Slaying the dragon

We must re-address arms control

W e when you walk past the United Nations headquarters on Man- hattan’s 1st Avenue, it’s hard to overlook the massive sculpture on the front lawn: a larger-than-life Saint George slaying the dragon. You could easily mistake it for a medieval monument, if the dragon weren’t made of fragments from Soviet SS-20 and US Pershing nuclear missiles – weapons dismantled under the INF Treaty of 1987. For more than 30 years, the treaty was an essential building block of European security and a cornerstone of international arms control architecture. By developing a sound, ground-based and nuclear-missile balance, it has violated and defied expectations. The ball to Russia’s court. During my recent visits to Moscow and Washington, I proposed criteria against which Russian transparency proposals should be tested. Regrettably, everything Russian has offered so far falls far short of those benchmarks. Six months remain for Moscow to return to full and verifiable compliance with the INF. Germany will do whatever it takes to make this happen.

An end to the INF Treaty would hit us all, and Europe would be low-sea. Perhaps it will come as a surprise that the treaty would also damage the prospects for arms control in general. A new arms race forms large on the horizon, while a key lesson of international policy is undermined, namely that lasting security interest is the keystone to lasting security. This realization is even more alarming when we look at the challenges ahead. The digital evolution offers potential for dramatically higher lives for the better. But it also has a profound impact on tomorrow’s geopolitical systems, on international warfare, on domestic security and global stability. In a nutshell, the ways of the future will most likely not be fought with mega bombs, but with robots and machines.

The Cold War is over. Security today is low on counting nuclear warheads but high on understanding the security challenges linked to future technological developments.

- 5G networks, which are currently being rolled out in Germany and many other countries, still fundamentally also carry cyber risks and this daily report of routine daily management.
- But how do we prevent our misuse for cyber warfare?
- Biotechnology offers the potential to improve human life – from tailoring genetic
discourse to mitigating the impacts of climate change, to the how can we be sure that access to biotechnology doesn’t enable territories, or even states to weaponize biological agents?
- Artificial intelligence is set to take unmanned aerial vehicles to the skies above our cities. But how can we stop autonomous weapons from building on this technology to select and attack targets without human involvement?
- New frontiers in long-distance travel will soon be pioneered by hypersonic carriers, drastically curbing travel times. But how can we deal with hypersonic missiles that reduce reaction times to just a few seconds, thus avoiding the ability for human control?

These fundamental questions remain unanswered today. To address them, I have invited colleagues, military experts and sci- entists to attend an international conference in Berlin on March 5 of this year. We want to launch an inter- national dialogue that captures tech- nology and rethink arms control. It will be informed by an in-depth analysis of technological trends, a clear assessment of the security landscape and an open debate between experts. Our European neighbors need to be at the heart of this dialogue, since Europe is par- ticularly affected by the current arms control crisis. Defining a common European position will also be necessary, as we are including global powers such as China, India, Japan and our transatlantic partners in our discussions.

We will also engage with the private sector, who is pioneering many of these technological developments. Together we will set arms control back on the international agenda.

The sculpture of Saint George and the dragon on the UN’s front lawn bears the title “Good Defeats Evil.” If we don’t take action, the dragon on the UN’s front lawn bears the title “Good Defeats Evil.” If we don’t take action, we risk making up to a world where robots are not able to still fight evil, or right from wrong – where high-tech weapons can be used in underdeveloped and where the choice between war and peace has slipped from human control. To avoid such a cata- strophic scenario, we must take new tech- nological challenges into account in arms arms control architecture. That would be a major step towards preserving peace in the 21st cen- tury and a manifestation of pure resilience.

By HEIKO MAAS

The US president’s impulses are forcing the world’s hands

WE can prevent a world in which we cannot tell good from evil

M ICHAE L LÜDERS WARNING: The global threat of authoritarianism, Robert Kagan asks, is so confident that democracy is under threat. The Western democracies are in a crucial struggle to maintain the freedoms for which many have fought. “If we don’t get it right, we lose the war of ideas,” he says, “and we lose the world.”

But what can we do? We can’t do it alone. We must work together to prevent the rise of authoritarianism – and to strengthen the institutions that do their best to rep- resent the people.

The Cold War is over, but the war on mecha- nized warfare is ongoing. Russia has offered so far falls far short of those benchmarks.

We are not alone in the effort to prevent the rise of authoritarianism. But we must act quickly and decisively.

In Munich, Germany

February 2019


**The year 2019 was ushered in by a sense of gloom and doom. The current global order is in crisis, which could trigger a new round of the Great Game.**

In his recent book, The Thucydides Trap, named after the Greek historian who had written that the growth of Athenian power and the fear that it instilled in Sparta, brought about the Peloponnesian War in 431-404 BCE. Thucydides, a war strategist of the ancient world, forecast the eruption of conflicts among states and predicted that the conflict would end the Corinthian War (405–404 BCE) and deplete the wealth of the city-state of Athens. Some scholars have compared the current international situation to that of the time when the ancient Greek city-states were in conflict. They argue that the current international order is vulnerable to the erosion of the existing international system. In this context, when looking back at the EU, it seems to be an epochal moment in the history of the European Union (EU).

The current international order is facing unprecedented challenges. The rise of new powers abroad is a key factor in the current international order. In the late 19th century, the balance of power shifted from the European continent to the Far East. The major powers of the world today are the United States and China, which are in direct competition for regional influence. This has led to the erosion of the existing international system and the emergence of new challenges.

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Authoritarian advantage

The struggle for a liberal world order is occurring not just outside the West but also within it

BY ROBERT KAGAN

A character in the Hemingway novel “The Old Man and the Sea” asks, “How do you hunt, boy, and what do you do?” the young man replies, “I hunt, and then I catch.” This is a fair description of how the United States and the European Union order collapsed, an event that had important global ramifications. Unfortunately, the leaders of both potential adversary systems, the Vladimir Putin and Xi Jinping, are just as much of the authoritarian who want a little respect and their own share of the international pie. We forget, of course, that people in the larger world, such as Hitler’s Germany, once again wanted “rites of passage” that were not available in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe — the “rites of passage” that are not available in the United States and Europe.

There are always dangerous people out there, with recent successes both legitimate and illegitimate, looking for a chance to compete. Because communities, even states, have limits, but the leaders of those communities, almost always, believe that more power is better. The more powerful China is, the more it will be able to say “no” to the United States, and more dangerous it will be for its neighbors and allies.

One reason may be that communism sprang from the same Enlightenment roots as liberalism. In many ways it competed on the same plane, and proved unable to compete. Because communism proposed such an extreme version of the Enlightenment, it confronted even more than human nature did, and so, on the one hand, it had to impose its systems with greater brutality, and, on the other hand, was even more likely to fail short of its own promises. It offered so much that was appealing to the human soul — “the shedding of all that makes one a prisoner,” as a Reuters report put it in 2017. That was communism’s failings and insecurities. Because communism sprang from the same plane, and proved unable to compete, because communism offered so much that was appealing to the human soul — the promise of the ideologues and radicals, in this view, was theihilation with liberalism, and the Enlightenment. The Counter-Enlightenment thinkers like Johann Gottfried Herder and Joseph de Maistre, in the 18th centuries in response to the French Revolution, but also in response to some of the basic tenets of Enlightenment liberalism. Counter-Enlightenment thinkers like Johann Gottfried Herder and Joseph de Maistre, a constant battle among competing forces and trends. Communism is at risk today. It is at the end of the day, the desire for freedom trumps these other trifles while the larger needs of the nation, including spiritual and material welfare, are not. Putin has positioned himself as the leader to provide those things, and has grown, at least among Russia’s elite and the Mussolini of the 1930s mentality with the benefit of the cold materialism of the 1930s. Lenin was not a Hitler or Stalin but he was a kind of caesar and dictator, a man who was standing up against “the Liberty and democracy, the two self-proclaimed authoritarians who just want a little respect and their own share of the international pie. We forget, of course, that people in the larger world, such as Hitler’s Germany, once again wanted “rites of passage” that were not available in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe — the “rites of passage” that are not available in the United States and Europe.

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The Washington Post

The New Republic

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Arms control – here we go again

The world’s security risks have become more severe. But what are today’s great powers willing – and able – to do to counter them?

BY DAN SMITH

The contemporary security environment is marked by a worrying number of negative developments. Global prospects are bleak. Although the intangible threat of nuclear war remains quite a distant threat, the nuclear mood is widely shared. The world has barely shifted over the last four years. For continuation, just consider the titles of successive editions of the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) annual report: 2016: Boundless Crises, Reluctant Guardians? 2017: Nuclear Tipping Points? 2018: To the Brink – and Back? 2019: Conflict: 40 Years on, the Changes

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The world’s security risks have become more severe. But what are today’s great powers willing – and able – to do to counter them?
A few months into 2019, a new round of US-Russian nuclear competition – Arms Race 2.0 – is clearly emerging. The risk of nuclear conflict through deliberate action is some 300,000 times more likely than a nuclear war beginning by miscalculation or escalation is growing. While US President Donald Trump is upping and deploying new offensive and defensive nuclear capabilities, the two governments are taking actions that could lower the likelihood of nuclear war.

All of this political engagement, strategic dialogue and trust building have exasperated the communists and increased adversarialism. This dynamic not only makes it much more difficult to avoid the possibility of a US-Russian nuclear exchange but also increases the risk that a new arms control framework or built the spread of nuclear weapons:

Despite the crises and close calls, the survival of the Cold War was no accident of a Nuclear Accident

February 2019

SALT II

Paragraph Nuclear Test Ban Treaty

Signed on June 10, 1963, by the US, the USSR, and the United Nations, this treaty banned nuclear weapon testing in the atmosphere, underwater, and underground. It is the oldest nuclear arms control agreement.

SALT II

The Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty was signed on May 26, 1979. Both superpowers committed to reducing their strategic forces to no more than 1,200 warheads on 800 missiles and bombers and to limit land-based missiles. The treaty was never ratified by the US Congress.

START

Signatures of the INF Treaty on a display at a facility outside Moscow on Jan. 30, 1988. (AP Photo/Barbara Kinney)

SALT I

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entrepreneurs are growing in many European countries. The European Association of
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bases depend on the United States and the security guarantees it provides. In today’s world, the President’s decision to withdraw our United States from Syria would mark the end of US credibility. Doubts about America’s and Europe’s

indefinite nature of a European army. So – what is it?

The ANC would like it, which failed in 1959 when the French National Assembly passed a motion to withdraw French forces from Algeria.

Quite a few initiatives have been announced to integrate the five EU members agreed on establishing a Permanent Structured Cooperation (PSC). In its steps toward building common force, the new EU commission has called for a detailed European defense concept, a German initiative was agreed to in Brussels under the work concept (NOC). Other policy ideas have pulled up, such as the elaboration of a European Security and Defense Council, the establishment of a Defense and Security Council – a discussion on the legal impossibility – that France renounces its permanent membership in the UN Security Council and hand it over to the EU. While all these initiatives are historically obvious, they could also simply no longer espoused political will to defend Europe, to accept majority decisions to transfer the defense portion of national sovereignty to a supranational organization – even to the point of leaving the EU.

At any rate, such a body would have to cover the same area as the EU. Defending Europe is not possible from inside. Many European countries of the United Kingdom, Norway, Sweden, Finland and Malta, because of their position and geography, is not eligible with control of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)). As long as these present, there will be no meaningful Euro-

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At any rate, such a body would have to cover the same area as the EU. Defending Europe is not possible from inside. Many European countries of the United Kingdom, Norway, Sweden, Finland and Malta, because of their position and geography, is not eligible with control of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)). As long as these present, there will be no meaningful Euro-

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Recalibrating its geostrategic compass is a must if the Alliance is to remain relevant.
A look at Western Europe’s postwar history helps illu-
minate what is at stake in the foreign policy point of departure in the past, and the foundation that undergirds its foreign policy moving forward. We can view the outcome of World War II as a global overview of Europe. In a matter of a few years, European imperialis-
ty and colonial mas-
teries found that their role on the global stage had changed com-
pletely. The power of the West German States and the Soviet Union grew to such an extent that no Euro-
pean could hope to be more than a commentator or ally of one side or the other.

In the niche of world politics, which became the stamping ground for European foreign policy for decades, Western Europeans could only experiment with new ideas, if not power. And they did: Peaceful European unifica-
tion was the result. In the case of West Germany, such experiments included Konrad Adenauer’s Euro-
pean integration and reconcilia-
tion policy in the 1950s and Willy Brandt’s détente and Ostpolitik in the 1970s. Europe’s approaches eventually brought the whole con-
cept back to the center of world politics as the fall of the Iron Cur-
tain and the end of the Soviet Bloc transformed the world stage and finally made the EU’s vision of a strong EU, enlargement and integration moving, indeed, a successful task in its economic globalization and within the existing system of international politics.

When achievements are truly unique, our intentions tend to apply supplant the underlying political strategy – perhaps we’ve gone too far. Since 1990, Western Europe has continued to pursue policies that once brought it success. The first danger that emerged was the susceptibility to error, which quickly became apparent in the former Soviet Bloc. There were whole peoples who now wanted to be set free, others who relied on strategies for peaceful conflict resolution in the tradition of the Commission of Security and Cooper-
ation Europe. The Cold War was over, but the world had become colder. In its overconfidence – the second danger – European countries, and most of all Germany, mean-
tioned their traditional roles in the EU. Although the Federal Republic, in tandem with France, had previously played a leading role in the Union, at about the time of the global financial crisis in 2008, it failed to realize that it needed a free pass to ride roughshod over its partners – even when major num-
bers of refugees arrived in Europe in 2015. The consequences were that Germany achieved loss and loss of what it wanted, and the EU lost much of its cohesion, an essen-
tial feature of its influence in the world.

This helps explain today’s mea-
sures of shockwaves at a time when Europeans, along with most of the industrialized world, find themselves confronted with non-
traditional foreign policy chal-
cenges. The impact of these chal-
genues reaches far beyond Europe with the globalization of international society means that we are dealing with more actors than ever before – states, international organizations, non-governmental organizations and transnational companies. At the same time, growing national or multidimensional, depen-
ded on by the use of social media, are leaving their mark on foreign affairs (and politics in general). This pres-
et an increased hold on the EU, and to the legitimacy of governance in our societies.

The first is that an increasingly fragmented world lacks orientation. One of the most important phases of world politics was the ending of the Cold War, which had previously been a central feature of the modern sense and their interests may well be directed against the interests of others, as it would cost more than a free pass to ride roughshod over its partners. The EU’s neighbors are the plaything of the divide-and-
rule tactics of militia powers. Hence, we must see itself as a magic car.

The problem is also a political one: What member state could agree to leave decisions affecting the death and life of citizens to others? And what if such decisions included the use of nuclear arms? Let us be humble and admit that it would be more prag-
matic to make use of tools already available to defend a territory and to exert coercive influence, such as the power of economic alliance and the employment of sanctions. Libya, Iraq and recent cases where they have proved effective, and a lot less bloody than bombs.

The influence of all EU member states acting with collec-
tive can make France, German or whichever state’s foreign policy successful. This is not about the strength of EU members “leading”, it is about forging the life-
long and fruitful path toward bringing the EU countries together again. The looming danger of becoming the plaything of the divide-and-
rule tactics of militia powers should be tackled because we Europeans together in the same year that the memory of war brought them together more than half a century ago.

The second threat is the fragmen-
tation of our societies into various subpublics. It leads down a path toward the loss of the social con-
sensus on foreign policy that was more or less prevalent since the creation of the European Eco-
nomic Community. Most compa-
nions are the new nationalist and populist movements. Whether it is former East Germans fearing immigrants competing for their jobs, Swiss wanting to “take back con-
trol”, or French pétis jassins fekki-
ning neglected by their president, a similar story is emerging in many democracies. Europeans, when in difficult straits, love to pay lip service to social consensus, love to pay lip service to social consensus on foreign policy – and perhaps on govern-
ments as a whole – to an oppor-
tunity to overcome our current chauvinisms.

VOLKER STANZEL, a former German diplomat, is vice president of the German Council on Foreign Relations and senior distinguished fellow at the German Institute of International and Security Affairs (SWP) in Berlin. His book “The German Dialogue” (Blumfelder Verlag) will be published in April.

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FRANKONIA

IN THE BEST LIVING AREAS OF GERMANY
A s of the beginning of Feb-
ruary, 2019, 16 candidates had announced.

The New York Times estimates that a
tenth candidate is “all but certain to
run” and identifies three more as “likely to run” and an additional
nine who “might run.” This adds
up to a potential 21 candidates on the
Democratic side; plus Star- t
bucks CEO Howard Schulz’s po
sible candidacy is noредел.

The next running, only Sena
or Elizabeth Warren has laid out
her foreign policy views thus far.

It turns out that he under-
assumed he was simply unaware of
Republican foreign policy pundits
in April 2016, both Democrat and
First. When he first put it forward
First?

whether it should put itself – and
the values of its constitu-
tion – first. “That’s a false dichotomy!”

Global leaders and institutions of the
country and its allies, including the
United States, are under pressure to
change the world.

US foreign policy should not
be separate.” On the contrary, she
argues, for instance, on the impor-
tance of fighting global corruption,

stake and diplomacy, as
part of a united national security
budget. Blinken and Kagan simi-
larly advocate more resources for
“preemptive diplomacy.”

To paraphrase the musical Ham-
let, “To be or not to be, that is the
question.”

How should America lead?
When the question is “What should
America do to advance its
interests?”

What happens if we suffer a
major terrorist attack within the
United States?

That’s a tough issue to raise at
the moment when the country is
focusing on domestic priorities.

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9

showing our true colors

“What’s wrong with America First?” — and other foreign policy questions Democratic presidential candidates will have to answer

BY ANNE-MARIE SLAUGHTER

The international community, in what could be three
two depressingly familiar alter-
natives: liberal internationalists of
classical liberal thinking, and realists that
favor military might.

A Core area of agreement, and an
important one, focuses on the
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world.
Violence has morphed from a political instrument into an economic resource, but this is only one of five reasons for today's never-ending conflicts.

Peace treaties have always relied on compromise, even if there are clear winners and losers.

So, why does that rational calculation become a standard work. In February 2019, FOREIGN POLICY. was published a study of the Thirty-Year War.
The annexation of Crimea, the aggression against Ukraine, and the conflict in Syria are virtually the entire range of Russia’s activities in the world. In any case, Russia is seen as capable of almost anything.

That Russia’s intervention in Syria has contributed to driving back the Islamic State and ending the wars of immigration to Europe has hardly been recognized in Brussels. Nor has Putin received any gratitude for his commitment to the Iran nuclear deal. The EU will gladly accept the support but it almost falls on fallow land – the most is simply too great to be undone.

This is a significant disappointment for Mogherini. She had set out with the goal of building new trust. Now she must content herself if Europe does not descend into a second cold war. Brussels lays the blame squarely on President Putin, whose policies are increasingly felt to be aggressive. The trans-Atlantic relationship crisis since Donald Trump took office is only exacerbating the problem.

The Trump administration is trying to torpedo Russia’s plans for the new gas pipeline, Nord Stream 2. Germany and other participant EU countries and companies are under threat of sanctions. Trump is even trying to redefine Europe’s energy security. Yet his maneuvering is directed not only at Russia, but at Germany as well. Although the links between Brussels and Washington to engage more formally in EU-Russia relations. The EU will gladly accept the supply of a friendly pose for a photo with Putin. Today, she must never let her guard down. Every statement Putin makes, every photo with his hand in the hand of Vladimir Putin. Their commitment to the Iran nuclear deal. The EU is not willing to accept the support but it almost falls on fallow land – the most is simply too great to be undone.

The Trump administration is trying to torpedo Russia’s plans for the new gas pipeline, Nord Stream 2. Germany and other participating EU countries and companies are under threat of sanctions. Trump is even trying to redefine Europe’s energy security. Yet his maneuvering is directed not only at Russia, but at Germany as well. Although the links between Brussels and Washington are under massive pressure from Washington to engage more strongly militarily and to position itself more squarely against Russia. And this drama is unfolding in Germany assumes NATO’s military ensign. The Berliner Zeitung – High Readiness Joint Task Force – at the beginning of 2019, Germany takes over a leadership role in the alliance.

All the while, the EU is increasingly shifting its policies in opposition to Moscow. Although Mogherini may still see Russia as a “natural partner and strategic player,” in terms of the European defense union, she is pushing for an expansion of tank routes within the EU to enable more rapid military mobilization in the east.

According to Brussels, the plans do not exclusively target Russia. Even the campaign against dis-information is said to focus on more than just Russia. However, who else they are referring to remains an open question. Only one seems to remains an open question. It’s hard to identify a strategy there, but at best it amounts to strategic ambivalence. The EU is keeping all of its options on the table. At the moment, even ambassador is remarkable: a hearty handshake with Putin.

No clear strategy has thus far come to light. Even Russia has difficulty assessing these new EU initiatives. President Putin offered that he has no problem with a European army. The idea borne in Paris is “a generally positive process in terms of strengthening the multi-polarity of the world. In this sense, our positions overlap with France.”

While Germany may be in a position to be the decisive factor, its stance has become precarious, even ambiguous. On the one hand, the German government is committed to its close cooperation with France, even terms of Europe’s relations with Russia. On the other hand, Berlin is under massive pressure from Washington to engage more strongly militarily and to position itself more squarely against Russia. And this drama is unfolding in Germany assumes NATO’s military ensign. The Berliner Zeitung – High Readiness Joint Task Force – at the beginning of 2019, Germany takes over a leadership role in the alliance.

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**State of play: Russia and the fraying West**

Despite their troubles, Europe and the US are not withering away. It would behove Moscow to avoid escalation.

**BY DMITRI TRENN**

Looking at the West today, a Russian who witnessed the Fall of the Wall 30 years ago says pure cinema.

Political America is gripped by Trumpism. Brexit limbo. Their French colleagues, Benjamin Griveaux, believe that the new regime, even if begrudgingly, will come.

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Helsinki 2.0 – illusion or imperative?
Despite everything: Get Russia involved

Cold hard fact: Peace is only possible with Moscow on board

BY ROLF MÜTZENICH AND ACHIM POST

When Social Democrats make the case for new initiatives in Germany’s official Russia policy, they usually dismiss them as “stale buzzwords.” So let’s get this all out of the way before we go any further. Yes, the Russian state has broken international law and continues to undermine obvious attempts to destabilize the EU and Western democracies. And, yes, it’s highly likely that Russian forces have infiltrated elections and referendum. Russia’s democratic deficits are all too visible, while the human rights situation in that country is blatantly unacceptable. And it doesn’t help that a temperature and unpredictable US president has been reiterating from the White House for the past two years. Indeed, this is a man who does not shy away from spreading fake news and sparking confrontations and escalations whenever he can.

What conclusions can we draw from all of this? How are we to deal with this highly explosive and challenging situation? Is it our “five-star” conviction — precisely because the situation is so problematic and increasingly dangerous — that we should take pride in reflecting on how we can solve tensions and reduce them to at least a manageable level? In light of the prospects for termination of the Iran nuclear deal, the scheduled end to the INF Treaty and the possible non-extension of the New START arms reduction treaty set to expire in 2021, we are faced with the potential collapse of the entire system of international arms control — an event that would have foreseeable impact on global security. The relationship between nuclear states has already begun to shift a serious role for a stable and predictable international order as a whole is at stake. We find ourselves at the beginning of a new nuclear arms race with many groups of allies going their own way.

For this reason, German Foreign Minister Heiko Maas is holding talks in Moscow and Washington in an attempt to find ways to counter the logic of escalation and preserve the international arms control regime. It’s very easy to throw away the results of the past, but this is precisely what is required to look long and hard at the alternatives and their foreign policy consequences. We’ve all agreed to blindly follow Trump and Putin into a new cold war, and would it not be better to try everything we can to prevent an escalation — in spite of all the associated obstacles and uncertainties? Are we really supposed to continue adding fuel to the fire or would it not be more sensible to attempt to rise above the current spiral of mutual accusations, reproaches and prohibitions?

We are convinced that black and white thinking is simply unworkable and that we need a policy that makes sense of initiatives and formats that break down blockades and eliminate extreme positions, and that focuses on persuading Russia to accept a sober analysis of the status quo and a pragmatic policy of small steps designed to ease the current stalemate. The policies of Ostpolitik and Entspannungspolitik created by Egon Bahr and implemented by Willy Brandt in the 1960s and 1970s were exactly what efforts relating to those historical policies were centered on. Success. Today, too, Germany and European foreign policymakers would be wise to set out on a long-term and clearly defined and pragmatic course in the direction of arms control, disarmament and dialogue.

We have various reasons for being interested in cooperating with Russia — just as Russia has an interest in cooperating with us. China is very aware of Russia’s economic weaknesses and undoubtedly exists — unfortunately — as the most favorable conditions — is still accessible on the Russian market. Those experiences have led to a fundamental sobering-up in Moscow. And this is exactly why it makes sense and is necessary to find common interests.

But this can only happen in concert with our European partners. Germany and the EU must continue on course for multilateralism rather than ego-centric unilateralism. The idea of integrating difficult partners into multilateral approaches does not reflect a lack of principle, but is evident of key insights into what is actually feasible and the fact that pressure alone will not bring about a change in behavior.

In addition, it is essential that we present a clear and coordinated European approach, especially when it comes to dealing with difficult partners. For example, the current debates regarding Nord Stream 2 are a concrete step on the necessary path for a joint European energy policy. Any retroactive consequences for decisions already taken would only make this objective more difficult to reach. Moreover, they would counteract efforts made by the German government to secure and modernize the European transit route. German and European foreign policy must use diplomacy to bridge the two major nuclear powers — the US and Russia — into overcoming their dangerous uncertainties. We are under no illusions:

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Nevertheless, we must do everything in our power to prevent the Cold War of the 1980s from coming to the fore in the time between two cold wars. Germany and Europe must never again become the site of “our” games involving nuclear or conventional weapons. With this in mind, smart foreign policy cannot wait for democracies to exist everywhere instead, smart policy proceeds to value-dealing with those who think differently.

BY ROLF MÜTZENICH AND ACHIM POST

During his time as prime minister of the SPD parliamentary group in the German Bundestag, Rolf Mützenich took on the role of the party’s foreign policy spokesman. He was also chairman of the Committee for Foreign Affairs from 2009 to 2013. Achim Post is the deputy chairman of the SPD parliamentary group in the German Bundestag.
From Brussels with love

To a more assertive EU in a volatile world

BY HELGA MARIA SCHMID

As we meet in Munich this year, the prediction made last year’s edition of this paper is still valid: the growing importance of great power rivalries must ring in our ears. Geopolitics is back and likely to stay.

What is more, our strategic environment is growing every more unpredictable. Today, major powers openly challenge the rules-based international order and seek to promote alternative visions of a world divided into spheres of influence. Geopolitical stakes strike tensions and raise the alarm bell of a new “proliferation age” that risks escalating into inad- vertent military confrontation. Climate change is becoming an existential threat while cyber warfare and disinformation campaigns are the new weapons of the 21st century.

For the European Union, the answer is clear: these challenges can be tackled only through a multilateral approach. If we stay united, we will have the tools and the political weight to shape the future global order. This is why instead of retreating from inter- national cooperation and global partnerships, the EU is stepping up its commitment to address global challenges together with its partners. This is true for the Paris Agreement on climate change, the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) on Iranian non-proliferation, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the EU’s strategy for connectivity between Asia and Europe and the reform of the WTO.

While these agreements are, in essence, hard to reach, we are content that they are the best way to ensure a more peaceful, pro- person and secure global environ- ment – even more so when it is clear that no single country can address those challenges alone. I am committed to this approach for the right one. The fact that demands of the world are so high speaks for itself.

At every given opportunity, the EU continues to assert its role as a security provider. Not only is it working intensively to intensify joint efforts to effectively fight terrorism, armed and vio- lent extremism, the EU is also engaged in a dialogue with 123 other countries on tax evasion, money laundering, arms smuggling, and drug trafficking. The EU is also pushing for the implementation of existing agreements and platforms, such as the Terrorist Financing Targeting and the Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation. We are also pushing for the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty to enter into force, which could play an important role as we work towards a complete, verifiable and irreversible dismantlement of North Korea.

As Europeans, we cannot afford to make haste or be too innovative. We need to modern- ize our approach and engage more actively with new actors in the intersection of technology and foreign and security policy. This is why the high representative of the EU launched the Global Tech Fund – including the CEOs of major tech companies – to help ensure that international ethics and rules can keep pace with human ingenuity. To harness these opportunities, we must also take the security implications seriously, hence the recent European Commission Communication on Artificial Intelligence.

All in all, supporting a rules- based multilateralism and greater European strategic autonomy are not contradictory objectives. How we strengthen our resilience in the face of new challenges, the EU is stepping up its efforts to contribute to security and stability in the world.

THE FUTURE IS WRITTEN IN THESE STARS

HELGON MARIA SCHMID

secretary general of the EU’s European External Action Service

OUR FUTURE IS CALLED EUROPE, WITH ITS CURRENT 28 MEMBER STATES, THE EUROPEAN UNION IS ONE OF THE MOST DYNAMIC ECONOMIC REGIONS IN THE WORLD, AND THIS IS ONLY THE BEGINNING.

Since EUTOP was founded in 1990, two years before the European Union was called into being by the signing of the Maastricht Treaty, we have regarded EU as a single political entity, whose heart beats in Brussels. The EUTOP business model is founded on this very conviction.

The starting point cannot be to dismantle the current architecture and start from scratch.

To common problems, there must be not only highlighted, but also translated into action. The EU is therefore investing in broader international cooperation and partnerships, and not just within the EU, the UN and Muslim states or organizations such as the African Union and ASEAN. Our traditional EU–US–UN coop- eration on common challenges such as migration illustrates how multilateral solutions can contribute to greater security, sta- bility and prosperity. For instance, as the UN PCIC Social Protection Special Rapporteur, I have been leading efforts to ensure a successful outcome at COP 20 in Katowice. The EU will lead by example by turning its own ambitious commitments for 2030 into concrete action. This was made clear at the high level event on climate and security hosted by the EU last June.

In the security sector, the EU continues to assert its role as a security provider. Not only is it working intensively to intensify joint efforts to effectively fight terrorism, armed and vio- lent extremism, the EU is also engaged in a dialogue with 123 other countries on tax evasion, money laundering, arms smuggling, and drug trafficking. The EU is also pushing for the implementation of existing agreements and platforms, such as the Terrorist Financing Targeting and the Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation. We are also pushing for the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty to enter into force, which could play an important role as we work towards a complete, verifiable and irreversible dismantlement of North Korea.

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This year’s EU elections could become an unlikely battleground for the future of the liberal world order

BY MARK LEONARD

T he Munich Security Conference has grown accustomed to ranking the security threats to the West—bilateral tensions, Basauri revolts, or the global ambition of China’s big data dictatorship—but today, the most critical challenges come not from outside the West but from the political dynamics within. In 2019, they actually derive from one of the most unlikely sources: the elections to the European Parliament. Traditionally, these elections bear almost no relevance to trans-Atlantic security. In spite of their name, European elections were predominantly national affairs with low turnout and even lower stakes. This year could actually be different on all of these counts.

First, rather than being merely incidental, these elections will be a major test of the liberal world order. In 2019, the stakes will be high for all Western democracies—Continental, North American, and Latin American. As they seek to mobilize people not just through elections but also on the idea of an outward-looking and cohesive European Union. As such, they are creating a new kind of Western counteraffiliation—one that challenges many of the ideas inherent in the traditional project of the West. They share a vision of what Mark Lilla recently described as “social organization,” which pushes back against what he sees as the apocalyptic, deferent, and cosmopolitan vision of the West and its sister project, European integration.

Orban and Salvini are working with Bannon in trying to create a federation of different strands of European populism—anti-immigration from the left, anti-migration from the right. Rather than talking about destroying the EU, they are trying to show how they would reinvigorate it as a vehicle for nationalistic states. Second, it just so happens that, as with Trump, all these parties have ties to Russia, and all share a skepticism of trade and multilateral institutions. This is how they seek to mobilize people who traditionally do not vote in European elections—and who, in turn, may be much greater turnout than is traditionally the case. The 2019 elections could shape up to be the big challenge for the established parties—such as Emmanuel Macron’s La République En Marche and Angela Merkel’s Christian Democrats.

Third, the stakes are much higher this year. If the pan-populist project succeeds, Orbán, Salvini et al. could secure a blocking minority in the European parliament, or, even worse, form an Austrian-style coalition between the right and center right. Rather than Brussels being a local point for EU institutions and their efficient operation, the pan-populist alliance could get their way by blocking or delaying the nomination of EU commissioners, making trade deal ratification less likely and preserving the Commission from pursuing Article 7 procedure. Populist parties can actually create the conditions for their fear-mongering on EU in a catch 22.

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Security. We make it fly.
A country without atom bombs is simply incapable of annihilating a country that has them

MICHAEL LUDERS

A s The New York Times reported in November 2018, the United States and Saudi Arabia have apparently reached a framework agreement for the sale of nuclear power stations to the Kingdom. The deal is said to be worth up to $50 billion, however Riyadh is insisting on creating its own nuclear fuel, despite being cheaper to buy or trade.

There can only be one plausible reason for this pursuit of uncontrolled uranium enrichment. Accordingly, US intelligence officials are increasingly concerned with the question of whether Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, the Saudi state’s de facto autocrat often referred to as MBS, is planning to build a Saudi atomic bomb.

Those responsible in Washington, or in Israel, do not seem overly concerned by the prospect; in any case, they are doing nothing to challenge the deal. Likewise, the political and media establishment’s blithe surrender over the murder of Jamal Khashoggi – an act most probably endorsed, if not ordered, by MBS – has had its effect: still, a clear bipartisan majority of US senators voted twice at the end of last year to limit President Trump’s authority in the nuclear deal with Iran, although a subsequent “国情”-year-old law, which Moham-

The Iranian government has announced its intention to break the 1980s, with the triumph of US Senorialism, which was followed by Iraq’s 1991 invasion of Kuwait, the US-led coalition, and in 2003, as confirmed by US administrations.

The second reason calls for a change in T ehran, if necessary by force and, in contrast to Iran, is seeking to annihilate the US and its allies have instigated regime change in the region. The idea has little appeal for the Iranians, however, the focus would be on a political or administrative means.

Argentina has returned the favor by guaranteeing Washington its support. While the exact number may be in the hundreds of billions, Saudi Arabia has since delivered out Saudi capital. While the exact number of US investment in the US market is unknown, the figure is thought to be in the hundreds of billions.

The attempt to effect regime change in Damascus – a policy promoted primarily by Tel Aviv and the US – has failed. Washington is in the saddle, pressure from the American people and the hardliners at the expense of the pragmatists around President Rou-

Sober geopolitical underpinnings.

Before the atom bomb was even conceptualized, the United States was already building atomic weapons to the teeth of the US Senate. The US Senate has never voted on a bill to authorize the use of atomic bombs, which it is now believed that President Harry S Truman, who was in full control of the US nuclear weapons program, authorized the use of atomic bombs in August 1945.

The Iranian authorities, like it or not, are concerned by the prospect; in any case, they are doing nothing to challenge the deal. Likewise, the political and media establishment’s blithely surrender over the murder of Jamal Khashoggi – an act most probably endorsed, if not ordered, by MBS – has had its effect: still, a clear bipartisan majority of US senators voted twice at the end of last year to limit President Trump’s authority in the nuclear deal with Iran, although a subsequent law, which Mohammad bin Salman could never have imagined, had no military asset-

The US $750 billion. The numbers speak for themselves. The sugges-

Iran is the sole remaining country in a wide stretch of land between the Atlantic in the west and Indocina in the east, which lies in the crosshairs of Washington and its regional allies.

It is objectively impossible. Iran is planning to build a Saudi atomic bomb.

The Security Times

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Argentina has returned the favor by guaranteeing Washington its support. While the exact number may be in the hundreds of billions, Saudi Arabia has since delivered out Saudi capital. While the exact number of US investment in the US market is unknown, the figure is thought to be in the hundreds of billions.
F or the past eight years, Syria has been the place where almost all the geopolitical, political, ideological and sectarian conflicts in the region have converged as if under a banishing menace. There was no peace today but the government of Bashar al-Assad’s Syria remained relatively untouched and a little help from Russia and Iran has been sufficient to make the world forget about it. The opposition is largely marginalized most of the time. Arab backers are about to check their course and the world with the government in Damascus, Russia and Iran remain the main external power brokers. The United States’ impending military withdrawal from Syria will also reduce its influence. The European Union will remove its memorandum to come up with their own policy for the new reality in Syria. For Europe, Syria will close – and tworopolitical regimes. Diplomats love to reiterate that there is no military solution to the conflict in Syria. While this is true, there clearly are military outcomes, mostly the defeat of extremist opposition and rebel groups. The Islamic State, too has lost its territorial control over part of the country and it remains uncertain whether or not the country will be retaken by the government sooner or later. But we can probably safely say that, rather than by a major operation, the Islamic State will be dismantled in Syria in a conditional reconstruction.

The territory east of the Euphrates river – in the border of Syria and Turkey – will not be reoccupied by the Islamic State. The country will not be retaken by the government. The Islamic State will simply disappear. Some of its members may return to their country. Some others may be able to set up a constitutional committee with credible representatives from all sides of the conflict. It is very unlikely, however, that Assad’s government would allow the adoption of any constitutional text that could set broad limits for the future of Syria. The opposition, for its part, will not be able to come up with a plan that can be validated by the international community.

In contrast, in international relations, there are not many solutions. The EU and its members will have to come up with their own policy for the new reality in Syria. This increases the need for a European strategy that includes military presence and military reform. Diplomats love to reiterate that there is no military solution to the conflict in Syria. While this is true, there clearly are military outcomes, mostly the defeat of extremist opposition and rebel groups. The Islamic State, too has lost its territorial control over part of the country and it remains uncertain whether or not the country will be retaken by the government sooner or later. But we can probably safely say that, rather than by a major operation, the Islamic State will be dismantled in Syria in a conditional reconstruction.

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As long as civil war in Syria continues, neither Israel nor Iran can have an interest in escalating the conflict between their two countries. And yet, the conflict has already taken on a sinister tone.

Our High Level Military Group and the Strategic Alliances Network shared the view that Syria had stationed roughly 1,000 Iranian weapons factories were under its efforts to supply its henchmen in Lebanon, Syria and Gaza so that they could unleash an "inferno" in response to the most state-of-the-art weapons to militias in Lebanon, Syria and Gaza. The agreement also involves Iranian activities in Europe. For example, "Iranian intelligence was recently caught planning attacks in Brussels and France." In January 19, Israel Pursued a Double Strategy on the One Hand it Condemns Iranian Airstrikes on the Other it Awaits Israel’s Response to iran’s步骤 to supply its henchmen in Lebanon, Syria and Gaza. the New Israeli Transparency is "no doubt designed to act as a deterrent and thus to prevent war. The Israeli Air Force’s freedom of action was long perceived as a grave tactical disadvantage for the Iranian Revolutionary Guards. Iran has pursued a double strategy on the one hand it condemned Iranian airstrikes on the other it awaits Israel’s response to Iran’s steps to supply its henchmen in Lebanon, Syria and Gaza. The agreement also involves Iranian activities in Europe. For example, "Iranian intelligence was recently caught planning attacks in Brussels and France.”

We have reached a point where our terrorist enemies, either within or without our own borders, are on the verge of turning the entire south-Lebanon sector into a military enclave hidden in plain sight. This makes the situation even more unpredictable.

BY GISELA DACHS

Gisea Dachs is a long-time Israel-based correspondent for the German weekly Die Zeit. She is now a special correspondent for German Studies at Hebrew University in Jerusalem.

BY RAFAEL L. BARDAJI

Rafael L. Bardaji is the former national security advisor to Sharon and the managing director of the Strategic Alliances Network.

February 2019

The Security Times — Challenges

The Israeli defense

Military success in the age of terrorist armies hinges on public education, too

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By ANDREA BOHM

February 2019

Surprising endurance

When it comes to Iraq, it is easy to expect the worst, but the country refuses to collapse.

BY WOLFRAM LACHER

February 2019

Indifference to chaos

What Libya tells us about Europe's unstable neighborhood
Erdogan’s triumph and defeat

The clear winners in Syria are Assad, Iran and Russia — with the Kurds caught between a rock and hard place

BY FRANK NORDHAUSEN

It is not often that something serious Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan speaks of. Yet following his visit to Moscow in late January, Erdogan needed several days to return to his old rhetorical form. After meeting with the Kremlin leadership, the latest in a series of talks on resolving the drama in northern Syria, US President Donald Trump’s surprise announcement on Feb. 9 that he would pull all 2,000 US troops from the war-wracked country has reshuffled the cards. When the Americans leave, there can be no more doubt that Syria’s fate will be decided in Moscow. Iran, meanwhile, is cementing its position, while the Kurds suddenly face an existential threat.

After returning from Russia, Erdogan said Turkey was ready to “unilaterally establish a safe zone in northern Syria if one does not emerge in the next few months,” because his country “cannot wait forever.” This was just a wind-up admission of defeat. Since November, Erdogan had been announcing an attack within the coming days. “In January,” he said, “for example, a 30-km buffer zone along the Turkish border in Syria’s Kurdish region would be set up soon.”

Erdogan wants to continue the interventionist policy he launched in Syria in 2015 to prevent the formation of a contiguous Kurdish state on Turkey’s southern border. He knows that such a Kurdish republic could pose a threat to Turkey. Now, if he’s still alive, that threat remains in the form of Manbij, which is currently under Kurdish administration, as well as the autonomous Kurdish cantons beyond the river’s eastern bank.

The Syrian Kurds currently control about a third of Syria. Although no clearly documented attack against Turkey have been launched from this territory, it is also true that the area’s ruling Kurdish Workers’ Party (PKK), which has been fighting against the Turkish state for 35 years, is a threat. While Turkey makes no distinction between the two groups, calling them all terrorists, the US list also the PKK as a terrorist organization that has fought alongside the US-backed YPG against the so-called Islamic State. In alliance with the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) and US support, the Kurds have largely routed the Islamic State. Erdogan’s triumph has turned into defeat. The clear winners of the US pullout from Syria, meanwhile, are Assad, Iran and Russia, which continues to inch closer to its goal of a Shiite land bridge between the Mediterranean and the Black Sea.

The tactic worked. To prevent a Kurdish offensive, which would provoke a new war between Turkey and Iraq, the US announced in December that it would pull its troops out of Manbij. Erdogan had, until then, always vehemently rejected Trump’s demand that he once again cooperate with US officials — something Erdogan had, until then, always vehemently rejected. And the Turkish president has a second problem. In the face of the US pullout, the area’s ruling Kurdish Workers’ Party (PKK), which has been fighting against the Turkish state for 35 years, is a threat. While Turkey makes no distinction between the two groups, calling them all terrorists, the US list also the PKK as a terrorist organization that has fought alongside the US-backed YPG against the so-called Islamic State. In alliance with the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) and US support, the Kurds have largely routed the Islamic State.

Trump used this successful campaign in the occasion to proclaim victory against IS and announce the US withdrawal, thereby keeping a campaign promise and following Washington’s own strategic dilemma of having to choose between the PYD and Turkey. The result was an immediate destabilization of northern Syria. The Kurds, who were relying on US protection from Turkey at least in the medium term, sensed betrayal, even though Trump later reversed his stance, saying the pullout would take place “over a period of time” and that he would protect the Kurds, even though no one knows how he intends to do so.

Failing triumphant, Erdogan euphorically proclaimed his anti-Kurdish offensive, which would begin against Manbij. The Kurds, however, responded immediately. Fearing the two had options of either a Kurdish offensive or a deal with Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, they chose the latter. They called on Damascus for help against the Turks and began fresh talks over their future status in a unified Syria. Erdogan’s triumph has turned into defeat. The clear winners of the US pullout from Syria, meanwhile, are Assad, Iran and Russia, which continues to inch closer to its goal of a Shiite land bridge between the Mediterranean and the Black Sea. The question now is whether Russia has taken on a bigger load than it can handle.

FRANK NORDHAUSEN is the eastern Mediterranean correspondent for the dailies Berliner Zeitung and Frankfurter Rundschau.
Reports of a "break-through" in US-Taliban talks have returned Afghanistan to the international limelight. Although both sides have reached consensus about a "framework" to deal with two key issues – a US troop withdrawal and Taliban guarantees about preventing a return of Al-Qaeda type terrorist groups to the country – this still needs to be fleshed out and represents just a first step in the peace to a deal. Too much remains uncertain, notably about the transformation of the current political system into one including the Taliban. Significantly, the Afghan government has yet to be part of these negotiations.

While making progress, Zalmay Khalilzad, Washington’s now Special Representative for Afghanistan Reconciliation, must make sure that democratic, human, women’s and minority rights are protected by the current constitution are transformed into the new political system. A peace deal that has no buy-in for the majority of Afghans would be worthless.

At the end of last year, alarm bells rang across Afghanistan. Only a few days after the announcement – which has since been somewhat walked back – that the US would extract all its troops from the country in the world, moreover, US Special Forces and air support often make the difference when the Taliban attacks Afghan cities. A substantial US withdrawal, if linked with a cut to most foreign aid, could lead to its break-down. This cannot be done for help. US military experts say that Afghan troops need “at least another three to five years” of international aid and advice. For some years, Afghanistan has been using the erosion of what official German analyses, echoing statements by NATO, describe as a "military stalemate." But since the end of 2016, the war has significantly broadened and intensified. Indicators such as the number of civilian war casualties, losses among armed government forces, internally displaced persons and the ratio between government and Taliban controlled areas are plateauing on all-time highs. The UN cited deteriorating security conditions in 2016 and 2017 and a consistently high level of uncertainty in 2018. It also upgraded the country from post-conflict back to in-conflict. Think tanks like the International Crisis Group and the US Council on Foreign Relations now again classify Afghanistan as the deadliest conflict in the world.

The Taliban control no provincial capitals and only a few of the almost 400 district centers. But according to a survey by the BBC, they carry out a significant amount of activity in roughly 70 percent of the country and control much of rural Afghanistan, entrenching many cities and towns. In many cases, however, local populations work towards making sure that they do not occupy such centers, as they hope to avoid collateral attacks from the air and the destruction they would cause. When the Taliban lost the large city of Ghazni after a five-day occupation, it was unclear whether it was the result of pressure from the allies or their own free will. The local officials of the Islamic State hold almost no territory, yet possess underground urban structures with the potential to carry out brutal terrorist attacks. Above all against Shi’ites.

For Northern Afghanistan, moreover, the assassination of the Afghan prime minister on April 21 could have alarmed the Taliban, who may have feared that the assassination of their leader could lead to their total withdrawal. While the Taliban control much of the country and control much of rural Afghanistan, they carry out a significant amount of activity. According to data from the World Bank and the UN, 54.5 percent of Afghanistan’s costs – more than any other country in the world. Moreover, US Special Forces and air support often make the difference when the Taliban attacks Afghan cities. A substantial US withdrawal, if linked with a cut to most foreign aid, could lead to its break-down. This cannot be done for help. US military experts say that Afghan troops need “at least another three to five years” of international aid and advice.

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The Talibab control no provincial capitals and only a few of the almost 400 district centers. But according to a survey by the BBC, they carry out a significant amount of activity in roughly 70 percent of the country and control much of rural Afghanistan, entrenching many cities and towns. In many cases, however, local populations work towards making sure that they do not occupy such centers, as they hope to avoid collateral attacks from the air and the destruction they would cause. When the Taliban lost the large city of Ghazni after a five-day occupation, it was unclear whether it was the result of pressure from the allies or their own free will. The local officials of the Islamic State hold almost no territory, yet possess underground urban structures with the potential to carry out brutal terrorist attacks. Above all against Shi’ites.
The war IS not over

Pulling out would lead to more conflict on the ground and more instability overall

S

shortly before the holi-
days, on Dec. 19, 2018, US President Donald Trump announced a phased withdrawal of 2,000 American troops from the northeast of Syria. Experts and observers initially agreed that the true here.

of this decision were Turkey on the one side and the current Syrian government and its allies Russia and Iran on the other. Additional winners include jihadi militants such as Hay’at Tahrir al-Sham, Hurras ad-Din and IS, which is far from being defeated everywhere.

Thus to assess the impact of the withdrawal on the capabilities of IS, it is important to keep in mind that the organization has deep regional roots and long-standing experience in the field. Its history did not begin with its declaration in 2006, it declared the Islamic State of Iraq (IS) and formed an international alliance of jihadi groups including the Islamic State of Iraq and affiliated organizations such as Al-Qaeda in Iraq. In January 2006, the Pentagon believed it had killed or imprisoned 34 of the Islamic State’s most important leaders and that only an estimated number of 700 fighters remained. For this reason, IS was no longer perceived as an existential threat. Only four years later, however, it rose like Phoenix from the ashes to conquer a wide swath of territory in Syria and Iraq, expanding its land reach far beyond its core regions. Important cities like Mosul in Iraq and Raqqa in Syria fell under IS control.

As Obama declared war on IS and formed an international alliance of jihadi groups, IS began to expand. By September 2014, it controlled almost all of its territory in Syria and Iraq. Nonetheless, in September 2018, the US Department of Defense estimated the number of IS fighters in Iraq and Syria to be between 21,000 and 31,000 individuals, divided more or less equally between the two countries. Even if there were only 15,000 to 25,000 fighters, this would be a far larger number than the 700 reported in 2010. Furthermore, the financial situation of IS and its supply of weapons is far better than in its worst days in 2010. In both Syria and Iraq, IS is far from being defeated. It is still carrying out attacks against civilians and security forces.

Brett McGurk, then special presidential envoy for the global coalition to defeat the group, warned a few days before the announcement of the withdrawal that IS is a “significantly degraded organization,” but that no one should be so naive as to “just declare victory and walk away.” We have to maintain pressure on these networks for a perfect setting for IS, which is far from being defeated everywhere. For this reason, IS is likely to remain a long-term concern. It has demonstrated their resilience when facing enormous military pressure. It is naïve to “just declare victory and walk away,” says former Special Envoy Brett McGurk.

Trump withdrawal syndrome: It is naïve to “just declare victory and walk away,” says former Special Envoy Brett McGurk.
Denuclearization doubts

US-North Korean talks continue, but can Kim Jong-un’s pledge to give up his nuclear program be taken at face value?

BY HANNES G. HILPERT

The White House has announced that US President Donald Trump and North Korea’s Supreme Leader Kim Jong-un will hold their second summit meeting at the end of February. Optimists expect that Kim Jong-un will follow through with his stated willingness to denuclearize and commit to a verifiable, irreversible dismantlement. Pessimists are afraid that we will see just another summit full of rhetoric and void of substance. As of today, we do not know what the summit meeting might hold, but we should be clear about where we stand.

Let us remember Summit I, when the two leaders convened in Singapore on June 6, 2018, for their first and unprecedented meeting. On his way home, President Trump spoke of a breakthrough and expected that North Korea no longer presented a nuclear threat. Noted experts and observers disagreed. They disputed the summit’s partial final declaration, which lacked substance and perspective. They missed meaningful concessions in return for the tremendous political validation North Korea had received from meeting the president of the United States. Indeed, no diplomatic steps towards denuclearization were announced.

These legitimate objections notwithstanding, the Singapore summit was significant and productive. Last year’s summit tackled the root cause of the denuclearization failures of the past—the mutual distrust between the US and North Korea. Instead of narrowly focusing on diplomatic and military issues and technicalities, once the leaders have agreed on a common objective, it was said, negotiations will proceed in good faith and tensions can be reduced. Negotiable, the political approach has worked only to some extent. To begin with, the most positive outcome so far is that the immediate risk of war has been reduced and diplomacy reigns again. When in November 2018, some US military experts put the risk of war as high as 50 percent, in 2019, North Korea halted all missile and nuclear tests, thereby de-escalating military tensions.

The UN Security Council’s sanctions regime against North Korea remains intact, notwithstanding the various sanctions violations, loopholes and the disputed talks for “a permanent denuclearization” in China and Russia. That, the international community has sustained the pressure on North Korea to give up nuclear arms and continue dismantlement of the Punggye-ri nuclear test site. Nevertheless, the UN Security Council has not only failed to achieve substantive arms reduction, but its sanctions, instead, appear to be continuing to invest in upgrading its ballistic missile base and nuclear production facilities, as has been disclosed by intelligence research institutions.

Given the unresolved controverted issues, it should be no surprise that bilateral negotiations between the US and North Korea are taking place at different work intensities, as has been revealed by intelligence research institutions. In order even to initiate new negotiations, there must be a convincing first step by North Korea that it will follow through with its stated willingness to denuclearize and commit to a verifiable, irreversible dismantlement. Both South Korea and China are participating in the negotiations in an indirect way. South Korea experienced a breakthrough and unprecedented meeting with the US President in the run-up to the summit, the climate of the talks has not been derailed. Indeed, there is talk among the leaders that in the run-up to the summit, the climate of the dialogue will become very good. Preparations are taking place at different levels and through different channels. Both South Korea and China are participating in the negotiations in an indirect way. South Korea experienced a remarkable rapprochement with North Korea in 2018. Over the past three meetings, concluding with direct discussions at the summit, the two leaders convened in Singapore on June 6, 2018, for their first and unprecedented meeting. On his way home, President Trump spoke of a breakthrough and expected that North Korea no longer presented a nuclear threat. Noted experts and observers disagreed. They disputed the summit’s partial final declaration, which lacked substance and perspective. They missed meaningful concessions in return for the tremendous political validation North Korea had received from meeting the president of the United States. Indeed, no diplomatic steps towards denuclearization were announced.

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Den nuclearization process of implementing a thousand provisions starts with one blast: Detonation of the command post facilities of North Korea’s nuclear test site in Punggye-ri.
A new frontline at sea

Russia's aggression in the Black Sea shows how little it worries about a strong response from the West

BY ANN-DORIT BOY

The Kerch Strait is located between the Russian mainland to the east and Crimea to the west. Russia and Ukraine share control over these waters under an international agreement on the division of maritime zones. Russia annexed Crimea, however, it appears to consider the strait its national waters and is restricting access from Ukraine's eastern parts to the Black Sea. A new bridge across the Kerch Strait, which Russia opened in May 2018, was built too low for many larger Ukrainian ships to pass under. Further, the Kerch Bridge – a branch of the Federal Secret Service (FSB) – began illegitimate controls on merchant ships. This effectively strangled business in the ports of Mariupol and Berdyansk in the Sea of Azov, which have been major export points for coal and steel since Soviet times. Russia's attack in late November has made it impossible for Ukraine to use these ports to the Black Sea, preventing them from transitioning to the Sea of Azov via the Kerch Strait. It was the first direct clash between Russia and Ukraine since the onset of the crisis in 2014, when Russia sent soldiers without uniform markings to invade the peninsula of Crimea and occupy the Donbass region.

During the summer months, leading up to the incident, Russia reported expanded its military presence in the Sea of Azov to some 40 ships. In September, the Ukrainian government responded by announcing its intent to set up a new naval base in Berdyansk to “repel Russian aggression in the region.” This goal is ambitious, given that the Ukrainian navy has been substantially weakened by the loss of a larger part of its fleet during the annexation of Crimea and it has thus far received little support from Western partners.

Not surprisingly, Russian media and military experts criticized the Ukrainian announcement as a provocation and warned that the government in Kiev should not invite NATO member ships for friendly visits in the Sea of Azov and the Black Sea – both important passages for Russia's navy. Thus, the attack against the Ukrainian vessels can be interpreted as a warning shot to deter Ukraine's leadership from opening its new naval base in Berdyansk.

The timing of the clash – four months before the presidential elections in Ukraine – suggests that the Russian leadership was looking for an opportunity to interfere in Ukraine's political process. President Putin openly accused his Ukrainian counterpart, Petro Poroshenko, of provoking the incident in the Sea of Azov to boost his popularity, claiming “the war in Ukraine is not going to end, as long as the government in Kiev is in power.” The fact remains, however, that the Ukrainian president cannot settle this conflict alone. Russian forces act first. Yet Putin has yet to make a credible attempt to end the fighting. An unstable and chaotic region. Ukraine serves his interests better than a pacified one.

President Poroshenko, who started as a white hope after the pro-European revolution on Maidan Square, has lost domestic support for delaying critical anti-corruption reforms and keeping the old system of influential oligarchs intact. There is no doubt that Poroshenko is more likely to stay in power as long as the war continues. His decision to declare martial law for the first time since 2014 in reaction to the war's escalation was thus heavily criticized in Ukraine as a political stunt and also helped fuel Russian rhetoric. The Kremlin's intransigence, however, will not increase the likelihood of another pro-Russian president in the upcoming elections in March, since a large majority of Ukrainians support independence from Russia in every possible way. The recent revival of a new Ukrainian Orthodox Church, which Poroshenko described as “stealing off the last chains that tied us to Moscow,” might also help him win back some support.

Russia's aggression in the Black Sea also shows how little Putin worries about the possibility of a strong response from the West. The United States and Europe initially reacted with mere expressions of concern. Meanwhile, Washington offered a symbolic $10 million “to further build Ukraine's naval capacities.” Germany and France pushed for an enlargement of the OOS's Observer Mission in Ukraine to include the Kerch Strait, but Russia rejected the plan. It remains unclear if Berlin and Paris will at least be able to send their own forces to monitor the area, since Russia and Ukraine would have to agree on the terms of such a mission.

The November incident has revived dormant theories regarding the potential of a Russian invasion along the coast of the Azov Sea in order to create a landbridge between Russia and Crimea, a plan that may seem obsolete since the completion of the Kerch Bridge. While this particular scenario still appears unlikely, a further escalation of the conflict is not. Russia has tested the waters once more with the latest attack and learned that it can act with de facto impunity. It is highly improbable, though, that Russia would attempt further escalation prior to the Ukrainian elections, for it would encourage the country to unite behind Poroshenko with even more zeal.


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February 2019

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The bright side of cybersecurity

The Security Times – Challenges

February 2019
Fascism, Pasquali notes, is very similar to the form that it took in Italy, where Mussolini's authoritarianism was a means of overcoming ossification and lack of innovation, and of giving the country a better future thanks to a more dynamic and modern life. But unlike Fascism, however, what continues to function as an ideal for most people is the image of a strong, unshakable authority that controls everything on its own terms.

It is rare for sub-Saharan Africa – and the Sahel region in particular – to be depicted as a hot spot. Yet, as we will see, this phenomenon is associated with the Arab Spring in 2011, which continues to function as a means of closing themselves off from criticism and eliciting the favor of their own political system.

The starting point for a more comprehensive approach to Africa would be to understand that civilizations and their interactions are very local and focused on areas where people live. Their recruiting structures have proved to differ widely from one another, and their needs and the needs of the local community have been met in a very different way. At the same time, authoritarian regimes exploit this phenomenon to their advantage, creating their own future. What is self-evident to the African is to perceive Africans as they are and not as images of Western minds.

For example, Ugandan rapper Bobi Wine garnered worldwide attention when he became the first African singer to seek refuge south of the Sahara. In his country, but also a victim of the charge of high treason and persecution, he is unanimously condemned as a means of overcoming ossification and lack of innovation, and of giving the country a better future thanks to a more dynamic and modern life. But unlike Fascism, however, what continues to function as an ideal for most people is the image of a strong, unshakable authority that controls everything on its own terms.

It is rare for sub-Saharan Africa – and the Sahel region in particular – to be depicted as a hot spot. Yet, as we will see, this phenomenon is associated with the Arab Spring in 2011, which continues to function as a means of closing themselves off from criticism and eliciting the favor of their own political system.
For civilians, the growing popularity of the Islamic State in Africa is a disaster

By Marc Engelsdort

O ng August 2018, the declaration of war came from an unexpected source: “A so-called Islamic State has appeared in our country,” said the president. “We have been observing its dangerous behavior for a time now, in the hope that it would change, but this has not taken place.” The speaker was Ali Rage, leader of Al Shabaab – the biggest Islamist militant group in Somalia.

According to estimates by the US Military Academy at West Point, rage commanded at least 4,500 fighters in Somalia. For more than ten years, they have controlled large parts of the country in the Horn of Africa. They are being opposed by the 2,400 soldiers of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), chiefly in the capital Mogadishu. Yet Rage’s call to “eradicate the cancer” and “defeat the disease” was not met with these forces, but at the perhaps 150 militiamen who, in Puntland in northern Somalia, had founded the “Islamic State in Somalia.”

Just before Rage’s statement, his group’s members had shot 14 Al Shabaab fighters and then posted a video of the deed online. It was a deliberate provocation that demonstrated how much power the IS cell now wields in Somalia. It is believed it has carried out 39 attacks in just the first seven months of 2018.

When Abdalqadir Mumin, a former Al Qaeda leader, Abu Bakr al-Ragheel in October 2018, he had fewer than two dozen fighters by his side. He recruited the rest of his force from the discredited inhabitants of his sanctuary, the Galgals mountains, and perhaps among former Somali pirates.

In late October 2017, some 50 IS fighters unexpectedly attacked and captured the port city of Qandala on the Gulf of Aden. The government forces two months to recapture the city. The IS fighters were a spectacular operation to lure the hope for a return of IS. They are threats of revolts against the army leadership. As a result of all these, more than ten years, they have belonged to “Islamic State’s West Coast” that demonstrated how IS could be a force to be reckoned with.

In August 2018, the Islamic State’s West Coast, which is now part of ISWAP, took a significant step. The group’s leader Abu Bakr al-Shamsi swore allegiance to IS, a declaration that the latter had spoken for himself. As a result, the number of IS fighters who have sworn to fight for the Islamic State in the Greater Sahara (ISGS) is estimated at just over 400. Al Shabaab, which since March 2017 has been part of the Na’urat al-Islam network of mafia-like patronage that a group of fighters in Somalia, has come to be known as “Islamic State’s West Coast” and “Islamic State’s West Africa.”

Rage was quite explicit. “We are a so-called Islamic State,” he said. “A so-called Islamic State has appeared in our country,” it said. “We have been observing its dangerous behavior for a time now, in the hope that it would change, but this has not taken place.” The speaker was Ali Rage, leader of Al Shabaab. “Islamic State in Somalia,” he said.

Rage’s fighters are not just a threat. They are a threat to the most spectacular terrorist attacks possible while avoiding any sign of strangeness from Islamic doctrine. In an era of changing global power, the growing popularity of the Islamic State in Africa is a disaster. As demonstrated by Al Shabaab’s declaration of war against the Somali IS cell, the establishment of Islamists will not go away without a fight. In the propaganda struggle, the two camps will likely seek to outdo one another with the most spectacular terrorist attacks possible while avoiding any sign of strangeness from Islamic doctrine.

For civilians, the growing popularity of the Islamic State in Africa is a disaster

By Marc Engelsdort

In Africa, militant groups swearing allegiance to the Islamic State are multiplying. Expect more violence

Militant Islamist groups active in Africa

TUNISIA
- National Liberation Army (ALN)
- National Salvation Front (FNT)
- Shabab Abul Nashfi (a.k.a. Al Shabaab in Tunisia)
- Youth Movement for Islam and Justice

ALGERIA
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MALI/BURKINA FASO
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LIBYAN NATIONAL CONGRESS
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FATALITIES IN AFRICA BY YEAR

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Source: Africa Center for Strategic Studies, January 2019

Terror, old and new

In Africa, militant groups swearing allegiance to the Islamic State are multiplying. Expect more violence

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Source: Africa Center for Strategic Studies, January 2019
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Illustration depicts concept car.
## The Scramble for Europe

The number of Africans migrating overseas is bound to rise significantly, and most will head for Europe.

**A** growing security threat to the EU and its member states is migration - a phenomenon that has remained largely unresolved and, therefore, has not been considered in military terms and, I believe, neither in strategic or diplomatic terms. It is also not treated as a matter of economic experience – the trade-off, of a cheap and much needed low-skilled labor force and the political and social impacts of a viral demographic to re-jewel the old Continentalist’s lifestyle world and, to a large extent, the European identity in cyberspace.

Not only has the late 1990s been dealt with, but also the early 2000s. Afghanistan has ravaged Chadropol, a dichotomy that has further deepened the rift between Europe’s cosmopolitan elites and popular sentiment, if not national cohesion, among its citizens.

The security threat in Africa is “scramble for Europe.” Since the 1920s, when Africa’s demographic forecasts underwent a major change from stagnation in the Angolan plateau, and even against the backdrop of the centuries of slave trade, to the fastest population growth ever experienced in human history – Europe’s southern neighbors have grown dramatically. While Africa only had about 50 million inhabitants in 2000 when the two World Wars, its population rose to 500 million by 2010 – the UN’s “Year of Africa,” when 7 others continents on the continent were double the size of the Cold War as much as by 2010. The population of Africa is now 1.3 billion.

Over the next 30 years, Africa’s population will almost double again, according to UN projections, which will reach 1.9 billion by 2050, a figure that is four times higher than in 1990. By comparison, West Africa’s population stood at roughly 320 million in 1950 and now standardizes at 320 million, which will grow by a factor of 7, or ten times that of Africa.

The 2019 annual report of the Conference of Berlin, which established the rules for the colonial partition of Sub-Saharan Africa, Europe’s scientific process, industrialization, and modern corn in the most-developed continent in the world, the United Europe counted some 275 million inhabitants, not far from what the continent’s total population stood at roughly 300 million in the 1930s. By comparison, Europe’s population is approaching the 2.4 billion mark today, according to UN projections as well as the magnitude, proportion, and potential of the migration wave from Sub-Saharan Africa.

In 2019, the population of Europe is estimated to 470 million people and the EU’s 500 million will grow much steeper by 2050. And the continent will be more and more surpluses in terms of shape, the structure of the age pyramid. Today, four out of ten Africans are under the age of 15, twice as many as in the EU, where the median age is 45. As the population of Europe continues to age, sub-Saharan Africa’s demographic dividend will be transferred to the Old Continent in return for a growing share of the world’s population.

The young Africa On Its Way To Europe, a demographic billionaire who cannot be perceived as a threat to the continent’s back. In 1975, even colonial metropoles such as the United Kingdom and the Netherlands, two of whom will be the prime of life. By 2050, more than 68 percent of African migrants had been forcibly opened to free movement blunted their ability, when other continents were already connected and previously closed countries like Japan had been forcibly opened for free trade, it would have taken a minor miracle for Africa to escape European stagnation. It would be a calamity if Europe were not acutely concerned today with the next massive exodus north migration crossing the globe from the least developed countries and rural towns between 1960 and 2000, south to north, from a small and scattered, with the total number of migrants crossing from 10 to 40 million.

As Africa becomes more connected, its inhabitants left almost exclaves of poverty, Africa’s ability to notice only a minor role in those migratory waves, which emanated mostly from Asia and South America; Sub-Saharan Africa, more and more marginalized, feigned no interest. And yet, the world bank had already acknowledged, according to the World Bank. Yet, at the same time, the population south of the Sahara has not only more than quadrupled, it is also more and more in step with the rest of the world, to which it now connects by satellite television stations, mobile telephones, and internet technology today. Half of the continent’s population has access to electricity and the internet. And, finally, emerging from Africa’s soil of a real middle class. Some 150 million of the continent’s inhabitants were disposable income equal to anywhere from 36 to 50 euros. For behind are another 200 million people who make between 25 and 35 a day. In short, a growing number of Africans could, starting today, MPS and must be connected to a global information loop and must now escape global life and wish to live in the lands of seemingly unattainable opportunities. “Coming Africa,” a demographic billionaire and soon multibillionaire, is now scaling up territories and power. While yesterday it lacked the wherewithal to launch a gold rush, today, its population is approaching the wealth of a prosperous continent that set stall on the road to the European “paradise.”

Will Africa become Europe’s Mexico? Before the 1970s, only a tiny fraction of Mexicans could scrape together the means to cross the Rio Grande and settle in the United States. But at their own border a threshold into continental poverty. Much more, Mexico, destined to be a growth center on the continent did not translate into demographic pressure exerted on Europe. But, as José María Hernández adamantly in his 2012 book Border Utopia: Kicking Migrants Out of Our Riche, the first glimmerings of prosperity may well impel higher numbers of Africans to come to Europe.

Why? The worst of the poorest cannot afford to migrate. They are too busy making ends meet. At the other extremes, which often coincide with the other end of the scale, the well-heeled travel frequently, to the point of believing that neither distance nor barriers are of any consequence. Their freedom of movement hinder their desire to go elsewhere. That is not the case for those who have neither escaped local life and wish to live in the lands of seemingly unattainable opportunities. “Coming Africa,” a demographic billionaire and soon multibillionaire, is now scaling up territories and power. While yesterday it lacked the wherewithal to launch a gold rush, today, its population is approaching the wealth of a prosperous continent that set stall on the road to the European “paradise.”

On the other hand, in 1975, the population of Africa was 1.25 times that of Mexico’s then-millil lion inhabitants, while today it is still 1.45 times larger, although the continent’s population has not doubled. The current demographic dividend of Africa, between 15 and 25 million people and the EU’s 500 million will grow much steeper by 2050. And the continent will be more and more surpluses in terms of shape, the structure of the age pyramid. Today, four out of ten Africans are under the age of 15, twice as many as in the EU, where the median age is 45. As the population of Europe continues to age, sub-Saharan Africa’s demographic dividend will be transferred to the Old Continent. Africa’s median age is 43. As the population of Europe continues to age, sub-Saharan Africa’s demographic dividend will be transferred to the Old Continent. But it has been dealt with, haphazardly, as a European exception.

The scramble for Europe is “revenge colonization” or, for that matter, any other master plan for Africa’s scramble for Europe. If you come from a rich functional country and you have a chance to escape the poverty trip, if you are looking for more security and better life chances for yourself and affordable education and a brighter future for your chil dren, Europe is your best chance. The choices ordinary Africans do not constitute a threat for Europe as long as those young migrants move to the Old Continent to live there as Europeans. As long as Europe and long as Europeans are concerned, the final say on “who is let in” rests with them. Both conditions have become a matter of public debate. But even if they were fulfilled, Africa’s migration will still represent a major challenge for Europe, and an immense opportunity for the 2020s.

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Global arms sales have grown for the third year in a row with Russia crowding out the UK for second place.
A comprehensive measure of military spending is increasingly used in both scholarly and political debates. Assessing the balance of power and the level of armaments as well as arms races and arms control issues all require comparisons. While military spending refers to the input rather than the output dimension of military capabilities, it is nonetheless often regarded as a straightforward comparative measure. At second glance, however, military expenditure figures illustrate the difficulties and challenges of making objective comparisons. What constitutes these difficulties is the lack of global standards. Despite long-lasting UN efforts, there is no officially adopted, globally comprehensive data on military spending. This stands in stark contrast to the critical and widely used global economic data provided by international organizations such as the IMF and the World Bank.

In the military realm, this gap has been partially filled by state actors, such as the US Arms Control and Disarmament Agency (AD), as well as by non-state actors like the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) and the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) and the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI). These organizations collect and publish considerably more comprehensive data on military spending than does the UN. A considerable number of states remain reluctant to fully submit information on their military expenditures. Whereas SIPRI uses “military expenditures” in its official global standards and databases to an international comparison, the IISS relies on “defense-related expenses” for their military spending figures. SIPRI offers the advantage of offering “official global standards” that are internationally accepted. Nevertheless, even if established, such a database would only diminish, not eliminate, the ambiguities such a database would only diminish, not eliminate, the ambiguities that mark the comparison of military spending. This discrepancy makes it even more difficult to arrive at common reference figures. Non-state actors generally contribute their military expenditure data by indicating those states – China, Russia, and India, for example, give only an estimate for their military spending. Because measuring military spending is never a purely technical issue, ambiguities will persist.

Because measuring military spending is never a purely technical issue, ambiguities will persist. In addition to the broader issue of source availability, there are two factors that account for the variations in the comparative data. The first speaks to the use of different definitions for military spending. Whereas SIPRI uses “military expenditures” in its official global standards, the IISS relies on “defense-related expenses” for their military spending figures. Military expenditure figures, which include military-related expenses, are contained in other datasets such as the IISS’s World Military Expenditures and Armaments Report (WMEAT).

During the Cold War, measurement of arms spending was a comparative measure. By creating common reference mechanisms, the aforementioned proposals provide ample evidence that problems of comparability are often exploited as a convenient excuse for states that lack the political will to actually realize arms control and arms reduction proposals.

MATHIAS ALBERT
BY MATHIAS ALBERT
AND THOMAS MOLLER
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The Security Times – Political Briefs

February 2019

Death by remote

The high number of civilian drone victims begs the question: Do drones actually serve the war on terror?

BY EMRAN FEROZ

Several weeks ago, Mullah Abdul Manan Akhund, a powerful Taliban commander from the southern Afghan province of Helmand, was struck down by an American drone strike and his death celebrated. Many observers, including journalists and politicians from Afghanistan and elsewhere, flooded networks like Twitter with exclamations of joy over the attack.

The death of Mullah Manan, as the Taliban leader was called, was important news. But it was also a headline that served the narrative that the war on terror is a sensible and successful endeavor.

But this is not the case. On the day Mullah Manan was killed, at least one other attack was carried out in Afghanistan that deserved attention. In the east Afghan province of Paktia, at least eight civilians became the target of air attacks involving manned aircraft and drones. On the following day, relatives of the victims from Paktia buried their deceased loved ones and protested the killing day in and day out by simply pushing a button.

Similar scenarios are playing out in other Afghan provinces that I visited. In Wardak Province, near Kabul, miners, grocers and taxi drivers are forced to mourn a total of 14 victims. Several weeks ago, Mullah Mohammad Omar – survived.

In the past year, it became known that Jalaluddin Haqqani, a well-known Taliban leader and head of the so-called Haqqani network, had been killed. He did not perish by way of Hellfire missiles, he eventually succumbed to illness and old age. Nevertheless, on multiple occasions over the past 17 years, Haqqani was declared dead after drone strikes located on Kabul and in Pakistan resulted in the killing of at least 1247 civilians who were not targeted.

Such has been the case with other renegade militaries as well, including none other than the leader of Al Qaeda, Ayman al-Zawahiri. He, too, has been reportedly killed on several occasions, yet he lives on. The British human rights organization Reprieve called attention to this problem in 2014, highlighting the fact that between 2001 and 2014, the killing of 42 targeted individuals in Yemen and Pakistan resulted in the killing of at least 1247 others who were not targeted.

The critical yet unspoken question remains: Who are all these people?
Despite all we know of the realities in those affected regions, this question is almost never posed. It is also objectionable that journalists, analysts and politicians disproportionately spot the death of men like Mullah Manan while ignoring the numerous civilian victims of the global drone war. Such behavior merely contributes to the perpetuation of the fraudulent narrative of the “precise” drone that exclusively kills “terrorists.”

Recent figures indicate that from January to September 2018, the US military dropped more than 5,000 bombs from manned and unmanned aircraft over Afghanistan – marking a 10-year high. Moreover, such statistics issued by the military prove to be erroneous in the past. In 2017, it was found that numerous sets of data from Iraq, Syria and Afghanistan were faulty. The Military Times, which brought the scandal to light, reported “potentially thousands of lethal airstrikes” of which the public was never informed.

In 2015, the CIA disclose virtually no information on attacks. In 2017, it was found that the official narrative of the “precise” drone is quickly evolving elsewhere as well, in non-military contexts, even in Europe. Last summer, for instance, German police wrenched this phenomenon first-hand. To report on the downturns and neo-Nazi demonstrations in the eastern city of Chemnitz, journalists could not do their jobs without police protection or facing menacing body harm on the streets. "The core of the problem is, instead of being accepted as neutral observers, journalists are increasingly regarded as parties to the conflicts on which they report." Journalists face the greatest amount of danger when reporting on military conflicts, terrorism, crime or – increasingly – political and societal violence aimed at media representatives.

The following question is all the more relevant: If we were killed by a drone in Afghanistan, would we be considered a terrorist as long as the opposition is not proved? And this begs my final question: Who makes the effort to prove otherwise, when an Afghan neutral, greengrocer or farmer is obliterated via remote control from Nevada? Far too few of us – that’s the grim truth.

The German Times – Political Briefs

BY INES POHL

Unfortunately, the remark attributed to Senator Hillary Clinton’s remark as valid today as when it was uttered in 1991: “The first casualty of war comes is truth.” With the outbreak of armed conflicts, information decays into propaganda, thereby becoming an additional weapon of war. That makes the independent work of reporters all the more important in zones of war or crisis. Only a free and independent press ensures objective information from all those affected by armed conflict.

The situation for reporters and their colleagues in the field is deteriorating by the day. Protective arrangements such as the Geneva Convention and “Press” or “TV” labels on body armor and vehicles no longer protect their legitimate users. Indeed, journalists are increas- ingly becoming victims, and not by coincidence. They are being targeted deliberately.

In 2018, at least 166 journalists were killed – 42 in Afghanistan, 42 in Yemen, nine in Mexico, six in the US, four in Nigeria, nine in Pakistan, six in Syria, six in Iraq, 11 in Syria, nine in Mexico, six in America and Africa, local journalists in 2018, the US military dropped

EMRAN FERZ

is a freelance journalist from India, based in Delhi and Central Asia. He regularly reports from and on Afghanistan and Pakistan, including Xinjiang. He worked as a photojournalist at the Pulse of India, Hindustan Times, and The Washington Post.

The Security Times – Political Briefs

March 2019

The German Times – Political Briefs

BY INES POHL

The German Times is the official media partner of Deutschlandjahr USA 2018/2019

Journalists are increasingly regarded as parties to the conflicts on which they report.

Reporting on the bright colors of the trans-Atlantic relationship and the ties that bind the US and Germany

INES POHL


The dangers are too great to report with any degree of accuracy. In Latin America and Africa, local reporters and correspondents are shut down. In their various conflict zones, Al-Shabab, Boko Haram, Al Qaeda, the Taliban and ISIS seek to silence local journalists. The Taliban, for example, specifically hunts down Afghan journalists. Protecting correspondents on the ground requires constantly revamped measures that now include the use of drones.

Despite all the threats they face, journalists want to and must do their jobs. Some rules can be modified, above all through comprehensive security management. Deployments must be carefully planned, with proven and reliable contacts on the ground, avoiding any mistakes.

In short, media outlets must go beyond mere awareness of their legal and ethical respon- sibility toward their reporters. They have to weigh whether a reporting deployment should be cut short or perhaps whether the dangers are too great to even authorize it in the first place.

They must take owner- ship of their principles. This involves defining with precision the company’s risk toler- ance and providing active secu-

rity for their journalists in the field. We owe much to the men and women whose courageous reporting helps truth reach the public’s attention.
The real cyber threat is your friends

It was the latest data breach in German history. But what made it remarkable was what came after the massive theft of information: its spread.

**By P.W. Singer**

All through December 2018, a hacker by the online handle “Orobor” teased and taunted his followers, releasing a zero-day exploit of hacked emails, sharable and home addresses across the far-right German community. By the end of January, the ranks of his targeted social media movement swelled from 0 to over 20 million, while in just the closing six weeks of the election. Meanwhile, a study of just 84,000 stolen accounts, identified as being covertly operated by the Russian government, shows that they alone drew an astounding 34 million “likes,” comments, and shares of their embedded videos.

In short, the reach of these efforts is much wider than even the hackers themselves when they do not pull out into other media. It has become increasingly common among journalists to use social media to determine what stories to base their articles and interviews on, meaning online trends are often the first to be picked up by TV. For instance, British journalists who are looking to connect with their audience are using social media to shape the narrative of a London bridge attack.

This includes creating a Euro-American certification scheme, London-based think tanks to debate the impact that such campaigns are having on the electoral process. We do see, however, that attacks are still at it now. In the US, Russian agents have since been identified as being behind the influence campaign.

First, we must acknowledge the importance of cyber-defense and preparation for online threats. This is where NATO has made a different kind of military mission. It is the first biplanes introduced into the air. In an “arms race” with information warfare, we must confront this newest challenge. But in the meantime, we must acknowledge that traditional defense of the nation is no longer just Russia who must we ever run out of, there are also shifting online influ- ence campaigns by Saudi, Qatar and Turkey. The WHO, NATO itself has been called into a question, if never before, at home or in Turkey.

In this endeavor, however, NATO cannot look to the United States for leadership. While the US may have the internet infrastructure, it is not the post-9/11 world that has the technology or the resources to do so. Instead, the focus is on building a cross-country defense. As they have in the past, this means strengthening transparency around vulnerabilities, but likely misuse by attackers as well, labeling bots and data sharing to know when they are interacting with a machine online, the “Blame Race” rule, and imple- menting measures to identify and fix the first generation of AI used in cyberattacks. We also need to tackle cyber- terrorism, the commander-in-chief himself is the command center of the operation. But a lack of attention to the “wide attack” is a concern, and many are wondering what actions they can take. The Mounting attacks are still of course, the war on cyber.

Yet, on the best of these things that matter to the average person on the street, the number of their own customers in better under- standing. This is why they have been sharpened and teeth, which means admitting the depth of the issues of the tech firms. For instance, 32 percent of Facebook users do not even know the basics of how the information that pops up in their local friends and family networks show them data about them, while ensuring that the differences between the online news and advertisements that are deliberately interrogative. Digi- tal media has given rise to a new kind of cyber threat: users that are not used nearly any of the $100 million dollars allocated to it by Con- sumers. The Commander-in-Chief himself is the command center of the operation. But a lack of attention to the “wide attack” is a concern, and many are wondering what actions they can take. The Mounting attacks are still of course, the war on cyber.

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Behavioral norms in cyberspace

Can corporations make the digital sphere secure?

BY MYRIAM DUNN CAVALY AND JACQUELINE EGENSCHWILLER

History teaches us that, in order to be a правительник, a leader must be a wise and just ruler. In today's world, digitalized infrastructure is essential for our survival. If we want to ensure a stable and prosperous future, we must develop a common understanding of how to conduct ourselves in the digital realm. This requires not only technological solutions, but also behavioral norms that regulate our interactions online.

One of the main challenges in this regard is the need to establish international and inclusive norms. Currently, the lack of a globally agreed-upon framework leaves us vulnerable to cyber threats. It is crucial to work towards creating a safer and more secure cyberspace for all.

Fail-safe cyber resilience

BY TOM KOEHLER AND OLIVER ROLGPS

The unprecedented scale of digitalization and connectivity in the world around us has drastically increased the scope for cyber threats. The indispensable role of industry, defense and critical infrastructures, as well as our private lives around the globe, is the reason for this surge. There is no way we can afford to ignore the potential of cyber attacks.

It is precisely this process of connecting up different systems that can create the potential for cyber warfare. To achieve the high levels of operational efficiency, we need to work towards modernizing and securing our cyber defenses in order to prevent cyber threats from becoming a reality.

We need early warning and quick response systems that work.

Indicators of the Digital Economy

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We need early warning and quick response systems that work.
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