



**CSIS European Trilateral Nuclear Dialogue**  
**2014 Consensus Statement**  
January 14, 2015

In an effort to increase trilateral nuclear dialogue among the United States, France, and Great Britain, the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) established a group of high-level nuclear experts to discuss nuclear issues and to identify areas of consensus among the three countries. From 2009-2014, the dialogue has hosted three meetings a year (one in each nation's capital) and produced consensus policy statements signed by nongovernmental participants in order to promote trilateral understanding of the nuclear challenges facing the P-3. In 2014, the group's discussion has addressed a range of issues in the Euro-Atlantic security environment and beyond. For example, it has:

- Provided regular updates on official policy development in each capital
- Explored opportunities for strengthening cooperation for deterrence in future crises under the nuclear shadow
- Examined potential proliferation pathways in the Middle East and Northeast Asia and associated concerns
- Assessed future prospects for arms control and disarmament in light of changing international circumstances

On the issues below, discussants agreed that their deliberations were sufficiently mature to warrant the following statements reflecting the consensus views of the undersigned.

**Russia**

- Developments in Russian policy and posture in 2014 represent a clear challenge to the West and call for a significant reevaluation of national and NATO approaches. Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea, its destabilization of parts of eastern Ukraine, and the disregard by Moscow of a number of international agreements, including the Budapest 1994 memorandum and the Helsinki Principles, raise major issues. We have examined Russia's robust program of simultaneously modernizing its strategic nuclear triad, its continued maintenance of a large stockpile of shorter-range nuclear weapons, and its newly revealed development of a system which violates the landmark Cold War Intermediate Nuclear Forces (INF) treaty (whose continued implementation is important to global stability). Serious concerns arise from this large investment, coupled with exercises of Russian nuclear forces very publicly presided over by President Putin (and which feature thinly disguised exercise attacks on NATO member states), the sharp increase in the use of Russian nuclear-capable bombers to probe the airspace of NATO and other countries during 2014, and public statements by President Putin and other senior Russian officials intended to remind the Alliance of Russia's nuclear weapons capabilities.
- In the current crisis Moscow is clearly and provocatively using its nuclear arsenal as an instrument of psychological intimidation, including its large non-strategic nuclear capability. This pattern is entirely incompatible with post-Cold War Helsinki norms and undermines stability across the entire Euro-Atlantic area. Against the background of



Russia's aggression in the Ukraine, it is an ominous indication that threats of nuclear escalation may be used to support future hybrid, conventional and sub-conventional, adventures against neighbors. Senior elements of the Russian government may have come to believe that nuclear weapons are, in fact, useful options whose early use in a conventional war could deliver strategic or political advantage when, in fact, precisely the opposite effect would probably occur.

### **NATO Nuclear Policy**

- The ongoing crisis caused by Russia's belligerent actions against Ukraine has focused NATO's attention on the security threat to the Alliance's eastern borders and led NATO, at its September summit in Wales, to take several measures to enhance its deterrent against Russian adventurism and increase assurances to its eastern members. The Russian threat to NATO which emerged in 2014 not only features newly improved conventional forces and modernized nuclear forces but also the new phenomenon of "hybrid warfare", in which regular and irregular forces are used in disguised ways to destabilize and occupy other countries. While the actions taken at Wales testify to NATO's strengthened sense of purpose, Alliance leaders did not formulate a longer-term strategy needed to manage the new security challenges posed by Russia. It also did not address how NATO should respond to Russia's increased reliance on nuclear weapons in its security strategy. Russian actions in NATO's immediate environment since the Wales summit (increased air, sea, and land border provocations) are an additional reason why a longer-term strategy is needed.
- While NATO has reaffirmed its *declaratory* nuclear deterrent policy at its last three Summits (2010, 2012, and 2014), for the post Cold War period the Alliance has downplayed its nuclear force *posture* based on the hope that in so doing NATO would encourage Russia similarly to reduce the role played by nuclear weapons in Russian security policy. As we have indicated above, that hope has been dashed.
- We believe NATO must implement its commitments to ensure nuclear deterrence is effective and aligned with current security requirements. It is important, both to reassure Alliance members of the extended deterrent nature of the Article V guarantee and "for allies concerned" to regain proficiency in the procedural, planning and operational aspects which make the NATO deterrent credible, that NATO renews focus on these critical areas. Such activities should be carried out in a manner entirely unlike those displayed by the Russian Federation: they should be low-key but still visible, but they should, in their design and execution, bring about demonstrably increased proficiency in headquarters staffs and operational units. The Allies should also examine how the classic concept of "nuclear burden-sharing" might be adapted to the current context.

### **Engaging the Younger Generation in NATO**

- We are all beneficiaries of a legacy passed on to us by our predecessors. In this regard, in addition to formulating its new approach for countering Russian expansionism and nuclear diplomacy, NATO also needs to educate a new generation of NATO citizens to



ensure the domestic support needed to sustain the effective execution of its collective strategy. The responsibility for ensuring the inter-generational passage of the underlying security consensus that is the bedrock of the Transatlantic Alliance has always been and still is an enduring challenge and needs to be addressed in this rapidly changing security environment.

- Between a quarter and a third of the populations of NATO member countries is under 25 years of age and have little, if any, memory of the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union. Nor have they experienced the acute insecurity that was caused by the existential threat posed by the massive Soviet Cold War nuclear arsenal, a threat so severe it justified over 7,000 U.S. non-strategic nuclear weapons deployed in Europe. While NATO has declared repeatedly, most recently in its 2012 Deterrence and Defense Posture Review, that it "remains a nuclear alliance," significant portions of NATO's population, including citizens within P3 nations, do not understand what that means, much less the kind of "nuclear burden-sharing" necessary for a credible deterrent. NATO has just begun to formulate a longer-term strategy, but the challenge of educating and engaging the younger generation remains. We urge NATO's Secretary General to establish an Alliance-wide initiative that will focus national leaders on the need to involve their next-generation citizens and help them understand the security challenges facing the Alliance and the responsibilities they must embrace in addressing those challenges.

### **Improved P3 Cooperation on Nuclear Strategy and Policy**

- During the past two years, much of the focus of P3 cooperation on nuclear policy has been in the P5 context, as the United States, the United Kingdom and France have tried to draw Russia and China into a more transparent and collaborative relationship on nuclear strategy and arms control. Although some limited progress had been achieved (for example, in the effort to develop with China a common lexicon of nuclear terminology) Russia's nuclear diplomacy over the same period of time has become more bellicose and threatening. While the Wales summit addressed the non-nuclear dimensions of Russia's aggression towards Eastern Europe, it was conspicuously silent about Russia's trumpeting of its nuclear capabilities and noted only that NATO aspires "to a cooperative, constructive relationship with Russia...and increased mutual understanding of NATO's and Russia's non-strategic nuclear force postures in Europe"<sup>1</sup>.
- Efforts in the arms control arena are unlikely to be productive in the near term. Rather, the P3 must lead a dialogue in the Alliance about how NATO should adapt its military strategy and nuclear policy to deal with the nuclear dimension of Russia's new assertiveness. Among other things, a communications strategy is needed to articulate the critical contributions to collective security made by British and French nuclear forces and forward-deployed American non-strategic nuclear forces.

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<sup>1</sup> Wales Summit Declaration, Press Release, Sept. 5, 2014:  
[http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official\\_texts\\_112964.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_112964.htm)



### **North Korea**

- After discussing North Korea for several years, we have now concluded that the question of North Korea's nuclear capability is transitioning from one of preventing/rolling back proliferation to one of learning to deter and manage a prickly, hard-to-fathom nuclear armed state. Furthermore, we cannot conceive of circumstances in which the current North Korean regime would voluntarily relinquish its nuclear weapons capability. Rather, we fear that Pyongyang will in the future incorporate nuclear intimidation and blackmail into its already massive capability to threaten its neighbors with conventional, chemical, biological, and unconventional warfare. As a result, we believe the time has come to concentrate on how to deter North Korean nuclear use, nuclear blackmail and onward proliferation, and to review and learn from those scenarios in which Pyongyang might consider employing nuclear weapons.

### **Preparing for the NPT Review Conference**

- Pressing security matters, such as the Ukrainian crisis and the rise of ISIS in Syria and Iraq, have demanded P3 attention and pushed aside the NPT agenda, which had taken center stage in 2010 and achieved considerable success at the May 3-28, 2010 RevCon. However, there are several issues, including the status of efforts to convene a meeting on the Middle East WMD free zone (as called for at the 2010 RevCon), and to a negotiated agreement on the Iranian nuclear program, as well as the momentum of the Humanitarian Consequences movement, which are likely to increase the risk of a difficult RevCon meeting in April/May 2015 that could adversely affect P3 interest in a strong and reliable NPT regime. As a consequence, the undersigned urge their governments to engage intensively and rapidly with each other and agree on a strategy that addresses these and other challenges that may emerge at next year's RevCon meeting.
- As part of a more proactive stance, the P3 need to develop a more compelling approach to counter the effort, led most recently by the Humanitarian Consequences movement, to delegitimize nuclear weapons and the deterrent provided by them. While acknowledging that Russia's actions in Crimea and Ukraine and political turmoil in the Middle East have disappointed expectations raised by the 2010 successes, the same negative trends underscore the continued need for an effective, credible NPT and the basic soundness of a step by step approach toward the goal of a much more secure world in which nuclear disarmament may be possible. In a security environment that is palpably more disordered and chaotic than it was just five years ago, the P3 need to state strongly at next year's NPT Review Conference why their policies promote regional and global security. They should explain their efforts to create the conditions that would permit further reduction in the role and number of their nuclear weapons and the difficulties of achieving those conditions. They should make the case that a step-by-step approach is the only practical approach to fulfilling the long-term vision.
- We acknowledge that the P3 and Russia (as well as China) can have convergent objective interests at the RevCon. However, in light of developments since 2010, and in particular since the illegal annexation of Crimea, we should make it clear that P3 (or P4 with China, if achievable) solidarity remains a priority.

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