

# THE HISTORIC AMERICAN ALLIANCE WITH EUROPE

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## HEARING BEFORE THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON EUROPE, EURASIA, ENERGY, AND THE ENVIRONMENT OF THE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES ONE HUNDRED SIXTEENTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

MARCH 26, 2019

**Serial No. 116-20**

Printed for the use of the Committee on Foreign Affairs



Available: <http://www.foreignaffairs.house.gov/>, <http://docs.house.gov/>,  
or <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/>

U.S. GOVERNMENT PUBLISHING OFFICE

35-613PDF

WASHINGTON : 2019

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## **THE HISTORIC AMERICAN ALLIANCE WITH EUROPE**

**TUESDAY, MARCH 26, 2019**

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON EUROPE, EURASIA, ENERGY, AND THE  
ENVIRONMENT,  
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,  
*Washington, DC*

The subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 2:45 p.m., in Room 2172, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. William Keating (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

Mr. KEATING [presiding]. The hearing will come to order.

The committee is meeting today to hear testimony on an historic American alliance with Europe.

Without objection, all the members will have 5 days to submit statements, questions, extraneous materials for the record, subject to the length limitation in the rules.

Mr. KEATING. I will now make a brief opening statement, and then, we will proceed to the hearing.

I just want to thank the witnesses and apologize for the fact we have these nasty things called roll calls, and they occur from time to time. But I think the interruptions are over, I hope.

I would like to welcome Ranking Member Kinzinger who is here with us, as well as Representative Cicilline, and we may be joined by other members as their interrupted schedules allow.

A generation ago, the ties the United States had with European nations were valued. They were hard-earned. They were part of the American DNA, our history, our personal heritage.

Like so many of us, my grandparents were Europeans who became Americans. In times of happiness, we celebrate. We renew this relationship with uniquely Americanized holidays like the recently observed St. Patrick's Day, something very special to me; Columbus Day; our own version of Bastille Day. In times that are more poignant, we observe shared sacrifices and loss, Memorial Day, Veterans Day, and personal loss. My own uncle was killed defending democracy on French soil.

Perhaps it is the fact that this relationship was so ingrained that we saw no need to share this with following generations. However, in conversations I have had with our counterparts on both sides of the Atlantic, they reflect the need to remember and, more importantly, to renew this relationship.

One cannot help but be profoundly moved visiting the monuments at Normandy to see, even to this day, homes in the area displaying both French and American flags. The alliances we forged with our European partners during and after World War II were

a testament to the brutally hard-learned lessons that we cannot escape what is going on in the rest of the world. Instead, we learned that the best way to ensure our security at home is to promote peace and stability abroad.

As a result, America committed to supporting a Europe that is whole, free, and at peace, and to working closely with our Western allies to define the rules and institutions that would hold nations accountable for respecting shared values and norms. Through these commitments, we would work to ensure that future generations would never witness the same terror and carnage of their forebearers.

The United States invested heavily in economic terms such as through the Marshall Plan, but also in military and leadership terms, to make sure these institutions would hold. And to this day, we continue to benefit tremendously as a result.

The Western alliance set the rules for the trade of goods and services, giving American businesses access to more predictable and profitable opportunities around the world. In fact, one-fifth of our trade today is with Europe.

We also achieved a level of collective military strength that has since World War II, deterred another major attack on the U.S. by a foreign government. Even when we were attacked on 9/11, our allies came to our defense and triggered NATO's Article 5. Since then, of the more than 3,500 men and women serving in coalition forces in Afghanistan, nearly one-third were not Americans.

By coming together to forge institutions and rules grounded in our shared values of freedom, democracy, rule of law, and the entrepreneurial spirit, we have worked together to ensure that we could live in relative peace, security, and prosperity for nearly a century now.

We are here today because we find ourselves again in uncertain times, facing grave threats to our security, and we cannot afford to forget why we committed to our alliance with Europe. Today, there are renewed threats from nuclear weapons, not only in Asia, from North Korea, but in Europe from Russia, and possibly, also, from Iran, if they, too, decide to pull out of the nuclear deal. The threat from terrorism is also not over.

And while we can agree or disagree over the causes, climate is already affecting our military readiness, and there are estimates that effects from climate change could cost our economy 10 percent of GDP by the end of the century.

Further, Putin has aggressively pursued hybrid warfare and tactics designed to undermine the very pillars of our security and our democracy and democratic alliances. And China has embarked on a strategy to reshape the global economy to its benefit at our expense.

Automation and new technologies are also rapidly changing. They are changing our work force and our economy, and what it means to go to school and get a job, so the next generation is better off than their parents were.

We can try to face all these threats and challenges alone. However, there has not been a single instance in U.S. history where we successfully did it alone. Rather, history teaches us that we are

stronger when our allies are stronger and we are working in lock-step together against common threats and adversaries.

Any actions or rhetoric, therefore, that weakens our allies and our alliances with them, is against our national security interest. We must continue to strengthen our capabilities and cement ever-closer ties with our European partners, and, in turn, embrace the same from each other and every one of them.

The greatest difference-maker we have—and when I say “we,” I mean both the United States and Europe—the greatest difference-maker we have versus China or Russia is that we have this historically unprecedented coalition, and they do not. Our European friends and partners, our NATO and non-NATO allies, the EU, and our joint multilateral institutions have been synonymous with the American prosperity and security, and that continues unchanged today.

So, I would like to thank our witnesses for joining us for this important discussion during our very first hearing this year of this subcommittee.

And I will turn now to the ranking member, Mr. Kinzinger, for his opening statement.

Mr. KINZINGER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you all for being here on the first hearing for this subcommittee. I could not think of a better topic to discuss. This is an issue that unites us all, and I think that is important to know.

Since the end of the Second World War, America and European resolve has formed the cornerstone of national security policy for the post-war order. Through our partnership with European nations, we have successfully defeated communism, halted genocide in the Balkans, countered threats from terrorism, defended human rights around the world, and maintained cohesion with our like-minded democratic partners.

While we no longer face the same existential threat posed by the Soviet Union, Western resolve and stability has helped to maintain peace in a world drowning with strawmen and in chaos. One of my growing concerns is our European allies continue to be reliant on oil and gas from Russian strawman Vladimir Putin who is using energy security to weaken our alliance.

That is why I introduced, with Chairman Keating, H.R. 1616, the European Energy Security and Diversification Act, which last night passed the House with overwhelming bipartisan support. We know that the Russians are using energy as a weapon against our allies, and this bill reassures Europe and shows America’s willingness to help our transatlantic partners in their energy growth.

Sometimes it seems like our enthusiasm, however, that we have in the United States for NATO is not always matched in Europe. I think Europe needs to step up in many cases, whether it is on their military spending, whether it is on a lean-forward attitude, or understanding, in fact, that they are on the front lines and, frankly, have the most to lose of any hostilities between Russia or any hostilities with terror or, frankly, the new cold war with China that is occurring even in Eastern Europe. Sometimes Europe comes across as tired. And I think if anybody needs to not be, it is Europe because they are on the front lines of this.

There are other challenges that we still have to address. There is a genocide in Syria that, despite a brief cessation on hostilities, I think is going to continue to get worse. We have the issue with Huawei and China, and we have allies that sometimes go to the lowest bidder, but put themselves in great harm and great possibility of harm by buying Chinese technology. And we have a new cold war with China, as I mentioned.

And I think in many cases in the United States we have politicized what we spend on the military and made it a partisan issue, when, in fact, our underinvestment in the military is the reason that we now have parity, which we should never have. We have parity with some of our near-peer competitors like China and Russia.

So, all these are very important. These are a lot of issues that unite us. But I look forward to asking the questions of our panel today.

With that, I will give back 2 minutes and 20 seconds.

Mr. KEATING. Well, I would like to thank the ranking member. That is quite generous and unusual in Congress to give back that time. And I have just cut into half of it by thanking him.

[Laughter.]

Our other members have the opportunity, if they so desire, to give a 1-minute opening statement as well. And I would like to go to Representative Cicilline from Rhode Island.

Mr. CICILLINE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And I would like to thank you and Ranking Member Kinzinger for calling this hearing, so that we can have an opportunity to discuss one of the most important relationships in the world, the transatlantic alliance.

I would also like to thank our witnesses for being here and for their extraordinary public service.

The partnership between Europe and the United States is an enduring alliance. It is a community based on a shared set of democratic values. It is a partnership that has fostered unprecedented peace and prosperity in Europe and the United States since the end of World War II. It is an alliance to celebrate and one we must continue to adapt for the future.

As we gather today, we must be clear-eyed about the challenges to the transatlantic alliance and we must be proactive on what Congress can do to shore up this critical bulwark. In Europe itself, the strength of the alliance is being tested by Brexit, the rise of populism in Europe, alarming antisemitism, and concerning democratic backsliding in places like Hungary and Poland. Here at home, our own President poses one of the greatest challenges to transatlantic relationships.

And I want to commend Ambassador Burns and Ambassador Doug Lute for your excellent report on "NATO at 70". I ask unanimous consent that that be made part of the record.

Mr. KEATING. Without objection.

Mr. CICILLINE. Thank you.

[The information referred to follows:]



## Executive Summary

Approaching the seventieth anniversary of its founding in April 1949, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) remains the single most important contributor to security, stability and peace in Europe and North America.

NATO provides the umbrella defending Europe from conventional and nuclear attack and a secure geopolitical landscape for the world's two largest economies—the European Union and the United States. NATO members comprise the largest and strongest alliance of democratic countries in the world. They contain Russian aggression and protect over 100 million East Europeans who now live in democracy and freedom after the fall of communism.<sup>1</sup> Far from obsolete, NATO remains vital for the more than 900 million Europeans and North Americans who benefit from it every day.<sup>2</sup> It is no overstatement that if NATO did not exist today, countries on both sides of the Atlantic would need to create it in a troubled, divisive 21<sup>st</sup> century where authoritarian powers are on the rise.

The NATO allies, however, are confronting daunting and complex challenges that are testing both their purpose and unity. Based on extensive discussions with current European and North American leaders, former senior officials, academics and journalists during the past six months, this report argues that NATO needs to come to grips with ten major challenges this year. The list is long, with simultaneous challenges from within the alliance, from beyond NATO's borders and looming on the horizon. Most significant is a challenge NATO has not faced before: the absence of strong American presidential leadership. NATO's leaders need to act decisively in 2019 to meet these tests and heal the widening divisions within the Alliance before it is too late.

## Challenges from Within NATO

### Reviving American Leadership of the Alliance

NATO's single greatest challenge is the absence of strong, principled American presidential leadership for the first time in its history. President Donald Trump is regarded widely in NATO capitals as the Alliance's most urgent, and often most difficult, problem. NATO leaders, for example, considered not holding a 2019 summit to mark the seventieth anniversary this spring as they did in decades past. They feared President Trump would blow up a meeting in controversy as he has done each time he has met with NATO leaders during the past two years. Wary of his past behavior, NATO plans a scaled down leaders meeting for December 2019.

President Trump's open ambivalence about NATO's value to the U.S., his public questioning of America's Article 5 commitment to its allies, persistent criticism of Europe's democratic leaders and embrace of its anti-democratic members and continued weakness in failing to confront NATO's primary adversary President Vladimir Putin of Russia, have hurttled the Alliance into its most worrisome crisis in memory.<sup>3</sup>

There is no reason to believe President Trump's attitude will change for the better during the next two years. He believes NATO allies are taking advantage of the U.S.<sup>4</sup> These are the same allies and partners who came to America's defense on 9/11, suffered more than 1,000 battlefield deaths alongside American soldiers in Afghanistan,<sup>5</sup> are fighting with the U.S. now against the Islamic State and shoulder the main burden sustaining a fragile peace in the Balkans, in both Kosovo and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

President Trump is the first U.S. president to view the European Union as an economic competitor rather than a vital partner of both the U.S. and NATO. His troubling anti-NATO and anti-Europe bias has caused European governments to question the credibility of the U.S. as the leader of the West for the first time since the Second World War.<sup>6</sup> The European public confidence in American leadership is also at historically low depths.<sup>7</sup> Every American president before Trump has encouraged the strength and

unity of Europe as a core interest of the U.S. Trump may well cause even greater damage to the Alliance while he remains in office.

For this reason, Republicans and Democrats in Congress must act together as a blocking force against President Trump's dangerous policies. Congress, on a bipartisan basis, should reaffirm the U.S. commitment to the Article 5 defense clause in the NATO Treaty. Congress should pass legislation this year requiring Congressional approval should President Trump attempt to alter U.S. treaty commitments to NATO allies or to have the U.S. leave the Alliance altogether.<sup>8</sup> Congress should continue to fund the "European Deterrence Initiative" to bolster U.S. military strength in Europe that is the primary deterrent against Russian adventurism.

### **Restoring European Defense Strength**

NATO's European members and Canada pose their own challenge to the Alliance—the weakness of their collective defense spending for NATO's common defense. President Trump has been right to push allies to spend more on defense. He has the support of the U.S. Congress and many Americans in doing so. It is simply unfair that only five of the twenty-nine allies are currently spending at least 2 percent of their Gross Domestic Product (GDP) on their military budgets, while the U.S. is spending 3.5 percent and shouldering much of the defense burden.<sup>9</sup>

Germany, the largest and wealthiest of the European allies, has a major shortfall as it is currently spending only 1.24 percent of its budget on defense. Its coalition government has not summoned the strength and determination to convince the Bundestag and the German public to reach the minimum 2 percent level soon. Germany is thus abdicating this most basic obligation as a member of NATO. Italy, Canada, Spain, the Netherlands and other allies are also spending well below the agreed 2 percent level.<sup>10</sup>

Having made his point, President Trump should also acknowledge that aggregate NATO defense spending trends are actually heading in the right direction, despite insufficient spending by some allies. NATO allies have produced four consecutive years of real growth for a

collective increase in spending of \$87 billion, particularly in reaction to Putin's annexation of Crimea in 2014 and President Trump's public pressure since 2017.<sup>11</sup> A majority of NATO members plan to reach the 2 percent level by the agreed target date of 2024. More than half will spend 20 percent of their defense budgets on new equipment and research and development.<sup>12</sup> This new spending is critical to produce added NATO defense capabilities, including intelligence-surveillance-reconnaissance, cyber and digital technologies.

The challenge for President Trump on NATO defense spending is to pivot from chief critic to chief cheerleader. His administration should also support new European Union efforts to strengthen the EU's own defense capacity as long as it complements, and not duplicates, NATO's existing capabilities and programs.

### **Upholding NATO's Democratic Values**

NATO is struggling to confront a potentially cancerous threat from within. Three allied governments—Poland, Hungary and Turkey—have undermined their own democracies in varying degrees by suppressing free speech and a free press and limiting the independence of the courts.<sup>13</sup> As NATO is, first and foremost, an alliance of democracies, the actions of these governments threaten the core values—democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law—to which each ally is committed in the North Atlantic Treaty.

Nearly every current and former NATO official with whom we talked for this report worried that a recommendation for NATO to discipline these anti-democratic governments would be highly problematic and divisive. Nonetheless, we believe NATO must find a way to shine a light on these recalcitrant allies. For example, NATO could review annually each ally's democratic practices, perhaps in a report prepared by a high-level, outside group. Allies that violate basic democratic standards could be suspended from NATO military exercises or denied access to NATO training and common infrastructure funding.

More than one European mentioned to us the ironic fact that the U.S. itself may be chastised for a deterioration of its own democratic standards in

such a process. Nevertheless, ignoring this challenge of democratic principles will undermine the core convictions that brought NATO together seventy years ago.

### **Streamlining NATO Decision-Making**

NATO allies have always reached critical decisions by consensus. This continues to make sense for all allies to agree on how NATO should act on major issues. But, it is time for the Alliance to empower the Secretary General on the administrative and resource issues that impede focusing on more significant challenges. The Secretary General must have the operational power to move an often-unwieldy Alliance forward in the way it plans and operates on a daily basis. Also important is improving decision-making in crisis scenarios.

## **Challenges from Beyond NATO's Borders**

### **Containing Putin's Russia**

NATO faces a challenge to deter further Russian aggression in Eastern Europe. Russian President Vladimir Putin is destabilizing NATO partners Ukraine and Georgia by the continued occupation of their territories. He also seeks to weaken the three Baltic allies from within.<sup>14</sup> And Russian cyber attacks, political subversion and aggressive social media campaigns pose a threat to all the NATO democracies and their electoral processes.

NATO allies thus need to take much stronger measures against Moscow than they have to date by:

- Reaffirming economic sanctions on Russia will remain in place for as long as it occupies Ukrainian territory;
- Sustaining indefinitely current back-to-back NATO rotational troop deployments to Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland, while adding enablers and improving readiness of reinforcements;

- Addressing vulnerabilities in the area of hybrid warfare urgently, the most likely form of Russian aggression against the Alliance;
- Preparing cyber offensive options to deter Russia from further cyber attacks.

At the same time, it makes sense for NATO leaders to maintain continuing contacts with the Kremlin on the many issues that divide NATO allies and Russia: Russia's violation of Ukraine's sovereign territory, dangerous Russian air and sea maneuvers in the Baltic and Black Sea regions, the Russian Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF) violation, Afghanistan and measures to prevent miscalculation that could lead to conflict that all wish to avoid.

Containing Russian power will be a generational challenge until Putin's Soviet-trained leadership circle leaves power during the next decade, perhaps beyond. There is no more important external challenge for NATO.

### **Ending the Afghan War**

NATO's largest and longest combat mission in Afghanistan is at a critical juncture. The war with the Taliban is at a stalemate. Afghan civilian and military casualties are at an all-time high.<sup>15</sup> Few believe the war can be won outright. President Trump appears determined to have the U.S. depart quickly sometime in 2019 after nearly 18 years of combat. President Trump and his advisors should proceed carefully, in close coordination with the Afghan government, to avoid a precipitous U.S. departure that would jeopardize American interests and risk further instability in Afghanistan.

The Trump administration is right to engage directly with the Taliban to explore a political process to end the war. A durable, sustainable settlement ultimately must be made among Afghans, including the elected Afghan government and the Taliban. The interests and views of Afghanistan's neighbors and the NATO allies with troops on the ground must be considered as well. The U.S. should proceed slowly and carefully, conditioning troop withdrawals on the Taliban's meeting agreed security and political benchmarks beginning with a ceasefire and including agreeing to engage

with the Afghan government. NATO allies should adhere to the “in together, out together” principle, avoiding unilateral national withdrawals.

### **Refocusing NATO Partnerships**

NATO maintains a partnership with forty-one countries outside the Alliance from Mauritania in West Africa to Japan.<sup>16</sup> Many states have been invaluable members of coalitions in Afghanistan, Iraq, the Balkans and in the fight against the Islamic State. Most important, NATO should strengthen its partnership with the European Union. Partnerships with the Gulf Cooperation Council, the African Union and the Arab League could promote stability along NATO's periphery.

### **Maintaining an Open Door to Future Members**

Following a historic two-decade expansion of the NATO Alliance with thirteen new members, NATO would be well advised to consolidate that expansion once North Macedonia joins the Alliance in the coming months. Over the next decade or two, however, NATO should keep the door open for any European democracy that meets the strict qualifications for membership. Georgia and Ukraine may not meet the conditions for years to come, but it is in NATO's interest to hold open the possibility of membership in the long term. No country outside the Alliance, most especially Russia, can have a veto over who NATO accepts as it pursues its goal of providing for a free and peaceful European continent.

## Challenges on the Horizon

### Winning the Technology Battle in the Digital Age

NATO faces yet another critical challenge in adapting quickly to a rapidly changing, global, military technology landscape. Its often-byzantine defense planning processes date to the Cold War, long before the extraordinary, current advances in military arms powered by artificial intelligence, cyber, robotics, quantum computing and biotechnology—perhaps the most decisive change in military technology since the start of the nuclear age. NATO allies, led by the United States, must now commit a far greater share of their military budgets to acquiring these new military technologies, lest China and Russia gain a decisive advantage in the decade ahead.

### Competing with China

While China does not pose a direct military threat to most NATO allies, it is emerging as a global competitor politically, economically and in seeking dominance in digital military technologies. Europe, the United States and Canada need to adopt a more cohesive approach to China. Beijing is emerging as the strongest strategic competitor of both North America and Europe in this century. The European allies need to focus more intently on the challenge from Chinese economic and technological power and industrial espionage. NATO allies should thus tighten restrictions on Chinese investments in key technology sectors on both sides of the Atlantic. And NATO should strengthen its military partnerships with Japan, South Korea, Australia, New Zealand and others.

China will be the main geo-strategic competitor of the United States in the decades ahead. It is in the interest of NATO allies to take on the defense burden in the trans-Atlantic region more equitably, to enable the U.S. to focus increasingly on the competition with China. In this strategic sense, NATO's military strength and unity could be a potentially decisive factor in the long-term competition ahead in the Indo-Pacific. The goal is to live and work with China where possible, but to compete to maintain the primacy of the free, democratic countries in both Europe and the Indo-Pacific.



Mr. CICILLINE. It is a thoughtful analysis of the current state of the alliance and roadmap for its future. The report warns, and I quote, "President Donald Trump is regarded widely in NATO capitals as the alliance's most urgent and often most difficult problem." End quote.

This is an extraordinary statement. NATO, an alliance founded by the United States and our closest allies in great part to defend the United States, now sees the President of the United States as a threat. Incredible.

Today, I want to send a clear message to our European allies. The United States is committed to our partnerships with Europe, and Congress will continue to support the transatlantic alliance, as we stand together to face new threats to democracy, peace, and global stability.

And I thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I yield back.

Mr. KEATING. Thank you, Representative.

Now no one else wants to have any opening statement. So, I would like to introduce our witnesses and thank them for their presence here today.

Ambassador Nicholas Burns is the Roy and Barbara Goodman Family Professor of the Practice of Diplomacy and International Relations at the Harvard Kennedy School of Government. During his distinguished career as a member of the Foreign Service, Ambassador Burns served as Undersecretary for Political Affairs at the Department of State, as well as U.S. Ambassador to NATO. Not unimportantly, he resides in Massachusetts and spends a great deal of time in the wonderful community of Westport.

Ms. Christine Wormuth is the Director of the RAND International Security and Defense Policy Center. She previously served as Undersecretary of Defense for Policy at the Department of Defense, and prior to that, as Deputy Undersecretary of Defense for Strategy, Plans, and Forces; Special Assistant to the President; Senior Director for Defense at the National Security Council, and Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Homeland Defense.

Dr. Hal Brands is the Henry A. Kissinger Distinguished Professor of Global Affairs at the Johns Hopkins School for Advanced International Studies, and a Senior Fellow at the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments. He previously served as Special Assistant to the Secretary of Defense for Strategic Planning, and as a leader writer for the Commission on the National Defense Strategy for the United States.

Finally, Ms. Heather Conley is a Senior Vice President for Europe, Eurasia, and the Arctic, and Director of the Europe Program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies. Previously, Ms. Conley served as Deputy Assistant Secretary at the Department of State's Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs.

We appreciate all of you for being here today and look forward to the testimony.

Please limit, although we are not going to hold a clock over your head, testimony to the vicinity of 5 minutes.

And without objection, any of your written statements will be made part of the record.

I will start with Ambassador Burns for his statement.

**STATEMENT OF NICHOLAS BURNS, ROY AND BARBARA GOODMAN FAMILY PROFESSOR OF THE PRACTICE OF DIPLOMACY AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS, JOHN F. KENNEDY SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT, HARVARD UNIVERSITY**

Mr. BURNS. Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Kinzinger, thank you very much for the pleasure of being here. And, Mr. Chairman, as you said, I am happy to be here as one of your constituents from Westport, Massachusetts.

I have submitted my testimony for the record. I just have three points in this short presentation.

First, thank you for doing this. Thank you for focusing on what does unite us, as the ranking member said. We believe in NATO and we believe in the European Union. And if you think about it, they are the cornerstones of the democratic West. They have become that, the U.S. relationship with the European Union on economics and on political affairs, and on climate change, and our NATO alliance.

NATO prevailed in the cold war. And when communism collapsed, in the words of President George H.W. Bush, who was a great transatlanticist, we found a Europe “whole, free and at peace”. And that was a tremendous accomplishment for the United States. And the U.S. and the EU and Canada, correspondingly, created unparalleled prosperity on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean.

We learned a lot of lessons over the last 70 years. NATO’s anniversary, of course, is next Thursday. April 4th of next week will be the 70th anniversary of the creation of the alliance. We learned that engagement with the world, and our leadership in it, strengthens the United States.

And the major insight that the founders had, Truman and Eisenhower, Acheson and Dulles, Republicans and Democrats, was that, to defend the United States at home, we have to be deployed overseas. We have to be in Europe in alliance with the Europeans, and that is how we have kept the peace and great power relationships since the Second World War. That is my first point.

My second point is that, much I think to everyone’s regret, certainly mine, much of what we have achieved may be at risk, as President Trump has belittled and, in my view, weakened NATO, and he has branded the European Union as a foe of the United States, the first President to do that.

Congressman Cicilline mentioned the report that Ambassador Doug Lute and I have just authored on “NATO at 70,” which we term “an alliance in crisis”. We say there that NATO’s largest problem is that, for the first time in its history, it lacks a strong, principled voice in the White House, in the American Presidency. We have always had Presidents, Republican and Democratic, who believe in NATO. And right now, we have a President who has failed to commit clearly and unequivocally that he will back up an Article 5 scenario on attack, a threat of attack, against one of our allies.

He has also failed to lead the alliance in responding to President Putin’s interference in the American election in 2016 and the Dutch, French, and German elections of 2017. And I think most importantly, he has become a constant critique of the small “d” democratic leaders, Angela Merkel, Emmanuel Macron, Theresa May in

Europe, while he has embraced some of the anti-democratic populist leaders like Viktor Orban in Hungary.

We hope, I certainly hope, that Congress can right the balance. You did at the Munich Security Conference on a bipartisan basis, and there are bills in Congress that would reaffirm our Article 5 commitment, which I certainly believe Congress should act upon.

Third and finally, this is not just yesterday's story. There was an op-ed in The Wall Street Journal this morning essentially saying NATO was a great story, but it is yesterday's story. This is about our future, because we cannot preserve a democratic, united, peaceful Europe without NATO in it. We are not going to have partners to fight in the anti-ISIS coalition, which has been very successful under both President Trump and President Obama's leadership, without Europe. They are fighting with us in the Horn of Africa. They are fighting with us, as you know, in West Africa. They are important to us on climate change as a potential partner as we re-enter—I hope we will—the climate change agreements in the future. They are important to us on Iran.

And finally, I would say, we are going to fight two big battles with the authoritarian powers in the years ahead. One is the battle of ideas. The Russians and Chinese believe that their big idea, central planning, one political party, denial of the human and civil rights of a population, that that is the way forward, and they are saying that. That is Xi Jinping and Putin's message. We need to defend our Western catalyst, rule-of-law societies. The United States and Europe have to be in that together. That is a first big battle.

The second is the battle for technological predominance in our military with the Chinese. And that maybe is the most important for our future, that we retain technological military superiority. It is at risk. We need Europe and our East Asian allies to compete with the Chinese. So, we are tomorrow's alliance, not just yesterday's alliance.

Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Burns follows:]

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The Historic Alliance between the United States and Europe  
 Testimony to the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Europe, Eurasia, Energy and the  
 Environment  
 Ambassador (ret.) Nicholas Burns  
 March 26, 2019

Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member Kinzinger, thank you for the opportunity to testify today on our vital alliance with Europe.

Maintaining U.S. leadership in the NATO Alliance and sustaining the critical relationship between the U.S. and the European Union will continue to be among the most vital strategic aims of the United States in the decade ahead. Both of our political parties and the great majority of Americans in recent public opinion polls support a continuation of American leadership in NATO. We should also continue to view the over 500 million people who live in the European Union as our allies, friends and economic partners.

In my own Foreign Service career as U.S. Ambassador to NATO, Ambassador to Greece and Under Secretary of State, I saw time and again how the European allies and Canada are critical to America's security in a dangerous world. That remains true today as it will surely be in the future.

*Our Common History*

During the seventy-four years since the Allied victory in the Second World War, no part of the world has been more important to the security and prosperity of the United States than Europe.

America's post-war leaders—Truman and Eisenhower, Marshall, Acheson, Dulles and others—understood that our experiences in the First and Second World Wars and the advent of the Cold War compelled us to think in new ways about how to defend America in a dangerous world.

They resolved that the United States could not, once again, retreat into isolation after the supreme effort we had made to defeat the fascist powers. We would have to lead, on a permanent basis, as the strongest economic, political and military power in the world. In order to do so, their great insight was that the U.S. could no longer defend its own borders without deploying American land, naval and air forces permanently in Europe well beyond the U.S. itself. This was a decision based on our own self-interest. It permitted us to defend our security and that of our allies in Europe and Canada who shared our most important values—democracy, human and religious rights, the rule of law, and a belief in free markets.

This strategy led the U.S. to take two historic decisions, on a bipartisan basis, in the years after World War Two.

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The first was to create the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) here in Washington seventy years ago next week in April 1949. For the first time in its history, the U.S. committed to help defend the security of allied countries on a permanent basis.

The second was to encourage the European countries, struggling to recover from war, to integrate their economies and political future in a new supranational effort that led from the Coal and Steel Community of the late 1940s to the Treaty of Rome in 1957, the Common Market, the Maastricht Agreement and the creation of the European Union we know and admire today.

Every American President from Truman and Eisenhower to George W. Bush and Barack Obama shared the common strategic view that the success and freedom of Europe was critical to our values, interests and success in the world.

In creating and leading NATO over the last seven decades, American leaders accepted the new reality that the U.S. would be stronger and more secure in alliance with others. In supporting European integration, the U.S. helped France and Germany to achieve a historic and permanent reconciliation. Together, NATO and the European Union became the twin standard bearers of the free world we worked to sustain.

Through the decades, the U.S., Canada and Europe helped to create other important multilateral institutions such as the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), The General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and many others that helped to form a network for democracy, human rights, free trade and free markets.

*A Europe Whole, Free and at Peace*

This historic American policy succeeded even beyond the hopes of its founders. NATO deterred a Soviet attack on Western Europe during more than four decades of the Cold War. The close U.S. economic and trade relationship with Europe and Canada produced unprecedented economic growth and prosperity on both sides of the Atlantic. The Cold War ended with the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe and with it the Warsaw Pact and the Soviet Union itself. More than 100 million East Europeans were freed from behind the Iron Curtain.

This helped to create, in the words of President George H.W. Bush, a Europe “whole, free and at peace”. The resulting transatlantic community is now the largest democratic group of countries in the world—nearly 900 million people living in free societies, protected by the rule of law and by the most powerful military alliance in history.

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The creation of this community is one of the great achievements of American foreign policy in our history. And it remains of incalculable benefit to the U.S.

*The Future of American Policy toward Europe*

As we consider our current and future strategy towards Europe, we should maintain and modernize this successful bipartisan policy of the last seven decades.

One of our central aims should be to lead and continue to build a strong NATO. In a recent Harvard University report entitled "NATO at 70: An Alliance in Crisis", Ambassador Doug Lute and I (both of us are former American Ambassadors to NATO), argued that NATO remains absolutely vital for America's most important strategic interests.

NATO is the core organization that keeps Europeans and North Americans free and secure from conventional and nuclear threats. It deters Russian President Vladimir Putin from invading or seeking to destabilize our NATO allies in Eastern Europe.

The NATO allies also share the burden with us of our military deployments outside of Europe. Many of the NATO allies are serving with our forces today in the successful anti-ISIS coalition in northern Syria, in counter terrorist efforts in the Horn of Africa and in West Africa. They have assisted the U.S. in Iraq. The European allies have taken over complete responsibility for the peacekeeping forces in Bosnia and the majority of the effort in Kosovo. As you know, all of the NATO allies have deployed with us to Afghanistan since 2003. Many are still there with us today.

I witnessed the value of NATO on 9/11 as U.S. Ambassador to the Alliance. The Ambassadors of Canada and the European allies came to me that afternoon at NATO Headquarters outside of Brussels to pledge to help defend us. Together, we invoked the Article 5 Mutual Defense Clause of the NATO Treaty for the first and only time the day after those horrible attacks.

Our allies acted to defend us because they understood their security was linked directly with our own. Their decision to fight with us was also based on the knowledge that we are all stronger in alliance than on our own. And they believed in our leadership.

Since going into Afghanistan with us, the NATO allies and partners have suffered more than 1000 combat deaths. I have often reflected on this simple but central lesson from 9/11—it is good for the United States to have such friends in the world who share our values and who stand with us when times are toughest.

It would be a mistake, however, to view NATO solely through the prism of our history. NATO is also critical for our future. Because our armed forces have permanent access to a labyrinth of NATO

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ground, air and naval bases throughout Europe, the U.S. is a continent closer to the threats we face in South Asia, the Middle East and Africa.

NATO is also the most significant power differential between the U.S. and our greatest adversary in Europe—the Russian Federation. We can call on twenty-eight other countries to share the strategic burden and the financial cost of our military operations. We have allies who see the world the way we do and will act with us. Russia does not have a single such ally.

In similar fashion, the U.S. has relied on the European Union as our closest economic and political partner in the world. Our largest trade relationship is with the EU. The largest investors in the U.S. economy are the countries of the EU. We are the two largest global economies. We have been together the foremost advocates for free and fair trade in the world, for human rights and for the rule of law.

During the George W. Bush Administration, the U.S. worked closely with the EU and its member states—France, Germany and the United Kingdom—to sanction Iran and pressure it to agree to negotiations over its nuclear weapons ambitions. During the Obama Administration, the U.S. and EU helped to lead the way toward the Iran Nuclear Deal as well as the Paris Climate Change Agreement of 2015.

This is not to argue that our interests are completely symmetrical with the EU or the NATO allies. We are often competitors, as well as partners, in trade. U.S. leaders of both parties, led by President Trump during the last two years, have also long been rightly frustrated by low European defense spending, in particular by Germany, the wealthiest of all the European countries. The Trump Administration and its predecessors have also argued that Europe is excessively reliant on Russian natural gas exports.

In addition, the Administration has been right recently to urge Europe not to become reliant on Chinese companies in the race for dominance in 5G and the other digital age technologies critical for the future. Over this past weekend, unfortunately, the government of Italy joined China's Belt and Road Initiative, giving Beijing unprecedented reach into the economies and industrial infrastructure of southern Europe to add to their investments in Greece and the Balkan countries. The U.S. will need to work hard to convince other European countries from taking the same step.

There is no doubt, however, that the many positive benefits of our relationship with NATO and the European Union far outweigh such disagreements. Every President, Republican and Democrat, has understood that the U.S. is far stronger with the NATO allies than without them.

President Trump, unfortunately, has chosen to become NATO's chief critic rather than its strong and unifying leader. As a result, we are experiencing one of the most profound transatlantic disputes since the creation of NATO.

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Ambassador Lute and I stated in our recent report on NATO that the major challenge the Alliance faces in 2019 is the absence of strong, principled American Presidential leadership for the first time in its history.

President Trump has failed to commit that the U.S. would honor its Article 5 commitments to allies in a crisis. This is the bedrock commitment that all our previous Presidents have honored. In addition, he has failed to stand up to President Putin's aggression towards our 2016 elections and to Putin's attempt to destabilize the Dutch, French and German elections in 2017. It was Congress, not President Trump, which insisted the U.S. impose sanctions on Russia in 2017 for this attack on western democracies.

He has been a frequent and caustic critic of some of our closest friends in Europe—including Chancellor Angela Merkel, President Emmanuel Macron, Prime Minister Teresa May and Prime Minister Justin Trudeau—while embracing publicly some of Europe's most authoritarian leaders such as Viktor Orban in Hungary, the Turkish and Polish governments as well as anti-democratic leaders in the Italian coalition.

This jarring juxtaposition—the American President appearing to side with anti-democratic populists in Europe against the true champions of democracy and the rule of law—has done significant harm to the reputation and credibility of the U.S. in Europe.

President Trump has also characterized the European Union as a “foe” of the U.S. That statement alone turns more than seventy years of carefully constructed American policy on its head. His open animus towards the European Union and his threats of a trade war with Brussels are deeply mistaken.

The Trump Administration has spurned the partnership President Obama had created with Europe in forging the Paris Climate Change Agreement. It took the U.S. out of the Iran Nuclear Agreement that we had negotiated in strength alongside the EU, Britain, Germany and France. It is now imposing secondary sanctions on European countries that continue to trade with Iran. These steps and others have created a level of anger and frustration with the United States that I believe is unprecedented.

He is the first American President to turn away from the close security, political, trade and diplomatic ties that have made our friendship with Europe the greatest force for democracy and peace in modern history.

*Policy Challenges for the United States in 2019*

Maintaining the NATO Alliance and a close partnership with the European Union remain essential for the security and economic success of the United States. We have a number of tough challenges ahead on which we will need the support and strength of both institutions in 2019 and beyond.



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First, we will need to strengthen NATO's armored capacity in Europe to contain Russian power, particularly in Eastern Europe. In this respect, the strong support of Congress in supporting and funding the European Deterrence Initiative (EDI) to rebuild U.S. military strength in Europe has been essential.

As Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, General Joseph Dunford, told the Atlantic Council last week, it will also be essential to maintain American forces on the European continent as NATO provides the U.S. "a comparative advantage over Russia".

NATO must also be much better organized under American leadership to counter Russia's hybrid offensive against our elections and in Moscow's attempt to destabilize our internal politics.

The U.S. should continue to push the European allies and Canada to spend more on their defense by reaching the 2 percent of Gross Domestic Product level expected of all allies by 2024. The allies should assume increased responsibility for NATO missions in the decade ahead.

Second, the U.S. should support those allies—Germany, France, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and others—who are combating the threat of anti-democratic populism in Europe today. In this respect, the U.S. and the allies need to find ways to admonish and pressure those allies—Hungary, Poland and Turkey—whose governments are adopting authoritarian policies. This threatens the values that bind NATO together as an alliance of democracies.

Third, we will also need to wage a broader, global "battle of ideas" against the power and self-confidence of the major authoritarian powers, Russia and China. They are seeking to delegitimize democracy, free elections and human rights in favor of their authoritarian model. This contest of ideas is being waged within Europe and around the world. Just as John F. Kennedy, Ronald Reagan and other American Presidents saw this as a fundamental test in the past, we should do so in our time as well.

The U.S. will need the weight and moral authority of the European allies to help win this battle to defend our democratic and rule of law societies in the decade ahead.

Fourth, we will also need Europe's support and active involvement as we wage a second global battle in the years ahead with China—the "battle for technological dominance"—in Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning, Quantum Computing, Biotechnology and other fields. This contest may well determine whether the U.S. can maintain in future decades the long superiority we have had in qualitative military power over our rivals. We cannot afford to lose this advantage to China.

Given the damage President Trump has caused to our relationship with the EU and NATO, Congress should continue to exercise its constitutional responsibilities to reaffirm our treaty commitments to

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NATO and the importance of our relationship with the European Union. Congress must limit and block, if necessary, the most dangerous policies of the President.

Congressional resolutions in support of NATO in 2018 were important in reassuring Europeans and their governments of our continued commitment. If the President moves to limit the U.S. troop contribution to NATO or, unthinkable, to seek to remove the U.S. from NATO altogether, Congress with the support of both parties, must move to block him.

*Conclusion*

The great Transatlanticist, Winston Churchill, reminded Americans of our importance to the free world at the height of the Second World War. In September 1943, Churchill said in a speech at Harvard about America's global role: "The price of greatness is responsibility." He added, "one cannot rise to be in many ways the leading community in the civilized world without being involved in its problems, convulsed by its agonies and inspired by its causes."

Churchill's war-time ally, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, echoed him by stating in his Fourth Inaugural Address in January 1945 when victory was imminent: "We have learned to be citizens of the world, members of the human community. We have learned the simple truth, as Emerson said, that "The only way to have a friend is to be one."

Chairman Keating and Ranking Member Kinzinger, these central truths about America's role in the world are under challenge today by those who would have us retreat from global responsibility and power.

I believe the United States is still the country that Churchill and Roosevelt described in their remarks. The U.S. is the greatest force for stability, for good and for peace in the world today. If we have learned one central lesson from World War Two until now, it is that to defend our country at home, we must remain engaged overseas with our democratic allies in NATO and the European Union.

As we look to the future, Americans can feel confident that we will be more secure, more prosperous and more confident about the continuation of human freedom if we maintain our historic, successful and irreplaceable alliance with Europe and Canada in the decades ahead.

Mr. KEATING. Ms. Wormuth.

**STATEMENT OF CHRISTINE WORMUTH, DIRECTOR, INTERNATIONAL SECURITY AND DEFENSE POLICY CENTER, RAND CORPORATION**

Ms. WORMUTH. Chairman Keating, Ranking Member Kinzinger, members of the committee, thank you for this hearing and for the opportunity to be here.

Our cooperation with the countries of Europe is based on our shared values. This is picking up on something Ambassador Burns just said, our shared belief in democracy, in individual liberty, and the rule of law. And we have shared a common purpose with Europe to protect and advance these values. And I saw that time and time again in my government career, how important it is to work with our European allies and partners.

I wanted to just give a few examples this afternoon of some of the benefits of the transatlantic relationship, looking at three different periods: the post-cold war period, the moments after the 9/11 attack, and then, the era we are in now, and will be in, an era of strategic competition.

Four decades of close cooperation with the Europeans during the cold war ended with the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the collapse of the Soviet Union just 2 years later. We immediately began working with Western Europe on Germany's reunification within NATO and the larger goal of building a Europe whole and free. We and our European allies focused on engaging the former Warsaw Pact countries as well as the former Soviet Republics, working to help them transition and stabilize.

Through programs like NATO's Partnership for Peace, the SEED Act, and others, NATO nations helped these countries emerge from communism. Many of them eventually joined NATO, and many others also joined the European Union. And the work that we did during that period made both sides of the transatlantic relationship safer and more prosperous.

After al-Qaeda attacked us on September 11th, 2001, Europe again showed their solidarity. NATO invoked the Article 5 collective defense pledge for the first and only time in its history. European nations fought with us in Afghanistan from the earliest days, losing more than a thousand military personnel on the battlefield. Under the NATO umbrella, many of the European countries are still with us in Afghanistan today. Some of our European allies also joined us in Iraq, fighting alongside our military, training Iraqi security forces, and working to rebuild Iraqi institutions.

And then, in the summer of 2014, when the Islamic State seized territory in Iraq, many Europeans joined us in the anti-ISIS coalition. Some joined the air campaign or contributed special operations forces. Others provided trainers on the ground, and still others gave weapons to the Kurdish peshmerga, and the Iraqi security forces. Many Europeans also provided much-needed reconstruction funding. Ending the physical caliphate, which just happened in the last few days, in Iraq and Syria would have taken much longer and cost much more without the support from our European allies and partners.

Our close relationship with Europe has given us basing and access rights that would help us not only defend Europe, if we had to, but also help us defend our own interests far from our shores. The network of American bases we have in the UK, Germany, Italy, Spain, Greece, and Turkey are strategic assets that help us respond more quickly, whether it is to conduct non-combatant evacuations, provide humanitarian assistance, or respond more quickly to crises.

It is also important to note we have cooperated with Europe on a range of non-military challenges. In 2013, several European nations helped with the destruction of Syrian chemical weapons. During the 2014 Ebola crisis in West Africa, the UK and France sent military personnel, and the EU contributed substantial financial resources to the countries fighting the disease.

As Ambassador Burns says, the Europeans also worked with us to negotiate the nuclear agreement with Iran and the Paris Climate Agreement. And although the United States has withdrawn from both of those agreements, the Europeans have stayed in both.

Now, as we look to this new period of competition, Europe continues to help us pursue our strategic goals. They have been our closest partners in pushing back against Russian violations of sovereignty. For the past 5 years, together we have maintained sanctions against Russia because of its aggression in Ukraine. And standing together, the United States and 24 European nations expelled 115 Russian diplomats in response to the brazen chemical weapons attack on the Skripals.

President Putin seems intent on undermining the rules-based order that the United States and Europe worked so hard to build all these many years. Preventing that outcome is going to require us to work closely with Europe and NATO. We have taken a number of measures already to shore up deterrence, including forward deployment of multinational battle groups in Poland and each of the Baltic States.

Motivated substantially by the need to deter Russia, many NATO members are increasing their defense spending. A majority of them will be on target to meet the 2 percent goal by 2024. And although several European countries absolutely need to spend more on defense, the increasingly fraught debate over burden-sharing runs the risk of overshadowing the many benefits of the transatlantic relationship.

I would just close by saying, looking ahead, the rise of China will likely be the most important geopolitical challenge for the foreseeable future. Our principal advantage in that competition, as the chairman has said, are our alliances with Asia and Europe, and it is one we cannot afford to jettison. So, just as we have worked together on security in Europe, we need to work closely with Europe today to form common political, economic, and security approaches to China.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Wormuth follows.]

## The United States and Europe Since World War II

### A Mutually Beneficial Partnership

Christine Wormuth

CT-506

Testimony presented before the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Europe, Eurasia, Energy, and the Environment on March 26, 2019.



For more information on this publication, visit [www.rand.org/pubs/testimonies/CT506.html](http://www.rand.org/pubs/testimonies/CT506.html)

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*The United States and Europe Since World War II: A Mutually Beneficial Partnership*

Testimony of Christine Wormuth<sup>1</sup>  
The RAND Corporation<sup>2</sup>

Before the Committee on Foreign Affairs  
Subcommittee on Europe, Eurasia, Energy, and the Environment  
United States House of Representatives

March 26, 2019

Chairman Keating, Ranking Member Kinzinger, members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear today to share my perspective on how the U.S.-European relationship has advanced U.S. security and global security since the end of World War II. Our cooperation with the countries of Europe, with NATO, and organizations like the European Union is based on our shared values—our shared belief in democracy, individual liberty, and the rule of law. We share a common purpose with our European allies and friends to protect and advance these values, and we’ve been engaged together in that common task for more than seventy years. My testimony will focus on highlighting how the U.S. relationship with Europe has benefited the United States, with a focus on military and diplomatic cooperation in the post–Cold War period, the years after the September 11 attacks, and the current period of strategic competition with Russia and China.

### The Post–Cold War Period

Founded in 1949 in the aftermath of World War II, NATO’s purpose during the Cold War was to deter the Soviet Union. Four decades of close cooperation with the Europeans, with the NATO alliance at the heart of that partnership, ended with the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the collapse of the Soviet Union two years later. Winning the Cold War would not have been possible without Europe. What was not so obvious thirty years ago was how much the close U.S. relationship with Europe would continue to serve U.S. security interests in the coming years.

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<sup>1</sup> The opinions and conclusions expressed in this testimony are the author’s alone and should not be interpreted as representing those of the RAND Corporation or any of the sponsors of its research.

<sup>2</sup> The RAND Corporation is a research organization that develops solutions to public policy challenges to help make communities throughout the world safer and more secure, healthier and more prosperous. RAND is nonprofit, nonpartisan, and committed to the public interest.

When the Berlin Wall fell, the leaders of West Germany, the United States, the UK, and France immediately began working together on Germany's reunification within NATO and the larger goal of a Europe whole and free. European allies and the United States focused their attention on engaging the former Warsaw Pact countries, as well as the former Soviet republics, working to help them transition and stabilize. Through programs like the Partnership for Peace, NATO helped these countries emerge from communism and begin reforming their militaries and ministries of defense. Many of these countries eventually joined NATO, and many also joined the European Union. The work the United States and its European allies did together during these years made the United States and Europe safer and more prosperous.

In the 1990s, the United States and its European allies turned their attention to bringing stability to the periphery of NATO, primarily in the Balkans. Through Operation Deliberate Force in Bosnia and then Operational Allied Force in Kosovo, the United States worked with Europe to bring peace to the Balkans. Today, NATO continues to maintain a presence of about 3,500 soldiers in Kosovo, with most of the personnel coming from European allies and partners.<sup>3</sup>

### U.S. Relations with Europe After the September 11 Attacks

After al-Qaeda attacked the United States on September 11, 2001, the nations of Europe immediately showed their solidarity. NATO invoked the Article 5 collective defense pledge for the first and only time in its history.<sup>4</sup> European allies and partners fought alongside the United States in Afghanistan from the earliest days, losing more than one thousand personnel on the battlefield.<sup>5</sup> Under the NATO umbrella, European countries remain part of the Afghanistan mission today. The Europeans also joined the United States in Iraq, fighting alongside the U.S. military, training Iraqi security forces, and working to rebuild Iraqi institutions.

In the wake of the September 11 attacks, the long-standing U.S. relationship with Europe enabled close cooperation to strengthen intelligence sharing in the fight against terrorism and to deepen law enforcement cooperation so that the United States and Europe would be better able to disrupt terrorist plotting, prevent future attacks, track foreign fighters, and identify homegrown extremists. These close intelligence and law enforcement partnerships continue to serve us well today.

When the Islamic State seized territory in Iraq and threatened Baghdad in the summer of 2014, many European countries joined the anti-Islamic State coalition led by the United States. Some countries joined the air campaign or contributed special operations forces, others provided trainers on the ground, and still others provided weapons for the Kurdish peshmerga and Iraqi security forces. Many European countries also supported much-needed reconstruction efforts.

<sup>3</sup> NATO, "Kosovo Force: Key Facts and Figures," February 2019 ([https://www.nato.int/nato\\_static\\_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf\\_2019\\_02/20190213\\_2019-02-KFOR-Placemat.pdf](https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_2019_02/20190213_2019-02-KFOR-Placemat.pdf)).

<sup>4</sup> NATO, "Collected Defense: Article 5," webpage, last updated June 12, 2018 ([https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics\\_110496.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_110496.htm)).

<sup>5</sup> U.S. Department of Defense, "Casualty Status as of 10 a.m. EDT March 21, 2019," webpage, last updated March 21, 2019 (<https://dod.defense.gov/News/Casualty-Status/>); also see [iCasualties.org](http://iCasualties.org).



The close U.S. relationship with Europe over the years has given us basing and access rights that enable the United States not only to help defend Europe should that be needed, but also to defend U.S. interests far from its shores. The network of American bases in the UK, Germany, Italy, Spain, Greece, and Turkey are strategic assets that enable the United States to respond more quickly, whether it is to conduct a noncombatant evacuation, provide humanitarian assistance, or respond to a crisis. Many U.S. military personnel wounded in Afghanistan, the Middle East, and Africa in the past sixteen years received lifesaving care within hours because there is a premiere U.S. military hospital in Landstuhl, Germany. Because the United States has access to the air base at Incirlik, Turkey, the United States was able to increase the number of strike sorties in Iraq and Syria, enabling it to intensify the fight against the Islamic State. These are just two examples of the benefits the United States gains from these arrangements.

Beyond military operations, the close relationship the United States has with Europe has also resulted in cooperation on a range of other issues. Through the European Union, Europe has conducted antipiracy operations across the Gulf of Aden, off the coast of Somalia. In 2013, Norway, Denmark, the UK, Germany, Italy, and Finland each assisted with the destruction of Syrian chemical weapons, an effort led by the United States.<sup>6</sup> During the 2014–2015 Ebola outbreak in West Africa, the UK and France sent military personnel to Sierra Leone and Guinea to assist with the response effort, and the European Union contributed substantial financial resources to countries battling the disease. France, Germany, the UK, and the European Union all worked closely with the United States to negotiate the nuclear agreement with Iran that put limits on Iran's nuclear program for 15 years—permanent prohibitions on nuclear weapons–related activities coupled with an intrusive inspection regime in perpetuity in exchange for relief from economic sanctions. The United States has withdrawn from the deal, but Europe continues to try to uphold the agreement, so far with success. The nations of Europe and the European Union also worked with the United States and many other countries worldwide to craft the Paris Agreement on climate in 2016, and although the United States has withdrawn, Europe remains in the agreement today.

### The United States and Europe in an Era of Strategic Competition

Now, as the United States and its allies and partners around the world enter a new period of strategic competition, the close U.S. relationship with Europe continues to help the United States pursue its strategic goals. The Europeans have been our closest partners in pushing back against Russian violations of sovereignty, whether through military action or less visible means, such as interfering in the democratic processes of multiple countries. For the past five years, the United States, Canada, and the European Union have maintained sanctions on Russia for its aggression in Ukraine. Standing together, the United States and 24 European countries expelled more than

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<sup>6</sup> Arms Control Association, “Timeline of Syrian Chemical Weapons Activity, 2012–2019,” webpage, last updated March 2019 (<https://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/Timeline-of-Syrian-Chemical-Weapons-Activity>).

115 Russian diplomats in response to the brazen Novichok chemical weapon attack against Sergei and Yulia Skripal on British soil.<sup>7</sup>

President Putin seems intent on undermining the rules-based order that the United States and Europe worked so hard to build and wants to replace it with a Europe that is once again divided into spheres of influence. Preventing that outcome will require the United States to work closely with Europe and NATO to deter further Russian aggression and defend against other forms of Russian interference. The United States and European NATO members have taken several measures since 2014 to shore up deterrence, including a more robust exercise program, a major new readiness initiative, and forward deployment of multinational battle groups in Poland and in each of the Baltic states. Motivated substantially by the need to deter Russia, many NATO members are increasing their defense spending. Five NATO members already spend at least 2 percent of their GDP on defense.<sup>8</sup> A majority of NATO members are on target to meet the 2 percent goal by 2024.<sup>9</sup> More than half of NATO members will spend 20 percent of their defense budgets on new equipment and much-needed research and development.<sup>10</sup> Germany, Italy, Spain, the Netherlands, and Canada all spend well below 2 percent of their GDP on defense, and this will need to change if NATO intends to successfully meet the range of challenges it faces.<sup>11</sup> Germany's inability to convince its public of the need to spend more on defense is particularly troubling and runs counter to its desire to be a leader in Europe and NATO. Although some European countries do need to spend more on defense, the increasingly fraught debate over burden-sharing runs the risk of overshadowing the many benefits to the United States of its close relationship with Europe.

Looking ahead, the rise of China, which is increasingly competing for leadership of the international community, will likely be the most important geopolitical challenge for the foreseeable future. The United States and Europe both have a stake in this competition, and the close U.S. relationship with Europe provides a significant competitive advantage. America's alliances in Asia and Europe are its principal advantage in this competition, one we cannot afford to jettison. Just as the United States has worked with its European allies and friends on other security challenges and opportunities, the United States should work closely with the countries of Europe to develop common political, economic, and security approaches toward China.

Looking back over the past seventy years, there are myriad examples of how the close U.S. relationship with Europe has benefited the United States, increased its security, and enabled its continued prosperity. The United States and Europe have not always seen eye to eye on every

<sup>7</sup> Angela Dewan, Milena Veselinovic, and Carol Jordan, "These Are All the Countries That Are Expelling Russian Diplomats," CNN.com, March 28, 2018 (<https://edition.cnn.com/2018/03/26/europe/full-list-of-russian-diplomats-expelled-over-s-intl/index.html>).

<sup>8</sup> NATO, "Defence Expenditure of NATO Countries (2011–2018)," press release, July 10, 2018 ([https://www.nato.int/nato\\_static\\_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf\\_2018\\_07/20180709\\_180710-pr2018-91-en.pdf](https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_2018_07/20180709_180710-pr2018-91-en.pdf)).

<sup>9</sup> Kathleen H. Hicks, Jeffrey Rathke, Seamus P. Daniels, Michael Matlaga, Laura Daniels, and Andrew Linder, *Counting Dollars or Measuring Value: Assessing NATO and Partner Burden-sharing*, Washington, D.C.: Center for Strategic and International Studies, July 2018, p. 3.

<sup>10</sup> NATO, "Defence Expenditures of NATO Countries (2011–2018)."

<sup>11</sup> NATO, "Defence Expenditures of NATO Countries (2011–2018)."

issue, and disagreements over specific political, economic, and security issues continue today. At the same time, Americans continue to support NATO and the transatlantic relationship. A 2018 Chicago Council on Global Affairs poll found that 75 percent of Americans favor maintaining the U.S. commitment to NATO.<sup>12</sup> Many Americans seem to understand what the 2017 National Security Strategy itself noted: “The United States is safer when Europe is prosperous and stable, and can help defend our shared interests and ideals.”<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> See Dina Smeltz, Ivo Daalder, Karl Friedhoff, Craig Kafura, and Lily Wojtowicz, *America Engaged: American Public Opinion and US Foreign Policy*, Chicago: Chicago Council on Global Affairs, 2018.

<sup>13</sup> The White House, *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, Washington, D.C., December 2017, p. 48.

Mr. KEATING. Thank you, Ms. Wormuth.  
Dr. Brands.

**STATEMENT OF HAL BRANDS, HENRY A. KISSINGER DISTINGUISHED PROFESSOR, SCHOOL OF ADVANCED INTERNATIONAL STUDIES, JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY, AND SENIOR FELLOW, CENTER FOR STRATEGIC AND BUDGETARY ASSESSMENTS**

Mr. BRANDS. Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Kinzinger, distinguished members, thank you for having me. I will jump right in, in the interest of brevity.

The modern transatlantic relationship anchored by NATO emerged after World War II during the early cold war, and the creation of NATO, in particular, marked a historic departure in U.S. policy that was rooted in a threefold logic. It reflected a realization that America had a profound interest in shaping a favorable balance of power in Europe, and that persistent U.S. diplomatic and military engagement was the only way of doing so. It reflected the idea that only a U.S. security guarantee could provide the reassurance necessary to generate economic recovery and prosperity and protect democratic institutions in Europe. And finally, the U.S. commitment was meant to suppress historical rivalries between Germany and its neighbors, and thereby, facilitate European economic and political integration.

Over the subsequent decades, the U.S. role within NATO and the alliance itself have evolved considerably, but for generations that relationship has produced a range of critical benefits, not just abstract global benefits, but concrete benefits for the United States.

First, NATO has significantly increased America's military punching power. During the cold war, European forces were vital to maintaining something like a balance of power vis-a-vis the Warsaw Pact. Since the cold war, NATO countries have made significant contributions to every major U.S. military intervention. America almost never goes to war alone, and a key reason for that is that it can draw on the support of European allies. For decades, the U.S. relationship with NATO has also provided access to bases, logistical facilities, and strategic real estate that make it far easier to project American power.

Second, the relationship with NATO provides geostrategic influence and global stability. NATO binds some of the richest countries in the world to the United States. It, thereby, helps us maintain a significant overbalance of power vis-a-vis any competitor. NATO has deterred aggressive States that might be attempting to destabilize Europe or the broader national system. It has tamped down European instability by making it virtually unthinkable that war could occur between NATO members. NATO also acts as an impediment to nuclear proliferation by convincing historically insecure countries, such as Germany and Poland, that they do not need the world's absolute weapon.

Third, NATO enhances U.S. diplomatic leverage. Put bluntly, Europeans have to listen to us on European and global issues because the United States plays the leading role in NATO, and that makes it the central player in European defense. The United States has also used NATO and its institutional structures as vehicles for

deep cooperation on counterterrorism, counterproliferation, counter-piracy, and other challenges.

Fourth, the relationship with NATO provides economic benefits. For decades, U.S. diplomats and trade negotiators have used the security leverage provided by its NATO commitments to extract more favorable terms in bilateral economic agreements. More broadly, NATO and other U.S. alliances sustain a climate of stability in which trade and free enterprise can flourish, thereby bolstering U.S. and global prosperity.

Finally, the relationship with NATO provides political legitimacy. Formal alliances like NATO provide greater international legitimacy for the use of force, especially in cases such as the Kosovo conflict when we cannot secure a U.N. Security Council resolution. Allied support also enhances the perceived legitimacy of military action at home.

For all these reasons, maintaining a strong transatlantic relationship is critical to U.S. interests. There are, of course, challenges that are currently testing the U.S.-NATO relationship, just as there have always been such challenges. I discuss those challenges at greater length in my written statement, but just a short list would include: building a stronger and more credible deterrent against Russian aggression in Eastern Europe; ensuring that key allies such as Germany are making necessary military investments; adapting the alliance to confront unconventional threats like political warfare and economic coercion; reconciling NATO's collective defense mission with its out-of-area responsibilities; confronting growing political illiberalism within parts of the alliance, and, most importantly, reversing the erosion of U.S. credibility within the alliance as a result of statements questioning America's Article 5 commitment.

The seriousness of these challenges should not be understated, but I believe that the transatlantic relationship can overcome them, just as it has overcome even greater challenges before, so long as the United States continues to provide the leadership that has proved so important for the past seven decades. And if anything, I think the relevance of NATO to American strategy is increasing today, not simply because of the Russian threat, but because it is hard to imagine any effective strategy for dealing with an autocratic, assertive China that does not include deep cooperation between America and its closest democratic allies in Europe.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Brands follows:]

**The Origins and Enduring Value of the Transatlantic Alliance**

Statement before the House Foreign Affairs Committee  
Subcommittee on Europe, Eurasia, Energy, and Environment

March 26, 2019

Dr. Hal Brands

Henry A. Kissinger Distinguished Professor, Johns Hopkins-SAIS  
Senior Fellow, Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments

Chairman Keating, Ranking Member Kinzinger, and distinguished members of the subcommittee, thank you for inviting me here. I am pleased to discuss the role that the transatlantic relationship, and the NATO alliance in particular, has played in advancing global security and U.S. interests since World War II.

This is a vitally important subject, one I address in my work at Johns Hopkins-SAIS and the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments. I should make clear, though, that my testimony here reflects only my personal views, and not the institutional position of Johns Hopkins University, CSBA, or any other organization.<sup>1</sup>

The modern transatlantic relationship—and the NATO alliance that represents the core of that relationship—emerged in the wake of World War II, during the early days of the Cold War. The creation of NATO marked a historic departure in U.S. foreign policy. It reflected a realization that the United States had a profound, enduring interest in shaping a favorable balance of power in Europe, and that persistent diplomatic and military engagement was the only way to shape such a balance. Additionally, American policymakers realized that only a U.S. security guarantee could provide the climate of reassurance necessary to generate postwar recovery, lasting prosperity, and the survival of democratic institutions in Europe. Finally, the initial U.S. commitment to Europe was based on the idea that this commitment was essential to suppressing historical rivalries between Germany and its neighbors and thereby facilitating the process of European economic and political integration.

Over subsequent decades, the U.S. relationship with NATO has evolved considerably, as new challenges have emerged and the alliance has taken on new roles and responsibilities. Moreover, NATO's membership has more than doubled since the alliance was created in 1949, and its geography has shifted as post-Cold War expansion pushed its front lines farther to the east. For generations, however, the U.S. relationship with NATO has produced a range of critical benefits, which I will briefly summarize before turning to some of the challenges the alliance currently confronts.

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<sup>1</sup> Parts of this testimony draw on Hal Brands and Peter Feaver, "What Are America's Alliances Good For?" *Parameters*, Summer 2017; Hal Brands, *Dealing with Allies in Decline: Alliance Management and U.S. Strategy in an Era of Global Power Shifts* (Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, 2017). See also Eric Edelman and Whitney McNamara, *U.S. Strategy for Maintaining a Europe Whole and Free* (Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, 2017); Hal Brands and Peter Feaver, "Trump's Transatlantic Crisis," *Commentary*, September 2018.

### Benefits

*Military Punching Power.* The primary measure of any alliance is whether it augments its members' military power. And although NATO is often described as a mechanism through which America defends other countries, the flip-side of this commitment is that NATO has significantly increased the military power America can bring to bear on a given battlefield.

During the Cold War, European forces were vital to maintaining something approximating a balance of power vis-à-vis Warsaw Pact forces. During the Persian Gulf War of 1991, key NATO allies such as France and the United Kingdom made large contributions of ground, air, and naval forces. NATO countries (either individually or as part of a larger alliance mission) also contributed troops or other capabilities to U.S.-led missions in Korea, Bosnia, Kosovo, Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, and the counter-ISIS campaign. The United States rarely goes to war alone, and a key reason for this is that it can draw on the support of its closest allies in Europe.

Although there are always difficulties associated with coalition warfare, these allied contributions have been critical in easing the overall U.S. burden. For example, NATO contributions to the U.S.-led war in Afghanistan helped sustain that mission and made it possible for Washington to surge 30,000 additional troops into Iraq at a time when its forces were strained to the limit. Additionally, the deeply institutionalized nature of the NATO alliance adds to the military benefits the United States receives from the alliance. The fact that the U.S. military engages in regular training, exercises, and operations with its NATO allies makes it easier to coordinate with them in a crisis, improving interoperability and reducing the frictions associated with mobilizing a coalition. And for decades, the U.S. relationship with NATO has afforded American forces access to critical bases, logistical facilities, and strategic real estate, all of which serves to significantly lower the costs and difficulties of U.S. power projection.

*Geostrategic Influence and Global Stability.* If NATO alliance thus makes America stronger in the conflicts it wages, it is more helpful still in terms of the conflicts it prevents and the geostrategic influence it confers. For decades, NATO has bound some of the richest countries in the world to Washington through enduring relationships of deep cooperation; it thereby helps America maintain a significant *overbalance* of power vis-à-vis any competitor. NATO has also acted as a strong deterrent to aggressive states that might be attempted to destabilize Europe or the broader international system, whether the Soviet Union during the Cold War or Putin's Russia today. Indeed, it is notable that Russia has behaved most aggressively toward countries (Georgia and Ukraine) that lack U.S. alliance guarantees, rather than toward those countries (the Baltic states or Poland) that possess them. This fact shows the wisdom of NATO's post-Cold War expansion: The front lines of today's U.S.-Russia competition are in the Baltic and elsewhere along the frontiers of the former Soviet Union, rather than farther to the west, where they were during the Cold War.

Similarly, NATO (and the U.S. role therein) have long tamped down international instability more broadly, by suppressing potential security competitions *within* Europe and making it nearly unthinkable that war could occur between the countries that make up NATO's membership. It is remarkable that no one worries today about a war between France and Germany or Germany and Poland, given the pre-1945 history of those relationships, and NATO has everything to do with

this achievement. Given that wars in Europe repeatedly reached out and touched the United States prior to 1945, moreover, this achievement directly serves American security interests.

Finally, NATO acts as an impediment to dangerous geostrategic phenomena such as nuclear proliferation, by convincing historically insecure countries—such as Germany and Poland—that they can afford to forego possession of the world’s absolute weapon. The guiding principle among the framers of the post-World War II order was that massive instability, arms racing, and violence in key regions posed a threat that would ultimately imperil the United States. The U.S. alliance relationship with Europe has restrained precisely these phenomena.

*Diplomatic Leverage and Cooperation.* Beyond its military, geostrategic, and political value, the NATO relationship greatly increases the diplomatic leverage U.S. leaders can bring to bear. To be blunt, Europeans are obliged to listen to the United States on European and global issues because Washington’s leading role in NATO makes it the central player in European defense. To give one example, the United States has repeatedly been successful in preventing the European Union from lifting its arms embargo on China because of the security leverage it has through NATO. Similarly, the United States has used NATO as a vehicle for cooperation on counter-terrorism, counter-cybercrime, counter-proliferation, counter-piracy, and other challenges. All of these efforts involve substantial intelligence sharing, pooling of information, and coordination across law enforcement and other lines of action—and that coordination is greatly facilitated when conducted through a deeply institutionalized alliance.

*Economic Benefits.* Critics of the NATO alliance often allege that it costs the United States vast sums to defend its allies. Yet the economic costs of the U.S. commitment to NATO are lower than conventionally assumed, because the alliance allows the United States to project military power much more cheaply than otherwise would be the case, and also because those NATO countries that host American troops generally provide payments to offset basing/presence costs.

Alliances such as NATO also generate numerous economic benefits. One analysis of the deployment of U.S. troops abroad and of U.S. treaty obligations shows that both of these forms of security commitments are correlated with several key economic indicators, including U.S. bilateral trade and global bilateral trade. Adding all the economic costs and benefits of these treaty commitments together produces the estimate that U.S. alliances offer more than three times as much economic gain as cost.<sup>2</sup>

For decades, moreover, U.S. diplomats and trade negotiations have used the security leverage provided by its NATO commitments to extract more favorable terms in bilateral financial and commercial arrangements. During the Cold War, for example, West Germany was willing to make “offset” payments to the United States—transfers that helped shore up the U.S. balance of payments—in order to preserve the American troop presence. Finally, given that NATO and other U.S. alliances sustain a climate of overall geopolitical stability in which trade and free enterprise can flourish, they bolster American and global prosperity in broader ways, as well.

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<sup>2</sup> Daniel Egel and Howard Shatz, “Economic Benefits of U.S. Overseas Security Commitments Appear to Outweigh Costs,” *The RAND Blog*, September 23, 2016, <http://www.rand.org/blog/2016/09/economic-benefits-of-us-overseas-security-commitments.html>



*Political Legitimacy.* Beyond its military, geostrategic, diplomatic, and economic virtues, NATO provides important political benefits which facilitate the use of American power. Formal alliances such as NATO provide greater legitimacy for multilateral action, especially in cases—such as the Kosovo conflict in 1999—when the United States is unable to secure a UN Security Council Resolution authorizing the use of force. Allied support also enhances the perceived legitimacy of military action for domestic audiences, thus strengthening the political foundations for military ventures. The willingness of European allies (or other allied states) to participate in a military intervention can signal that the resort to force is a wise and necessary move, and that it has a reasonable prospect for success. Finally, the NATO allies have long provided useful input on use of force decisions. Particularly when the deliberations involve long-standing treaty allies, U.S. officials can have more honest discussions about difficult policy choices because the participants are “all in the family.” Put another way, while every U.S. president reserves the right to use force unilaterally when U.S. interests demand, presidents have generally understood that the failure to persuade other partners to approve and join America in the effort is itself a powerful signal that the proposed action may not be viable.

### Challenges

The transatlantic relationship and the NATO alliance in particular have thus provided a range of important benefits for the United States. Today as in the past, however, there are pressing challenges that are testing the U.S.-NATO relationship. Key challenges include:

*Forward defense.* The combination of unfavorable geography and Russian military modernization presents severe challenges to NATO’s ability to defend its easternmost states from a potential Russian assault. The alliance will need additional presence and a stronger regional force posture if it is to reestablish a credible deterrent to Russian aggression.<sup>3</sup>

*Burden-sharing.* Burden-sharing is a perpetual challenge within NATO. Yet it is fair to say that this issue has reached a crisis point when America’s three most important European allies—the United Kingdom, France, and Germany—would each struggle to deploy and sustain a single armored brigade in combat beyond their own borders.<sup>4</sup> In general, alliance military spending has been moving in the right direction since 2015. But the performance of some key countries (namely, Germany) continues to be disappointing and Brexit is likely to further curtail the resources the United Kingdom can make available for defense.

*Adapting to confront emerging threats.* While NATO faces traditional military threats in the East, it also confronts more novel, unconventional threats such as information warfare, cyberattacks, political meddling, and economic coercion on the part of authoritarian rivals. The alliance will have to rebuild its ability to repel conventional aggression while also improving its capabilities—perhaps in cooperation with the European Union—to address emerging threats.

<sup>3</sup> See *Providing for the Common Defense: The Assessment and Recommendations of the National Defense Strategy Commission* (United States Institute of Peace, 2018).

<sup>4</sup> Michael Shurkin, “The Abilities of the British, French, and German Armies to Generate and Sustain Armored Brigades in the Baltic,” RAND Corporation, 2017, [https://www.rand.org/pubs/research\\_reports/RR1629.html](https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR1629.html).

*Reconciling competing priorities.* As NATO's geography has expanded, so has the difficulty in reconciling the alliance's competing priorities. Whereas states on the alliance's eastern frontier are most worried about Russian aggression, states on the alliance's southern flank are often more concerned about terrorism, refugee flows, and other challenges emerging from the Middle East and North Africa. Similarly, as the prospect of state-on-state warfare in Europe increases, NATO countries will face increasing difficulties balancing that mission with "out of area" challenges such as the war in Afghanistan.

*Concerns about U.S. credibility.* At the level of day-to-day policy, U.S. engagement with NATO has remained relatively steady, and the alliance has made progress both in improving readiness for a potential conflict with Russia and in focusing on non-traditional threats. At the political level, however, relationships with key European allies and leaders have frayed badly, and statements questioning America's commitment to NATO's Article 5 have produced concerns about the credibility of the U.S. security guarantee. In some European quarters, these concerns are leading to broader doubts about the long-term viability of the alliance. They are also leading some European countries to advocate the pursuit of "strategic autonomy" in the form of a more credible European Union defense capability, although progress toward that goal remains elusive so far.<sup>5</sup> Put bluntly, if confidence in the U.S. commitment to NATO collapses, so will the alliance.

*Authoritarianism within the alliance.* NATO has had authoritarian members before, but in recent decades it had become an alliance of democratic states. Democratic backsliding in countries such as Turkey, Hungary, and Poland is now challenging that progress, and raising questions about how the alliance should deal with illiberalism within its ranks. The fact that Hungary and Turkey have established close relationships with Putin's Russia adds urgency to this challenge.

*Fragmentation of the European project.* NATO developed in tandem with moves toward greater European integration, which provided the political and economic cohesion to accompany the military cohesion that the alliance provided. Today, however, the cohesion of the EU is being challenged due to Brexit, surging illiberalism within certain European countries, and a populist backlash against the European project. In the near-term, challenges to European unity will reduce the possibility of "strategic autonomy" and the development of alternative defense mechanisms that might eventually rival NATO. Over the longer term, however, such fragmentation will probably weaken the European pillar of the alliance and thus weaken the alliance itself.

### **Conclusion**

The seriousness of these threats should not be underrated. Yet NATO and the transatlantic relationship have faced periods of crisis before—during the Korean War, the Vietnam War, the 1980s, and the early days of the War of Terror. Some of the challenges that arose during those earlier periods—how to construct a viable deterrent to Soviet aggression, for instance, or how counter the deployment of Soviet SS-20 missiles in Eastern Europe—were arguably as great or greater than any the alliance faces today. The alliance survived these earlier tests, in part because

<sup>5</sup> Hal Brands, "Europe Wants to Defend Itself from Russia? Good Luck with That," *Bloomberg Opinion*, August 30, 2018, <https://www.bloomberg.com/opinion/articles/2018-08-30/europe-wants-to-defend-itself-from-russia-good-luck-with-that>.

of its great resilience, and in part because the United States played a critical role in either holding the alliance together or repairing damage that had occurred.

Moreover, even though the cockpit of geopolitical rivalry has moved from Europe to the Asia-Pacific region, it does not follow that NATO and the transatlantic relationship are irrelevant to the geopolitical challenges the United States faces. For example, it is hard to imagine any successful democratic response to the rise of an aggressive, authoritarian China that does not feature close cooperation between the United States and its closest democratic allies in Europe.

The United States must therefore continue investing in the transatlantic relationship; it must provide the leadership that has proved so important in rallying NATO countries to overcome common challenges. There is no reason that NATO cannot continue to be an overwhelming net benefit to U.S. security, prosperity, and global influence, so long as America remains committed to the alliance that has served it so well. If, however, the United States weakens its commitment to the alliance and the broader transatlantic relationship, NATO will find it far harder to address today's challenges—and America will profoundly damage its own interests.

Mr. KEATING. Ms. Conley.

**STATEMENT OF HEATHER CONLEY, SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT, EUROPE, EURASIA, AND THE ARCTIC, AND DIRECTOR, EUROPE PROGRAM, CENTER FOR STRATEGIC AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES**

Ms. CONLEY. Thank you, Chairman Keating and Ranking Member Kinzinger, members of this committee. What a privilege it is to be your kickoff hearing. Thank you so much.

And let me just say thank you for the kind invitation to NATO's Secretary General, Jens Stoltenberg, to speak at a Joint Session of Congress next week. That sends such an important message. So, thank you for that leadership.

Seventy years ago, the United States knew who we were, what we stood for, and what we needed to do to safeguard freedom. We were the good guys. We stood for freedom. We were those can-do Americans, said with equal parts envy and exacerbation by our allies. America's Greatest Generation, having fought twice in Europe in the span of 28 years, understood the extraordinarily high cost of freedom and the scourge of nationalism and hatred. To honor that American sacrifice from two world wars, that generation of leaders knew that European stability was essential to ensure America's security, exactly as you said, Chairman Keating, and it understood that strong alliances win wars against aggressors then and now.

As I was preparing for this oral statement, I looked under my computer keyboard, and I keep a copy of Senator John McCain's farewell message to the Munich Security Conference last year, which Mrs. McCain read, and it inspired me. And I just want to offer this quote to you from Senator McCain: "Together with our allies, we kept faith with those on the other side of the walls that divided the oppressed from the free. We were confident that they wanted the same things we did—freedom, equal justice, the rule of law, a fair chance to prosper by their own industry and talents. This is our greatest inheritance, and it did not happen by accident."

Today I would argue we are having a tough time answering the question of who we are and what we stand for. We are tired of spending funds overseas that are so urgently needed at home. We are frustrated and burdened by the yoke of leadership. We want others to shoulder that burden, and sometimes we appear as victims that other countries are taking advantage of.

Congressman Kinzinger, you noted how weak our allies are acting right now. They are very divided. They are having a hard time resisting China's economic strength, I would argue Russia's malign influence. We cannot take America's greatest foreign and security policy success, Europe, for granted. We need to engage them. We need to work with them. We need to push them very hard, but that requires deep American diplomatic, economic, and security engagement.

But I leave you with this final thought: this discussion is really not about our allies. It is about who we are and what we stand for in the future. This anniversary gives us an opportunity to put forward the hard-fought wisdom, values, principles, and knowledge of

previous American generations, but we must bring it forward to a new generation. I have to convince my young daughters why NATO is as important to them as it is to me. As representatives of the American people, you must do this. As former officials that are sitting on this witness table, we must do our part as well. This is our greatest inheritance and we must fight every day to preserve it and strengthen it.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Conley follows:]

**Statement before the  
House Foreign Affairs Europe, Eurasia, Energy, and the  
Environment Subcommittee**

*“The Historic American Alliance with Europe”*

A Testimony by:

**Heather A. Conley**

Senior Vice President for Europe, Eurasia, and the Arctic  
Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS)

**March 26, 2019**

**2172 Rayburn House Office Building**

Chairman Keating, Ranking Member Kinzinger, and distinguished members of this subcommittee, thank you for this opportunity to testify before you today on the historical importance of allies and alliances to the security and prosperity of the United States. But perhaps most importantly, thank you for the opportunity to underscore the importance of preserving this unique American strength and asset in the future. I am so grateful that you are holding this hearing, as I fear many Americans—including senior leaders in our own government—have either forgotten or through abject neglect are destroying the extraordinary inheritance that we received from the “Greatest Generation.” As this generation, which fought and won the Second World War, leaves us, we must honor their sacrifice by rededicating ourselves to the task of renewing the transatlantic alliance so that it is available to future generations.

The eve of the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of NATO is a timely moment to reflect on this rich inheritance. I am delighted to offer some brief reflections on the origins of the transatlantic partnership and to offer tangible examples of how this partnership has uniquely benefited the United States. But I would also suggest that we view this anniversary not simply as an opportunity to reflect, but as a clarion call to action by Congress to strengthen and deepen this essential alliance. For far too long, American leaders, many of them in this chamber, have spoken eloquently about our historic alliance with Europe while at the same time endorsing actions that have weakened it. We cannot have it both ways. Grand statements ring hollow without leadership and sacrifice, just as transactional actions fall flat when devoid of values, principles, and integrity.

We see this conflict play out in U.S. policy today: while the United States focuses heavily on military strength and might, we are diplomatically and economically undermining and eroding our core strength—the transatlantic alliance. As Secretary Mattis stated clearly in his resignation letter, and as any military officer will tell you, fighting alongside allies is the most difficult and painstaking political and military work one can do, but it is essential to ensure our prosperity.

#### The ‘Cost’ of National Survival

In 1940, Winston Churchill told the House of Commons in his first address as Prime Minister that “without victory, there is no survival.”<sup>1</sup> Churchill knew perhaps better than any other leader that the United Kingdom could not achieve victory without the support of its allies, and certainly not without the aid of the greatest military power, the United States—despite our great reluctance to fully enter the conflict at that time. The survival of a nation is guaranteed by an alliance structure that will fight and make sacrifices for the survival of its members. At times, this sacrifice can be enormously high, as the American military cemeteries in 16 foreign countries attest in their silent dignity, and as evidence by the reverence with which citizens of these countries view these hallowed grounds. Allies ensure our survival as a nation.

But for a nation that enjoys unmatched global military and economic power in the world, how can America’s defense and survival depend on other countries? The United States does have

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<sup>1</sup> “Blood, Toil, Tears and Sweat,” International Churchill Society, <https://winstonchurchill.org/resources/speeches/1940-the-finest-hour/blood-toil-tears-and-sweat-2/>.

remarkable power, but it is not unlimited. When America's allies join the United States in any task, our power is amplified and we are able to accomplish our objective. When the United States chooses to go it alone, we may have sufficient resources to accomplish the immediate task, but we will not achieve a durable solution nor can we bear the costs alone.

The cost of America's alliances has been a topic of much heated debate for decades. But it has become a particularly potent political argument today, as some in our country have concluded that allies are not "worth the cost" to the United States. Yet how can the American people appropriately weigh the "acceptable" costs of alliances without understanding their intrinsic value? This is where our conversation with the American people must begin anew: in an era of great competition where adversaries actively seek to weaken our allies and alliance system to weaken the United States itself, what are our alliances worth to us and to our national survival?

#### Made by America

America's alliance structure in Europe began to crystallize over a century ago during the First World War, when France, Italy, the British Empire, and the United States developed the concept of alliance warfare. These structures were further developed during the Second World War and continued to center on maintaining a unified political purpose and a unified theatre of operations and command to restore national sovereignty. For an alliance to be successful, both elements were understood as essential: unified political will *and* the capability and means to accomplish the task.

At the end of the Second World War, these developed political and military structures were quickly called back into service as the Soviet Union rapidly transformed from wartime ally to postwar adversary. Europe's weakness and exhaustion following two devastating conflicts required American leadership to conceive and build new and more durable structures to meet the challenges of the Cold War. The 1948 Berlin Airlift, a massive U.S. and allied humanitarian effort to save people in West Berlin from the Soviet blockade, was a foretaste of the role that the North Atlantic Treaty Organization would play to ensure the survival and freedom of the people of Western Europe.

A year later in 1949, the preamble of NATO's founding document, the Washington Treaty, clearly stated the unity of purpose that binds the Alliance: "*to safeguard the freedom, common heritage and civilisation of their peoples, founded on the principles of democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law.*" Notice how similar it sounds to the Declaration of Independence. The preamble and the simple, straightforward articles of the Treaty are the flexible operating system of a durable and growing alliance (12 members in 1949, soon to be 30 in 2020). In 1949, the unified political objective for NATO was to safeguard freedom from Soviet aggression, and the Alliance developed adequate military capabilities to fulfill that objective. In 2019, its political objective is to safeguard the alliance's democracies from Russian aggression but also against threats that emanate from the Middle East, Africa, and the Indo-Pacific region.



Throughout the Cold War, NATO had to manage great tensions among members, unilateral decisions taken by members, and even members that temporarily lost their democratic credentials. There are many examples: the 1956 Suez Crisis, the 1966 French decision to remove its forces from NATO's unified military command, the advent of the junta in Greece in 1967, the introduction of the concept of *Östpolitik* or *détente* with the Soviet Union, U.S. calls to downsize its forces in Europe, and the 1983 Pershing missile crisis. But despite these crises, NATO endured and was able to respond flexibly to each challenge in large measure due to binding agents: the existential challenge posed by the Soviet Union, strong and confident American leadership that understood our security was tied to that of Europe's, and an alliance based on democratic values and principles.

What the Alliance had not anticipated was its own success. The fall of the Berlin Wall 30 years ago and the subsequent collapse of the Soviet Union removed one of the main unifying elements in NATO's political and military purpose. But as it was at the end of the Second World War, NATO was quickly called upon to respond to a European conflict, this time in the Western Balkans. Though this was not on a member's territory, NATO had decided to redefine its purpose as expanding freedom, peace, and security in Europe and it understood this in the broad geopolitical sense—instability near member states risked instability *in* member states. The Alliance expanded its mission to safeguard freedom in Europe by enlarging its membership, which has simultaneously benefitted and challenged NATO.

#### Post-Cold War Stress Fractures and Strategic Drift

NATO's ability to understand that instability outside of its immediate borders was a growing challenge paved the way for the Alliance to address its defining post-Cold War moment: the terrorist attacks against the United States on September 11, 2001, which led the Alliance to invoke Article 5 for the first time in its history. NATO has deployed and sustained forces in Afghanistan for the past 18 years, at great human and financial cost: over 3,500 NATO and other coalition partners' soldiers have been killed since the beginning of the U.S. offensive in Afghanistan.<sup>2</sup> NATO allies have collectively spent around \$2.3 billion to support the NATO-Afghan National Army Trust Fund, a key tool to support the country's security forces and institutions.<sup>3</sup> Although we seldom hear these numbers when American officials discuss the "costs" of NATO, no one should doubt that our allies have responded when the security of the United States was at risk.

Yet over the course of these 18 years, NATO lost its balanced approach to political strategy and military means. Tactical military operations and force generation requirements overshadowed a deeper and more meaningful understanding of the Alliance's political objectives. Divisions grew among NATO members during the 2003 Iraq war in which only some allies participated, though NATO did ultimately support a training mission in Iraq. This lack of unity extended into the late

<sup>2</sup> "Afghanistan Fatalities," iCasualties, <http://icasualties.org/App/AfghanFatalities>.

<sup>3</sup> "NATO and Afghanistan," North Atlantic Treaty Organization, March 5, 2019, [https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics\\_8189.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_8189.htm).

2000s and early 2010s: allies drew different conclusions from the 2008 Russian-Georgian conflict and the Alliance's further expansion, and in 2011 the United States, France, and the United Kingdom decided to intervene militarily in Libya against Gaddafi's brutal repression of popular unrest under the mandate of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1973—an offensive that was hastily transitioned to a NATO operation but exposed weaknesses in both political unity and sustainable military capability. Stress fractures began to form within NATO as the alliance grappled with rapid technological change, missile defense capabilities, cyber warfare, disinformation, and energy insecurity.

Russia's 2014 military intervention in Ukraine, both in Crimea and the Donbass, stemmed some of this fracturing and returned NATO to its founding mission and purpose, though it also exposed NATO's political and military atrophy in the face of a revisionist and aggressive power. U.S. leadership of NATO had been in decline for over a decade; the robustness of NATO's political dialogue had diminished; the Alliance lacked a common threat assessment, with some members seeing the preeminent threat emanating from the east and others from the south; it faced a gross underinvestment in adequate European defense and war-fighting capabilities that had been honed for counter-insurgency in the desert; and the United States lacked war-fighting capabilities in Europe because until 2014, it had viewed Europe not as a theater of operation but rather as a place to develop partner capabilities and as a launching point to the Middle East and Africa.

#### A Return to Safeguarding Freedom

NATO's return to its founding mission and purpose in the past five years and the unwavering bipartisan support of Congress to enhance transatlantic security is a critical opportunity to restore America's strategic understanding of the value of alliances to our national security. There is little time to lose as we have entered a particularly precarious moment in transatlantic history, one in which we risk taking NATO for granted so much that we could seriously jeopardize its future.

NATO's purpose, as it was in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, is to safeguard freedom in Europe and North America. NATO must protect its members from external threats, while increasingly guarding itself from internal threats to freedom driven by ethno-nationalism and illiberalism. NATO's fundamental task is therefore once again to stabilize Europe as it manages historical transformations from Brexit, the uneven development of German leadership balanced by French ambitions, Turkey's movement away from Euro-Atlanticism, and growing internal fragmentation. NATO must also manage American retrenchment, an increasingly unstable Russian Federation, terrorism, migration, China's economically driven influence, global economic and climate insecurity, and technological change.

It is an understatement to say that current and future demands placed on NATO are great in the quest to safeguard freedom. This is why the United States, while remaining a global security actor, must return to Europe: (1) physically through an enhanced security posture; (2)

diplomatically with strong, confident, patient, and *quiet* diplomacy that is guided by democratic and value-based principles; and (3) economically through an enhanced trade and investment partnership. During the Cold War, values-based American leadership developed a policy of non-recognition of the Soviet occupation of the Baltic states that kept faith with captive nations until they were rightfully restored to the Euro-Atlantic community. It is patient American diplomacy that after 27 years created the conditions through which the Republic of North Macedonia could join NATO with Greece becoming the first NATO member to ratify their membership. And someday, it will be a more confident American leadership that will challenge the growth of illiberalism and nationalism within NATO, not coddle it.

NATO, like the United States, was built on the sturdy foundations of "*the principles of democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law.*" It has always been NATO's vocation to safeguard freedom in an increasingly dangerous world. Victory is required, for our national survival is at stake.

Mr. KEATING. Thank you, Ms. Conley, and thank all the witnesses. In a very short period of time, I think you capsulized what this hearing is about.

And I, too, had the privilege of going to the Munich Security Conference as part of the CODEL led by Senator McCain. What an experience that is, trust me, in every respect. But his patriotism, his love of this country, his understanding of the role of our country, and an understanding of the alliance that we are talking about, was as deep as any person I had ever met in my life, and he will be missed. One of the best legacies we can all serve to honor him is to do our best at this difficult time to move forward.

Because, in my opinion, this is not just a hearing. This is really the beginning of a central mission of this committee during this Congress. Each of us is here and have been elected at different times in our country's history, but I honestly believe that what we do as a Congress during this 2-year period, in particular, will have fundamental impact on our relations with our most important allies and create a bond of greater security and prosperity in our country in an area where we have never had such an ability to do so.

I came back—and I saw Ambassador Burns there—from Munich with the Speaker and several other of our leaders just a little over 3 weeks ago. We had the opportunity to go to Brussels after that, and in the whole course of that, met with most of the key European officials.

Really what I want to get to is this: I was really taken aback by the depth of the challenge we have in front of us as a Congress. There was a poll in Germany that came out just about the time that we got there, and it showed that the German people had 85 percent unfavorability toward the United States and only 10 percent favorability. The German people, those are among our closest allies, people that, as our witnesses detailed, have fought with us and lost lives. So, these are the critical issues we have in front of us.

And also, we met with those leaders. And I will share with you without identifying them, because there are Chatham Rules that took place in these private meetings. But during those recent meetings, during those meetings that we had, the leaders were using words like “painful,” “hurtful,” describing our actions at that time. They centered, for instance, on the U.S. rationale for the tariffs that are imposed on Europe right now, and they wanted us to explain why we were using emergency security powers to impose those tariffs. They said, “When did we become your enemies? When did we become a security risk to your country?”, our closest allies.

So, if you could, that is why I led with this question. We have work to do with the people in Europe, and that is why we are here today. That is why this is central to what we will do, reminding them of the importance of this alliance. Because I think when people focus back on what we took for granted a generation ago, they will understand better how to invest personally, financially, and in terms of our security interests together.

So, if I could, those two comments: what can we do to help improve as a Congress? And I must tell you, I am not casting our meeting just on those issues. I have been to many CODELs trav-

eling as Members of Congress. I cannot recall a time that I felt as appreciated with us being there as Members of Congress as we did during that period. And that is encouraging. But what can we do? Because the people that will be making decisions—and there are elections coming this spring—will be guided by their own constituencies. And it is concerning to see that unfavorability that is there with a close ally, and also the work we have to do with these other officials, our counterparts in Europe.

Mr. Burns? Ambassador Burns?

Mr. BURNS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I would also say this: politics is a two-way street. Relations across the Atlantic are a two-way street. I think there are things that we need to do and they need to do.

On our side, it was pretty clear from the Munich Conference—it was an extraordinarily insightful conference to hear from the Europeans—they are looking for a reaffirmation of the American commitment to NATO, especially focused on Article 5, because the President just has not done that. He has had his first visit in 2017. He did not mention Article 5. In fact, it was taken out of his speech. And then, last summer, on the day of the summit with President Putin in Helsinki, he was highly ambivalent about whether he would respond to an attack on Montenegro, a country that was attacked politically, an attempted coup by the Russians 2 years ago.

And the second thing that we need to do is reaffirm our relationship with the European Union. Every President since the Coal and Steel Community was created in 1948 has believed that the European Union is a partner of the United States. It is in our interest to see them succeed. The President consistently has called them a foe, a competitor, only looking at them through a prism of trade, but not also in our political partnership, which is very deep.

I think on their side of the ledger—and here, the ranking member I thought made a very productive statement—we have to push the Europeans as well, as we always have. They are excessively reliant on Russian natural gas. They are endanger of being excessively reliant on Chinese capital investment through the Belt and Road Initiative. You saw that Italy joined it formally over the weekend. They are insufficiently distrustful of Huawei on the 5G issue.

And so, I do think we have a right and an obligation in a two-way street relationship to push back. And the one that I feel most strongly about is German defense spending. It is the largest and most successful economy. They have a surplus. And yet, the Bundestag reported out last week a budget that will not get them to 2 percent by 2024, which is the target. They may barely get to 1.5 percent. President Trump is right to push them. President Obama was right to push them. The only silver lining there—I will finish on this—is that we have seen four consecutive years of real growth in European defense spending since Putin's annexation of Crimea, mainly not in Germany, but in the other allies, and that is something we can push forward on with them.

Mr. KEATING. My time is up, but I think that you will have the opportunity, the other witnesses, to address some of those issues with some of the other questioning.

So, I yield to the ranking member, Mr. Kinzinger.

Mr. KINZINGER. Mr. Chairman, I am going to swap places with Ms. Wagner.

And I will say, from my side, if you could, let's be very disciplined on the 5-minute clock because of the hour.

But I will switch places with her, Mr. Chairman.

Mrs. WAGNER. I greatly appreciate the courtesy of the ranking member. I have to get to a Financial Services markup. And so, I am on roller skates today.

And thank you, Mr. Chairman, for organizing this hearing.

And thank our witnesses.

I had the great privilege of serving as a United States Ambassador in Western Europe, Ambassador Burns.

And, Ms. Conley, I would like to associate myself with your opening statement greatly.

Although we work closely with partners in the EU bloc, our goals are not always in step. We have historically relied on the United Kingdom to bridge gaps between the United States and EU countries.

Ms. Conley, how will the UK's departure from the EU affect EU policies in areas of interest to the United States, such as sanctions and trade and regulatory policies?

Ms. CONLEY. Thank you so much for that question.

The European Union will be greatly reduced, should the United Kingdom depart the EU. On an almost daily, hourly basis, the story is in constant change. But, all things being equal, the United Kingdom provides for the European Union a very export-oriented, very market-economy-driven—it is driving the European Union on foreign and security policy. And this will be a great loss to the European Union when the United Kingdom leaves.

If anything, we focus too much on the ins and outs of this extraordinary Brexit debate, but we have not focused enough in thinking about how much the EU will diminish, and in some ways how much the United Kingdom will diminish from being out of the European Union. This is why we are seeing in the EU the creation of what they are calling the Hanseatic League, which is Northern European economies that are trying to in some ways fill the space that the UK will leave in being market-driven, export-driven, much different from the Southern European economies.

Mrs. WAGNER. There will definitely be a void.

Ms. Wormuth, many of our European partners share the United States concerns regarding Russia's non-compliance with the Intermediate Range Nuclear Forces Treaty, or INF. The United States has since withdrawn from the INF with NATO support. I understand these recent developments worry some European stakeholders who fear resurgent U.S.-Russian competition will destabilize Europe. What is the future of arms control in Europe, and what role can European countries play in pressuring Russia back into compliance?

Ms. WORMUTH. Thank you for the question, Congresswoman.

I am very concerned about the future of the arms control regime in the wake of the decision to withdraw from INF, primarily because I am concerned about what it means for whether we extend the New START agreement in 2021, which I think is very much

in the interest of the United States, despite the fact that we are in a very low period with the Russians. So, figuring out how to extend that agreement, which is in our interest, I think is item No. 1 on that agenda. I think we need to continue to have our European allies and partners put pressure on Russia to work with us to extend that agreement and to call out their bad behavior, as they have in many instances.

I do think that part of having a credible deterrent is showing a unified front. I think the way the United States withdrew from INF did not shore up that unity inside of the alliance. So, going forward, we need to coordinate, so that we show a unified front.

Mrs. WAGNER. Thank you, Ms. Wormuth.

Ambassador Burns, during the cold war our alliances with European countries helped the United States maintain a durable balance of power vis-a-vis the Soviet Union, preventing catastrophic conflict, frankly, between the great powers. Today, we are seeing China step into the balance or into the place, I should say, that the Soviet Union once occupied. What role will Europe play in countering the rise of China?

Mr. BURNS. I think, as Heather Conley said, the Europeans seem to be disorganized and not united on how to respond to China, a great deal of divisiveness as the Chinese seek inroads. The Chinese are running and own the Port of Piraeus—

Mrs. WAGNER. Yes.

Mr. BURNS [continuing]. The biggest port in the Eastern Med; significant investments in the Balkans, now in Italy. So, the European Union needs to organize itself. It needs to develop a common policy because this is a major threat. And they understand that the military advantage that the United States has had since the Second World War will be at risk if in AI, machine learning, quantum computing, biotechnology, our government does not have the ability to keep up with the Chinese in the technological arms race. Europe is going to be part of that. Their labs, their tech companies, their research universities have to be with us and united in that.

So, I think that, on a NATO basis, China has become an issue. And in Ambassador Lute's report that I did with him, that is one of our recommendations: we have to think about China as a threat.

I would close on this, Congresswoman. General Milley said this morning when he testified up here on the Hill that he felt that Russia was still the great existential threat. I think we are facing two big authoritarian threats—

Mrs. WAGNER. I agree.

Mr. BURNS [continuing]. In Europe.

Mrs. WAGNER. I agree.

Mr. Chairman, my time has expired. Again, I thank the ranking member for his courtesy.

Mr. KEATING. Well, thank you, Representative. Thanks for bringing that point across because one of the highest-ranking members of the EU that we had private conversations with said, if we are on the course we are now, and we could look back 30 years from the future, we would find out by far the greatest threat is China and their activities.

I yield to Mr. Cicilline, who I understand might yield his position and time.

Mr. CICILLINE. My position, not my time.

[Laughter.]

Mr. COSTA. I thank my friend and colleague from Rhode Island for yielding this time. I have another subcommittee that is going on.

We have an all-star group of testifiers today, and I want to thank you all for your service to our country and your efforts there.

Chairman Keating, I want to commend you for this effort. I do agree that we are in a transitional time in world history, and I think this subcommittee will and can, if we do, play an important role in combination with our allies in Europe in being, in essence, the glue that reaffirms, as we have stated earlier, the importance of this transatlantic relationship.

Seventy years—70 years—of this history is the longest peacetime period in Europe in over 1,000 years. I am certain that the majority of Americans, certainly the majority of Europeans, do not think about that. Probably the majority of them do not even know that, that these institutions that we have helped create from NATO to the other efforts with the European Union and stabilization of that, the World Trade Organization—the list goes on—these are things we did not just for Europe; we did for ourselves. Countries do what is in their own interest. And this peace dividend that has resulted in this 70-year transatlantic partnership must be reaffirmed.

So, let me ask you a few questions here, and I just want to go quickly through it because of time.

Ambassador Burns, do you view the European Union as our adversary?

Mr. BURNS. No, they are our partner strategically.

Mr. COSTA. Ms. Wormuth, do you view the European Union as our adversary?

Ms. WORMUTH. No. I would affiliate myself with Ambassador Burns' view.

Mr. COSTA. Yes. And, Ms. Conley?

Ms. CONLEY. Absolutely not. The European Union is our great partner.

Mr. COSTA. And Hal Brands?

Mr. BRANDS. The European Union has provided the political and economic cohesion to go along with NATO's military cohesion.

Mr. COSTA. Right. And I think that some of the comments made here earlier—certainly there are wealthy countries in Europe that should do more in terms of their commitment, Germany being one of them. And we need to continue to push them, as the previous administrations have done. But there are constructive ways that you can do that. And I know the chairman here and I, as chairman of the Transatlantic Legislators' Dialogue, are committed to doing just that.

I am looking for the four of you to give us some thoughts and suggestions on how at this transitional time in history we can use these institutions, these committees, these efforts with the NATO PA and Transatlantic Policy Network, to be this glue that reaffirms that America still cares.

Because the comments that Chairman Keating made when I was at Brussels last month with him and others—these are questions that our European friends are asking, where is America? And they



are dealing with the same challenges that we are: populism, extremism, fear from immigration, racism, bigotry, antisemitism that not only is raising its head here, but in Europe as well.

So, what suggestions would you have in terms of using our legislative tools with our partners in Europe over the next 2 years? Ambassador Burns, do you want to begin, quickly?

Mr. BURNS. I would just say that Congress has a real opportunity here. If the administration is not willing to work with the Europeans on refugees or climate or Iran—and there is a question about whether or not the Trump administration actually sees the EU as a strategic partner—Congress can step forward, and these legislative exchanges are important.

Mr. COSTA. I think it has been very clear, the administration sees these relationships as transactional and does not really believe in multinational partnerships. Clearly, that is what they have exhibited. It is just a different view and it is jarring, I think, for this partnership.

Thirty years ago, the Berlin Wall fell. These are really historical things, if you think about it, and it is due, in part, to the success of this partnership I believe.

Other comments? Yes?

Ms. CONLEY. I would just add, I think, obviously, visiting often, traveling, speaking out, making sure that they are hearing other voices of support. I would also encourage you to think about how your district and the States can work more collaboratively with Europe, the sister city partnerships, economic relationships. If this cannot be a top-down approach, we have to stabilize and maintain it. Really energize your constituents to reach out to economic ties that bind, and continue to send the strong messages.

Mr. COSTA. And working with AmCham; there is also the private and the public sector. There are NGO's. There is a lot of things that are tools, Mr. Chairman, that I think we need to employ with our European colleagues as well.

My time has run out, but I do not know if any of you care to comment. In 2013, the equivalent of the Joint Chiefs of Staff of Russia, General Gerasimov, talked about a policy using democratic institutions, elections, to undermine the European Union and the U.S. as an economic force and as a military force, to play on those divisions. Think he has done a pretty good job so far with their limited hand?

Mr. KEATING. If I could, perhaps that could be answered in the course of the other questioning, too. If you could filter that in, it would be appreciated.

Thank you, Representative.

Mr. COSTA. Thank you.

Mr. KEATING. I now call on Ranking Member Kinzinger.

Mr. KINZINGER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thanks for enforcing the 5 minutes, because I know a lot of us have stuff to do this afternoon.

Let me just say again, all of you, I appreciate you being here. I think this is a fantastic hearing. I think there is a lot that unifies us.

I have heard a few shots kind of coming from the other side about the administration. Let me be clear. I think the administra-

tion appreciates Europe and sees Europe as a friend. I think the administration appreciates NATO and sees NATO as a friend. But sometimes Europe and NATO do not like being called out when they are not doing what they need to do. And, I mean, it is a reality.

Back post-World War II, Europe was in a position where they needed the United States, basically, to provide a whole lot, and there was a lot of benefit to us. Now we are in a position where we have a lot of very strong countries, and we all have to rely on each other for a security situation.

I think it is important to note that we get as much out of NATO as NATO gets out of us. So, I think it is important. This is not just a United States doing a favor for Europe situation. But, that said, the fact that we all kind of have something to play, I do not think there is anything wrong with calling out Europe when they are falling short in those areas.

I think looking at the issue with Russia, as the chairman mentioned and others mentioned, Russia is a huge problem. We see it in our own hemisphere as we get reports that Russia has landed troops in Venezuela, a socialist nation that is failing its people that are starving to death. And Russia, once again, appears to be using its military, as it did in Syria, to hold a terrible person in power because it benefits them in power.

So, that is why pushing back against Russia through NATO in Europe, taking away energy as a weapon for them, pushing back against them in our own hemisphere, which we have neglected for too long, is very important. And we need our friends in NATO to step up with us. We need them to spend a little money with us, too.

Ms. Conley, I want to touch on Germany with you and I want to ask you a question. Germany's willingness to continue the construction of the Nord Stream 2 pipeline and to connect 5G with the Chinese telecom firm Huawei is only a few of the questionable choices that they are making. What does it say about the strength of the U.S.-European alliance when Germany, the largest economy in Europe, is taking actions that are counterproductive to our joint security interests?

Ms. CONLEY. Thank you, Congressman.

That is exactly what we do; we work on tough problems. The challenge is Nord Stream 2 follows Nord Stream 1, and we should have been much stronger on Nord Stream 1. I think there is an awareness in the German government that they cannot proceed as to how they wanted to. Chancellor Merkel has said that she wants to ensure that Ukraine does have transit, gas transit, before the end of this.

But you are absolutely right, this is where we have to roll up our sleeves and work very closely with them, not scream at them through Ambassadors, but work constructively with them. They respond to a parliament. They are just like our system. They can demand change. We let this go on for too long.

I would argue we have been sort of in a benign neglect phase for over a decade. We are very transactional. We ask one thing, and then, we will come back and ask for another. We do not engage in a sustained way.

If we are concerned about Nord Stream 2, we had better be as concerned about TurkStream because TurkStream is a reconstituted South Stream. So, we have to look at this very holistically.

The 5G issue, you are absolutely right, Europe is falling very far behind in IT infrastructure. They know that. And what they are trying to do is make sure the U.S. companies are affected to try to level the playing field. We have to join with them, and if we do not join with them, they will be very susceptible to our adversaries—

Mr. KINZINGER. Yes, I agree. And, look, this has been an issue that has come under Republican and Democratic administrations prior. We have let this kind of relationship sleep. We have basically said, OK, the fact that NATO exists is enough, and we have not taken into account these creeping problems that we are now having to deal with head-on. But I think we need to be careful not to assume that, when we take on these problems head-on that atrophied for so long under us, that is not disappreciating NATO or hating Europe that we are finding them as competitors. This is us saying, look, the future of the United States and the future of Europe is relying on this.

Let me just ask you in only the 30 seconds left—Germany continues to be the member that does the most to stifle NATO growth. Year-in and year-out, they are near the bottom of defense spending. Why does Germany continue to be such a problem when it comes to defense spending and in reaching the 2 percent GDP target?

And I gave you 18 seconds. You can topline it and figure the rest later.

Ms. CONLEY. So, I am deeply concerned not only in the State of the Bundeswehr and the lack of functional capabilities in the maritime as well as their air and land power, but please understand we are talking about different scales of economies. So, when you talk about the German economy, it is not the Estonian economy. So, when we put this marker at 2 percent, we put ourselves into this corner where we benchmark at 2 percent. You can spend 2 percent to defend against another NATO ally, which is the Greek posture, or we can have allies that have capabilities that the U.S. can use.

Mr. KINZINGER. It would be good if Germany had one of those.

Ms. CONLEY. Well, Germany absolutely has to increase their defense spending, and we have to work very closely with them on Bundeswehr reform. But the Germans are also the lead framework nation in Lithuania and the NATO battalion. They are contributing, but we have to work much harder and hold them to account, I agree with you.

Mr. KINZINGER. I think we all agree.

With that, I am going to yield back just because of time. Thank you very much.

Mr. KEATING. OK. Thank you.

Now I would like to recognize the very patient Representative from Rhode Island, Mr. Cicilline.

Mr. CICILLINE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you again to our witnesses for your really helpful testimony.

Ambassador Burns, I want to start with you. As I mentioned in my opening statement, you referred to the challenges faced by NATO at 70, particularly as it relates to the failure or absence of

leadership from the U.S. President, and how unusual a circumstance that is. Although we are trying to do as much as we can as Members of Congress to reaffirm our support and our understanding of the importance of this relationship—we did a resolution which was overwhelmingly supported in a bipartisan way; we are having this hearing—my sense is still that world leaders look to the words and actions of the President and not the Congress. And so, I am wondering if you could speak a little bit about what the absence of American Presidential leadership in this moment has meant in terms of the future of NATO and what we can do to undo some of the damage that is being done by the President in this regard.

Mr. BURNS. Thank you, Congressman.

One of the most striking things that Ambassador Lute and I heard—we took 6 months, interviewed 60 leaders, current and former on both sides of the Atlantic—one of the most striking things was that a lot of Europeans said there could not be next week a head-of-government summit here in Washington to celebrate the 70th anniversary because the European leaders and some of the Americans were not quite sure if President Trump would blow up the summit with rhetorical attack on NATO, the way he did the last two NATO summits in 2018 and 2017. That is a sad reflection.

I think what we have lost is we have never had a President who is so ambivalent, and this is a kind characterization, about NATO. Article 5 is the key. A lot of people have been saying, watch what the administration does, not what it says. But, for deterrence to work, your words have to be clear and they have to be credible, and they have to be firm. If you backslide on Article 5, that does give an opening to an adversary like Vladimir Putin. It may not be a conventional attack of the type that we might have feared, and we did fear, in the 1950's and 1960's, but now a hybrid attack or a cyberattack on our election system. And so, I think we have lost a lot. And we need the next President, whenever that President appears after a vote of the American people, to really dig us out of a hole.

Congress does have an opening right now. Ironic for someone who is a creature of the executive branch—I served my entire career in the executive branch—to ask Congress to exercise its constitutional responsibilities. But I can tell you, what I have heard from Europeans is the resolutions you passed reaffirming American support for NATO did make a difference for them. And I think we saw that in Munich as well.

Mr. CICILLINE. Thank you, Ambassador.

I think one of the other things that we have heard a lot about is, obviously, the shared democratic values that both led to the creation of NATO and it has sustained it for these 70 years. But I think many of us are very concerned about, and you have written about this, the democratic institutions that are weakening, particularly in Hungary and Poland. I think it is also quite a stretch to claim that Turkey embodies democratic values. Populist parties are growing all across Europe, and you, Ambassador Burns, highlighted this in your report, this democratic backsliding as a cancer within NATO.

And so, I am curious to know what you think Congress can do to shore up the foundations of democracy at the core of the transatlantic alliance and what your assessment is of the State of democracy in Europe. And obviously, any of the other witnesses who want to contribute to that, answer.

Mr. BURNS. Two big challenges. The biggest challenge in Europe right now, the existential challenge is the rise of the anti-democratic populists, Marine Le Pen, Geert Wilders, Alternative for Deutschland. They are contesting the European parliamentary elections. They may, unfortunately, do well in them this spring.

Very important for the United States to be on the right side of that issue. And there is a perception, more than a perception, a strong belief that the President has embraced Viktor Orban in Hungary and the Polish government, and Salvini, the right-leaning leader in the Italian coalition. We should be behind the Christian democrats and the social democratic leaders, the true small "d" democrats in Europe like Angela Merkel, and we are not right now. And that is hurting us.

On the NATO side, I have to tell you, when Ambassador Lute and I suggested in our report that NATO look into the democratic practices of Hungary, Poland, and Italy, there was widespread opposition among most of the people in NATO. They say, "It will divide us." But NATO is not just a military alliance; it is a political alliance. The second sentence of the Washington Treaty is about our values, rule of law, democracy, human rights. We have got to pay attention to that. There ought to be an annual assessment of whether countries are backsliding. There have to be some penalties, but right now there is no agreement in NATO that we should do that.

Mr. CICILLINE. Thank you. My time has expired.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I yield back.

Mr. KEATING. Thank you, Representative.

And the chair recognizes the gentleman from Indiana, Greg Pence.

Mr. PENCE. Thank you, Chairman Keating and Ranking Member Kinzinger. Thank you for holding this important meeting.

I thank the panel for their service to this country, and thank you for being here today and providing a lot of information.

In some of your written testimony, Ambassador Burns and Ms. Conley, you stated, NATO deters Russian President Putin from invading or seeking to destabilize our NATO allies in Eastern Europe. And two, the United States must return to Europe economically through enhanced trade and investment partnerships.

I would like to discuss these items and switch gears a little bit from some of the things we have been talking about and talk about energy security. According to our congressional Research Service, the EU remains highly dependent on Russia for natural gas. More than 40 percent of total European gas imports are from Russia, and some EU members are almost totally dependent on Russian gas, as you know.

At the same time, Russia has demonstrated its willingness to use its energy resources to further its foreign policy. For example, Russia cutoff gas supplies to Europe for periods in 2006 and 2009, and has repeatedly manipulated flows through Ukraine.

NATO is not blind to this challenge. According to NATO, and I quote, “NATO’s role in energy security was first defined in 2008 at the Bucharest summit and has since been strengthened.”

My question, is NATO, America’s greatest security asset, doing enough to enhance energy security in the alliance, and what more should they be doing, if not? And I ask each of the panelists.

Ms. CONLEY. Congressman, thank you so much for that question.

I think NATO certainly is at the center of thinking about security very widely and has created a center of excellence to focus on energy security. But, ironically, it is the European Union that has the most input into demanding diversification of European energy. The European Union’s Third Energy Package tries to break the upstream and the downstream requirements and tries to seek and ensure diversification. It has had successes; yet, it has had failures such as Nord Stream 2.

We have to continue to work very closely with our allies to make sure that this cycle of dependency—and it is not just oil and gas; there is a malign economic influence that also comes as part of the dominance of, whether it is Gazprom or Rosneft, in NATO countries. We have to break that cycle of dependence. And this is exactly where NATO and EU cooperation is absolutely essential. NATO is the security provider, but the EU has the economic tools to try to help break this cycle of dependency.

Mr. BRANDS. I would agree with that. I would just add, to the extent that the United States can promote or facilitate the export of LNG and other energy exports, that can provide a useful counterweight to Russian influence as well.

The point I would make in terms of addressing this is that it is important for the United States to apply pressure and apply encouragement, but to do so in a constructive way. Because if it comes across as hostility or outright condemnation, that turns this issue or the defense spending issue into a referendum on the current political leadership of the United States, which is not an argument that we will win in Europe right now.

Ms. WORMUTH. And just to amplify that, I very much agree with what Ms. Conley said about Germany and its need to step forward in the area of defense. But, unfortunately, I think because so much of the German government feels like they have been singled out by the current administration, they are letting that color their decisions. And it almost feels as if part of deciding not to spend as much on defense is a reflection of feeling like they have been singled out unfairly.

And so, I think we really need to get to a place where we are pushing the Europeans, as the ranking member said, but we are doing that against the backdrop of the complete understanding of the positive relationship that we have and how much our European allies bring to the table. I think without grounding those hard conversations in that backdrop, it is very easy to have those conversations be unconstructive.

Mr. BURNS. Congressman, NATO thought a lot about energy security at the beginning and the middle part of the cold war decades ago. We had to in terms of our contingency planning; less so now. NATO should think more about this, but I think, realistically, the EU is going to be the focal point of the institution that the U.S.

can work with most effectively. U.S. LNG, Norwegian, Algerian gas are substitutes, and we have got to work with the EU to get there.

Mr. PENCE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I yield back.

Mr. KEATING. Thank you, Representative.

The chair now recognizes the vice chair of the committee, Representative Abigail Spanberger.

Ms. SPANBERGER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am honored to serve as the vice chair of this subcommittee as we continue to reinforce our shared fundamental values of international cooperation, mutual security, and democracy.

My question today for the witnesses—and I thank you very much for joining us—relates to trade policy. Recently, we have seen the White House invoke restrictive trade policies, particularly the imposition of tariffs in response to trade imbalances and in the name of national security. Yet, it is the farmers, business owners, and everyday people across my district, central Virginia's 7th district, and across the country who are hurt both by these tariffs and the retaliatory tariffs countries have imposed in response.

Mr. Brands, in your view, and, Ambassador Burns—and to the other witnesses if you would care to respond as well—in your view, are these tariffs serving our national security interests or are there other, more effective diplomatic avenues for resolving trade disagreements that would not have this outsized negative impact on our own citizens that we should consider pursuing instead?

Mr. BRANDS. I do not believe that the tariffs are serving the national interests. And I would simply add that I think they are undercutting U.S. goals in other respects as well.

One thing I would give the administration credit for is trying to bring pressure on China to address its unfair trade practices, but that will be much more effective if we are not isolating ourselves by picking trade fights with our allies at the same time.

Ms. SPANBERGER. Thank you.

Mr. BURNS. Congresswoman, I would just say it is complicated. We have always competed with the EU in trade. We are going to have our differences, but we need to fight fairly.

The smarter play for us right now is to combine forces with the EU and Japan and South Korea against China. The President is fighting. I think he has made a lot of good points about China's predatory practices. We need that EU support, and right now we have got a divided team on our side.

I would also say, in the mid to long term, we should go back to thinking about a U.S.-EU free trade agreement. Nine hundred million people, the two largest democratic spaces in the world, and the two largest economies in the world, and this could help our economy and it could help us to confront the predatory nature of the threat from the Chinese.

Ms. SPANBERGER. And given the tenor that so many of these conversations have had related to our trade policy and related to our engagement with our allies, what do you see the path forward to dial back some of this aggression, to put us back on the right path, and potentially move toward, as you said, sir, combining forces, particularly in the face of the greater challenge, which is China?

Mr. BURNS. You know what we do not have right now is a productive relationship between the American President and the Ger-

man Chancellor. President Obama and President Bush, George W. Bush, both had very productive, frank relationships with Angela Merkel. You could work things out with her because she is the strongest leader; to a lesser extent with President Macron of France. We do not have those relationships. The President and the Chancellor, I am told, do not talk often. If you do not have a conversation between the two most important alliance leaders on trade, then you get into situations, very unfortunate, where we are threatening a trade war.

And I think a lot of people fear, when the U.S.-China trade war ends, that the President is going to go after the EU for our next trade war, and that is going to hurt everything that I think the four of us have talked about this morning. It is going to have an impact on the military and political issues as well.

Ms. SPANBERGER. Thank you.

Ms. CONLEY. I would just add, Congresswoman, that we do, like in the other areas, we do have very big differences with the European Union on a whole range of trade issues from data privacy and protection and agriculture. We cannot shy away from those. We have to dig into those.

But placing tariffs on steel, aluminum, threatening tariffs on auto parts, we are self-harming ourselves. And exactly what we should have done is create a Japan-EU-U.S. full-spectrum approach to China on State-owned enterprises, the whole sweep on the AI issues. We could have had a dramatic impact on China's behavior. We just are choosing to fight our allies and our adversaries at the same time. We need to husband our allies and go after the same thing.

Ms. SPANBERGER. Thank you very much for your time today. And I really appreciated your comment about fighting our allies and our adversaries at the same time. I think that is counterproductive. And I thank you for your comments this afternoon.

I yield back.

Mr. KEATING. Thank you, Representative, and thank you for that line of questioning because, as a person in the last Congress that cofounded the then-called TTIP Caucus, there is no question—and I reached a great reception, as a matter of fact, when we brought this up when we were in Europe just recently—that if we work together, even if we are not successful in standardizing even the majority of products we have, we will have one-half of the world's GDP. If we really want to be effective with China, we should deal from strength. So, I appreciate that line of questioning. It was well received by the leaders there. I am not unmindful of obstacles we would have, but at least we will be going down the right road. So, thank you.

And now, the gentleman from Mississippi, thank you for joining us. Representative Michael Guest, welcome to the committee, and thank you for being here.

Mr. GUEST. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I want to turn my focus just for a few minutes on NATO spending. And I think there was, during some opening statements made by you, Ms. Wormuth, that, currently, of the 29 NATO countries, eight have met the 2 percent GDP, which is the NATO spending standards that have been set, is that correct?



Ms. WORMUTH. Congressman, it is actually five currently now who are meeting the 2 percent target.

Mr. GUEST. Only five?

Ms. WORMUTH. That is correct.

Mr. GUEST. And you said that we are on track by 2024 to have additional countries that would meet that 2 percent GDP. What number?

Ms. WORMUTH. I think we are expecting it to be somewhere between 14 and 15. I mean, these are projections, but it will be a majority of the 29 members.

Mr. GUEST. So, we will still have, roughly, 14 or 15 then that do not meet that standard?

Ms. WORMUTH. That is possible.

Mr. GUEST. And some information that I saw—and tell me if any of you believe this is accurate or not—but some research said that, in 2017, the U.S. paid for over 70 percent of the combined defense expenditures of NATO. Does that number sound accurate to you?

Ms. WORMUTH. Well, I think it is easy to mix up the math because there's NATO common funding. There is sort of NATO budgets, and then, there are the individual national defense budgets. So, I am not sure which statistic that speaks to.

Mr. GUEST. All right. Let me ask, I guess my question is, since we currently have only five of 29 countries that meet that, even in 2024, we expect only to have, roughly, half—you believe 14 to 15—what can we do, as a Congress? I guess two things. What can we do, and then, what should we do to make sure that other NATO members are meeting their obligation?

Ambassador, I will start with you, and I will work down the table from left to right.

Mr. BURNS. You know, the real problem is in the parliaments of these countries, particularly in Germany where the Bundestag does not want to spend the money. And they have, as you know, a surplus in their budget. So, speaking to them legislature to legislature I think is something that our members, Republican and Democrat, should do.

Second, there is actually no common standard to how to measure 2 percent across the alliance. Individual allies measure it differently. We need a clean, regular metric that everyone can agree on. And I would say expand the 2 percent category to include spending on cyber defense and spending on intelligence, because some of the members, that is their comparative advantage. That is where they could help us. And right now, we are not counting what they are spending under 2 percent. This is a major problem, but it really has to focus on Germany as well.

Mr. GUEST. So, is what you are saying that we need to expand the categories that we consider counting toward that 2 percent? So, we would not be putting money necessarily 2 percent GDP into soldiers and battlefield equipment, but that money could be counted in additional spending? Is that your suggestion?

Mr. BURNS. That is a suggestion that Ambassador Lute and I made in our recent report, and it is striking to know that there is not a common assessment of how this is all measured. Some countries include pensions for military veterans and some countries do not, for instance. But cyber and intelligence, that is very important

to counter the Russian threat, which is the most pernicious threat to NATO now.

Mr. GUEST. Ms. Wormuth, do you have any suggestion what we can do to get the majority, and ultimately all, of the countries to that 2 percent GDP amount?

Ms. WORMUTH. I do, Congressman. I think, first, we have to continue to speak constructively and do the hard work and have the hard conversations with our NATO allies about the importance of meeting that target. The projection today is that, by 2024, a majority of the 29 will get there, but we still have time and we can work with those countries to get more of them closer to the target. And again, that, I think, means having those difficult conversations against a backdrop of recognizing that we are all in this together.

Another point I would make is that 2 percent is about the input. What is as important, if not more important, is the output. What are we buying with that? I do not want to see our NATO allies spend more money on their pensions and on some of their personnel accounts. I want to see them buying new equipment. I want to see them investing in research and development. And I would say the NATO countries are doing better. Part of the Wales Defense Investment Pledge was to have 20 percent of their defense budgets go to new equipment and R&D, and several members are reaching that target.

So, I think we need to be focusing on have those hard conversations and have conversations about what they are buying and making sure what they are buying is useful for the alliance and for deterring Russia and dealing with the range of other challenges NATO faces.

Mr. GUEST. Dr. Brands, do you have any suggestions?

Mr. BRANDS. I would endorse all this. I would also say, "single out the high-performers for praise and recognition."

Mr. GUEST. And then, finally—I know I am about over time—but, Ms. Conley, I will give you a chance to answer the question.

Ms. CONLEY. Yes, thank you.

And I think just to pull on Dr. Brands, I mean, we need to do more with those allies that are contributing more. More for more, is how I would put it.

Also, appreciate that our allies provide host nation support in the basing, and that is a contribution. Many times when the U.S. invests in European security, there is a rebate. NATO, through its common funds, reimburses the alliance. So, it is not as clear and simple.

But you are absolutely right, every leader at the Wales summit made a commitment to 2 percent to 2024. Now, like this Congress, they could not make a commitment of funding to 2024. They are democratically elected. But the trajectory has to be there. The capabilities have to be there. The message has been received, but, boy, we have to keep their feet to the fire and accept no excuses.

Mr. GUEST. Thank you.

Mr. Chairman, I apologize for going over and I yield back.

Mr. KEATING. As we conclude, I just want to institute quickly a second round, but make it more of a lightning round. I do not know if you have planes to catch or what your transportation issues might be, but a couple of issues just for brief comment. And I will

also give my colleagues any chance to put those questions in the queue as well.

But we have not touched on Turkey and S-400, especially from its NATO implications. This is very serious. I did not want this hearing to go by without bringing up that issue because I do think it presents a very grave threat to our alliance if this continues. So, if you could comment on Turkey and the possible S-400 purchases from Russia?

Ms. WORMUTH. Chairman, I am very concerned about the Turkish decision to acquire the S-400, and so concerned that I think, frankly, we are in a position where we need to reconsider going forward with the F-35s to Turkey. We cannot have our planes essentially plugging into an adversary air defense system. We have been having this conversation with Turkey for some years now, but it feels like we are at the tipping point. But I certainly would not be comfortable going forward with the F-35s.

Mr. BURNS. I agree with Secretary Wormuth. The statements, recent statements, by Chairman Dunford and Supreme Allied Commander Scaparrotti I think have been straight on target. And that is, we cannot integrate this system into our alliance. And so, I agree with Secretary Wormuth. If the Turks proceed with this—and Erdogan is threatening to do that—then I think the F-35 should be at risk. How can we have close strategic coordination if they are importing a Russian system in the NATO ally defenses?

Ms. CONLEY. Chairman, I would just argue that the S-400 picture is a symptom of a much broader and larger strategic picture that Turkey is turning away from Euro-Atlanticism—its approach to Venezuela, its approach to Iran, its rapprochement with Russia, some of the instability in the Aegean Sea. This deserves a hearing from this subcommittee to look at the totality.

And much of NATO's containment strategic rationale was anchoring Turkey and Greece, Euro and the Euro-Atlantic community. This anchor is starting to push in a different direction.

I would also argue, for the Congressman's comment, Hungary, you need a hearing dedicated to Hungary and understanding what is going on and whether we can maintain NATO classified information with that country. Family first. These are important countries. We are losing them. We have to find a strategy and a way forward to return them to the Euro-Atlantic community.

Mr. KEATING. Great. Well, I would like to thank the witnesses and say this has been a day of interruptions with the roll calls, but this has been so important.

We had very good participation from the subcommittee members running in and out. A couple of them had to leave. And the members of the committee, those members or other members, will have the opportunity to ask additional questions in writing. And we ask the witnesses to please respond to those questions. And the hearing record will be open for 10 business days in order to receive those responses.

Mr. KEATING. Thank you so much for being here. This is just the beginning of an important journey. I think in the short time we had to discuss this we covered so much ground, but are left with so many more issues to pursue.

With that, I will adjourn this hearing and thank you for your participation.

[Whereupon, at 4:10 p.m., the subcommittee was adjourned.]

APPENDIX

**SUBCOMMITTEE HEARING NOTICE  
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS  
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6128**

**Subcommittee on Europe, Eurasia, Energy, and the Environment**

**William R. Keating (D-MA), Chairman**

March 26, 2019

**TO: MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

You are respectfully requested to attend an OPEN hearing of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, to be held by the Subcommittee on Europe, Eurasia, Energy, and the Environment in Room 2172 of the Rayburn House Office Building (and available live on the Committee website at <https://foreignaffairs.house.gov/>):

**DATE:** Tuesday, March 26, 2019

**TIME:** 2:00 pm

**SUBJECT:** The Historic American Alliance with Europe

**WITNESS:** The Honorable Nicholas Burns  
Roy and Barbara Goodman Family Professor of the Practice of Diplomacy and International Relations  
John F. Kennedy School of Government  
Harvard University  
*(Former Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, U.S. Department of State)*

The Honorable Christine Wormuth  
Director  
International Security and Defense Policy Center  
RAND Corporation  
*(Former Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, U.S. Department of Defense)*

Hal Brands, Ph.D.  
Henry A. Kissinger Distinguished Professor  
School of Advanced International Studies  
Johns Hopkins University  
Senior Fellow at the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments  
*(Former Special Assistant to the Secretary of Defense for Strategic Planning)*

Ms. Heather Conley  
Senior Vice President, Europe, Eurasia, and the Arctic  
Director, Europe Program  
Center for Strategic & International Studies  
*(Former Deputy Assistant Secretary of State in the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs, U.S. Department of State)*

**By Direction of the Chairman**

The Committee on Foreign Affairs seeks to make its facilities accessible to persons with disabilities. If you are in need of special accommodations, please call 202/225-5921 at least four business days in advance of the event, whenever practicable. Questions with regard to special accommodations in general (including availability of Committee materials in alternative formats and assistive listening devices) may be directed to the Committee.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

MINUTES OF SUBCOMMITTEE ON Europe, Eurasia, Energy, and the Environment HEARING

Day Tuesday Date 3/26/19 Room 2172

Starting Time 2:45p Ending Time 4:10p

Recesses \_\_\_\_\_ (\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_) (\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_) (\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_) (\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_) (\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_) (\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_)

Presiding Member(s)

*Chairman Keating*

Check all of the following that apply:

Open Session

Electronically Recorded (taped)

Executive (closed) Session

Stenographic Record

Televised

TITLE OF HEARING:

*The Historic American Alliance with Europe*

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

*Keating, Cicilline, Costa, Spanberger, Gonzalez, Kinzinger, Wagner, Fitzpatrick, Pence, Guest, Burchett*

NON-SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: (Mark with an \* if they are not members of full committee.)

HEARING WITNESSES: Same as meeting notice attached? Yes  No

(If "no", please list below and include title, agency, department, or organization.)

STATEMENTS FOR THE RECORD: (List any statements submitted for the record.)

*Ambassador Nicholas Burns  
Ms. Christine Wormuth  
Dr. Hal Brands  
Ms. Heather Conley  
NATO at Seventy (page 11 of the hearing transcript)*

TIME SCHEDULED TO RECONVENE \_\_\_\_\_

or  
TIME ADJOURNED 4:10p

  
Subcommittee Staff Associate

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS**  
*EUROPE, EURASIA, ENERGY, AND THE ENVIRONMENT SUBCOMMITTEE HEARING*

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