to the European journey to strategic autonomy. Through the initiative, the EU will eventually be able to build an **autonomous** and **self-sufficient defence market** by developing its **capabilities** while **supporting European industries**. Thanks to the savings made through pooling and sharing capacities, European actors can also better afford critical technology for which they still rely on increasingly isolationist non-European powers. By developing its autonomous defence market, the EU therefore significantly expands its ability to “act alone when necessary”, in the spirit of strategic autonomy.

**2NC---NB---AT: U.S Key**

**Geography---the U.S can’t defend Europe even if they tried.**

Kimberly **Marten, 20** (Kimberly Marten is a Professor of Political Science at Barnard College, specializing in IR and Russia, 4-16-2020, accessed on 5-21-2022, International Politics, Vol 57, Issue 3, “NATO enlargement: evaluating its consequences in Russia”, https://link.springer.com/article/10.1057/s41311-020-00233-9, HBisevac)

Armed force deployments in Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania have **never been close to** large **enough** to pose an offensive threat to Russia. They remained small and relatively fat over this time period (World Bank n.d.). As mentioned above, Kaliningrad now found its land borders surrounded by NATO (it faces neutral Sweden by sea), but this threatened the enlarged NATO alliance much more than it threatened Russia. Kaliningrad has long been **heavily militarized**. Most of its population since Soviet times has worked in military installations (Chillaud and Tetart 2007), even though Russian deployments there were cut somewhat in the 1990s to meet the zonal limits of the original CFE Treaty (Kramer 1997). But in a future war with Russia, NATO would have a challenge resupplying and reinforcing the Baltic states, for two reasons. First, by land NATO could only get to the Baltics via the Suwalki Gap, **a 40-mile-long chokepoint** on the Poland/Lithuania border faced by **heavily militarized** Kaliningrad on one side and the nominal **Russian ally Belarus** on the other (Roblin 2019). Russia often participates in joint military exercises with Belarus, some of which have resembled World War Two scenarios in size, and Moscow could easily **move** large **forces** to Belarus **quickly**. Second, Kaliningrad is the perfect place for Russia to implement an anti-access/area denial (A2/AD) missile defense strategy, leaving the Baltic states **cut off** from the rest of NATO by air and sea unless NATO were willing to bear the likelihood of **signifcant casualties** (Williams 2017; Sukhankin 2017, 2018b). An infuential 2016 RAND study concluded that NATO forces would be incapable of deploying quickly enough even to defend the Baltic states from a Russian surprise attack (Boston et al. 2018). In short, NATO expansion to include the Baltic states weakened NATO, not Russia.

**Saving the U.S umbrella is hopeless---the U.S can never credibly threaten.**

Orion **Noda, 20** (Orion Noda, doctoral researcher at King’s College, 5-1-2020, accessed on 5-21-2022, Strife, “Risking New York for Paris? The Illusion of the US Nuclear Umbrella”, https://www.strifeblog.org/2020/05/01/7577/, HBisevac)

Deterrence theory is almost as old as the nuclear age. Consequently, the idea of Mutual Assured Destruction (MAD) and the use of nuclear weapons as a retaliatory deterrent has dominated the field of nuclear weapons and politics from the 1950s onwards.[1] However, like any field, a series of **biases infect it**. This blind trust and belief in the postulations of Deterrence Theory has established what Nick Ritchie called the “regime of nuclear truth” and **denominated** “**nuclear absolutism**.”[2] The effects of this **unquestionable belief** in Deterrence Theory sharply increases States’ **reliance** on and **valuing** of nuclear weapons. Consequentially, it poses an existential threat to **disarmament** processes and **severely undermines** nuclear weapon States’ **Article VI obligations** under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). It is long past time these ‘truths’ were punctured.

Deterrence Theory, derived from a Realist school of thought, postulates that the possession of nuclear weapons – the ultimate deterrent – will thwart and deter attacks against the possessor. The sheer destructive power inherent in a single nuclear weapon, let alone thousands detonating in quick succession, make their use (almost) unthinkable. As a means to solidifying a unified front against the Soviet Union in the aftermath of the Second World War, the Western European States along with the United States formed the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in 1949 to deter the Soviet Union’s massive conventional forces, as well as its ever-increasing nuclear arsenal after its first test a few months later. With **NATO**, the **U**nited **S**tates became the **guarantor** of the **defence** of Western Europe, and the so-called US **nuclear umbrella** was **born**.

As stated in Article V of the NATO treaty, an attack on one member was an attack on all of them. The US nuclear umbrella is, therefore, a **security assurance agreement** that the US deterrent intended primarily to defend itself, also **extends** over the **territory** of its **NATO partners**.[3] In other words, the United States would **defend NATO members** against aggressors, even resorting to **nuclear weapons**, should the situation require these capabilities to be deployed. In theory, the US nuclear umbrella would soothe NATO members’ anxieties and serve as an alternative to the acquisition of their own nuclear weapons.[4] However, given its Realist roots, the crucial question arises: when push comes to shove, would the United States be **willing** to **risk** its **own security** to defend its allies in Europe? What are the **costs** of **sustaining** the **illusion** of the US nuclear umbrella? While these questions retained an academic quality for some time, in the Age of Trump, they urgently require revisiting.

Alliances under Anarchy: a Realist Take

Realism puts significant emphasis on self-help given the anarchical setting of the International System. Cooperation is scarce and limited, and only possible if states see it in their primal interest of survival and quest for power. Nevertheless, military alliances do happen and are circumscribed in the theoretical postulations of Realism—they last for as long as the states involved see it as comparatively advantageous. In particular, alliances are formed to counter a third, more powerful, state.[5]

The US nuclear umbrella, one of the crown jewels of NATO, **relies heavily** on the existence and **credibility** of military alliances. If the alliance fails, so do the security assurances. In that sense, even though military alliances do exist, it seems almost incredible that, under Deterrence and, therefore, Realist logic, military alliances would include credible nuclear security assurances. In other words, following the Realist rationale of self-help and its ultimate goal of survival, it seems highly unlikely that a state would risk its own security and survival to come to the defence of another state, ally or not, that is threatened by a third.

Historically, military alliances based on mutual assistance and defence have **proven to be nothing but** **empty promises**. In 1924, Czechoslovakia and France signed the Treaty of Alliance and Friendship, which stated that the two States would come to the other’s aid in times of peril.[6] In 1938, given the rise of tensions just before the Second World War in Europe, Czechoslovakia also had a gentleman’s agreement with the United Kingdom regarding the latter’s aid in case of a military invasion of the former by Germany.[7] However, when Germany invaded Czechoslovakia, neither agreement was fulfilled, following several of the bedrock assumptions of the Realist school of thought.

Alliances, therefore, are **susceptible** to **failure**. As hard as it is for military alliances to succeed, the nuclear age amplifies the obstacles for their endurance. Even at the height of the Cold War, inside the war planning rooms of the Pentagon and the Strategic Air Command, the nuclear security assurances seemed to **tremble**. During the Berlin Crisis of 1961, top US officials were **reconsidering** whether the United States should employ nuclear weapons to defend an eventual military incursion of the USSR in West Germany.[8] Since the development of nuclear weapons and the dominating logic of nuclear deterrence, it is perfectly reasonable to argue that security assurances in the nuclear age are **quasi-empty words**. In 2020, revisiting the bases of the US nuclear umbrella—particularly in Europe—does it still hold **any value** as a credible security assurance?

New York for Paris? The US Nuclear Umbrella Revisited

The strength of the US nuclear umbrella guarantee **raised questions** from the very start, most notably from France. In the 1960s, General Charles de Gaulle was highly sceptical of US nuclear security assurances, particularly after the USSR developed intercontinental ballistic missiles with enough range to reach the United States. This scepticism led de Gaulle to pose the question whether US President John F. Kennedy would be **willing to risk New York for Paris**. Eventually, this very lack of confidence fomented the development of France’s force de frappe—**the French nuclear arsenal** – allowing France to be able to protect itself and **avoid** a strict **dependency** on **NATO**.[9]

The question posed by de Gaulle summarises the central issues with the credibility of US – or any – nuclear security assurances and umbrellas. In 1970, given the USSR’s massive conventional forces and its nuclear parity with the US, President Richard M. Nixon believed the nuclear umbrella was no longer sustainable.[10] Despite his beliefs, Nixon could not publicly admit the frailty of the US nuclear umbrella lest it create anxieties in its European allies and tampers with the Cold War balance.[11]

Fast forward to the present day, Donald Trump was elected President in 2016 with the slogan ‘America First.’ Ever since tensions have risen in the nuclear sphere in multiple fronts. President Trump, echoing President Harry S. Truman’s words from 1945, famously threatened “fire and fury” against North Korea and withdrew from the Iran Nuclear Deal. Moreover, relations with Russia have also deteriorated after the mutual withdrawal from the Intermediate Nuclear Forces Treaty and the seemingly unwillingness to extend New START—the only treaty remaining treaty limiting US and Russia’s nuclear arsenals—despite Russian President Putin’s positive signalling towards extension. Similarly, President Trump has repeatedly shown his contempt for NATO, after moving to cut US contributions to the organisation. Despite Trump’s increased reliance on nuclear weapons and desire of a larger arsenal, it seems unlikely Trump and his ‘America First’ mentality would risk New York – or any other US city, for that matter—for Paris. The **illusion** of the US nuclear umbrella seems to be **surfacing** at last. On the other side of the Atlantic, a recent poll conducted by the Körber Foundation showed that the German population **would rather** either rely on **France** and the **U**nited **K**ingdom for nuclear assurances or even **forgo them** than to rely on the US nuclear umbrella. Notwithstanding, high-ranking military officers seem to hold on to the current regime of nuclear truth.

Sustaining the illusion of the US nuclear umbrella incurs other costs whose effects have a global reach. By perpetuating the current regime of nuclear truth, the US is selling its nuclear umbrella, using it as a rock-solid alibi to keep the United States from abiding by its disarmament commitments. Under Article VI of the NPT, each State “[…] undertakes to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament”.[12] One key-argument against US nuclear disarmament for decades has been the anxieties it would create amongst its allies under the US nuclear umbrella.

The nuclear non-proliferation regime is already strained as it is. Arms control seems to be failing and non-nuclear weapons States are frustrated with the slow pace of disarmament efforts. The so-called ‘grand bargain’ of the NPT – non-proliferation in exchange for nuclear technology for peaceful purposes and the promise of disarmament – is in jeopardy. The **maintenance** and **belief** in the US nuclear umbrella and the growing frustration from the non-nuclear weapon States with its nuclear peers coalesce in existential threats to the **cornerstone treaty** keeping nuclear proliferation **at bay**. Were the illusion of the umbrella finally exposed, it would eliminate a key hindrance to nuclear disarmament. The US nuclear umbrella seems to have **lost its credibility**. President Trump, in practicing his ‘America First’ policy has opened the blinds showing the illusion of its nuclear security assurances, particularly in the post-Cold War world. The dismantlement of the US nuclear umbrella – being replaced by a European nuclear umbrella, led by France and the United Kingdom, or eliminated completely – would likely have **no de facto changes in European security**. Rather, it would cripple to anti-disarmament movement in the United States. The United States is **unlikely to risk New York for Paris**, and its European allies seem to **already know it**. Waking up from this illusion would create a more inviting environment for nuclear disarmament.

**2NC---NATO Collapse---T/L**

**Lacks any legitimacy with allies OR the public.**

Valery **Kulikov, 21** (Valery Kulikov, correspondent at NewAge, 9-3-2021, accessed on 5-16-2022, NewAge, “NATO collapse comes closer”, https://www.newagebd.net/article/148030/nato-collapse-comes-closer, HBisevac) “in a conflict with China…” is in the original text

THE shameful events in Afghanistan in recent weeks have led to a **dramatic loss** of **credibility** for the **U**nited **S**tates and **NATO** in the minds of the Western public. The earlier **criticism** of the Atlantic Alliance’s policies and actions has now **increased enormously** and has become the **most widespread meme** in the publications of various media.

The mournful announcement of the British Daily Mail is more straightforward than ever. Next to the image of a coffin covered in the national flag, is posed a question Britain has never been able to answer: what, in the end, did they all die for in Afghanistan?

The British TV channel Sky rightly points out that after the withdrawal of Soviet troops in 1989, the official government of Afghanistan endured for three years, and after the US withdrawal it did not last even three hours.

The seizure of power in Afghanistan by the Taliban (banned in Russia) is a grave disgrace and a **shameful defeat for NATO**, believes the Swiss TV channel SRF. One of the Alliance’s **grandest projects** of the past two decades has been brought to an **ignominious grave**. Western countries have failed to build democracy in Afghanistan, and now they refuse to even address the future of the country and its people.

NATO secretary general Jens Stoltenberg is not cut out for big speeches; indeed, even when he has something positive to say, he gives, to put it mildly, ‘an excessively reserved impression’, writes a diplomatic correspondent of the Swiss TV channel SRF. When Stoltenberg was finally confronted about the failure of the Western military alliance in Afghanistan, he looked deeply broken and depressed.

As the Wall Street Journal points out, Biden’s ‘disgraceful departure’ from Afghanistan was a **slap in the face** for NATO. Following the 9/11 attacks, when the Collective Defence Clause was invoked for the first time in history in Afghanistan, America’s allies in the Alliance have shed much blood in that country, spent vast sums of money in the conflict, and lost more than a thousand people. The newspaper stresses that Washington almost **mocked** its partners when in his speech about the withdrawal of troops Biden only **briefly mentioned NATO** and did not say a **word** about the European allies of the United States. So it is **not surprising** that European leaders are **seething** with **anger**, concludes The Wall Street Journal.

In his time, French president Emmanuel **Macron** was met with a barrage of criticism when he spoke of NATO as ‘**brain dead’** in 2019. But it was then that he warned that **no matter who was in charge** of the United States, it was becoming an **increasingly less dependable ally**. And today, Macron’s words seem nothing short of **prophetic** throughout the European capitals.

For Europe, the Taliban’s seizure of power in Afghanistan is an unmitigated nightmare, writes Deutsche Wirtschafts Nachrichten. First of all, because the US has shown through its **hasty withdrawal** that it **no longer intends** to **defend** the ‘**free world**’, and without American support Europe does not have enough strength to defend itself, and this catastrophic deficit is unlikely to be eliminated soon.

Moreover, there has been talk in the European Union for many years about the need for a European army, which, however, has come to nothing so far. The Lisbon Treaty provides for a tight tie between the European Union and NATO, headed by the United States, but given the changed circumstances, this point needs to be reconsidered, the Germans argue. The notion that Americans would be willing to engage in worldwide warfare in the name of protecting democracy has become an **illusion**. The Truman Doctrine, adopted in 1947, stipulated that Washington would support free nations in their struggle against totalitarian regimes, but under former President Donald Trump and his successor, Joe Biden, the United States has abandoned these values, the German newspaper notes.

In an August 17 interview with the online publication Parlamentní listy, Czech President Milos Zeman said that the US has **fallen** from the **prestige** of a **world leader** after the withdrawal from Afghanistan, and concerns have been raised about the **meaning** of **NATO’s existence**. The Czech president noted that the **distrust** of NATO on the part of the member countries will only **grow** after the recent incidents in Afghanistan. At that, he stressed: ‘But if NATO has been a failure, then that should lead to a reassessment of our military spending and an emphasis on national defence.’

Criticising the NATO evacuation in Afghanistan, the German tabloid Bild paid special attention to the fact that during the organisation of the withdrawal of troops from Afghanistan, the Bundeswehr focused on removing 29 pallets of beer and a popular German beer-lemonade mix, as well as 340 bottles of wine, champagne and other alcohol that remained in stock at its base in Mazar-i-Sharif. Additional transportation capacity was provided for this, which was not previously available for the local German helpers who risked their lives to make Afghanistan a better place. Thus, 65,000 cans of beer turned out to be more valuable to the German government and defence minister Annegret Kramp-Karrenbauer than the people who risked their lives to make Afghanistan better, the German media emphasise. European leaders are wondering how the current failure in Afghanistan will affect NATO. However, according to The Washington Post observer, they should also reflect on the fact that the **existence** of the alliance is **threatened** by the **hostile public opinion** in their own countries. The core principle of the alliance is the rule that all countries must come to the aid of a member of it in the event it is attacked. If one refuses to participate in collective defence, the entire alliance will **cease to be**. And the withdrawal of US troops from Afghanistan raises the question of whether or not that country can **live up** to its **commitments**. However, recent public opinion polls show that those polled are **no longer willing to support the US** in either a conflict with Russia or in a conflict with China…

Twenty years ago, hardly anyone could have imagined that by ending the war in Afghanistan, Washington would almost call the Taliban its ally. Today, these fighters ensure the evacuation of Kabul, the Americans provide them with reports with all the data on their citizens and Afghans, who ‘can be allowed to enter the airport.’ These passenger lists have already been dubbed the execution lists.

‘Since July, the US has evacuated more than 100,000 people from Afghanistan. Were all of them Americans? Were all of them heroes? No! Only 5,000 of them are US citizens. Were each and everyone of the remaining 95,000 all interpreters? No! Today, the State Department admitted that they have no idea how many of these people have a special visa proving that they worked for the US. The pilots are not given passenger lists. We are told that refugees pass the border without being searched. It appears that we don’t even know who they are taking back here’, says Fox News host Carlson Tucker.

On the whole, the public opinion, amid recent events in Afghanistan, is that the US and NATO have once again displayed to the world their **inadequacy** in achieving their designated goals. And this, in turn, raises **justifiable doubts** as to their **ability** to fulfil their declared **international obligations** regarding the security of their allies and partners.

**Leaving now avoids a commitment trap.**

Stephen **Walt, 18** (Stephen Walt, columnist at Foreign Policy and the Robert and Renée Belfer professor of international relations at Harvard University, 6-26-2018, accessed on 5-21-2022, Foreign Policy, “NATO Isn’t What You Think It Is”, https://foreignpolicy.com/2018/07/26/nato-isnt-what-you-think-it-is/, HBisevac)

Even so, NATO’s present problems predate Trump and are largely the result of **long-term structural forces**. In the absence of a common, clear, and present danger, sustaining an elaborate multinational alliance was always going to be difficult, and it is in some ways a testimony to past diplomatic artistry that NATO has kept going as long as it has and despite the failures in Afghanistan and Libya and the divisions that erupted over the war in Iraq. Even if Trump had stuck with the status quo, **reaffirmed** the **U.S. commitment**, and played nicely with Europe’s leaders, it would **not** have **reversed** the **gradual erosion** of the trans-Atlantic partnership.

A better course would have been to start a **gradual**, **constructive**, and if possible **amiable decrease** of the **U.S. security role** in **Europe**, making it **clear** to U.S. allies that Washington no longer believed it needed to maintain a security presence there and that it planned to be either **completely** or nearly **out** in five to 10 years. The United States might conceivably remain a formal member of NATO, but it would no longer station forces there, no longer insist that the supreme allied commander in Europe be a U.S. officer, and no longer expect the **Europeans** to fall **obediently** into line whenever **Washington barked orders**. Trade, investment, and tourism would continue, and U.S. arms manufacturers would be free to sell to European buyers if these states decided to bolster their defenses. Meanwhile, the United States would be free to focus on other problems.

Contrary to what you might think, I’m not anti-European, let alone anti-NATO. The alliance was a bold achievement for its time and one that served both the United States and Europe well in the past. But as I wrote back in 1998: “[**N**]**othing** is **permanent** in international affairs, and NATO’s **past achievements** should not blind us to its **growing fragility**. Instead of **mindlessly extending guarantees** to every potential trouble spot, and instead of basing our foreign policy on a **presumption** of **permanent partnership**, it is time for Europe and the United States to begin a slow and gradual process of **disengagement**. **This is going to happen anyway**, and **wise statecraft** anticipates and **exploits** the **tides of history** rather than engaging in a **fruitless struggle** to hold them back.” It was true back then and is even truer today.

**2NC---NATO Bad---AT: Arctic**

**Conflict wouldn’t happen but even IF, NATO gets destroyed.**

Mathieu **Boulegue, 20** (Mathieu Boulegue, research fellow with the Russia and Eurasia Program of Chatham House, 1-22-2020, accessed on 6-5-2022, Russia Matters, “Military Assets in the Arctic: A Russia-West Correlation of Forces”, <https://www.russiamatters.org/analysis/military-assets-arctic-russia-west-correlation-forces>, HBisevac)

For now, the risk of a standoff between **Russia** and **NATO** in the Arctic remains **low**. However, should military tension increase in the region, **naval assets** and overall **military deployments** would **largely play** in **Moscow’s favor** in the European Arctic and in Washington’s in the Pacific Arctic.1 In the European theatre NATO members and their partners Sweden and Finland have **limited** Arctic-capable military forces present and reinforcements would take a **long time to arrive** from the other side of the North Atlantic. Naval assets on both sides are generally **ill-fitted** for genuine **ice conditions**, which limits the **scope** and the **nature** of **operations** in the region. Moreover, the Kremlin would likely seek to remove military tension from European Arctic waters as quickly as possible toward the North Atlantic, which would increase pressure on NATO to defend the **North Atlantic** sea line of communication (**SLOC**) and **ensure access** to the **Baltic Sea**.

**NATO fails in the Arctic.**

Mathieu **Boulegue, 20** (Mathieu Boulegue, research fellow with the Russia and Eurasia Program of Chatham House, 1-22-2020, accessed on 6-5-2022, Russia Matters, “Military Assets in the Arctic: A Russia-West Correlation of Forces”, <https://www.russiamatters.org/analysis/military-assets-arctic-russia-west-correlation-forces>, HBisevac)

A quick comparison of forces shows that Russia has **clear military superiority** in European Arctic waters. Moreover, Moscow clearly sees the High North as a strategic as well as an operational priority, having created a new, **full-fledged** military district for the Arctic in late 2019 and an **electromagnetic warfare** center for the Northern Fleet last May.

Although lacking modern surface combatants, the **Northern Fleet**—Russia’s key **military presence** in the Arctic—has been adapted with **lighter surface** vessels equipped with **standoff missile systems** (P-800 Oniks and Kalibr-NK mostly). Among other available assets, it can count on one Kirov-class nuclear-powered guided-missile cruiser, one Slava-class guided-missile cruiser, one Gorshkov-class frigate, up to four Udaloy-class anti-submarine destroyers and one recently deployed diesel-electric icebreaker. The fleet of deployable submarines, although ageing, is still a force of six to seven ballistic missile submarines (SSBNs), four active cruise missile submarines (SSGNs) and eight to nine nuclear-powered attack submarines (SSNs), two to four special mission submarines (SSANs) and up to five conventional attack submarines.

The Northern Fleet also has **powerful air assets**, which create a **multi-layered** air- and sea-**denial network** giving the armed forces space for **perimeter control** and **out-of-area interdiction** from long-range to coastal defense. These systems including several regiments of S-300 and S-400 air defense systems, air superiority fighters (notably several squadrons of Su-33s and MiG-29s) and missile systems.

With assets mostly concentrated around Arkhangelsk and on the Kola Peninsula, the Northern Fleet hosts three naval formations, the 45th Air and Air Defense Army and the 14th Army Corps (including the Arctic Brigade with the 80th and 200th Separate Motor-Rifle Brigades). The Northern Fleet **alone** can organically **generate** up to six **b**attalion **t**actical **g**roup**s** (BTGs) scattered around the **Kola Peninsula**—four ground-based and two from naval infantry.2 Special forces units are generated from the 61st Red Banner Naval Infantry Brigade. Ground troops are mostly used for the protection of the coastline of Russia’s Arctic zone as well as facilities and infrastructure located there.

Meanwhile, Russia’s armed forces have recently **focused** their training on amphibious **coastal assault capabilities**, **air defense systems** in the region and **combined arms operations** between naval and air forces. The Russian armed forces operate a relatively disparate network of bases and air strips across the country’s Arctic zone, with military infrastructure there serving both military and civilian purposes, notably for search and rescue operations, radar coverage and domain and situational awareness.

In case of regional military tension or a standoff, the Kremlin’s strategy would likely seek to move away from Arctic waters as quickly as possible toward the North Atlantic. Moscow’s regional strategy encompasses **out-of-area sea denial** through defense in depth in order to remove any **military tension** from the **Kola Peninsula**,3 which hosts two-thirds of Russia’s **sea-based nuclear deterrent**. This would **increase pressure** on NATO to defend the SLOC, which is paramount for **freedom of operation** and navigation in the North Atlantic. This would also potentially hamper access to the Baltic Sea in terms of reinforcements as well as create a contested environment toward the Greenland-Iceland-United Kingdom gap in the northern Atlantic Ocean. **Perimeter defense** is **ensured** by **multi-layered air** **defense** and **coastal defense capabilities** around the **Kola Peninsula**.

**2NC---NATO Bad---AT: Baltics**

**Deterrence in the Baltics is severely lacking---Russia would curb-stomp us**

Matus **Halas 19**, Lecturer in Strategic Studies at the Department of Political and Strategic Studies at the Baltic Defence College, “Proving a negative: why deterrence does not work in the Baltics,” 7/11/19, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09662839.2019.1637855>, accessed via T&F//sci-hub.

In the meantime, a single Russian air assault division with its own tank battalion based in Pskov, just 20 miles from the Estonian border, has probably **more professional soldiers than the entire [EDF**] Estonian Defence Forces, which acquired their very first tracked infantry fighting vehicles in 2019. Not to mention the Kaliningrad Oblast as the most militarised part of Europe and all the other Russian installations in Luga, Ostrov, Vladimirsky Lager and elsewhere that include the most modern attack helicopters, Iskander-M ballistic mis- siles as well as rocket artillery and that are already present today in the immediate vicinity of the three Baltic NATO member states (see Sutyagin and Bronk 2017). It thus seems that NATO has a **fundamental problem** with deterrence at the conventional level. Sufficient capabilities are missing on the Eastern Flank, and the reinforcement strategy is dubious, to say the least. It was only in March 2019 that the U.S. Army began to once more exercise rapid deployments of parts of its Armored Brigade Combat Teams from Texas to Europe at a very short notice. This was the first time that it did so since the end of the Cold War (Rising 2019). There is **no** plausible **reason** to expect that a battalion-size forward presence plus a possible reinforcement would form a **credible deterrent** in the Baltics under these circumstances if the same strategy in a similar general deterrence situation was not con- sidered as a viable option for Europe during the latter half of the Cold War. And this is even more so the case if NATO is in a more disadvantageous position in the Baltics than it was in West Germany before the fall of the Berlin Wall. The assumption of the British Ministry of Defence (2017) that the eFP in Estonia “will provide a proportionate, defensive, and combat capable force to defend our NATO ally and deter any form of hostile activity against the Alliance” is simply **unfounded**.

NATO communication related to the security of the Baltics seems to be **in denial** of the mismatch between the declared need to deter Russia on the one hand and the capabilities necessary to achieve that on the other. As the former SACEUR James Stavridis pointed out: “[w]hile over the long term Russia would find itself overmatched by NATO (which outspends Russia on military activity by approximately 10-to-1), the short-term outcome could be a NATO capital or two in Russian hands” (Stavridis 2019). Insufficient local capabilities prevent NATO’s deterrence **posture from being credible** enough and that is so in spite of the overall Western conventional, technological and material superiority over the Russian military. NATO’s credibility ceases to exist if the Alliance first sets itself a goal at the level of battalions and then continuously updates and upgrades that goal eventually ending up establishing a Multinational Division North HQ in Latvia in 2019. Not to mention the wider context of a gradual increase of the U.S. presence in Poland, including its setting up of a forward division HQ there. Every step in this case represents merely a tacit acknowl- edgement of lacking capabilities in the first place. Thus the same future Estonian Defence Minister Jüri Luik, who originally praised the eFP battle groups as a “sufficient minimum baseline” in 2016, claimed together with the top Lithuanian security analyst Tomas Jerma- lavičius already a year later (Luik and Jermalavičius 2017, p. 237), that the battalion-sized eFP battle groups “unfortunately do not constitute a force capable of denying Russia its initial aims, while the deployment of NATO’s rapid reaction and follow-on forces is vulnerable to **political and military suasion**, including through A2/AD activation and nuclear threats”. To make the case still more illustrative, even the tripling of an important reinforcement element – the NATO Response Force (NRF) – after the summit in Wales in 2014 results, according to Jens Ringsmose and Sten Rynning (2017a, p. 17), largely from a “creative book- keeping”, in which forces that stand up and those that stand down are now counted together with those on standby. “The **NRF is not adequate** for deterring attacks on the Baltic allies” (Ringsmose and Rynning 2017b, p. 451) and the whole concept of relying on reinforcements, if taken seriously, seems rather suspicious from the military point of view.

But it is not the missing credibility of the Allied deterrence posture – despite the great effort in communicating the opposite – that stands out as the most important finding result- ing from NATO’s local conventional inferiority. The Alliance conveys an official story of a suc- cessful deterrence in line with the second row of Table 1 that formalises the logic of general deterrence in terms of Boolean logic. The problem is that even if NATO might have a global escalation dominance over Russia, “Russia has **escalation dominance** over the Baltic countries individually and collectively” (Lanoszka 2016, pp. 191–192). The lack of sufficient local capabilities that undermines the credibility of the overall deterrence posture shall then take us to the third row of Table 1, which predicts that **deterrence should fail** and a challenge to the status quo coupled with a threat to use military force should be made in case of an ample opportunity to advance national interests. Capability is a required condition of a deterrence success and “in a game in which at least one player’s threat lacks capability, deter- rence will fail” (Zagare 1987, p. 77). Yet a demand to change the status quo in the Baltics did not happen in spite of the lasting local conventional superiority of Russian forces (Kroenig 2015, p. 54) and their ability to swiftly conquer the region.

**Russia has significant advantages in the Baltics**

**Veebel and Ploom 18**, Dr. Viljar Veebel is a Fellow on Russian Strategic and Military Studies at the Baltic Defence College; Dr. Illimar Ploom is an Associate Professor of Strategic Studies at the Estonian National Defence College, “The Deterrence Credibility of NATO and the Readiness of the Baltic States to Employ the Deterrence Instruments,” LITHUANIAN ANNUAL STRATEGIC REVIEW 2017-2018 Volume 16, DOI: 10.2478/lasr-2018-0007

Thus, there exists a potential for Russia to succeed in the Baltic region due to its **conventional supremacy** in the region, relatively radical views of local Russian-speaking communities, **lack of the credible deterrence** elements, etc. Next to the opportunity that it o ers to Russia, according to the view of the authors, the attack against the Baltic countries could also be at least as strongly motivated by Russia’s wish to ridicule the Alliance and the collective defen- ce/deterrence network as a whole. Looking from this perspective, there exist many reasons why Russia would select the Baltic countries for this purpose. First, this could happen because of the logistical advantage for Russia. Russia has a land border with this region and the territories of the Baltic countries are also fully “covered” by Russia’s anti-aircra and missile defence systems. Second, as easy as it would be for Russia to bring additional military supplies to the Baltic region, the more difficult it would be to do so for the leading countries of the Alliance. ird, the relatively large Russian-speaking (and ne- cessarily Russian-minded) community could be easily mobilised to justify and support Russia’s aggressive ambitions in the Baltics.

**NATO can’t defend the Baltics and trying to do so exacerbates tensions.**

Joshua **Shifrinson, 20** (Joshua Shifrinson, Assistant Professor of International Affairs with the Bush School of Government at Texas A&M University, 3-7-2020, accessed on 6-5-2022, International Politics Journal, “NATO enlargement and US foreign policy: the origins, durability, and impact of an idea”, https://link.springer.com/article/10.1057/s41311-020-00224-w, HBisevac)

On the other hand, NATO enlargement exposes the United States to a variety of security ills while limiting its ability to respond to these dilemmas. First, ongoing expansion requires the United States to defend several Eastern European states of questionable strategic value, up to and including the use of nuclear weapons. Even if some of the members to which NATO has expanded are useful for denying prospec- tive rivals maneuvering room to prove their mettle (e.g., the European Union) or expanding their geographic reach (e.g., Russia), many of the member states to which the United States oered security guarantees via NATO are of minimal long-term importance. Loss of the **Baltic states** to Russia, for instance, would do **little** to **shift Europe’s strategic map**, while none of NATO’s new Southeastern European mem- bers are of use in either **reinforcing US power** or **denying power** to others (Shifrin- son 2017a, 111). Having taken on the commitment, however, the United States— as NATO’s principal military backer—is now **stuck** having to try to **defend** these actors. This is **no easy task**, especially in the Baltics; local **geography** is **unfavorable**, the **distances** involved make **reinforcement difficult**, and the **proximity** to local **prospective threats**—in this case, Russia—means it is nearly impossible to obtain **favorable force ratios**. Nevertheless, the United States and other NATO members have tried to engage the problem, committing growing assets along the way (Kuhn 2018; O’Hanlon and Skaluba 2019; Lanoszka and Hunzeker 2019). The alliance is therefore playing a **fraught game**. The United States and its partners can certainly try to develop military tools to meet NATO’s expanded commitments, but doing so is **expensive**, may **exacerbate tensions** with **Russia**, stands a real chance of **failure**, and—insofar as allies are under the US security umbrella—risks the United States putting its **own survival on the line** by extending US nuclear guarantees in the face of a nuclear-armed opponent.12 In sum, US backing for enlargement has left the United States with a suppurating sore of a strategic commitment, putting it on the ring line in Eastern Europe.

**2NC---NATO Bad---AT: China**

**No NATO-China confrontation now---even if, NATO fails.**

Pierre **Morcos, 21** (Pierre Morcos, Visiting Fellow, Europe, Russia, and Eurasia Program, 6-8-2021, accessed on 6-5-2022, Center for Strategic & International Studies, “NATO’s Pivot to China: A Challenging Path”, <https://www.csis.org/analysis/natos-pivot-china-challenging-path>, HBisevac)

Allies agreed in London to mention China for the first time in a NATO declaration, underlying that “China’s growing influence and international policies present both opportunities and challenges that we need to address together as an Alliance.” Two years later, NATO has **not clarified** yet its **strategy** toward **China**, and its “pivot” to China remains **ill-defined**. As NATO leaders meet on June 14 in Brussels, will they begin to formulate a NATO China policy? Even though China **does not pose** a direct military threat to NATO, contrary to Russia or terrorist groups, Beijing’s growing economic influence and diplomatic assertiveness in Europe coupled with its growing military relationship with Russia do have major implications for the transatlantic economy as well as its security. Chinese investments in **critical infrastructure** across Europe, from **telecommunications** networks to **port facilities**, could **weaken** NATO’s ability to **respond** to **international crises** diplomatically and, if necessary, **militarily**. China’s majority ownership positions in about 10 percent of all European port capacity and its investments in civilian roads and rails in Eastern Europe potentially **complicate** NATO’s **military mobility** and **readiness** in a crisis situation. Similarly, if some allies include Huawei equipment in their 5G networks, questions about the integrity of their telecommunications would be raised given the close ties of the company with the Chinese Communist Party. Sensitive defense **supply chains** of allies can also be **overly dependent** on China, as recently witnessed with the F-35 fighter jets. China’s **military reach** is also getting closer to the Euro-Atlantic region. The Russian and Chinese navies have conducted joint military exercises in the Mediterranean and Baltic Seas, signaling a burgeoning military cooperation between Beijing and Moscow. Collaboration between China and Russia grows stronger in the Arctic, where both countries invest in natural gas projects as well as in transport corridors as part of an effort known as the “Polar Silk Road” or the “Northern Sea Route.” Beyond the Euro-Atlantic area, China is developing **modern military capabilities** (long-range missiles, aircraft carriers, and nuclear attack submarines) with potentially **serious security implications** for NATO given their **global reach**. Likewise, China is investing in **counterspace weapons** that could potentially threaten any NATO satellite. Allies are also regularly the targets of cyberattacks originating from China-based hackers. Allies have faced an **increasingly** **assertive** **Chinese fo**reign **po**licy as well. Amid the Covid-19 pandemic, Beijing has notably intensified its **disinformation efforts** directly targeting **NATO** countries. Beijing has also tried to leverage its close economic ties with some NATO countries through the Belt and Road Initiative to erode allies’ cohesion and unity in an effort to impede criticism of Beijing’s human rights violations and its violations of Hong Kong’s Basic Law. China actively exploits bilateral ties to impede unified positions within the European Union, making it a very easy step to diminish joint positions at NATO on **issues** **contrary** to **Chinese interests**. This dimension of the China challenge **underscores** the **importance** of NATO’s **political cohesion** toward Beijing.

**China has massive advantages.**

James Jay **Carafano, 19** (James Jay Carafano is the Vice President of Kathryn and Shelby Cullom Davis Institute for National Security and Foreign Policy and the E. W. Richardson Fellow, 10-8-2019, accessed on 6-5-2022, The Heritage Foundation, “NATO's China Problem”, <https://www.heritage.org/global-politics/commentary/natos-china-problem>, HBisevac)

Chinese actions and power could **well erode** NATO’s capacity to **exercise self-defense**. From **telecommunications** to **industrial control systems**, from **space** and **cyberspace** to **bridges**, **railroads** and **ports**, China already has a **heavy footprint presence** throughout the transatlantic community. NATO will need all this **infrastructure** to **deter** **conflict** and **defend itself**. Yet if China controls the **off-switch** or has the capacity to **conduct malicious** or **denial activities**, NATO’s capacity for self-defense will be **severely compromised**. NATO has other concerns, as well. It cares a lot about arms control, and not just in a Eurocentric sense of the U.S., Britain and France v. Moscow. NATO correctly views arms control as a global issue—and China is a necessary player in global arms control. The alliance has a vested interest in the future of that dialogue. What should NATO do? For starters, it need not open its headquarters to Chinese officials to get their “take” on how to deal with Russia, the Middle East, etc. There’s little sense to give China yet another international forum for bloviating. What is needed are sober intra-NATO discussions on how to deal with the boys from Beijing. Currently, NATO member countries are **far** from being of **one mind** on the **matter**.

**EU and Canada say no because of interest alignment with China---makes unified response impossible.**

François **Heisbourg, 20** (François Heisbourg, IISS senior adviser for Europe and special adviser of the Paris-based Fondation pour la Recherche Stratégique, 3-23-2020, accessed on 5-16-2022, Routledge, Survival; Global Politics and Strategy, “NATO 4.0: The Atlantic Alliance and the Rise of China”, https://doi.org/10.1080/00396338.2020.1739950, HBisevac)

Furthermore, even before Trump’s current term at the White House expires, America’s policy as to its European and Asian allies will be **increasingly shaped** by **US perceptions** of the role allies play in helping or hindering **US objectives towards China**. The ongoing dispute between the US and China concerning the acquisition of 5G networks is the **first major test** of this proposition. America has openly threatened to curb **intelligence sharing** with its closest allies if they choose to entrust China’s Huawei Technologies Company with setting up their 5G networks.15 It remains to be seen what practical conclusions the US will actually draw if major allies such as France, Germany, Italy or the UK decide to ‘go Chinese’. If no key European ally chooses Huawei, following in Japan’s and Australia’s footsteps, that outcome will be due at least in part to the strength of America’s campaign calling attention to the security and strategic implications of their 5G decisions. Given the **commercial advantage** enjoyed by **Huawei** as a result of the infrastructure it built up as part of 3G and 4G networks and what is apparently massive state aid, it could normally expect to be selected as a 5G prime contractor in many markets in the absence of **broader security** and **strategic considerations**.16 As China’s rise **consolidates** and as its **assertiveness** increases over time, NATO will be systematically **forced** to choose between working **with** the US, **without** the US or **against** the US when it comes to **relations** with China. China itself well understands this. It is handling the precedent-setting 5G confrontation as a first-order political issue. Threats from Chinese ambassadors in Europe and others arose from November 2019 onwards, while the general tone of Chinese diplomacy in Europe and Canada deteriorated, with punishments imposed on a broad range of issues.17 Against this backdrop, the relationship between the US and its NATO allies will be increasingly prone to **misunderstanding** and **uncontrolled disagreements**. It is in the North American and European interest to work together to avoid the former and reduce the latter to manageable proportions. Because European and Canadian interests may **align more closely** with China’s policies than with America’s on a number of key issues – such as the global financial order, the extraterritorial reach of American law and climate change – any US–Europe mechanism for coping with differences would need to have a **heavily transactional cast**, with or without Trump. The basic **structural differences** between the **new international system** and its **bipolar** and **unipolar predecessors** will further complicate **transatlantic interactions**.

**Diverging perspectives on China make a united response unlikely**

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These **concerns are significant** now, and have the potential to become worse in the future, as they are the seeds out of which might grow a “decoupling” of the alliance. All else being equal, a tight coupling of NATO’s military capabilities and political intent augments the alliance’s deterrent capability and its political health. The threat from Russia is not the threat from the Soviet Union, to be sure. However, the lopsided nature of **the threat from China**—an increasing threat to the United States and its interests but a far lesser threat to European states—does **introduce the potential for divergence**.

Within the alliance, perceptions vary considerably regarding the threat **China** poses. For example, May-Britt Stumbaum, an expert on the European Union (EU)–China relationship, argues that, “given their significantly different global outlooks, the [US] United States and the [EU] European Union **differ fundamentally in their perceptions of China’s rise**�”13 She submits that Europe does not and will probably **never share the United States’ hard power perspective** on Asia-Pacific. The U.S.’ rebalancing to Asia-Pacific was spurred by strategic military consideration and is seen in an economic view only secondarily. For the Europeans, and particularly Germany, the Asia-Pacific region and the relationship with China is shaped by the “tyranny of distance,” with Russia in between consum- ing most of the strategic thinking and resources that Germany and Europe entertain eastward.14

Moreover, some European analysts, like Chinese ones, **tout the importance of multipolarity** in global politics, and the necessity for strategic **cooperation in the EU-China relationship**�15 For instance, Gustaaf Geeraerts asserts that, “as [a] consequence of increased international engagement and increasing economic in- terests abroad, Europe and China are geopolitically more proximate than ever be- fore.”16 As these arguments suggest, this introduces the possibility that a wealthier and more prominent, powerful, and assertive China will be able to **entice** some European states into **passivity**, or even neutrality, in the event of a Sino-American crisis or confrontation.

**2NC---NATO Bad---AT: Cyber War**

**NATO’s decision-making process is slow for cyber response**

Z’hra M. **Ghavam 16**, Lieutenant Commander, United States Navy B.S., United States Naval Academy, “NATO’S PREPAREDNESS FOR CYBERWAR,” September 2016, https://www.hsdl.org/?view&did=801548

Still, before NATO invokes Article 5, it has other options at its disposal. NATO has a sophisticated cyber capability—including experts on cybersecurity, intrusion detection, and computer forensics—that it could activate following a NAC decision to combat a cyber act of aggression.237 As this thesis has previously discussed, NATO’s Rapid Reaction Teams (RRTs) can deploy on short notice upon a request to offer technical assistance to NATO facilities and Allied members that suffer network intrusions.238 Each day, the NCIRC Center analyzes and responds to over 200 million cyber incidents that take place on NATO’s networks—ten of which on average are sophisticated attacks requiring action by the RRT.239 According to NATO experts (expressed during the author’s conversations in Brussels, Belgium, September 17, 2015), although the NAC deploys the RRT **daily** for its own network security, it has **yet to do so on behalf of an Ally**. Because a decision to deploy the RRT must be reached by the NAC, protocol might **impede the team’s** future **efficacy** in cyber response, at least in some circumstances. Thus, NATO’s ability to act quickly on behalf of an Ally attacked in cyberspace could be **impeded by its bureaucratic consensus model**.

**NATO’s political willingness to respond to a cyber attack is low---that wrecks preparedness**---this is presumption level offense.

Z’hra M. **Ghavam 16**, Lieutenant Commander, United States Navy B.S., United States Naval Academy, “NATO’S PREPAREDNESS FOR CYBERWAR,” September 2016, https://www.hsdl.org/?view&did=801548

Although NATO’s one-nation, one-vote consensus principle reinforces the idea that each Ally is equal, is this in fact the case in the eyes of specific Allies? The nations surveyed during the 2008 and 2015 Pew studies are among the Alliance’s top security contributors. Indeed, many of them also have the largest political influence within NATO. Their reluctance to employ force to protect fellow Allies could **corrode the Alliance’s solidarity** and adversely influence future defense policies. If the publics and presidential frontrunners in major NATO nations **are unwilling to uphold** national **commitments** under the Washington Treaty after an armed attack on an Ally, what does this waning support imply for their resolve to do so in reply to a perceived lesser assault in cyberspace? Waning public support for honoring Article 5 commitments may signify an even **lower willingness to meet NATO’s** collective defense **obligations** in response to an act of terrorist or state-sponsored cyber aggression. Some public opinion polls suggest that if a cyber threat met the threshold of an armed attack, NATO might be less prepared politically to invoke Article 5 than in a case of conventional military aggression. While polling is an important tool in political decision making, in practice governments take many factors in addition to public surveys into account in deciding whether and how to use force. Declines in political will and public support for NATO’s collective defense principle in some Allied member states have **left NATO minimally prepared** to respond effectively to major acts of cyber aggression against one or more of its members, particularly when that response necessitates the use of military force. Out of a numerical ranking of 1–3, the Alliance earned a preparedness score of 1 in political will.

**2NC---NATO Bad---AT: Democracy**

**European leadership solves democracy.**

Lizza **Bomassi &** Pierre **Vimont, 19** (Lizza Bomassi, Deputy director of Carnegie Europe. M.Sc., London School of Economics, Pierre Vimont; Senior fellow at Carnegie Europe and former executive secretary-general of the European External Action Service, 12-11-2019, accessed on 5-20-2022, Carnegie Europe, "Reimagining a Global Europe”, https://carnegieeurope.eu/2019/12/11/reimagining-global-europe-pub-80554, HBisevac)

It is on democracy, unsurprisingly, that the traditional debate on values is most palpable. Today, the state of **democracy** and human rights **globally** is **poor**. Many see a waning commitment to these values from the traditional bastions of the current democratic world order. Yet this depiction hides a more nuanced picture. While executive-level support for democracy promotion in its more traditional homes has declined, its operational manifestation remains largely intact. Governments still channel a considerable amount of financial assistance toward the technical level in this field. And various democracy initiatives, such as Sweden’s Drive for Democracy, illustrate how individual EU member states have acted as **champions** of **democracy promotion**. This has sent a confusing message and led to different responses from different parts of the globe. Some have opted to approach this issue from a utilitarian perspective, either by providing purely technical assistance or by molding democratic models of engagement to the local context. Others perceive the Western democratic model as simply one of many different forms of governance. While Russia and China are not particularly keen for a European—or, for that matter, Western—leadership model, some countries in Asia, like India, and in South America and sub-Saharan Africa find some **merit** in the **EU** being involved in **democracy promotion**. But these countries see such investment as requiring a lighter touch and a deeper consideration of local specificities. It is by sharing Europe’s own experience and adopting what the EU’s outside partners often consider a less patronizing attitude that Europe is recognized as a useful partner. So, while there is space for the EU to **lead** in this field, it must choose to do so in a much more incisive yet nuanced way.