

## Support Grows for Keeping Stronger U.S. Force in Europe

Timothy Vuono

U.S. military leaders in Europe are considering scaling back current plans for a significant drawdown of U.S. forces stationed there, with a view to maintaining a stronger American military presence in Europe than previously envisaged. The focus of this latest review is primarily on the number of U.S. Army soldiers who should remain in Europe.

Planned reductions under the 2004 Global Defense Posture Review would cut U.S. force levels from 95,100 to 62,800 by 2012, leaving only 28,000 soldiers in two combat brigades, seven other supporting brigades, and various headquarters. A third brigade was planned to rotate regularly from different U.S.-based units to support training commitments with east European militaries at sites in Romania and Bulgaria, although this has yet to occur.

The commanders believe circumstances have changed enough since the original analysis of overseas basing to warrant a new “math equation” for the number and type of U.S. ground forces based in Germany. Decisions on several key moves may be necessary within the next four to six months owing to the long preparation times needed for basing plan adjustments.

In recent congressional testimony, General John Craddock, commander of U.S. European Command (EUCOM) and NATO, acknowledged that his staff conducted a preliminary study to determine if forward deployed forces available to EUCOM were adequate for their tasks and missions. The study appears to confirm that the planned forces will not be sufficient to support essential alliance security cooperation requirements, as well as ongoing rotations to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Supporters of retaining more forces in Europe point to several reasons for reviewing many of the assumptions underlying the established European basing strategy. These include expanded requirements from the 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review for U.S. forces to “build partnership capacity” by training with potential coalition members, while also supporting deployments to areas of “persistent conflict” worldwide; a renewed need for U.S. leadership in NATO as the alliance adapts to its new role in Afghanistan and establishes the NATO Response Force; lingering concerns over the Balkans and other potential flashpoints in Africa and the Caspian Sea region; and the planned 65,000-soldier increase in the overall active-duty size of the U.S. Army.

According to General David McKiernan, commander of U.S. Army Europe, “The debate is really over whether our requirements are best met by a forward presence capability or rotational units from the United States. What is the right balance? Location counts...and from Europe you have a strategic hedge, with most of these forces still available” for global deployment. For McKiernan, the key question is whether the United States has the right “stance” in Europe—that is, “the best combination of capabilities and geographical positioning.”

*(continued on page 2)*



U.S., Bulgarian and Romanian soldiers on a joint training exercise.

## Why Moscow Is Threatening to Suspend Conventional Forces Treaty

Stephen J. Flanagan

Following a series of tirades earlier in the year against U.S. unilateralism and plans to deploy missile defense facilities in Poland and the Czech Republic, President Valdimir Putin announced that Russia intended to suspend participation in the 1990 Treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) by mid-December. The timing and content of Putin’s decree seems designed to put pressure on NATO to implement previously agreed and additional changes to the treaty and to warn NATO allies of a further deterioration in relations if the United States proceeds with its European missile defense plan.

The Russian Foreign Ministry said Putin’s move was due to “unacceptable circumstances,” including the failure to adjust certain treaty limitations to NATO’s expansion, planned U.S. military deployments to Romania and Bulgaria, which have caused long-term strategic concerns in Moscow, and the fact that Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania have not adhered to the treaty. At an extraordinary meeting of CFE parties called by Moscow in mid-June, Russia had demanded satisfaction on these issues to restore the treaty’s viability and had also sought elimination of the so-called flank limits that restrict concentrations of forces and heavy equipment in border regions between NATO and Russia.

The CFE Treaty was a product of the Cold War, and its core provisions reflect the two-bloc structure of that period. The original treaty established ceilings on five categories of equipment (tanks, armored combat vehicles, artillery, attack helicopters, and combat aircraft). The

*(continued on page 2)*

*Atlantic Outlook* is a newsletter of the CSIS Europe Program, including the New European Democracies Project and the Initiative for a Renewed Transatlantic Partnership. Edited by Reginald Dale, it provides news, analysis, and commentary on political, economic, and security developments in Europe, the EU and the United States, and in transatlantic relations. It also highlights forthcoming and recent CSIS Europe Program events. Contact Derek Mix: [dmix@csis.org](mailto:dmix@csis.org).

## SUPPORTS GROW FOR KEEPING STRONGER U.S. FORCE *(from page 1)*

By November, fully half of all U.S. Army forces stationed in Europe will be deployed to Iraq or Afghanistan, temporarily leaving fewer soldiers than would remain at the end of the planned drawdown in 2012. McKiernan's recommendation to Craddock is to retain about 40,000 U.S. Army soldiers in Europe—12,000 more than originally planned. They would be structured in four army brigades and a division headquarters. One consequence would be that forces could be sent more frequently for training in Bulgaria and Romania, but for shorter periods than originally planned—an outcome likely to receive mixed reactions from the Bulgarian and Romanian governments, which have welcomed an increased U.S. military presence in their countries.

Although the EUCOM analysis focused on army forces, it may also recommend retention of additional air force support airlift capacity in Europe and rotational naval forces for European missions. That would mean a total U.S. military presence stationed in Europe of up to 75,000.

While proponents of the current drawdown agree that the United States must have some forward-deployed forces to support requirements, they question the basis and substance of the new European basing proposal. Some Pentagon officials are concerned that any adjustments to proposed U.S. force levels in Europe will disrupt a carefully orchestrated global stationing plan. They are reluctant to alter past decisions without an equally thorough analysis of the strategic, political, and fiscal implications for all regions.

Supporters of the renewed assessment argue, however, that future troop basing plans should take into account warming U.S.-European relations, which are particularly evident in Germany. With federal government support, three German states—Rheinland-Pfalz, Hessen, and Bavaria—are offering numerous incentives to retain more U.S. forces, including land expansion deals and build-to-lease arrangements that could significantly offset basing costs. Rheinland-Pfalz investors have gone so far as to build an initial 700 housing units for U.S. forces without any formal commitments. The combination of incentives and existing infrastruc-

ture in Germany would mean the United States would have to make only minimal extra investments in military construction.

A more general issue underlying the debate is the fundamental question of the U.S.-European military relationship. The retention of more U.S. ground forces in Europe could reinvigorate an Atlantic Alliance that is still struggling to clarify its strategic purpose and operational posture. Habitual and consistent relationships between military forces help build and reinforce diplomatic, political, cultural, and commercial ties. The success of NATO in Afghanistan and future missions hinges on preparatory training and coordination. The credibility of U.S. leadership in the alliance depends not only on America's ability to support operations from Europe, but also on regular and routine participation in enduring security cooperation activities that are most effectively supported by forward-based forces.

In light of all these considerations, momentum for revisiting the number and type of U.S. ground forces based in Europe is growing. The Pentagon's Joint Staff recently formed a working group to examine the concerns and proposals from military commanders. The group intends to develop options for senior Pentagon officials to consider in response to the recommendations from the commanders in Europe this fall.

*Colonel Timothy Vuono is a U.S. Army military fellow with the CSIS International Security Program. This article reflects his views, not necessarily those of the Department of Defense.*

## WHY MOSCOW IS THREATENING *(from page 1)*

treaty ceilings, zonal restrictions, and verification and transparency measures sought to limit capabilities to launch surprise attacks or major offensive operations. A 1992 agreement established national limits on military personnel, and the flank limits were adjusted in 1996.

At a 1999 Istanbul summit, the parties agreed to adapt the treaty to take account of the end of Europe's East-West division while allowing its most useful provisions to continue in modified form. The changes would replace the earlier bloc ceilings with national and territorial limits on conventional arms and equipment and allow temporary exceptions to the limits for exercises and short-term deployments. The adapted CFE Treaty would address some of Moscow's concerns about an imbalance with NATO but also increase transparency and strengthen the principle of host-nation consent to any stationing of foreign forces.

NATO and most other governments conditioned their ratification of the adapted treaty on implementation of a package of Russian political commitments undertaken at the Istanbul summit. Moscow pledged to withdraw by a date certain its forces from Georgia and Moldova—including soldiers and a large ammunition depot in the breakaway Transnistria region. While most Russian forces have left Georgia, the withdrawals from Moldova have stalled. NATO governments still favor the adapted treaty, but only if Russia fulfills its commitments.

For the moment, Russia is still implementing the treaty. It engaged in the July data exchange required under the treaty's verification provisions and is allowing and participating in on-site inspections. Moreover, the Russian statement made clear that Moscow was not closing the door to further dialogue with the NATO countries. So far, Putin's gambit has failed to divide the alliance, if that was its intention. Washington and its allies have affirmed their commitment to resolve the impasse and are exploring diplomatic options. German foreign minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier has offered to host talks in Berlin in early October to "create the conditions for a concrete dialogue."

Tensions between NATO and Moscow could rise, however, if these issues are not settled. Peaceful relations and budget constraints since the end of the Cold War have assured that no participating state has come close to the treaty's ceilings on military equipment and personnel. These limits, however, coupled with extensive verification and transparency measures, have enhanced stability in the Euro-Atlantic region by maintaining predictability and openness in conventional military operations. If Russia proceeds with suspension, these benefits will be lost, because Moscow has said it will stop providing information on its military forces and discontinue inspections. Russia is unlikely to exceed overall force ceilings, but it could concentrate forces in its flank region in order to put pressure on Georgia or other neighbors.

*(continued on page 3)*

## RECENT AND UPCOMING EVENTS

**June 25**—Conference in Bucharest on economic development in the Black Sea region hosted by the CSIS New European Democracies Project, the Romanian Chamber of Commerce, and the Foundation for Democracy, Culture, and Liberty. Participants included Romania's ministers of foreign affairs and finance and key business representatives.

**June 27**—President Toomas Hendrik Ilves of Estonia addressed a CSIS Statesmen's Forum on the definition of "New Europe," following an introduction by Zbigniew Brzezinski, CSIS trustee and counselor. Moderated by Janusz Bugajski, director, CSIS New European Democracies Project.

**September 6**—Discussion led by Slovak minister of defense Frantisek Kasicky on security challenges facing the Central and Eastern European

(CEE) region, as well as CEE involvement in NATO, the development of a European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP), and the NATO-ESDP relationship. Meeting jointly organized by the CSIS New European Democracies Project and the CSIS Defense Industrial Initiatives Group as part of the Central European Security Agenda series.

**September 6** – CSIS Statesmen's Forum with Finnish defense minister Jyri Häkämies: "A Finnish Perspective on European Security and Transatlantic Relations."

**September 19-20** - Workshop on cooperation between international organizations, NGOs, and NATO in such places as Afghanistan, hosted by the CSIS Europe Program and the British Royal United Services Institute (RUSI) as part of a joint project by Allied Command Transformation and RUSI.

## After Election Victory, Turkish Leader Faces New EU Challenges

Bulent Aliriza

With its overwhelming victory in parliamentary elections on July 22, the ruling Justice and Development Party (JDP) has consolidated its clear domination of Turkish politics. By winning almost half the votes cast, the party successfully showed it could sustain its mass support despite the loudly expressed concerns and hostility of its political opponents and the powerful Turkish military establishment, who are intensely suspicious of the party's Islamist roots and ultimate intentions. Now, however, the JDP government faces fresh challenges, not least with respect to Turkey's stalled relations with the European Union.

The formal opening of EU entry negotiations in October 2005 was a major argument used by the JDP to counter accusations that it was leading Turkey away from the West and constituted one of the major achievements of Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan in his first term of office. Erdogan declared immediately after the elections that his new government would continue "to work with determination to achieve the goal of membership."

His statement was welcomed by José Manuel Barroso, president of the European Commission, which is conducting the negotiations with Turkey, as evidence of Erdogan's commitment to "sustained movement towards the European Union." European Commissioner for Enlargement Olli Rehn warned, however, that it was imperative for the new Erdogan government to relaunch Turkey's program of legal and economic reforms "with full determination and concrete results."

Erdogan is likely to find the task of reinvigorating the accession process more difficult than it was at the start of his first term in 2002. Turkey's major domestic political preoccupations during recent months, combined with growing opposition to Turkish membership throughout the European Union and skepticism on the part of the Turkish public about the likelihood of EU entry, have contributed to a perceptible slowing of the process that will not be easy to reverse.

In the European Union, resistance to Turkish accession is spearheaded by French president Nicolas Sarkozy, who has stated bluntly that Turkey has "no place in Europe." He has proposed that Turkey should join a separate Mediterranean Union, with close links to the European Union. German chancellor Angela Merkel has called for a privileged partnership instead of EU entry for Turkey, although she has been somewhat more circumspect than Sarkozy because her Socialist coalition partners favor full Turkish membership.

Sarkozy recently prevented the start of negotiations with Turkey on economic and monetary policy and seems likely to launch a direct challenge to the Turkish accession process at the EU summit in December. The European Commission remains fully committed to completing the negotiations with Turkey and will strongly resist any attempt to undermine the accession process. Its efforts, however, are likely to be hampered by complications stemming from the unresolved dispute over Cyprus, which joined the European Union in 2004 under its internationally recognized Greek Cypriot government. The concerns of Cyprus are shared by a number of other EU members.

Erdogan will need all the political credit he acquired by winning a new mandate, along with his much-vaunted skills in personal diplomacy, to counter the negative trend in Turkish-EU relations, particularly given the retirement of former British prime minister Tony Blair, one of the strongest supporters of Turkish membership. In view of the significance of the EU factor in Turkey's domestic politics, it is easy to understand the desire of Erdogan and newly elected President Abdullah Gul, who played a major role as foreign minister in Turkey's drive to start the entry negotiations, to proceed on the path to membership. It is less easy, however, to see how they will be able to clear the formidable obstacles in the way.

*Bulent Aliriza is director and senior associate, CSIS Turkey Project*

### WHY MOSCOW IS THREATENING *(from page 2)*

As for Russia's other concerns, the three Baltic governments have declared their willingness to become parties once the adapted treaty is in effect; Washington has made clear that U.S. forces will make only modest, periodic deployments to Romania and Bulgaria for temporary training missions requiring minimal military infrastructure; and NATO governments have expressed readiness to consider further adjustments in flank limits once the adapted CFE Treaty enters into force.

*Stephen J. Flanagan is senior vice president; Kissinger Chair; and director, International Security Program, at CSIS. Kaley Levitt helped to research this article.*

## Blair Has a Long Shot at Achieving Middle East Progress

Haim Malka

Tony Blair's foray into peacemaking as the envoy of the Middle East Quartet (United States, Russian Federation, European Union, and United Nations) seems baffling at first. With violence continuing between Israelis and Palestinians and a divided Palestinian government, some might consider the former British prime minister to be on a fool's errand. Yet, if Blair can resist the temptation of trying to resolve Israeli-Palestinian tensions, the domain of U.S. secretary of state Condoleezza Rice, he may be able to achieve tangible results. His greatest opportunity lies not in bridging the gaps between Israelis and Palestinians, but between Palestinian rivals.

Blair's official mandate, to build Palestinian governing institutions and promote economic development, is narrow but still formidable. The emergency Palestinian government appointed by President Mahmoud Abbas after Hamas's takeover of Gaza is weak and has little legitimacy. The Quartet policy of isolating Hamas has caused more hardship for ordinary Palestinians and fanned the flames of Fatah-Hamas rivalry, but it is not likely to change soon.

Against this bleak background, Palestinian development and Israeli-Palestinian political progress depend on a rapprochement between Hamas and Fatah through a return to unified government. Without a united Palestinian government, Hamas can render Israeli-Palestinian negotiations meaningless by violently thwarting any political overtures made by Abbas. Israelis know this, which is why few believe that current discussions between Israeli prime minister Ehud Olmert and Abbas will lead anywhere.

If Blair seeks to build institutions for all Palestinians and to promote a new unity government, he just might be able to make a positive contribution where past Middle East envoys have failed. If he does the bidding of the Bush administration and promotes a development plan that excludes Gaza and rewards those close to the inner circle of Abbas, he will only contribute to the growing woes of Palestinians.

The odds are against his achieving even such a modest goal. Despite a recent call by a UK parliamentary panel for an end to the boycott of Hamas, and previous contacts between the organization and British diplomats, Blair is not authorized to talk with Hamas. He does not, however, have to. More importantly, he must persuade Palestinians that they can create a viable political system only through power sharing. He will have some support from Saudi and even European quarters. His biggest challenge will be to convince the Bush administration that a Palestinian unity government is a necessary evil for future progress on the Israeli-Palestinian front.

Blair's task will ultimately be meaningless without a new agreement between Hamas and Fatah. Only then can Palestinian politics move forward without violence and a valid partner emerge for future negotiations. If Blair focuses on this key goal, his narrow mandate may turn out to be his saving grace.

*Haim Malka is deputy director and fellow, CSIS Middle East Program*

## News Updates

- U.S. president George Bush and newly elected British prime minister Gordon Brown agreed on a wide range of issues, including the fight against terrorism, Darfur, and the need to reactivate the Middle East peace process and complete the Doha world trade talks, at their first official meeting at Camp David at the end of July. But their personal relationship, at least in public, was not as intimate as that between Bush and Brown's predecessor, Tony Blair. Bush agreed with Brown that U.S. links with Britain constituted America's "most important bilateral relationship." Brown stressed that any withdrawal or redeployment of British troops in Iraq would depend on the military advice of British commanders.
- Portugal assumed the rotating six-month presidency of the European Union on July 1. Portuguese priorities include an Intergovernmental Conference to negotiate details of the EU treaty on institutional reform agreed to at a Brussels summit in June; a new focus on the Lisbon Agenda of economic reforms to improve the EU's global competitiveness; closer partnerships with non-EU countries on migration; and stronger links with African countries.
- French president Nicolas Sarkozy agreed to a parliamentary enquiry into whether a \$405-million French arms deal with Libya had figured in international negotiations for the release of six Bulgarian medics sentenced to death for allegedly infecting hundreds of Libyan children with HIV. Sarkozy took credit for the medics' release on July 24 and flew to Libya the next day.
- Sergei Ivanov, Russia's first deputy prime minister and a possible successor to President Vladimir Putin, threatened to deploy mis-

siles in Russia's Baltic enclave of Kaliningrad, bordering Poland and Lithuania, if Washington did not abandon plans to site missile defense facilities in Poland and Czech Republic and cooperate with Russia instead. Experts said he was probably referring to Russia's new Iskander cruise missile, with a range of up to 500 kilometers.

- EU countries agreed to a controversial deal to share information on airline passengers with the United States, in a move intended to avert the threat of transatlantic travel chaos. The compromise agreement would require EU airlines to provide 19 pieces of information (down from 34) shortly before takeoff and increase from 3 to 15 years the time that U.S. authorities could hold passenger data such as names, payment details, and seat numbers.
- Swedish Defense Minister Mikael Odenberg resigned September 5 to protest drastic cuts in Sweden's defense budget, which he said would undermine Sweden's commitment to joint European initiatives such as EU Battlegroups.

*Atlantic Outlook* is produced by the CSIS Europe Program, including the New European Democracies Project and the Initiative for a Renewed Transatlantic Partnership. CSIS is a private, tax-exempt institution focusing on international public policy issues. Its research is nonpartisan and nonproprietary. CSIS does not take policy positions. All views expressed in this publication are those of the authors. For more information please contact Derek Mix: [dmix@csis.org](mailto:dmix@csis.org).