

17 May 2010

His Excellency Mr Anders Fogh Rasmussen  
Secretary General  
North Atlantic Treaty Organization

Secretary General:

As Chair and Vice-Chair, we hereby transmit the final report of the Group of Experts.

At the April 2009 Strasbourg/Kehl Summit, the Heads of State and Government of the Alliance tasked you with developing a new Strategic Concept and requested that you appoint a group of qualified experts to consult widely and provide advice for you. Our analysis and recommendations are submitted for your consideration as you develop a new Strategic Concept for approval by Heads of State and Government in Lisbon this November.

On behalf of our colleagues, we will begin by saying that our participation in the Group has been both challenging and encouraging. We conclude that the North Atlantic Treaty Organization has reason to enter the second decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century with confidence. NATO remains without peer, a powerful military alliance that has safeguarded and promoted the democratic values of its members. It provides a crucial link binding North America and Europe.

The world has changed since the last Strategic Concept was adopted in 1999, and the Alliance has changed with it. It has for the first time invoked its core security guarantee in the aftermath of the attacks on the United States of September 11, 2001; taken on an important mission far from its territory, where it works alongside civilian and military partners from around the globe; grown to twenty-eight member states; undertaken important initiatives in improving its ability to deploy and sustain forces; and learned from and adapted its post-conflict missions in the Balkans. A new Strategic Concept is needed to draw from these experiences the doctrines that will guide the Alliance for the next decade and beyond.

Our Group concludes that NATO must be versatile and efficient enough to operate far from home, generally in robust partnerships, and well beyond what was anticipated in 1999. This can involve military operations but also active engagement, including consultations, practical programs of cooperation, crisis management, and support for efforts such as non-proliferation, arms control. In order to sustain the political will for operations outside its area, NATO must see that all its members are reassured about the security of their home territories. We see these missions as complementary and intertwined.

In short, NATO must be prepared to assure all its members that they will be secure against the full range of possible threats, whether they emerge from afar or from unfavorable developments in the Euro-Atlantic region. The combination of *assured security* at home and *dynamic engagement* abroad will be NATO's touchstone in the decades to come.

In this regard, our Group emphasizes the importance of public support for NATO operations, especially when the Alliance is committing resources and lives far from the territory of NATO's member states.

The Group's conclusions draw on an intensive program of work, which sought to be transparent and inclusive. The Group of Experts participated in four formal seminars, in Luxembourg, Slovenia, Norway, and the United States, and as a group also attended special sessions in the Czech Republic and Russia. At each meeting, outside experts (totalling several hundred) were invited to make presentations and engage with the Group on issues facing the Alliance. As members of the Group, we consulted with governments, legislatures, and other interested institutions across the Alliance before completing the report. We benefited from invaluable inputs from the NATO military authorities. We also consulted with NATO partners from Europe, the Mediterranean, the Gulf, and around the globe, as well as other international organizations, especially the United Nations, the European Union and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. The Secretariat solicited additional views from meetings and web-based discussions hosted by think tanks and universities, and NATO's website allowed for additional participation. It is difficult to come to a final number of people involved, but the Secretariat estimates that thousands of people from across the Alliance and elsewhere were invited to participate in Group activities, and – through the outreach and internet access provided – the opportunity was open to all.

We will close the letter by thanking you, Mr. Secretary General, for the consultative and friendly spirit in which you have worked with the Group since the summer of 2009. We have operated independently, but the support provided by the Secretariat, especially by Jamie Shea and the Policy Planning Unit, and by you personally has been invaluable.

With this submission, the formal work of the Group of Experts comes to an end. We can assure you, however, that we and our colleagues intend to remain active and vocal as the Strategic Concept is developed, considered, and adopted by the member states. As you take on the task of proposing that concept, you have our promise of our assistance and support.

Sincerely,

Madeleine K. Albright  
Chair

Jeroen van der Veer  
Vice Chair