

Multilateralism is Dead. Long Live Multilateralism!



10 Years Munich Young Leaders

Dear Reader,

This year marks the 10th anniversary of the Munich Young Leaders (MYL) programme. When the Munich Security Conference and Körber-Stiftung established this initiative, we envisioned a platform for young experts to engage in open dialogue with high-ranking political figures, to strengthen their networks, and to exchange new and creative ideas in the field of foreign and security policy. Today, the Munich Young Leaders network comprises more than 250 alumni from over 60 countries, among them ministers, members of parliament, commanders and leading political experts from the world's most distinguished institutions. These remarkable individuals do not just represent a wide array of expertise and come from all over the globe; they also actively shape the multilateral architecture through their daily work. We are proud that, over the last decade, the Munich Young Leaders programme has matured into a one-of-a-kind network offering its members unique opportunities for exchange.

Strengthening this exchange is particularly crucial at a time when international cooperation is under unprecedented pressure. As the United Nations General Assembly begins its 74th session, it is difficult to be particularly optimistic about the future of the multilateral world order. Long-standing international institutions and agreements are increasingly questioned or even outright rejected, as some actors no longer consider collective action the way to go when it comes to tackling common challenges.

Against this background, fresh ideas for reviving multilateral cooperation are urgently needed. In this regard, the vast network of the Munich Young Leaders – coming from a wide range of backgrounds including governments, national and regional parliaments, civil society, academia, think tanks, the media and the private sector – represent an invaluable repository, which has provided relevant impulses and inspiration to foreign and security policy debates on countless occasions. In this publication, the Munich Young Leaders present best practices for multilateral cooperation and offer diverse regional perspectives on the prospects and challenges of the multilateral order. Their insights highlight that there is no shortage of successful concerted action to bring about a more peaceful, prosperous and stable world – and that much can be learned from these efforts.

This publication would not have been possible without the participation of both the Munich Young Leaders and our partners, who made their research and data available. We would like to thank all authors and partner organisations for their contributions and wish you a thought-provoking read!

Yours sincerely,



Wolfgang Ischinger
Ambassador; Chairman,
Munich Security Conference



Thomas Paulsen
Member of the Executive Board,
Körber-Stiftung



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Editorial

Multilateralism is under fire precisely when we need it most”, stated United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres when addressing world leaders at the UN General Assembly debate in September of 2018.¹ Guterres is not alone in his analysis: over the past few years, multilateralism has been variously described as “under attack”, “under siege”, “in crisis” or “at a crossroads”. On some occasions, it has simply been declared “dead”.²

It is hard to deny that climate change, migration, epidemics, terrorism and the disruptive effects of technological change care little for borders.

At the same time, it is hard to deny that climate change, migration, epidemics, terrorism and the disruptive effects of technological change, to name but a few, care little for borders. Transnational problems like these can only be tackled through collaborative efforts. In fact, it was largely through multilateral efforts that states prevented the proliferation of nuclear weapons; it was the multilateral trade regime that delivered unprecedented levels of growth and prosperity to many parts of the world; and it is international collaboration that, on many occasions, has

made certain that the perpetrators of genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity do not enjoy impunity.³ If decades of cooperation have proven that multilateral agreements and frameworks are the best way to tackle transnational threats, provide crucial global public goods and ensure that the power of the law does not succumb to the law of the mighty, then why is multilateralism in crisis?⁴

First, many multilateral institutions have been unable to adapt to the pace of global developments and thus have failed to deliver. For instance, the World Trade Organization’s rules for e-commerce and cross-border data flows – two areas of global trade that have grown tremendously in recent years – are hopelessly outdated, and reforms are not in sight.⁵ The membership and decision-making structures of many international organisations are equally outdated. Most importantly, these institutions do not adequately reflect the increased clout and number of non-Western powers.⁶ In this regard, the UN Security Council and the international financial institutions have encountered particularly fierce criticism.⁷ These and other organisations’ failures to reform are clearly imperilling their legitimacy – and thus their efficacy.⁸ In short, because they lag “behind the curve of history”, many multilateral organisations are “struggling to stay relevant”.⁹

Geopolitical shifts and mounting great-power rivalries are likewise straining global cooperative efforts.¹⁰ Increasing tensions between Washington and Beijing and – to a lesser extent – between the

European Union and China are endangering multilateralism, and not only in the economic realm.¹¹ In the South China Sea, Beijing's increasing belligerence and disregard for international law are seriously undermining regional stability. By annexing Crimea, Russia has broken several multilateral agreements and dealt a major blow to regional security collaboration.¹² And mounting tensions between the United States and Russia risk inflicting long-term damage on arms control and the global non-proliferation regime. To effectively uphold a system of multilateral cooperation, "the system's biggest players [need] to more or less agree on the basics of cooperation".¹³ Yet, this condition is seemingly no longer being met.

What receives little notice these days is the numerous instances and areas where multilateral cooperation continues to work – and to deliver promising results.

As if this was not enough, rising nationalism in and beyond the West poses yet another challenge to the multilateral order. Europe is facing populist nationalist movements that challenge basic liberal tenets like open borders, multiculturalism and global cooperation.¹⁴ The United States under President Trump, for its part, is rejecting its traditional role as guardian of the liberal international order, seemingly preferring to spoiler efforts at global cooperation.¹⁵

So far, so bad – so one-sided. What receives little notice these days is the numerous instances and areas where multilateral cooperation continues to work – and to deliver promising results. These "beacons of hope" of multilateral cooperation are the focus of this volume. Zooming in on these instances is neither naïve nor an act of denial. It is worthwhile for at least two reasons. First, overstating the problem may further compound it: after all, part of the multilateral malaise is the growing perception that international cooperation is dysfunctional.¹⁶ Acknowledging what works – and thereby restoring balance to the picture – is thus a relevant part of the

cure. Second, we may actually learn from the "beacons of hope". Instances of effective multilateralism should be seen as "best practices" that may inspire and revive cooperation elsewhere. In short, multilateral best practices deserve far more attention – both from those who seek to defend and strengthen multilateral cooperation and from those who doubt its merit.

In this context, the Munich Young Leaders are uniquely qualified to highlight successful instances of multilateral cooperation and to significantly advance the debate on multilateralism by presenting innovative ideas. Not only is their network itself an instance of multilateral "best practice", the Munich Young Leaders also work at critical nodes in the multilateral architecture. As the makers of multilateralism, they can offer the unique insights that they acquired while shaping the multilateral system. And last but not least, the Munich Young Leaders can use their diverse geographical and professional backgrounds to infuse the debate on multilateralism with much-needed fresh perspectives.

The first part of this publication features "beacons of hope" of multilateral cooperation.

The first part of the publication features a series of contributions written by the Munich Young Leaders, each of which presents a "beacon of hope" of multilateral cooperation, examines the conditions underpinning its success and identifies possible "lessons learned" that may inspire collaboration elsewhere.

These contributions highlight the continued ability of multilateral frameworks to tackle urgent global problems. For instance, Cathryn Clüver Ashbrook (MYL 2014) and Daniela Haarhuis (MYL 2014) analyse urban collaborations, showing that the world's largest cities have successfully reduced their emissions and thus made relevant progress in the battle against climate change. Al Sharif Nasser (MYL 2011) and Aykan Erdemir (MYL 2013) explore scientific cooperation in the Middle East: they demonstrate that scholars from the region are cooperating

under the most adverse of circumstances, engaging in collaborative research projects while their home countries' relations are severely strained. Cale Salih (MYL 2016) and Philipp Rotmann (MYL 2018) draw attention to the global hotspots where UN agencies and other multilateral organisations have helped mitigate the risk of violent conflict. Lolwa Al-Jefairi (MYL 2015) relates how a multilateral coalition of states and international organisations recently achieved significant progress in defeating terrorist propaganda online. And Fawaz M. Al-Sabah (MYL 2009) and Rolf Schwarz (MYL 2014) explore the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation's (NATO) partnership with the Gulf states and how it has helped the allies and regional states work towards greater stability in the broader Middle East.

The contributions also identify multilateral frameworks that have stood the test of time. The NATO is one of them. Benedetta Berti (MYL 2013), Anna Maria Dowd (MYL 2013), James Golby (MYL 2017) and Dominik P. Jankowski (MYL 2014) examine how the alliance has progressively broadened its tasks in response to a changing security environment. Anna Maria Dowd (MYL 2013) and Aaron Dowd (MYL 2013) draw attention to the transformation of NATO in the wake of growing cyber-threats: they examine how the alliance started to establish strong patterns of cooperation with industry partners in order to address the challenges posed by disruptive technologies. The Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) is another example of an organisation that has managed to transform. Jan Hamáček (MYL 2009) and Christoph Israng (MYL 2009) show how OPCW member states, in response to a surge in chemical weapons attacks, have recently expanded the organisation's mandate and tasked it with the job of attribution.

**The second part of this publication
presents different regional
perspectives on multilateralism.**

The second part of the publication adds to the multilateral debate by offering input from various regions of the world. The contributions present different

perspectives on multilateralism, visions for the future of international cooperation and views on the most urgent issues to be tackled multilaterally. In the process, these contributions address another imbalance that afflicts the "multilateralism in crisis" debate: its Western-centric tilt.

In his opinion piece, Xizhou Zhou (MYL 2018) argues that China is largely playing by the rules and engaging with the existing multilateral order in an attempt to rise "from within". Myong-Hyun Go (MYL 2015), Shafqat Munir (MYL 2017) and Ambika Vishwanath (MYL 2011) call for a new Asian multilateralism based on democratic principles and norms in order to form a counterweight to a regional order that is increasingly perceived as Sino-centric. Jasmine El-Gamal (MYL 2013) describes a trend towards more fluid and pragmatic alliances in the Middle East shaped around different issues such as opposition to Iran, jihadist terrorism and political Islam. According to Ottilia Maunganidze (MYL 2017), Africa is often overlooked as an agenda setter in the international system despite the fact that African countries have a long tradition of multilateral cooperation. Julia Friedlander (MYL 2018) argues that the future of transatlantic cooperation is being shaped behind the scenes – namely by joint efforts of the United States and its European partners to remove the many structural impediments that still impede collaboration. Manuel Muniz (MYL 2017) and Marietje Schaake (MYL 2013) point out that European states need to join forces to strengthen Europe's collective technological weight lest they be caught in the middle of strategic competition between the United States and China.

What can we learn from these contributions? Three lessons stand out: First, there is evidence that actors in various regions across the world share a strong interest in maintaining multilateral cooperation. However, while the awareness that transnational threats require cooperative solutions is well

established in all parts of the world, distinct national or regional understandings of multilateralism and of the purposes it should serve often vary greatly. Second, even though some governments may embrace unilateralism, multilateralism is flourishing below the level of the nation-state.

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While non-state or sub-state actors may not be able to tackle each and every global challenge, particularly those involving violent conflict, they are already filling important governance gaps left by nation-states. For instance, city networks have proven to be a powerful buffer to states' assaults on multilateral agreements: in defiance of the United States government, city governments have continued to adhere to the Paris Climate Agreement, successfully reducing their carbon emissions and pressuring others to follow suit. And third, those governments committed to the multilateral approach are increasingly finding

it beneficial to join forces with non-state actors. NATO's efforts to tackle growing cyber threats by building robust partnerships with the private sector are just one such example.

We need to make sure that the
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sustained – and that they can
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the world needs them most.

Multilateralism might be under strain. But, as the French President Emmanuel Macron aptly put it: “[T]oday, more than ever, we need multilateralism [...]”.¹⁷ To overcome current global challenges, we need committed multilateralists. This publication shows that they still exist in many parts of the globe. We need to make sure that the sparks that multilateral cooperation still generates are sustained – and that they can reignite collaborative efforts where the world needs them most. For all of those who want to contribute to this worthwhile cause, this publication offers inspiring insights.

EDITORIAL TEAM



Sophie Eisentraut
Senior Policy Advisor,
Munich Security
Conference



Christoph Erber
Policy Advisor & Project
Manager, Munich
Security Conference



**Elisabeth
von Hammerstein**
Programme Director
International Affairs,
Körber-Stiftung



Anna Merk
Programme Manager
International Affairs,
Körber-Stiftung

The State of Multilateralism

Reflections by the Munich Young Leaders



Sawsan Chebli (MYL 2009)
State of Berlin Delegate to the
Federation; Permanent
Secretary of Active Citizenship
and International Relations,
Senate Chancellery, Berlin

“Today, multilateralism seems to be an elite project. We need to change our language when we speak of multilateralism. We need to reach out to people’s hearts. We need multilateralism now more than ever to maintain nothing less than peace in this world.”



Uzoamaka Ugochukwu (MYL 2019)
S/S, Organizational Design, Central
Bank of Nigeria, Abuja

“The biggest multilateral challenge for sustainable development in Sub-Saharan Africa is the absence of women in peace and conflict resolution.”



Derek Johnson (MYL 2015)
Executive Director, Global Zero,
Washington, DC

“The biggest threat to multilateralism is the rise of authoritarian nationalism and the populist leaders who consolidate power by harnessing racial, ethnic and religious prejudices, undermining trust in institutions, and eroding universal values and norms.”



Axel Gugel (MYL 2019)
First Secretary, Political Section,
Permanent Mission of the Federal
Republic of Germany to the
United Nations, New York City

“Multilateralism is not dead, but must re-invent itself: through reformed United Nations, regional organisations and initiatives, a network of politically connected cities and a youth movement that acts locally but thinks globally.”



Svitlana Zalizhchuk (MYL 2017)
Member of Parliament 2014–19,
Verkhovna Rada (Parliament
of Ukraine), Kiev

“The old system of balance of power in the world has been disrupted, but it is far from clear what will replace it. It will require a common effort to build a new system of global governance, but we must not compromise on democratic values and the international rule of law.”



Dmitry Suslov (MYL 2009)
Deputy Director, Center for Comprehensive European and International Studies, National Research University Higher School of Economics, Moscow

“Multilateralism is not dead. It is just becoming less Western-centric. A new, “post-Western” multilateralism will be more pluralist and will include non-Western institutions and arrangements, such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa), the Eurasian Economic Union, etc.”



Lynn Kuok (MYL 2013)
Senior Research Fellow, University of Cambridge, Singapore

“The biggest challenge in the Indo-Pacific is defending a rules-based order. Countries and multilateral institutions must both live by and promote an understanding that a rules-based international order is the best guarantee for long-term prosperity and security.”



Jean-Baptiste Jeangène Vilmer (MYL 2018)
Director, Institute for Strategic Research (IRSEM), Ministry of Defense, Paris

“Multilateralism is seriously ill but not terminally ill. To save the rules-based order, rules themselves need to evolve: we cannot address 21st century challenges with 20th century institutions. Multilateralism will be post-Westphalian, open to civil society, or not be at all.”



Bilawal Bhutto Zardari (MYL 2019)
Chairman of the Pakistan Peoples Party; Member of Parliament, National Assembly, Islamabad

“In South Asia, the danger of nuclear armed conflict is the lynchpin for multilateral security cooperation. Nuclear deterrence has not prevented and may in fact have encouraged a costly arms race in the region, overshadowing other multilateral challenges such as fighting poverty and addressing climate change.”



Melissa Hanlon (MYL 2018)
Deputy Director for North and West Europe, Office of the Secretary of Defense, Department of Defense, Washington, DC

“The biggest threat to multilateralism is public apathy. There is a lack of public understanding of the nature of current security threats and how multilateral institutions serve as a force multiplier in addressing these threats.”

The views expressed here are those of the authors.



Beacons of Hope:

Multilateralism in Action

Micro-Multilateralism: Cities Saving UN Ideals

Cathryn Clüver Ashbrook (MYL 2014) and
Daniela Haarhuis (MYL 2014)

The UN Charter focuses on states as the central actors in the international system, defining as a multilateral action when three nation-states cooperate in a field of common interest. Today, nation-states are increasingly paralysed into inaction due to political divisions or great power rivalries. Hence, they are failing to effectively utilise collective action. Sub-national entities are stepping into this vacuum to deliver on core functions embedded in the UN Charter, redefining effective collaboration on a transnational scale – what we call micro-multilateralism.

Cities have emerged as particularly skilful champions of micro-multilateralism, even though their role as independent actors is not specifically addressed by the UN Charter. With 70 per cent of the world's population projected to be urban by 2050, cities are now effectively tackling transnational issues once the prerogative of states.¹

Though the UN system has actively fostered connections and collaborations between cities for decades – in the Sustainable Development Goals, as part of the UN Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) and the UN Safer Cities Programme, for example – these have all been top-down efforts, where the UN structure has served as the convening entity.² Cities remained a subset of the nation-state rather than actors in their own right.

But now, we are witnessing rapid growth in a different model of urban collaboration: cities have realised that migration, climate change and the

threat of pandemic disease and terrorism will affect them disproportionately compared to other areas in nation-states, because urban density magnifies and catalyses the negative impact of these transnational phenomena. Driven by a newfound sense of self-interest and a sense of urgency, cities are forming their own transnational action networks. The most prominent example concerns the fight against climate change: the C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group (C40).

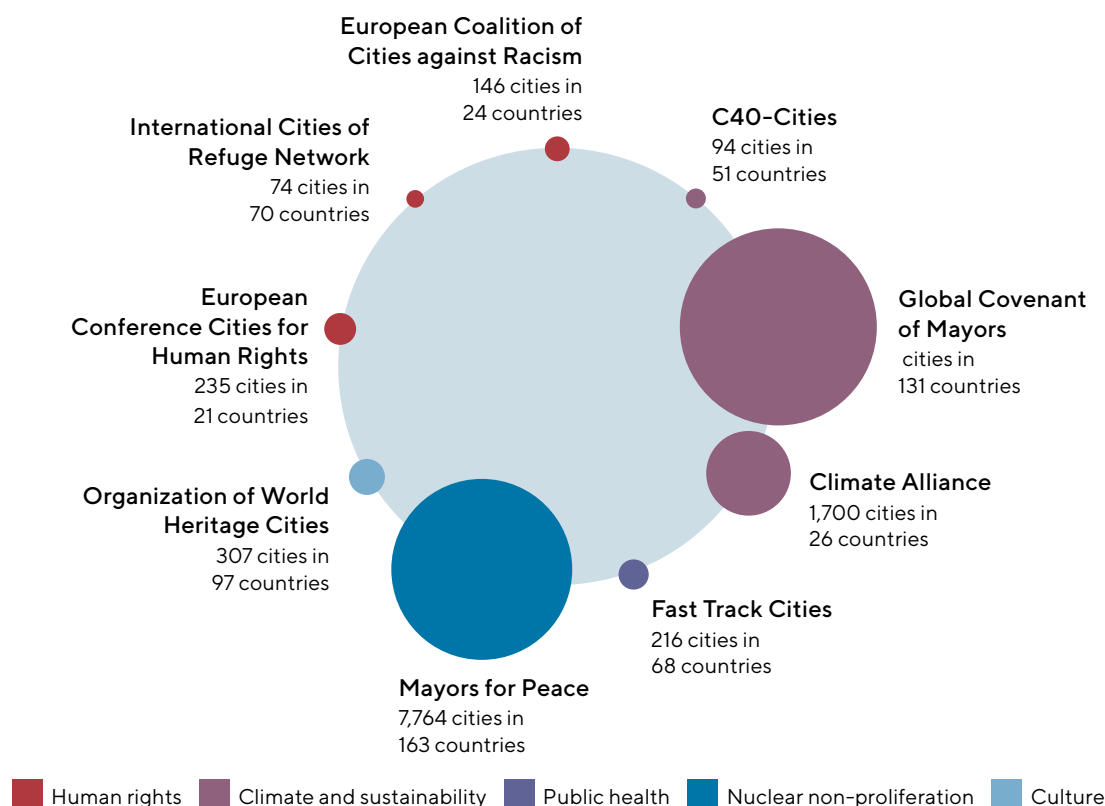
Cities have emerged as skilful champions of micro-multilateralism, forming transnational action networks, most prominently in the fight against climate change.

Launched in 2005 by the then mayor of London, Ken Livingstone, as a loose convention of megacities, C40 has evolved to include over ninety cities – including Paris, New York City, Cairo, Beijing, Dhaka and Medellín – with a total of 650 million inhabitants. It now maintains a permanent secretariat in London, it participated in the UN climate change negotiations and it has initiated concrete, local, scalable projects that contribute to the goal of combatting the impact of climate change.

In its earliest incarnation, C40 served as a platform for cities to showcase – in a friendly form of

Facets of micro-multilateralism

Selected cooperation initiatives between cities, by topic



Source: Munich Security Conference, Körber-Stiftung³

competition – their ideas for reducing CO₂ emissions, driving down the temperature in cities, creating resource efficient waste and water management systems and designing transportation infrastructure that minimise congestion and emissions. Over time, the network has transformed itself into a hub that provides a suite of services to support cities in addressing their most urgent problems, including offering technical assistance, peer-to-peer exchange mechanisms, communications and lobbying tools, and research and knowledge-management services. This helped cities develop a metrics- and results-based collective voice to demand greater action on the nation-state and supranational levels.

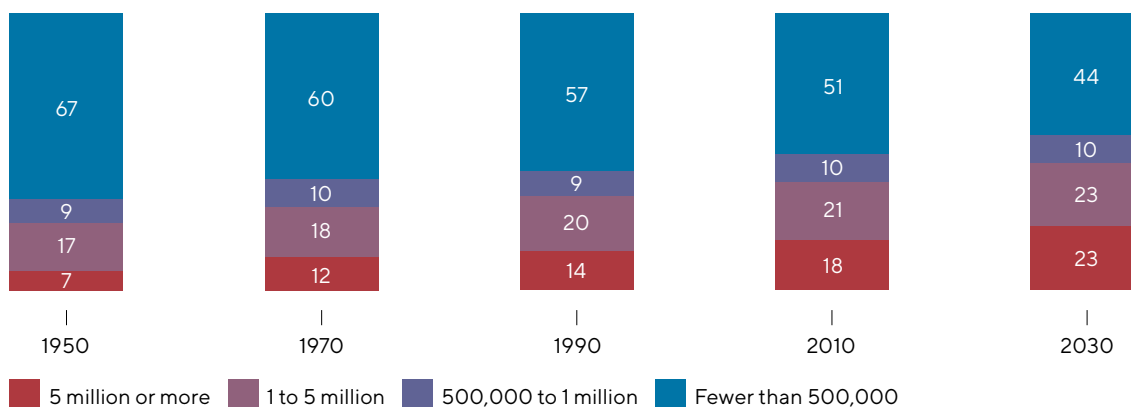
The achievements of this collaboration are impressive. For instance, 27 of the world's largest cities, all members of the C40 network, recently

reported that they had successfully reduced emissions over a five-year period by 10 per cent due to this multilateral action.⁴ City halls in places like Berlin, Warsaw, Los Angeles and Melbourne have reached this crucial milestone despite increasing population numbers while still providing robust urban economic growth. These cities have continued to decrease emissions by an average of 2 per cent per year since the 2012 peak, while their economies grew by 3 per cent and their populations by 1.4 per cent per year on average.⁵

In short, by creating issue-specific networks like C40, cities are taking concrete action where many national governments are falling short. In so doing, they are forcing state-based multilateral organisations like the UN to sit up and listen: a delegation from C40 has presented and represented the achievements of cities

Global evolution of urbanisation

Share of global population, by size of settlement, 1950–2030, per cent



Source: United Nations⁶

at every Conference of the Parties since the signing of the Paris Agreement in 2015.⁷

The decision by US cities large and small to adhere to the Paris Agreement (for instance, by reducing methane leaks or accelerating electric vehicle adoption) in spite of the federal government's withdrawal from the global climate pact is proof that urban networked cohesion is not only real but is also internationally powerful. And it has the capacity to engage actors of the next highest order: states such as California have joined forces with cities as part of “America's Pledge”, creating a momentum that would not have been possible were it not for the city networks' efforts to develop global standards for reporting progress in reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

To build lasting networks among cities, it takes a strong sense of urgency as well as a clear focus, concrete goals and metrics.

What does it take to build lasting networks among cities to address integrated, international public policy problems? The C40 example highlights that it takes a strong sense of urgency, which generates

sufficient political will and leadership to commit resources, as well as a clear focus, concrete goals and metrics, and a clear sense of how collective action can overcome individual limitations.

Mayors are all too aware of the detrimental effects that climate change has on their cities. Climate change exacerbates all manner of urban governance challenges, including cities' abilities to provide economic development, affordable and durable housing, and health and basic services (especially water and waste management). For C40, focusing on mitigating and countering the adverse impact of climate change has created a clear focus, while the metric-based approach centring on CO₂ levels and temperature containment as an initial goal has provided a set of anchors to keep network participants focused. The clever infusion of a sense of healthy competition around the achievement of these goals has allowed city halls to attract the attention of urban citizens and create wide buy-in among their populations.

And while metrics fulfil an important accountability function for networked action on issues such as climate change, other, less quantifiable policy areas are also making their way onto the urban collaboration agenda. More specifically, cities are joining forces to tackle the issues at the very heart of the UN system: the protection of human rights.

Mayors of major European cities have taken initiative in the field of human rights. Incubated as a network platform in 2011, eight cities are at present self-declared human rights cities – York, Middelburg, Barcelona, Utrecht, Lund, Salzburg, Vienna and Graz – seeking to give human rights an urban face.⁸ Its goal is to “pursue a community-wide dialogue and actions to improve the life and security of women, men and children based on human rights norms and standards”, in each of the participating cities.⁹ Similarly, the larger network of “European Conference Cities for Human Rights”, which brings together 235 European cities, has committed itself to upholding human rights in urban policies in the “Barcelona Agreement”.¹⁰

Urban-incubated collaboration in the area of human rights underlines attempts at creating new norms with qualitative rather than quantifiable impacts.

These two examples of urban-incubated collaboration in the area of human rights underline attempts at creating new norms with qualitative rather than quantifiable impacts – in contrast to the C40 metrics. Laudable as these efforts are, could more be done on a concrete “operative” action level? Could sub-state become independent actors in the human rights arena next to states?

The answer is yes, if we take a look at a prominent example of micro-multilateralism between a German federal state and its cities: with the active support of 22 of its urban communities, the German federal state of Baden-Württemberg created deliberate and concrete sub-national human rights-based action by integrating more than 1,000 Yazidi women persecuted in Northern Iraq. One of these women is 2018 Nobel Peace Prize winner Nadia Murad. With the federal state serving as the convening entity, cities supporting one another coalesced around human rights principles. Canada found this example of local action so inspiring that it followed suit, with Toronto, London, Calgary and Winnipeg serving as host communities.¹¹ Building on these examples,

other German federal states, including Brandenburg, Schleswig-Holstein and Berlin, reached similar decisions of their own. While the primary actors here were federal states, they were reliant on collaboration with urban leadership to integrate Yazidi women into their communities – without such efforts, these humanitarian measures would have failed.

There is obvious potential here for mayors to expand collective action in the human rights area by making use of their collective power. With their 650 million constituents, cities could bring about qualitative and measurable action in this area, while amplifying human-rights protection on the international stage, similar to the C40’s wider impact. In the process, collective urban-centred action could help reinvigorate UN goals and force more action in this arena: from sanctions targeting the use of products from dictatorial regimes by municipal institutions to collective pressure from cities to preserve press freedom, for instance.

Cities could do more if they realised that cooperation on human rights issues is just as much in their interest as combatting climate change, pandemic proliferation or home-grown terrorism.

Micro-multilateralism offers a promising antidote to a number of current ills in the international system. Emerging city networks – if fostered and scaled – can serve as a powerful buffer to assaults on international treaties, such as the Paris Climate Change Agreement or the Geneva Refugee Convention.

The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the authors.

AUTHORS



Cathryn Clüver Ashbrook
Executive Director, Future of Diplomacy Project; Project on Europe and the Transatlantic Relationship, Harvard Kennedy School, Cambridge, MA



Daniela Haarhuis
Professor of Human Rights Law, University of Applied Sciences, Düsseldorf

Chemical Weapons: Fighting the Return of an Evil

Jan Hamáček (MYL 2009) and Christoph Israng (MYL 2009)

Kuala Lumpur, Salisbury, and Khan Shaykhun seem to have little in common at first sight. Yet, they have recently suffered the same horrible fate. In all these places, chemical weapons were used against civilians. In theory, the use of chemical weapons is taboo, but in practice this taboo has been broken. These violations have not only caused terrible human suffering, they also indicate that achieving global chemical disarmament remains a serious challenge to international security.

Yet, as despicable as these recent chemical weapons attacks may be, they should not overshadow the laudable progress made by the international community towards eliminating chemical weapons over the past decades. In fact, compared to attempts to eliminate other categories of weapons of mass destruction, steps towards eliminating chemical weapons have been highly successful. Negotiations on a complete ban of chemical weapons started during the Cold War and, in 1992, led to the adoption of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC). In 1997, the CWC went into force, prohibiting the development, production, stockpiling, and use of chemical weapons. Under this agreement, states parties also declared any stockpiles of chemical weapons they possessed and pledged to destroy those arsenals as well as the facilities that produced them. To monitor and enforce implementation, the international community set up a watchdog: the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW). The organi-

sation's efforts to prevent the use of chemical weapons have centred on monitoring and verifying their complete destruction by states parties to the CWC. Efforts also include capacity building in member states. In addition, the OPCW has been tasked with responding to incidents where chemical weapons were used, most importantly by launching inspections.¹

Despite limited financial resources,
the Chemical Weapons Convention
has almost eliminated an
entire category of weapons of
mass destruction.

As of 1 January 2019, more than 190 states have acceded to the CWC.² With near-universal membership, the CWC is the international agreement with the largest number of states parties, second only to the UN Charter.³ The convention covers 98 per cent of the world's population. But there is another reason why the CWC is considered the world's "most successful international disarmament treaty": it has almost eliminated an entire category of weapons of mass destruction.⁴ According to the OPCW, 97 per cent of the chemical weapons stockpiles declared by possessor states after acceding to the CWC have been verifiably destroyed.⁵ Since just a few milligrams

of certain chemical weapons are enough to kill a human being, the verified destruction of roughly 70,000 metric tons of dangerous chemical agents and of 7.4 million munition items is an unprecedented success of multilateral cooperation. This is all the more remarkable considering the OPCW's very limited financial resources: the watchdog's annual budget for 2019 amounted to less than EUR 70 million.⁶ Recognising the organisation's "extensive efforts to eliminate chemical weapons", the Nobel Committee awarded the OPCW the Nobel Peace Prize in 2013.⁷

Clearly, the main reason for this success lies in the horrific nature of chemical weapons themselves. The almost universal consensus that these weapons of terror should have no place in the world has greatly helped the OPCW in pursuing its core mission. Yet, the inclusive composition of the organisation and its mode of decision-making has certainly also played a role. In structural terms, the OPCW emulates the UN but ensures a much more level playing field for its member states than UN bodies like the Security Council. The Executive Council (EC), the OPCW's governing body, consists of 41 member states, which are elected for a two-year rotating man-

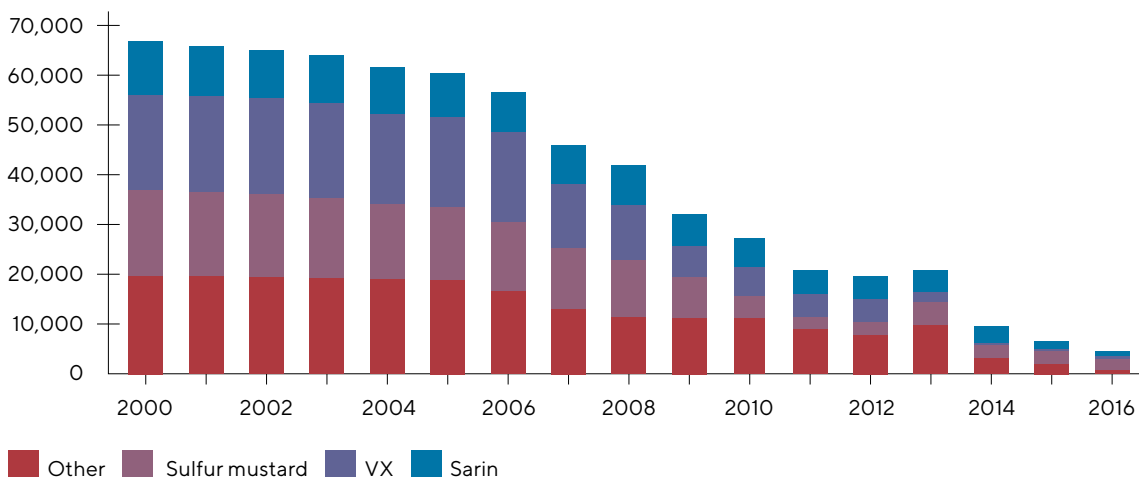
date by the Conference of the States Parties – the OPCW's principal and plenary organ. In the EC, each regional group enjoys fair representation. Apart from equitable geographical representation, the CWC stipulates that EC membership should reflect the size of the countries' chemical industries, as well as their political and security interests.

Member states recently expanded the OPCW's mandate: it may now also identify the perpetrators of chemical weapons attacks in Syria.

Moreover, in the EC, no member state has a veto right. While OPCW decision-making bodies have established a culture of deciding by consensus wherever this is achievable, it is not legally possible for a minority to block majority decisions. According to the Rules of Procedure, which apply both in the Conference of States Parties and in the EC, procedural decisions are taken by simple majority, while matters

Declared stockpiles of chemical weapons worldwide

Metric tonnes, by type of chemical weapon



Source: Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons⁸

of substance are decided by a two-thirds majority. This has enabled the OPCW to reach decisions in cases where the UN Security Council could not. For instance, in late 2017, veto-wielding Russia prevented the UN Security Council from upholding the mandate of the UN-OPCW Joint Investigative Mechanism (JIM). This political mission had assigned responsibility to the Assad regime for a series of chemical weapons attacks in Syria. Responding to the termination of JIM's mandate, in June 2018, a majority of OPCW member states adopted a decision that tasked the OPCW with the job of attribution. Russia was unable to prevent the 82–24 vote (with 26 abstentions) in favour of expanding the OPCW's mandate, which had hitherto been restricted to establishing whether chemical weapons had been used but not by whom.⁹ This shows that the OPCW – once a mostly technical organisation operating by consensus – is a dynamic multilateral institution fit to advance its mandate even when challenged by some members.

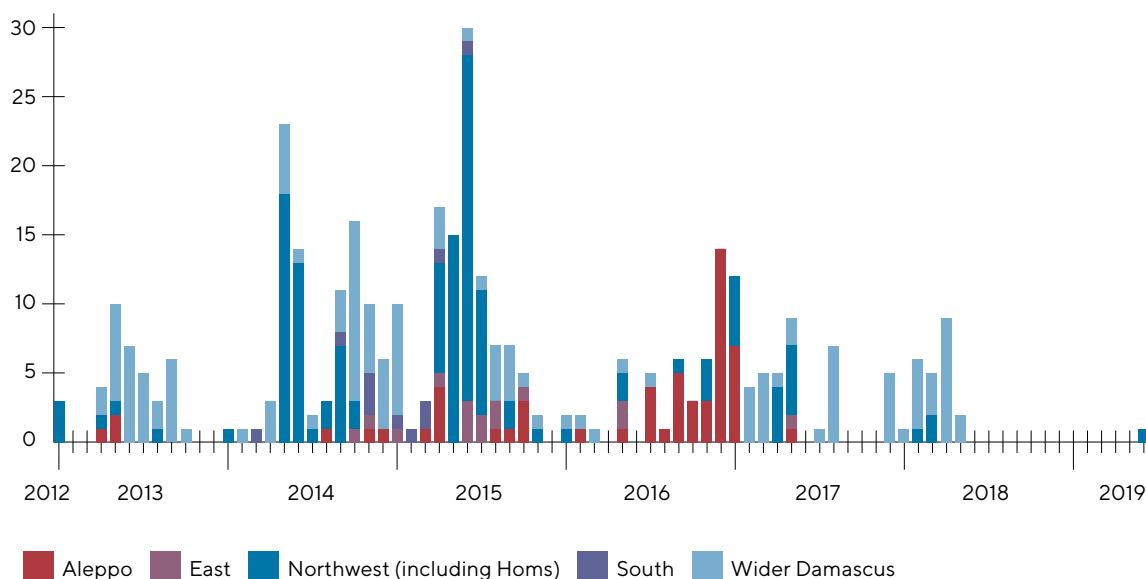
This success – as well as the OPCW's broader achievements in chemical disarmament – is highly relevant to the aim of creating a world free of chemical weapons.

The OPCW has not yet completed its mission.

Unfortunately, since 2012, the era of “relative non-use” seems to have ended.¹⁰ The continued, large-scale use of chemical weapons in Syria is the most blatant example of this. Indeed, over the past few years, the Assad regime has been documented to have carried out several hundred attacks using chemical agents such as chlorine gas.¹¹ Moreover, chemical weapons attacks committed against individuals in Kuala Lumpur (2017) and Salisbury (2018) illustrate that the OPCW has not yet completed its

The use of chemical weapons in Syria

Chemical weapons attacks, by theatre, December 2012 – May 2019



Source: Global Public Policy Institute (GPPi)¹²

Czech and German support for the OPCW

Both the Czech Republic and Germany, the authors' respective home countries, have played a key role in the fight against chemical weapons. These two states have significantly contributed to the OPCW in its endeavour to free the world of chemical weapons, i. e. by making voluntary financial contributions and by offering capacity building programmes for other OPCW member states. The Czech Republic held the position of chairperson of the Executive Council in 2018–2019, while Germany chaired the Conference of States Parties in 2016–2017.

mission. They also show that if the global taboo against chemical weapons continues to weaken, a technically oriented organisation like the OPCW has limited means to forcibly react to chemical weapons attacks. Most importantly, it cannot impose serious sanctions against those who violate the convention. While it may be able to launch inspections and even fact-finding missions, it still relies on the UN Security Council for holding perpetrators accountable.

Through capacity building in member states the OPCW addresses the growing challenge posed by non-state perpetrators of chemical weapons attacks.

But the CWC is faced with yet another challenge, namely the fact that an important type of actor does not feel bound by it: non-state actors. The 1995 Tokyo subway sarin attack by members of the cult Aum Shinrikyo and more recent chemical weapons attacks committed by ISIS are only two cases in point. The OPCW and its members are addressing this challenge by reinforcing the organisation's capacity building with a view to empowering states to better control access to toxic chemicals.¹³ Moreover, the OPCW provides protection against the effects of chemical weapons as well as assistance in case of their use.

The re-emergence of chemical weapons highlights that the international community in general

and the OPCW in particular need to reinforce their efforts to fight these hideous weapons. Despite the current rise in chemical weapons attacks, the OPCW is well aware of and ready to take on this challenge. The recent vote by the Conference of States Parties in favour of expanding the OPCW's mandate and tasking it with identifying the perpetrators of chemical weapons attacks – mostly in Syria but possibly elsewhere – is a strong case in point. While the decision does not solve the problem of the OPCW's weak deterrence capabilities, many judge it “a huge step forward” – a step that highlights the continuing relevance of the OPCW as a multilateral tool for achieving universal disarmament.¹⁴

The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the authors.

AUTHORS



Jan Hamáček
First Deputy Prime Minister of the Czech Republic; Minister of Interior; Chairperson of the Czech Social Democratic Party, Prague



Christoph Israng
Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany to the Czech Republic, fmr. Chairperson of the Conference of States Parties to the CWC / German Permanent Representative to the OPCW, Prague

Cyber Resilience: Partnering With Industry

Aaron T. Dowd (MYL 2013) and Anna Maria Dowd (MYL 2013)

The rapid diffusion of emerging and disruptive technologies such as artificial intelligence, big data, cyber and machine learning has dramatically transformed how the world operates. According to Cisco, by 2022 the number of devices connected to the internet will exceed 28.5 billion, more than three times the global population, and it is projected to reach a staggering 500 billion devices by 2030.¹ It has never been easier to collaborate, innovate and share information, which has become the most valuable currency of the digital age. But, it has also never been easier to disrupt, manipulate and exploit vulnerabilities while generating cascading effects and widespread shock waves across governments, economies, and industries.

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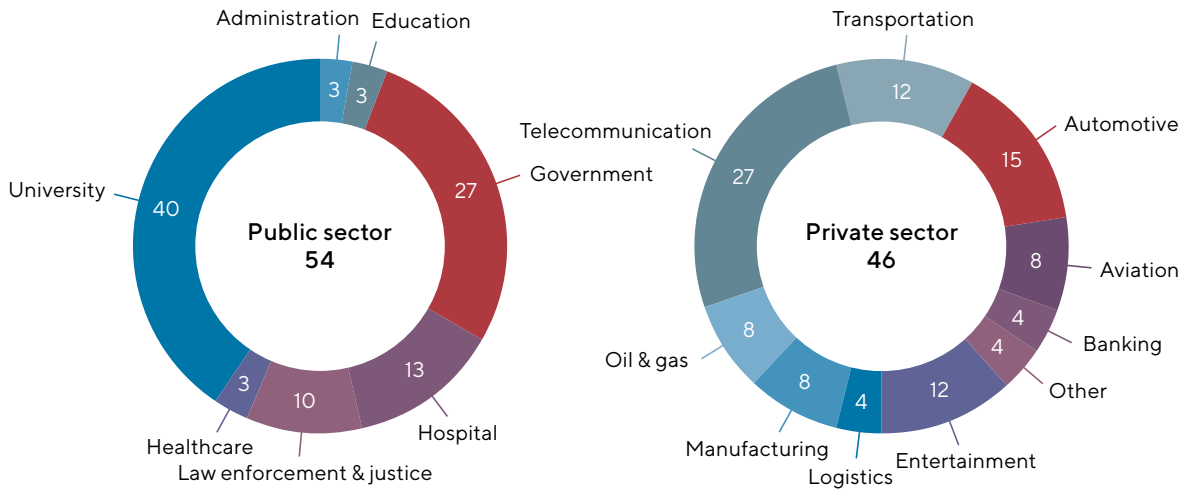
The dependence on digital technology intensifies our reliance on cyberspace. A vital and progressively indispensable part of socio-economic systems, it makes us more efficient and, at the same time, more exposed. In May 2017, the WannaCry ransomware

attack affected over 200,000 devices and machines in 150 countries; it targeted critical infrastructure, hospitals, financial institutions and factories, resulting in USD 4 to 8 billion of financial losses.² Just a few weeks later, the NotPetya malware attack, the most devastating cyberattack in the history of the internet, crippled companies, banks and government agencies, causing an estimated USD 10 billion of damage worldwide.³ Though difficult to accurately quantify, expert estimates place the annual GDP cost of cyberattacks from as low as USD 275 billion to as high as USD 6.6 trillion globally.⁴

Yet, the cost of cyberattacks cannot be solely measured in economic terms. Cyber insecurity has a wider societal dimension. It poses a direct threat to private individuals across the globe, undermining privacy as well as the confidentiality, integrity and availability of data. Nearly 2 billion individuals have had their personal data stolen.⁵ The 2013–2014 Yahoo breach affected 3 billion accounts worldwide, the Marriott breach in 2018 impacted 500 million customers and the 2017 Equifax cyber intrusion exposed the sensitive personal information of more than 140 million people.⁶ Cyberattacks are putting the benefits of global interconnectedness at risk by disabling and disrupting more than just essential services and critical infrastructure. The increasingly persistent espionage of sensitive and classified information, election interference, the interruption of democratic processes and even the disruption of military operations have reached unprecedented

Victims of the 2017 WannaCry attack

Organisations affected, per cent



Source: EY⁷

levels. These cyber-enabled campaigns, conducted by both state and non-state actors, have become the hallmark of the digital age and threaten national and international security.

Cyber attacks against Estonia in 2007 and against Georgia in 2008 prompted NATO to undertake efforts to develop an overarching cyber strategy.

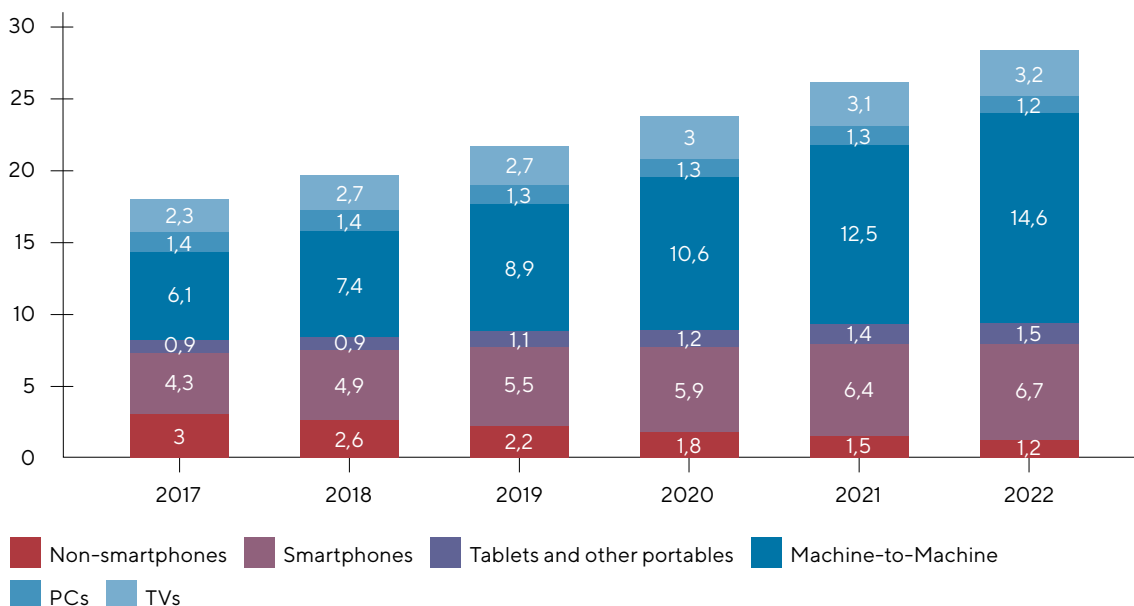
The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) has continuously sought to adapt to emerging security challenges, including the malicious cyber activities that pose immediate and long-term strategic risks to the alliance. Although NATO has always protected its own networks, it was the 2007 cyberattacks against Estonia's public and private institutions and Russia's cyber campaign against Georgia in 2008 that signalled a major paradigm shift in the perception of cyberthreats. These aggressive tactics demon-

strated that they can be as damaging to national and Euro-Atlantic security as conventional warfare, prompting NATO to undertake efforts to develop an overarching cyber strategy. The first NATO cyber policy, though limited in scope, was approved in 2008.

It was, however, the adoption of the Enhanced NATO Policy on Cyber Defence at the 2014 Wales Summit and its implementation through the Cyber Defence Action Plan that heralded a sea change. The allies recognised that the unprecedented evolution of offensive cyber activities was endangering NATO members' populations and territories. Reaffirming cyber defence as a core task of the alliance, NATO leaders confirmed the applicability of international law in cyberspace and declared that, depending on the circumstances, a cyberattack may constitute an "armed attack". Most notably, it may thus lead to the invocation of Article 5 of the Washington Treaty, the collective defence clause, which commits member nations to consider an armed attack against one or more of them an armed attack against all. NATO leaders also agreed for the first time that building a robust partnership with the private sector was

Growth of connected devices worldwide

Number of devices, by type, billions



Source: Cisco⁸

key to deterring shared threats and adversaries. As a result, the allies founded the NATO Industry Cyber Partnership (NICP) paving the way for intensified cooperation with industry in addressing cyber threats and risks.

Since its launch, NICP has been instrumental in strengthening the collective cyber defences of NATO, allies and the private sector alike. To ensure NICP's effectiveness, NATO, together with industry, has developed a number of collaborative mechanisms that facilitate the exchange of expertise, information and experience of operating under the constant threat of cyberattacks. For example, to securely share real-time information on cyber threats, NATO launched the NICP Malware Information Sharing Platform, which helps speed up the detection of incidents and the establishment of defensive countermeasures. The NATO Communications and Information Agency, which is responsible for defending NATO networks, has also developed individual

industry partnership agreements – of which there are now 19 – that allow rapid and early bilateral exchange of information on cyber vulnerabilities. This information is integrated into the NATO Computer Incident Response Capability, a 24/7 detection and prevention technical centre.

The NATO Industry Cyber Partnership has been instrumental in strengthening the collective cyber defences of NATO, allies and the private sector alike.

Information sharing, though not a cure-all, empowers NATO, allies and industry partners to enhance their individual and collective cyber defences by leveraging the knowledge, experience and

capabilities of a wider community. It delivers better situational awareness, including a deeper understanding of threat actors and their tactics, techniques and procedures (TTPs). Subsequently, information sharing is extremely useful in rapid triage, contextualisation of incidents, and identification of possible attack vectors. It also bolsters coordination for a collective response to new threats and decreases the likelihood of ripple effects across systems, industries, sectors and critical infrastructure. NICP underscores that as the private sector owns and operates over 90 per cent of networks and cyberspace infrastructure, it is often the first line of defence and should be seen as a strategic mission partner. Indeed, some of the most timely and actionable intelligence on cyber threats originates from private sector partners, who have proved critical in reinforcing the resilience of NATO and allies' networks.

Collaborations with industry have enabled NATO to be more proactive, anticipating the threats and capabilities needed to deter or defeat them.

Furthermore, NICP has emphasised frequent interactions, either formal or informal, between NATO leaders and private sector executives hailing from big tech to innovative start-ups from across Europe and North America. These exchanges often examine the direction taken by private-sector entrepreneurs and investors with a view to developing capabilities to enable future cyber operations and bringing NATO into the digital age. Collaborations with industry have thus enabled NATO to be more proactive, anticipating the threats and capabilities needed to deter or defeat them rather than reacting to crises from behind the technology curve.

As NATO has broadened the scope and depth of cybersecurity cooperation and partnership with the private sector, one lesson has been paramount: successful multilateral collaboration requires high levels of mutual trust. This can only be achieved

through continued dialogue, shared values and a profound understanding of common challenges. Although the collaborations with industry represent significant progress toward bolstering cyber resilience, there is much more to be done. In 2016 at the Warsaw Summit, the allies recognised cyberspace as a domain of operation, thereby strengthening the alliance's ability to defend itself in cyberspace as effectively as it does in the air, on land and at sea. In addition, the allies adopted the pledge to enhance the cyber defences of national networks and infrastructures as a matter of priority. Most recently, NATO established the Cyberspace Operations Centre to tackle complex and disruptive threats. The success of these endeavours will rely upon deepening relationships and engagement with international organisations, industry, academia and partners around the globe.

Technological advancement has reached an inflection point simply too big for any public or private organisation. As we have become increasingly susceptible to the risks flowing from the rapid evolution of technology in a volatile security environment, creating multilateral collaboration frameworks and strategic partnerships is essential. It will not only help to set ethical norms, develop adequate oversight and safeguards and provide digital accountability but to exploit the opportunities that disruptive technologies present.

The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the authors.

AUTHORS



Aaron T. Dowd
Principal, Transatlantic Holdings, Washington, DC



Anna Maria Dowd
Head, Industry Relations, NATO Communications and Information Agency, Brussels

Conflict Prevention: Scoring Small Wins

Philipp Rotmann (MYL 2018) and Cale Salih (MYL 2016)

All the wars and atrocities we see today are failures of prevention: failures of governments, armed groups, and of the multilateral system.¹ Examples can be found in Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq, Myanmar, South Sudan, the Central African Republic, Sri Lanka, Ukraine, and Yemen – and this list could still be extended. Hence, there are regular calls to actively engage in conflict prevention. But these appeals sometimes sound like platitudes: after all, by engaging in proxy warfare, both great powers and regional ones actively foment conflicts and violence, while multilateral institutions, including the UN Security Council, are frequently paralysed.

Away from the big stage of geopolitical rivalries, the multilateral system has logged some success in preventing conflicts.

And yet, away from the big stage of geopolitical rivalries, the multilateral system has logged some success in preventing conflicts. These successes merit greater attention than they currently get, not only because they give us a more balanced appreciation of what the system can do but also as sources of valuable lessons on how to make it work better. Three case studies exemplify this in particular.

In The Gambia, in late 2016, civil war was about to erupt. The country's president, Yahya Jammeh, who had been in power for more than two decades, refused to step aside after losing the presidential election. Skilful diplomacy by the UN and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), backed by the credible threat of military force, finally compelled Jammeh to abdicate power.

In Bolivia, UN development actors – mostly Bolivian nationals working under the flag of UN impartiality – helped successive governments navigate a series of political crises that plagued the country in the 2000s and that repeatedly threatened to escalate into violent ethnic and racial conflict.

In Nepal, a UN peace operation, the United Nations Political Mission in Nepal (UNMIN), was instrumental in monitoring the implementation of a peace agreement reached between the Nepalese government and the Maoist party in 2006.

In all these cases, multilateral actors helped to manage tensions that could well have escalated into (further) violent conflict. A closer look at each of these cases illustrates the roles multilateral actors and institutions can play and under what conditions their efforts are most likely to succeed.

First, multilateral institutions are uniquely equipped to mediate between conflict parties. They can either act as intermediaries themselves or – if they throw their weight behind another actor – empower others to take on the mediator's role. Their unique ability to do so rests on their image as

generally impartial – that is, politically nonpartisan – entities that do not just represent the interests of one party but those of the wider international community. Put differently, the success of mediation efforts does not just depend on the envoys' capabilities, including their political savvy, but also on their perceived authority and legitimacy. Being formally mandated (or endorsed) by one or several multilateral organisations credibly signals that the envoy will be able to pay heed to the concerns of various relevant stakeholders.

Still, envoys and other representatives of the multilateral system need to carefully manage their relationships with host governments. If they overstep their mandate and try to dominate domestic prevention efforts rather than supporting them from the background, they risk losing the consent and trust they have received from national actors; if, on the other hand, they are too risk-averse to raise thorny issues with the host government, they risk losing their reputation as impartial, values-based intermediaries.

In The Gambia, the UN envoy was particularly given to working from the background: he carefully prompted regional heads of state to talk the president into accepting his electoral defeat. Thus, the most important voices were the president's authoritarian colleagues, whom he perceived as credible interlocutors in efforts to negotiate his inner circle's political future. In the end, President Jammeh accepted exile in return for immunity from prosecution.

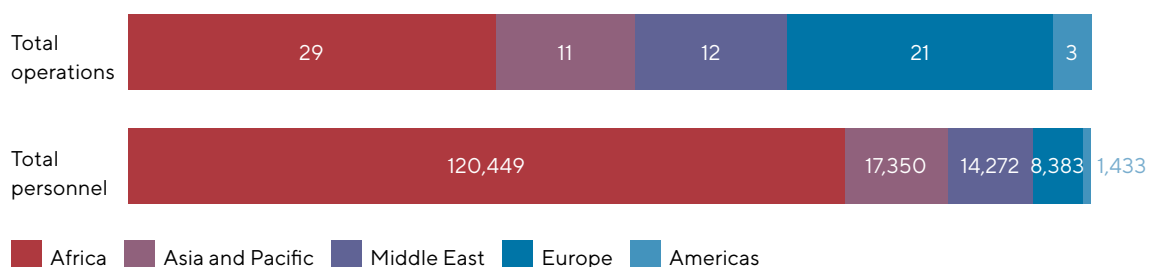
Second, multilateral actors can facilitate negotiations by providing impartial political and technical support. This assistance can take diverse forms, including supplying relevant expertise, staff capacities, data, and analysis, or even just offering logistic support such as transportation to facilitate in-person negotiations.

Multilateral actors can facilitate negotiations by providing impartial political and technical support, including supplying relevant expertise, staff capacities, data, and analysis.

For instance, in Nepal, UNMIN and the UN Country Team offered crucial assistance to national actors in implementing the 2006 peace agreement that officially ended a decade of civil war between Maoist rebels and the government of Nepal. Most importantly, they helped monitor disarmament efforts and prepare the election of the Constituent Assembly in 2007. In addition, through the establishment of a UN Peace Fund for Nepal, the UN was able to mobilise financial resources to address urgent funding gaps in the implementation of the peace agreement. The fund supported projects that aimed at addressing root causes of the conflict like the exclusion of marginalised groups. It particularly focused on women,

Multilateral peace operations around the globe

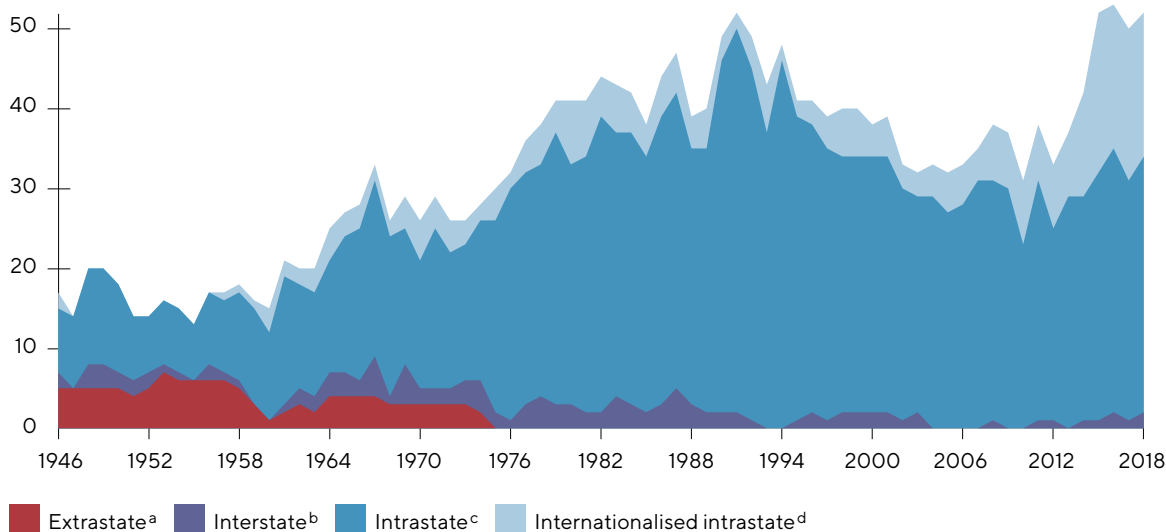
Missions, by region, number of operations, and personnel



Source: Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI)²

Evolution of armed conflicts over time

Number of state-based armed conflicts, by type



Types of armed conflict:

- a) conflict between a state and a non-state group outside its own territory; b) conflict between two or more governments; c) conflict between a government and a non-governmental party; no interference from other countries; d) conflict between a government and a non-government party where either or both sides receive troop support from other governments that actively participate in the conflict

Source: Uppsala Conflict Data Program³

youths, and indigenous people, supporting efforts to improve their access to public services or initiatives to create jobs.⁴ The fund also provided the resources needed for the effective demobilisation of Maoist combatants. All of this lessened tensions between domestic political factions and helped stabilise the post-conflict situation.⁵

In Bolivia, the UN Development Programme (UNDP) developed a robust data and analysis unit called Project of Political Analysis and Prospective Scenarios (PAPEP). PAPEP collected original data via surveys, interviews, and other methodologies and developed scenarios and political roadmaps to guide high-level government actors in making decisions that would reduce the risk of conflict. For instance, in the 2008 constitutional crisis, PAPEP polls revealed that a vast share of the Bolivian population wanted parties to continue their political dialogue, in turn creating the necessary pressure

for actors to settle their differences. The resulting agreement averted another escalation of violence.⁶ UNDP's credibility as a well-informed and reliable source of risk analysis repeatedly created opportunities for the institution to engage with national actors, who looked to the UN for political advice on de-escalation policies.⁷

At times, technical support may also just mean allowing conflict parties to meet and talk. In The Gambia, for instance, the UN regional office provided a small airplane, easily recognisable as UN property and thus as impartial, to help regional leaders conduct shuttle diplomacy. This was crucial, given the region's cumbersome commercial flight connections and the fact that Gambia's intransigent ruler had denied landing permissions to the aircraft used by regional leaders he did not fully trust.

And third, multilateral actors can back political strategies with military force. The UN and ECOWAS

negotiators successfully employed coercive diplomacy in the Gambia. Faced with a repressive, authoritarian president who had lost the election but was unwilling to stand down, neighbouring countries prepared for a military operation to oust President Jammeh. If they had followed through on this, it could have sparked a bloodbath. The UN regional office and ECOWAS thus worked in concert with the African Union, the UN Security Council, and key regional governments to find a peaceful resolution to the standoff. Coercive diplomacy did the trick: the offer to negotiate, backed by the credible threat of a military intervention by a joint ECOWAS force, which even entered Gambian soil and airspace but did not engage in physical violence, finally forced the president to negotiate his exit. After Jammeh had left the country, the ECOWAS mission assumed a stabilisation role, protecting the incoming administration during the transition period. This example shows that military force may indeed play a role in preventive efforts. Yet, it does not serve the traditional purpose of “defeating” the “opponent” but aims at forcing conflict parties to the negotiating table.

**The magic mojo of multilateralism
can make a real difference if
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In none of these cases did multilateral actors just sweep in and fix things. The conflict parties themselves, often under pressure from other regional actors, played the key roles. This shows that the magic mojo of multilateralism can make a real difference if there is sufficient political will among key actors to resolve their conflicts. Multilateral actors can then help remove practical obstacles and challenges on this path. Most importantly, multilateral actors can make a difference by adding legitimacy, credibility, and trust as well as impartial political and technical support and even military pressure as part of a political strategy. Yet, in order to be successful,

the UN and others can only build on existing political will – they cannot create the will for peace out of thin air. For instance, in the Gambian case, success depended on the existing political will of key ECOWAS members to apply calibrated force. There is no multilateral magic bullet that can stop governments from killing or abusing their own people.

Likewise, multilateral conflict prevention can be substantially complicated if great or regional powers have strong stakes in the conflict. Luckily, the three cases examined were spared this fate. That said, a difficult geopolitical context is no excuse for cases where the UN or regional organisations have failed on their own. In the final months of Sri Lanka’s civil war in 2008/09, for example, the UN was found to have gravely failed to protect hundreds of thousands of civilians because it did not adequately react to repeated warnings about killings.⁸ In South Sudan, tens of thousands of people were killed since 2013 while the regional organisations that could have reacted have been held hostage by the power games of several African governments.

Fortunately, most of the world is not Syria or Ukraine. There are serious conflict risks inherent in “easier” cases, where contextual conditions are more favourable to prevention efforts and where multilateral actors have critical assets to contribute. Multilaterals can get these cases right – and they must, lest even more of the “easier” cases become “difficult” ones.

The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the authors.

AUTHORS



Philipp Rotmann
Associate Director,
Global Public Policy
Institute (GPPI), Berlin



Cale Salih
Research Officer, United
Nations University's
Centre for Policy
Research, New York City

Security Cooperation: Broadening Alliances

Fawaz M. Al-Sabah (MYL 2009) and Rolf Schwarz (MYL 2014)

In June 2004, at its Istanbul summit, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) launched a special partnership with the Gulf region, called the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (ICI). The initiative was part of a broader effort, initiated since the end of the Cold War, to develop partnerships with non-NATO countries. Most importantly, these partnerships aimed to boost partners' own defence capacities and their military interoperability with NATO, thereby helping the alliance project stability in its immediate and wider neighbourhood.

The attacks of 9/11 and growing regional fears over Iran's nuclear programme prompted NATO to seek closer relations with Gulf states.

After the 9/11 terrorist attacks and in the wake of growing regional fears over Iran's nuclear programme, NATO sought to extend its partnership to the Gulf region with the aim of cooperating in the fight against terrorism and preventing possible nuclear proliferation. The alliance was in a good position to do so: not only had it successfully transformed itself from a Cold War organisation to one dealing with a new set of security challenges for the Euro-Atlantic region – the terrorist threat chief

among them – it had also garnered experience in working with the Arab world, having conducted 10 years of Mediterranean Dialogue with Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Mauritania, Morocco, and Tunisia.¹

Senior officials from four Gulf countries showed an interest in cooperation, but the follow-up work was more difficult – especially since few Gulf states had diplomatic representation in Belgium, where NATO is headquartered. Bahrain, for instance, initially had to instruct its ambassador in Paris to follow NATO affairs, and when this approach became too cumbersome, it acted through the head of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) delegation to the European Union in Brussels, a Bahraini diplomat. The United Arab Emirates (UAE) became the first Gulf country to open a liaison arrangement in 2008, sending a senior military person to Brussels, and, in 2012, it opened a distinct diplomatic mission to NATO. Other Gulf states (Bahrain, Kuwait, and Qatar) have since followed suit.

Today, four regional states have joined the ICI, namely Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates. Oman and Saudi Arabia, although invited, still remain formally outside. Nonetheless, they do participate in some ICI activities, such as training courses offered at the NATO Defense College in Rome. The other four Gulf countries have fully embraced the initiative, which offers them “practical bilateral security cooperation with NATO”.² Most importantly, these states are working with the

alliance to achieve interoperability and are seeking to strengthen their own defence capacities and capabilities. To this end, officers from ICI countries are allowed to participate in the Operational Capabilities Concept Evaluation and Feedback programme (OCC E&F), which supports them in developing forces that are capable of operating according to NATO standards and procedures. ICI countries also engage in programmes to modernise their security institutions and train their local forces.³ In the future, NATO could invite officers from ICI countries to serve in the International Military Staff. In sum, these efforts aim to increase the Gulf countries' abilities to tackle their regional security challenges – both alone and jointly with NATO.

In the beginning, much of NATO-Gulf cooperation took the form of public diplomacy. For NATO, it was vital to initiate a process of building mutual understanding of common security threats with the Gulf countries, integrating their militaries but also government officials, opinion leaders, academics, media and civil society representatives. As part of public diplomacy, ICI partners also conducted a series of ambassadorial conferences in the Gulf region. In this context, the North Atlantic Council visited Kuwait in 2006, Bahrain in 2008, the United Arab Emirates in 2009, and Qatar in 2010.

**In 2009, a Middle East Faculty
was established at the NATO
Defense College in Rome.**

A particularly innovative format of cooperation between NATO and the Gulf states within the framework of the ICI was launched in 2009 when a dedicated Middle East Faculty was established at the NATO Defense College in Rome. In the framework of its Regional Cooperation Course, the faculty offers courses to officers and diplomats from NATO member countries and from the wider Middle East alike, covering security issues that affect both regional states and NATO countries in order to develop a shared understanding that may serve as the basis for concrete security cooperation.⁴ The college also helps

NATO to develop “in-house expertise [...] on Middle Eastern affairs”.⁵ Even though they are not members of the ICI, the Gulf states Oman and Saudi Arabia are active participants in these courses.⁶ Most recently, a Kuwaiti officer became the first faculty member from an ICI country to join the teaching staff, which validates regional ownership of this initiative.

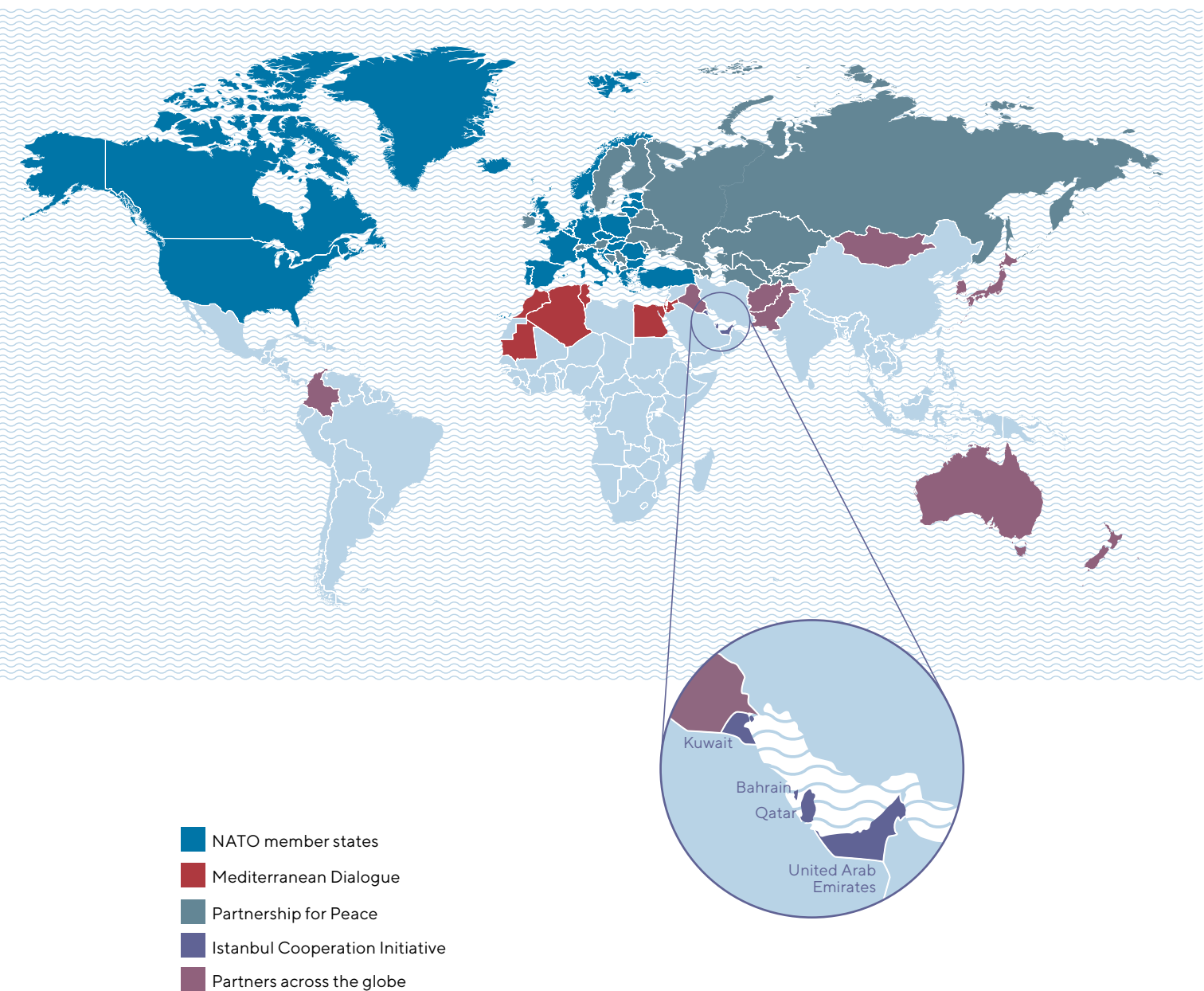
**Efforts to build mutual under-
standing of common security
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cooperation between NATO
and the Gulf.**

In January 2017, this educational outreach was further strengthened when a NATO-ICI Regional Centre was inaugurated in Kuwait. In the context of the inauguration, the North Atlantic Council conducted a meeting with the foreign ministers of ICI countries; this meeting was also attended by Oman, Saudi Arabia, and the secretary general of the GCC. Just as in Rome, Oman and Saudi Arabia are automatically invited to courses offered at the NATO-ICI Centre and regularly participate in them.

The initial hope that collaboration in the framework of the ICI would eventually lead to and facilitate practical cooperation between NATO and the Gulf countries was, in fact, borne out: ICI countries have increasingly acted as security providers, actively contributing to NATO's efforts to project stability in the broader Middle East.⁷ The International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan is a case in point: in 2003, ISAF became NATO's first ground mission outside of Europe; and from early on, it not only involved Afghan authorities but also around 50 non-NATO countries. Gulf countries were chief among them: military co-operation was channelled and facilitated by the ICI, with Gulf countries providing ISAF with essential political and logistical support. Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates became troop-contributing nations, Kuwait and Qatar provided transport assistance, and all the ICI partners helped provide legitimacy for NATO's engagement within the wider region. More precisely,

NATO's global outreach

Partnership countries, by specific framework



Source: North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)⁸

Muslim countries' participation in NATO's operation helped overcome the prevalent perception that the alliance's primary target was Islam rather than terrorist extremists. In this context, partnerships with Muslim countries helped boost the acceptance of NATO-led stabilisation efforts among local populations.⁹

Qatar and the United Arab Emirates also contributed to another NATO-led operation, namely Operation Unified Protector (OUP) in Libya, launched in 2011, by providing personnel and military aircraft.¹⁰ Thus it is safe to say, as several Gulf officials did during the opening of the NATO-ICI Regional Centre in Kuwait in 2017, that the ICI has actively contributed to "global peace and security".¹¹

Combining public diplomacy, political dialogue, education, and training with practical cooperation, as pursued first in Afghanistan and later in Libya, has helped build a relevant partnership between NATO countries and individual Gulf states – a partnership that has proven its worth on a variety of fronts, most notably in counter-terrorism efforts, as well as in the ambition to work towards greater stability in the broader Middle East.

Combining public diplomacy, political dialogue, education, and training with practical cooperation has helped build a relevant partnership between NATO countries and individual Gulf states.

Yet, further efforts are required. Most importantly, NATO needs to stay active in matters of importance to the countries of the region. In its 2010 Strategic Concept, NATO committed to "develop a deeper security partnership with our Gulf partners".¹² Naturally, this also requires NATO to address the concerns of the sub-set of NATO members who prefer to focus on the alliance's Eastern rather than its Southern flank. Recently, the targeting of oil tankers in the Gulf region, is another opportunity for NATO to play an active role by deploying or leading efforts to secure vital energy supply lines.

NATO's educational outreach to the Gulf region could serve as a blueprint for engaging other regions of strategic importance.

As the region will continue to strongly impact Euro-Atlantic security, partnerships with Gulf states and other regional countries will remain of utmost importance. NATO has created innovative tools for managing its relationship with the region. Of these, the country-tailored approach to cooperation that allows partner countries to pick from "a 'menu' of bilateral activities" has proven particularly helpful.¹³ It has allowed NATO cooperation to meet its partners' national needs while still contributing to regional security at large. The alliance's educational outreach to the wider Middle East through its Regional Cooperation Course is another tool of success. It could well serve as a blueprint for engaging other regions of strategic importance. Asia is a case in point, where education on security issues of common concern could help promote greater cooperation with NATO.¹⁴

The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the Kuwait National Security Bureau or the State of Kuwait, of the OECD or their Member countries.

AUTHORS



Fawaz M. Al-Sabah
Assistant Undersecretary, Kuwait National Security Bureau, Kuwait City



Rolf Schwarz
Senior Advisor, Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), Paris

Counter-Terrorism: Joining Forces Against Daesh

Lolwa Al-Jefairi (MYL 2015)

Terrorist networks have repeatedly shaken the world – the rise and fall of the so-called Islamic State (“Daesh”) being one of the most recent examples. But the evolution of Daesh stands out as it pioneered using new ways of communication to disseminate its radical ideologies and toxic ideas. Through social media, the group has been able to reach considerably larger audiences of potential adherents than any other terrorist network before it.

Daesh has been particularly savvy in using social media for its purposes. Its global brand grew tremendously when the so-called caliphate was first announced due to heavy investment in strategic communications. Indeed, Daesh was as much a “media conglomerate as a fighting force”, publishing dozens of items per day during its peak around 2015.¹ In doing so, the terrorist network exploited loopholes and vulnerabilities in social media platforms such as Twitter, allowing the organisation to evade detection and deletion of its media output and suspension of its accounts. Likewise, video-sharing sites such as YouTube have served as a tool for the group to publicise speeches by its radical clerics or to solicit funding for its extremist cause.²

A 2015 North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) study concluded that Daesh’s success was owed to “using strategies and tactics which have never been encountered on this scale ever before.”³ The study also acknowledged that non-aligned and ineffective counter measures by Western states

and regional actors initially compounded this problem.

Daesh’s skill in weaponising words and ideas required a collective response to address it. Thus, in September 2014, the Global Coalition Against Daesh was formed. As General John Allen, a former Special Presidential Envoy for the Global Coalition Against Daesh, argued at a coalition conference later that year in Kuwait: “It is only when we contest Daesh’s presence online and deny the legitimacy of its message [...] that Daesh will be truly defeated”.⁴

Daesh’s skill in weaponising words
and ideas required a collective
response through a unique model
of multilateral cooperation – the
Global Coalition Against Daesh.

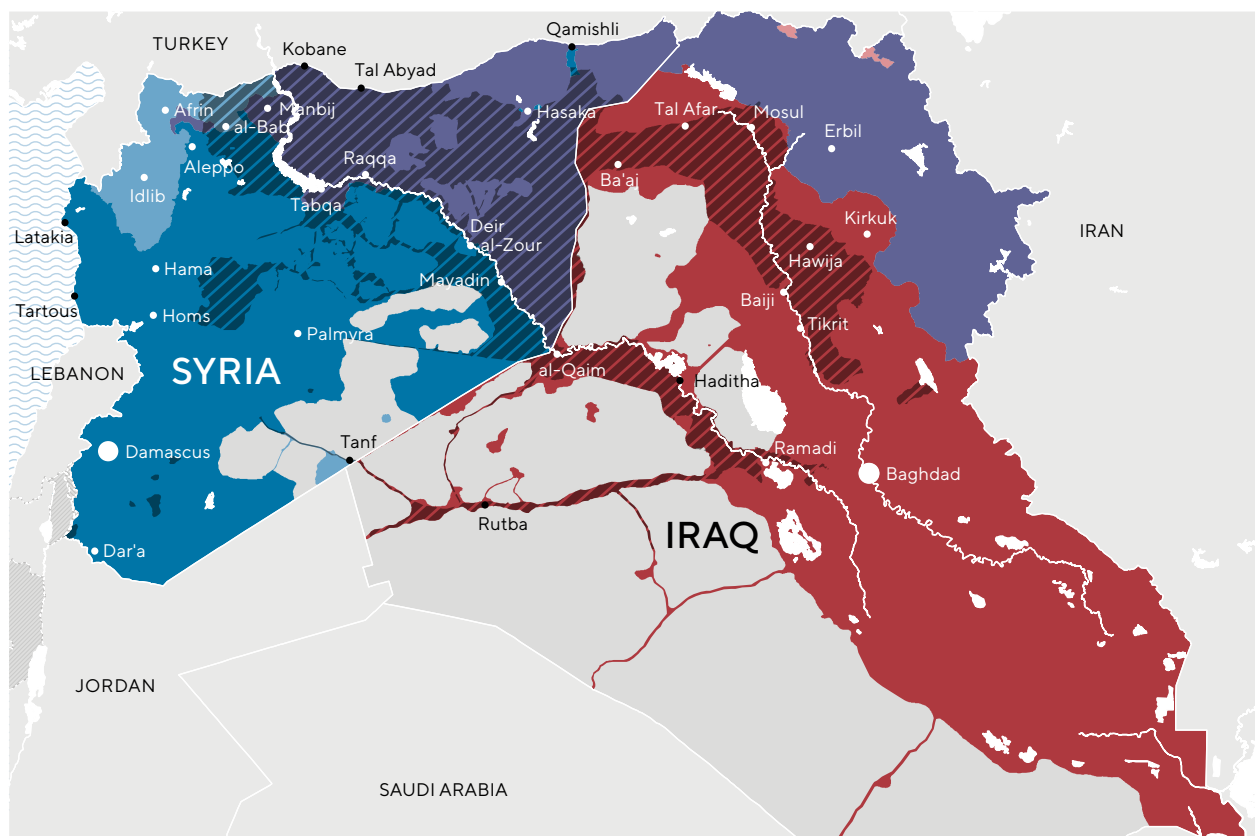
As a unique multilateral initiative to counter a transnational threat, the coalition has grown from its 12 founding members and today comprises 80 partners including states from Europe, the Middle East, Africa and Asia as well as international institutions such as NATO, the Arab League and Interpol. The coalition has successfully applied different types of efforts to defeat Daesh, mainly through five working groups: military operations; countering the group’s propaganda; tackling Daesh’s financing and

economic infrastructure; preventing the flow of foreign terrorist fighters across borders; and supporting the stabilisation and restoration of essential public services to areas liberated from Daesh.⁵ In so doing, the coalition has formed a unique model for multilateral and multi-faced cooperation.

This united multilateral stance proved vital to defeat the growing threat from Daesh in the information space. In 2015, the global coalition announced a Communication Working Group, whose main objective was to undermine Daesh propaganda and whose ultimate goal was to damage the

The rise and fall of Daesh

Territory controlled in Iraq and Syria, by faction



Territorial control in June 2019

■ Iraqi government ■ Kurdish forces ■ Turkish army ■ Syrian government ■ Syrian opposition

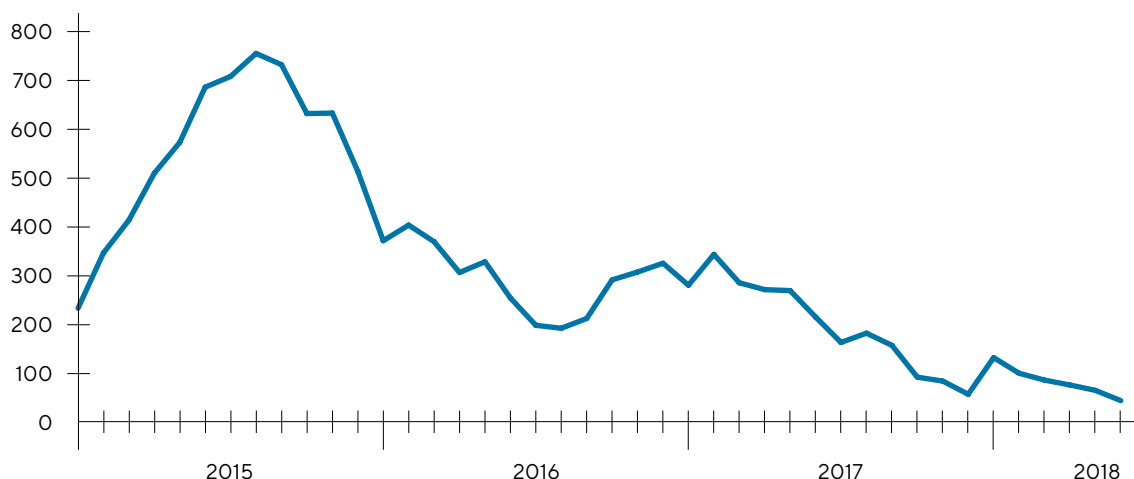
Territory lost by Daesh since January 2015

▨ Daesh

Source: IHS Markit, Conflict Monitor © 2019 IHS Markit. All rights reserved. Provided "as is", without any warranty. This map is not to be reproduced or disseminated and is not to be used nor cited as evidence in connection with any territorial claim. IHS Markit is impartial and not an authority on international boundaries which might be subject to unresolved claims by multiple jurisdictions.⁶

Dissemination of visual propaganda by Daesh

Number of official visual media releases, January 2015 – June 2018



Source: Combating Terrorism Center⁷

group's perception and curb its ability to recruit more followers. Over 30 coalition members have met every quarter to share information and experiences, coordinate messaging against Daesh propaganda, promote campaigns to communicate coalition victories on the ground, engage with the private sector and social media companies to diminish the spread of extremist and terrorist messages online, and transmit alternative positive narratives of tolerance, co-existence, unity and peace.

To be successful in the fight
against terrorism, strategic
communication should not only
focus on counter-propaganda but
also on positive messages.

Another mechanism meant for sharing experiences and expertise in strategic communications is the Global Coalition Against Daesh's Communication Cell in London. This effort brings together all coalition partners within a single communications ini-

tiative to counter Daesh's propaganda and damage its online brand by emphasising the group's failures.⁸ But, to be successful, strategic communication should not only focus on counter-propaganda but also on encouraging messages. In the Communication Cell, secondees from over ten countries with professional backgrounds in sectors ranging from communications to diplomacy collaborate closely with the host country, the United Kingdom, to promote such positive alternative messages. A case in point was a social media campaign about inspiring women from Iraq who stood up against extremist ideology and promoted gender equality and a more equal role for women in their society. These stories were spread by English- and Arabic-language accounts on Twitter, reaching more than 100,000 followers. Coordinated efforts like these changed global narratives, contesting the terrorist group's claims in the information space and building resilience among vulnerable audiences.

But acting in lockstep to silence Daesh and other terrorist groups both online and offline has been just as crucial. Notably, the virtual caliphate progressively fell apart just as Daesh was losing ground in Syria and Iraq. A case in point was the loss of

Mosul and Raqqa in the second half of 2017, which delivered a severe blow to the terrorist network's media operations, because the two cities had hosted key production bases for Daesh's online content.⁹ By October 2017, Daesh's propaganda output was 85 per cent less than in August 2015, when it had reached its peak.¹⁰ These are impressive numbers and a testament to the coalition's vital work to defeat the extremist group. Four years on, Daesh has failed to create the state it once promised. With its brand damaged and crimes exposed, the terrorist network is no longer able to recruit thousands or use social media and other online spaces to spread its propaganda without resistance. However, the collapse of its strongholds in Syria and Iraq notwithstanding, the terrorist network continues to be active in the region and beyond, having established regional branches from India to West Africa.¹¹ The threat from Daesh is not over, as the group's remaining members will likely try to find new ways to spread its key messages.

This experience with Daesh underlines the need to acknowledge that communication is a key battleground in preserving international peace and security. Building on this multilateral success and utilising international capabilities in the information space is a vital lesson that should be kept in mind for future threats, although the conditions that led to success against Daesh may be different in other cases.

The Coalition fundamentally weakened Daesh by simultaneously targeting the group's military assets, revenue streams, and communications.

Why was the coalition so successful? First, there was a clear common cause that united all members under one body. The determination and the unity of the partners and their coordinated efforts to share information and expertise were the main reasons for this international success. Second, acting together as a coalition of 80 member states provided interna-

tional legitimacy in the fight to defeat Daesh – a crucial aspect when communicating coalition efforts in order to secure public support for military operations. And finally, the coalition's holistic approach was crucial in the struggle against Daesh. Comprehensively attacking Daesh by simultaneously targeting the group's military assets, revenue streams and communications played a decisive role in weakening the group's overall power and perception.

Multilateral cooperation must continue to effectively counter-terrorism and violent extremism and build on the lessons learned and the successes achieved collectively to promote the use of counter-narratives to confront violent extremist messaging online. The threat of terrorism and its exploitation in the information space is persistent, organic and generational. Other malign groups will learn from Daesh's media and propaganda operations and likewise employ the full gamut of communication tools to spread their messages of hatred.

But they are not the only ones that can learn and adapt. In fighting future instances of extremist propaganda, the international community may well build on the many lessons learned in the framework of the global coalition's fight against Daesh. As the threat of terrorism will likely persist for the foreseeable future, the success of this multilateral model will serve as a guideline.

The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the author.

AUTHOR



Lolwa Al-Jefairi
Fmr. Advisor on CT Strategic Communications, seconded to the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office

NATO After 2014: Adapting to a New Reality

Benedetta Berti (MYL 2013), Anna Maria Dowd (MYL 2013),
James Golby (MYL 2017), and Dominik P. Jankowski (MYL 2014)

Since its inception in 1949, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) has been a pillar of European security. However, NATO does not owe its strength to its members' nuclear arsenal or tank divisions alone. Instead, the alliance's clout crucially rests on its ability to change, reform, and adapt – as it has successfully proven many times over the course of its history. At present, with the rules-based international order increasingly coming under pressure both from within and from without, multilateral organisations like NATO need to adapt now more than ever. NATO has proven its ability to change and remain flexible while preserving its core *raison d'être* and values. It can thus serve as a powerful example of how multilateral institutions can withstand the test of time.

NATO was established in the aftermath of World War II to ensure the security of Western Europe and North America, chiefly through collective deterrence and defence against the Soviet Union. The organisation has successfully fulfilled that mission over the course of many decades. With the collapse of the Soviet Union and the monumental series of changes that ensued in Europe, NATO's role shifted. In the immediate post-Cold War years, the alliance continued to fulfil its mission of ensuring peace and stability in the Euro-Atlantic area by taking on a new task: contributing to the creation of a new security architecture for Europe, including by integrating former Warsaw Pact countries. Similarly, NATO's footprint grew in the 1990s, with the organisation

increasing its capacity to undertake crisis management operations outside of its traditional operational theatre. In the decades following the end of the Cold War, NATO undertook a number of so-called “out-of-area” operations, spanning from intervening in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in Kosovo to halt war crimes against the civilian population to deploying troops to Afghanistan in the aftermath of 9/11 to ensure that the country would never again become a safe haven for transnational terrorism.

The 2010 Strategic Concept, a document that describes the organisation's strategic direction and main objectives, reflects this broadening of tasks. It stresses that NATO's main tasks in the 21st century encompass collective defence, crisis management, and cooperative security – a term that refers to NATO's efforts to contribute to peace and stability by fostering and strengthening partnerships and cooperations with non-NATO countries and other international organisations.

The role, values, and relevance of the alliance were again tested in 2014. Indeed, NATO yet again had to adapt to meet the challenges of a security environment that had fundamentally changed and become much more complex. This process represented both a stress test and a successful case of how multilateral institutions can remain relevant by embracing change.

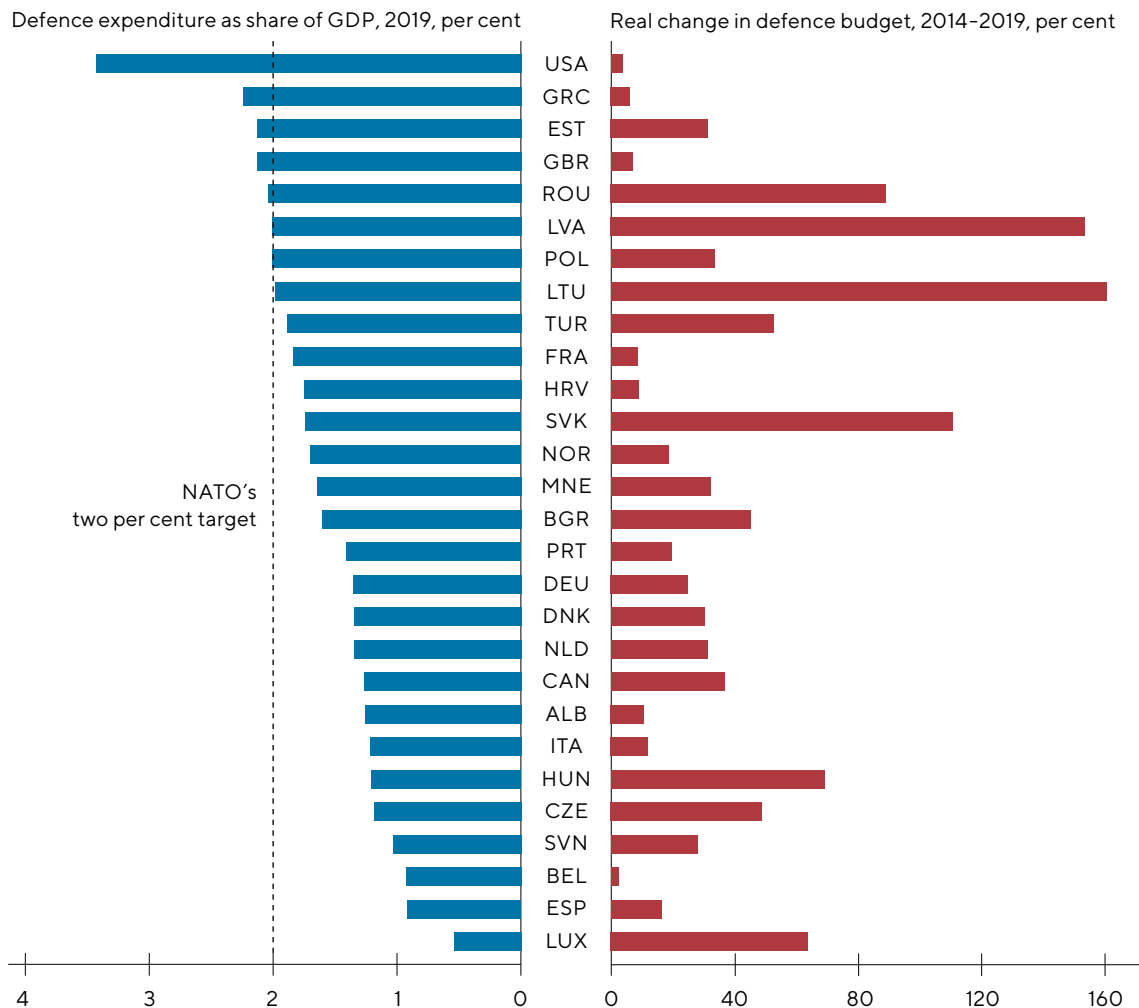
2014 was a watershed year for the alliance. On the one hand, Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea revealed that the security environment had yet again

transformed: an increasingly assertive Russia was willing and able to challenge the rules-based European security order, including by military force. The impact of Russia's illegitimate annexation of Crimea cannot be understated. What is more, since 2014, allies have been confronted with a broader pattern of destabilising behaviour by Russia, ranging from provocative military actions and large-scale, no-notice snap military exercises along NATO's borders to irresponsible and aggressive nuclear rhetoric, hybrid attacks and interference in NATO countries' demo-

cratic processes and to the breach of international norms and agreements, including the INF Treaty and the Chemical Weapons Convention.

Apart from Russia's growing provocations, NATO also had to come to terms with the short- and long-term security implications of major stability crises that occurred in the alliance's southern neighbourhood, including the rising threat posed by non-state armed groups, particularly terrorist organisations. Again, 2014 was a watershed year in this respect: the so-called Islamic State took over the Iraqi city of

Evolution of defence spending by NATO members



Source: North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)¹

Mosul and proclaimed the birth of the “caliphate”. This event, combined with the ongoing conflict in neighbouring Syria, highlighted the urgency and magnitude of the threat from terrorism and instability facing the alliance.

In addition, this set of conventional and non-conventional challenges was compounded by the growing significance of hybrid threats and the rising sophistication of threats emanating from the cyber-domain.

The alliance re-calibrated its relations with Russia, freezing military and civilian cooperation, while preserving channels for communication and dialogue.

In this context, the alliance took a series of important steps. First, NATO re-calibrated its relations with Russia. In the aftermath of the Cold War, NATO had taken concrete steps to build a constructive dialogue and foster practical cooperation with Russia, in an attempt to begin a new chapter in NATO-Russia relations. These efforts were put on hold. Allies decided to freeze all practical military and civilian cooperation until Russia returned to full compliance with its obligations under international law. Yet, NATO preserved military lines of communication (between the supreme allied commander Europe and the Russian chief of defence) as well as channels for political dialogue (chiefly through meetings of the NATO-Russia Council, a format that allows the alliance and the Russian Federation to exchange information, hold dialogue and, in doing so, reduce the likelihood of misunderstandings). Moreover, NATO allies decided to implement the greatest reinforcement of the alliance’s collective defence in a generation, which included investing in the deployment of a combat-ready multinational forward presence in the Baltic states and Poland and committing at its 2014 summit in Wales to move toward the guideline of spending two per cent of their gross domestic products on defence – including 20 per cent on new equipment – within a decade.

With respect to its southern neighbourhood, the alliance invested in a series of measures designed to “project stability”, namely to contribute to the complex and long-term process of stabilising the MENA region.² NATO decided to do so chiefly by boosting cooperation with its Middle Eastern partners – including Jordan, Tunisia, and Iraq – and by enhancing its investment in regional training and capacity-building efforts in areas such as non-proliferation, border security, countering improvised explosive devices, and cyberdefence, to name just a few.³

Following the rise of ISIS and its self-proclaimed caliphate, NATO also stepped up its contribution to countering terrorism within the MENA region. For example, it has actively supported the multi-national, US-led global anti-ISIS coalition through its Airborne Warning and Control System intelligence flights, which help provide robust situational awareness and early warnings and make the coalition’s air operations more efficient. The alliance also established a training mission in Iraq, aimed at building the capacity of Iraq’s security forces, its defence and security institutions, and its national defence academies.

NATO embarked on a collective process of reflection on the need to provide three tasks at once: reinforced collective defence, crisis management, and cooperative security.

In addition, the alliance embarked on a collective process of reflection to better understand the shifts in its security environment and to fully account for the need to be able to simultaneously provide for reinforced collective defence, crisis management, and cooperative security. To ensure that it can operate effectively in this new environment and continue to fulfil its key responsibility of ensuring peace and security in the Euro-Atlantic area, NATO is in the process of becoming a truly 360-degree organisation that is able to tackle both conventional and non-conventional threats, irrespective of where they originate.

This process of adaptation has required the organisation to reform both its military backbone – its command structure – and its headquarters. Over the past three years, NATO has reviewed and revised its military and political institutions so that it can be more agile, more flexible, and better prepared for the challenges of today and tomorrow. The changes in NATO's command structure include not only adding over 1,200 additional personnel but also building two new commands that will focus on protecting transatlantic sea lines of communication (Joint Force Command Norfolk headquarters in the United States) and on enabling rapid movements of troops and equipment across allied territory (Joint Support and Enabling Command in Germany). When it comes to NATO's headquarters in Brussels, the alliance is also reviewing and reforming the way it works, investing in innovation, and focusing on promoting speed and quality in its decision-making. All these reforms have contributed to revamping NATO's culture of readiness.

NATO has also taken significant steps that have enabled the alliance to proactively harness disruptive technologies and better anticipate emerging threats. In a landmark decision at the 2014 Wales summit, NATO adopted the “Enhanced Policy on Cyber Defence” as part of its core task of collective defence, and two years later, at the 2016 Warsaw summit, it recognised cyberspace as a domain of

operations.⁴ The alliance continues to adapt to the world of fast-moving cyberthreats, including those conducted as part of larger hybrid campaigns, by developing strategic response options to cyberattacks and malicious cyberactivity, by setting up a new Cyber Operations Centre, and by increasing collaboration with private sector partners.

In the past five years, the alliance has thus implemented a series of significant changes. This has been no easy feat: in order to initiate reforms and adaptation processes, it has had to generate consensus among its 29 members. This requires in-depth discussions as well as robust consultation processes. The alliance's ability to have these – at times – difficult conversations and work towards consensus constitutes one of its greatest strengths – and is the reason why it is able to change in the first place. Most importantly, this ability rests on the fact that the allies share a set of common values and core strategic interests that allow them to overcome differences and make difficult decisions together. In this sense, the alliance continues to work to ready itself for the future, recognising that, to stay relevant, NATO will have to continue to transform and adapt in the decades to come.

The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the authors.

AUTHORS



Benedetta Berti
Head, Policy Planning
Unit, Office of the
Secretary General,
NATO, Brussels



Anna Maria Dowd
Head, Industry Relations,
NATO Communications
and Information Agency,
Brussels



James Golby
Defense Policy Advisor,
US Mission to NATO,
Brussels



Dominik P. Jankowski
Political Advisor;
Head, Political Section,
Permanent Delegation
of the Republic of
Poland to NATO,
Brussels

Science Cooperation: Bridging Regional Divides

Al Sharif Nasser (MYL 2011) and Aykan Erdemir (MYL 2013)

Much of the political instability in the Middle East has been driven by factors that transcend borders. These root causes of conflict include competition over resources such as water or energy, the displacement of people as a result of climate change, food insecurity, or violent clashes triggered by extremist ideologies. As a result, there is an increasing realisation in the region that none of these challenges can be effectively addressed by nations alone. Likewise, many actors in the region have recognised the merit of scientific cooperation in addressing at least some of these challenges. Several states in the Middle East have thus started to experiment with a form of collaboration that addresses both the cross-border nature of challenges and the potential utility of scientific approaches to solving them: science diplomacy.

Science has the ability to build
bridges where politics creates rifts.

Science diplomacy refers to the use of scientific collaborations among nations to address common problems and to build constructive international partnerships. It has become one of the most indispensable and interesting instances of international and multilateral cooperation. History is full of examples

of policy makers using science to bridge political fault lines in order to foster cooperation and reduce the risk of conflict. One of the more prominent examples was the bilateral scientific cooperation between the United States and the Soviet Union during the Cold War, which covered four specific areas – the high seas, Antarctica, outer space, and the deep seas. These efforts helped establish lasting bilateral ties between Moscow and Washington but also contributed to multilateral cooperation, for instance, at the International Space Station (ISS). By building mutual trust, science diplomacy can help mend ties between (former) adversaries. Science has the powerful ability to build bridges where politics creates rifts. Because it is often perceived as “apolitical”, scientific collaboration can survive in a climate of political tensions, maintaining the cooperative ties among states upon which diplomatic efforts can build.

In the Middle East, one success story of science diplomacy that has risen above the enduring cleavages of this conflict-ridden region is the SESAME project, established in Amman, Jordan. The acronym SESAME, a cultural feature of the cuisines that all regional partners share, refers to the Synchrotron-light for Experimental Science and Applications in the Middle East. SESAME was launched as a cooperative venture between its eight founding members: Bahrain, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Pakistan, Palestine, and Turkey. It is governed by a council comprising governmentally designated representatives from its current member states, which now includes also

Cyprus and Iran. It is governed by a council comprising governmentally designated representatives from its founding member states, who meet twice a year to discuss administrative and budgetary matters, including member state contributions. Observer states also participate in these meetings, including Germany, Japan, and the United States to name but a few.

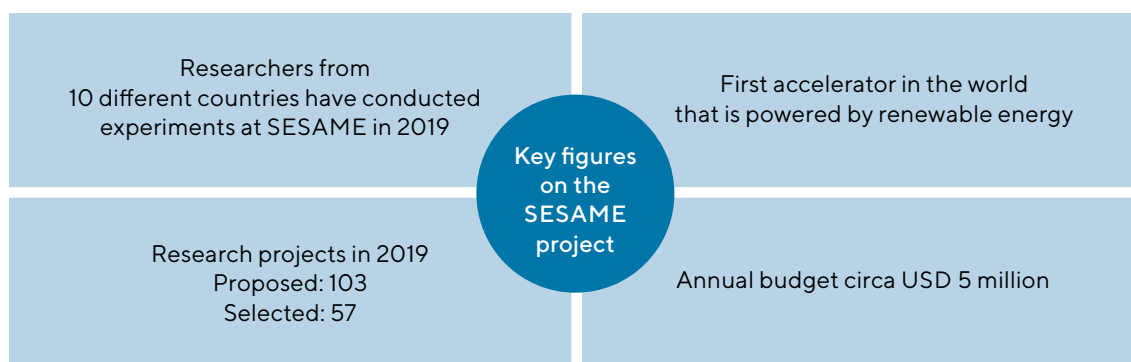
SESAME is following in historic footsteps: it is modelled on the European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN).

In this unprecedented effort to bridge regional divides in the Middle East, SESAME is following in historic footsteps. The project is modelled on the European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN), conceived in the aftermath of World War II and tasked with enabling scientific research that its members could not afford individually. In this way, CERN strengthened the links between several European countries that had recently been at war. Like CERN, SESAME has a dual mandate to constitute a world-class centre for scientific excellence and a means to foster regional scientific collaboration.

CERN was also the place where the idea for SESAME was born. There, a group of scientists conceived of SESAME when they established the Middle Eastern Science Collaboration (MESC) group in 1994. In 1997, CERN's leadership and MESC engaged the German government, which in turn agreed to donate the components of a soon-to-be-decommissioned light source synchrotron at a facility in Berlin (BESSY I). This marked the project's first concrete commitment. Several other European countries subsequently donated further components to facilitate SESAME's construction. By virtue of its use of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) as an umbrella for the formation of SESAME, the institution came to closely follow the procedure of CERN's foundation. In fact, the conventions of both SESAME and CERN are largely similar to each other.

Jordan was the obvious choice to host the project due to its political accessibility to all people from the region and its leaders' commitment to science diplomacy.

SESAME: Synchrotron-light for experimental science and applications in the Middle East



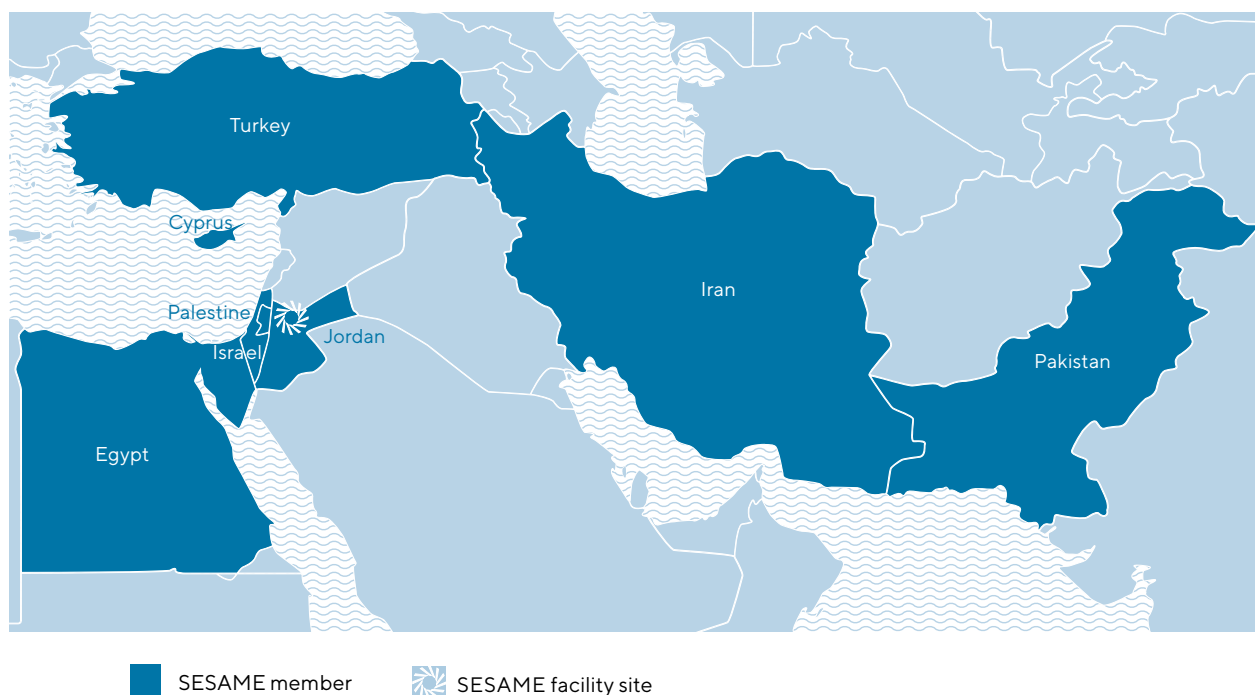
Jordan's political accessibility to all people from the region and its leaders' commitment to the vision of science diplomacy that supported regional peace efforts made it the obvious choice to host SESAME. After five years of construction, SESAME was officially inaugurated in 2017.

With SESAME, the Middle East is now home to its first ever synchrotron and thus to a truly notable facility for scientific research. Scientists from member states were involved in its construction; they have received joint training in its operation, they are already using the facility, and they will do so simultaneously and/or jointly going forward. As a third-generation high intensity light source, SESAME is used for sophisticated experimental science and research in a wide range of areas. Indeed, the institution's research possibilities are enormous and include the life sciences (e.g. designing drugs for pathogens and diseases common to the region),

material sciences (e.g. designing and testing new materials), environmental sciences (e.g. probing air, soil and water pollution and toxicity), and even cultural heritage (e.g. structurally analysing archaeological objects). Accordingly, physicists, chemists, biologists, and physicians, but also archaeologists and environmental scientists can use SESAME to advance their research. The facility's experimental programme began in 2018, and its first peer-reviewed papers were published in June of this year.

Promoting multilateralism is a particularly valuable ambition in the Middle East. As the region is characterised by a lack of trust, rising suspicion among the political elite and the public, and weak institutions and human capital, establishing international cooperation remains a significant challenge. While state-to-state efforts to address key diplomatic and security challenges are essential, parallel efforts to build bridges and trust across different

Science cooperation through SESAME in the Middle East



Source: Munich Security Conference, Körber-Stiftung²

communities – as SESAME is doing with scientists – are a welcome complement.

SESAME is a success story of multilateralism. With the open approval of their governments, it has brought together scientists from countries whose relationships are strained or characterised by open hostility. For this reason, SESAME not only aims to build “scientific and cultural bridges between neighbouring countries” but also to promote “mutual understanding and tolerance through international cooperation.”³ It demonstrates that science diplomacy through collaborative research projects can play a vital role in building trust among nations, thereby supporting regional stability and security even under the most challenging of circumstances.

The concept of science diplomacy is not new. But it has never been more important in informing policy and in creating effective mechanisms and spaces for countries in crisis zones to cooperate. It can be an effective means to help build trust and confidence where other cooperation formats are absent or not feasible. As UNESCO’s 2010 Science Report accurately sums up: “[...] the stability and security of Arab countries cannot simply be a function of military expenditure [...]. Long-term security and prosperity for all countries in the region can only be achieved by assuring the triple helix of food, water and energy security, combined with sustainable and equitable socio-economic development in tolerant societies where accountability and rule of law prevail. [Science and technology] can achieve some of these goals, if not all.”⁴

SESAME demonstrates that science diplomacy can help build trust and enhance stability even under the most challenging of circumstances.

SESAME’s facilitation of scientific collaboration and research in a non-ideological and open environment is all the more significant at a time when policy debates are becoming increasingly emotionally laden. Although projects such as SESAME may initially

appear limited in scope, the critical exchange among an international team of scientists, built on principles of transparency, accountability, and rationality, has the potential to spill over to the political arena and inspire similar practices within it.

SESAME’s facilitation of scientific collaboration and research in a non-ideological and open environment is all the more significant at a time when policy debates are becoming increasingly emotional.

In conclusion, science has the powerful ability to build bridges where politics creates rifts. The Middle East does have intractable challenges of its own – some of which are deep-rooted historic ones. As SESAME demonstrates, however, even in this conflict-ridden region, adversaries can pursue scientific cooperation as a legitimate arena to practice and build multilateralism.

The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the authors.

AUTHORS



Al Sharif Nasser
Managing Director,
Middle East Scientific
Institute for Security,
Amman



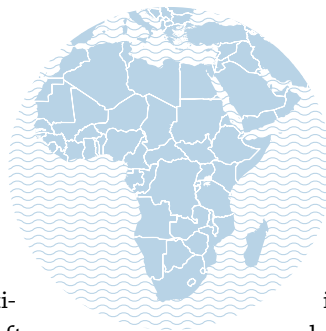
Aykan Erdemir
Senior Fellow, Foundation
for Defense of
Democracies (FDD),
Washington, DC



Matter of Perspective: **Multilateralism Across the Globe**

Africa: Secret Champion

Ottilia Anna Maunganidze (MYL 2017)



Africa has long recognised and appreciated the critical role that multilateralism plays, very often unnoticed by the rest of the world.

Founded in 1963, the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) succeeded in uniting Africans within a single continental organisation. African states championed the causes of international solidarity, the non-aligned movement, the G77 and the UN, among others. From the 1960s to the 1990s, when Africa focused on ending colonialism and apartheid, strengthening multilateralism was the continent's way of advancing its own emancipation. With 55 member states, the OAU's successor, the African Union (AU), is now integral to the maintenance of global multilateralism, particularly at the UN, where the strength of numbers is critical for motions.

**For Africa, multilateralism is a
continental imperative.**

For Africa, multilateralism is a continental imperative. The AU embodies this conviction. Working towards ever closer regional integration, the body represents a form of highly inclusive multilateralism. As an umbrella body, the AU comprises eight regional bodies covering Southern, Central, Eastern, Western and Northern Africa. Regarded as the building blocks of the wider African Economic Community, these re-

gional bodies are the primary coordinating bodies for countries and feed into the broader AU peace, security, development, and governance agendas.

Facilitating multilateral ties through greater trade is among one of the AU's chief objectives. But ambitious plans to establish an African Economic Community with a single currency by 2023 do not – yet – square with the economic reality. For now, Africa's regional economic integration is comparatively low. Exports within the continent amount to a mere 15 per cent, while intra-trade levels in Asia and Europe are at 58 per cent and 67 per cent, respectively. However, the recent entry into force of the African Continental Free Trade Agreement could push the continent towards unprecedented regional economic integration. All but one African state have signed the agreement, making it the largest free-trade area in the world in terms of participating countries since the formation of the World Trade Organization (WTO).

Economics aside, the AU serves as a key player on peace and security. Given that many violent conflicts persist across the continent, this is a top priority that takes up most of the body's resources. The AU now leads on peace operations in Africa (including those deployed by the UN) and is instrumental in most political negotiations and mediation efforts, either directly or by deferring to the relevant regional body. For example, in Southern Africa, the Southern African Development Community leads

mediation efforts in conflicts and political impasses such as those in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Lesotho and Zimbabwe, with the support of the AU. Likewise, in Western Africa, the Economic Community of West African States leads on counter-terrorism and responding to violent extremism in close partnership with the AU.

But multilateral cooperation in Africa extends beyond the AU and its regional bodies. Several multilateral organisations, such as the Pan-African Parliament, the African Development Bank, the Economic, Social and Cultural Council, the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, and the African Court on Human and People's Rights serve as platforms for African states to settle their differences and foster cooperation. However, owing to financial constraints among others, these institutions are not as strong as they need to be to fulfil their mandates. Thus, the societal commitment to a collective future is still not matched by the financial, human and other resources needed to further strengthen multilateralism on the continent.

As such, Africa's own endeavours towards multilateral solutions still rely heavily on global multilateral institutions. The majority of resolutions of the UN Security Council, for example, are concerned with addressing African situations. In addition, UN agencies such as the UN Refugee Agency, the International Organisation for Migration, the UN Children's Fund, and the World Food Programme do a significant amount of their work in Africa. This often reduces Africa to a target of global multilateral efforts.

But can Africa be more? Arguably yes, because Africans understand their own context better and have embraced multilateral approaches for a long time. So, they can (and ought to) play a greater role in shaping the actions of outside actors on African soil – and beyond.

In fact, for Africa to evolve from a hidden to a true champion of multilateralism, two priorities should be kept in mind. First, Africa should double down on advancing the continent's integration. In economic terms, recent steps, such as the creation of a free trade area are encouraging. But working towards a true economic and monetary union with a common currency is crucial to unlock Africa's potential. In political terms, a concerted effort to make the

AU more effective should be a priority. Only by implementing recent institutional reform proposals and by enabling the body to finance itself sustainably will Africa be able to develop the clout needed to shape the international agenda.

Africa is leading the charge for a reformed UN system.

Second, the global governance architecture and its institutions must become more representative. This is why Africa is leading the charge for a reformed UN system, with a UN Security Council that is more inclusive and representative of present geo-political dynamics. WTO trade regulations and International Monetary Fund financial requirements are equally disadvantaging Africa and other developing regions. The current set-up does not sufficiently empower Africa – which comprises one sixth of the world's population – to make decisions for itself and become a global agenda setter.

Of course, until these challenges are solved, Africa will remain “on the agenda”. But, pending reforms, perhaps the solution is if Africa plays a critical role in setting and implementing the agenda. Founded on a strong sense of shared identity and driven by common interests in resolving the continent's problems, Africa's commitment to multilateralism is a force to be reckoned with – if it manages to unlock more of its potential. More than ever, as the global order is currently experiencing one of its most severe crises, multilateral champions like Africa are desperately needed.

The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the author.

AUTHOR



Otilia Anna Maunganidze
Head of Special Projects, Office of the Executive Director, Institute for Security Studies (ISS), Pretoria

Middle East: Rifts and Shifts

Jasmine M. El Gamal (MYL 2013)



Multilateralism in the Middle East has historically been aligned around the Arab League and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC); the former is a broad alliance for cooperation on issues such as politics, economy and culture, while the latter focuses mainly on economic issues. Despite the differences in their history, focus and membership, the two institutions were both created to serve as vehicles for ensuring Arab unity on crucial issues such as opposing Israel and avoiding conflict among member states.¹

Since the Arab Spring, patterns of multilateral cooperation in the region have become much more fluid.

Whereas, for decades, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict brought together Arab nations around a common cause, namely support for Palestinian statehood, this is no longer the case today. Since the series of uprisings known as the Arab Spring, which began in 2011, three issues in particular have reshaped regional alliances and given rise to internal tensions: the perceived threat by Iran, regional terrorism and the role of political Islam (or Islamism).² This three-fold set of issues has torn apart traditional alliances,

rendering patterns of multilateral cooperation in the region much more fluid. They beg the question of what multilateralism in the “new” Middle East looks like and what the implications are for Western states dealing with issues in the region.

To address what they perceive as a threat from Iran, Arab states have recently moved towards unprecedented coordination with Israel.

First, Iran’s regional influence is perceived by its Sunni neighbours as an existential threat to their interests. Thus, the increasingly hostile rivalry between Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates on the one hand, and Iran on the other, has overtaken traditional opposition toward Israel, as the Arab states have moved towards unprecedented coordination with Israel to address the Iranian threat. In February 2019, this cooperation, which had thus far largely taken place behind the scenes, was on full display at the US-led “anti-Iran” conference in Warsaw, Poland, as Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu hailed the event as a breakthrough in Arab-Israeli relations.³ These ties will likely grow even stronger as the strategic competition and proxy confrontation between Riyadh and Tehran continues.

Second, the threat of jihadist terrorism throughout the region, aggravated by the violent conflicts in Syria and Libya and which has resulted in multiple attacks by terrorists in Egypt, Tunisia, Jordan and other countries, has similarly frayed the Arab League framework and turned states against one another. When Libya's Muammar Qaddafi violently quelled a popular uprising in the country, the Arab League suspended Libya from the organisation and actively supported Qaddafi's ouster by North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in 2011. Likewise, Arab League member states jointly denounced Syria's Bashar al-Assad for enabling terrorism in the region and expelled Syria from the union in 2011. There is no consensus today regarding Syria's re-admittance into the league; several Sunni Arab states accuse Assad of allowing Iran to expand its influence in the region and empowering Shia militias that pose a direct threat to their regimes, while Iraq and Tunisia have publicly called for Syria to be allowed to return to the organisation.

Third, the rise of political Islamism in the wake of the Arab Spring has been another divisive issue. In particular, popularly elected Islamists in countries such as Egypt and Tunisia stirred deep insecurities throughout Saudi Arabia, Egypt and the United Arab Emirates, resulting in an unrelenting and coordinated response to stem the rising influence of groups like the Muslim Brotherhood in the region. The most dramatic example of this endeavour was the forced removal of Egypt's first democratically elected leader and member of the Muslim Brotherhood, Mohamed Morsi, by the Egyptian military. Morsi's ouster again split Arab countries, with the move supported by Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates and staunchly opposed by Qatar.

These three issues have not only produced a split in the Arab League but also cracked the economically focused GCC down the middle.⁴ A Saudi-Bahraini-Emirati alliance (which, along with non-GCC member Egypt, has come to be known as the "Quartet") has imposed a political and economic blockade on Qatar, on the grounds that it supports terrorism in the region and allows its capital, Doha, to serve as a safe haven for exiled Islamists as well as for its close relationship with Turkey and Iran.

What does this mean for the United States when it comes to dealing with the "post-Arab Spring" Middle East? In fact, regional disintegration in the Middle East has coincided with a preference in Washington for working with individual states rather than in multilateral formats. Since the election of Donald Trump as president, the United States has sought to deepen ties with individual states that share its interests in the region. This approach is a departure from his predecessor's strong preference for multilateralism and coalition-building, as evidenced by the Obama administration's approach to the Iran deal and NATO military intervention in Libya. President Trump shows vocal disdain for multilateral institutions and has a desire to deal with partners (as well as adversaries, for that matter) on a bilateral level. His staunch opposition to Iran has also led to the complete alignment of the United States' goals with the anti-Iran regional bloc.

**President Trump shows vocal disdain
for multilateral institutions and
has a desire to deal with partners
on a bilateral level.**

To that end, we can expect Arab states to continue to cooperate with those Arab allies that share their views on the three main issues outlined above rather than formulating coherent positions within the framework of the two regional organisations. We can also expect the Trump administration to continue encouraging this trend.

The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the author.

AUTHOR



Jasmine M. El Gamal
Non-resident Fellow, Rafik Hariri
Center for the Middle East,
Atlantic Council, Istanbul

Europe: Innovating Together

Manuel Muñiz Villa (MYL 2017) and Marietje Schaake (MYL 2013)



The newly chosen leadership of the European Union (EU) must reform and deepen the EU and project its influence around the world. The state of innovation in Europe should be at the very top of their priority list. The digital economy is producing a G2 world, with the United States and China in the lead and Europe at a distant third. There is not one European firm among the world's largest internet companies. Additionally, most technology unicorns are outside of the EU. Places like Shenzhen or Silicon Valley transfer significantly more technology to the market than their European counterparts.

Allowing these trends to continue will be detrimental to Europe's future generations for a number of reasons. At a geopolitical level, if Europe fails to develop its technology base it will find itself unable to meet the geostrategic challenges of the 21st century. An outdated industrial and technological base will be unable to provide Europeans with a resilient and effective data infrastructure and will ultimately limit the strategic autonomy of European nations. At a time when the technology and innovation sector has become an important arena for US-China great power rivalry, Europe is well advised to strengthen its collective technological weight – and thereby avoid being caught in the middle.

But there are also internal reasons for greater European action. Companies that make heavy use of technology are known to be more productive and

more competitive. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development has termed some of these companies “frontier firms” and estimates that they captured almost all of the productivity growth in advanced economies in the last decade. It is frontier firms that create most of the high-quality and high-paying jobs. Hence, having an outdated and uncompetitive corporate base will lead to growing precariousness among our labour base and will result in talent loss. An unproductive private sector will also lead to a public-revenue challenge for governments across Europe. Fiscal traction is a product of a healthy economy. Without profitable firms and high-paying jobs, states across Europe will face funding challenges, putting additional pressure on public budgets.

**The EU should establish a
radically ambitious innovation
and technology agenda.**

Given the deep implications of either leading or lagging behind, the EU should establish a radically ambitious innovation and technology agenda. This should be a long-term effort in which stronger cooperation among European partners plays a decisive role. We foresee three areas of strategic action:

First, behind every innovation hub in the world there is a basic and applied research ecosystem made

up of universities and research centres that attract talent from all over the world. The goal of these clusters is not only to provide world-class training but also to generate applied knowledge that can be transformed into high-impact companies and projects. Europe needs academic institutions that bring together the best minds from the research world with those from industry, the financial sector and the entrepreneurship community. Such institutions should also measure their success by the number of startups that are launched in their incubators, the number of jobs created by their spin offs, and by their overall contribution to the local, regional and national GDP. Unless this shift occurs, we will have an academic infrastructure that is not fit for purpose in the 21st century.

The second task for the EU will be to complete the Digital Single Market (DSM). Scale is also important when it comes to markets that enable innovation. Successful digital markets are large markets. Yet Europe is still fragmented by unnecessary barriers. There are a great number of regulations and norms to navigate in order to operate across EU borders. This is hindering the scalability and ultimately the competitiveness of European firms. The main reason why technology companies from the United States and China are thriving is that they have enormous domestic markets where they can grow and from which to launch their international expansion. It is urgent, therefore, to double down on the deepening of European integration and the belief in perfecting markets through multilateral cooperation. Standard chapters on digital trade should become part of trade agreements so that the EU ensures a level playing field both at home and abroad.

Third, the EU should, however, remain alert to malpractice and to some of the competition challenges posed by the digital economy. We know that digitalisation has produced winner-takes-all markets and that there are strong oligopolistic forces within the digital economy. Those who have access to data and the capacity to process it tend to do better than those who do not. The lack of productivity diffusion from frontier firms to others might in fact be the clearest sign that there is some severe market concentration occurring within our economies. Wage stagnation, the collapse of labour income as a share

of national income and the weakening of collective bargaining procedures are other such signs. The EU has the obligation to guarantee free and fair competition within its markets. It has shown it can set a values-inspired example by agreeing to data protection rules. It must continue to ensure the rule of law applies online as it does offline and that competition in the digital economy is fair. This pursuit of a values-driven or norms-compliant innovation process would be of benefit not just to Europeans but also to citizens around the world.

**Europe has shown it can set a
values-inspired example by agreeing
to data protection rules.**

There is a clear agenda for Europe to lead in the field of innovation. Europe has the human capital, the infrastructure, the institutional capacity and the financial and corporate fabric to be a world leader in technology and innovation. The new team of European leaders should double down on having an impact by developing a European model that creates ripple effects around the world. The time for action on this is now. An agenda focused on creating the right ecosystem for innovation, the expansion and deepening of European cooperation around the DSM, and a steadfast defence of free, open and rules-based markets are some of the goals that should guide a comprehensive EU strategy in this field.

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AUTHORS



Manuel Muñiz Villa
Dean, IE School of Global
and Public Affairs,
Madrid



Marietje Schaake
Member of European
Parliament 2009-2019,
Brussels

China: Playing by the Rules?

Xizhou Zhou (MYL 2018)

China is facing increasing criticism that it is undermining the multi-lateral system by creating alternative, competing structures and institutions. Should the rest of the world be worried?

Beijing had no say in the formulation of today's prevailing multilateral rules, but history indicates it has generally played by these rules – and in some cases, it has become an ardent defender of the current order. The areas of trade, energy and climate change provide but a few examples of this pattern.

China would not have become the superpower it is today had it not joined the multilateral rules-based trade system.

In December 2001, China joined the World Trade Organization (WTO). Michael Moore, the WTO's director-general at the time, announced that “[the Chinese] economy will be subjected to the rules-based system of the WTO”.¹ To enter the organisation, China had to accede to a multitude of multilateral rules and relax over 7,000 tariffs, quotas and other trade barriers. This gave an enormous boost to the Chinese – and thus for the world – economy. For most Chinese, life since then has meant rapidly rising



exposure to the outside world and an increase in standards of living.

China would not have become the superpower it is today had it not joined the rules-based trade system. It has relied on WTO mechanisms for its trade relations with the world and has often defended them from being weakened. For example, most recently, Beijing actively engaged in negotiations to prevent the WTO Appellate Body from falling apart as a result of Washington's blocking of the appointment of new judges.

With strong GDP growth came fast energy growth – another area where China embraced existing multilateral institutions. The post-WTO growth in the early 2000s caught China's energy sector by such surprise that there were not enough power stations to meet the demand from all the new factories; many companies in China began operating their own small diesel generators, resulting in a major increase in diesel imports – along with a rise in global oil prices.

The International Energy Agency (IEA), created by industrialised countries after the 1973 oil crisis to prevent future supply disruptions, took note of China's rising role. But there was one problem: the IEA had been created under the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), of which China was not a member. However, Beijing was fully cognisant that a stable global oil supply environment was as important to China as it was to OECD countries and began regular communications with the IEA. In 2015, China announced a

formal joint programme that allowed the two sides to engage in mutual information sharing to facilitate better understanding of global energy – and to enable China to adequately prepare for potential market fluctuations in areas such as strategic petroleum reserves. A deputy director general from China's energy administration even joined the IEA as a special advisor to provide better linkages.

With a much bigger energy footprint, China's carbon emissions also went up. From the Rio Convention in 1992 to the Kyoto Protocol in 1997, the country has played a key role in global climate governance. In 2014, Beijing collaborated with Washington to produce the US-China Joint Announcement on Climate Change, providing much-needed impetus for the 2015 Paris Agreement. Even after the United States withdrew from this agreement under the Trump Administration, China reconfirmed its commitment and urged other nations to stay on course. Today, China is one of the few major economies on track to meet its Paris climate targets.

As the global power balance continues to shift, emerging economies like China demand adjustments to the current multilateral system.

That said, as the global power balance continues to shift, emerging economies like China are starting to demand adjustments to the current multilateral system to reflect a changing world. For some time now, Beijing has become impatient with the slow pace of reform at many longstanding institutions like the World Bank. From China's point of view, their failure to accommodate the rise of China and other emerging countries impairs the legitimacy of these institutions and of the multilateral system itself.

In 2016, Beijing took the initiative to establish the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB). Here, China enjoys greater influence than at the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund – initially making many worried that China was abandoning the Bretton Woods system and setting up its own shop with its own set of rules. Three years on,

however, it has also become apparent that the AIIB's management and governance systems closely mirror those of existing multilateral institutions, with many of its top management having held senior positions at the World Bank and other development banks. The AIIB's investment policies are similar to – and sometimes even more stringent than – those of existing institutions, e.g. they prohibit investment in coal-related projects due to climate concerns. This is partly why the heads of the World Bank and IMF have both openly supported the AIIB and affirmed that they would collaborate on development efforts.

One area where exceptions may be found is when it comes to China's "core interest", i.e. territorial integrity. We saw this happen during the 2016 arbitration decision on the South China Sea, where Beijing rejected the decision by the Permanent Court of Arbitration at The Hague, which ruled in favour of the Philippines. We should treat these as exceptions rather than the rule – after all, in China, many have noted the precedent set by the United States when it defied an order by the International Court of Justice in a 1986 case with Nicaragua.²

The general consensus among Chinese officials and average citizens remains that multilateralism continues to benefit China and its people – while some reforms might be needed, the system itself should be upheld. As Ambassador He Yafei, China's former deputy foreign minister, puts it, "China has neither desire nor interest in 'turning the table' on the existing global governance system."³ In other words, China is rising "from within" the existing multilateral order.

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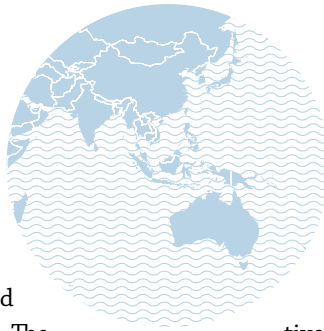
AUTHOR



Xizhou Zhou
Managing Director, Regional Head,
Asia Pacific Power, Gas Coal &
Renewables, IHS Markit, Beijing

Asia: A Balancing Act

Myong-Hyun Go (MYL 2015), Shafqat Munir (MYL 2017) and
Ambika Vishwanath (MYL 2011)



Asia after World War II was a region reawakening from warfare and centuries of colonialism. The United States became the main provider of security in the region because it guaranteed the security of the Philippines, Australia, Japan, Pakistan and South Korea by signing bilateral defence treaties and instituting preferential trade and investment arrangements with its Asian allies. Asians have reaped substantial development gains from the decades of open trade, investment and multilateral cooperation that have followed. As a result, the region has emerged as the world's largest trading hub.

**It is high time that Asians take
the initiative for promoting peace
and prosperity in their region.**

The post-1945 multilateral environment, however, has recently seen the emergence of new geo-strategic and geo-economic realities. US retreat from the global stage and from Asia in particular is a central component. It comes at a time when China is challenging not only the territorial integrity of several countries but also the liberal tenor of the regional economic order. In this context, it is high time that Asians take the initiative for promoting peace and prosperity in their region to a greater extent. In

this effort, multilateral cooperation should be the means of choice.

While there appears to be a collective understanding of the challenges inherent in American disengagement and an increasingly Sino-centric regional order, an Asian vision for home-grown multilateralism that may address these challenges is emerging in a piecemeal and sporadic manner at best. To gain traction, greater buy-in is required from advanced democracies such as Australia, New Zealand and Japan; so is more enthusiastic participation from India, South Korea and other emerging states.

As Asian multilateralism develops, any appearance that it is primarily a strategy directed against China should be avoided. Even though Asian multilateralism may clearly serve as a counterweight to Chinese attempts to dominate the region, a confrontational approach will only prove counterproductive.

**A home-grown multilateralism
requires greater buy-in from
advanced Asian democracies like
Australia, New Zealand and Japan.**

For instance, concern about aspects of China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), such as excessive debt borrowing, disrespect for labour standards and

preferential treatment of Chinese investors at the expense of local actors, is present both in Asia and elsewhere. The financial and other important benefits of the BRI often come at the cost of respect for the liberal values that democracies hold dear. Yet, discouraging countries from engaging with the BRI is not a promising way forward. On the contrary, it is crucial to engage with the BRI to shape the initiative from within – and thus ensure that it better adheres to international norms and principles.

Asian nations must collectively engage with China's Belt and Road Initiative to ensure that it respects international norms and principles.

Asians should leverage their collective weight to promote the principles of a democratic and rules-based order. In this regard, the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), a multilateral free trade agreement for the Asia-Pacific region that originally included the United States, could have been a powerful tool in states' efforts to counterbalance the illiberal aspects of the rise of China. However, the Trump administration withdrew from the agreement. Still, the fact that under Japanese leadership, the remaining TPP members forge ahead without the United States in the framework of the Comprehensive and Progressive TPP (CPTPP) is an encouraging sign. In the future, the CPTPP should strive to include other

large economies, namely South Korea and India. In so expanding, it could counterbalance Chinese initiatives by offering a path to regional growth and social progress for liberal democracies that is consistent with the principles of transparency, accountability and sustainability. Stronger cooperation among Asian states in the economic realm might even help mitigate the effects of US-China competition on smaller economies in Asia.

The CPTPP is also evidence of a shared commitment by Asian countries to free trade and economic integration. Moreover, trade openness in the region continues to increase with the creation of flexible “mini-lateral” institutions, such as the ASEAN Plus Three and the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sector Technical and Economic Cooperation, which promote principles of good governance and free markets at the sub-regional level. These institutions and larger regional economic mechanisms for cooperation such as Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation are encouraging counterweights to a global economic multilateralism that is deeply in trouble.

Asia needs to strengthen regional multilateralism. In this regard, the CPTPP is a good start. Yet in order to ensure that Asian multilateralism thrives, constant investment of economic, political and social resources is required.

The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the authors.

AUTHORS



Myong-Hyun Go
Research Fellow, The Asan
Institute for Policy Studies,
Seoul



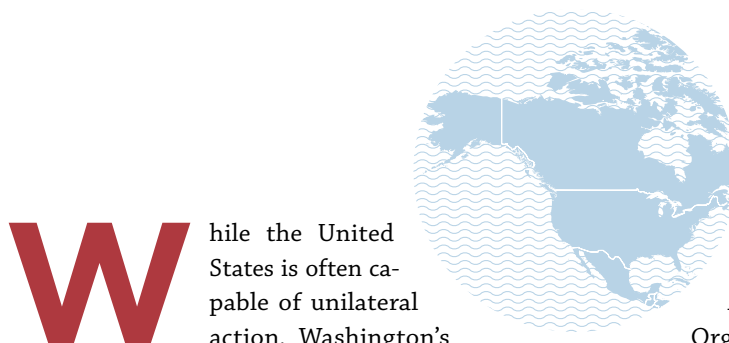
Shafqat Munir
Research Fellow,
Bangladesh Centre for
Terrorism Research (BCTR),
Bangladesh Institute of
Peace and Security Studies
(BIPSS), Dhaka



Ambika Vishwanath
Co-founder and
Director, Kubernein
Initiative, Mumbai

United States: Behind the Scenes

Julia Friedlander (MYL 2018)



While the United States is often capable of unilateral action, Washington's preference is to move in consort with its allies and partners. Yet as geopolitics starts to meld with economic policy and the challenges of technological development, practitioners across multiple disciplines will need to focus on what practical impediments prevent international agreement. Now more than ever, tactical partnership will underpin any political commitment and demonstrate the strength of our cooperation. When facing a new problem, United States policymakers assess the unique levers available to the government while at the same time looking around to see who could join their cause. Although public discourse may suggest differently, the more that European partners see themselves in a leadership role, the more inclined the United States will be to see multilateral action as the most effective way to achieve its end goals.

The technocrat's job in Washington is to coax policy away from political rhetoric and remove impediments to cooperation that lead to policy divergence, especially with close European partners. From the perspective of those working within the government, it is clear that gaps in information sharing and law enforcement capabilities are two obstacles that have hindered a collective response to foreign policy challenges posed by Moscow. The same is true for transatlantic China policy. Unfair economic

practices by Beijing have disgruntled trade negotiators on both sides of the Atlantic and within the World Trade Organization. Yet while this debate goes on, as transatlantic partners we struggle to launch new tools to expand investments in critical infrastructure or project financing that will spur innovation and help maintain our competitive advantage over the Belt and Road Initiative. When it comes to the future of North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and debate over European efforts towards strategic autonomy, we speak about reinforcing commitment to the alliance without paying adequate attention to the interoperability of our military hardware, which allows domestic commercial interest in procurement to take precedence over collective security. Timely information sharing among trusted partners, creative movement of capital and an enhancement of joint military capability form the backbone of international cooperation. In each of these examples, transatlantic cooperation faces obstacles, but acknowledging this should not result in generalised assessments that the transatlantic community is "unwinding" because the United States and Europe "cannot agree" on how to "handle" Russia, China, or NATO. Details matter.

Similarly, assertions that relations between the United States and the European Union (EU) "are at an all-time low" are unjustified. It is clear that there will not be agreement on everything, but such statements do a disservice to what is happening behind

the scenes. For instance, there has not been much public discussion about transatlantic data sharing agreements such as the EU-US Privacy Shield and the Passenger Name Record Agreement, which are critical for international security. We also cannot forget the recent meeting of minds between Washington and the European Commission on managing economic relations with China. Ironically, nothing has put the depth of the relationship between the United States and the EU into such stark relief as the United States government's contingency planning for Brexit. Since the United Kingdom triggered Article 50, processes have been underway to replicate between Washington and London all regulatory understandings that devolve from EU law. Before Brexit, neither the United States, the United Kingdom nor continental Europe had explained (or themselves internalised) the value of EU institutions, which enabled the United States and Europe to conclude hosts of invaluable agreements, drawing us together in ways that often flew beneath the political radar due to their technical nature.

Transatlantic cooperation remains the maypole for addressing global conflict.

Transatlantic cooperation remains the maypole for addressing global conflict. As an official responsible for European affairs at the National Security Council, I was frequently asked to help build consensus on issues that were not strictly in my area of responsibility. In the office, it was easy to joke that “working on Europe” was often less about Europe itself and more about the world. The United States has sought support when recognising a new interim president in Venezuela to encourage the country's democratic transition, when expelling Russian intelligence officers in response to a chemical weapons attack in the United Kingdom or when taking action against Iran-sponsored terrorist activities – to name a few policies that recently required engagement efforts. Tensions can mount when Washington perceives that cohesive European action would not be possible without pressure, or at least not in time to achieve a desired outcome.

When approaching a problem, the United States faces a choice: move forward independently to the greatest extent possible, given the global role of its military and economy, or work towards collective action. The amount of effort that consensus-building with Europeans requires cannot be underestimated. We pore over engagement strategies designed by our diplomats that outline frameworks for soliciting support from likeminded partners, often analysing each individual country's political commitment and its capabilities. Ultimately, these efforts demonstrate the need for European stakeholder in international engagement that matches that of Washington.

There will be tension in Washington between unilateral and multilateral action as long as the United States remains (or at least perceives itself as) the “market leader” in security – be this in terms of military capability, access to financial capital or diplomatic activity. When we, the United States, are the first movers in a time of crisis, or are expected to be, we will try to set the rules of engagement, potentially at the expense of others' perspectives. On the other hand, the United States will feel less inclined to choose unilateral action the more its partners stand on an equal footing. This starts from the ground up: by recognising the operational mechanisms the transatlantic community has in place and working on those needing fortification. Then, when all partners strive to sit equally around a negotiation table, they will be able to speak clearly and frankly, peel away rhetoric, and use all means available to address a challenging geopolitical climate.

The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the author.

AUTHOR



Julia Friedlander

Senior Policy Advisor, US Department of the Treasury and Director, European Union, Southern Europe and Economic Affairs, National Security Council (April 2017 – July 2019), The White House, Washington, DC



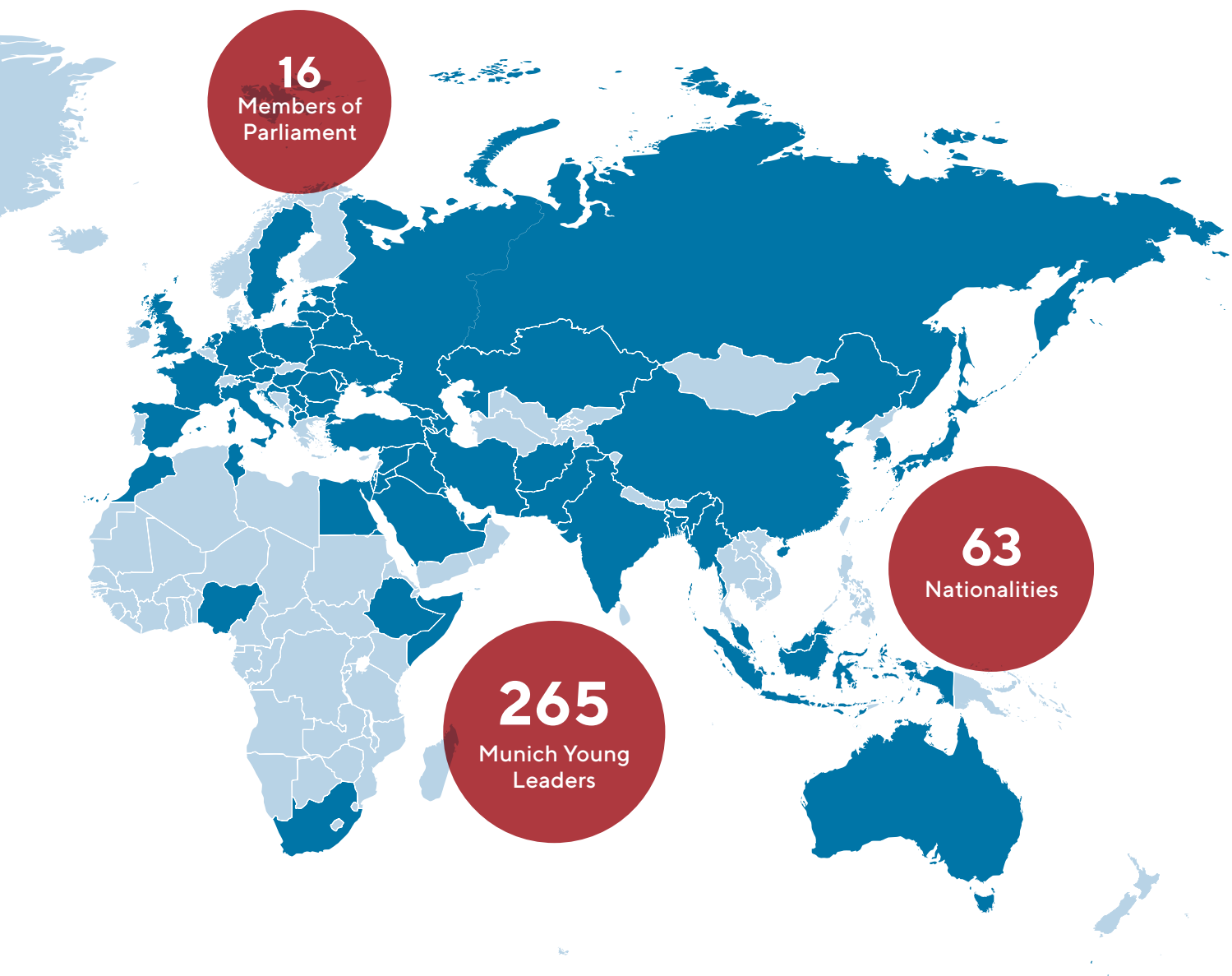
Munich Young Leaders



About the Munich Young Leaders

The Munich Young Leaders programme is a joint project of Körber-Stiftung and the Munich Security Conference. The programme, launched in 2009, is designed to give aspiring experts and young decision-makers from all over the world an international platform to take part in important political debates, strengthen their personal and professional networks, exchange ideas on foreign and security policy with high-ranking political figures, and engage in an intergenerational and interdisciplinary dialogue.

Members of the programme come from a wide range of backgrounds including governments, national and regional parliaments, civil society, academia, think tanks, the media and the private sector. Every year, a new cohort of 25 outstanding talents joins the Munich Young Leaders programme to discuss and exchange ideas with high-ranking personalities and key decision-makers at the Munich Security Conference. To date, more than 250 talented minds from over 60 countries have become part of the Munich Young Leaders. Among them are ministers, members of parliament, senior civil servants, commanders and leading political experts from some of the world's most distinguished institutions.



In addition to the annual gathering of the new Munich Young Leaders cohort in Munich in February, the Munich Security Conference and Körber-Stiftung invite all Munich Young Leaders to the Annual Meetings, which are organised in cooperation with a smaller alumni group from a host country. So far, these meetings have been held in Washington, DC, Moscow, Berlin, Kyiv, Warsaw, Rabat, and Madrid. To celebrate the 10th anniversary of the Munich Young Leaders programme, the 2019 Annual Meeting takes place in New York City. At the Annual Meetings, the alumni meet with senior personalities and decision-makers from the host country to discuss foreign and security policy with a view to regional particularities, and share experiences and recommendations. Throughout the year, Munich Young Leaders also take part in various events organised by the Munich Security Conference and Körber-Stiftung.

10 Years Munich Young Leaders



A group of 25 promising young professionals from 17 countries participates in the Munich Security Conference (MSC). They form **the first class of Munich Young Leaders (MYL)** and meet with high-level politicians and experts, including Henry Kissinger.

At the MSC, the 2011 class of MYL engages with George Soros, Michèle Alliot-Marie, and Toomas Hendrik Ilves.

The **MYL alumni gather in Kiev** for their Annual Meeting.

The **MYL network is growing: more than 100** promising foreign and security policy makers and experts have already joined the programme.

In their discussions at the MSC, the MYL class of 2013 engages with Ng Eng Hen, Anne-Marie Slaughter, and Faisal Ibn Al Hussein.

2009 — 2010 — 2011 — 2012 — 2013 — 2014

The MYL programme enters the second year. At the MSC, the 2010 class of MYL discusses the future of Euro-Atlantic security and global disarmament with Carl Bildt, Helga Schmid, John McCain, and many others.

The MYL classes of 2009 and 2010 meet in **Berlin** for the **first MYL Annual Meeting**.

In the aftermath of the Arab Spring the MYL alumni from Morocco host the **Annual Meeting in Rabat**.

Speakers at the 2012 MYL programme at the MSC include Alexander Stubb and Ahmet Davutoğlu.

On the occasion of **50 years of the Munich Security Conference** and **55 years of Körber-Stiftung** the MYL alumni gather in Wildbad Kreuth in Bavaria for the Annual Meeting.

At the MSC, the 2014 class of MYL gets the chance to talk to Mohammad Javad Zarif, Saeb Erekat, Louise Arbour, and many others.





For the **5th Annual Meeting, the MYL cross the Atlantic Ocean**. In discussions at the US Congress and the White House they exchange views on the future of transatlantic relations with policy makers in Washington, DC.

Among this year's MYL interlocutors at the MSC are Kevin Rudd, Anders Fogh Rasmussen, and Alexander Vershbow.



Speakers at the 2017 MYL programme at the MSC include Ursula von der Leyen, Anne Applebaum, and Fatou Bensouda.

The 2017 **Annual Meeting** takes place in **Moscow**.

The 2019 class of MYL is the first with a **majority of female participants and speakers**. Christine Lagarde, Ivanka Trump, Kersti Kaljulaid and many others join the MYL for discussions at the MSC.

On the occasion of the **10 year anniversary** the MYL alumni gather in **New York City** to discuss the future of multilateralism.

2015 — 2016 — 2017 — 2018 — 2019

In the run-up to the 2016 NATO Summit the MYL alumni meet for the **Annual Meeting in Warsaw** to discuss the future of security and defence policy in Europe and beyond.

At the MSC, Victoria Nuland, Fu Ying, and Amos Gilad exchange views with the MYL class of 2016.

Among the interlocutors for the **10th class of MYL** at the MSC are Tzipi Livni, H.R. McMaster, and Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al-Thani.

In September, King Philip VI attends the **Annual Meeting in Madrid**.



Munich Young Leaders

Kemel Aitzhanov, Resources Monitoring Analyst, Treasury Department, KazMunaiGas Exploration Production JSC, Astana

Irakli Alasania, Senior Partner, SP Consulting, Alexandria, VA; fmr. Minister, Ministry of Defence, Tbilisi

Abdulaziz Alhies, Producer, Aljazeera; Researcher, Forum for Arab and International Relations, Doha

Muna A. Ali, Professor of Political Science and International Relations; Head, Euro-Gulf Research Unit, College of Social Sciences, Kuwait University, Kuwait City

Leyla Aliyeva, Vice President, Heydar Aliyev Foundation, Baku

Cyril Almeida, Assistant Editor; Columnist, DAWN Media Group, Islamabad

Mohammed Khalid Alyahya, Editor-in-Chief, AlArabiya.net - English, Dubai

Dmitry Androssov, Member, Federal Political Council, People's Freedom Party (PARNAS), Moscow

Taku Aramaki, Deputy Director, National Security Policy Division, Foreign Policy Bureau, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Tokyo

Ali Aslan, TV Presenter; Journalist, Berlin

Jurij Aston, Antici, Permanent Mission of the Federal Republic of Germany to the EU, Brussels

Majed Bamyia, Political Coordinator and Legal Advisor, Permanent Observer Mission of the State of Palestine to the United Nations, New York City

Ivan Bartoš, MP, Chairman Czech Pirate Party; Member, Deputy Representative Poslanecka Snemovna (Chamber of Deputies of the Parliament of the Czech Republic), Prague

Tobias Basuki, Researcher, Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), Jakarta

Elena Beganu, Counter Terrorism Officer, Advisor and Programme Manager, Science for Peace and Security Programme, Emerging Security Challenges Division, North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), Brussels

Mantvydas Bekešius, Consul General, Consulate General of the Republic of Lithuania, Chicago; fmr. Deputy Minister, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Vilnius

Paul Belkin, European Affairs Analyst, Congressional Research Service, United States Congress, Washington, DC

Alexandra Bell, Senior Policy Director, Center for Arms Control & Nonproliferation, Washington, DC

Andrea Berdesinski, Head, Division 300 (General Issues within the Remit of Directorate-General 3 and Supraregional Issues), Federal Foreign Office, Berlin

Ronen Bergman, Senior Security and Intelligence Correspondent; Yedioth Ahronot; Staff Writer, New York Times Magazine, Tel Aviv

Benedetta Berti, Head, Policy Planning Unit, Office of the Secretary General, North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), Brussels

Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, MP, Chairman of the Pakistan Peoples Party; Member, National Assembly of Pakistan (National Assembly of the Parliament of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan), Islamabad

Ireneusz Bil, Executive Director, Amicus Europae Foundation of Aleksander Kwasniewski, Warsaw

Andrew Bishop, Global Head, Policy Research, Signum Global Advisors, Washington, DC

Jan Bittner, Desk Officer, Division 213 (Bilateral Relations Asia), Federal Chancellery, Berlin

Olaf Böhnke, Senior Advisor, Rasmussen Global, Berlin

Ivonne Bollow, Global Director, Corporate Public Policy, Metro Group, Düsseldorf

Mbarka Bouaida, Secretary of State for Marine Fisheries, Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Rural Development, Water and Forests, Rabat

Nasser Bourita, Minister, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Rabat

Mathieu Briens, Head, Cabinet of the Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management, European Commission, Brussels

Natalia Burlinova, Founder; President, The Public Initiative "Creative Diplomacy" (PICREADI), Moscow

Johanna Bussemer, Head, Europe Division, Rosa Luxemburg Foundation, Berlin

Lei Cao, First Secretary, Political Section, Embassy of the People's Republic of China, Washington, DC

Sawsan Chebli, State of Berlin Delegate to the Federation; Permanent Secretary of Active Citizenship and International Relations, Senate Chancellery, Berlin

Agnes Ciuperca, Advisor, Division 411 (Sustainable Trade Policy, Investment, Sustainability Standards), Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, Berlin

Cathryn Clüver Ashbrook, Executive Director, Future of Diplomacy Project; Project on Europe and the Transatlantic Relationship, Harvard Kennedy School, Cambridge, MA

Ahmet Berat Çonkar, MP, Member; Chair, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi (Parliament of Republic of Turkey), Ankara

Linda Curika, Public Relations Officer, NATO Strategic Communications Centre of Excellence (NATO StratCom COE), Riga

Arnaud Danjean, MEP, Member, Committee on Foreign Affairs, European Parliament, Brussels

Julia De Clerck-Sachsse, Senior Advisor, Strategic Planning, European External Action Service (EEAS), Brussels

Milica Delevic, Director, Governance and Political Affairs, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, London

Marko Djuric, Director, Office for Kosovo and Metohija, Government of the Republic of Serbia, Belgrade

Reema Dodin, Deputy Chief of Staff, Office of the Democratic Whip, United States Senate, Washington, DC

Julia Döhrn, Speechwriter, Office of the Minister, Federal Ministry of Defence, Berlin

Alexey Dolinskiy, Partner, Capstone Connections, Moscow

Aaron T. Dowd, Principal, Transatlantic Holdings, Washington, DC

Anna Maria Dowd, Head, Industry Relations, NATO Communications and Information Agency, Brussels

Naz Durakoglu, Senior Foreign Policy Advisor to Senator Jeanne Shaheen, United States Senate, Washington, DC

Zyad El Elaimy, Lawyer, El Elaimy Law Office; fmr. Member, Parliament of the Arab Republic of Egypt, Cairo

Jessica Elledge, Foreign Policy Advisor to Senator Christopher Murphy (D-CT), United States Senate, Washington, DC

Aykan Erdemir, Senior Fellow, Foundation for Defense of Democracies (FDD), Washington, DC

Dana Erekat, International Relations Consultant, Taawon - Welfare Association, Ramallah

Dogan Eskinat, Communications Officer, Office of Communications, Presidency of the Republic of Turkey, Ankara

Nicholas Fang, Executive Director, Security and International Affairs, Singapore Institute of International Affairs (SIIA), Singapore

Sumayah Fatani, Specialist, Decision Support Center, The Royal Court of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Riyadh

David Federmann, Board Member, Federmann Enterprises, Tel Aviv

Shiri Fein-Grossman, Head, Foreign Policy Branch for Regional Affairs (Middle East Department), National Security Council, The Prime Minister's Office, Jerusalem

Beate Freuding, Partner, BE-YOND Strategic Consulting, Berlin

Christian Freuding, Senior Military Assistant to the Minister, Federal Ministry of Defence, Berlin

Julia Friedlander, fmr. Director, European Union, Southern Europe and Economic Affairs, National Security Council, The White House, Washington, DC

Pia Fuhrhop, Foreign Policy Advisor to Omid Nouripour, MP, Alliance 90/The Greens, German Bundestag, Berlin

Taro Fujii, Deputy Counsellor, National Security Secretariat, Tokyo

Alexander Gabuev, Senior Fellow; Chair, Russia in the Asia-Pacific Program, Carnegie Moscow Center, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Moscow

Jasmine M. El Gamal, Non-resident Fellow, Rafik Hariri Center for the Middle East, Atlantic Council, Istanbul

Matthias Gebauer, Chief Correspondent, DER SPIEGEL, Berlin

Gowhar Geelani, Writer; Columnist, dawn.com; Catch News, Srinagar

Alyona Getmanchuk, Director,
New Europe Center, Kiev

Fahimeh Ghorbani, Research
Fellow, Middle East Programme,
Institute for Political and
International Studies (IPIS), Ministry
of Foreign Affairs, Tehran

Janet Dyah Ekawati Gibson,
Co-Founder; Senior Consultant,
Srikandi Adhirajasa Nayyotama
(SAN) Consulting Group;
Project Manager, PT Datareka
Integrasia, Jakarta

Anatoly Glaz, Head, Department of
Information and Digital Diplomacy,
Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Minsk

Myong-Hyun Go, Research Fellow,
The Asan Institute for Policy
Studies, Seoul

James Golby, Defense Policy
Advisor, United States Mission to
NATO, Brussels

Christoph Grams, Desk Officer,
Afghanistan and Pakistan, Federal
Ministry for Economic Cooperation
and Development, Berlin

Camille Grand, Assistant Secretary
General for Defence Investment,
North Atlantic Treaty Organization
(NATO), Brussels

Sebastian Groth, Head, Policy
Planning Staff, Federal Foreign
Office, Berlin

Dmitry Gudkov, Independent Politi-
cian; fmr. Member, Committee on
Constitutional Legislation and State
Policy, State Duma (Parliament of
the Russian Federation), Moscow

Axel Gugel, First Secretary, Political
Section, Permanent Mission of the
Federal Republic of Germany to the
UN, New York City

Alice Guitton, Director General,
International Relations and
Strategy, Ministry of Armed Forces,
Paris

Tim Gürtler, CEO, Agora Strategy
Group, Munich

Daniela Haahrhuis, Professor of
Human Rights Law, University of
Applied Sciences, Düsseldorf

Jan Hamáček, First Deputy Prime
Minister of the Czech Republic;
Minister, Ministry of
the Interior, Prague

Melissa Hanlon, Deputy Director
for North and West Europe,
Office of the Secretary of Defense,
Department of Defense,
Washington, DC

Hemin Hawrami, Deputy Speaker,
Kurdistan Region Parliament, Erbil

Martin Heipertz, Head, European
Policy Division, Federal Ministry
of Finance, Berlin

Lorenz Hemicker, Political Editor,
FAZ.NET, Frankfurter Allgemeine
Zeitung (FAZ), Frankfurt am Main

Ina Heusgen, Deputy Political
Coordinator and Legal Advisor,
Permanent Mission of the Federal
Republic of Germany to the
UN, New York City

Emile Hokayem, Senior Fellow for
Middle East Security, International
Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS),
London

Hanna Hopko, MP, Member; Head,
Committee on Foreign Affairs,
Verkhovna Rada (Parliament of
Ukraine), Kiev

Peer Horstmann, Deputy Head,
Division 202 (Common Security and
Defense Policy of the EU), Federal
Foreign Office, Berlin

Marko Horvat, Counsellor,
Permanent Representation of the
Republic of Croatia to the UN,
OSCE and International
Organisations, Vienna

Glori Husi, Vice President,
Mortgage Lending, Guaranteed
Rate, Inc., St. Petersburg, FL; fmr.
Director, Cabinet of the Chair,
Democratic Party of Albania, Tirana

Hamad Al Ibrahim, Policy Analyst,
RAND Corporation,
Santa Monica, CA

Luukas Ilves, Head of Strategy,
Guardtime, Tallinn

Fariz Ismailzade, Director,
Advanced Foreign Service Program,
Azerbaijan Diplomatic Academy
(ADA), Baku

Christoph Israng, Ambassador,
Embassy of the Federal Republic of
Germany, Prague

Abhijit Iyer-Mitra, Senior Fellow,
Institute of Peace & Conflict
Studies, New Delhi

Happymon Jacob, Associate
Professor of Disarmament, School
of International Studies and
Disarmament, Jawaharlal Nehru
University, New Delhi

Julian Jakob, Senior Policy Advisor,
European Affairs, FDP Parliamen-
tary Group, German Bundestag,
Berlin

Dominik P. Jankowski, Political
Adviser; Head, Political Section,
Permanent Delegation of the
Republic of Poland to NATO,
Brussels

Jean-Baptiste Jeangène Vilmer, Director, Institute for Strategic Research (IRSEM), Ministry of Defense, Paris

Lolwa Al Jefairi, fmr. Advisor on CT Strategic Communications, seconded to the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office

Dorothea Jestädt, Senior Director; Head, Retail and FMCG, WMP EuroCom AG, Berlin

Sajad Jiyad, Managing Director, Al-Bayan Center for Planning and Studies, Baghdad

Noura Al Jizawi, Researcher, Reach Project, University of Toronto; Chairperson, Start Point; fmr. Vice President, National Coalition of Syrian Revolution and Opposition Forces, Toronto

Derek Johnson, Executive Director, Global Zero, Washington, DC

Besa Kabashi-Ramaj, Director, Center for Research, Documentation and Publication, Pristina

Daria Kaleniuk, Executive Director, Anticorruption Action Centre (AntAC), Kiev

Zanda Kalniņa-Lukaševica, Parliamentary State Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Riga

Giorgi Kandelaki, MP, Deputy Chairman, European Integration Committee, Sakartvelos P'arlament'i (Parliament of Georgia) Tbilisi

Michael Kellner, Party Secretary, Alliance 90/The Greens, Berlin

Ronja Kempin, Senior Fellow, Research Division EU/Europe, German Institute for International and Security Affairs (SWP), Berlin

Anton V. Khlopkov, Director, Center for Energy and Security Studies (CENESS); Editor-in-Chief, Nuclear Club, Moscow

Christian Klein, Senior Officer, Administration, German Bundestag, Berlin

Benjamin Knödler, Deputy Head of Mission, Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany, Phnom Penh

Till Knorn, Deputy Chief of Protocol; Director for Visit Programmes, Federal Foreign Office, Berlin

Zeynep Köksal Yaykiran, Vice President, PET Holding; President, Köksal Education Foundation (KEV), Ankara

Yosuke Kon, Section Chief, Cabinet Office, Government of Japan, Tokyo

Konstantin Kosten, Consultant, EUTOP, Berlin

Ayşe Hilal Koçtak, Ambassador, Embassy of the Republic of Turkey, Kuwait City

Vladislav Kulminski, Executive Director, Public Administration Reforms, Institute for Strategic Initiatives (IPIS), Chişinău

Lynn Kuok, Senior Research Fellow, University of Cambridge, Singapore

Jeanette Kwek, Deputy Director, Strategic Futures, Ministry of Defence, Singapore

Agnieszka Łada, Director, European Programme, Institute of Public Affairs (IPA), Warsaw

Elena Lange-Bratanova, Deputy Head, Division R4 (Readmission; Europe and Asia), Directorate-General M (Migration; Refugees; Return Policy), Federal Ministry of the Interior, Building and Community, Berlin

Jessica J. Lee, Director of Policy and Advocacy, Council of Korean Americans, Washington, DC

Kadri Liik, Senior Policy Fellow, European Council on Foreign Relations (ECFR), Berlin

Oliver Linz, Senior Policy Advisor, Security and Defence Policy, CDU/CSU Parliamentary Group, German Bundestag, Berlin

Joseph Chinyong Liow, Associate Dean; Professor of International and Comparative Politics, S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore

Matthias Lüttenberg, Deputy Head, Division 212 (Middle, Southeastern and Eastern Europe; Southern Caucasus, Central Asia), Federal Chancellery, Berlin

Merle Maigre, Executive Vice President, CybExer Technologies, Tallinn

Alan Mak, MP, Member, House of Commons; Parliamentary Private Secretary, Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, UK Government, London

Toe Naing Mann, MP, Member, Commission for Assessment for Legal Affairs and Special Issues, Pyithu Hluttaw (Lower House, Parliament of Myanmar), Naypyidaw

Kholoud Mansour, Affiliated Researcher, Center for Middle Eastern Studies (CMES), Lund University, Lund

Aiman Mansour, Senior Director for Middle Eastern Affairs; Chief Liaison Officer to Middle Eastern Countries, National Security Council, Office of the Prime Minister, Jerusalem

Hayfa Matar, Minister Plenipotentiary and Deputy Chief of Mission, Embassy of Bahrain, London

Ottilia Anna Maunganidze, Head of Special Projects, Office of the Executive Director, Institute for Security Studies (ISS), Pretoria

Lindiwe Mazibuko, Co-Founder; Executive Director, Apolitical Academy, Johannesburg; Fellow, Institute of Politics, Harvard Kennedy School, Cambridge, MA

Barbara Meincke, Personnel Officer, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), Berlin

Dzianis Melyantsou, Belarus' Foreign Policy Programme Coordinator, Minsk Dialogue Track-II Initiative, Minsk

Alan Mendoza, Executive Director, The Henry Jackson Society, London

Johnny Mercer, Minister, Defence People and Veterans, Ministry of Defence, London

George Messiha, fmr. Member, Parliament of the Arab Republic of Egypt, Cairo

Markus Meyer, Commander, Parachute Regiment 26, Federal Armed Forces, Zweibrücken

Sven Mikser, MP, Member, Riigikogu (Estonian Parliament); fmr. Minister, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Tallinn

Efrat Minivitzki Thein, Director, Department of Foreign Relations and International Organizations, National Security Council, The Prime Minister's Office, Jerusalem

Sara Al Mohamadi, Fellow, International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS), Manama

Imen Ben Mohamed, MP, Member, Majlis Nuwwāb ash-Sha'b (Parliament of Republic of Tunisia), Tunis

Tahereh Mohammadi, Research Fellow, South and West Asia Studies, Institute for Political and International Studies (IPIS), Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Tehran

Siemtje Möller, MP, Member, Defence Committee, German Bundestag, Berlin

Rym Momtaz, Correspondent, POLITICO Europe, Brussels

Olga Mostinskaya, Councillor, Municipal Council, Moscow

Shafqat Munir, Research Fellow, Bangladesh Centre for Terrorism Research (BCTR), Bangladesh Institute of Peace and Security Studies (BIPSS), Dhaka

Manuel Muñoz Villa, Dean, IE School of Global and Public Affairs, Madrid

Fuad Muradov, MP, Chairman, State Committee on Affairs with Diaspora of the Republic of Azerbaijan; Milli Majlis (Parliament of the Republic of Azerbaijan), Baku

Dominik Mutter, Head, Division 211 (Security Policy; Nonproliferation and Arms Control; Bilateral Relations with the USA, Canada, North, West and South Europe as well as Turkey), Federal Chancellery, Berlin

Samer Naber, Director, European Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Amman

Al-Sharif Nasser, Managing Director, Middle East Scientific Institute for Security, Amman

Nargis Nehan, Acting Minister, Ministry of Mines and Petroleum, Kabul

Parke Thomas Nicholson, Analyst, US Government Accountability Office, Washington, DC

Ippeita Nishida, Senior Research Fellow, Sasakawa Peace Foundation (SPF), Tokyo

Anjoum Noorani, First Secretary, Energy and Climate Programmes, Embassy of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Mexico City

Lana Nusseibeh, Permanent Representative, Permanent Representation of the United Arab Emirates to the United Nations, New York City

Delphine O, Ambassador-at-large; Secretary General, UN Forum for Gender Equality, Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs, Paris

Serap Ocak, fmr. First Secretary, Permanent Representation of the Federal Republic of Germany to the United Nations, New York City

Carlos Oliver Cruz, Special Assistant to the Deputy Director-General, International Organization for Migration (IOM), Geneva

Lesya Orobets, fmr. Member; Secretary, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Verkhovna Rada (Parliament of Ukraine), Kiev

Olaf Osica, Project Director, Foreign Markets Project, PTWP SA Group, Katowice

Yulia Osmolovska, Director General, AB&D Group, Kiev

Igal Ostanovsky Katz, Deputy Director, International Law Department, Military Advocate General, Israel Defence Forces (IDF), Tel Aviv

Mohammed Al Otaiba, Founder, Syndication Bureau; fmr. Editor-in-Chief, The National, Abu Dhabi

Ann-Kristin Otto, Desk Officer, Division 232 (Military Aspects of Security Policy), Federal Chancellery, Berlin

Nikolai Ovsyanko, Head, Division on International Security and Arms Control, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Minsk

Fulya Özerkan, Journalist, Agence France-Presse (AFP), Ankara

Min-Jung Paik, Researcher, Center for Security and Strategy, Korea Institute for Defense Analyses, Seoul

Shruti Pandalai, Associate Fellow, Centre for Military Affairs, Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (IDSA), New Delhi

Jinho Park, Chief of Staff to Baek Seungjoo, MP, National Assembly of the Republic of Korea, Seoul

Denys Pashchenko, Key Expert, EU Project Pravo Justice, Kiev

Gergana Passy, President, PanEuropa Bulgaria, Sofia

Şafak Pavey, Senior Advisor, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Geneva

Christian Pernhorst, Deputy Head, Division 205 (Russia, Belarus, Moldova and Eastern Partnership), Federal Foreign Office, Berlin

Hartmut Philippe, Advisor, Foreign Affairs Secretariat, German Bundestag, Berlin

Manu S. Pillai, Historian and Author, London; fmr. Chief of Staff to Shashi Tharoor, Chair, Standing Committee for External Affairs, Parliament of India, Mumbai

Kati Piri, MEP, Member, European Parliament, Brussels

Andrei Popov, President, Institute for Strategic Initiatives; fmr. Deputy Minister, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration, Chisinau

Sergejs Potapkins, Political Consultant; Chair, Baltic Hong Kong Trade Association (BHKTA), Riga

Pamela Preusche, Head of Division, EUKOR (European Correspondent Basic Issues and Coordination of EU Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP incl. CSDP); Coordination of PSC and Foreign Relations Counsellors (COREU Management), Federal Foreign Office, Berlin

Ruslan Pukhov, Director, Centre for Analysis of Strategies and Technologies (CAST); Member, Russian International Affairs Council (RIAC), Moscow

Fahim Al Qasimi, Executive Chairman, Department of Government Relations, Government of Sharjah, Sharjah

Péter Rada, Vice Dean for Academic and International Affairs, Faculty of International and European Studies, National University of Public Service, Budapest

Roya Rahmani, Ambassador, Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, Washington, DC

Jovan Ratkovic, International Secretary, Social Democratic Party (SDS); fmr. Foreign Policy Advisor to the President of Republic of Serbia, Belgrade

Oleksiy Riabchyn, MP, Member, Verkhovna Rada (Parliament of Ukraine), Kiev

Philipp Rotmann, Associate Director, Global Public Policy Institute (GPPi), Berlin

Maksim Ryzhenkov, First Deputy Head, Presidential Administration of the Republic of Belarus, Minsk

Fawaz Meshal Al Sabah, Assistant Undersecretary, Information and Security, National Security Bureau, Kuwait City

Styopa Safaryan, Founder; President, The Armenian Institute of International and Security Affairs (AIISA), Yerevan

Cale Salih, Research Officer, United Nations University's Centre for Policy Research, New York City

Vigen Sargsyan, MIT Sloan Fellow, MIT Sloan School of Management, Cambridge, MA; fmr. Minister, Ministry of Defence, Yerevan

Ali Sarikaya, MP, Member, Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi (Parliament of Republic of Turkey), Ankara

Marietje Schaake, MEP, fmr. Member, European Parliament, Brussels

Michael Schattenmann, Head, Communications, Strategy & Marketing, Heraeus Holding GmbH, Hanau

Olexander Scherba, Ambassador, Embassy of Ukraine, Vienna

Caroline Schmutte, Head, Germany Office, Wellcome Trust, Berlin

Georg Schulze Zunkley, Deputy Head, Division 011 (Parliament and Cabinet Division), Federal Foreign Office, Berlin

Rolf Schwarz, Senior Advisor, Development Cooperation Directorate, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Paris

Christoph Schwegmann, Senior Defence Advisor, Policy Planning Staff, Federal Foreign Office, Berlin

Benedikta von Seherr-Thoß, Head, EU/CSDP Division, Security and Defence Policy Department, Federal Ministry of Defence, Berlin

Radmila Šekerinska, Minister, Ministry of Defence, Skopje

Oleksiy Semeniychuk, Director, Institute for Global Transformations, Kiev

Merve Seren, Assistant Professor, International Relations, Ankara Yildirim Beyazit University, Ankara

Dahlia Shaham Brender, Independent Consultant, Herzliya

Yamei Shen, Associate Research Fellow, Department for American Studies, China Institute of International Studies (CIIS), Beijing

Jaiveer Shergill, Supreme Court Lawyer; Spokesperson, Indian National Congress, New Delhi

Sam Sasan Shoamanesh, Chef de Cabinet to the Prosecutor, International Criminal Court (ICC); Vice President, Institute for 21st Century Questions (21CQ); Managing Editor, Global Brief Magazine, The Hague

Rebecca Shrimpton, Counsellor, Defence Strategic Policy, Embassy of Australia, Washington, DC

Artur Sirbu, fmr. Chief of Staff, Office of the Minister, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration, Chisinau

Alexander Skiba, Deputy Head, Division 22 (Africa, Asia-Pacific, International Development), Office of the Federal President, Berlin

Amanda Sloat, Robert Bosch Senior Fellow, Center on the United States and Europe, The Brookings Institution, Washington, DC

Wawrzyniec Smoczynski, Managing Director, Polityka Insight, Warsaw

Hanbyeol Sohn, Assistant Professor, Department of Military Strategy, Korea National Defense University, Seoul

Olga Sõtnik, Chief Specialist, Ministry of Culture; fmr. Member of Riigikogu (Parliament of Estonia), Tallinn

Thomas Speckmann, Director, Brunswick Group, Berlin

Maximilian Spinner, Deputy Head, Political Section, German Mission to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), Brussels

Léa Steinacker, Chief Innovation Officer, WirtschaftsWoche, Düsseldorf

Marik A. String, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Political-Military-Affairs, Department of State, Washington, DC

Melody Sucharewicz, Consultant for Political Communication, Tel Aviv

Dmitry Suslov, Deputy Director, Center for Comprehensive European and International Studies, National Research University Higher School of Economics, Moscow

Ksenia Svetlova, Researcher, Mitvim – The Israeli Institute for Regional Foreign Policies, Ramat Gan

Ashraf Swelam, Director General, Cairo International Center for Conflict Resolution, Peacekeeping and Peacebuilding (CCCCPA), Cairo

Almutasem Al Syoufi, Executive Director, The Day After Association (TDA), Istanbul

Tomasz Szatkowski, Under-Secretary of State; Deputy Minister of National Defence of the Republic of Poland, Warsaw

Kiwako Tanaka, Senior Research Fellow, Office of Policy Simulation, Security Studies Department, National Institute for Defense Studies, Tokyo

Nawaf Wasfi Tell, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Embassy of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, The Hague

Şafak Timur Otru, Journalist, The New York Times, Istanbul

Stefan Tinca, Political Director, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Bucharest

Eka Tkeshelashvili, Head, European Union Anti-Corruption Initiative (EUACI), Kiev; President, Georgian Institute for Strategic Studies; fmr. Minister, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Tbilisi

Adel Al Toraifi, Chairman, Castlereagh Associates, London; fmr. Minister, Ministry of Culture and Information, Riyadh

Anton V. Tsvetov, Deputy Head, Department for Multilateral Economic Cooperation, Ministry of Economic Development, Moscow

Małgorzata Twardowska, Senior Policy Support Officer, Eastern Europe Desk, Conflict Prevention Centre, Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), Vienna

Uzoamaka Ugochukwu, Senior Supervisor, Organization Design, Central Bank of Nigeria, Abuja

Sebastian Veit, Senior Vice President, Governmental Relations, Uniper SE, Düsseldorf

Ambika Vishwanath, Co-Founder; Director, Kubernein Initiative, Mumbai

Mark V. Vlasic, Senior Fellow; Adjunct Professor, Institute for Law, Science & Global Security, Georgetown University, Washington, DC

Feodor Voitovsky, Acting Director, Primakov Institute of World Economy and International Relations of Russian Academy of Sciences (IMEMO RAN), Moscow

Maximilian von Waldenfels, CFO, Caspar Health, Goreha GmbH, Berlin

Mustakim Waid, Office for Strategic Coordination & Support, UN World Food Programme, Rome

Joshua Walker, Global Head, Strategic Initiatives, Eurasia Group, Washington, DC

Dong Wang, Associate Professor, School of International Studies, Beijing University; Secretary General, Academic Committee, Pangoal Institution, Beijing

Maria Weimer, fmr. Member, Riksdag (Parliament of Sweden), Stockholm

Martin Wilk, Advisor to Frithjof Schmidt, MP, Alliance 90/The Greens, German Bundestag (Parliament of the Federal Republic of Germany), Berlin

Yael Wissner-Levy, Head, Strategic Communications & Content, Lemonade Inc., Tel Aviv

Kelvin Wong, Defence Technology Reporter, IHS Jane's International Defence Review, Singapore

Ting Xu, Co-Founder; Director of Advisory, Aetos Strategy & Advisory, Hong Kong

Hamed Yaghoubifar, Research Fellow, West Asian Studies Center, Institute for Political and International Studies (IPIS), Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Tehran

Seyed Hessameddin Yassini, Research Fellow, European Studies Department, Institute for Political and International Studies (IPIS), Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Tehran

Merkeb Yimesel, Minister Counsellor II, Embassy of Ethiopia to the Benelux and Baltic Countries and Mission to the European Union, Brussels

Xue (Tiffany) Yuan, Editor, International Desk, Caijing Magazine, Beijing

Alexander Zaborovskiy, Advisor to the Executive Director, International Monetary Fund (IMF), Washington, DC

Mahdi Zadehali, Third Secretary, Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Beijing

Svitlana Zalishchuk, MP, Member, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Verkhovna Rada (Parliament of Ukraine), Kiev

Xizhou Zhou, Managing Director; Regional Head, Asia Pacific Power, Gas, Coal & Renewables, IHS Markit, Beijing

Igor Zhovkva, Head, Department for Foreign Policy and European Integration, Administration of the President of Ukraine, Kiev

Yali Zhu, fmr. Deputy Director, Department of European Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Beijing

Sotoudeh Zibakalam, Researcher, Department of European Studies, Institute for Political and International Studies (IPIS), Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Tehran

Endnotes

Please note that all links were last checked on 1 August 2019. While the essays in this publication are written in British English, direct quotations have been left in the original language. Note that deviations from 100 per cent in visualized data are due to rounding.

Editorial

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Matter of Perspective: Multilateralism Across the Globe

Russia: Break it Till you Make it?

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Körber-Stiftung

Berlin Office
Pariser Platz 4a
10117 Berlin
Germany
Email: youngleaders@koerber-stiftung.de
www.koerber-stiftung.de/en
Twitter @KoerberIP

Munich Security Conference

Stiftung Münchner Sicherheitskonferenz gGmbH
Prinzregentenstr. 7
80538 Munich
Germany
Email: myl@securityconference.de
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