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NATO's Deterrence Requirements: A Lithuanian Perspective

Strategic Insights, Volume VIII, Issue 4 (September 2009)

by [Dr. Kestutis Paulauskas](#)

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Because Lithuania is a “three no’s” country,^[1] there is no question of Lithuania contributing to NATO’s nuclear deterrence posture by hosting Allied nuclear weapons. Moreover, Lithuania’s constitution explicitly forbids the presence of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) on its soil. Why then should Lithuanians care about nuclear deterrence?

While Vilnius will never be “calling the shots” in the high politics to which all things nuclear (arguably) still belong, Lithuania, as a member of NATO’s Nuclear Planning Group (NPG) is a full participant in NATO’s nuclear consultation process. The country benefits directly from NATO’s nuclear deterrent and U.S. extended deterrence. In addition, Lithuanian security thinking is still entrenched in a traditional threat perception: for Lithuanian statesmen and politicians, security is about preserving national sovereignty and territorial integrity and not so much about terrorism or proliferation of WMD. While there are significant uncertainties about the numbers, types, and locations of Russia’s sub-strategic or non-strategic nuclear weapons, these weapons constitute a clear and present security concern for Lithuania.^[2]

There are also nuclear safety and security considerations. Lithuania, among other neighboring countries, was exposed to the radioactive aftermath of the largest-ever nuclear disaster—the 1986 Chernobyl catastrophe, the result of horrendous mismanagement of nuclear energy by the Soviet Union. As it happens, there is a Chernobyl-type nuclear reactor in Ignalina, Lithuania, which is scheduled for closure by the end of 2009. So, while the typical Lithuanian does not think about nuclear matters every day, Lithuanians are used to living in the shadow of what may be a nuclear time bomb.

These are some of the factors behind Lithuania’s dual-track approach: unwavering support for NATO’s nuclear deterrence policy and posture, and active efforts in the United Nations and elsewhere in support of international efforts to promote arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation.

This paper puts forward a few rather unpopular arguments, especially in the context of a renewed frenzy about the “global zero” objective of complete nuclear disarmament. First, the paper challenges some of the established assumptions about the current security environment. Second, it asserts the importance of perceptions and misperceptions that persist with regard to NATO’s nuclear posture. Third, against the background of imaginable scenarios and contingencies, the paper reconsiders the deterrence requirements that are explicitly or implicitly outlined in the 1999 Strategic Concept, with a view to the forthcoming new edition of this document.

“Midnight Hour” or a “Lazy Afternoon”?

The current global security environment is usually described as increasingly uncertain and unpredictable. Indeed, many security risks and threats interrelate and overlap in one way or another. Terrorists breed in the safe havens of failed states. Technological progress and the Internet in particular enable unlimited and uncontrolled access to scientific know-how, thus facilitating the proliferation of WMD. Growing dependence on cyberspace has also given rise to a new type of warfare—cyber terrorism. Climate change may contribute to increasingly severe natural disasters, as some recent tragedies—the Indian Ocean tsunami in 2004, Hurricane Katrina in 2005, or the Kashmir earthquake in 2005—attest. The scarcity of natural resources may fuel armed conflicts. The conjunction of terrorism, nuclear proliferation and rogue and/or failed states stands out as a particularly explosive problem. Against this background, one could argue that the recurrence of major inter-state conflicts is no longer unthinkable.

In other words, the world is not getting more secure and at peace with itself. Nuclear weapons are not going away, neither in President Barack Obama’s lifetime, nor probably in his children’s lifetime. Nuclear power is getting more widespread and accessible than ever before. The number of nuclear-armed states has been growing, not diminishing, since the NPT entered into force, despite all the non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament efforts. The vision of “global zero” and complete nuclear disarmament is a noble long-term goal, but in the near term, it may prove to be naïve and possibly dangerous, if mishandled.

No current nuclear weapon state is ready, willing or even able to abandon its nuclear arsenal. The North Korean and Iranian examples are inspiring cases for other nuclear aspirants. Iran is an example of how to get the entire world’s attention while denying any intention to develop a nuclear weapon. North Korea is an example of the rewards one can reap from promising to get rid of a nuclear weapons program which one was not supposed to obtain in the first place.

Given this context, The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists has argued recently that it is “5 minutes to midnight.”^[3] In other words, the board of directors of this publication judges that the world is on the brink of nuclear holocaust. While one could argue that the end of the Cold War should have brought the nuclear clock a few hours back, it seems that only the Western nuclear powers and NATO actually did it. The direction of NATO’s nuclear policy and posture conveys a strange impression that it is a lazy afternoon, not midnight, in global politics. Over the past 15 years NATO’s nuclear deterrent capability has been declining both in terms of the quantity of nuclear warheads, and in terms of the scope and variety of delivery weapons systems.^[4] According to NATO’s Nuclear Fact Sheets, out of 11 different nuclear weapon systems that were deployed in Europe in 1971, only one system remains today—dual capable aircraft (DCA) gravity bombs—and the numbers of both aircraft and bombs have also been reduced considerably.^[5]

In other words, NATO’s nuclear posture in Europe has been progressing nicely towards the “vision of zero.” But for all practical purposes, it does not really matter whether complete elimination of nuclear weapons is possible. For the time being, it is largely a theological debate about believing without any chance of proving. The problem is that preaching a “theology of zero” today may have practical consequences for the security of the Alliance tomorrow. Given the current security environment, NATO may have more opportunities for war-fighting and peace-making than it could possibly be willing (let alone able) to handle. The ultimate question is whether retaining a credible NATO nuclear deterrent could help limit these “opportunities.”

(Mis)perceptions of NATO’s Nuclear Forces

Whatever the physical qualities and military value (from none to absolute, depending on one’s perspective) of nuclear weapons, nuclear deterrence happens in the minds of the deterrer and the deterree. More than anything else, nuclear deterrence is about perceptions.

Despite their role in ending the bloodiest war in the history of mankind, nuclear weapons have never been popular devices in the public imagination. While in terms of actual death tolls, the true weapons of mass destruction are small arms and light weapons (and, some may add, cars), the images of nuclear mushroom clouds and global annihilation easily outweigh any other possible threat to human life.

NATO's nuclear forces are valued and appreciated by some, but despised by most. Among the latter, there are two distinct groups of "haters":

The disarmament community. This large and colorful group of devoted people working for both governmental and non-governmental organizations is on a crusade against nuclear weapons in general, and NATO's nuclear weapons in particular. Given that semi-authoritarian states (such as China, Pakistan, and Russia) and rogue regimes (such as Iran and North Korea) do not really care about international public opinion and do not have any public debate to speak of, the NATO Allies with their deplorable nuclear weapons constitute an easy target for this community. It is interesting to note that diplomats from NATO member countries working on non-proliferation and disarmament topics in the United Nations often vote in favor of UN resolutions that implicitly or explicitly condemn the NATO nuclear policy and posture that those same Allies have subscribed to under NATO's 1999 Strategic Concept.

In the context of the NPT, numerous articles have given the strange impression that NATO's nuclear-sharing arrangements constitute THE obstacle to the success of the entire non-proliferation regime. This is very difficult to believe. Indeed, one could argue that for the main proliferators NATO's nuclear sharing arrangements hardly matter at all. If one drew a chart with the trends of nuclear arms reductions and nuclear proliferation since the early 1990s, one would find an interesting inverted proportionality between the two phenomena. In other words, the fewer the operational nuclear weapons in the world, the more nuclear weapon states emerge.

Last but not least, the disarmament community is obsessed with a few myths about the "warmongering" nature of NATO's nuclear posture. One of the most popular myths is the principle of "first use." In fact, NATO observes the principle of "strategic ambiguity" by not articulating under what circumstances it would consider nuclear weapons employment. This ambiguity in the eyes of disarmament community is perceived as a clear intention to be the first to use a nuclear weapon in a conflict. This is quite simply a ridiculous view as it is impossible to begin to imagine under what circumstances the North Atlantic Council could consider using nuclear weapons, unless nuclear weapons were used against the Alliance.

Western publics. The second group of "haters" does not have any identifiable agenda, apart from its inherent culture of protest against war and advocacy for peace; and it does not produce sophisticated, semi-academic articles. However, it is probably more important than the first group, because this group happens to be the electorate of the European NATO members. To be sure, some Allies, first and foremost the two NATO European nuclear powers—the United Kingdom and France—do not shy away from public nuclear debate. Quite the contrary—leaders of both countries have publicly upheld nuclear deterrence as an important element of their national security policy, despite dissenting voices from within their own parties (especially in the case of the UK). Germany is a contrary example, in that nuclear debate has long been a "taboo," owing to fear of public outrage and possibly even a collapse of the government. In the run up to the 2009 parliamentary elections, the Social Democratic Party has made the nuclear dossier part of its electoral campaign (i.e., by advocating the removal of the American nuclear weapons from Germany). Thus, instead of being about "security policy," the discussion turns into one about the "politics of disarmament." Again, this is entirely a Western phenomenon, for where there are no free elections, a public nuclear debate is simply impossible.

And then there are those who do not mind NATO perpetuating its nuclear policy. One could identify three groups of such "Strangeloves":

NATO's nuclear specialists (or, according to the disarmament community, "**nucleoholics.**") There is a small community of NATO insiders who serve or who have served on NATO's International Staff, in the military commands, in the capitals or in national delegations at NATO headquarters who are for the most part sincere believers in the idea that NATO's nuclear deterrence posture helps to prevent war and preserve peace. Some of these people, especially retired military officers, even see some military role for nuclear weapons beyond being merely "political devices" for deterrence purposes.[6]

The "rogues." For the rogue states, it is a case of "Yes we (also) can!" For such regimes, nuclear weapons symbolise power, prestige and status, on par with that enjoyed by those who already possess nuclear weapons. However, their goals extend beyond symbolism to the acquisition of political-military options.

The "near peers." Last but not least, the "near peer" powers—Russia and China—see Western nuclear forces as a credible justification (but definitely not the only reason) for their nuclear programs.

Finally, there is a general discursive space, within which the salience of "nuclear issues" is increased or reduced. The recent wave of abolitionist articles was not a result of significant international processes or breakthroughs, but rather of self-referential academic and (mostly) pseudo-academic debate. In fact, one could argue that were it not for the recent articles by prominent figures in certain newspapers and journals,[7] the "salience" of nuclear issues would have remained submerged. Today, talking "nuclear abolition" is quite simply a lucrative business (just as it was lucrative to talk MADly during the Cold War), and it became even more lucrative after Barack Obama's endorsement. Lastly, popular culture feeds the public imagination with masterful special effects.[8]

NATO's Nuclear Policy: Which Contingencies?

NATO's 1999 Strategic Concept contained several key tenets pertaining to NATO's nuclear deterrence posture and nuclear forces. First, it assumed that "the existence of powerful nuclear forces outside the Alliance" was a significant factor in maintaining Euro-Atlantic security.[9] Second, the American conventional and nuclear forces in Europe were seen as "vital to the security of Europe, which is inseparably linked to that of North America." [10] In other words, the nuclear posture was seen as an inherent element of the transatlantic link. Third, the nuclear forces were ascribed a fundamental political purpose—"to protect peace and to prevent war or any kind of coercion"—and to help ensure credible deterrence because the Alliance's conventional forces alone could not do it.[11] Finally, as regards the force structure, the Concept argued for "an appropriate mix of nuclear and conventional forces based in Europe and kept up to date where necessary, although at a minimum sufficient level"[12]

To sum up this official narrative, in 1999 the Alliance adopted a posture of general deterrence as an ultimate insurance policy in case of a major contingency. In addition to referring to "the existence of powerful nuclear forces outside the Alliance," the 1999 Strategic Concept stated that "the Alliance's forces" (presumably including its nuclear forces) "contribute to the preservation of peace, to the safeguarding of common security interests of Alliance members, and to the maintenance of the security and stability of the Euro-Atlantic area. By deterring the use of NBC weapons, they contribute to Alliance efforts aimed at preventing the proliferation of these weapons and their delivery means." [13] Today the major security concerns of the Allies have extended to include international terrorism. The Comprehensive Political Guidance (CPG), adopted in 2006, argues that over the next 10 to 15 years "terrorism, increasingly global in scope and lethal in results, and the spread of weapons of mass destruction are likely to be the principal threats to the Alliance." [14]

What possible contingencies may entail a role for NATO's nuclear deterrent? What could or should the next NATO Strategic Concept say about the Alliance's nuclear posture?

There are at least five readily identifiable contingencies with a nuclear dimension:

1. Nuclear proliferation (i.e. a country buys, builds or steals its way into becoming a nuclear weapon state);
2. WMD terrorism by a non-state actor (i.e. a terrorist organization employs a "dirty" radiological, chemical or biological bomb against NATO's population and/or forces);
3. State-sponsored nuclear terrorism (i.e. a terrorist organization employs an actual nuclear weapon with from the assistance of a rogue regime);
4. Nuclear confrontation with a rogue regime (i.e. a nuclear-armed rogue threatens or actually uses a nuclear weapon against NATO); and
5. A major nuclear exchange (i.e. a nuclear conflict with a major nuclear power).

While the first two contingencies seem to be more likely than the others, they present less scope for nuclear deterrence. In the case of preventing proliferation, NATO's nuclear deterrence posture may have little effect if the proliferator's main motivations are its own local ambitions and insecurities. There are a host of other preventive measures that are more (and often less) successfully applied to deal with proliferation, and most of these measures consist of diplomatic, political and legal efforts to curb international trade in nuclear weapons-related technologies.

The difficulties of deterring terrorists are widely recognized. In this case, the best possible response is denial—preempting attacks by terrorists and preventing them from achieving their objectives. Some terrorist attacks leave no "return address." If there was one, however, NATO would have sufficient conventional power to bring its wrath upon the perpetrator. It is therefore no surprise that NATO so far has not articulated a role for its nuclear deterrence posture in preventing nuclear proliferation and WMD terrorism. At the end of the day, there might be no role whatsoever for the nuclear deterrent in this regard.

The case of a state-sponsored act of terrorism is somewhat more nuanced. While conventional denial and preemption would still be the preferred options, "the state-sponsored" aspect of this contingency opens some room for nuclear deterrence. The advance of "nuclear forensics" makes it possible to identify the originator of the weapon used, and this, arguably, should make the state in question think twice before providing a terrorist group with a usable nuclear device. One could indeed consider a case for a "tailored deterrence" approach for such contingencies.

Finally, the nuclear threats from rogue states and major nuclear powers are much more obvious candidates for nuclear deterrence. The first contingency is somewhat complicated by the "rationality" problem of the leadership (in other words, its "deterrability") and the uncertainty about the actual capabilities in possession of the regime in question. Again, the preferred course of action would be via missile defense rather than nuclear response, and, given the "rationality" issue, the deterrence would have to be tailored to the specific situation and the specific actor. With the ongoing debate about a possible NATO missile defense capability, one could argue that NATO is in the process of developing a complement to its nuclear deterrence policy concerning such contingencies. Only the "near peer" powers present a case for classical "general deterrence." This happens to be the only contingency for which NATO has an articulated, coherent and adequate nuclear deterrence policy and posture.

Table 1: Contingencies and NATO's nuclear policy

<u>Contingencies</u>	Deterrence and Defence Requirements	Role for Nuclear Deterrent	NATO's Nuclear Policy
Nuclear proliferation	Prevention	None	Uncoordinated
WMD terrorism by non-state actors	Denial, preemption	None	Not articulated
State-sponsored nuclear terrorism	Denial, preemption, tailored deterrence	Important	Not articulated
Rogue nuclear state	Missile defense, tailored deterrence	Important	Under development?
Major nuclear power	General deterrence, arms control	Vital	Articulated and adequate

Deterrence by its very nature is a binary phenomenon. For any deterrence to be feasible, the deterree has to be deterrable. For NATO to define its own deterrence requirements, the Allies need to pay attention to the posture, capabilities, motives and policy of the potential adversaries.

In this respect, it is possible to draw some distinctions between rogue states (which are also likely to sponsor terrorist groups) and major nuclear powers. In most cases the goals and motives behind the nuclear programs of these countries will be similar: first and foremost, every country seeking nuclear weapons does so for their security and deterrent qualities. In most cases the weapons (because few states have them) are also a source of pride and status. For countries like North Korea it might be the only source of national pride. For ex-superpower Russia, its nuclear arsenal is one of the few remaining symbols of its former status.

While the concrete features of each country's nuclear policy and posture vary, nuclear programs are usually motivated by two main factors: regional rivalries (such as the China-India-Pakistan triangle or the Israel-Iran relationship) and the growing U.S. conventional supremacy (a factor for Russia, China, and North Korea). The importance of nuclear weapons in U.S. strategic thinking and military planning has, it appears, been superseded by great advances in conventional technology. This trend has an adverse effect on the potential adversaries, prompting them to rely even more on their nuclear weapons. Hence the pursuit of robust modernization programs by the Russian and Chinese governments.

Another important feature common to both rogue states and major nuclear powers is their ignorance of and/or disregard for NATO's nuclear deterrent. For them, it is all about the Americans. On the one hand, NATO has never actually articulated its nuclear deterrent posture against any particular country since the end of the Cold War.^[15] The secrecy associated with NATO's nuclear deterrent means that it is mostly unknown outside the Alliance and outside the disarmament community. Iran, North Korea and China could not care less about a few DCA aircraft somewhere in Europe. The notable exception is of course Russia, which takes NATO's military power—including its nuclear forces—very seriously.

On the other hand, as argued above, it is hard to picture a scenario in which NATO would come close to considering nuclear employment, apart from a major nuclear conflict with a major power. Both Iran and North Korea could be overwhelmed by conventional power alone. Even if these regimes used a nuclear device, NATO's heads of state and government would probably opt for a conventional response and/or missile defences. Tailoring deterrence is inherent in NATO's strategic posture with its reliance on an "appropriate mix" of conventional and nuclear forces and flexibility in using DCA aircraft to showcase the Alliance's resolve.

Table 2: Deterring the "rogues" and the "near peers"

	Deterring "rogues"	Deterring "near peers"
Goals	Security, deterrence, pride & status	
Deterrent posture	Regional rivalries, U.S. conventional supremacy	
NW programs	Clandestine, limited numbers and reach	Robust modernisation
Perception of NATO	Non-factor	Non-factor (except Russia)
NATO's posture	General deterrence with implicit tailoring	General deterrence

This leaves NATO's nuclear forces with only one very clear and definite role: deterring the "near peer" powers, like Russia.

Andrei Piontkovskij has argued recently that Barack Obama's speech in Prague sounded eerily similar to Mikhail Gorbachev's vision of a nuclear-weapon-free world. He labeled the phenomenon the "Gorbama" effect. He also noticed that there was no reaction from the Kremlin to the Prague speech, which is extremely unusual, in view of the sabre-rattling and boastful stance of Russian leaders.^[16]

If one tried to deconstruct Russia's strategic posture, the rationale behind the silence would begin to seem rather logical. Russia has long suffered from a hang-over after losing its empire and from a self-inflicted complex of inferiority and Western encirclement. These feelings contributed to the 2000 Military Doctrine, which outlined the basic tenets of Russia's military strategy, in which nuclear weapons play a central role:

1. First, Russia relies increasingly on its nuclear power to deter any kind of threat, hence the principle of "first use." Moscow would be ready to repel a conventional attack by using nuclear weapons.
2. Second, the Russians hold that non-strategic nuclear weapons have practical military value, especially in the regional conflicts that Russia envisions fighting, and did fight on 08/08/08.
3. Third, Russia's increased reliance on nuclear weapons has translated into increased training and the resumption of strategic bomber patrols since 2007.
4. Fourth, Russia quite openly pursues the modernisation of its nuclear triad—ICBMs (such as the Topol M), SLBMs (such as the Bulava) and air-delivered systems.

It is important to note that Russia's nuclear deterrent is not only about the United States and NATO. It is also about China, which may at some point challenge Russia in its vast and sparsely inhabited Far East.

From a Russian perspective, American missile defense plans clearly have a potential to undermine Russia's power. First, Russia is concerned that the ten interceptors that the Americans initially planned for deployment in Poland are only the beginning, which the United States will exploit and augment as its missile defense project further matures. A functioning and effective U.S. global ballistic missile defense system would clearly undermine what Russians like to call the "strategic balance." Russia is one of two countries capable of destroying the entire world, and the sole country capable of destroying the United States. Losing this "balance of terror" would mean a huge moral defeat for Russia. Second, even limited U.S. missile defenses would undermine Russia's strategy of limited nuclear war, in which Russia envisions using a nuclear weapon first and then forcing the opponent to negotiate and surrender. The bottom line is, in the words of Andrei Piontovskij, "no Russian government—Putin, post-Putin or anti-Putin—will ever agree to abolish nuclear weapons."^[17]

Conclusions

In 2009, as in 1999, "powerful nuclear forces outside the Alliance" still exist, and even continue modernization despite the "global zero" and disarmament frenzy. This is a clear and present deterrence requirement for NATO.

American weapons in Europe remain one of the few tangible elements of the transatlantic security link. If these weapons were to be removed, questions about the credibility of U.S. "extended deterrence" would resurface. Would the Americans have enough willpower to put Washington, D.C. or New York on the line just to deter, and, in case deterrence fails, retaliate for a nuclear attack on Vilnius or Tallinn? With American nuclear weapons back on U.S. soil, the United States and NATO as a whole would lose a great deal of the flexibility which is inherent in the Alliance's current deterrent posture.

NATO's nuclear forces are also the ultimate hedge to compensate for an ever growing operational overstretch which has raised doubts about the Alliance's ability to respond to the more demanding conventional scenarios that may arise on the immediate periphery of the territory of the Allies. STRATFOR has long argued^[18] that America's simultaneous interventions in Iraq and Afghanistan have opened a window of opportunity for a resurgent Russia to reclaim its geopolitical losses. One could argue that Russia successfully seized that opportunity on 08/08/08.

Although Moscow has insisted consistently since the 1950s that all U.S. nuclear weapons should be removed from Europe, one could argue that the United States would do Russia a disservice by withdrawing its nuclear weapons from Europe. It would signal to Moscow that it is no longer taken seriously and break down what Russia likes to call the "strategic balance in Europe." From this perspective as well, the withdrawal of the remaining U.S. nuclear weapons would have unpredictable consequences for security and stability in Europe.

The role of the Alliance's nuclear forces in "protecting peace and preventing war" is much less clear when it comes to the security of non-NATO countries or stability in the regions beyond the Euro-Atlantic area. The conflicting parties in the Balkans, in the Middle East, and most recently in Georgia, did not care much about the Alliance's resolve "to protect peace and prevent war." In terms of its military posture, NATO is likely to continue to rely on an "appropriate mix of nuclear and conventional forces." However, the importance of the latter has grown over the last decade, while nuclear weapons are becoming somewhat more obsolete in both American and Alliance strategic thinking.

On the other hand, the new Strategic Concept is likely to put a strong emphasis on the threats of terrorism and WMD proliferation. However, in both cases, NATO's nuclear forces will have little or no role to play. If anything, the nuclear arsenals of the NATO Allies serve as a motivational as well as a deterrent factor in Iran's calculation.

The new Strategic Concept will also hail international efforts to promote arms control, nonproliferation and disarmament. Again, there is no hard evidence that the so-called "balance between disarmament and deterrence" can strengthen in some magical way the security of all the NATO Allies. The temptation to accelerate nuclear disarmament may lead to actually diminishing Euro-Atlantic security.

At the end of the day, NATO's nuclear deterrent has only one unambiguously clear purpose—to deter other nuclear powers. It may sound simplistic, but overcomplicating security matters may obscure what really matters—the security of the territory and population of the Allies.

About the Author

Dr. Kestutis Paulauskas was the deputy defence advisor in the Lithuanian delegation at NATO in 2006-2009. Among other responsibilities, he was a member of NATO's NPG (Nuclear Planning Group) Staff Group. He is currently a lecturer at the Institute of International Relations and Political Science at the Vilnius University. The views expressed in this paper are solely those of the author and do not represent an official position of the Lithuanian government.

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4. See: Vaidotas Urbelis and Kestutis Paulauskas, "[NATO's Deterrence Policy – Time for Change?](#)," *Baltic Security and Defence Review* 10, 2008, 86-87.
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6. See: Klaus Naumann et al., [Towards a Grand Strategy in an Uncertain World: Renewing Transatlantic Partnership](#), Noaber Foundation, 2007.
7. Ivo Daalder and Jan Lodal, "[The Logic of Zero](#)," *Foreign Affairs*, November/December 2008; George P. Shultz, William J. Perry, Henry A. Kissinger, Sam Nunn, "[Toward a Nuclear-Free World](#)," *Wall Street Journal*, 15 January 2008.

8. For example, a Hollywood movie, *The Sum of All Fears* (director Phil Robinson, 2002) features a nuclear attack by terrorists on the American soil.

9. The Alliance's [Strategic Concept](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_27433.htm), 24 April 1999, par. 21, available online: http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_27433.htm.

10. [Ibid.](#), par. 42.

11. [Ibid.](#), par. 46.

12. [Ibid.](#), par. 46.

13. [Ibid.](#), par. 41.

14. [Comprehensive Political Guidance](http://www.nato.int/docu/basic/b061129e.htm), 29 November 2006, par. 2, available online: <http://www.nato.int/docu/basic/b061129e.htm>

15. It is worth noting, however, that NATO's 1991 Strategic Concept included the following statement: "Even in a non-adversarial and cooperative relationship, Soviet military capability and build-up potential, including its nuclear dimension, still constitute the most significant factor of which the Alliance has to take account in maintaining the strategic balance in Europe." (par. 13).

16. Andrei Piontkovskij, "[Gorbama](http://www.grani.ru/War/Arms/Nukes/m.149543.html)," 6 April 2009, available at GRANI.RU: <http://www.grani.ru/War/Arms/Nukes/m.149543.html>.

17. [Ibid.](#)

18. E.g., George Friedman, "Russia's Great-Power Strategy," *STRATFOR*, February 14, 2007.