



Lack of NATO Troops for Afghanistan Should Not Surprise

NATO's top commander, General James L. Jones recently asked NATO allies to send an additional 2,500 troops to combat Taliban forces in southern Afghanistan. Other than Poland – which promised to send more troops early next year – Jones' call was initially met with a deafening silence across Europe, though it now appears the shortfalls will be met by unnamed allies (the countries that made commitments are being kept secret to allow for parliamentary approval to deploy their troops). Given Europe's continuing struggle to match its ambitions with capabilities, many countries' resistance to participating in high-intensity combat operations, and growing fatigue with the U.S.-led war on terror, NATO's difficulty in meeting its force requirements should not come as a surprise.

Since the fall of the Berlin Wall, European countries at both the national level and inside international organizations such as NATO and the EU have issued dozens of strategy documents outlining the need for enhanced capabilities to combat terrorism and the proliferation of WMD, deal with failed or failing states, contend with regional conflicts as well as respond to humanitarian crises or other challenges. Transformation from static Cold War militaries into leaner forces has also been a priority for NATO countries. Despite these goals, defense spending in most European countries remains flat or in decline with few signs of increased funding in the next five years.

The reasons for this are clear. First, defense spending remains in fierce competition with growing social spending

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A New Direction for Lebanon?

By Rick Barton and Mark Irvine

Will the thirty-four day war between Israel and Hezbollah unite Lebanon and set this long fragmented country in a new direction? The goal of creating a prosperous Lebanese state at peace with its neighbors has a chance to succeed, but only if the recent tragedy provides a fresh start. The international community can help by supporting an integrated approach that focuses on strategic priorities.

A War Without Winners

Israel, Hezbollah, and certainly Lebanon all emerged from the war as losers. Israel revealed hints of vulnerability as it failed to achieve a decisive victory and saw its northern cities paralyzed by a barrage of nearly 4,000 rockets. Hezbollah lost hundreds of fighters and most of its entrenched positions near the Israeli border. Although Hezbollah has raised its profile and popularity in the region and reinforced its fervent support among its core constituency, Lebanese Shiites, the war emboldened its political rivals and motivated Prime Minister Fouad Siniora's government—with the hesitant approval of the two Hezbollah ministers—to approve the deployment of the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) and an expanded UN peacekeeping force in the south.

In Lebanon, hundreds of civilians were killed, injured, or chased from their homes. The war wrecked infrastructure and cluster bombs rendered swaths of farmland unusable.

Even before the war, Lebanon was the definition of political fragility. Lebanon's last census was taken in 1932 and is the basis for the country's confessional power-sharing arrangement under the 1989 Taif Agreement. Conducting a new census today—which Lebanon must grapple with eventually—could cause the government to collapse. The army is poorly equipped and reflects the ethnic and religious divisions of the country. Any outright attempt to disarm Hezbollah would result in mass desertions or a sectarian breakdown and could spark a new round of civil war.

While the ceasefire is holding and there is a strong balance of deterrence, areas of potential provocation remain. The most likely flashpoint would be the discovery of major violations of the embargo on arms shipments to Hezbollah.

The Initial Post-War Response

The response to the crisis in Lebanon so far has been mixed. International donors were slow to get started, but have since pledged \$940 million for Lebanon's reconstruction at the Stockholm Conference in addition to separate commitments of nearly \$2 billion by many Arab states.

On the ground in Lebanon, Hezbollah's rapid response was a reminder that speed matters. Once the fighting stopped, Hezbollah equipped young men with clipboards to canvass towns and neighborhoods affected by the war. Bulldozers cleared streets of rubble and operatives disbursed aid, including \$12,000 cash handouts to people who lost their homes.

The revamped United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) is also both impressive and worrisome. The peacekeeping force, authorized to include up to 15,000 troops by UN Resolution 1701, is anchored by contributions from European countries with advanced militaries, including France (2,000), Italy (2,500-3,000), Spain (1,100), and Germany (naval support). Bangladesh (2,000), China (1,000), Indonesia (1,000), and Turkey (1,000) have also made substantial troop commitments. The mission marks the welcome return of many European countries to substantial participation in UN peacekeeping missions. Western European

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militaries can self-deploy rapidly and sustain their troops, which makes them a valuable asset to any peacekeeping mission. It is the most muscular peacekeeping force to operate under a UN flag with French Leclerc tanks and 155 mm artillery cannons at its disposal as well as air and naval support.

The peacekeepers are not naively assuming the role of an impartial mediator between all parties. Rather, they are tasked with helping the Lebanese government assert control over its territory and secure its borders. UNIFIL will assist the LAF deployment of 15,000 troops and its enforcement of what has unofficially become a no weapons visible zone south of the Litani River.

A danger for UNIFIL remains the lack of clarity about what to do in the face of foreseeable complications and crises. UNIFIL must anticipate and try to prevent scenarios that could lead to another outbreak of fighting. What if Hezbollah fires rockets at Israel and the LAF does not respond? Or if Israel threatens intervention or strikes when the arms embargo proves ineffective?

The creation of a UN military command center modeled on USCENTCOM and headed by a three-star officer is a much-needed innovation. The planning unit enhances direct military-to-military contact and creates a body to set strategic priorities and anticipate future needs. Since the questions are as much political as military ones, they must be addressed at the highest levels on a constant basis.

What is Required to Succeed

The limitations of UNIFIL reinforce the importance of having a clear and integrated strategy for Lebanon. Like other reconstructions, it is neither a straightforward military nor strictly rebuilding effort.

The process should be guided by the following principles. First, allow the Lebanese government to drive the process and insist on an inclusive unity of leadership. In the eyes of the Lebanese, the government is responsible for the success or failure of the overall enterprise. Giving them ownership makes success more likely. This does not mean everything must be centralized through the government, but it should be clear the state has the primary responsibility for guiding the effort. Uniting the country behind the effort, including opposition leaders if it can be done, expands the

range of people invested in the project.

Second, prioritize and focus on achievable objectives. What are the three key issues that must be addressed in Lebanon? This is ultimately about achieving a broad political solution that is built around four pillars: (1) establishing security and public safety, (2) creating the conditions for justice and reconciliation between parties, (3) addressing the social and economic needs of the population, and (4) enabling good governance and participation. All political endeavors must grapple with the challenges of finite resources, bureaucratic obstacles, and endemic slowness. Understanding one's capabilities is necessary for improvement and avoiding major pitfalls. The national unity effort must set the priorities and they are likely to include the restoration of basic services and removal of cluster bombs and land mines.

Third, build a combined team of Lebanese and international players with clear leadership and real authority that can deliver tangible results over a three-year time horizon.

Fourth, define clear measures of progress. Setting measurable benchmarks injects accountability into the process and helps to focus disparate projects toward common goals.

Finally, communicate with the Lebanese and regional publics. The plan and the operations must be transparent in order to achieve buy-in among the population. What constitutes success is largely a subjective judgment. Inflating expectations of what is achievable can make failure preordained.

The war in Lebanon was a step backward, but if the recent conflict in Lebanon offers any hope, it will be to set a fragmented state in the right direction.

The United States has common cause with the Europeans as well as with much of the Arab League in helping the Lebanese government rebuild and assert control over its territory. In particular, the transatlantic unity should not be a one-off event. The United States and Europe must prioritize the development of coordinated post-conflict capabilities. A coordinated effort would combine U.S. and European strengths and also allow for flexibility in cases where one or the other partner should take the lead.

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Is Support for EU Integration Dwindling?

By Jacob A. Kuipers

With the expansion of the European Union (EU), greater opportunities for travel, employment, and trade have emerged in Europe bringing down barriers between countries, ethnicities, and cultures, which some have argued has fostered a European identity. Recently, however, some EU citizens have started to turn away from this EU personification and have placed more emphasis on their national identities. Although this trend has been present in Western Europe, it can now be seen moving east.

The latest example occurred in Slovakia, a new EU member state. Following the June 2006 parliamentary elections three protectionist parties – the SMER (Direction) party, led by Robert Fico, the Slovak National Party (SNS), and the Movement for a Democratic Slovakia (HZDS) – teamed up to form the ruling government. After more than eight years of integrating with the European Union, Slovakia might now start erecting national barriers.

The formation of the new ruling coalition initially raised concerns within the international community about Slovakia's future, as all three parties have reputations for populism and conservatism. Although Fico has shifted the image of SMER to center left, his coalition partners, on the other hand, have sustained more tarnished images.

First, the HZDS is the party of the former authoritarian prime minister, Vladimir Meciar, whose policies throughout the mid-1990s isolated Slovakia from the West. Second, the SNS, a long-time ally of Meciar's, has been an isolationist, anti-minority party. In June, nearly 12 percent of the Slovak voting population gave their support to SNS. That is more than an eight percent jump in votes from the previous parliamentary election in 2002. This upsurge in support led to the inclusion of the SNS in government.

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NATO Acquires C-17s

On September 12, NATO announced it is starting contract negotiations for the acquisition of four C-17 strategic lift aircraft under a Weapon System Partnership (WSP). This is not only an important milestone in the Alliance's procurement of a much needed capability, but also a demonstration of its ability to use innovative approaches to acquiring these capabilities. It should also be a catalyst for a re-examination of the Alliance's future strategic lift requirements.

A WSP is an agreement set up by the NATO Maintenance and Supply Organization (NAMSO) to manage aspects of common logistics support for weapon systems or defense-related equipment owned by two or more Alliance members. Each WSP provides for joint management by the participating countries and for the equitable sharing of the administrative costs and costs of claims related to the agreement. Currently, there are more than 20 WSPs that cover a wide range of defense systems, including anti-tank missiles, C-130 and P-3 aircraft, and certain helicopters. The scope of services provided under a WSP ranges from materiel management (spares procurement, common storage, etc.) to materiel maintenance (repair, configuration control and upgrades) and transportation services.

The NATO Maintenance and Supply Agency (NAMSA) – the executive arm of NAMSO – is leading the negotiations with Boeing, which produces the C-17, with the aim of receiving the first aircraft by the end of 2007 and an additional aircraft every six months after that through 2009. The C-17 WSP is part of the overall effort by 13 nations to develop a NATO Strategic Airlift Capability (SAC) based at Ramstein Air Force Base in Germany. The nations participating in the NATO SAC are: Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia and the U.S. A multinational military structure will be created to coordinate use of the aircraft, possibly based on the NATO AWACS

model in which nations are allocated flight hours based on their initial contribution for the capability. The 13 nations will use the aircraft based on national requirements or for NATO, UN, EU or other multinational operations as they see fit.

The majority of funding for four NATO C-17s will be transferred from the Strategic Airlift Interim Solution (SALIS) account – which will be discontinued – and from the U.S. However, the minimum military requirement submitted by SHAPE was for eight C-17-type aircraft. If NATO intends to increase its C-17 fleet beyond four aircraft, time is of the essence. On August 18, Boeing announced that it will cease internally funding the production of aircraft for which there are no orders in mid-2008. Of the 22 aircraft that were internally funded by the company, 18 have now been sold: Australia, Canada and NATO have each agreed to purchase four, the UK will buy one (in addition to the four it already leases and intends to purchase), the US Air Force is acquiring another three and Sweden is considering the acquisition of two. However, barring further orders in the immediate future, Boeing will still have four aircraft that have not been sold, and the production line will be closed if new customers cannot be found. While this does not mean that no more aircraft will be produced – the production line can be reopened at a later date – it does mean that they will be more expensive per unit as the costs of renewing production are incorporated into the price. If the Alliance is at all considering the acquisition of additional C-17s, now is the time to act.

As the mechanism to commonly procure four aircraft for NATO is being developed, a new look at NATO's strategic lift requirements is also in order. It would be a shame to decide two years from now that more C-17s are required, only to discover that their price has skyrocketed. — GBA

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This addition of the SNS in the ruling coalition is troubling for other EU member states. The SNS, unlike HZDS, is considered a radical nationalist party with inward looking policies, hoping to cut ties with its neighbors in the process. Its party platform does not exhibit strong EU values and standards. In fact, its chairman, Ján Slota, said in August that the Czech Republic was lucky to have cleansed itself of its minorities. In response, officials from the EU and neighboring Hungary have called on Bratislava to condemn the SNS position on minorities.

Parties advocating protectionism, as well as nationalism, are well-known in West European countries, especially France's National Front and Austria's Freedom Party. Most recently in Germany, the National Democratic Party (NDP), a far-right anti-immigration party, won six and half percent of the popular vote in regional elections on 17 September, making Mecklenburg-Vorpommern the third region in Germany with far-right representation in its assembly.

Similar trends are now happening in the EU's new member states. In the Czech Republic, the NezDem Party, which advocates for strict immigration policies and a review of Czech EU membership, was established in 2005 in opposition to the country's pro-EU parties. Even though NezDem did not receive enough votes in the last election for a seat in parliament, the party has launched a grassroots effort by opening offices in every Czech province. In Poland, the League of Polish Families (LPR), an anti-EU, social-conservative formation, received eight percent of the popular vote in the September 2005 elections, ensuring for the first time a spot for LPR in the coalition government.

In each of these countries populist and protectionist parties have gained electoral support due to the populace's dissatisfaction with the status quo. Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Poland, and Germany all have or had pro-EU reform governments. Due to continued EU problems and an economic slowdown these governments have become targets for ultra conservative and nationalist parties.

The Slovak situation is not an isolated case in Europe. After years of openness and inclusiveness with the expansion of the EU, pro-integration politicians seem to be losing ground to more aggressive and provincial rhetoric. If populist, protectionist, and nationalist parties continue to gain ground in parliaments across the EU, the political stability of the EU could be at risk. Imagine countries entrenched in deadlocks over the treatment of minorities, where immigration into each country is limited, and companies face significant barriers to entry into markets. A fractious EU could simply not exist. With the constitutional crisis unresolved, EU countries, especially the new member states, must remain committed to fundamental EU ideals of open borders, markets and minds. Wavering from these founding principles will only rub salt in the wound of EU stagnation

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requirements. Second, European investments in new capabilities are constrained by the fragmented nature of European defense demands. The thicket of rules and regulations that govern European defense trade and industrial capabilities are focused largely on legacy platforms and job creation rather than transformation. Some progress has been made in recent years with the creation of a European Defense Agency, but it remains to be seen if national militaries will offer up substantial projects for open competition. Finally, conscription or universal service requirements in some European countries require substantial personnel and benefit outlays on troops, which often detract from research and development investments.

With some countries spending as little as 1.4 percent of GDP on defense (despite NATO's target of at least 2 percent), Europe's progress on creating forces prepared for expeditionary operations such as the NATO mission in Afghanistan has been slow. Only a small percentage of Europe's roughly 2 million troops are deployable. Estimates range from 3 to 5 percent, and this does not account for parliamentary or constitutional restrictions.

Those European troops that are deployable are often tasked with peacekeeping or stabilization missions because they are simply not equipped and trained for high-intensity combat. In other cases, particularly in Germany, the decision not to send troops into combat in southern Afghanistan is rooted more in politics than preparedness. German political elites believe that their publics will not stomach soldiers coming back in body bags, but will rally behind more benign and safe humanitarian deployments. (It is important to note that Germany is undertaking several such operations around the world at the moment, another reason presented for not sending more troops to Afghanistan.)

Finally, European reluctance to commit substantial troops to combat operations in Afghanistan is understandable given the current mood in Europe towards the war on terror. The widespread perception that the United States abandoned Afghanistan to pursue the unpopular Iraq war makes the prospect of casualties in Afghanistan doubly daunting for European governments. There is an undercurrent of resentment among European leaders who feel they are being repeatedly asked to clean up a problem that the Iraq war in part created. It is also worth noting that NATO has been ringing the alarm bells about its under-supported ISAF mission and the credibility of the alliance since 2003. Some European politicians may be desensitized to these pleas at precisely the worst time and when NATO needs their support most.

Events in Afghanistan are reaching a critical juncture, and European politics and perceptions, as well as United States commitments in Iraq, may prevent NATO from getting the assets necessary to ensure victory. The resurgence of the Taliban and weakness of the central government in Afghanistan will continue to threaten global security without aggressive support from the West, particularly NATO. Afghanistan is far from a lost cause, but the substantial progress and promise envisioned after the fall of Kabul is slowly being reversed. The apparent initial unwillingness or inability to raise the necessary forces that General Jones called for is not surprising, but failure to meet this commitment will have drastic consequences both for Afghanistan and for NATO itself. — JS and JW

Recent Developments

- Georgia was granted an "intensified dialogue" by NATO during the UN Summit Meetings in New York in September.
- The U.S. Defense Department announced a plan to put 12,000 American combat troops in eastern Afghanistan under NATO command, possibly by October.
- At the 6th summit of the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) in Helsinki, Chinese Premier Wu Jiabao pledged more active Chinese cooperation in security, counter-terrorism, cultural and economic matters.

CSIS NATO SUMMIT PRIMER

CSIS's International Security Program is pleased to announce that it will be launching a special report in early November on the NATO Summit in Riga. The publication, *Transforming NATO (...again): A Primer for the NATO Summit in Riga 2006*, will offer a comprehensive overview of the developments slated to come out of the Summit and offer suggestions on ways for the Alliance to prepare for its next summit in either 2008 or 2009. The primer will be launched in Oslo, Norway on November 3rd, and in Brussels, Belgium on November 6th. A Washington-based launch is also planned for mid-November. For more information, please contact Justin Wiseman at (202) 775-3187 or JWiseman@csis.org.

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