



The Ukraine Crisis

and the End of the Post-Cold War European Order:
Options for NATO and the EU



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Resume

The Ukraine Crisis has changed European and US security policy. Irrespective of the impact the crisis will have in the short, medium and long term, the Russian intervention in Ukraine, the annexation of Crimea and the subsequent destabilisation of eastern Ukraine will have far-reaching consequences for the following three reasons:

- It will reduce strategic warning due to Russia's will and ability to use armed force in its neighbouring area.
- It is apparently the definitive Russian departure from the idea of a united, free Europe that began with the Helsinki Process and was realised with the integration of economies and societies after the end of the Cold War. An important element in the idea of a united, free Europe is that conflicts must be resolved by peaceful means and not by force of arms.
- It demonstrates that a number of the partnerships, etc., that have formed the foundation for EU and NATO policies, have been inadequate. Therefore, the crisis creates a need to rethink Western strategy.

In the light of this new risk, the West's existing policy is inadequate. This does not necessarily mean that the policy hitherto has been mistaken, and it absolutely does not mean that we are facing a new Cold War. However, the West must realise that Russian governance does not have the same general goals as those of the West.

Although the West can thus in the short term be content to overcome the crisis, the consequences for the European security policy framework in the medium and long term will be appreciable.

These consequences will apply not least to the West itself because the crisis has revealed differences in priorities among the Western powers and challenged the world view that the West's policy has been based on. Furthermore, the West must acknowledge that Russia is willing to use military means to accomplish its goals. This presents EU foreign policy in particular with a number of fundamental challenges and means that NATO must rethink and thoroughly reconsider its obligations under Article 5, especially with regard to the East European member states, where the Baltic States are particularly vulnerable.

Recommendations

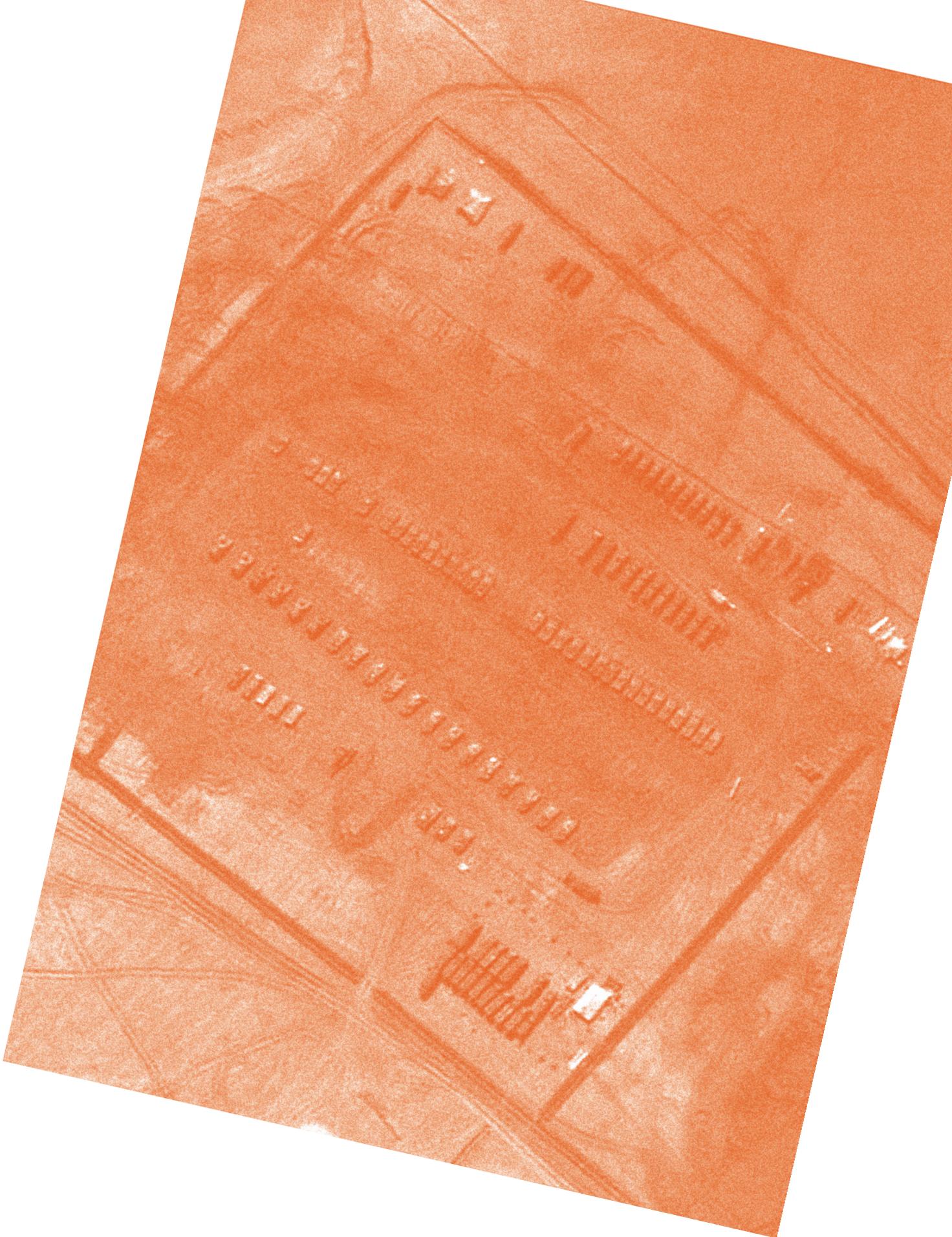
NATO should adopt a declaration on **transatlantic solidarity**, which explicitly mentions the Baltic States and is followed up by concrete initiatives such as making NATO's Baltic Air Policing a permanent mission.

NATO should adopt a declaration that obliges the European countries to increase their **defence budgets to 2 per cent** of GDP within 15 years.

Partnerships must be reconsidered in a more dynamic form. Firstly, a clearer distinction must be made between types of partnership with particular emphasis on partnerships in neighbouring areas. Secondly, NATO must arrive at a more strategic view of how partnerships can in the long term contribute to NATO's security by developing institutions and capacities in certain partner countries. How NATO will commit to the individual partnerships and how partnerships place partners under an obligation during crises must be made far clearer.

A **NATO-EU task force** should be established, which would coordinate the policies of the two organisations with regard to Russia in order to strengthen cooperation between the organisations.

NATO should make energy independence part of its **defence planning process** to give European countries a goal for the extent to which they should reduce their dependence on Russia for energy supplies. An initiative of this kind would have to be carefully coordinated with the EU.



Introduction

In Europe the post-Cold War period ended on 28 February 2014. Historians have discussed when the Cold War ended: was it when the Berlin Wall fell on 9 November 1989, when the Warsaw Pact closed shop in 1991, or when the Soviet Union broke down during the same year? Historians will also discuss whether 28 February 2014 marked the beginning of a new epoch of security policy in European history. Historians have these discussions because such events are the culmination of a series of events and the beginning of something new. It can be difficult to decide whether a given event is a precondition for something new or is something new in itself. When Russia's President Vladimir Putin ordered Russian troops to enter Crimea as his response to the Ukrainian revolution, which had recently ousted the Ukrainian president and placed Ukraine's geopolitical position at risk, it was one of those types of event in which the spring of history was wound up and then released to set a new chain of events in motion.

In other countries, the terrorist attacks in the United States on 11 September 2001 were the event that ended the post-Cold War period. From an American perspective, the attacks defined a new security policy agenda that triggered a series of events in Asia and the Middle East that marked 11 September 2001 as the beginning of a new epoch, rather than the breakdown of the Soviet empire. In East Asia, globalisation and the consequent economic growth in China have dictated the agenda over the past two decades. While these events have not gone unnoticed in Europe, they have not shaped European policy, which is one of the reasons why Europeans and Americans have not always seen eye to eye about what the central challenges were and how they should be tackled. The fact that Europe committed to the so-called war on terror was chiefly because nobody felt that there were more pressing problems of security policy closer to home. As the Americans pushed for a more global European commitment, it was also based to a great extent on the slogan that 'Europe was finished'¹ in the sense that the expansion of the EU and NATO after the Cold War had resulted in a stable security environment on the Continent.

However, this argument no longer held water on 28 February 2014. Historians will continue to discuss which factors provoked it. Was it the EU that had recklessly overplayed its hand by offering Ukraine an association agreement that raised hopes on the streets of Kiev, but

also threatened Russian interests and therefore led to a situation in which Russia felt it had to save what it could of its assets when the regime in Kiev fell? Was the rapid deployment of Russian special forces in Crimea actually the realisation of a long-standing plan to reconquer lost territory when the opportunity arose? Irrespective of which factors triggered the concrete events, the Russian annexation of Crimea and the subsequent destabilisation of Ukraine will have far-reaching consequences on the following three grounds:

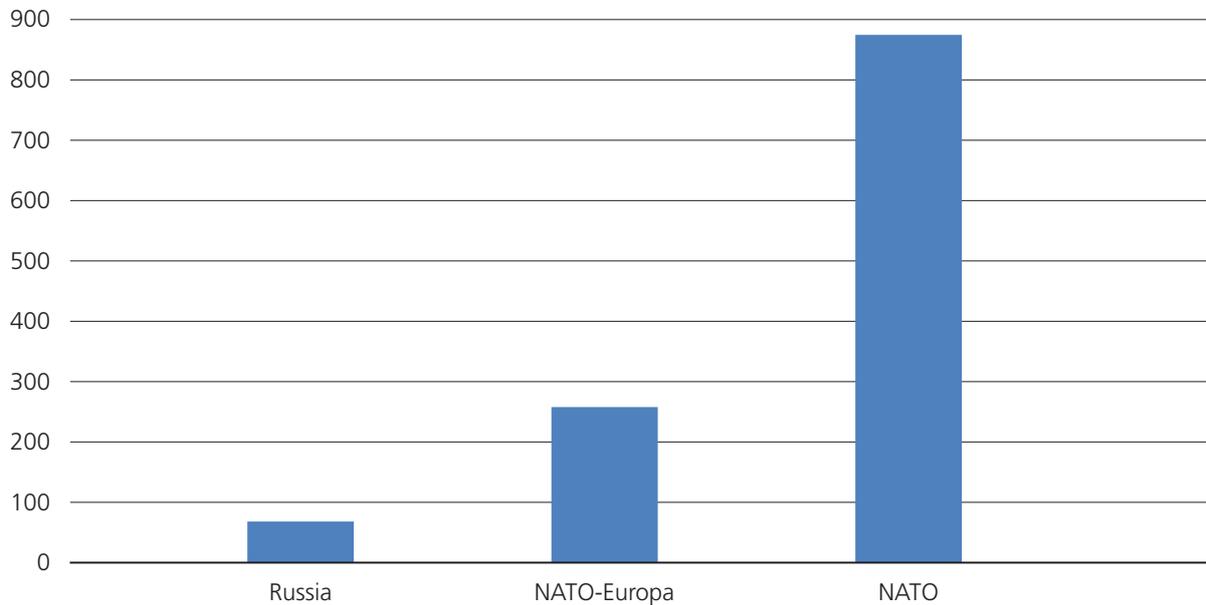
- It will reduce strategic warning due to Russia's will and ability to use armed force in its neighbouring area.
- It is apparently the definitive Russian departure from the idea of a united, free Europe that began with the Helsinki Process and was realised with the integration of economies and societies after the end of the Cold War. An important element in the idea of a united, free Europe is that conflicts must be resolved by peaceful means and not by force of arms.
- The events demonstrate that a number of the partnerships, etc., that have formed the foundation for EU and NATO policies, have been inadequate. Therefore, the crisis creates a need to rethink Western strategy.

Therefore, the post-Cold War era has now ended. The historians of the future will discuss whether there was an inter-war period between the Cold War and the Cold War Light² or whether it was a transition to a balance of power system in Europe with Russia attempting to establish its own Eurasian bloc, possibly in an alliance with China.

- One thing that is certain, however, is that this is *not* a question of a new Cold War along the lines of the conflict between the West and the Soviet Union that lasted from the 1940s to the 1980s. There are several fundamental differences, namely:
- It is not a question of an ideological confrontation in which the parties represent ideological alternatives that are relevant for the development of each party's society. The Russian state ideology formulated by Putin is not a product that can be exported, even though the citizens of some other countries may agree on such matters as anti-Americanism, and even

Defence spending in Russia, NATO Europe and NATO USA i 2013 (mia. USD)

Figure 1



Source: IISS The Military Balance 2014

though some sectors of the European right wing are impressed by Putin's leadership.

- The new confrontation is not a confrontation between two different ideologies but is, in the words of US president Barack Obama, a confrontation between two different types of governance.
- Russia is integrated into the global economy, which was not the case with the chiefly separate economic system that the Soviet Union and its allies operated with during the Cold War.
- There is no corresponding high level of mobilisation due to rivalling military alliances in which the basic conflict of the Cold War could heat up at short notice with the risk of a global nuclear war.
- Due to the factors above, there are many more and more comprehensive opportunities for a softening of the conflict.

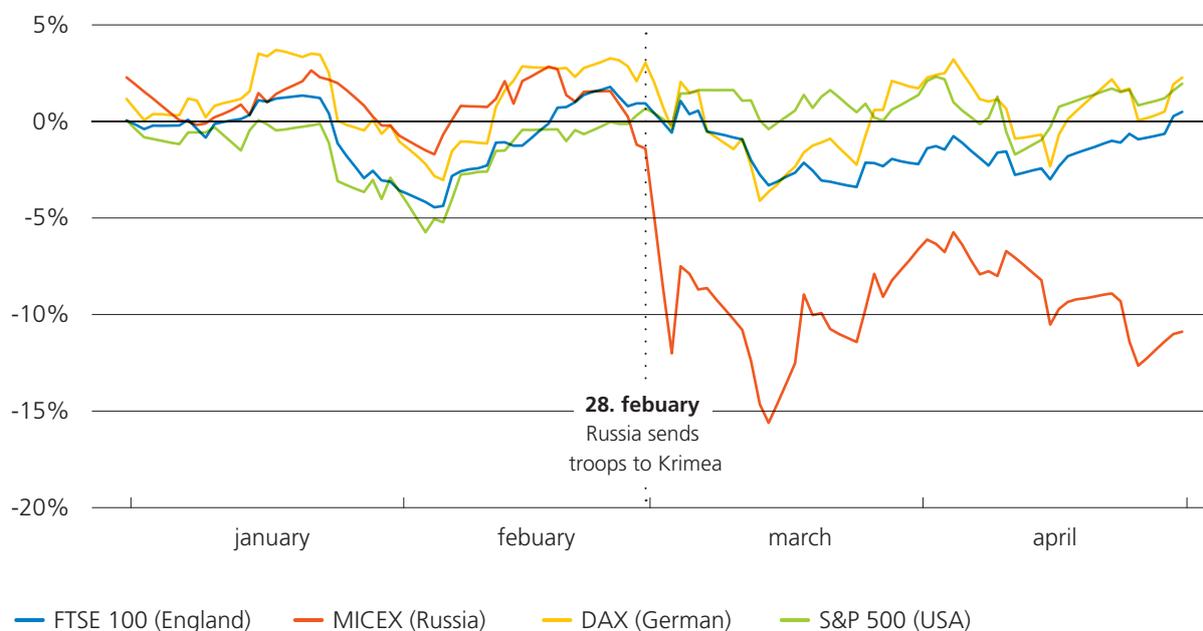
Putin's Russia is thus far less of a military, economic and political threat than the Soviet Union was. This comes not least to expression in NATO's overwhelming military superiority as shown in figure 1. In a direct conventional confrontation, NATO would in all probability be able to defeat Russian forces. However, it is Russia that has

so far used this asymmetry to its advantage. John R. Schindler calls this Special War and it consists of using military forces in combination with intelligence operations and similar measures, just under the military horizon,³ so Russia has been able to just avoid a direct confrontation with the West. Instead, Russia has struck in places where Western interests and intentions were unclear and where its intervention did not justify a military response from the West. During negotiations in Geneva, Russia even acquired a diplomatic framework for its continued involvement in Ukraine on the pretext of intending to stabilise the situation.

Deprived in this way of its obvious military advantage, the West has had fewer cards to play. While the debate in the West dealt with which risks the allies were prepared to run in relation to Russia, Russia has simply run risks on the assumption that the West would be unable to respond before it was too late. That the intervention in Crimea constituted a considerable risk for Russia was clearly indicated by the reaction on the Moscow stock exchange in February-March 2014. The fear of sanctions and repercussions with regard to the Russian economy triggered a dramatic fall in share prices while the reaction on the West European stock

Stock market reactions to the Russian occupation of Crimea, early 2014

Figure 2



Source: <http://concorde.ua/en/research/market-data/indices>

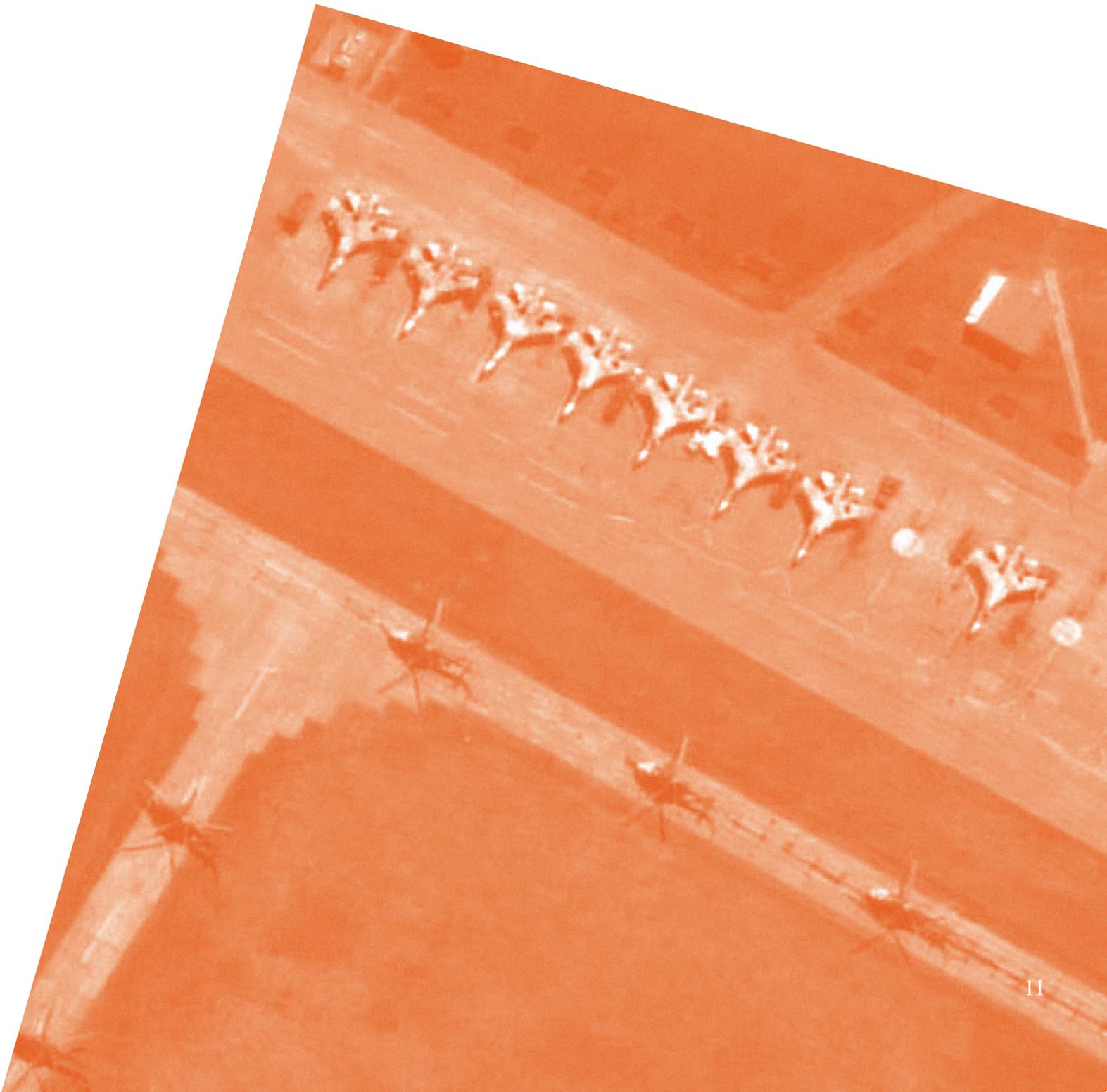
exchanges was far less dramatic. However, they were more aware of the risk to the European economy if gas supplies were influenced than was the case with the New York stock exchange where, in an economy that is not dependent on Russian energy supplies, the crisis had little influence. These different reactions showed that Russia basically runs a greater risk in connection with a conflict than the West does. However, on the other hand, it showed that Russian investors had decided that the Russian Government could get away with its policy – perhaps because of Western investors’ recognition of the fact that what was happening in Ukraine was not decisive for the West and its economy.⁴

It is appropriate in this connection to differentiate between vulnerability and sensitivity.⁵ The dramatic reaction on the Moscow stock exchange reflected the fact that the Russian economy is structurally vulnerable because of its great dependence on energy exports. A boycott on Russian energy imports would therefore have serious consequences. The European economies are sensitive to changes in oil prices or restrictions on Russian oil imports due to sanctions. Some Western

companies are also vulnerable with regard to developments in relations between Russia and the West because they have major investments in Russia. This differentiation between sensitivity and vulnerability illustrates a difference in risks in the short and long term respectively. In the long term, Russia runs the greatest risk because the European countries can reorganise their energy infrastructures to reduce their dependence on Russian energy. However, it would require time to make these changes and the West therefore runs the greatest risk in the short term. This gives Russia time to play its energy card in the situation and hope that Europeans will not reorganise their energy consumption in the long term. The requirement for risk management is therefore greater for Europeans, who must tackle risks in the short and long term, than it is for the Russians.

Although there is thus every reason to keep calm, it is also necessary to take into account that the present confrontation with Russia could be serious and could constitute a geostrategic challenge in itself. This report deals with the consequences of the Ukraine Crisis for Western countries security and defence policy and, as

this policy is to a great extent shaped by the requirements and options consequent on memberships of NATO and the EU, the analysis of what the crisis means for these two organisations plays a central role in the report. Finally, the report outlines the possible consequences for the Western strategy. However, we focus first on the factor that triggered the crisis, namely Putin's policy.



Putin's world

After a telephone conversation with Putin at the beginning of March 2014, the German Chancellor, Angela Merkel, informed her allies that the Russian president took a completely different view of events in Ukraine than she did – he appeared to be living in “a different world”.⁶ On the face of things, this remark could seem like a naive expression of surprise from the head of a trading state who had spoken on the telephone to a president with other, more militaristic priorities. Seen from this perspective, the chancellor would appear to have confirmed the idea that Europeans are from Venus while Americans – and Russians – are from Mars.⁷ However, perhaps the point Merkel was making was not that she could not understand the other world that Putin lives in but, on the contrary, that she understood it all too well. This was not simply a conversation between a chancellor and a president, it was also a conversation between a former citizen of the DDR and a former KGB agent who had been stationed in the DDR.

Putin has made the regeneration of the Russian nation his project. For him, the end of the Cold War and the breakdown of the Soviet Union was a defeat for Russia rather than a victory for democracy over communism. In March 2014, 63 per cent of Russians agreed with the president that Russia had regained its status as a superpower according to an opinion poll conducted by the Russian Levada Centre, which could also report that 80 per cent of Russians approved of Putin's policy.⁸

In justifying the annexation of Crimea in a speech at the Kremlin on 18 March 2014, the president took his point of departure in an international situation that he claimed made it necessary to act strongly and swiftly:

Like a mirror, the situation in Ukraine reflects what is going on and what has been happening in the world over the last several decades. After the dissolution of bipolarity on the planet, we no longer have stability. Key international institutions are not getting any stronger; on the contrary, in many cases, they are sadly degrading. Our Western partners, led by the United States of America, prefer not to be guided by international law in their practical policies, but by the rule of the gun.⁹

From Putin's point of view, the United States and its allies had done whatever lay within their power from Kosovo to Iraq, in spite of international law and Russia's wishes. Therefore, he had nothing left but contempt for the West's protests over Russia's actions in Crimea. By acting “irresponsibly and unprofessionally” in Ukraine, the West had infringed Russia's rights and thus triggered the Russian reaction, according to Putin, who, in Russian strategy documents and in his speech at the Kremlin, listed the West's violations of Russian interests at length. Taken together, these violations amounted to a strategy in Putin's view: “we have every reason to assume that

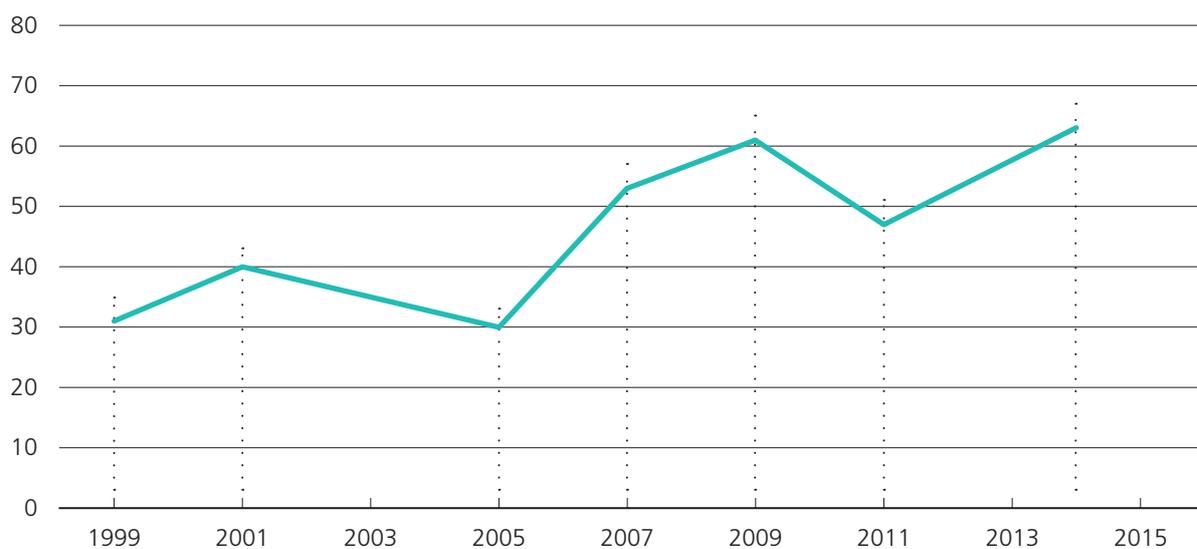
the infamous policy of containment, led in the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries, continues today.”¹⁰ For Putin, there is thus a direct connection from the Crimean War (1853-56) to the Ukraine Crisis in 2014. The alliance with the Western powers during World War I and World War II has been forgotten, as has the cooperation on reforms in the post-communist period. Viewed in this way, Russia is constantly under siege. The so-called liberation of Crimea can therefore best be seen as a sortie from a besieged fortress, where a Russia under siege is able to make use of the shorter lines of communication inside the fortress to strike in the places where the Western besiegers have left holes in their blockades. If this analogy seems too militaristic, Russian strategy documents are on the other hand full of references to competition between Russia and its surroundings. Russia’s foreign policy concept from 2013 contains the following statement:

For the first time in modern history, global competition takes place on a civilizational level, whereby various values and models of development based on universal principles of democracy and market economy start to clash and compete against each other. Cultural and civilizational diversity of the world becomes more and more manifest.¹¹

Foreign policy is regarded as an important tool in ensuring competitiveness in this world of competition between civilisations.¹² Precisely because civilisations become the organising category, national borders between countries within these civilisations play a lesser role. This thinking is the justification for the dominating, defining role that the Russian Government wants to have within its civilisation. The Russian foreign policy concept thus states how “Russia will maintain its active role in the political and diplomatic conflict settlement in the CIS space”¹³, and how the establishment of a Eurasian economic union¹⁴ will bind the former Soviet countries together. Putin’s speech and the policy documents for the Russian government appear to be motivated by a feeling that the 21st century will be dominated by confrontation between Russia and the rest of the world. It is time to prepare. However, it is equally clear, also when reading between the lines, that Russia is afraid that it is too weak and that its preparations have begun too late. Few feelings can be more frightening for the members of a foreign policy elite than the feeling that history’s drums are summoning people to assemble but failing to awaken them from their sleep. The end of the Cold War is the source of this uncertainty and the feeling of Russian weakness.

Russians who believe their country is a superpower (%)

Figure 3



Source: The Levada Center, Moscow – <http://www.levada.ru/17-03-2014/pozitsii-rossii-na-mirovoi-arene>

“Russia has overcome the consequences of the systemic political and socio-economic crisis of the end of the 20th century.”¹⁵ The breakdown of the Soviet Union and the subsequent political chaos, which threatened social cohesion and the country’s unity, mean that Russia does not see national security as a question of defending itself against foreign enemies, but rather as a need to focus on the far more comprehensive task of saving the nation. National security can be achieved by virtue of “important social, political and economic transformations intended to create secure conditions for the realisation of Russian citizens’ constitutional rights and freedoms, the stable development of the country, and the preservation of the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the state.”¹⁶

It is common to the strategy documents, but perhaps most clear in the national security strategy, that they are based on an organic view of Russia. Russia is depicted as people are depicted in Maslow’s psychological works,¹⁷ in which certain basic material needs must be fulfilled before immaterial needs. The whole person and the whole nation must be intact and in good physical health. Russian health, however, was threatened by the breakdown of the Soviet Union and the disintegration of the country. In concrete terms, this has come to

expression in factors such as low life expectancy and, in more abstract terms at national level, in which the strategic focus is on those limbs that have been severed from the national body is such that it is difficult not to regard it as a temporary problem that must be solved by reuniting them with the national body. Once again, the idea of fulfilling material needs before immaterial needs is in evidence. Russia cannot make any progress before its economy and territory have been secured.

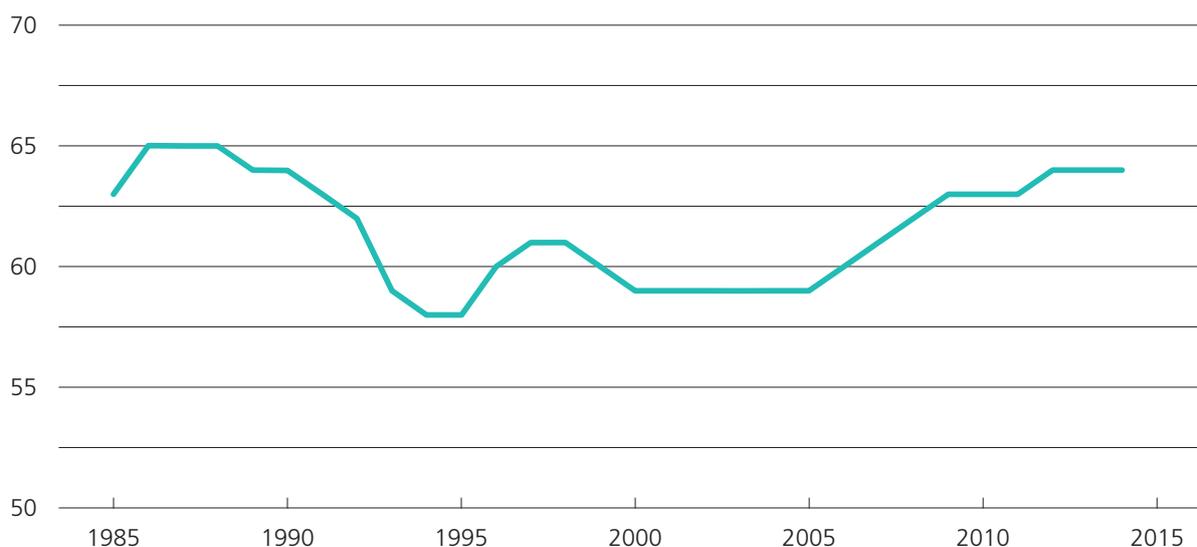
Putin spoke in the Kremlin on 18 March 2014 about how “in people’s hearts and minds, Crimea has always been an inseparable part of Russia”. This reflects a sharp focus on enabling those parts of Russia that have been separated from the mother country to return and make Russia whole again – geographically and spiritually. This involves rediscovering the authentic Russia. “Authentically Russian ideals and spirituality are being reformed, alongside a dignified attitude to historical memory.”¹⁸

According to Putin, Russia has found itself. This is not as such either a break with the Russia of the Tsars or of the Soviets, but an authentic Russian nation, a historical truth about the Russian people.

An authentic Russia is not an abstraction, on the contrary, it is defined in quite concrete terms. Russia’s national security strategy thus identifies a number of

Average life expectancy for Russian men 1985-2014. Years.

Figure 4



Source: The World Bank and CIA World Factbook

points that can be used to measure how secure Russia and its citizens are. These points are macroeconomic indicators that include the rise in consumer prices, income distribution, the debt-equity ratio in the national budget, health, culture and education budgets and military spending.¹⁹ The health of the state, society and the individual are linked in concrete and figurative terms in such a way as to oblige the Russian Government to intervene at all levels in order to ensure healthy development. In this view, the state must take responsibility for society and the individual that is not taken by Western governments. This means that the Russian state must be stronger than a Western state in order to be able to take overall responsibility for the nation's health.

While Western governments take responsibility for the economy, for health, education and security, they do not do so as part of an overall package defined in relation to national security. This extremely broad security concept turns a crisis-ridden school system, a housing bubble and other circumstances, which in the West would be tasks for the market and civil society to perform, into state issues of a character that could threaten the security of the state and therefore need extraordinary measures. Based on experiences connected with the collapse after the fall of the Soviet Union, Putin's government has therefore "securitised"²⁰ social developments to an extent where the only possible solution is a strong leader at the helm of a strong state. Orlando Figes sees this as an expression of the way in which what are known as the *siloviki*, i.e. people who, like the president himself with a past in the intelligence services and the so-called power ministries, regard governmental power as something that must ensure the state's interests rather than liberate citizens.²¹

Whereas Western states increasingly came to regard the state as a tool designed to ensure citizens' rights and freedom of expression throughout the 19th and 20th centuries, Russian state ideology, as formulated by the Putin administration, sees the state as a tool for guiding citizens along a predefined path. In this sense, they are in line with 300 years of Russian-style versions of Western reforms from Peter the Great to Catherine II the Great up to today. Under Catherine II, attempts were made centrally to reform Russia based on inspiration derived from the philosophy of the European Enlightenment while at the same time retaining the national Russian character.²² Peter the Great's coercive

management of reforms was notorious because of its detailed regulation of everything right down to the length of the aristocracy's beards. This state control of reforms and developments has on the one hand fascinated the West, as after the Bolshevik revolution, but has been seen on the other hand as incompatible with Western values.

The result is two radically different views of what the tasks of politicians and foreign policy politicians in particular consist of. Western politics deals to a considerable extent with change. A Western politician runs for office in order to change something and Western politicians therefore to a great extent compete to extend rights or to ensure public benefits for new groups. According to Russian security strategy, however, politics does not deal with change, but involves finding the natural, stable core of the national community and ensuring that national developments stay on this track.

These different state ideologies come clearly to expression in the debate on homosexuality. Although there are naturally different views of this in the West, the tendency for many years has been a heightening of moral and legal equality between homosexuality and heterosexuality. Therefore Western opinions of the Putin government's anti-homosexual legislation have been characterised by an equal measure of indignation and surprise. Such legislation was a logical consequence of the belief in a pure, strong national body in Putin's ideology, but as correspondingly illogical from a Western point of view. This is reflected by the fact that 74 per cent of Russians do not feel that society should accept homosexuality, while 88 per cent of Europeans and 80 per cent of North Americans feel the opposite.²³ Obama made it clear that he understands the conflict with Russia as a conflict between two state philosophies. In his speech in Brussels on 26 March 2014, the president said:

Throughout human history, societies have grappled with fundamental questions of how to organize themselves, the proper relationship between the individual and the state, the best means to resolve inevitable conflicts between states. And it was here in Europe, through centuries of struggle – through war and enlightenment, repression and revolution – that a particular set of ideals began to emerge: The belief that through conscience and free will, each of



us has the right to live as we choose. The belief that power is derived from the consent of the governed, and that laws and institutions should be established to protect that understanding. And those ideas eventually inspired a band of colonialists across an ocean, and they wrote them into the founding documents that still guide America today, including the simple truth that all men – and women – are created equal.

But those ideals have also been tested – here in Europe and around the world. Those ideals have often been threatened by an older, more traditional view of power. This alternative vision argues that ordinary men and women are too small-minded to govern their own affairs, that order and progress can only come when individuals surrender their rights to an all-powerful sovereign. Often, this alternative vision roots itself in the notion that by virtue of race or faith or ethnicity, some are inherently superior to others, and that individual identity must be defined by “us” versus “them”, or that national greatness must flow not by what a people stand for, but by what they are against.²⁴

The conflict between Russia and the West that Putin described as a policy of containment is a conflict between two different types of governance for Obama, with the Russian state and the Western states each in its own camp. While the conflict for Putin is an expression of different civilisational and geopolitical realities that create a conflict between “Fort Russia” and its besiegers, the geopolitical issues for Obama are things that can be overcome if there is agreement to govern the state in a certain way. In Obama’s view, civilisation is a fellowship based on development rather than a point of departure for conflict.

As such, Obama sees the opportunities for development similarly to the way they are seen by Madeleine K. Albright and Bill Clinton (see below), but these opportunities are clearly overshadowed by the concrete challenge from Putin, also for the president. This challenge appears so much the more serious precisely because Russia is not on its own as far as Obama is concerned. Russia’s thinking can spread and threaten coexistence in Europe. This threat had already given rise to a strong Western reaction as could be seen, for instance, on the outbreak of the Cold War. In this connection, George Kennan attempted in 1947 to explain to his superiors

at the Department of State in Washington that the communist leadership did not want to see coexistence after World War II: "From the Russian-Asiatic world out of which they had emerged they carried with them a scepticism as to the possibilities of permanent and peaceful coexistence of rival forces."²⁵ Obama may well have arrived at a similar conclusion:

To be honest, if we defined our interests narrowly, if we applied a cold-hearted calculus, we might decide to look the other way... But that kind of casual indifference would ignore the lessons that are written in the cemeteries of this continent. It would allow the old way of doing things to regain a foothold in this young century. And that message would be heard not just in Europe, but in Asia and the Americas, in Africa and the Middle East.²⁶

Russian policy has clearly been experienced as a challenge to world order in the United States. The Obama administration had otherwise made it clear that a challenge of this kind was more to be feared from China than from Russia. The administration therefore decided in 2012 to pivot US foreign and security policy towards Asia in order to prevent China from challenging US and allied interests in the region in the long term.²⁷ Now, however, it appears that the US pivot has become a pirouette. Not only has Russia challenged the United States, Putin has formulated his challenge in terms that make it very difficult for him to mobilise his allies. Putin and his power elite cannot raise their banner on behalf of the working class and the oppressed throughout the world as his communist predecessors in the Kremlin could. On the contrary, Putin's concept concerning confrontation between nations and civilisations stands between him and his allies. Based on this concept, Russian interests are equally at odds with those of China as with those of Europe and the US.

Putin's foreign policy doctrine does not have a positive agenda, but one that is anti-American and anti-Western, something that may well sell tickets but which also reflects the fact that Russia and China are integrated into the global economy in two very different ways. Russia is an exporter of raw materials, while China is an importer of them and a manufacturer of consumer goods. China is therefore far better integrated into Western production and consumer structures than is Russia. This must play a significant role in the materialistic reading of world politics that can be found in the Kremlin.

By acting as he has in connection with the Ukraine Crisis, Putin has given the Beijing government a choice between integration with the West in a globalised world and conflict with the West; a choice that is more definitive than China is probably comfortable with. There is sympathy in Beijing for anti-Western, anti-American rhetoric, but if China must choose between an aggressive policy that involves intervening in other countries and conflict with the United States and a more cautious policy, Beijing will choose the latter. It is worth remembering in this connection that while the West is in the habit of lumping the growth economies together and calling them the BRIC countries, Brazil, Russia, India and China not only have different interests, three of them have conflict-ridden histories.

That China chose to abstain from voting in the UN Security Council and supporting Ukraine's territorial integrity and independence should prompt the more thoughtful members of Russia's foreign policy elite to consider how far-reaching cooperation with China would be (it should also be noted that Beijing took a similar position during the Russo-Georgian War). Similarly, consideration should be given in Beijing's foreign policy circles as to whether close cooperation with Russia might embroil China in conflicts that would present an obstacle to the country's economic development at a time when continued growth is a top priority there. The Russian intervention in Ukraine could thus have highlighted the limits of an alliance between Beijing and the Kremlin.²⁸ This could be exploited by the West in the same way that the US was able to create an alliance with China against the Soviet Union in the 1970s, which means that the West must be very careful to avoid alienating China in the way it structures sanctions against Russia.

Russia's intervention in Ukraine has thus given the West an opportunity to formulate a new policy on China and this will oblige it to reconsider its policy on Eastern Europe and Russia. With regard to the latter, it is necessary to briefly look at what the West's policy towards Russia has been, and what consequences the events in Ukraine will have for NATO and EU policy in particular.

Western policy on Russia

Western policy has not been based on Russia having become a liberal democracy. The years with Boris Yeltsin's robber capitalism or Putin's oppression of minorities and the bypassing of the constitution have shown with all possible clarity that this was not what Russia had become. Nor has Western policy been based on the idea that it would always be possible to cooperate with Russia. The enlargement of NATO took place in opposition to the wishes of Russia, the intervention in the Kosovo Conflict (1999) took place in conflict with Russia which, during the final stages, sent soldiers into Kosovo ahead of the advancing NATO forces and Russia has obstructed Western policy in many areas such as Iraq, Iran and Syria. Western policy, however, has been based on the assumption that Russia would in time become a liberal democracy, which would have made it increasingly easy to find concrete solutions in relations with Russia. As Albright expressed it in Chicago on 2 October 1998:

My job as Secretary of State is not to describe the worst possible outcome in Russia or anywhere else. It is to devise policies that protect American interests and encourage the best possible outcome. That has been our objective ever since the Russian tricolor rose above the Kremlin in 1991.²⁹

She was not mistaken – the policy simply did not succeed. It was based on an alliance with reformers in Russia rather than with the Russian state. It was always quite clear in the West that the worst scenarios in Russia would involve conflict with the West, and they hovered like shadows over the West's Russian policy. This was not least because a number of observers believed that the enlargement of NATO – in Kennan's words – was a "fateful error",³⁰ that would force Russia to react. In order to prevent this reaction, NATO's enlargement was combined with cooperation with Russia. The enlargement was slow and well considered because, as Bill Clinton said at a NATO summit in 1994, this approach to enlargement "enables us to prepare and to work toward the enlargement of NATO. It enables us to do it in a way that gives us the time to reach out to Russia".³¹ As the then Danish foreign minister, Niels Helveg Petersen, put it in the Danish Parliament in 1998: "Security in Europe must be created with Russia, not against Russia."³²

The West found itself in a constant dialogue with Russia on how European security architecture should be

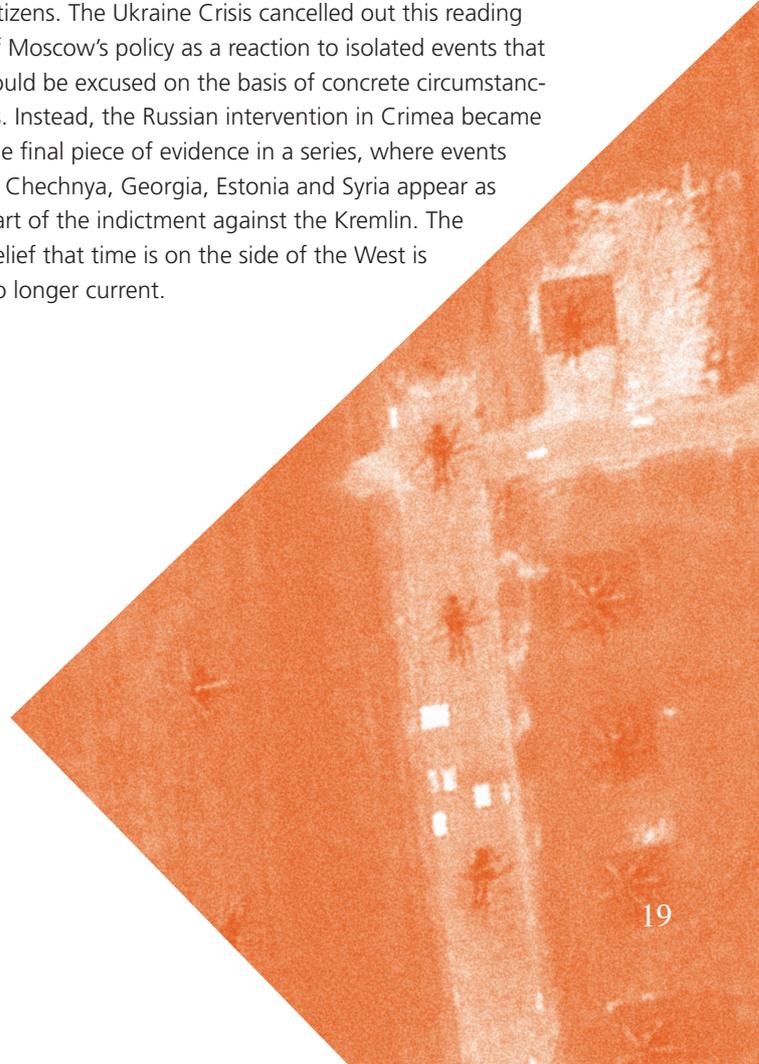
designed. A dialogue in which Russia did its best to use the possibility of a breakdown in Russia and in relations between Russia and the West as a threat against the West. After the end of the Cold War, Russia was so weak that this was its best weapon for the time being. If the West did not support Yeltsin's regime, the argument from the Kremlin was that various old communists could come to power. During this period, Russia deliberately played on the fear of a new Cold War as a consequence of a breakdown in Russian reforms. An example of this was when Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev delivered a bellicose speech at the OSCE meeting in Stockholm in 1992, which he subsequently withdrew with a remark to the effect that this would be the tone if the opposition came to power in Russia. However, the West regarded the opposition as the voice of the past rather than of the future. As Albright told the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, Russia's opposition to an enlargement of NATO was "a product of old misconceptions about NATO and old ways of thinking about its former satellites in central Europe. Instead of changing our policies to accommodate Russia's outdated fears, we need to encourage Russia's more modern aspirations."³³ If Russia realised these aspirations regarding modernisation, the country could become part of the European order, which it had combated during its incarnation as the Soviet Union and that Russia was now sceptical about. "Only time will tell what Russia's ultimate role in Europe will be", said Bill Clinton when he presented a scenario for a democratised Russia that lived in peace with the rest of Europe. In this case, said Bill Clinton, "no doors can be sealed shut to Russia – not NATO's, not the EU's".³⁴ The open door was an important principle and the metaphor of the door was repeated and repeated in order to show that Russia would not be barred from Europe but could on the contrary take the decisive steps and enter the new European region as it had been organised after the Cold War. However, the metaphor also made it clear that while it was the West that was holding the door open, it was Russia that would have to approach it and cross the threshold. This constituted the goad in the West's policy on Russia.

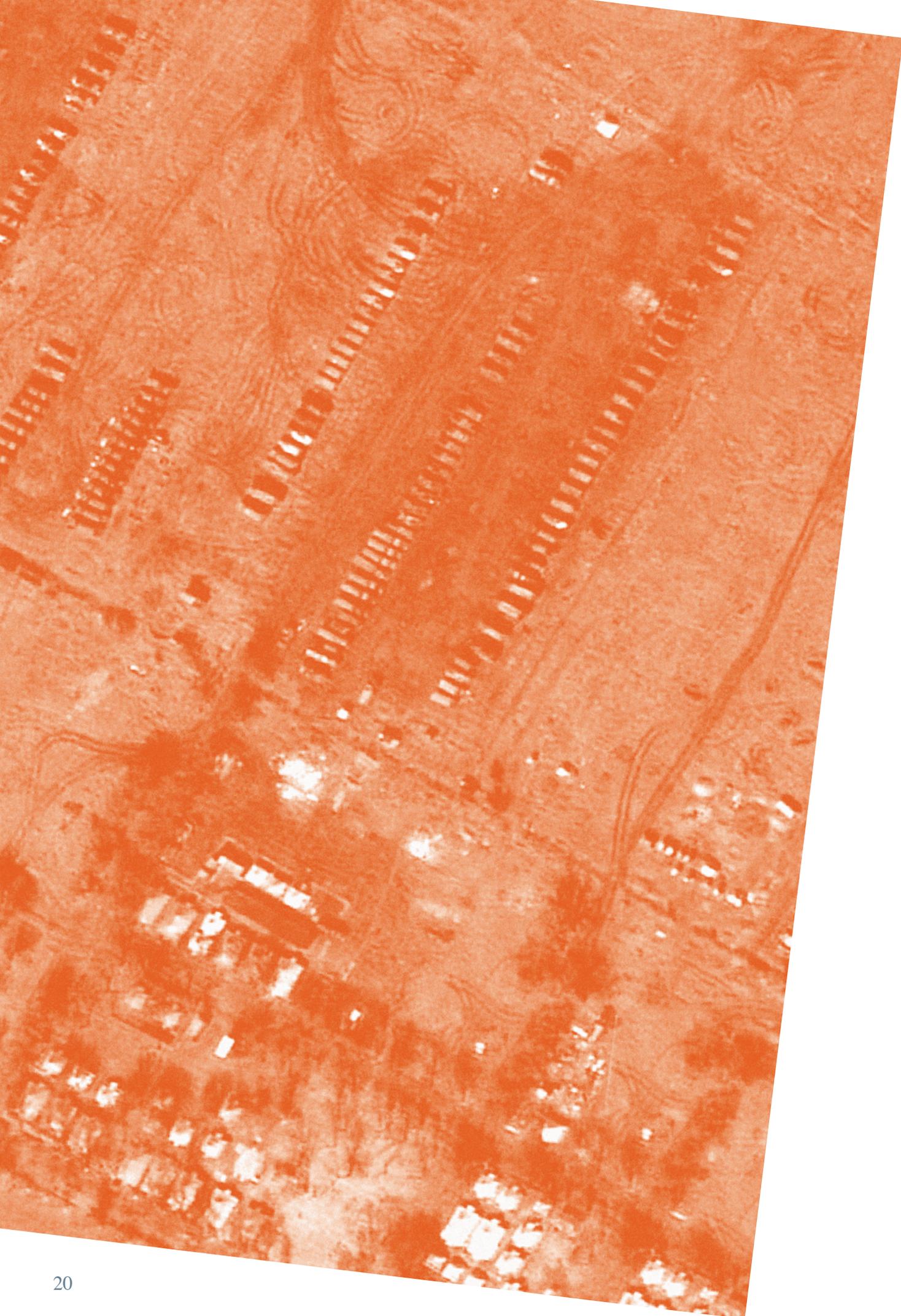
The criticism that the West's Russian policy was naïve overlooks the fact that it was only so to the extent that it was in the West's interests to maintain an open attitude to Russia. In Western eyes, Russia constituted a risk that was connected with a number of other policies that

had to be managed. The US ambassador in Moscow during the period 1987-1991, Jack Matlock, pointed out that after the collapse of the Soviet Union, the West no longer negotiated with Russia as an equal partner, but treated Russia like a loser through a "cycle of dismissive actions"³⁵ The truth was that Russia was too weak to oppose the enlargement of NATO, for instance, and that Soviet policy in Eastern Europe had left Russia with very few friends in the region.

The Soviet Union had controlled the region by force and once its power evaporated, so did its influence. Russia had not and has not, as we have seen, achieved a position in its relations with its neighbours that is inclusive and appreciative in the same way as the Western foreign policy position. In other words, Russia offered little else than opposition to change. Since the status quo was not in the interests of the West and the integration of Russia was not possible, Western policies focused on the concrete Russian opposition in the concrete case. Relations with Russia were thus rarely seen as a cohesive policy area; Russia's opposition to this and that was rather seen as an element within a series of policy areas. This came best to expression perhaps when George W. Bush, as a newly-elected president, met Putin in Slovenia in 2001 and came to the conclusion after the meeting that he viewed Putin as "a man deeply committed to his country and the best interests of his country", and added that "I appreciate very much the frank dialogue and that's the beginning of a very constructive relationship."³⁶ In other words, Bush acknowledged that Putin had his own Russian interests to take care of, but was saying at same time that they would not stand in the way of Bush's policies. Not only were the problems isolated, their solution also depended on one man. This did not concern Russia's interests because, in the final analysis, neither Bush nor his Western government colleagues acknowledged that these interests differed in the long term from those of the West; it concerned Putin's interpretation of these interests and the degree to which it would be possible to make a deal with him. As so often before, relations with an authoritarian regime were reduced to relations with the man at the top. After looking Putin straight in the eye, however, Bush continued with his plans for a missile defence system, the enlargement of NATO and, after 11 September 2001, the invasion of Iraq. All of which were contrary to the wishes of Putin and Russia.

In the belief that time was on the side of the West, the problems with Russia were treated as isolated problems rather than as an expression of general tendencies. The conflict in Chechnya, which began in the 1990s, was seen as a local, Islamist-inspired rebellion against the central government in Moscow rather than as an expression of the central government tightening its grip on the regions and replacing a pluralist, federal system with rigorous control from Moscow. The invasion of Georgia in 2008 was seen as a local, nationalist conflict where President Mikheil Saakashvili's defiance of Russia was seen as equally much of a major problem as the subsequent Russian invasion, rather than as a challenge to European security. Russian hackers' attack on Estonia in 2007 was seen as an example of the risk of cyber warfare in the future rather than as an expression of the Russian will to also use this area to destabilise former Soviet republics. Russian support of Bashar al-Assad's regime in Syria was similarly seen as an expression of relations between Syria and Russia that had their roots in the Cold War and not as a general opposition to Western intervention and as a defence of allied regimes without due regard to the way they treated their own citizens. The Ukraine Crisis cancelled out this reading of Moscow's policy as a reaction to isolated events that could be excused on the basis of concrete circumstances. Instead, the Russian intervention in Crimea became the final piece of evidence in a series, where events in Chechnya, Georgia, Estonia and Syria appear as part of the indictment against the Kremlin. The belief that time is on the side of the West is no longer current.





NATO and EU

With the passing of the belief that Russia is part of the West's future, the view of Russian opposition to Western policies as a risk connected with a given policy also passes. Instead of being seen as a disruptive factor in a number of different areas, Russia is now seen as a risk in itself. "Ukraine cannot be viewed in isolation," concluded NATO's Secretary-General, Anders Fogh Rasmussen, in a speech at the Brookings Institution on 19 March 2014. Fogh Rasmussen continued:

And this crisis is not just about Ukraine. We see what could be called 21st century revisionism. Attempts to turn back the clock. To draw new dividing lines on our maps. To monopolise markets. Subdue populations. Re-write, or simply rip up, the international rule book. And to use force to solve problems – rather than the international mechanisms that we have spent decades to build.³⁷

In this view, the consequences of the Russian intervention in Ukraine is that NATO must see Russia as part of its future rather than as part of its past. Where Albright talked about Russia's outdated fear in 1997, the fear

of the NATO countries has now been aroused. In his speech, Fogh Rasmussen emphasised that "in times like this, when the security of the Euro-Atlantic area is challenged, the North Atlantic Alliance has not wavered. And it will not waver. For 65 years, we have been clear in our commitment to one another as Allies. And to the global security system within which NATO is rooted."³⁸ For a Secretary-General who had prioritised relations with Russia, the events in Ukraine were a confirmation of the need for NATO to formulate a joint strategy regarding Russia instead of seeing Russia in terms of concrete subsidiary challenges regarding other objectives that NATO might propose for itself. Fogh Rasmussen thus paved the way for NATO to place relations with Russia at the top of the agenda for the first time in many years at the Cardiff summit in September 2014. On the face of things, the choice of Jens Stoltenberg as Fogh Rasmussen's successor appears to be support for this new order. As the Prime Minister of Norway, Stoltenberg was responsible for a defence policy that prioritised the defence of the Norwegian border with Russia and power projection in the northern areas in the form of new frigates and new fighter aircrafts, and



a foreign policy that resulted, among other things, in a treaty that concluded a long-standing conflict with Russia on its maritime boundaries. Stoltenberg symbolises the mixture of rigour and willingness to negotiate that NATO wishes to communicate to Russia.

The ISAF coalition in Afghanistan has dictated NATO's agenda since 2006. Discussions in NATO have dealt with running operations in Afghanistan and other operations that followed in the wake of 11 September 2001 and the allies' opportunities to contribute to these operations. Classic NATO questions, such as how much Europeans contributed to the alliance by comparison with the Americans, how much money should be invested in new technologies and how the alliance's power and command structure could best be organised, have been discussed over the past years at NATO's headquarters and in the capitals of the allied countries. However, these questions have often been put in the new operational context. With the prospect of this context dissolving with the withdrawal from Afghanistan, and on the basis of the cuts in defence budgets, NATO will be faced with the challenge of setting the agenda for the future at the Cardiff summit with no knowledge of what the future will bring. For NATO, part of the significance of the events in Ukraine lies in the fact that they are occurring at a time when they will come to define the agenda at the Cardiff summit and thereby NATO's agenda. In Fogh Rasmussen's words: "Later this year, in Wales in the United Kingdom, we will hold our next NATO Summit. We need to focus on the long-term strategic impact of Russia's aggression on our own security."³⁹

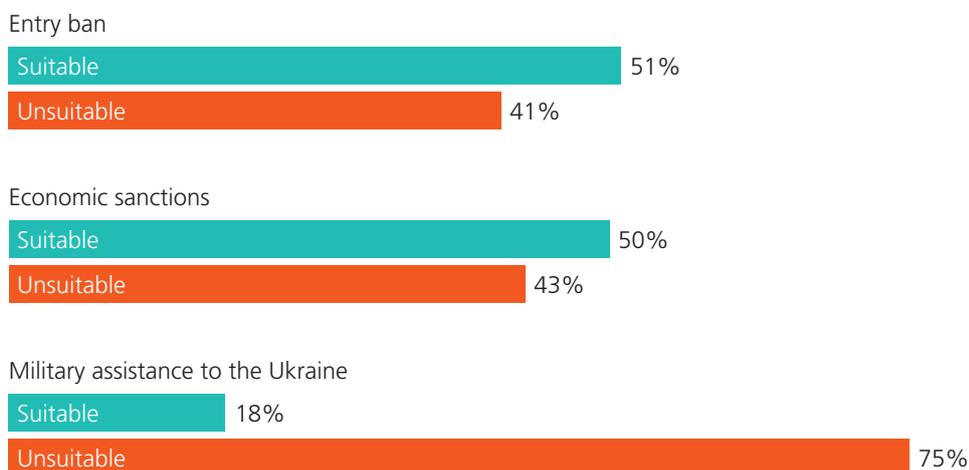
The West's reaction to Russian aggression: then and now

The long-term consequences of Russia's aggression for the West's strategy is, in the nature of the case, difficult to assess at present. However, two things can be taken into consideration:

- The reaction in connection with previous cases of Russian aggression. This will make it possible to predict the debate that will follow from the events in Ukraine.
- The initiatives, etc., that are already on NATO's agenda and will be furthered by the events in Ukraine and prioritised in the subsequent debate.

When the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan in 1979, the initial reaction of the then US president, Jimmy Carter, was not unlike Obama's reaction to the events in Ukraine. Carter saw the Soviet use of power against a neighbour as a breach of the policy of détente that had characterised the 1970s, and feared "a return to the Cold War".⁴⁰ Whereas today we see the entire period as one long cold war from the end of the 1940s to 1989, the Cold War was regarded as a closed chapter in 1979. Since President Richard Nixon's policy re-orientation towards the Soviet Union, the agenda called for cooperation rather than confrontation. This epoch ended in 1979 because, among other things, Carter, and not least President Ronald Reagan, who succeeded him, regarded the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan as proof that the West had been naïve in believing that the Soviet Union wanted cooperation. In 1980, Robert Tucker summed this up as follows: "the United States has steadily moved throughout the past decade toward an insolvent foreign policy."⁴¹ As is the case today with Russia's intervention in Ukraine, the Soviet Union's intervention in Afghanistan led to a debate regarding how the Kremlin saw the world, what plans the leaders in the Kremlin had and what the West could and should do about them. As Carter said in 1979, the Soviet invasion "gives rise to the most fundamental questions pertaining to international stability".⁴² The invasion was one thing, but what would come after? Was the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan an isolated event that the Kremlin had felt obliged to carry out, or was it on the contrary a question of a Machiavellian plan in which Afghanistan was "a stepping stone to possible control over much of the world's oil supplies"⁴³, or was Ukraine an expression of a strategy that had "been in the making for a decade?"⁴⁴

Then as now, analysing the Kremlin's intentions and capacity to realise them was of central importance. If the invasion of Afghanistan was seen as an expression of an attempt by the Kremlin to outflank the West and gain control of the Middle East's oilfields, what was happening in Afghanistan was relevant for NATO and the rest of the world. Fogh Rasmussen regards the Ukraine Crisis as a wake-up call to the West regarding Russian intentions,⁴⁵ while former US secretary of state, Hillary Clinton, compared the Russian arguments for annexing Crimea with Hitler's arguments for annexing the Sudetenland in 1938.⁴⁶ Seen from this perspective, the



Source: www.tagesschau.de/inland/deutschlandtrend2234.html. Maj 2014.

events in Crimea were not isolated acts, but were part of a broader, strategic context.

Then as now, there was widespread criticism of the US president's "transparent failure to lead", as Carter's discharge of his office was characterised after the invasion of Afghanistan and the breakdown of détente.⁴⁷ When asked on American TV to characterise Obama's leadership during the Ukraine Crisis, Senator John McCain said: "I don't know how it could have been weaker besides doing nothing."⁴⁸ Professor Eliot Cohen was equally sarcastic when he said that "President Obama's history of issuing warnings and, when they are ignored, moving on smartly to the next topic gave a kind of permission".⁴⁹ This criticism stemmed in the 1980s, as it does today, from frustration over the options to react to a crisis that appear to be on the table and the consequent belief that better leaders would have been able to conjure up better solutions. Alternatives that could take account of the fact that Europeans were in mutual disagreement and in disagreement with the Americans as to what the correct policy with regard to the Kremlin would be. Lawrence Eagleburger, Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs, admitted in the 1980s, that "détente for you, for Berliners, for Germans has made a difference ... but for us détente has been a failure".⁵⁰ The then West German Chancellor, Helmut Schmidt, thus believed that "precisely because relations are dif-

ficult and extremely complex, we need not less communication but more".⁵¹

Different interpretations of what the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan meant led to disagreement on security policy in the individual countries (an example from Denmark is what was known as the footnote era), among the European countries (where the German and British governments, for instance, disagreed in their assessments of the situation) and between Europe and the United States. It is therefore worth noting how Hillary Clinton, who appears to be very interested in what voters will believe up to the next presidential election, carefully positioned herself far to the right of the president she acted as foreign secretary for a year ago. The explanation could be that 67 per cent of American voters were in favour of the way Obama handled foreign policy in 2009, while this figure fell to 47 per cent (with 45 per cent against) in March 2014.⁵²

In 1980, Americans chose Reagan instead of Carter, not least because Reagan promised leadership on foreign policy that the events in Afghanistan and Iran had shown that Carter couldn't manage. The candidates for the next US presidential election may well have to compete on being the biggest hawk to make Europeans appear like a flock of sparrows. In this connection, Italian Prime Minister, Matteo Renzi, was more concerned about avoiding a new cold war than stopping Russian

aggression. Renzi warned the EU not to introduce more rigorous sanctions as this could mean an escalation, "that does not take us back to an iron curtain scenario. A scenario that probably only exists in the nightmares of some of the key actors in this situation, but which we must avoid."⁵³ Helmut Schmidt had a similar nightmare and brushed up his arguments from 1981.⁵⁴ In Germany, the Ukraine Crisis has given rise to the coining of the designation *Putin-Versteher* to describe the influential elements of German opinion and the business community that show understanding for Russia's acts and reject introducing stricter sanctions against Russia.⁵⁵

However, the 1980s can teach us how even weak European governments, that must operate in the face of divided opinion, can be influenced by a consistent US policy – not least because this policy reflects the influence of the US through NATO, the armed forces and members of the security policy elites, and can set an agenda that prioritises a policy of necessity. In the 1980s, Europeans and Americans could play "good cop-bad cop" with regard to the Soviet Union without either party realising that this was what they were doing, and while continually reproaching each other for conducting an irresponsible policy. The requirement for being able to play this game successfully once again, however, is an American commitment in relation to Russia that is possibly not in place today. The EU similarly means that Europeans have the opportunity to play a weakened hand far more strongly today than 30 years ago, which could have the paradoxical effect of weakening the European position.

The ability of the EU to conduct a collective policy with regard to Russia could be a problem in itself. This may have been the reason why Nick Witney from the European Council of Foreign Relations so harshly criticised those Europeans who believed that Russia constituted a serious threat that could best be combated under the auspices of NATO: "So let us thank the new Cold Warriors, but tell them they have mistaken their era. Let us celebrate NATO's value as an insurance policy, but not confuse it with an adequate vehicle for Europe's role in the world."⁵⁶ The Union's foreign policy is based on the idea of exporting the values of integration and commerce. As Witney pointed out, European policy is not concerned with shielding member states against risks, which is the traditional task of security and defence policy, but with creating security and managing

crises through what would be called aid and commercial policy in the member states. The defence policy dimension has been incorporated into these other policies. This approach to international relations requires not having problems oneself, but solving those of others. That the Union can gain advantages from its policy is naturally the point of departure, but these advantages are regarded in Brussels as something that the Union wins together with others. The cake grows in size through an increase in free trade and the climate becomes better for us all, etc. However, as previously mentioned, Russia is not playing such a plus-sum game.

The EU's handling of Ukraine's association agreement, which was the factor that initiated the crisis because the then Ukrainian president's rejection of the agreement in favour of an agreement with Russia sent demonstrators into the streets, can to a certain extent be explained by the fact that EU foreign policy focused on added value rather than on risks. "The European Union definitely miscalculated about Russia's reaction," concluded Lithuania's Foreign Minister, Linas Linkevičius in the *International New York Times*, "when you play soccer, there are rules of the game, but the other side turned out to be playing rugby with a bit of wrestling".⁵⁷ The EU's problem is that it does not have a rugby team, only a football team. If a new cold war is in the offing, the EU's ambitions for a common foreign policy in its existing form will be unsuitable. However, even if less confrontational scenarios come into play, the union will be fundamentally hampered by the fact that the world view that its policy is based on has been adjudged irrelevant in the Kremlin.

Challenges for new EU and NATO leaders

However, the EU is central in the areas where it really possesses competences and expertise. The challenge will be to mobilise them in a coherent foreign policy that is coordinated with other players, primarily NATO. Catherine Ashton's successor as head of the union's foreign policy must therefore:

1. Prioritise the Union's foreign policy measures in those areas where it will actually make a difference
2. Coordinate these measures with NATO and the United States
3. Stop over-ambitious plans for a common foreign policy.



This will achieve the effect of harmonising what the EU respectively says and does. An effort in the three areas would dramatically heighten the Union's credibility, and credibility is exactly what the EU is lacking in relation to Russia. Finance and trade are central aspects of the EU and the EU therefore uses sanctions against Russia as a means to an end. However, the EU must rapidly decide whether sanctions work with regard to states that are governed like Russia.⁵⁸

In September 2014, Stoltenberg will become the new Secretary-General of NATO. Stoltenberg must first and foremost work to increase NATO's credibility. This is a far more concrete issue for NATO than it is for the EU because it involves NATO's musketeer oath under Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty. Throughout NATO's history, credibility in relation to the guarantee of security that the allies, and not least the US, gave the individual members has been decisive. Stoltenberg will thus have three main tasks:

1. Ensuring the credibility of Article 5 with regard to Russia.
2. Coordinating with the EU and the US.
3. Focusing attention on the European defence budgets and on how they can best be converted into practical

capacities. The financial crisis has led to dramatic cuts in defence budgets, especially in those countries that are closest to Russia. This is problematic for their ability to provide a credible defence system, not least because the other European allies have also reduced their defence budgets and therefore do not appear to be the best helpers in an hour of need.

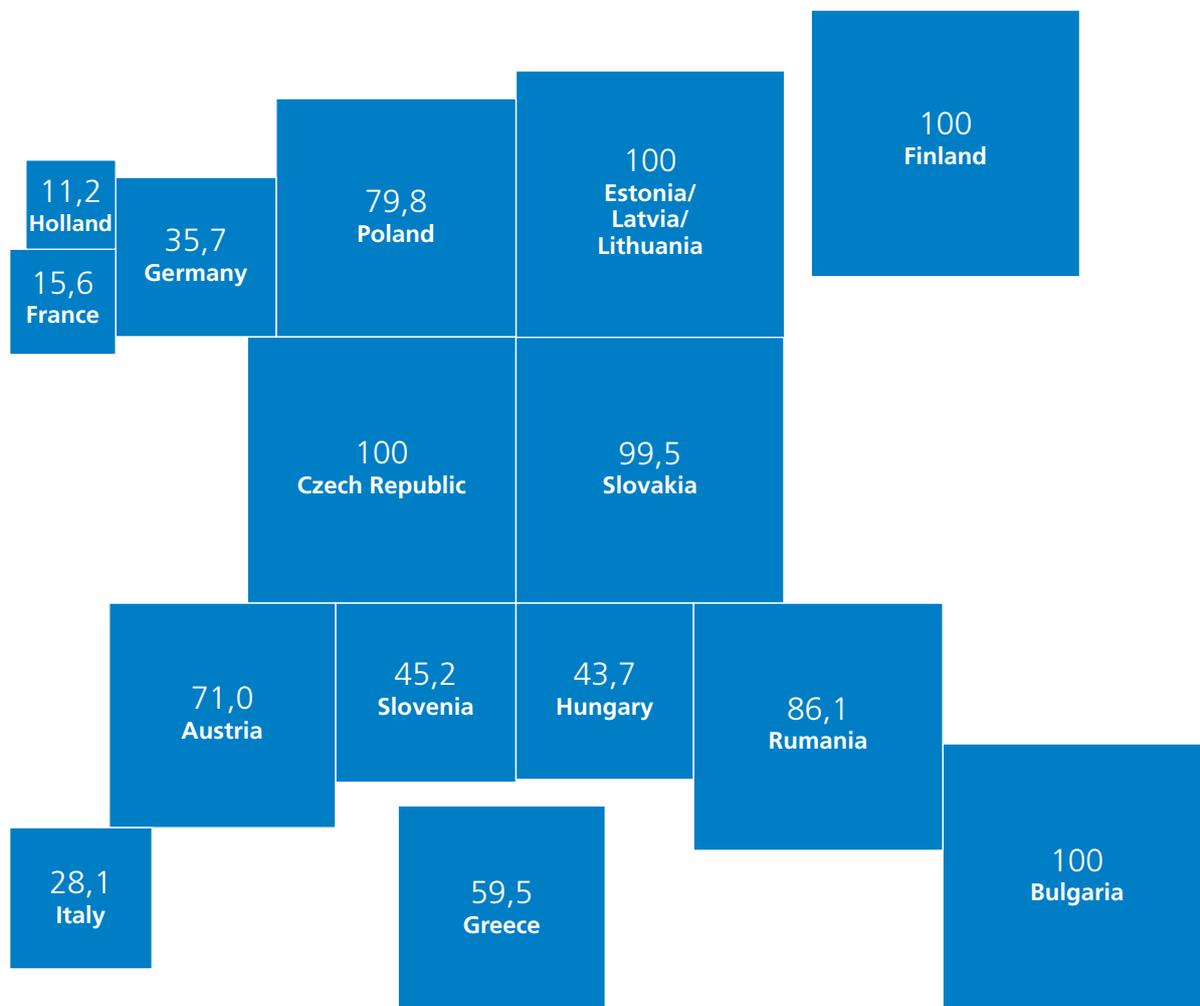
The new heads of the EU's foreign affairs policy and NATO respectively are faced with a challenge that they can only meet together and they should grasp the opportunity to establish a prominent, energetic partnership that can power the reorientation of European security policy and anchor it in cooperation with the United States. The following deals with concrete challenges facing the EU and NATO.

Challenges for the EU

Trade agreement · After the Ukraine Crisis, the trade agreement between the US and the EU has taken on new significance that far outreaches commercial policy. As the US president's special trade delegate, Michael Forman, said on 13 March 2014: "Right now, as we look around the world, there is a powerful reason for

European dependency on import of russian gas (% of total import of natural gas, 2012)

Figure 6



Source: Financial Times

Europe and the United States to come together to demonstrate that they can take their relationship to a new level.⁵⁹ It will be the task of the EU's European External Action Service to communicate this strategic point in the European Commission so that negotiations on the trade agreement can lead to the establishment of a free-trade zone between the United States and the EU.

Energy · Unlike the United States, which is gradually becoming self-supplying with energy, Europe is a net importer of energy and is expected to import even more over the next 20 years. Today, 32 per cent of the EU's gas imports and 35 per cent of the EU's oil imports come from Russia.⁶⁰ The EU decided in March 2014 to initiate an analysis of the union's energy security and a plan to reduce energy dependence. The analysis should be completed in June 2014 and it will present the European Commission with the challenge of finding a formula for energy independence and the diversification of energy sources, at the same time as the union is bound by stringent environmental goals that oppose the use of atomic energy, shale gas and other energy sources that could effectively ensure energy independence.⁶¹

Turkey · European policy and the attitude to foreigners has in a similar manner meant that the EU has not been able to incorporate Turkey, which could well become the next Ukraine. Not in the sense that Russia will begin to interfere with the country's domestic affairs (it is more probable that Turkey will issue a critical statement about the treatment of minorities in Crimea), but in the sense that Turkey is another important strategic country in the EU's neighbourhood that the union has chosen to neglect, precisely because the union's foreign policy has not focused on protecting itself against future risks. The result is that Turkey, as was the case in Ukraine, has gradually moved away from the EU and that the union's ability to influence the country's development in a direction that is positive for Europe has steadily decreased. Europe's negligence has given Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan a number of arguments for rejecting the European way for the benefit of a regime that is becoming increasingly authoritarian, and a foreign policy that is similarly in conflict with European interests. A reflection regarding how Europe handled the Ukraine Crisis should include a reconsideration of partnerships and association agreements, etc., with the aim of preventing

the situation regarding Turkey developing to a point at which the EU could initiate a crisis due to an incoherent policy or an ill-considered move.

Challenges for NATO

The Ukraine Crisis came at a point when NATO was in doubt as to what its primary task would be after the war in Afghanistan. In 2015, government control will be transferred to the Afghans and the question will then become what NATO should do with itself. Fundamentally, a defence alliance has no need of a task, but can regard itself as insurance that member states should preferably not need. Although strident voices have spoken in favour of a NATO of this kind, NATO has defined its existence in terms of projects since the end of the Cold War. These have taken the form of stabilising missions in the Balkans and the enlargement in the 1990s, anti-terror operations and the war in Afghanistan from 2001 to date. These projects have been central to NATO's narrative about itself, even though NATO has in reality been involved in many other things. After the war in Afghanistan, NATO has therefore been on the lookout for a new project and a new narrative. On the one hand, a number of countries wanted continued focus on a global NATO that would find partners in Asia, train soldiers in Africa and gradually commit itself in the Arctic. On the other hand, a number of countries wanted NATO to turn its attention to Europe again and focus on the defence against Russia. The Ukraine Crisis has not done away with these two ambitions but has made it possible to combine them – not least because the need to deploy forces in the eastern NATO countries has suddenly become more concrete. Such deployments make the same demand for capabilities as deployments outside NATO's sphere and the challenge to strengthen structures and training that formerly lay in talking about a NATO that was more focused on its domestic challenges, has therefore decreased. At the same time, the view that there is a threat from Russia has drawn more attention to the need of the Eastern European NATO members to invest in their own defence – both from the old NATO countries and the Eastern European countries themselves. Furthermore, focusing on more traditional ground operations fits in well with the tendency of the armed forces' desire to focus on building up fundamental skills in connection with conventional operations after ten years of operations. Russia's intervention in

Ukraine therefore strengthens a number of existing tendencies and this is part of the explanation why it has taken on major importance for NATO.

Partnerships · Like the EU, NATO has found it difficult to define how to cooperate with countries that were not members of NATO or were not about to become members. At the Chicago summit in 2012, heads of state and governments adopted a declaration which stated that “partnerships play an important role in promoting international peace and security” and, at the coming Cardiff summit, partnerships have been identified as one of the central subjects. Today there is a wide range of partners in several different groups – from the Middle Eastern and North African countries in the Mediterranean Dialogue and the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative to partners across the world such as Australia and South Korea and a heterogeneous Partnership

for Peace group with countries, such as Sweden and Austria, together with central Asian countries. Given such a heterogeneous mix, it is high time for NATO to begin reorganising and restructuring its many partnership relations.

Partnerships enhance NATO’s ability to fulfil its own role (as a force multiplier) around the world. In the European region, partnerships are at the same time the central mechanism for stabilising and promoting neighbouring areas around the territories of the NATO members. After the crisis in Ukraine, which, from 1997, has had a special partnership relation by virtue of the NATO-Ukraine Commission, it is particularly important for NATO to strengthen partnership relations and the formal framework. This applies to partners in Western Europe, especially Finland and Sweden, to partners further east such as Ukraine and Georgia and to NATO’s global partnerships in the form of countries (such as



Japan and Australia) and international organisations such as the UN and the EU. The heightened geopolitical insecurity in Europe makes it clear that the practical content and actual outcome of partnerships have risen considerably in strategic value. Unfortunately, NATO has not been correspondingly clear with regard to its allies and partners about the definition of a partnership, what it could be used for and what guarantees of security partnerships could potentially offer.

Because partnerships were an alternative to membership for a number of European countries, they never received major institutional attention. NATO's formal partnership structures were developed in the 1990s as part of the long-term reaction to the fall of the Berlin Wall and within the framework of the work on the later enlargement of NATO. During the ISAF mission in Afghanistan, partners' operative contributions were extremely valuable for NATO. Partnerships were seen as stable, while membership processes were seen as dynamic and were therefore prioritised. In 2011, NATO decided to group all partnership offers in a single framework (Partnership Cooperation Menu), from which all partner countries could choose the desired elements. The idea of a menu underplays the importance of partnerships, not least with regard to the need for special measures for special partners.

In general, NATO has underinvested in the potential transformative strategic effect of partnerships. Cooperating with NATO has a double function for partners. The first function involves security policy and provides access to a multilateral forum, formal consultations and an informal extension of bilateral relations with powerful countries. The second function involves access to the NATO network. NATO is the global provider of best practices regarding defence and security policy. By cooperating with NATO, partners also have access to operative cooperation and the acquisition of NATO standards in the broadest sense, including instruction, training and exercises. Partnerships can therefore be a means of changing a given partner. Through cooperation and substantial investments in building up institutions and capacities, partnerships with NATO – with partner co-ownership in conformity with sound development policy practice – can become a strategic tool for NATO.

NATO has developed a process (Membership Action Plan) that prepares countries for membership, but has found it difficult to create a process for countries that

cannot become members. With regard to Georgia and Ukraine, NATO has thus had interests in and cooperation with them, but they have not been adequate enough for a Russian intervention to be considered to constitute a violation of the alliances in accordance with Article 5. Russia's conduct similarly demonstrates that NATO's borders have advanced so far to the east and that Russia's policy has been so confrontational that admitting countries such as Georgia or, if it should once again become relevant, Ukraine, would involve considerable risk. These countries cannot live up to the central criterion for admission – that they would not bring security problems with them into NATO. Russia has made sure of this by creating insecurity with regard to their borders. On the other hand, Russia's conduct demonstrates the cost of not admitting them. Security conditions in the countries on the other side of NATO's borders are unclear and could lead to instability and crisis. This presents NATO with a dilemma in line with the EU's: how to manage risk in relations with the Eastern European countries that are not members.

Turkey and Syria · Turkey is a full member of NATO but this does not rule out the circumstance that the country constitutes a potential challenge for NATO that is far more concrete than the challenge for the EU in the same connection. One result of the confrontation between the West and Russia after the Ukraine Crisis could very well be a complete breakdown of the fragile cooperation on the civil war in Syria. Obama justified his refusal to intervene in Syria on the grounds that he could collaborate with Russia to remove the country's chemical weapons and negotiate a solution in the longer term. Negotiations now appear even less realistic than they did before, and the United States stopped collaborating with Russia on the destruction of the chemical weapons. The result was that the US and the West now really have no influence on the conflict, while Russia's influence is increasing. At the same time, Syria is an area that allows Russia to show the West the consequences of introducing sanctions. An escalation of the civil war in Syria is therefore highly possible and this escalation could draw Turkey into the fray. If the conflict in Syria – through the agency of Russia – came to involve Turkey, Turkey could invoke Article 5, which would bring NATO into the conflict. There is therefore a risk of a proxy war between the West and Russia in Syria.

Conventional deterrence · Conventional deterrence has again become current for NATO due to Russia's use of conventional power in Ukraine and the pattern of Russia's actions in its neighbouring countries outside NATO's area. Deterrence is the effect produced by a country's military forces. The potential threat of the use of power reflected by the armed forces changes the calculation that a potential opponent's actions are based on. In other words, defence is an insurance mechanism – a lock on the door. Deterrence has assumed two forms since the beginning of the 20th century: nuclear and conventional. NATO and Russia possess a mutual nuclear deterrent and, viewed alone, this nuclear deterrent creates a stable situation. However, the nuclear deterrent is an abstract entity that is detached from specific geographical circumstances.

After the end of the Cold War, the general view of nuclear weapons changed focus. From being a question of mutual deterrence between the two blocs in connection with the risk of a nuclear war, and thereby the risk of what would manifestly be mutual destruction, the new world order appears to a greater extent to follow an agenda on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons to unstable states or terrorists.⁶² Iran's atomic programme in particular, since it became public knowledge in 2002, has been the object of a great deal of debate and has led to comprehensive sanctions.⁶³ In spite of the end of the Cold War, however, and the change of focus, the nuclear threat is still present and NATO has therefore not rejected the option of a nuclear defence.

NATO expressed a wish in the strategic concept at the Lisbon summit for a world without nuclear weapons, but made it clear at the same time that as long as nuclear weapons existed, NATO would be an alliance with nuclear capacities for the purpose of defence and deterrence via the nuclear powers the United States, Great Britain and France⁶⁴. The president of the latter country, François Hollande, also emphasised at the Chicago summit in 2012 that a possible missile defence system under the auspices of NATO could complement the nuclear deterrent – but could not replace nuclear weapons.⁶⁵ This was a clear signal from NATO that there was both the ability and, in the appropriate circumstances, the will to counter the worst conceivable threat – the use of nuclear weapons – by using nuclear weapons in order to deter an opponent from using its own nuclear weapons. Furthermore, a missile defence system could

help to reduce the effect of an attack on NATO with nuclear missiles whereby the effect of NATO's deterrent would be increased – as the message from NATO would be: we can hit you, but you can't hit us.

The conventional deterrent is far more bound up with time and space than the nuclear deterrent. The immediate, concrete ability to bring armed forces into action is decisive for a credible conventional deterrent, which depends on deployments and similar measures, which nuclear missile systems have made superfluous. There is therefore a great difference between having an aircraft carrier in the Pacific and having one in the Baltic. A comparison between Russia's defence budget and NATO's, or simply between that of the European NATO countries, shows that Russia's is far smaller. However, a comparison between the Russia defence budget and that of the three Baltic States shows that Russian expenditure and actual military capacities are far and away greater than those of the Baltic States. A comparison of the size and capacities of the Western forces and those of Russia shows that the West is correspondingly superior, but the calculation looks very different again if the Russian forces in the Western military district are compared with NATO's forces in the Baltic. In order to work, conventional deterrence must be based on the practical possibility of countering a concrete attack in a concrete place (or at least on the possibility of relieving those who are under attack in a convincing manner). Deterrence must not only be convincing to a potential opponent, it must also serve as a guarantee for an anxious NATO member. When analysing NATO's actions in connection with the Ukraine Crisis, it is worth differentiating between deployments that serve to reduce anxiety in the eastern member countries, and plans and deployments that really have a deterrent effect.

Considerations about conventional deterrence take on a new character if the aim is to deter Russia from waging what is known as special war where Russia, as it has done in Ukraine, exploits national minorities to create instability and contest borders. NATO's doctrines of deterrence are based on deterring a military attack and are therefore in danger of being bypassed because Russia can so to speak sneak an intervention in because it is beneath the limits of what NATO can be expected to intervene for. The Ukraine Crisis therefore makes a demand for the development of NATO's concepts for conventional deterrence.



Missile defence systems · Missile defence systems have been on NATO's agenda for many years and the US has already installed such defence systems in Poland and Romania that protect parts of NATO against a missile attack. Unlike the Star Wars Programme of the 1980s, NATO's plans for a missile defence system are not intended for defence against an attack by a major power with many missiles, but against an attack from a smaller state, such as Iran, with a few missiles. Nevertheless, every defence system will reduce a potential opponent's ability to hit the target and not least the ability to conduct a limited nuclear war. Russia has therefore taken the view of NATO's plans for a missile shield that it is a way of disturbing the nuclear balance which is, in a sense, in its place as it was during the Cold War era. NATO has answered that now, when the Cold War has ended, it was difficult to understand Russia's problem as NATO has no plans to attack Russia and, according to NATO, Russia can hardly feel it is under threat from a system that was designed to counter a threat from Iran and similar states. The discussion has not been very constructive and has basically involved different views of what the European security system is all about.

After the war in Afghanistan, a missile defence system was an obvious area to invest in because it demonstrated that NATO countries had common goals and could operate systems together. Therefore, there has been talk of supplementing the land-based systems with a marine-based system to enable five to ten warships to protect the rest of NATO. The most cogent argument against this investment so far has been that it would strain relations with Russia. Today, Russia's reaction is the most cogent argument in favour of the investment. A missile defence system would send Russia a clear

signal to the effect that the Kremlin cannot veto it, but at the same time it would be a defensive system that would be a far less aggressive reaction than deploying NATO's response force (NRF) in the Baltic. Furthermore, a missile defence system involves expensive, advanced equipment of the kind that the Kremlin (especially in the light of sanctions) could hardly afford. It would be a not particularly subtle reminder that NATO is militarily superior to Russia. Finally, a missile defence system would be an obvious point of departure for cooperation between US and European fleets. Cooperation on a missile defence system could also become even more important because a consequence of the Ukraine Crisis might be that Russia would no longer help to freeze Iran's nuclear programme. Even though Russia would only give Iran the green light for a nuclear arms build-up with a certain amount of trepidation, Iran, like Syria, would be an effective way of increasing the West's costs in connection with the sanctions against Russia and make it more difficult for the West to concentrate on Russia.

Interoperability and training · NATO's credibility depends on the ability of the member countries to cooperate. Operations in Afghanistan have provided practical experience in the field which was not the case during the Cold War, and which in many ways has to a much greater extent geared NATO and a number of member countries for concrete military cooperation. More specifically, a number of the smaller NATO states today have become accustomed to being at war, whereas until the 1990s this was a competence possessed only by bigger states such as the US, Great Britain and France. NATO's ambition has been to maintain this with the help of military exercises, for instance, during the periods after operations in Afghanistan. The Ukraine Crisis has made this need even more concrete.

NATO's ability to support the defence of allies in the event of a war or a crisis would be a central question at a time when the Baltic States, for instance, have good grounds to ask whether they are on the list of countries with Russian minorities that want to be liberated. During the Cold War, NATO's demonstrated its ability and will to relieve front line states such as Denmark through military exercises. The experience from these exercises helped to define NATO's requirements for the individual country's forces. The ability to operate together in the eastern part of NATO will probably play a far more

prominent role in the future. This also means that NATO will change the emphasis on operations outside its area to operations inside its own area. Whereas NATO's planning hitherto has taken its point of departure in a number of scenarios in which the defence of member countries was important, but not the most probable of them, the defence scenario will now be given greater weight and therefore be allocated more resources. The consequence of this could well be that NATO will not give such high priority to capacity building, etc. However, the challenge would still be that the scenarios are all probable to a certain extent and that NATO can therefore not simply go back to a cold war structure. On the contrary, the new Russian challenge requires a completely different flexibility than did circumstances during the Cold War.

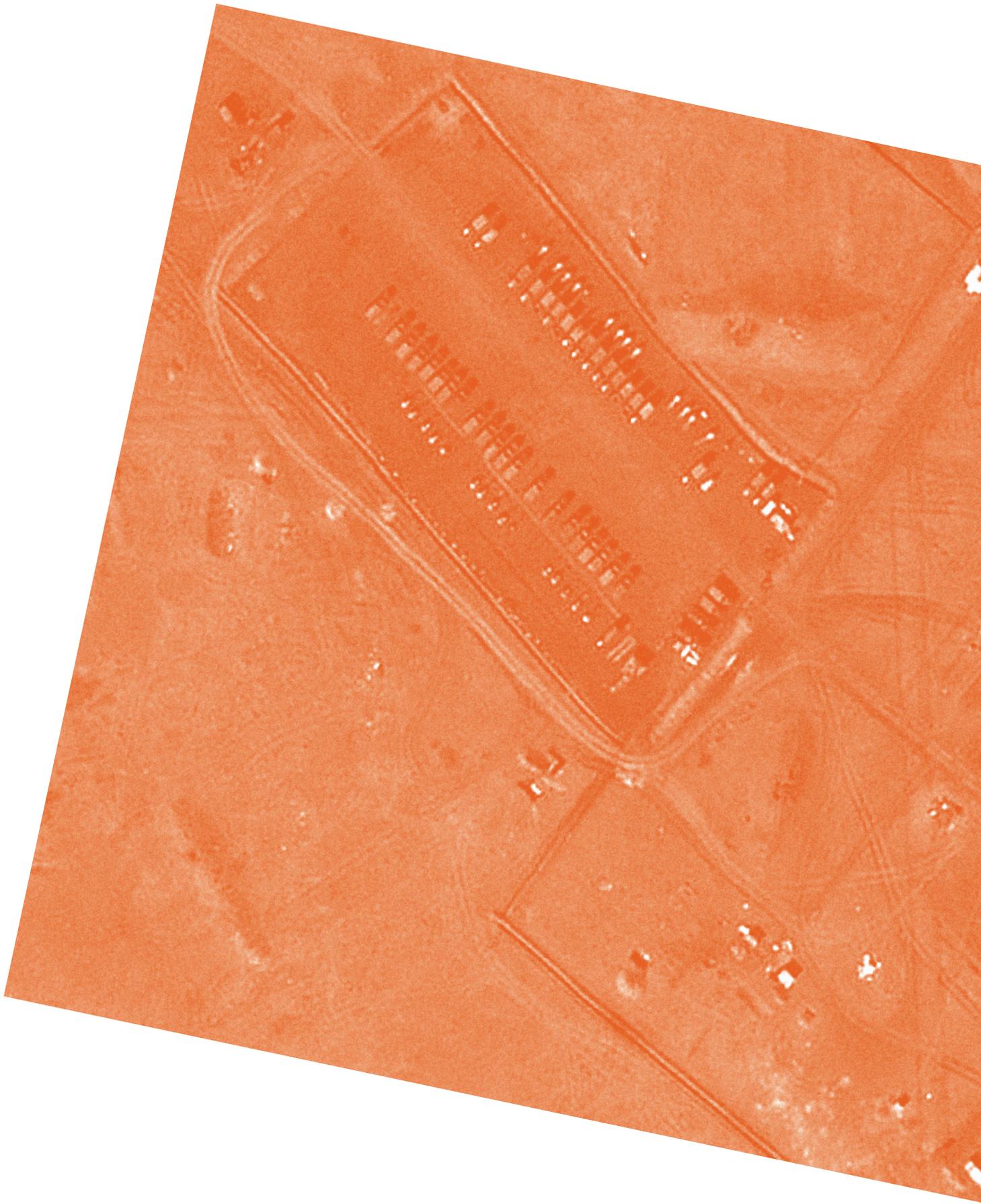
Joint operations and joint capabilities · At a time of declining defence budgets, the best way to maintain capabilities has been to cooperate. This was the message in Fogh Rasmussen's idea of Smart Defence, and this message will under any circumstances be central to NATO's Cardiff summit and in the future. However, in this area too, the Ukraine Crisis has made abstract ideas more concrete. The airspaces of the Baltic States have been protected by a joint NATO operation since 2004. After the intervention in Crimea, this protection was strengthened by French aircraft, among others, and the United States sent planes to Poland. The purpose of this was not only to give the air forces in the Baltic more punch, it was also a classic NATO operation where as many members as possible moved their forces into the danger zone so that an attack would really be an attack on all (or certainly many) members. This is the declaration of solidarity that is intended to demonstrate that the musketeer oath is meant to be taken seriously. This was underlined by NATO at the meeting of foreign ministers on 1 April 2014 where NATO's focus on deployment and exercises was also emphasised.⁶⁶ However, the discussions at the meeting also showed that there was a limit to how far a number of NATO countries were prepared to go. Poland's request for the deployment of two brigades in its territory⁶⁷ was rejected at the meeting and even though

NATO has subsequently made much of demonstrating that the alliance's crisis management and mobilisation mechanisms are fully functioning, the Ukraine Crisis will lead to a discussion as to precisely what the Western allies can do to defend its eastern allies, who will probably want permanent staffs, bases and forces in their countries. Joint operations would therefore take on a new political significance that would go beyond the shopkeeper's accounts of the Smart Defence, but which precisely therefore could breathe new life into cooperative projects and the joint purchasing of equipment, etc.

In Sum: Ukraine is not an isolated problem

For the EU, the Ukraine Crisis demonstrates the problems with the Union's view of itself and the policy regarding its neighbours and Russia that followed from it. Where NATO is concerned, the Ukraine Crisis once again gives occasion to focus on regional security and on conventional deterrence. NATO and the EU must carefully consider which spoken and tacit guarantees they offer their partners.

Nor is the Ukraine Crisis isolated in the sense that we can learn from previous crises and the way they have challenged European and allied policies and in this way equip ourselves for future debates and initiatives. We can learn that the interpretation of Russia's motives and the role that concrete events, such as the Ukraine Crisis, will be central points in the debate. The various views that come to expression in that debate will presumably draw equally long dividing lines internally in the European countries, between the European governments and between the European governments and the US government. This will bring various problems connected with Russia into play. The refocusing of NATO and the debate about this will not be least important for the Baltic and Scandinavian countries. They have followed NATO away from its neighbouring area to remote regions such as Iraq and Afghanistan and stationed defence forces there as a replacement for the territorial defence of the Cold War in the assumption that Russia was a risk that NATO and the European security system had under control. The events in Ukraine are a challenge to NATO with regard to this premise and a challenge to Western strategy.



A Western strategy:



If Putin wanted to be taken seriously, he succeeded. Russia has attempted to thwart the West's policies in a number of areas since the end of the Cold War. However, Russian attempts to put a spoke in the wheel of these policies at global level and to assert Russia at regional level were regarded as specific problems. Russia opposed the invasion of Iraq in 2003 and invaded Georgia in 2008, but these were regarded as isolated problems rather than expressions of general Russian revanchism. After the Ukraine Crisis it is clear that the Russian Government actually meant what it said and that Russian citizens actually back up this policy. Russia has got its second wind after the political, economic and social blow constituted by the breakdown of the Soviet empire. The end of the Cold War was not seen as a victory over communism that the West and Russia could join hands on, but as a Russian defeat that amputated parts of the Russian body. While the West has insisted that Russia in the long term would have to realise that the country had the same interests as the West, it must by now be clear that this is no longer the case. This has had decisive consequences for the West's conditions for conducting security policy:

- The West no longer has the initiative.
- Russia has the will and the ability to use armed force.
- This is a question of competition between two different orders.
- Security policy has precedence once again.

The West no longer has the initiative.

Western policies (the enlargement of NATO and the EU, the intervention in the Balkans, supplying the forces in Afghanistan) have set the agenda for relations with Russia since the end of the Cold War – if for no other reason than that the West barely took Russia seriously unless the country protested about some aspect of Western policy. What Russia otherwise did in relations to its close neighbours was not of strategic importance for the West. Russia constituted a risk in itself rather than a risk connected with concrete policies. However, with the Ukraine Crisis, Russia has shown that it can set the agenda and that the West's preparedness to keep up is very poor.

Russia has the will and ability to use armed force.

Armed force has not been part of the recipe for the way relations between West and East should be regulated since the end of the Cold War. On the contrary, Europe has been demilitarised, of which the dramatic limitation of defence budgets is an expression. Since the fall of the Berlin Wall, armed force has only been used in Europe in the Balkans. This was a question of a conflict which the West intervened with the aim of preventing a war from shaping borders. The premise for European policy has been that international relations are based on trade and cooperation.

This is a question of competition between two different orders.

Where the West was concerned, the end of the Cold War meant that Western ideas of an open society and a free market were the basis not only for the organisation of individual countries, but also for relations between them. The present Russian regime offers a different model – both to its own citizens and to the citizens of other countries. Russia is doing this within the framework of the global economy and in intensive trade with Europe.

Security policy has precedence once again.

Precisely because Russia is integrated into the global economy in ways that the Soviet Union was not, it is an even bigger challenge for the Western countries, which traditionally see economy as a source of peaceful coexistence and integration, to understand that Russia uses its economic resources, especially in the energy sector, as an integral part of state power.

After the Ukraine Crisis the challenge for the West

commitment and deterrence

will be to formulate a long-term, cohesive strategy based on the following principles:

- Values are universal, interests are not.
- Military power is a precondition for peace in Europe.
- International organisations and international economy are arenas, not forums for cooperation.
- Russia's vulnerability must be exploited.
- The Western countries must stick together.

Values are universal, interests are not.

The West's greatest assets are open societies and the free market. Neither in Europe nor in North America must we be misled by Putin's state ideology to believe that Russians do not want an open, free society. The words spoken in the West must appeal to those Russians who want to take a different path, and the actions of the West must show that we are prepared to cooperate. Western citizens and governments, however, must at the same time arrive at the difficult conclusion that we simply do not share objectives with the Russian government. We do not agree about the foundation of state power, we do not agree about the role of the nation in a global community and we do not agree about how international society should be organised.

Military power is a precondition for peace in Europe.

Russia's will and ability to use armed force emphasises that the security of European countries depends on a credible deterrent with regard to Russia. The West is overwhelmingly superior in relation to Russia when defence budgets and capacities are compared. However, the West cannot benefit from this superiority if Russia can play on the West's hesitation to use its military capacities and on NATO's inability to secure the defence of new members, especially the defence of the Baltic States. Credible deterrence is thus the key element in ensuring that the Putin government does not escalate the conflict with the West to the point where the West decides on military intervention.

International organisations and international economy are arenas, not forums for cooperation.

These different values and conflicting interests mean that we must acknowledge that international cooperation and the global markets are not control-free spaces but

arenas for a struggle about who gets his way. It is therefore means, not ends, that differ from the military sector.

Russia's vulnerability must be exploited.

Russia has taken the initiative because Putin's government has skilfully exploited the West's sensitivity regarding energy supplies combined with the West's inability to realise that Russia will exploit that sensitivity and will not begin to act like a Western state over time by allowing the market to function according to its own logic. No matter how sensitive to changes in Russian energy supplies a number of European countries may be in the short and medium term, European economies are far stronger than Russia's. The West must invest its way out of dependency on Russia, whereas Russia will always be dependent on selling its energy products to the world's biggest economic bloc. The West must formulate a long-term, cohesive energy and trade policy with regard to Russia that will enable the Western countries to exploit Russia's vulnerability.

The Western countries must stick together.

Putin has the initiative because the West has not prioritised the formulation of a cohesive policy. Western crisis management has been characterised by national initiatives that have been poorly coordinated in organisations with the result that Russia's actions have not been met by a resolute response that would lead the Kremlin to expect concrete sanctions in the case of an escalation. In other words, the West has to a great extent created a sphere of action for Russia and it is decisive to reduce this sphere of action with the help of a coordinated Western policy. It is in the nature of the case that the precondition for this will be a compromise between the various attitudes and the recognition of the fact that Europe only has influence by virtue of close cooperation with the United States. It is decisive for the West to establish a consensus on a new strategic concept for NATO, for instance, as it must coordinate many different attitudes and be prepared to react to Russian initiatives – just as the case was during the Cold War.



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