

**CENTER FOR  
STRATEGIC AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES (CSIS)**

**THE FUTURE OF THE TRANSATLANTIC RELATIONSHIP:  
AFGHANISTAN, NATO'S NEW STRATEGIC CONCEPT,  
AND THE CHALLENGES OF BURDEN SHARING**

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MINISTER OF DEFENSE,  
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JOHN HAMRE: Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. We're delighted to have you here. This is – it is wonderful to be able to see this kind of a turnout. I must say, Herr Minister, normally we don't see enthusiastic, excited crowds for German ministers right after lunch. (Laughter.) People are usually sleeping rather peacefully in the audience – (laughter) – so this will be a rare, pleasant surprise for all of us.

Thank you for coming. My name's John Hamre. I'm the president here at CSIS. We're delighted to welcome and co-host this event. We're pleased that we're here, and I'm going to turn over the formalities to my friend Ulf Gartzke, who is going to introduce the minister. Thank you for coming. Oh, turn off – turn your phones to silent stun, okay? I'm going to – and if anybody goes off and you start talking, I'm going to haul you out rather indecorously. So okay, Ulf, come on up here.

ULF GARTZKE: Thank you, Dr. Hamre, for your kind introduction. On behalf of the Hanns Seidel Foundation, I would like to welcome all of you here this afternoon. Again, a big thank you to Dr. Hamre and his team for hosting us here today, and judging by the audience, this is a very important and timely discussion. It is a great pleasure and privilege to introduce today's keynote speaker, Germany's defense minister, Karl-Theodor Zu Guttenberg.

The good news, of course, for me is that the minister doesn't really need any introduction, but to take an expression I used earlier this year when I introduced him as the new German economics minister to a D.C. audience, I would say that the best way to describe him is to say that he is a troubleshooter. And of course, I am kind of digressing a little bit from my script here, but the best way to translate troubleshooter into German, for those of you who speak it, is *kriezen beweltiger* (ph) which is more abbreviated as KT. But this is within the CSU orbit only, I guess.

Karl-Theodor Zu Guttenberg was first elected to the Bundestag in 2002, and when I say troubleshooter, you can see that he focused early on on rebuilding transatlantic relations and German-American relations in the wake of the Iraq war. He has come to Washington more than any other German politician and, I venture to say, more than any other European politician in recent years.

Last fall, after the CSU suffered its first major electoral defeat in 46 years, Karl-Theodor Zu Guttenberg was appointed the CSU secretary-general to get the party back on track. This February, he was named Germany's new economics minister in the midst of the biggest financial and economic crisis in decades.

Three weeks ago, Karl-Theodor Zu Guttenberg was appointed Germany's new defense minister, one of the toughest jobs out there given the security challenges we face – we Germans, but also our allies, of course – face in Afghanistan and elsewhere. At the same time, of course,

this latest important assignment remarks the return to the minister's original passion, I should add, namely, foreign security and defense policy.

We are delighted and truly honored that you are here today, and so please join me in welcoming Germany's new defense minister, His Excellency Dr. Karl-Theodor Zu Guttenberg. (Applause.)

KARL-THEODOR ZU GUTTENBERG: Thank you very much. John Hamre and Ulf, thank you for much too kind words. I'm still struggling with the sentence of John about the enthusiasm in German ministers – (laughter). I may give that to colleagues, that very sentence – (chuckles) – but it's great to be back, and it's good to see so many friends here, and thank you all for coming, and I hope that we find some time to discuss afterwards and also to exchange a couple of views informally.

And it won't be the last time; for the next weeks and months and probably, hopefully, years to come, I'll have the opportunity to travel a bit more often than during the last months, as where I was a bit distracted by having the job of being the economic minister. And I changed from General Motors now to generals and real motors. (Laughter). And I'm quite happy to, let's say, to have had the chance to hand over that very topic to our esteemed colleague, Bruederle, who seems to be quite happy to have that very issue. (Laughter.)

But I want to thank you very much, CSIS, for giving me the chance to address such a distinguished group of colleagues, friends and guests today, and also a remarkable group of German journalists I am happy to have brought with me today, and some of them who are in Washington, and good to see many here as well. And as it has already been pointed out by Ulf, it's really getting back to the roots and getting back to a passion of security policy and foreign policy, and I've had a rather busy morning, already a busy day.

We flew in quite late this morning; there was fog in Paris – not politically, but there was real fog in Paris this morning – and so we came in late and we had a meeting this morning, a first meeting with Secretary Gates and then the opportunity to talk to Jim Jones and now to Jim Steinberg to get also an impression of the coherence of the three houses here and to get also their views on common challenges we are facing right now and challenges we need to tackle together.

It's – the year 2009, ladies and gentlemen, is a specific year and a very important year for Germany. We have celebrated 60 years of the founding of the Federal Republic of Germany. We have celebrated maybe a bit too silent 60 years of our constitution. Had a bit of a footnote character to it in the months. I think 60 years of our constitution is also a reason to celebrate, and just a couple of days ago, we celebrated together 20 years of the fall of the Berlin Wall, and I think that was a remarkable moment, seeing our friends and partners walking through the Brandenburg Gate from the east to the west. I also recall in that respect seeing the Russian president walking through the Brandenburg Gate from the east to the west.

And it was an emotional moment; a bit rainy that day, but also good and remarkable speeches by the president via video, but also by the secretary of state. Highly appreciated by the German public, and also by all of us. A very moment, a very specific moment, and I just would

like to underline that this reunification in freedom of Germany, now 19 to 20 years ago, would not have been possible without the generous and continuous support of the United States, and we will and we shall never forget this.

And this is also – not – I wouldn't call it a task, but this is certainly a responsibility for me and for others to again and again remind – also to remind the younger generation in Germany it's – for me it was – it's like yesterday, and it's – for me it's like yesterday, and I'm not – I'm still a quite young fellow in this business, but we have now 20-year old young people already studying that hadn't been born at the time of the fall of the wall, and for many of us it seems like yesterday, and to explain our gratitude and to explain who deserves all – not only respect, but also this gratefulness from our side, is certainly a responsibility for German politicians specifically.

Looking at Germany from the outside, despite the financial crisis right now, one might see a powerful country. Fourth biggest economic power in the world and still – there is a bit of a fight going on – leading export nation. We are in a “clinch” with China in that regard, in quotation marks, and in security terms and in terms of foreign affairs, Germany has gone a long way in a comparably short time. And this sentence is not an excuse, but an explanation, also, for a couple of things I may say in the next – within the next minutes.

And in the meanwhile, we are also active members of numerous international organizations, and we have soldiers deployed in 10 operations across the world, 10 operations we need to remind also the German public again and again that this spectrum we already fulfill in the meanwhile, and as many of you know, there will be – the first steps now in this new post for me means to explain five of those mandates and those operations already in the first weeks of – in the ministry now, because we have to prolong the mandates already in November and December of this year, the mandates of a couple of those operations. I will come back to one or two of them.

But we are in Germany also, as we all are, probably still in the process of learning. One thing, for example, that many of us still have not acknowledged is that with this newfound – can we call it normality after the fall of the Berlin Wall? Comes – within this new found normality comes responsibility. Some of us unfortunately mistake the German responsibility to act with a responsibility to warn against action, and their perceived moral high ground from which they lightheartedly criticize the actions of others easily forgets that also the absence of action can be morally wrong.

A functioning relationship means being frank, but it certainly does not mean to establish a culture of mutual finger-pointing. And I'm talking about the relationship between the both of our countries, with the transatlantic relationship as such. And during the last years, we have seen moments where this mutual finger-pointing occurred above the surface. And there were many characters who worked against this culture, in quotation marks, and I would like to praise in that regard our ambassador, Klaus Scharioth, and others who are doing a remarkable job over here of not having this culture established as such.

You may think that these are just simple, maybe trivial, aspects, or basics, maybe. But for us, it is something that we still have to get used to. In terms of security policy, for many decades, Germany was able to slipstream the United States. However, as I have referred to already since reunification, we have tried to live up to our challenges and to our tasks. Despite all achievements, more steps remain to be made. What is now still exceptional – German military deployments – needs to become more common and needs to become thus more widely accepted, and this was one of the reasons why I, to the surprise of some in Germany, tried to find a new language a couple of weeks ago when it came to the explanation and the descriptions for our military deployments, to find a language which is blunt, which is clear and which tries to describe what I think is reality.

And we have had a tendency in German politics all over the party lines to somehow – let's call it euphemistically, outbalance our language when it came, for instance, to Afghanistan and what we are doing there and why we are doing it and what's actually happening there. And some were startled and very surprised that the term war or that the term, actually, the term war suddenly played a role in public discussion on Germany. But I think it is necessary that we lead that discussion and it's necessary that we also keep in mind what reactions that may cause may be on the legal level – it's a soft discussion we are having – and may be on the emotional level.

For decades, the risk to the safety of our country has been so very real for us Germany, tangible most, that the change towards the risk management of today's security policy is not easy. We are faced with new and increasingly complex threats and challenges. We have discussed them very often also at CSIS, and in today's security environment – and this is a truism – threats no longer respect borders or geographical distances.

What happens hundreds of thousands of miles away in a different country may have a direct effect on our own existence. We have to be careful not to use this feud as an excuse on both sides of the Atlantic, but we all have to be aware of the asymmetries that have been inflationary, cited and quoted during the last couple of years. But also, still, to know that we sometimes tend to act and react rather symmetrical towards the asymmetries we are facing right now.

But this is not all. Analysis of future trends, such as the 2008 National Intelligence Council study, indicate that the West is faced with a relative decline in power. For Europe, things look even gloomier. It is said to lose much of its influence and current status. What a lovely prospective, ladies and gentlemen. On the other hand, new powers emerge – China and India are just two of them. In recent years, we have allowed the transatlantic partnership and NATO, its most important forum, to drift – at least to a certain extent.

And there's quite some discussion going on right now in Germany whether the transatlantic partnership and the transatlantic ties still have the same or even higher relevance than, for instance, the transpacific ties, ladies and gentlemen. I'm not referring to a trip that is taking place right now, definitely not. But we all have to be aware that this – that at least this – those ties are getting stronger. And from a European, from a German perspective, we not only need to discuss it but also see it as a reason to foster and strengthen the transatlantic ties. Not to follow them only with romantic or nostalgic views and tear-driven eyes.

In Europe, during the last couple of years, as you all have followed, to a certain extent, anti-Americanism grew – accusing the U.S. of being responsible for many crises around the world, of doing too much, of not doing enough, or of not doing it right. That’s what we have heard, the whole spectrum – again and again. And it brought us to the point, whether public diplomacy works, yes or no, again, on both sides of the Atlantic. To America, in turn, Europe seemed to have outlived itself – of being slow, of being backward, bureaucratic and with little strategic vision. I have heard that, again and again.

And the only thing I agree with is the bureaucratic aspect. (Laughter.) So can we really afford all this? Certainly not. None of us is able to tackle the challenges we face alone. We have heard that very often. But the only way to success is through cooperation – shared goals but also shared emotions, again and again – and also shared burdens, ladies and gentlemen.

We now turn to transatlantic alliance. We actually have proven, tested and mutually planned structures. Working through such partnerships leads to much better results than working in ad hoc coalitions of the willing. But the tree on which the cherries to pick grow is still existent. And we need to take that into account as well.

So contributing to peace and stability, especially in Afghanistan, is our top priority. My first trip abroad, led me, brought me to Afghanistan last week. It was a, let’s call it – let’s try to find a mildest phrase – it was an interesting trip. It showed many, many different facets. And it was important for me to visit. And I hope that it’s not being misunderstood to visit the troops before the partners – to explain that sentence to my wife as well. (Laughter.) But it was a necessary visit and a necessary visit, again, to explain what we are doing there.

It is the first operation that followed an attack on one of the alliance members. For NATO, this mission is unprecedented in scope, in breadth and complexity both in civil and the military terms. And this is why visiting Afghanistan was priority to me. And I wanted to gain another first hand insight and talk to various actors involved. There are countless pictures of Kabul and Kunduz in my mind now – pictures of a difficult situation for both our soldiers and the Afghan people. And, to be very honest, Kabul at the moment is more fortress than a lively village or city.

And our soldiers are in combat, unfortunately; far from stabilization. A pretty familiar situation for American forces, as I recall it, however, still challenging. Again, this was also reason to use more of a clear language.

And because of the extremely volatile security situation in Kunduz, I ordered an increase in troops to reinforce our Quick Reaction Force another 120. And here in Washington, when talking about Afghanistan, I’m being asked – also now, in our new position – will Germany take on a greater role in Afghanistan? My answer is, all of us who are engaged in Afghanistan have to continuously rethink their commitment to make Afghanistan a success.

And Germany, in general, is willing and prepare to contribute adequately if the fundamentals are set in the right way. And some of the fundamentals we are waiting now, for the

next weeks to come. How will we get there? I vision just a three-step approach. First, we need an updated strategy with a clear aim and clear benchmarks.

And I underline the word, clear aim and, clear benchmarks, and not just phrases and not just vague impressions, but benchmarks that deserve the name because we have to struggle in Germany, as in many other countries and partner nations as well, with the inflationary use of the term “exit strategy.”

And the question is how we use the word “exit strategy” or whether we use it? Is exit strategy just off and away or does it actually mean handover in responsibility? And does it then follow a clear structure and does it follow a clear strategy as such? The first point.

Secondly, once this is agreed upon about clear aims and clear benchmarks, we have to ensure that all relevant actors assume their roles.

And thirdly, against the background of the decisions of the international community, Germany will adjust its engagement. That means precisely that we will prolong our mandate this December unchanged, first of all, with our 4,500 troops we have sent to Afghanistan.

We’re still the third-biggest troop supplier but that we are all eagerly waiting for the announcement the president has to make over here because it probably will be around the time when we have to prolong the mandate in Germany. And that we have already started discussion about our impulses for a strategy, a renewed strategy for Afghanistan. And that those impulses will be impulses also for the Afghanistan conference that we’re assuming will take place at the end of January next year.

And in the light of this Afghanistan conference, in the light of the impulses, we would also like to see in coherence along with European partners but also with our transatlantic partners – a reassessment of the German commitment towards Afghanistan is possible. I cannot say today to what direction, but I will say that we will certainly rethink our mandate that we are prolonging now this December. But for this we need the fundament. And the fundament will be, one pillar, certainly, the American announcement.

And on the other hand, secondly, which is, let’s say, one of the most interesting parts as well is what we can expect from the Afghan government. We know that there has been specific meeting today in Kabul and we certainly need more than just a continuous smile of a president and repeatedly promises and promises and promises again. More than just words; we need the Afghan government to act. And we need, also, clear benchmarks, in respect of how the Afghan government could be measured.

If you want to withdraw internationally our forces from Afghanistan at some point in the not-too-distant future through a handover in responsibility, as we call it on both sides of the Atlantic. And, specifically, as we try to call it in Germany, as well, we need those clear benchmarks, meaning criteria for success as well as understandable and responsible timelines.

Our priorities are very similar to those I hear and sense over here: security, good governance and institution-building, disarmament where it's necessary, reconciliation and reintegration, economic development and Afghanistan's regional role. And also, an understanding of the regional partners out there of the neighbors and those in the region which does not only mean Pakistan, but certainly, Pakistan but also India. India is frequently forgotten when it comes to the future of Afghanistan and Pakistan in our German discussion, if I may say so and also the Central Asian states and certainly, also, Iran.

Exchanged a couple of views about Iran this morning as well from another context. So looking at the variety and complexity of the tasks inherent in these fields, it becomes clear that we need different actors to engage – experts, who have the knowledge and the resources which are needed. So far, unfortunately, there has been a tendency to focus on the military for much of this. Further, I strongly object to voices – and I was one of those voices a couple of years ago – that call Afghanistan a litmus test for the alliance. To me, it is rather a litmus test to the whole of the international community. And you maybe should rethink what kind of pressure we put on the shoulders of the institutions we are having and what results this may and can cause.

Conflict resolution in Afghanistan cannot be done with military means only. What an unbelievably boring sentence but how unbelievably true. Hence, besides formulating a clear strategy for success, we need to agree on a pragmatic and binding work-share. Every actor involved, at the national as well as international level, needs to perform and show full commitment. And I clearly underline, very positively, what I hear over here and what I've heard from Gen. McChrystal last week in Kabul that the term, regionalization, is gaining more and more grounds. And that the regional aspects of the forthcoming, hopefully, of the forthcoming strategy are playing a significant role. And this is the experience we have had within our comprehensive approach that this might be, maybe, key for any access.

I've talked about the Afghan government, about the promises we have heard so far. May it be, countering corruption, may it be, countering the crime and work on good governance and other things. They need to act, as I've said. And our expectations are high. Germany and the international community are not willing to help nor will we continue sending our soldiers and civilian workers indefinitely if the Afghans don't take over their share in building up their country. And I come to the third step, Germany and our commitment, and I have already stressed what our plans are and how we will try to form our commitment for the next week and months is to come but then also for the next years to come.

I know that the part of – that the speech I have to hold here is also on NATO's new strategic concept but I also know what it means to speak longer than 15 to 20 minutes before such an audience. And I'm not allowing a clear discussion in other things. I just would like to, to make two points. One is, I think that we have a common and a significant chance next year when it comes to formulate – also at this time we are in the reflection phase right now, to formulate the new strategic concept of NATO – to bridge certain elements of frustration we have seen, to overcome certain deficits in consensus building and other things, to be aware and to be sure that we need, probably, creativity, to find a structure that works on both sides and brings us to the core of NATO as such.

The relevance of Article 5 is more than just high. Also, the discussion that is linked to Article V and to the new challenges that may be linked to Article V; we have had the discussions for years and already made the energy question one that could be linked to Article V; cyber war and other things. But this is a necessary discussion and one of utmost importance.

And also, again and again, how political may the discussions be within NATO? I think we haven't found common grounds here yet, but this is one of the discussions we are leading at the moment, as well.

Just a footnote because I have pages and pages and pages here, but a particular long-term point of concern again and again is the NATO-EU relationship, and I remember many, many discussions we have had on that.

And if I talk about the relationship, I also talk about the lack thereof. And we all know that these two organizations can be found in nearly every major theater of operation. Furthermore, they have almost identical members, and what is this if not a living proof of the importance of these organizations working together? And that the aim of complementarity remains to be one of the main goals, and of the most important aims. And the question to avoid duplications but also to be able and capable to act and react remains really within our discussion, as well.

Last point, because I've been asked here again: Some of you have read the coalition treaty of the CDU/CSU and FDP. A remarkable piece of paper. (Laughter.) And there was one sentence that led to, let's call it, mild disturbances over here. And that was the question of how we handle possible – because it's still a secret, as we all know – possible nukes on German grounds.

And to give you one answer, because I've been asked here again, as well, this is not a question we would like to see treated unilaterally or just bilaterally, but it has to be treated, if at all, within the coalition. And it has to be treated within NATO as such, and we have to keep in mind what any step means, as a consequence. And what the consequence could be is – for instance, the three nays within NATO, we could have partners in mind who probably would be glad to offer their grounds and their soil for any weapons. But the question is whether that makes sense, then, for the security structures within Europe.

Nevertheless, it was just important for me to repeat my colleague, Westerwelle, who exactly said that when he was here. I just would like to underline that because there was some misperception, specifically in Germany, and also one of the discussions that could have been avoided.

And as we are in a phase right now that some struggle with the fact that they are still in power in Germany and others struggle with the fact that they are, after 11 years, finally in power, – (laughter) – I think we will come together and will come to the conclusion, despite all of those things, that this is a government which is clearly committed to transatlantic structures through a transatlantic friendship. And for me, it is an honor and pleasure to be here, and to be here more often than during the last couple of months. Thank you very much. Thank you. (Applause.)

HEATHER CONLEY: Mr. Minister, thank you very, very much for those very comprehensive remarks this afternoon. You answered all the questions that the speech title held, and we are, indeed, very grateful for that.

Good afternoon, my name is Heather Conley. I have the great privilege of directing the Europe program here at CSIS, and I'm delighted to be able to moderate the next half-an-hour or so of question-and-answer period and dialogue.

Just as one good housekeeping note, if you do have a question for the minister, please raise your hand. I will point to you and there will be a microphone that is passed to you. And please provide your name and affiliation before you pose the question to the minister.

I have only two roles as moderator. One is to make sure that the minister is not late for his next appointment, so I'm going to make sure we have a timely discussion. And secondly, to use an American baseball analogy, I get to throw out the first pitch to the minister to get the conversation going. I promise it's not going to be a fastball or a curveball, Mr. Minister, but I'm going to start the discussion, and then, certainly, open to the floor for a great conversation.

Mr. Minister, you talked about the use of exit strategy, and, certainly, when you were in Kabul last week, you said you shouldn't be shy about using it, but I'd be grateful to have your – what's your vision of a successful exit from Afghanistan? What does it look like?

Yesterday, Foreign Minister Westerwelle noted that the German government would seek a framework for the withdrawal of its forces from Afghanistan to become visible during this particular parliament, which, as we know, ends in 2013.

So, obviously, we're interested in that vision, and the second part of seeking your vision is you have been, as many others have, critical of President Karzai and his lack of focus on corruption. Is it a smart tactical strategy to publicly point these issues out while you need the Karzai government to be successful if we are to turn over greater responsibilities? So that's the fastball, Mr. Minister.

MR. GUTTENBERG: Thank you very much. It's always a challenge for a German to understand baseball analogies. (Laughter.) But, first of all, on your last question, I think being silent is an even worse option. And if not addressing things everybody actually knows – the president knows, the government knows that they have the obligation to handle it in a proper way. And I think we are now in a phase where we have to make clear what our goals are, and what the goals for an Afghan government are.

On the question of a successful handover in responsibility – I'm deliberating not using the word "exit strategy" right now – I think one well-known point is successful training, training and training. And in that regard, giving the Afghan security – let's call it person, maybe in the Afghan National Army, maybe police forces and others the possibility and the option to take care for the security themselves. And in that regard, that's part of a successful handover in responsibility.

The other one is we have to make clear what is the goal. Is the overall goal to still have the dream of a well-established democracy, Western-style, or of a somehow stable Afghanistan that still can comply to its traditions and to its culture and to the experiences others, and we have had with Afghanistan, as well?

I think we have reached a couple of limits here, and so stability may be defined from one or the other, but differently. And in Germany, the debate is quite clear that the goal or the expectation that Afghanistan will function like a – put it now in quotation marks – like a Western democracy could be, at least, difficult. And this difficulty, we have to keep in mind.

And so the question at the end of the day will be can we avoid endlessly any occurrences or any, also, internal fights in the future in Afghanistan – is that our goal, yes or no? And is that the principle that we stay there indefinitely? And so my point, then, is we have to make – when I'm talking about benchmarks, I mean benchmarks which don't reach that far because otherwise we will never reach any result. Thank you.

MS. CONLEY: Mike, please? And we'll make sure we'll get a microphone coming to you. (Chuckles.) No, I'm sorry, over here? Sorry.

Q: Thank you. I'm Mike Haltzel from Johns Hopkins SAIS and McLarty Associates Consulting. Welcome, Mr. Minister. You said that you're eagerly awaiting President Obama's decision on, basically, what sort of surge we should do in Afghanistan. My question's very simple. As the Obama administration has gone through this lengthy process of analysis, has it solicited Germany's opinion in a systematic and in-depth way?

MR. GUTTENBERG: Certainly, today. (Laughter.) And also during the last couple of weeks. But we have to keep in mind that, I'd say, we have been in an interesting position in Germany during the last couple of months, as well. There was, as you all know, our campaigning period. And sometimes, the one or the other may have been distracted from such questions, as well.

But looking at the face of the ambassador, I think there has been a very close contact, and, also, the repeated attempt to hear our opinion and to get known to our structural thinking, and also to get our impressions – what we are doing in our region in Afghanistan in the North. And there, I don't see any deficits in that regard.

Where we have to work on, also, for the future is that we optimize communication lines in Afghanistan; that we try our best to combine the civil and the military efforts there. But as a very possible result of our consultations and of our constant rethinking of the respective strategies, I see a remarkable amount of aspects in the strategy.

We have heard – I think it was in April this year or May this year – have come very close to what we have called at the beginning the “comprehensive approach.” And I certainly recall, the one or the other, smile in faces of American friends over here, as well. What the hell are they meaning with the comprehensive approach? What a typical German idea. How could you dare

to combine civil and military aspects? And so on and so on. And I think there was a fruitful discussion afterwards, and that some of those ideas have fallen on fruitful grounds.

MS. CONLEY: Bill? A microphone over here.

Q: I'm Bill Drosdiak, president of the American Council on Germany. Mr. Minister, welcome. As you know, one of the biggest complaints about German forces in Afghanistan is that they have operated under caveats – tight restrictions in their deployments. Are you, after your last trip, prepared to recommend to the new German government that you lift some of these caveats and enable the commanders to have more flexibility in deploying German forces?

And the second point, on police training, which has been, largely, the responsibility of German and European forces in the past, is considered to be one of the biggest failures of the Afghanistan policy in the last few years. What are the lessons learned? What can we do better in terms of training the police forces in Afghanistan?

MR. GUTTENBERG: Thank you very much, Bill. On the latter, I think the police training is more and more a success story now, but we need to match the goals. And we are still too far away from the 400 trainers we need to see in Afghanistan. I think that's not only a matter of the Germans, but also of some European partners who could be a bit faster and to really get to that point. Nevertheless, wherever this police training is taking place, it is functioning, it is working. We have, also, in this regard, a coordination challenge to combine the different philosophies of police training.

Let's say the American philosophy of police training is a bit distinct from the one Germans, for instance, offer. Although I understand the criticism that a police – a future police officer in Afghanistan does not firsthandly need the experience how to conduct the traffic in his village, but there may be other options that he needs to do. But this is – it's a footnote with a smile and a face and I think it's – but what we need to do is to coordinate a bit more clearer the different styles of training. And both make sense. And I think both have clear goals in that regard.

On the caveats and the complaints, to be very honest, I had frank and very open talks during the last couple of weeks with responsible – specifically – gentlemen in Kabul, with those having responsibility for ISAF and for other things. And I haven't heard the complaints any longer we have heard for a while. And that is because – I think because we have made clear that the German soldiers are not any longer in the North only to dig holes for water and to wave to Afghan children.

It's more and more that we are also in combat situations. We are – we have our casualties there as well. And we have learned that the spectrum is definitely wider than we offered it to public in Germany, for one, and that's probably also a reason that many of our partners thought that's what the Germans are doing. And we have certainly done much more than just the civil aspect of sending our soldiers down there. And I think it's well-known that we have, for instance, responsibility for the quick-reaction force in the DC-North (sic). And the

troops I'm sending down there now – the additional troops – are additional troops specifically also for those security elements.

And so the caveat discussion is probably still a – to a certain extent, not only and academic one – we can lead this caveat discussion, more or less, with any single partner within NATO. At one time, we have also looked for caveats within the American strategy, as such, and we, surprisingly, found some. And I think it's – but this is one of those things where we – what I stressed before was mutual finger pointing.

I think we should be much clearer about the substance we are offering, and I think the Germans are offering quite a lot of substance, specifically in the RC-North. And maybe just to add one point, the question why are you not part of the southern part of Afghanistan has really not played a role any longer during the last weeks, I know, in the position now.

MS. CONLEY: Yes, the gentleman right there.

Q: Thank you very much. My name is Zaitsef al-Hashimi (ph) from Voice of America Afghanistan service. I had two questions. First of all, regarding future commitments of Germany in Afghanistan, if you're going to deploy more troops in Afghanistan, where will they be stationed and will they be doing combat or not, or only training? And the second question is, what's your thoughts on Gen. McChrystal's recent reports on Afghanistan, and especially when it comes to increasing troops in Afghanistan? Thanks.

MR. GUTTENBERG: The first question was wisely said, and please don't expect an answer. (Laughter.) Because the decision has not been made yet. And the decision – specifically, the second part of your question – where, exactly, will German troops be in the future – can only be part of answering the first one. And the first one, as I said before, will be answered yes or no after the Afghanistan conference. So that's where we are right now.

But I said that we are willing and probably also capable to reassess our existing mandate. But it depends on the substance we see then and we will have delivered this time. On McChrystal's concept, I clearly understand his concept, not only as one that focuses on numbers of troops, but that gives also an indication that there is much more to cover. And this is why I work on, specifically, the civilian means he's offering in his concept.

And I am very much in favor of the clear perspective on regional topics and regional ties he wants to build and build up. What – in respect of the numbers he is offering now, getting to the troop numbers, and getting to those numbers he wants to see trained in the future, let's call it ambitious. It's quite a number.

MS. CONLEY: Thank you. There was a gentleman way in the back – you guys.

Q: Christoph von Marschall from the German daily Der Tagesspiegel. I would like to come back to the German influence on the decision-making on the future strategy in Afghanistan. Of course, I understand one side, which you already elaborated on – we are all partners in the alliance, equal terms, so everybody has a say in it.

On the other hand, the ratio of the burden is shifting to the – not to Europe's side. At the beginning of this year, we had a ratio of soldiers 1-to-1, U.S. on one side, all other NATO partners together. At the moment, we are at 2/3-to-1/3. Next year, we will be probably around 70-to-75 percent American troops, only one-quarter European troops. And in Germany, we the – (inaudible) – same in the United States – who pays the bills had a little bit more say than the other guys. And how does this shift of burden-sharing influence the decision-making?

MR. GUTTENBERG: Thank you, Herr von Marschall. There's, certainly, let's say, an earlier decision of the future strategy by the U.S. than, for instance, by some European partners, and specifically by Germany. One of the reasons may be the timelines we are in and that a new government has just formed.

The question whether and how to handle this and what it could also mean for the institutions that are – that form the rooftop over this operations there, is, I think, still unresolved because we have no clue, yet under which kind of missions the Americans will deploy more troops? Yes or no? What will be part of ISAF; what will be part of OEF, for instance? And the decision within NATO is one that has to be linked to ISAF, clearly.

And then we will probably have an intense and hopefully substantive discussion at the beginning of December within the NATO council, which is taking place, I think, the 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> of December. And I think there's a good chance – I don't know it yet – but there's a good chance that we may see a decision of the U.S. before.

So this has to be taken into account and the willingness and the ability of any troop numbers is, I think, not only guided by the principle who is sending the most is the one who can put endless pressure on others to cohere on the same level there. I think it's a question whether a partner state is exceptionally able and capable to do so. And instead, we find – that we find it in coherence with our principles and with things we need to manage up to this time.

So the discussion will be – one part of the discussion will be starting within the NATO structures at the beginning of December, and this will also be one of the cornerstones for any of the decisions that have to be made afterwards.

MS. CONLEY: Thank you. There's a gentleman right here?

Q: I'm Jerry Livingston from the German Historical Institute. Mr. Minister, may I thank you for your straightforwardness in your talk and in the answers to the questions, at least so far. Let me take you away from Afghanistan and ask you something about the EU-NATO relationship.

When President Obama abandoned the proposed missile defense shield in Poland and Czechoslovakia, he rushed Vice President Biden off to Poland and Czechoslovakia to reassure them. What would you say if the U.S. government came to you as an EU state and said, primary responsibility for the defense and security policy of Eastern Europe should be in the hands of the

EU? After all, that's your front yard, that's your bailiwick and that's where the EU should live up the responsibility to which you referred in your talk.

MR. GUTTENBERG: Thank you very much. I think the EU is taking over more and more responsibility in different structures and with different structures. And, nevertheless, nevertheless, we should not minimize the existing structures of NATO, and those countries you have just talked about are member states of NATO. And if we understand the NATO structures correctly, defense and deterrence are still main pillars within NATO. So it could be seen, at least equally, as a platform to act and to react.

Nevertheless, I think the decision was an understandable and also wise decision because the discussion and debate about missile defense under the last administration here in the U.S. has caused – let's call it disturbances – within Europe and also within those countries involved in it.

And if I now look at the new missile defense strategy, I see a responsible and I think also understandable path. We are marching together, and if we find a way – and this will be also part of the discussions for next year – to tie it to NATO structures – this new missile defense issue – then it could be in the benefit for all of us.

And the European Union, again, is trying to find and to formulate and also to act in defense structures that show growing responsibility but that are showing still also certain deficits, of course. And, again, the relationship between NATO and EU still needs to find stable grounds.

If you all recall the Berlin Plus arrangement and we all recall how difficult it can be from time to time, if in both areas – NATO and EU – there are still some partners, like Greece, like Cyprus and like Turkey, for instance, to try to find their playing grounds within the responsibilities that we should see in another dimension.

MS. CONLEY: Thank you. Reggie?

Q: Hello, I'm Reggie Dale, CSIS. My question actually follows almost directly on from what you've just said. The EU is at this very moment – I don't know if the dinner is still going on in Brussels – but they are in the process of implementing the institutional changes agreed under the Lisbon treaty. And once they've done that and there is a president of the European Council and a high representative for foreign and security policy.

In the security field, will that help to have a more increased cooperation inside the EU? Will it help to have a voice to talk to the United States, which, perhaps, expresses a more coherent EU policy? And will it help in resolving this question of the relations between EU and NATO?

MR. GUTTENBERG: Thank you very much. Well, the matter of coherence is one that depends on the willingness of 27 member states. And in that regard, everyone who has the instruments to coordinate properly will be highly welcome. And I don't have to stress the, again, again, quoted in cited sentence of the phone number in Europe, again and again, as well. And

the person who is tied to that sentence denies that he has ever said that – (chuckles, laughter) – but there could be one of those. And I think it could be seen as being helpful.

I have just attended a couple of days ago within the last gasps of these structures, a defense and foreign ministers' meeting – or, foreign and defense ministers meeting, to say it correctly – (laughter) – in Brussels, where we had introductory remarks by Anders Rasmussen, by Javier Solana and by Benito Ferrero Waldner. What an interesting scenery. And how interesting the substance of those introductory remarks; everybody very cautious, not too undermined, all just to undermine the respective part.

And if those structures could be a bit more effective, I think it would be in the benefit for all of us that the rumors I've just heard on – I think it was last on the Blackberry of the ambassador – but there was just rumors that Mrs. Ashton is being seen as the next foreign – or, the first foreign minister of the EU. I cannot clarify it yet but, also, quite a surprise – (inaudible, off mike).

AMB. KLAUS SCHARIOTH: That's why I showed it to you! (Chuckles, laughter.) And I still try to understand the last tactical moves of the Brits during the last couple of days. (Laughter.)

MR. GUTTENBERG: But I think it's good news, and it should be seen as a chance.

MR. CONLEY: Mr. Minister, I think we're going to have to allow one more question because I won't do the first part of my job, which is keeping you on time, if we take much more. Ma'am, we'll have you have the last question.

Q: Thank you. Welcome, Mr. Minister, to Washington, D.C. Congratulations on your new assignment. My name is Zorica Maric and I am defense counselor at the Embassy of Montenegro in the Defense Attaché Office.

You pointed out rightly that there is a geostrategic shift and that Europe and Germany are looking towards some other directions, as well, for operational alliances. You mentioned transpacific relationship. And obviously, there are not only shared values but also shared interests that we all have to look at.

Still, coming from the Western Balkans – from Montenegro – transatlantic relationships are the most important for us, and we see them as the framework of security in a near and medium-term future. How do you see – could you please be so kind and elaborate? How do you see the extension of NATO, and the collective security and peril for Europe in the near term? Thank you very much.

MR. GUTTENBERG: Thank you very much. I do emphasize, again, the importance of the transatlantic relation, also in respect to what I've said to the transpacific sphere we're talking about.

On expansion of NATO, we have had – the discussions we have had in respect of Georgia and Ukraine; we have the results we have found, and, let’s say, an interesting way of handling some of, let’s say, the accession structures of NATO.

When it comes to other expansive next steps within NATO, there is an ongoing discussion of whether to offer MAP – for instance, to Montenegro and also Bosnia-Herzegovina. I do have the expectation that at least one of those two countries has a certain chance to have MAP offered, at least – maybe also in the next meeting we are going to have.

Nevertheless, I see on one hand, very hopeful and very good signals in the Western Balkans. In different parts of the Western Balkans, I also see a certain amount of stagnation. And some – let’s say some hopes we have had so far have not been fulfilled yet. And, specifically, when it comes to constitution-building; when it comes to police-building and other things, and sort of question whether – for instance, in Bosnia, we need to keep the OHR, yes or no? And this will be one of the discussions, for instance, for the next weeks and months to come.

The expansion of NATO is one that has to be clearly bound to criteria, and we have to meet those criteria. And those who seek membership in NATO need to fulfill those criteria. Again, this is a very boring answer to a very difficult question, and I certainly recall the difficulties we have had on both sides of the Atlantic when it came to explain how euphoric we need to be, specifically with Georgia and Ukraine. And it’s probably not the last discussion we have led in that way, but it certainly was one of the discussions I have enjoyed today in this very specific round here. Thank you.

MS. CONLEY: Mr. Minister, thank you so much for your candid conversation and we so appreciated having you here on a very quick trip to Washington, and we look forward to welcoming you back many times.

If I can just ask that everyone remain seated until the minister and the delegation depart, and then we thank you all for coming and being with us here at CSIS today. Would you please join me in giving a round of applause to the minister? (Applause.)

(END)