

***Working Group on 'Nuclear Weapons and Nuclear Weapons Free Zones' of  
Pugwash, the Netherlands***

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**TACTICAL NUCLEAR WEAPONS AND THE (LACK OF) LOGIC OF RECIPROCITY:  
'REASSURANCE WITHIN NATO' VS. 'CONFIDENCE BUILDING WITH RUSSIA'**

Is 'reciprocity' in NATO's Deterrence and Defense Posture Review of May 2012  
NATO's 1979 'dual track decision' revisited? A discussion paper  
(up-revised mid-November 2013)

***Preface***

*This discussion paper was prepared by the Dutch Pugwash Working Group on 'Nuclear Weapons and Nuclear Weapon Free Zones', our member Laurens Hogebrink being its main author. An earlier draft was prepared for the 60th Pugwash Conference on Science and World Affairs, 'Dialogue, Disarmament, and Regional and Global Security' in Istanbul, 1-5 November 2013.*

*The paper focuses on the issue of tactical nuclear weapons (TNW) in Europe. In recent years, this issue has been discussed in many conferences and reports. Our entry point in the ongoing debate is NATO's concept of 'reciprocity' with Russia and the opposing views among allies, some giving priority to 'reassurance within NATO' and others to 'confidence building with Russia.'*

*In discussing 'reciprocity, this paper also draws a parallel with NATO's 'dual track decision' in December 1979 to deploy 572 new Pershing II and cruise missiles and offer negotiations, which according to the paper is not a good example to follow. We suggest a new and more flexible approach, combining unilateral steps and informal (preferably agreed) reciprocal measures.*

*The aim of this paper is to inform readers and invite responses. We welcome suggestions for progress in removing TNW from Europe, as a contribution to ending Europe's Cold War posture and strengthening the NPT regime worldwide. Comments can be sent to [marcvogelaar@hotmail.com](mailto:marcvogelaar@hotmail.com).*

Ambassador (ret.) Marc Vogelaar, moderator of the Working Group, November 2013

**1. Introduction: the background**

At its summit in Strasbourg/Kehl, 3-4 April 2009, NATO decided to develop a new 'Strategic Concept' to define NATO's goals and policies for the next decade. The two previous 'Strategic Concepts' dated from 1999 and 1991. The new text was adopted at the NATO summit in Lisbon, 19-20 November 2010. During the process, the future of the remaining ca.

180 U.S. tactical nuclear weapons (TNW)<sup>1</sup> in Europe was a controversial issue. These nuclear weapons are B61 nuclear gravity bombs, to be delivered by aircraft and deployed on six bases in five NATO member states: Germany, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands and Turkey. As NATO failed to achieve a consensus in Lisbon, NATO decided to undertake a *'Deterrence and Defense Posture Review'* (DDPR) to define the *"appropriate mix of conventional, nuclear and missile defense forces."* The result was adopted by the NATO Summit in Chicago, 20-21 May 2012.<sup>2</sup>

Again, the review process proved difficult and it did not come as a surprise that no substantial progress was made. The DDPR endorsed the status quo by not deciding on any changes in NATO's nuclear posture.<sup>3</sup> The result turned out even more conservative than expected because, as a consequence of affirming the current posture, it suggested giving the green light for the modernization of current nuclear capabilities.<sup>4</sup> Moreover, while some change had been expected in NATO's 'declaratory policy' as a result of the new U.S. position taken in its April 2010 Nuclear Posture Review, NATO 'solved' this problem by noting that all three nuclear powers in NATO have their own declaratory policy.<sup>5</sup> As to developing an arms control approach, again a new NATO committee was announced, without a clear mandate.

'Kicking the can further down the road' was how many observers called the outcome of Chicago. Obviously, the DDPR document was presented and adopted as a consensus text, but in reality its contents showed that no consensus had been possible.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> In this paper, we stick to the phrase 'tactical nuclear weapons' (TNW) instead of 'non-strategic nuclear weapons' and other terms that are currently used. TNW are remnants of the Cold War when they were intended for use on the battlefield in what was called a 'tactical' role as opposed to the role of 'strategic' nuclear weapons, with a far longer range and aimed at destroying central facilities in the U.S. and the USSR. Therefore, another name was 'theater nuclear weapons', Europe being the theater (or Korea/Japan). After the Cold War, TNW have not been assigned a new military role. Proponents of keeping U.S. TNW in Europe argue that their function today is merely political, not military (without explaining how weapons can have a political function when they have no military function). Russian TNW are assumed to still have a military role as compensation for Russia's conventional weakness in comparison to the US and NATO.

The term 'non-strategic' merely says what these weapons are *not*. In fact, the distinction between 'strategic' and 'tactical' no longer makes sense. A nuclear weapon is a nuclear weapon. It no longer matters whether it is launched by an aircraft from the Netherlands or by a submarine in the ocean. The Cold War logic no longer applies. There are differences between targets, but almost seven decades after Hiroshima and Nagasaki the taboo on using a nuclear weapon is immense, regardless if it is called 'tactical' or 'strategic'.

<sup>2</sup> For the text, see [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official\\_texts\\_87597.htm?mode=pressrelease](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_87597.htm?mode=pressrelease).

<sup>3</sup> In its par. 31, the DDPR concludes that *"in the current circumstances, the existing mix of capabilities and the plans for their development are sound."*

<sup>4</sup> In addition to what is said about the plans for development (see footnote 3), par. 11 of the DDPR says: *"Allies concerned will ensure that all components of NATO's nuclear deterrent will remain safe, secure, and effective as long as NATO remains a nuclear alliance."* ('Allies concerned' are the 27 members of the Nuclear Planning Group, not including France). Strictly spoken, this language may be read as applying to safety and security only. However, the Life Extension Program (LEP) of the B61 includes many new features and many experts argue that the new B61 bomb will have new military capabilities. NATO allies seem to have agreed already in April 2010, see footnote 34. See also this comment by three experts immediately after Chicago:

<http://armscontrolnow.org/2012/05/21/nato-on-nuclear-weapons-opportunities-missed-and-next-steps-forward/>.

<sup>5</sup> See par. 10 of the DDPR.

<sup>6</sup> For a brief analysis by the present author, see <http://www.nonukes.nl/blog/nato's-deterrence-and-defence-posture-review-shows-that-consensus-is-not-possible>.

Since May 2012 no significant progress has been made. President Obama failed to use his speech in Berlin on 19 June 2013 for announcing any new initiative, despite the fact that he gave his speech in the capital of Germany which had put the issue on NATO's agenda (see below, par. 3). He spent only a few words on the issue, repeating standing NATO policy.<sup>7</sup> Moreover, after the entry into force of the New START Treaty about strategic weapons, relations between the US and Russia have deteriorated for a variety of reasons.<sup>8</sup>

The issue in NATO is not 'extended deterrence' as such, as U.S. strategic weapons continue to be the nuclear 'umbrella' protecting NATO allies. The issue is whether NATO still needs nuclear weapons deployed in five non-nuclear countries in Europe more than two decades after the end of the Cold War.

## 2. Purpose of this paper

This paper tries to analyse the different – and partly opposing - views of reciprocity in NATO. Some allies see TNW as the 'link' with the U.S. strategic guarantee and want to consider reciprocal steps only if NATO first takes *military* reassurance measures strengthening their sense of security. Others attach great value to changing NATO's nuclear posture as a contribution to confidence building with Russia, which they see as a *political* rather than military process. NATO must solve this by a serious internal discussion about the future of its post Cold War nuclear policy and posture.

However, as is argued in this paper, blaming Russia is the easiest way for NATO to conceal its internal division. This method has worked before. NATO's current approach to reciprocity can be compared with NATO's 'dual track decision' in December 1979, when NATO decided a) to deploy 572 new intermediate range missiles in Europe, and b) to offer negotiations with the Soviet Union. The negotiation 'track' had been added at a late stage in the process. It was not intended to forego deployment of the new missiles (only their number was negotiable) but to make deployment acceptable to hesitant Western European political leaders and public opinion (see par. 10).

Today, like in the years following the 1979 'dual track decision', NATO's self-imposed linkage with Russian concessions could effectively mean a deadlock.<sup>9</sup> Russia can easily afford not to move, thereby holding NATO in its grip. Moreover, without moves by Moscow and without a decision by NATO to end its Cold War posture because doing so would be in its own interest, NATO may eventually be forced to modernize its TNW. This again will invite comparisons with the crisis of the 1980ies. NATO's current reciprocity approach is aimed at disciplining NATO's allies into unity, but by effectively making NATO dependent on Moscow, NATO may get caught in its own trap and become even more divided. Eventually, financial constraints

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<sup>7</sup> "(...) we'll work with our NATO allies to seek bold reductions in U.S. and Russian tactical weapons in Europe." Obama spoke these words without any emphasis, as a routine remark.

<sup>8</sup> One is the 'Snowden affair': in July 2013, Russia granted temporary asylum to a former US official who had leaked information about US and British mass surveillance programs including millions of telephone calls, emails and sms's in NATO countries. More recently, relations may have improved somewhat again in the cooperation on Syria's chemical weapons.

<sup>9</sup> It is a wide-spread mistake that the 1987 INF Treaty that eliminated the new missiles was the result of NATO holding firm. The treaty was achieved thanks to U.S. and USSR leaders Reagan and Gorbachev breaking with the logic of the negotiation positions of both sides. See par. 10.

may force NATO to eliminate its TNW rather than a new political consensus about new political choices as to Europe's future security structures.

This paper also emphasizes that Russia is part of the current TNW problem because of its own large arsenals – far larger than NATO's - and its unwillingness to discuss them. Russia's attitude makes life easier for those in NATO who want to retain TNW. There is no convincing reason why Russia should not be more transparent and flexible about its TNW, without making such steps dependent on concessions by NATO.

Perhaps most important, NATO is missing a unique opportunity to contribute to strengthening the non-proliferation regime. In the U.N. context a growing number of states question NATO's 'nuclear sharing' (as the practice of 'extended deterrence' through forward deployment of U.S. TNW is called) as being against the spirit, if not the law, of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, which prohibits any transfer of nuclear weapons to non-nuclear countries.

This paper argues that both sides should look for alternative approaches combining unilateral with reciprocal steps, like happened in the past with the 1991/92 'Presidential Nuclear Initiatives' that eliminated thousands of warheads in Europe (see par. 4 and 12).

### **3. The linkage with Russian steps**

During the internal NATO process since the Strasbourg/Kehl summit in April 2009, the issue of Russia's much larger TNW arsenal has played an increasing role. Three official texts from 2009 and 2010 are still relevant:

- a) The text that really triggered the new TNW debate in NATO was the October 2009 coalition agreement in which the new German government stated as its goal "*that the nuclear weapons stationed in Germany will be withdrawn.*" Surprisingly (and wisely!), the text contained no link with Russian concessions.
- b) In the five points with which during a ministerial meeting in Tallinn, in April 2010, U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton tried to formulate a NATO consensus, it was stated that "*in any future reductions, our aim should be to seek Russian agreement to increase transparency on non-strategic nuclear weapons in Europe, relocate these weapons away from the territory of NATO members, and include non-strategic nuclear weapons in the next round of U.S.-Russian arms control discussions alongside strategic and non-deployed nuclear weapons.*"<sup>10</sup> Officials present at the meeting said that it had been formulated in this rather vague way ("*our aim should be to seek*") to avoid a *formal* linkage. The U.S. wanted to keep open options for change.
- c) The same happened in the text of the 'Strategic Concept' of November 2010<sup>11</sup>, par. 26: "*Any further steps must take into account the disparity with the greater Russian stockpiles of short-range nuclear weapons.*" Again, reciprocity was not formulated as a *formal* condition for steps by NATO. However, the *political link* became more strongly established by the way the again rather vague wording ("*must take into account*") was generally interpreted as reciprocity being a strict condition.

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<sup>10</sup> See [http://www.armscontrol.org/act/2010\\_05/NATO](http://www.armscontrol.org/act/2010_05/NATO) .

<sup>11</sup> See [http://www.nato.int/nato\\_static/assets/pdf/pdf\\_publications/20120214\\_strategic-concept-2010-eng.pdf](http://www.nato.int/nato_static/assets/pdf/pdf_publications/20120214_strategic-concept-2010-eng.pdf) .

The way the linkage has been further confirmed in the DDR of 2012, though again formulated in a vague way, still leaving room for different interpretations, will be discussed in the next two paragraphs.

#### **4. What is meant by ‘reciprocity’?**

What did and does NATO want from Russia? How does NATO understand reciprocity?

In the early phase of the new TNW debate, ‘reciprocity’ primarily referred to a rather open and flexible process that would include Russian steps or gestures with an emphasis on transparency and relocating Russian TNW away from NATO territory. As part of such a process, NATO could give up nuclear sharing or at least withdraw all or most U.S. TNW from Europe.

It is obvious that reciprocity normally results from negotiations. And often the assumption was that new bilateral negotiations after New START would be the venue to achieve this. In such negotiations, TNW were to be included. However, although during the DDR process many statements by politicians and diplomats mentioned new negotiations as the proper venue, few experts believed that soon after New START new negotiations would be politically feasible. And technically, including TNW in the objective of further reducing strategic nuclear weapons would be extremely complicated. Moreover, Russia made clear that it first wanted a few years to see how New START is implemented. Russia also added other conditions, like including missile defense, new ‘strategic’ conventional weapons (‘Prompt Global Strike’), weaponization of outer space, and including other nuclear powers.

Already in 2010 it became evident that new negotiations were unlikely.<sup>12</sup> In official statements, the word ‘negotiations’ in relation to TNW virtually disappeared. It is worth noting that it is also missing in the text of the DDR.

At the same time, ‘reciprocity’ was increasingly understood as making any NATO steps conditional of Russian concessions. In the DDR process, some allies disliked this approach as too rigorous and static. They emphasized confidence-building as the proper goal, to which transparency, further reductions and eventual elimination of TNW should contribute (see below, par. 8). Obviously, confidence-building would need to come from both sides. However, the DDR failed to be specific on this, although the phrase ‘confidence building’ was mentioned.

So, ‘reciprocity’ became a vague concept that could be interpreted in different ways, thereby concealing the differences in what allies wanted. In the DDR itself, again the formulation is vague: NATO is prepared to ‘*consider further reducing its requirement*’ for TNW ‘*in the context of reciprocal steps by Russia*’, et cetera (for the quote, see below, par. 26 of the DDR). Clearly, ‘*in the context of*’ is not a very precise way of defining the process. (But it was an admission that new formal negotiations were unlikely).

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<sup>12</sup> President Obama’s commitment of February 2011 to ‘seek initiating’ talks with Russia that would include TNW within a year after the entry into force of New START was required by a U.S. Senate resolution related to the approval of New START. Few officials believed this to be feasible.

Today, 'reciprocity' has become a mantra aimed at hiding the internal divisions in NATO while blaming Russia for lack of progress. For the time being, the condition of 'reciprocity' is used to suggest a NATO consensus precisely because what it means remains unclear. But eventually, it may backfire (see par. 10).

Much clearer is what, in NATO's debate so far, 'reciprocity' does *not* mean. It does *not* refer to a process in which Russian steps could be made *in response to NATO initiatives*. Any element of unilateralism seems to be excluded. This is strange, as the most successful disarmament process in nuclear history was both *unilateral* and *reciprocal*: the '*Presidential Nuclear Initiatives*' of 1991/1992. These were initiated by President George H. W. Bush who after the end of the Cold War decided the withdrawal and elimination of thousands of U.S. TNW in Europe. This was reciprocated by Soviet/Russian leaders Gorbachev and Yeltsin (for more information, see par. 12).

### **5. A closer look at 'reciprocity' in NATO's DDPR as adopted in May 2012**

As said, without being specific NATO has established a conditional relation between possible changes in NATO's posture and Russian steps. The following are the relevant paragraphs in the DDPR as adopted in May 2012<sup>13</sup> (the word 'reciprocal' appears in par. 26 and 27):

24. *The Alliance is resolved to seek a safer world for all and to create the conditions for a world without nuclear weapons in accordance with the goals of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, in a way that promotes international stability, and is based on the principle of undiminished security for all. (Emphasis in the text).*
25. *Allies look forward to continuing to develop and exchange transparency and confidence-building ideas with the Russian Federation in the NATO-Russia Council, with the goal of developing detailed proposals on and increasing mutual understanding of NATO's and Russia's non-strategic nuclear force postures in Europe.*
26. *Since the end of the Cold War, NATO has dramatically reduced the number, types, and readiness of nuclear weapons stationed in Europe and its reliance on nuclear weapons in NATO strategy. Against this background and considering the broader security environment, NATO is prepared to consider further reducing its requirement for non-strategic nuclear weapons assigned to the Alliance in the context of reciprocal steps by Russia, taking into account the greater Russian stockpiles of non-strategic nuclear weapons stationed in the Euro-Atlantic area.*
27. *Allies agree that the NAC will task the appropriate committees to further consider, in the context of the broader security environment, what NATO would expect to see in the way of reciprocal Russian actions to allow for significant reductions in forward-based non-strategic nuclear weapons assigned to NATO.*
28. *In addition, Allies support and encourage the United States and the Russian Federation to continue their mutual efforts to promote strategic stability, enhance transparency, and further reduce their nuclear weapons.*

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<sup>13</sup> For the full text, see footnote 2.

Some critics, also some officials in NATO staff (and among NATO allies), believe that despite this vague language NATO, by adopting this DDR text, has driven 'reciprocity' too far and indeed has given Moscow a veto on NATO making changes for its own benefit. Some critics believe that lack of U.S. leadership is the main explanation. Apparently, keeping unity in NATO was considered more important than pushing for progress in President Obama's 'Prague agenda'.<sup>14</sup>

At the same time, the still rather ambivalent wording of especially par. 26 should leave room for a far less formal linkage. In a remarkable speech in November 2013, Ivo Daalder, who had just retired as U.S. Ambassador to NATO, said: "We work very hard in the deterrence and defense posture review to make clear that it is possible under the right circumstances not only to reduce our reliance but in fact eliminate our reliance on US nuclear weapons in Europe. And there is nothing in these documents that prohibits the possibility of getting there. We do talk about Russian reciprocity, but it doesn't talk about Russian agreements. We do talk about the need to work together within the alliance, but it doesn't talk about the fact that Russia can have a veto over what we do."<sup>15</sup>

## **6. Two NATO objectives: *reassurance* within NATO and *confidence-building* with Russia**

In NATO's view, NATO/Russian reciprocity must contribute to two objectives: *reassurance within NATO* and *confidence building with Russia*. Some member states put the emphasis on the first objective, others on the second. Can these two objectives be reconciled?

### *a) Reassurance within NATO.*

Some member states are opposed to withdrawing (or reducing) U.S. TNW as they feel threatened by the proximity of Russian TNW and do not trust Russian intentions. Obviously, historical experiences play a role. For them, the presence of U.S. TNW in Europe is an essential guarantee of the U.S. commitment to their security, as it is the link to the U.S. 'strategic' forces, like it was in the Cold War. For them, TNW stationed in Europe make 'extended deterrence' visible, which is not the case with U.S. strategic forces. However, these allies would feel less need for U.S. TNW if the Russian threat would be countered by a stronger conventional NATO posture that also would reassure them of the validity of the U.S. guarantee. Examples are: more U.S. troops, missile defense, more contingency planning, more NATO investment in military infrastructure in the Baltic region, more Art. 5<sup>16</sup> exercises relevant for member states close to Russia, et cetera.

For them, reciprocity is primarily a military concept. *Russian* measures in the area of TNW (including more transparency and relocation away from NATO territory) might add to their sense of security, but only if combined with new reassurance elements *within NATO*. However, many of such military reassurance elements within NATO would antagonize Russia. Therefore, they would contradict the second objective: confidence building.

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<sup>14</sup> Referring to Obama's speech in Prague, April 2009, outlining his plans for a world without nuclear weapons. For an appeal for stronger U.S. leadership, see this July 2013 article by Edmund E. Seay, former arms control advisor to Ambassador Ivo Daalder at the U.S. mission to NATO:

[http://www.basicint.org/sites/default/files/nuclear\\_policy\\_paper\\_no\\_14\\_final.pdf](http://www.basicint.org/sites/default/files/nuclear_policy_paper_no_14_final.pdf).

<sup>15</sup> Transcript of speech at the U.S. Atlantic Council on 12 November 2013. See <http://www.c-spanvideo.org/program/316191-2> <http://www.c-spanvideo.org/program/316191-2>.

<sup>16</sup> Art. 5 of the NATO Treaty says that an attack against one will be considered an attack against all.

b) *Confidence building with Russia.*

Some member states no longer see a role for U.S. TNW, which they consider a relic of the Cold War. They also believe that in post-Cold War Europe a new process of confidence building with Russia is long overdue. The process of developing new security structures in Europe is broader than military (for instance, energy security is part of it), but changing military postures and policies is an important element. Withdrawal (or at least reductions, as a first step) of U.S. TNW is seen as contributing to confidence building between NATO and Russia. Obviously, a confidence building process should include Russian measures achieving more transparency of the Russian arsenals, relocation of warheads away from NATO borders, et cetera, but NATO has options for being more transparent as well.

For these allies, reciprocity is primarily a political concept. The process will be difficult, as there is a large asymmetry between the two postures and policies, but it should be possible to identify first steps on both sides. (See par. 8).

*Concluding:* a central problem within NATO is that, on the one side, some NATO members still believe that 'extended deterrence' is only credible with U.S. nuclear weapons deployed in Europe. For them, the guarantee provided by U.S. strategic forces is not sufficient. Therefore, they would only give up their opposition to changes in NATO's nuclear posture if NATO (esp. the U.S.) takes credible non-nuclear *reassurance measures* (although many of these are likely to be perceived by Russia as provoking). A condition for nuclear measures is that they must be reciprocal and contribute to military security. At the other side, some member states no longer believe in the need for U.S. TNW being stationed in Europe. In reality, their role in 'extended deterrence' has since long been taken over by U.S. strategic forces.<sup>17</sup> Their reduction and withdrawal could be an essential contribution to a process of *confidence building* with Russia that is that is long overdue in post-Cold War Europe. The significance of reciprocity in the TNW area is political rather than military. Obviously, these two approaches are hard to reconcile.<sup>18</sup>

## **7. Reciprocity and *reassurance*: several 'needs' of NATO to be combined or reconciled**

The discussion about alternative forms of *reassurance* addresses several 'needs' on which NATO needs to find consensus. To mention a few that are obvious (some of them were already mentioned above):

- a) Stronger conventional forms of reassurance in Europe, esp. emphasizing the U.S. commitment ('U.S. boots on the ground'), more Art. 5 exercises, etc.
- b) A stronger sense of security as a result of missile defense.
- c) Stronger emphasis on the role of U.S. strategic nuclear forces in 'extended deterrence'.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> No allies suggest the end of 'extended deterrence' as such: as long as nuclear weapons exist, the ultimate guarantee will remain U.S. 'strategic' nuclear forces.

<sup>18</sup> Some member states do not want change at all, as they believe that conventional forces can never be a substitute for nuclear deterrence.

<sup>19</sup> This could enhance the recognition that, in a military sense, the distinction itself between 'strategic' and 'tactical' is a leftover from the Cold War and is no longer relevant today. See also footnote 1.

- d) More clarity about the role of British and French nuclear forces. (This is a difficult issue, as it difficult to envisage the U.K. launching one or more of its missiles if not in the context of a U.S. nuclear attack. For France, see below).
- e) New forms of burden-sharing in NATO. (Strengthening inter-alliance cooperation and solidarity is a broader problem among NATO's 28 member states, not only applying to the link with the U.S.).
- f) Better cooperation between NATO and the European Union in addressing security needs.
- g) More political attention for the concerns of member states close to Russia.
- h) Other Russian steps reducing the (perception of the) Russian threat.

In this context, confidence building with Russia has a place as well, but only as an additional element in the broader pattern of reassurance. It will not come as a surprise that some new NATO member states, formerly under communist rule, are the most vocal in stressing reassurance as a need to be addressed urgently.

Clearly, much of what is mentioned above is theoretical. In reality, NATO member states are reducing their defense budgets, which means less rather than more conventional capabilities. The U.S. is shifting its focus from the Atlantic to the Pacific. The 'needs' above fail to address new threats like cyber war. At some time in the future, 'Prompt Global Strike' options may be more 'reassuring' than nuclear weapons. Et cetera.

Moreover, a special 'need' is accommodating France's concerns. On the one hand, French nuclear forces are not assigned to NATO. Although they are said to '*contribute to the overall deterrence and security of the Allies*,<sup>20</sup> NATO has no say in French nuclear policy. On the other hand, the consensus rule in NATO gives France the possibility of blocking NATO decisions at the level of all 28 member states without France being a member of NATO's Nuclear Planning Group (27 member states).

France's concern that changes in NATO's nuclear posture could affect its own nuclear weapons effectively means a French veto. Some NATO members wanting to end what they consider a remnant of the Cold War feel that NATO is held hostage by a member state that does not share in the responsibilities of this nuclear posture and also has no clear role in the reassurance that other members are asking for.

### **8. Reciprocity and *confidence building*: what could it mean and what does NATO want?**

Like reassurance, *confidence building* also is a package of a variety of 'needs'. It is broader than the reassurance package, as it includes also many non-military elements. Some of the military security 'needs' to be addressed here are:

- a) Reducing threat perceptions on both sides. For NATO, this would include Russia abstaining from military exercises close to the borders of NATO members, especially in the Baltic area.
- b) Agreements on missile defense in Europe.
- c) Reviving the CFE Treaty (Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe).<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> NATO's *Strategic Concept*, November 2010, par. 18.

<sup>21</sup> The CFE Treaty was signed in 1990, after the end of the Cold War. It was amended in 1996 but got into trouble due to NATO's enlargements in 1999 and 2004, U.S. plans for bases in Bulgaria and Rumania, Russian

- d) Discussing the future security system ('architecture') in Europe, including pleas by Germany for putting TNW withdrawal into a frame work of 'cooperative security' instead of seeing them as an arms control issue only.
- e) More willingness on both sides to use the NATO-Russia Council (NRC, established in 2002 for consultation and cooperation) and its working groups.

It is evident that in the broader non-military package also other issues such as energy security and human rights in Russia would play a role on NATO's side, whereas Russia would want to see recognition of its equal status as a superpower and its interests in the Middle East and elsewhere. But in the context of this paper the focus is on confidence building in the area of TNW.

In a 'Non-Paper' submitted in April 2011 to a NATO foreign ministers meeting in Berlin by Poland, Norway, Germany and the Netherlands, and endorsed by six other NATO members, seven proposals were made.<sup>22</sup> They were called '*Proposals on increasing transparency and promoting confidence with regard to tactical nuclear weapons in Europe.*' The 'Non-Paper' was intended as input to the DDR process. The idea was that building confidence was required for '*further reductions and the ultimate elimination of these weapons.*'

One year later, in the DDR document a reference was made to a dialogue in the NRC (par. 25) but no specific proposals were mentioned. Instead, the DDR said that NATO "*will task the appropriate committees to further consider, in the context of the broader security environment, what NATO would expect to see in the way of reciprocal Russian actions to allow for significant reductions in forward-based non-strategic nuclear weapons assigned to NATO.*" Not even these 'appropriate committees' were specified.

The proposals in the 'Non-Paper' seem to have had little support from key allies during the DDR process. According to diplomats, some allies were opposed anyhow, the U.S. gave priority to NATO unity, and Russia showed no interest. Nevertheless, if NATO would take its own emphasis on reciprocity seriously, it would have to present ideas.

## **9. Back to the proposals of April 2011**

In the absence of new suggestions, some of the proposals in the April 2011 'Non-Paper' were likely to emerge again, for instance those on data exchange, notifying movements of forces and weapons, site visits, and discussing strategic doctrines. Indeed, in February 2013, U.S. Acting Under Secretary for Arms Control and International Security Rose Gottemoeller mentioned several of the transparency and confidence building measures that were also in the 'Non-Paper'.<sup>23</sup> The occasion was a workshop in Warsaw on '*Prospects for Information*

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troop levels in the Caucasus, the presence of Russian troops in Moldova and Georgia, U.S. missile defense plans, and other issues. It was suspended by Putin in 2007. An adapted treaty signed in 1999 has not been ratified by NATO members, mainly to protest the Chechen war.

<sup>22</sup> To be found here: <http://www.fas.org/programs/ssp/nukes/nuclearweapons/nato-nonpaper041411.pdf> .

The six other members were Belgium, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Iceland, Luxemburg and Slovenia. According to diplomats present at the meeting, several other countries had wanted to sign as well but failed to do so due to time constraints.

<sup>23</sup> See <http://www.state.gov/t/us/204785.htm> .

*Sharing and Confidence Building on Non-Strategic Nuclear Weapons in Europe.*<sup>24</sup> Many possible measures were listed but so were complications in putting them into practice. A verification regime might be the most difficult challenge.

Also in February 2013, NATO finally agreed about the mandate of the new arms control committee preparing a dialogue with Russia on confidence building and transparency measures.<sup>25</sup> Its mandate includes exchanging information on nuclear doctrines, numbers of dismantled TNW, and safety measures.

In the meantime, there have been several efforts for dialogue on military postures and doctrines in the NATO-Russia Council, but in July 2013 Gottemoeller also said: *"We must do better in the NRC process."*<sup>26</sup> In June 2013, the Dutch government hosted a *'NATO-Russia Council Seminar on Nuclear Doctrines and Strategy.'* The U.S., the U.K., France, Russia and NATO informed the ca. 70 participants about their nuclear policies but no results were made public, except for some comments by Russian Ambassador Grushko. He stressed that for further nuclear disarmament a holistic approach is needed *"taking into account the integrity of all factors that may negatively affect strategic stability."* He emphasized the importance of the implementation of New START. He added that it is time for *'multilateralization of nuclear disarmament'*, which refers to involving other nuclear weapons states, - a further complication for real negotiations.<sup>27</sup>

In defining reciprocity, it is useful to go back to the proposals in the 'Non-Paper' of April 2011 and take a fresh look. Here they are summarized:

- 1) Using the NATO-Russia Council (NRC) as primary framework for transparency and confidence-building efforts concerning TNW in Europe.
- 2) Exchange of information on TNW (numbers, locations, operational status, command arrangements, warheads storage security).
- 3) Developing standard reporting formula for TNW inventories.
- 4) Voluntary notification of any plans to move TNW.
- 5) Exchange of visits by military officials.
- 6) Exchanges on conditions and requirements for gradual reductions of TNW in Europe. In a first phase, clarification of numbers eliminated and/or put into storage as result of 1991/92 PNI's.
- 7) A NRC seminar on nuclear doctrines, esp. on the role of TNW, possibly in Poland in first quarter of 2012.<sup>28</sup>

It is striking that in this 2 pages document the NATO-Russia Council is mentioned five times, although at the time the NRC was generally considered not functioning.<sup>29</sup> Diplomats called

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<sup>24</sup> For the report and additional information, see <http://www.pism.pl/publications/reports/PISM-Report-The-Warsaw-Workshop-Prospects-for-Information-Sharing-and-Confidence-Building-on-Non-Strategic-Nuclear-Weapons-in-Europe> .

<sup>25</sup> For the new arms control committee, see Oliver Meier's article of 26 February 2013: <http://armscontrolnow.org/2013/02/26/nato-agrees-on-new-arms-control-body/> .

<sup>26</sup> <http://www.state.gov/t/us/212489.htm> .

<sup>27</sup> <http://natomission.ru/en/cooperation/current/show/144/> .

<sup>28</sup> The Warsaw workshop in February 2013 mentioned above was inspired by this. It was formally hosted by Poland and Norway.

the climate in the NRC below zero. This was not only because of lack of interest by Russia in the NRC, Russia's opposition to U.S. and NATO missile defense plans and the CFE stalemate, but also because NATO was unable to agree internally about what it wanted. Even the idea of TNW as a subject for future negotiations was rejected by some allies, as it would confirm that NATO no longer needs them.

At the time, the 'Non-paper' could generate the support of members with divergent opinions as it also argued that '*reductions should not be pursued unilaterally or be allowed to weaken the transatlantic link.*' And reciprocity should be one of the principles underlying the promotion of transparency and confidence building.

Recently, some politicians made a unilateral step by putting transparency into practice. In June 2013, two former Dutch prime ministers, Ruud Lubbers and Dries van Agt, broke with NATO's 'neither confirm nor deny' policy and confirmed that U.S. nuclear weapons were located at the Dutch air force base Volkel. The location of U.S. TNW in Europe is the worst kept secret in NATO anyhow. The two former politicians were not prosecuted for revealing classified information, because the government would have to prove that they did so, and this would imply revealing classified information....<sup>30</sup> In September 2013, Belgian former prime minister Mark Eyskens confirmed the presence of U.S. nuclear weapons in Belgium. (Germany is not making a secret of TNW being on German soil, on the basis of an agreement in NATO long ago).

#### **10. Dual track decision of 1979 revisited?**

As said, a *confidence building process between NATO and Russia* as proposed in the April 2011 'Non-Paper' is difficult to achieve if it is to be combined with an *intra-NATO process of taking reassurance measures* that Russia will find threatening, rightly or wrongly, and that may provoke counter-measures. Is it impossible to reconcile these two processes? Maybe, maybe not. This is the challenge. But how will NATO reach internal agreement?

History may teach a lesson for how *not* doing it. The 'kicking the can further down the road' policy of NATO, already started in 2009 in Strasbourg/Kehl, then continued after the May 2012 summit in Chicago and now locked up in 'reciprocity' as a condition for any change, reminds of NATO's 1979 'dual track' approach, when a negotiations track was added to the track of deploying 572 Pershing II and cruise missiles in order to discipline NATO into unity and silence public opinion. During the Geneva negotiations, started in 1981, none of the 'zero options' put on the table by either side really aimed at zero. Only reductions could result.

Today, the INF Treaty of 1987 that eliminated all ground-launched intermediate-range missiles, is widely seen as the result of NATO holding firm. It is celebrated as a success of NATO. However, at the time many in NATO were very unhappy with the Treaty. NATO had fallen into its own trap of presenting its proposals as 'zero'.<sup>31</sup> It was thanks to President

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<sup>29</sup> However, at the time a NATO-Russia Council (NRC) committee held (low profile) seminars about transparency issues.

<sup>30</sup> It should be added that, in Dutch history, Van Agt and Lubbers were the prime ministers most involved in the nuclear issue. Both were prime minister during the missile crisis in the late 1970ies and the 1980ies.

<sup>31</sup> Before Ragan and Gorbachov intervened, diplomats counted on a deal of 100 missiles on both sides.

Reagan and General Secretary Gorbachev that the stalemate was broken. Both thought that the negotiations were taking too long.

Not only were many in NATO unhappy, it has also been largely forgotten what NATO tried to do about it in the two years between the signing of the INF Treaty in December 1987 and the fall of the Berlin Wall in November 1989. NATO spent much time on measures to compensate for the 'loss' of its new intermediate-range missiles, because 'zero' would result in a 'gap' in the escalation ladder between short range battlefield weapons and U.S. strategic weapons, 'decoupling' European NATO allies from the U.S. NATO's short-range weapons were to be modernized as well. However, in October 1988, at a ministerial meeting of the Nuclear Planning Group in the Dutch sea resort Scheveningen, Belgium (alone!) blocked NATO consensus on modernization, early 1989 followed by Germany.<sup>32</sup>

In these years, options that were seriously considered for filling the INF gap included deploying extra U.S. long range bombers with cruise missiles in the U.K, putting air-launched missiles on dual capable NATO aircraft now carrying gravity bombs, and assigning nuclear-tipped cruise missiles on U.S. ships to NATO.<sup>33</sup> Germany opposed modernisation also because it saw the INF Treaty as a new chance for promoting detente in Europe. Eventually, in the pivotal year 1989 it was not NATO but the people of Central and Eastern Europe that prevented a new nuclear arms race in Europe, by ending the Cold War East-West division through (mostly peaceful) revolt.

The parallel with the outcome of the DDPR is that the DDPR tries to keep NATO united by linking possible changes in NATO's own policy and posture to Russian concessions which are unlikely to be made. Today, the result of NATO following the example of the 1979 'dual track' approach would be a stalemate, again. Without negotiations or without Moscow making concessions first, NATO cannot move. And if at some point negotiations of some sort would start, NATO would again fall into its own trap, as NATO would have very little to offer. What is the leverage of B61 bombs, most of which cannot even reach Russian territory and are on an alert status of months? Moreover, as said above, a link with CFE and missile defense would be unavoidable. Russia would demand discussion of a broad range of issues. Verification would be extremely complicated. Concessions from NATO's side would prove internally divisive. Et cetera.

Moreover, holding firm will backfire as it will lead to a new controversy about modernization. Replacing the aging B61 bombs by a precision-guided successor will give NATO new capabilities, certainly when combined with the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter that is likely to succeed current dual capable F-16 and Tornado aircraft. Proponents of keeping U.S. TNW in Europe will argue that, for its credibility as a bargaining chip, modernization of the B61 is necessary. According to one official report, NATO – or at least 'certain NATO allies', obviously referring to the host countries of U.S. TNW – have already agreed with new military features of the B61.<sup>34</sup> Modernization will be very divisive in NATO.<sup>35</sup> Modernization

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<sup>32</sup> In fact, the debate – and the internal conflict – started already before the INF Treaty was signed and continued for some time after the fall of the Berlin Wall.

<sup>33</sup> Air-launched and sea-launched intermediate-range missiles were not prohibited by the INF Treaty.

<sup>34</sup> A May 2011 U.S. Government Accountability Office report says that in early 2010 key issues had to be resolved with 'certain NATO allies'. In April 2010, agreement was reached with NATO allies on 'key military

for the sake of arms control was precisely the argument used during the years following 1979. The main tool in disciplining NATO allies into unity was that dissent would endanger the Geneva negotiations.

A new discussion about modernization would even be more divisive in NATO due to the rising costs of modernizing the B61 bombs, now estimated at \$ 10 billion.<sup>36</sup> And obviously, modernization would be strongly criticised by Moscow and would be used as a rationale for its modernization plans (which it is assumed to have anyhow).

As the kind of reciprocity aimed at Russian steps as a precondition for NATO is unlikely to bring progress, some experts believe that NATO should consider taking some steps unilaterally. Others even suggest that, as a result of the failure of the DDRP process and NATO's inability to establish a consensus other than the continuation of 'kicking the can down the road', NATO member states now hosting U.S. TNW should start bilateral talks with the U.S. about having them withdrawn. Consensus in NATO is not sacred (see par. 12).

### **11. Russia's condition for reciprocity**

The precise numbers of U.S. and Russian TNW (operational and non-deployed) are not known. And although since the end of the Cold War their numbers have gone down very substantially, by 90 % (U.S.) and 75% (Russia), especially as a result of the 1991/92 PNI's, there is still a great disparity. Most analysts use the figures provided by U.S. nuclear weapons experts Hans. M. Kristensen and Robert S. Norris:

- 760 U.S. warheads (sea-launched cruise missiles, in the process of retirement, and some 500 B61 gravity bombs, of which nearly 200 deployed in Europe and to be modernized), and
- 2000 Russian warheads (air-launched, naval, air-defense, missile defense and some ground-based).<sup>37</sup>

Russian experts argue that the ca. 600 or 700 TNW that serve the anti-ballistic missile defense system around Moscow should not be counted in the equation, as they can have a defensive function only. There are doubts about Russia having fully complied with its promises made in the PNI's as to the elimination of all its ground-based TNW. As a first step towards transparency and confidence building, Russia could be more open about its figures.

However, since a long time, Russia insists that it is NATO's turn for reciprocal steps, as after the end of the Cold War Russia has removed all nuclear weapons from foreign countries and

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characteristics of the bomb', including a guided tailkit section. See <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d11387.pdf> p. 13.

<sup>35</sup> Like in the 1980ies, the word 'modernization' is avoided. It is called 'keeping up to date' or 'refurbishment' (or 'life extension'). However, it is evident that the new B61 bombs will have capabilities not available to NATO today, and even more so if they are carried by F-35 fighters likely to replace current dual capable aircraft. See Hans Kristensen's analysis [http://tacticalnuclearweapons.ifsh.de/pdf/Nuclear\\_Policy\\_Paper\\_No11.pdf](http://tacticalnuclearweapons.ifsh.de/pdf/Nuclear_Policy_Paper_No11.pdf). The word 'modernization' is also avoided because Obama's April 2010 Nuclear Posture Review prohibits 'Life Extension Programs' to "provide for new military capabilities." See p. 39 of <http://www.defense.gov/npr/docs/2010%20nuclear%20posture%20review%20report.pdf>.

<sup>36</sup> See <http://blogs.fas.org/security/2013/04/b61-12tail/>.

<sup>37</sup> See <http://bos.sagepub.com/content/68/5/96.full>. For a more detailed report by Hans M. Kristensen, see [http://www.fas.org/docs/Non\\_Strategic\\_Nuclear\\_Weapons.pdf](http://www.fas.org/docs/Non_Strategic_Nuclear_Weapons.pdf). For a detailed analysis of Russian TNW from a Russian perspective, see this article by Andrei Zagorgski: <http://www.ifsh.de/pdf/publikationen/hb/hb156.pdf>.

the U.S. has not. Seeing all U.S. TNW withdrawn to the U.S. is a *conditio sine qua non* for steps by Russia.

Russia has a strong point here, also because after the end of the Cold War the deployment of nuclear weapons on the territory of non-nuclear weapon states has become increasingly controversial. Many countries consider this being against the spirit, if not the law, of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). Article I and II of the NPT prohibit any transfer of nuclear weapons to non-nuclear states. During the last NPT Review Conference, in May 2010, this argument found broad support. Russia is endorsing this view. At the same time, it is not a reasonable argument for not willing to discuss its own leftovers from the Cold War.

Besides lack of transparency about its numbers, an issue is the lack of clarity about Russian TNW in its security strategies. Russia, like all NATO members, is obliged to further diminish the role of nuclear weapons in its security doctrines.<sup>38</sup> More clarity would enhance confidence building. NATO and Russia see the role of TNW in a quite different way. U.S. nuclear weapons have a key role 'extended deterrence': crossing the 'nuclear threshold' is an enormous step in escalation. In contrast, in Russian strategy the use of a nuclear weapon is seen as de-escalating, as a signal.

Moreover, Russia claims that all of its TNW are located in central storage sites, but there is no clear definition of this term. This adds to the lack of clarity about 'deployed' and 'non-deployed', as the proximity of operational bases would enable deployment on short notice. Safety is another concern to be addressed, - applying to both sides.

As in NATO's discourse reciprocity refers to both Russian and U.S. measures, an embarrassing question for NATO would be the following. If in the discussion about reciprocity Russia would ask NATO to adhere to the principle of relocation to central storage sites including storing warheads separate from their delivery systems: what would be 'reciprocity'?<sup>39</sup> Relocation of B61 bombs to where, if not to the U.S.?<sup>40</sup> NATO says that Russian central storage sites and operational bases often are not far from each other. This illustrates that *real* reciprocity between Russia and NATO, measure for measure, is hard to conceive. The two postures are quite different, not only in numbers but also in types of warheads and delivery systems, ways of storage and deployment, levels of readiness, etc.

Moreover, Russia will no longer leave out French and U.K. nuclear weapons which it considers 'strategic' and which in the past have not been included in the SALT and START negotiations. Another complication is the role of Russia's TNW vis-à-vis China. At the same time, Russia argues that in a crisis NATO's TNW can be moved close to Russia's borders, which will make them 'strategic' (terminology is again a leftover from the Cold War).<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> This pledge is part of the Action Plan adopted at the 2010 NPT Review Conference.

<sup>39</sup> Russia claims to have done so. See for instance the extensive report by Pavel Podwig, Spring 2011: [https://www.google.nl/search?q=pavel+podwig+Russia's+nuclear+forces&rlz=1C1GPCK\\_enNL418NL421&og=pavel+podwig+Russia's+nuclear+forces&aqs=chrome..69i57j0.12936j0j4&sourceid=chrome&espv=210&es\\_sm=93&ie=UTF-8](https://www.google.nl/search?q=pavel+podwig+Russia's+nuclear+forces&rlz=1C1GPCK_enNL418NL421&og=pavel+podwig+Russia's+nuclear+forces&aqs=chrome..69i57j0.12936j0j4&sourceid=chrome&espv=210&es_sm=93&ie=UTF-8). See also footnote 37.

<sup>40</sup> Obviously, transferring the 'dual capable' Dutch F-16s, now on Dutch Air Force base Volkel, to Dutch Air Force base Leeuwarden would not be credible. And would the U.K. be willing to station them?

<sup>41</sup> See [http://rbth.ru/news/2013/08/14/us\\_tactical\\_nuclear\\_weapons\\_must\\_be\\_withdrawn\\_from\\_europe\\_-\\_russian\\_defe\\_28898.html](http://rbth.ru/news/2013/08/14/us_tactical_nuclear_weapons_must_be_withdrawn_from_europe_-_russian_defe_28898.html).

Still, also Russia is aware that TNW have never been the subject of negotiations and that discussing their role is long overdue. Russia also knows that its military power continues to be a concern for formerly communist countries fearing the combination of reducing the conventional forces of the U.S. in Europe and withdrawing its TNW.<sup>42</sup>

## **12. Better examples from the past and new models: consensus not sacred**

Since some time, there have been signals that the U.S. not only is aware that new formal negotiations with Russia are not likely to start in the near future, but that informal agreements are even preferable. This may yield faster results and will avoid a new conflict with the U.S. Senate about ratification of a new treaty. Indeed, progress requires new models. Fortunately, there are also other historical examples than the 1979 'dual track decision' and the stalemate in the Geneva negotiations that followed.

First of all, we must keep the memory alive of the Reykjavik summit in October 1986. Although it failed in its primary objective, it did bring about a 'meeting of minds' of the U.S. and Soviet leadership that eventually led to the INF Treaty of December 1987.

An even more relevant example are the visionary 1991/92 '*Presidential Nuclear Initiatives*' already mentioned several times above. These were not the result of negotiations. NATO was still busy defining its position in possible new negotiations with the Soviet Union on short-range nuclear weapons, when on 27 September 1991 President Bush made his surprise announcement that he would forego negotiations and eliminate a large number of TNW, including all nuclear artillery and warheads of the Lance missile (both in Europe and Korea). Bush asked Gorbachev to reciprocate. The next day, the U.K. announced the unilateral withdrawal of its Lance missiles from Germany. Already one week later, on 5 October, Gorbachev announced reciprocal steps, also unilateral. (After the U.S.S.R. had collapsed, Yeltsin continued this policy, early 1992). NATO agreed in a meeting on 17 October 1991, after the unilateral decisions had been announced.

So these steps were both *unilateral* and *reciprocal*. They formed a very effective form of reciprocity and one that, if revived today, would be both *reassuring* and *confidence-building*. Moreover, such a combination of unilateral steps and both informal and agreed forms of reciprocity would avoid the risk of Moscow de facto deciding about NATO's nuclear policy.

These events in NATO's history also illustrate that consensus has not always been sacred. In 1986, Reykjavik caused panic in NATO's headquarters in Brussels. In 1987, already before the INF treaty was signed, NATO started work on filling the 'gap' that the treaty would cause. In 1991/92, the withdrawal and dismantling of the thousands of warheads through the PNI's was not the result of NATO consensus. More recently, withdrawals of U.S. nuclear weapons from Greece and the U.K. were bilateral decisions taken by the U.S. and the respective host states. NATO was informed, not consulted. The withdrawals were not made conditional

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<sup>42</sup> Cf. this comment by three former defense ministers of Latvia, Lithuania and Poland: <http://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/why-europe-still-needs-nuclear-deterrence> .

upon Russian steps. NATO cannot formally prohibit such unilateral and bilateral decision making, and has not done so in the past.<sup>43</sup>

In fact, NATO's current reciprocity approach is a departure from two decades of dealing with the TNW problem through unilateral steps. It is a return to the logic of the Cold War.<sup>44</sup>

An interesting footnote is that the only two cases of real nuclear disarmament in the history of nuclear weapons - the INF Treaty of 1987 and the PNI's of 1991/92 – were decided by Republican U.S. Presidents, who did not see NATO consensus as a precondition for action. In contrast, President Obama seems to have made his options hostage to NATO solving its internal division.

These examples suggest that, probably, NATO's problem of the contradiction between *reassurance within NATO* and *confidence building with Russia* can only be resolved by combining unilateral steps (or perhaps only gestures, as a beginning) with informal forms of reciprocity and bilateral agreements. Reciprocity then should be defined as an open and flexible process with room for independent manoeuvring rather than making any move dependent on the other side. The U.S. should declare explicitly that 'extended deterrence' in NATO no longer requires TNW deployments on European territory. It should ask the question why some allies believe in the guarantee provided by U.S. TNW in Europe if they do not believe in the guarantee provided by U.S. strategic weapons, which are far more likely to be used first. It should make clear what it wants.<sup>45</sup>

Probably, in internal discussions the U.S. is already clear in reassuring reluctant allies about its continued guarantee. This is certainly suggested in the recent speech by former U.S. Ambassador at NATO, Ivo Daalder.<sup>46</sup> At the same time, more European allies should show political will and publicly state that, more than two decades after the end of the Cold War, nuclear postures of the past must be changed. The 1991/1992 PNI's could serve as an example.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> Recently, German Ambassador Rolf Nickel has raised the possibility of unilateral steps, see <http://deepcuts.org/sites/default/files/news/Speech%20by%20Ambassador%20Nickel.pdf>.

<sup>44</sup> This argument has been brought forward by several experts of nuclear arms policy. For instance, see <http://www.thebulletin.org/2011/januaryfebruary/us-tactical-nuclear-weapons-europe-2011>.

<sup>45</sup> On 19 June 2013, the same day of Obama's disappointing speech in Berlin, a new U.S report to Congress on its nuclear employment strategy just announced that the U.S. will retain TNW in Europe until NATO has agreed about change. Effectively, this means that the U.S. makes its own policy dependent of the view of just a few allies, see [http://www.defense.gov/pubs/reporttoCongressonUSNuclearEmploymentStrategy\\_Section491.pdf](http://www.defense.gov/pubs/reporttoCongressonUSNuclearEmploymentStrategy_Section491.pdf).

<sup>46</sup> Another quote from this speech, see footnote 15: "We just completed this month, this week, last week the first major article V live exercise the alliance has conducted in the last 10 years. Many of the countries that participated in that exercise had never participated in an article V exercise and we just completed that. Those are the kinds of steps that really matter for collective defense. Far more than how many nuclear weapons you may have in what country. Particularly when the cost of modernizing those nuclear weapons runs into 10 plus billion."

<sup>47</sup> The April 2011 'Non-paper', signed by 10 allies, twice refers to the PNI's. It is also interesting to note that in the Council Decision (previously called Common Position) presented by the European Union (which includes most European NATO members, also France) to the 2010 NPT Review Conference, the U.S. and Russia were encouraged 'to further develop the unilateral 1991/92 Presidential initiatives.' See <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2010:090:0008:0014:EN:PDF>.

This discussion in NATO should be open and transparent. NATO member states in favour of withdrawal should not shy away from formulating their own policy goals. They should follow the example of Germany in 2009. Why are they less vocal than their opponents? By continuing to declare consensus sacred, NATO will continue its Cold War nuclear posture as long as this is desired by only a few members. B61 modernisation may become unavoidable, - for the sake of negotiations in which Russia shows no interest. Why should NATO members be kept hostage in this way by a few of their own partners?<sup>48</sup> Why are U.S. officials not saying loud and clear that this contradicts Obama's Prague agenda? Why are the TNW issue and the concept of 'reciprocity' still blocking a serious discussion on Europe's future security structures, as is often advocated by German diplomats?<sup>49</sup> Why is Russia enabled to just lean back and watch NATO's inability to solve its own problems?

### **13. Conclusions and recommendations for the Dutch section of Pugwash**

Summing up: NATO continues to be divided about the ca. 180 U.S. TNW hosted by five non-nuclear weapons states in Europe. Russia is not showing interest in changing its own Cold War posture as to its TNW. The U.S. has failed to give priority to the issue. In the relation between the U.S. and Russia President Obama's 'reset' seems stalled. NATO member states have either opposed or done little to support Germany's position in 2009. Allies supporting withdrawal could have sent stronger signals to Washington. Instead, they have adjusted their positions for the sake of NATO consensus and made any change dependent on Russian consent, in the name of consensus about a 'reciprocity' that remains largely undefined. If nothing happens, even modernization of the B61 bombs may become unavoidable. As a result of the stalemate, future European security structures are not addressed.

In this situation, there is space for analysis by experts and NGO's. The main differences should be further analysed. Proposals could be made for small steps that would be possible, once the political climate becomes more favourable again. The intellectual dilemmas in combining *reassurance within NATO* and *confidence building with Russia* is a major challenge to be addressed.<sup>50</sup>

Pugwash would be just one of many non-state actors, but through its own international network it could help preparing the ground for change. Possible actions include:

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<sup>48</sup> Quite recently, on 24 October 2013, the Dutch government published its new policy paper on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Foreign minister Frans Timmermans, in stark contrast with his earlier positions as a Member of Parliament, made any change in NATO's posture dependent a) on progress in U.S.-Russia talks, and b) on agreement within NATO about proposals to be made to Moscow, admitting that such agreement even does not yet exist on transparency proposals, with the result that NATO cannot yet discuss these issues with Russia. For Timmermans' remarkable replies on 25 October 2013 to Parliamentary questions about the (absence of a) say by the allies in U.S. decisions on the modernization of the B61, see this comment by the present author: <http://www.nonukes.nl/en/news/dutch-foreign-minister-timmermans-nato-allies-have-no-say-in-b61-modernization> .

<sup>49</sup> Often in NATO's history, (West)Germany has played the role of advocating détente and new structures in Europe. In recent years, it has consistently linked the TNW issue to the need for new security structures, while at the same time being the most explicit advocate of withdrawing TNW. Rather than taking up the challenge, NATO has locked up Germany in the 'reciprocity' approach. However, see also footnote 42.

<sup>50</sup> In her remarks in February 2013 to the seminar in Warsaw mentioned in footnote 23, Rose Gottemoeller also invited experts outside government to discuss the issues.

- a) Intellectual discussions by email with Pugwash members in NATO countries about the merits of the confidence-building measures as proposed in the 'Non-Paper' (see par. 8 and 9).
- b) Idem with Pugwash members in the Russian Federation, inviting suggestions for how to apply a combination of 'unilateral' and 'reciprocal' steps (both informal and agreed) to the issue of TNW in Europe comparable to the PNI's in 1991/92.
- c) A seminar with Pugwash members from the Russian Federation, the U.S. and NATO hosting countries, perhaps organized together with the Dutch peace organisation IKV Pax Christi.

More suggestions are welcome. So are comments!

*Mid-November 2013*

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**ANNEX: ASSUMPTIONS AS TO THE EFFECTS OF ENDING NATO'S NUCLEAR SHARING**

Withdrawal of NATO's TNW and ending nuclear sharing would not have much influence on the policies of Pakistan, Iran, North Korea, Israel, et cetera. However, such a step by NATO would strengthen the NPT regime in several respects:

- a) It would be a political signal showing the reduced need for nuclear weapons in security strategies and thereby give substance to the NPT pledge (2010) to reduce the role of nuclear weapons in security strategies.
- b) It would end all doubts about U.S. and NATO member states' compliance with art. I and II of the NPT, which prohibit any transfer of nuclear weapons to non-nuclear weapon states.
- c) It would help setting a standard that prohibits deploying nuclear weapons in non-nuclear weapons states.<sup>51</sup>
- d) It would contribute to the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons, as the number of countries with nuclear weapons on their territory would go down from the current 14 to 9.
- e) It would show that NATO is serious in committing itself to creating the conditions for a world without nuclear weapons.<sup>52</sup>
- f) It would increase pressure on the Russian Federation to take measures itself.

Moreover,

- a) It could contribute the a new 'reset' of the relations with Russia.
- b) It would address safety concerns about nuclear weapons in Europe now stored on 6 locations in 5 countries.

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<sup>51</sup> Some experts believe that Pakistan deploying nuclear weapons in an Arab country is not unthinkable. For a recent article about Saudi Arabia, see <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-24823846>.

<sup>52</sup> See, among other documents, par. 24 of the DDP. In its documents, NATO also states that, as long as nuclear weapons exist, it will remain a nuclear alliance. However, being a nuclear alliance does not necessarily include TNW in Europe, as the ultimate guarantee will remain U.S. 'strategic' forces.

- c) It would be a *political* departure from NATO's Cold War posture, rather than the result of budget pressures and the costs of replacing aging aircraft for nuclear missions (DCA, dual-capable aircraft) and modernizing B61 bombs.
- d) It would save money (which is an argument for its own sake as well).
- e) It would finally enable a discussion about Europe's future security structures rather than about one particular weapons system.