

Brussels Forum

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NATO in Transition

Ms. Sharon Stirling-Woolsey: Ladies and gentlemen, please take your seats. The program is about to begin.

Pres. Craig Kennedy: Come on in and grab a seat. Welcome back for the second session today. We've got a really excellent rest of the afternoon set up for you so it should be very special. Now it's my distinct pleasure to welcome back to the Brussels Forum the Secretary General of NATO, His Excellency Mr. Anders Fogh Rasmussen who's going to give some introductory remarks to set the stage for this next discussion. Sir, please.

Sec. Gen. Anders Fogh Rasmussen: Thank you Craig, for that introduction. I'm really delighted to be sharing the stage this afternoon with two of my predecessors. George, Jaap, your skilled leadership steered the Alliance through many difficult and decisive moments.

The crisis in Ukraine is another difficult and decisive moment. It's also a very dangerous moment and a wake-up call for all of us, not just in Europe but across the whole of the Euro-Atlantic area. Earlier this week in Washington, I spoke about why the crisis makes clear that NATO matters more for America than ever before. Today I want to explain why the crisis

also shows that the transatlantic bond and NATO matter more for Europe than ever before.

Russia's military aggress [sic] in the Ukraine is the most serious crisis in Europe since the fall of the Berlin Wall. Our vision of a Europe whole, free and at peace has been put into question because this is not an isolated incident. It follows a pattern of behavior, of military pressure and frozen conflicts in our neighborhood: Transnistria, South Ossetia, Abkhazia, and now Crimea.

What connects those crises is one big country unilaterally deciding to rewrite international rules overnight and on its own and recreate new dividing lines in Europe 25 years after the free peoples of Europe erased them. We had hoped this kind of revisionist behavior was confined to the 19th century, but we see it is back in the 21st century. It is based on confrontation, not cooperation, and it poses a real threat to the global order based on our values and the rules that we all agreed to respect. We need to respond both now and in the future. For now I see three priorities: first, to reaffirm our commitment to collective defense; second, to strengthen our support to Ukraine and the wider region; and third, to make clear that we can no longer do business as usual with Russia.

First, collective defense. No one should doubt NATO's resolve if the security of any of its members were to be threatened. Our commitment to the security of all allies is unbreakable now and in the future. This commitment is not just about words but real assets and real actions: more planes to police the airspace over the Baltics; Surveillance flights over Poland and Romania and we remain vigilant and ready to take all necessary steps. Our goal is to diffuse the crises on our border. And make no mistake, we will defend our allies.

Second, we will strengthen our support for Ukraine. We will intensify political and military cooperation. And that includes support of the transformation of Ukrainian armed forces into modern and effective organizations able to provide credible deterrents and defense against military threats enhancing the ability of the Ukrainian armed forces to work and operate together with armed forces of NATO allies. Increased participation in NATO exercises. This will be done both as an alliance and by allies individually. We also, working with other partners in the region, to provide the support they need in this time of crisis. And finally, speaking about immediate response, our relations with Russia. In 2010 we agreed to develop a true strategic partnership between NATO and Russia. I still believe that engagement remains the right way

forward, but I also have to say that today, we see Russia speaking and behaving more as an adversary than as a partner. That is not of our choice.

It is of great concern and it puts into question the very foundation of our cooperation with Russia. We have already agreed that no staff-level meetings with Russia will take place for now and we are reviewing the entire range of our cooperation so that NATO foreign ministers can take the appropriate decisions when they meet in Brussels in ten days from now. However, we're also keeping the door open for political dialogue. Now, this is what we are doing for now. But we must also look to the future, because this crisis is a game changer and it undermines the rules-based global order. To uphold that order, Europe and North America must stand together and continue to strengthen our economic and military ties. This is how we can best face up to those who break the rules and how we can continue to protect our values and our way of life. First, we must reinforce our economic ties. The transatlantic trade and investment partnership is key and it is urgent. Second, we must make energy diversification a strategic transatlantic priority and reduce Europe's dependency on Russian energy. And third, we must increase defense investment in Europe and strengthen our security cooperation within NATO.

The United States has shown a clear commitment to Europe's security from jet fighters to the Baltics, exercises in the Black Sea, to deployments of the USS Donald Cook to Spain as centerpiece of NATO's missile defense system. Europeans must play their full part. We have seen encouraging signs but there is more to be done. We need greater political will, stronger capabilities and more investment in defense. We cannot continue to disarm while the rest of the world is re-arming and some are rattling their arms on our borders. NATO's greatest responsibility is to protect and defend our populations and our territories. To do that we must insure that we have the full range of capabilities to deter and defend against any threat. To back off diplomatic soft power with military hard power. Now we need real power. Yeah. Yeah, thank you. All right. Yeah. Yes, please. So, yeah, okay. But I think we--I will need it, yes. Yeah. There are many ways to try and challenge NATO, but I can assure you--I can assure you that NATO will remain strong and vigilant and we will work with the European Union and the rest of the international community to safeguard security and stability in the Euro Atlantic area. Ladies and gentlemen as we prepare for our next summit in Wales, we will be taking tough decisions on the security of allies, corporation with partners and our relations

with Russia. Make no mistake in a changed world NATO stands ready. Thank you.

Craig Kennedy: Thank you Mr. Secretary General. I think it's clear that if we need someone to guide us through dark times you're exactly the person. So our next session on NATO in transition will be moderated by one of GMF's own, Dr. Constanze Stelzenmuller. Constanze, the floor's yours. Actually hold on a second. We're going to do a little adjustment here. Oh, we're going to do a video first. I'm sorry. Okay.

Video Narration: With the end of the combat mission in Afghanistan later this year, NATO, for the first time in 20 years, will not be engaged in any major out-of-area military operations. For some, the idea of a piece dividend is very attractive. For others, the idea of an operational pause will allow their armed forces to properly reset and restock itself in preparation for the next mission. The recent Ukraine crisis has certainly raised the importance of answering the question of just what kind of NATO the allies want post 2014. Should there be a global NATO or a NATO with global partners? How will leaders ensure that even at a time of scarce resources allies maintain credible military capability? How should the alliance address the Russia issue? Can NATO and Russia truly be partners? How should NATO reset itself post 2014 and what should its mission be?

Dr. Constanze Stelzenmuller: Well, good afternoon. As Craig's already said my name is Constanze Stelzenmuller. I'm a senior transatlantic fellow with the German Marshal Fund's Berlin office and I'm here to moderate the second plenary panel on NATO in Transition, although on the evidence of the past panel, I think I will be something between a traffic cop and a referee. That said, I will be a traffic cop and a referee. I understand emotions are running high on this topic and we're all guessing, I think, that this will be about the same topic as the last plenary, mostly. But I would like us to be clear, brief, concise. You can ask questions and comments after our panelists have had their say, but also please be gracious to each other, and if we could have not grandstanding I think that would be greatly appreciated by all.

Now, this topic, "NATO in Transition," many in this room here have spent much of their professional lives on this, but I think we all are very much aware that until a few weeks ago, this topic struck a somewhat elegiac note meaning that while we all know that NATO has many, many historical achievements to celebrate, we weren't quite sure post the withdrawal of the ISAF combat mission in Afghanistan, what NATO's future was going to look like. And then, of course, came the overthrow of the under covert government in Ukraine and the illegal annexation of Crimea by Russia. And since

then, European foreign ministers have been vying with each other as to whether this crisis is as bad as the time after 1989, the fall of the Berlin wall or as bad as the Yugoslav wars. But as bad as the reality is, as has been said here today several times, this is a watershed moment for Europe and one that raises challenges that will be left an entire generation to deal with. And if it is a transition, than it seems rather like a transition backwards--backwards to history.

For now, of course, the U.S. and Europe seem to agree stridently that there is no military option. They keep saying that. Leaders keep saying that and sanctions currently are the order of the day, and I would say they are tough and they are beginning to hurt as, among others, the stock markets are showing and the price of the ruble. But that does not mean, of course, that there is no role for NATO, visible or less visible. Political signaling, consultation to reassurance to what? What indeed? What can, what must NATO do to help contain this crisis and what should it avoid in order to not let it escalate? These are very, very difficult questions. Some of you will remember a BBC show of the 1980s which schooled many of us in politics, Yes Minister. And there is a famous first episode of the second installment Yes Prime Minister, where Jim Hacker gets introduced to the nuclear button

and he says, "Well, when exactly do I push this?" And the general, his chief of staff says, "Actually I can't tell you. Please ask your chief scientist." And the chief scientist is called in and Jim Hacker asks him in a very memorable passage to explain the theory of a deterrence to him. And for a German obviously, even when I watched this today, it still makes a shiver run down my spine, because, bit by bit, the chief scientist explains, you know, says, "Where would you start? Border of Poland? Bits of East Germany? You know, entry into east Berlin?" And, horrified, Jim Hacker keeps saying "No. No. No." and in the end the chief scientist said, "Well, so much for the theory of deterrents." And of course, if we are honest with each other, much as we relish words of clarity these days, including from the Secretary General of NATO we are in a very, very difficult situation and one where there are no easy choices and no easy cause and that is what we want to discuss today and we have, I think, probably the most distinguished panel we could have for this debate and one, I've just bet, that has not set together in this grouping ever so it's a distinct pleasure to welcome not just the current NATO secretary general but Lord George Robinson, NATO Secretary General from 1990 to 2004, former defense minister from the UK and The Honorable Jaap De Hoop Scherffer his successor as secretary general from 2004 to 2009 former foreign

minister from the Netherlands. Let me start with you, Lord Robertson. And I remember interviewing you once when I was journalist at (inaudible) in 1997 in your office at the Defense Ministry, former War Ministry, and I think you still had a map on your wall that had both Germanies on it. So clearly a man who is very fond of Germany, all the Germanies.

I would like to get a question out of the way that has been thrown around by some of the realists, not just in my country, to my embarrassment, but also in America. And that is the question whether NATO broke its promise in 1999 by the enlargement and the subsequent enlargements after '99, taking up all the new Eastern European members. The quote that is often heard is the one by James Baker, that NATO would not move an inch nearer to Russia's borders. Did NATO break its promises to Russia?

Lord George Robertson: No, it didn't. And that alleged promise was way before my time. James Baker was not a contemporary of me. The enlargement of 2002 broke no promises at all. And indeed was done with the cooperation of Russia. I had many meetings with Russians at that time; and, although there were some members of the government of Russia, who were reluctant, especially in the Baltic states, ultimately President Putin stood back and said that he was quite comfortable with that taking place.

I think there were other, we mustn't use the word redlines anymore, but appears to the others (inaudible) related to Georgia and Ukraine in particular. So there was no promises broken. And indeed the NATO-Russia Council statement at the time clarified what we meant, that we said there would be no permanent formal (inaudible) of NATO troops. And I think the previous promise had to do with the stationing of nuclear forces to the east, as well. So we didn't break any promises at all.

Good relations with Vladimir Putin and with the Russians at that time. You mentioned interviewing me at the British Ministry of Defense. Actually I'm going to say that wasn't the old War Office building, it was (inaudible) Ministry Building. Which is quite relevant because when I went to Moscow in early 2002, I think I was the first international visitor for then not even President Putin. I was given a plane by the German Defense Ministry to take me to that famous meeting. And I was interviewed as I landed in the evening before the following day's meetings. And all across the breakfast television programs the following morning was an aide to the Secretary General being interviewed in the freezing cold at the airport with a plane in the background that said "Luftwaffe" along the side.

Ms. Constanze Steizenmuller: Yeah, thanks for reminding us of that.

Lord George Robertson: At the end of the meeting, President Putin said, "Why did you come in a German plane? Could you not come with a Union Jack on it?" But we had good relations. And the fact is, they abused your question. Because it is relevant at the moment. I stood beside Vladimir Putin at a press conference; and, on the 28th of May 2002, after the meeting of heads of state and government at the inaugural meeting of the NATO-Russia Council, flanked by Putin and by Berlusconi, I did a press conference. And I just want to say what Putin actually said in reply to a question. In other words, this was not a scripted comment by him. And I think it's very important at this time, 14 years later. He said, "Russia always had a crucial role in world affairs. The problem for our country has been, however, that over a very long period of time a situation arose in which Russia was on one side, and the other side was practically the whole of the rest of the world. Nothing good came of that confrontation between us and the rest of the world. We certainly gained nothing from it." And he then went on to say, "Russia is and wants to be and remains part of the civilized community of nations. There's nothing to be gained if our voice is not heard, and we are determined for our national interests to be taken account of. Russia is prepared to act in accordance with international law, international rules in the course of

a civilized dialogue for the achieving of common and joint ends. And those ends have been set out very clearly in the document we signed off today."

I think President Putin and the Russian people need to be reminded of these words. What they signed off to, what was the joint commitment; and they should be reminded of it regularly and constantly.

Ms. Constanze Steizenmuller: Thank you very much. I think that was a very useful reminder, Lord Robertson. Let me move to Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, your successor as NATO Secretary General. You presided over much of NATO's initial Afghan operations; and, of course, over a NATO that was going global with a vengeance, that was looking to become more deployable, more sustainable, more globally engaged itself and with partners. Now, given what is happening here and what might still happen, and given limited defense budgets at a time of crisis that's still not over, clearly, at least not for a lot of Europe, was that a mistake?

The Hon. Jaap de Hoop Scheffer: No, it definitely wasn't. I admit that would we have been sitting here four or five weeks ago, this would have been the topic. You said it yourself. What is NATO? What is NATO going to do? I should start by complimenting Vladimir Putin, that he helps us a lot in two ways; A, to underline the relevance of NATO, which we had to do ourselves mainly over the past years; and secondly because he might, as

Secretary General Rasmussen said, he might convince politicians in the allied nations to stop the slide in the defense budgets. That's a silver lining of this horrible crisis. We would've discussed NATO going global, NATO as an alliance of democracies. We do not have that luxury, as we speak. We do not have it. What we now have to do is see that we bring political comfort to the Baltics, to Poland, to the central and European states, and I hastily add, that we comfort Moldova, we comfort Georgia, we comfort Ukraine. That will mean a lot of money. That's not, of course, NATO's responsibility; I think you've discussed this earlier in this afternoon. That's where the European Union comes in. We should comfort Ukraine, but also Moldova. I mean, put in, too, Transnistria already quite some time ago. And you know that this week the president of the Parliament of Transnistria said, "Couldn't we have the same status as Crimea?" We're all, we're Russians, after all. In other words, I am not answering your question in the sense that we should put the discussion on hold, with a discussion which is related to NATO and its global partners. It is good to have good relations with Australia, with New Zealand, South Korea, Japan and so on and so forth, the U.A., what we learned in Afghanistan. But we have been taught a power politics lesson by Mr. Putin; and we thought that we were over that and that we have left that situation for good. We

have been taught a lesson. We, as we sit, the majority of us as we sit in this room, are trained to think in moral categories. Vladimir Putin does not think in moral categories; he thinks in different categories. And that's the lesson, and that is why NATO as well as the European Union, should now, but Anders said it a moment ago, do everything it can to prevent this crisis from worsening. It is already bad enough. And I hate to admit it. When we have to say Crimea is a fait accompli. I didn't expect that, quite honestly, two weeks ago, that I was sitting here and said Crimea is a fait accompli. And now the question is when we discuss sanctions, when we discuss NATO's role, NATO's position, NATO's reinforcement, that we are preventing this crisis from even getting worse than it is. A crisis which has, as you said, 19th century traces, and it has 20th century traces. And we thought we were living in the 21st century. In this respect, we are not. So there's a lot of work to do for NATO in the domain Anders just told us. There's an awful lot to do for the European Union. It took me, let me finish with this, it took me one-and-a-half, close to two years, to get consensus on air policing over the Baltics. That wasn't necessary. It took much, much longer, as you know, to develop contingency plans for that region. They didn't exist. And it was considered too provocative. We know better now.

Ms. Constanze Steizenmuller: Thank you very much. Well, I will say I've been thinking along similar lines, watching Europeans battle out a consensus. Many of us in this room were around for the Yugoslav wars. And will remember that it took years, it took years for the British, the French, the Germans, and the Americans to agree on what needed to be done. In many ways we were too late. We finally sprang into action. Compared to those times, I think we have gotten a lot faster and a lot more decisive.

Ms. Constanze Stelzenmuller: Secretary General Rasmussen, thank you for your very clear words. I think that was helpful for all of us. You said the situation is a potential game-changer, we must stand together now to protect our way of life. That said, how serious are NATO's defense commitments towards Eastern Europe, given the U.S. draw-down and European defense cuts?

Sec. Gen. Anders Fogh Rasmussen: As I emphasized in my introduction, make no mistake, we will take all necessary steps and measures to ensure effective protection and defense of our allies. I mentioned some of the steps we have already taken. And we stand ready to go further if it's necessary to deter and defended against any threat. So you can rely on our determination to provide such effective, collective defense. As regards defense investments, I think this is a wake-up call; and in all European capitals the

whole situation should now be reviewed. And it is necessary to reverse the trend of declining defense budgets. We can't continue cutting deeply in defense budgets and still think that we are able to provide effective collective defense. That's the reality. We have to reverse the trend.

Ms. Constanze Steizenmuller: Right. Okay. Thank you very much. I think with this, we'll take it out into the audience. Now, there are two ways that we can do this. Just to remind you, you can of course raise your hand and wave at me, or jump around, or do whatever you do to get my attention, and I will pay attention. The other alternative is that you post a question here, it will be lightly edited for grammar and style, and then sent back to me on this iPad; and should there be any lack of questions, I will look at see what there is and if there's anything more interesting going. That said, I see a lot of hands up. Would you please--two things. Please briefly introduced yourselves and your affiliation. And if you want to, you can make a comment but it would be nice if you could address it to something that's actually been said here, or that someone said. And if you ask your question, address it to one of our three distinguished handlers. Okay, Anne-Marie Slaughter, how about you? Does anybody have a microphone to give to Anne-Marie Slaughter? Sorry, here, over there. Thank you.

Ms. Anne-Marie Slaughter: Hi. This is not going to be a popular question. But I think it needs to be asked, particularly here. I want you to explain why this is such a watershed when 2008 in Georgia was not. I want--The consensus here seems to be this is just absolutely a game-changer. With all respect to the Russians, and I know where I stand on this issue, and many of you know where I stand on this kind of issue; but, you know, Kosovo would've looked not so dissimilar from the Russian point of view, in the sense that once you separated Kosovo from Serbia, you got a popular result that looked very different than you would have had you actually had a referendum in Serbia and Kosovo as a whole. I'm not saying they're the same, but they're not SO different that we don't even talk about them. And what happened in Georgia was very similar. So I just want to know why this is the game-changer. Not that we shouldn't be doing what we're doing, but why there's such a consensus that suddenly the world has changed.

Ms. Constanze Steizenmuller: Secretary General, would you like to take that?

Sec. Gen. Anders Fogh Rasmussen: Yeah. First on Kosovo, there is a huge, huge difference between Kosovo and what we are witnessing in Crimea. Let me just remind you that in Kosovo we were pretty close to what I would consider genocide. And finally, too late, but

finally, the international community took action; and since then our actions have been based on a U.N. Security Council resolution. So there's a huge difference. I could go further, but time doesn't allow. So, please, please don't try to make the case that Crimea and Kosovo are similar; they're very, very, very different.

Ms. Constanze Steizenmuller: But I don't think that's Anne-Marie Slaughter, in all fairness was doing. She was asking why didn't we think that was a watershed moment already? And why didn't we think Georgia was already a watershed moment? Am I right?

Sec. Gen. Anders Fogh Rasmussen: Yeah, but Kosovo was--

Constanze Steizenmuller: Why did it take Ukraine?

Sec. Gen. Anders Fogh Rasmussen: Kosovo was also a sea change. Absolutely. But not, but not similar. And it was actually something very special that we engaged at that time in a campaign to stop genocide. So that was also a very particular situation, but different.

Now, returning to Georgia. Obviously, what we witnessed in Georgia was also a very serious challenge. But we are now witnessing military action from the Russian side that is unprecedented when it comes to the size of troop movements. The fact is that it's about the riot of 45 million people to make their own choice.

So of course there are similarities between what we saw in Georgia and what we are now witnessing in Ukraine. But the two events together really demonstrate that this is part of a more comprehensive Russian strategy. And that's why I do believe that we need a firm and determined response both in the short term, and in the longer term.

Hon. Jaap de Hoop Scheffer: May I briefly add that there's of course a big difference between having Ukraine as a geopolitical battlefield on the base of its size, on the base of its population, which has always been--we all know the history. The history of Ukraine is a bit different from Georgia's history.

But in principle, I do agree with Anders. What happened in 2008 in this regard is not basically different. The consequences could be very, very different because Ukraine is not Georgia.

And that is what I see as a big risk, and that is the reason that we have to do what we should do to prevent from Putin having not learned as one geopolitical lesson to raise the temperature as he can do every day in the eastern and southern part of Ukraine to stir trouble, bringing in a few buzzards. I mean, Ukraine and Georgia, a huge difference. Both nations, by the way, as I said before, I repeat, both Georgia and Ukraine should now be massively financially

and politically supported where we can. That's our responsibility.

Lord George Robertson: I think there's also--you know, It's fairly easy. You go to public meetings, and you finish your evening, and somebody gets up and say, "I'm quite appalled by the fact that the speaker spent the whole of this evening talking about world affairs and did not mention the problems of Upper Volta."

The fact that you intervened in some place doesn't mean you have to intervene in every place. I'm old enough to remember the invasion by Argentina of the Falkland Islands. And the very ambivalent position of the United States of America at that time in saying, "We're keeping out of it." Latin America is very important to us as well, so, I think you can't do everything all the time.

And, anyway, we are a community of nations. There has to be a community of views before things happen. (inaudible) is looked upon now as a set of absolutely template for atrocities happening, near Genocide happening, action being taken, it being successful after 78 days, no allied casualties.

Well, it wasn't unanimous before we went in. It was difficult to get a legal base, because there was no in Security Council resolution. We almost lost if Milosevic had not lost his nerve. And actually, we hadn't had help from Russia on the diplomatic side. So

these are all very different and they can be very complicated situations. But there is no doubt about the geopolitical importance of Ukraine today.

Ms. Constanze Stelzenmuller: That said, Kosovo is also an example of just how difficult we Westerners, with all our money and all our means, find it to then move forward democratic transformation and economic civility even. But I'd like to hand the next question to Rosietta Tevich. Can you remind us of your affiliation?

Ms. Rosietta Tevich: Rosietta Tevich with Chatham House. My question is to Dr. Scheffer, actually. When, this week, President Yoshihiko was in Brussels. He had very bitter memories of a Bucharest Summit. And he said that when we sat at this table and I was explaining the importance of giving membership action plan to Ukraine and for same matter to Georgia, the reason that was given by some member states was public opinion is too low, 31 percent of that time was a low, you said, some member states.

But he said when Spain was joining NATO, the public opinion was even lower. And he said the situation that we have today would not have happened with these two countries had membership action plan. Do you agree with that or not? Thank you.

Jaap de Hoop Scheffer: Well, that's very hard to predict. The only thing I can say is that Bucharest was

a pressure cooker, because as you know, there were major differences within the alliance between France and Germany on the one hand, United States on the other hand, not yet Iraq revival revisited, but almost. And you also know the result.

And you also know that sense then, it hasn't become easier. And sense a few weeks, it has become even more difficult. Let's face the facts vis-à-vis, Ukraine and Georgia. And that's why I'm not now going to tell you or anyone else here, they'll be NATO members in five or seven and a half years, because we know that's not going to happen.

And Ukraine, after the government, of course, left the NATO buff when Yanukovych came in. So I can't predict if this would have happened had they been NATO members. Had they been NATO members, we would have, of course, been obliged as we are now in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and elsewhere, I mean to have Article 5. That's crystal clear.

But it's also crystal clear that the political basis for bringing them in was simply not there. It was there in Bucharest and it is not here now. I mean that's reality. Which does not at all mean, I repeat myself again, that we have heavy responsibilities because of the Ukraine and Georgia. And I add again, Moldova. Let's not forget Moldova, because next stop might really be Transnistria. And Moldova is a poor

country. It is a fragile country, and let's not repeat the same mistakes again.

Ms. Constanze Stelzenmuller: Okay. On that note, I think we hand over to Ambassador Grushko who is Russian Ambassador at NATO. Is Transnistria the next stop?

Ambassador Alexander Grushko: Well, first of all, I would like to say that this is not the best day for me, because I see three Sec. Generals sitting on the stage, and I know them all personality, so how old I am. I know a lot of story from all of history.

Ms. Constanze Stelzenmuller: Join the club.

Ambassador Alexander Grushko: My second point is that I do believe that NATO is very close to have a new or old *raison d'être*, and if this will be a choice. Coming back to, moving back to the Cold War, I would like to say that this is not the position of the Russian Federation and we do believe that we have a global security agenda which is extremely important and Russia will be prepared to continue cooperation, but on equal footing.

Third point is also extremely important, I think, that it links this discussion with the previous one. It should be acknowledged that the policy of the president of the Russian Federation, Vladimir Putin, when he came to power, was in fact to build strategy partnership.

You rightly said that we started from the freezing of NATO-Russia relations. We sent our own declaration.

This was also the result of our common vision how to build security architecture after 2001, the tragedy. We also proposed to launch a project called Four Common Spaces with the European Union. With a lot of things therein, also common security, internal security space, external security space, we proposed to have crisis management agreement (inaudible) a lot of things that could and should link together European Union and Russia. And this is extremely important not to allow creation of such a situation when our neighbors will be in the position of choice between EU and Russia, and that happened in Ukraine.

So we should not--for us there is no need to justify that what we do want to achieve in our relations with the West, this was a genuine partnership. And we have a lot of good examples, one we cooperate on a quite, quite, quite promising and sound basis.

Final points. Two final points. Very short. We don't need permission from NATO and you to act in line with international law. And Crimea was absolutely legitimate case, and I do believe that NATO should acknowledge that fact. And since NATO is a collaboration of democratic countries, should accept this democratic choice of Crimean people. It was so clear, so obvious, that I think there should not be any

doubt that what people have said during referendum, this should be respected.

Final point about soft power versus hard power. I think today there is a lot of debate about a new vision of NATO, that NATO should be in the position to demonstrate its muscles, and a lot of things being talked about the vulnerability of Baltic States. I think when we talk about this region, it is better to preserve the rights of the population and to get rid of this phenomenon of no citizenship. Twenty-three years have passed after the collapse of the Soviet Union, but 640,000 people are non-citizens only because they do speak Russian. And I think it will be the better solution than to send US interceptors with really unclear mission. Thank you.

Ms. Constanze Stelzenmuller: Okay. Well, I think we should thank the Ambassador for setting out the Russian position very clearly. I would imagine that one or two or three of our panelists would like to address that. No?

Sec. Gen. Anders Fogh Rasmussen: Yeah, of I may, I would ask Ambassador Grushko a question. Because we have, all of us, including Russia, in 1999 in the OSCE charter for European Security, subscribed to the principle that each and every nation has an inherent right to freely choose its alliances. Why doesn't the

Russian Federation respect that principle to which it has subscribed?

Ms. Constanze Stelzenmuller: Please, can you hand the ambassador the mic again? If you want to answer, you don't have to. Look, actually the question was to the ambassador, please.

Ambassador Alexander Grushko: Well, first of all, this is a question, but that's true. This is true. There is a very clear commitment. But at the same time, there is also principles, basic principles of international law in shrined in all the documents that first of all principle often the visibility of security. And nobody will improve its security at the expense of security of others.

NATO is free to take any decision, and Russia is free to take any decision to protect its legitimate security interests. And from the beginning, we are tending to all our callings and we were very outspoken in all our discussions that we do believe that if NATO goes with enlargement, it will continue produce new dividing clients, moving dividing clients towards the Russian borders.

And we said very clearly, also, that in some cases, these dividing clients will cross the countries, inside countries, and this is, of course, a very, very, very, important signal. It's up to you to listen or not, but

we believe that we were absolutely right focusing on that.

And I think that when we are talking about future security architecture and this was an idea behind our proposal on treaty on European security. We must find the ways to protect the security of all, but not relying on the instruments we inherited from the best.

Sec. Gen. Anders Fogh Rasmussen: Alexander, may I ask you, will you accept Georgia's rights to choose NATO membership if this is a Georgian decision and if NATO accepts? Would you accept that?

Ms. Constanze Stelzenmuller: Okay. And then we'll stop the back and forth, the bilateral.

Ambassador Alexander Grushko: No, (inaudible) We believe that this is a future mistake to do it.

Sec. Gen. Anders Fogh Rasmussen: That's all to answer the question, I guess.

Ambassador Alexander Grushko: No, this is the question. This is the position of my country.

Sec. Gen. Anders Fogh Rasmussen: No, because when NATO did, you sent in your forces into Georgia in 2008.

Ambassador Alexander Grushko: No, it's not true, because we were attacked. Read, please the (inaudible) report and it was very clear on (inaudible) attack on the Russian peace keepers. We lost 15 people. Exactly, the problem was that at time, we are knocking at the

door of NATO-Russian console trying to present our case. We were not allowed.

And in a few weeks, NATO has decided to establish NATO-Georgian commission. In-fact, to decorate Georgian leadership for this act. And believe that this was not the way how NATO should address this situation, because Russia was attacked. I should refer to one thing. Secretary General said that Transnistria or don't forget Tajikistan. Tajikistan is also very important because in all these cases, it is because of Russia, because of Russian soldiers we have peace, stability, security, and people are not dying.

And this is also part of the security picture. And this is an element we should be taking into account when NATO looks at the possible Russian role as an instrument for our common security.

Ms. Constanze Stelzenmuller: Okay. I would suggest we leave the bilateral at that. It's been very instructive, certainly. I have over here Ambassador Masafumi Ishii of the foreign ministry in Japan. And I haven't forgotten all of your others. I have eyes in the back of my head.

Ambassador Masafumi Ishii: Masafumi Ishii from Japan. Just for the sake of change, a short comment from Asia. I think as three secretary generals of your country put the core issue here is unilateral change of the status quo by force should not be tolerated, and

the root of the law should be--should prevail. And that means this is not the Europe or United States issue. This is the global issue and the same thing may happen in my part of the country. So the way you solve this crisis have an impact on the future instant in my part of the world as well. So please bear that in mind.

Ms. Constanze Stelzenmuller: On that note--and yes, I am aware of you all. But on that note, of course, it would be at least as interesting as what Masafumi Ishii just said to hear someone from China here. Is anybody from China in the room who would like to take a position on what is happening in the Ukraine? It doesn't sound like it. Okay. Well--

Male: They seem to be hiding under the bedcovers, you'd just assume.

Ms. Constanze Stelzenmuller: Well, you can get back to me. Now, over here, this gentleman in the second row next to my colleague Alexandria has been waiting for a long time. Yes. I got you all.

Male: Uh, my name is (inaudible) from Brazil. My question is: Russia was playing an important role in Syria on the chemical weapons. What will happen now?

Sec. Gen. Anders Fogh Rasmussen: I suppose that all parties involved feel obliged to live up to the United Nations Security Council Resolution on the destruction of chemical weapons in Syria. I mean, that's not affected and should not be affected by

ongoing events in Ukraine. Let me remind you there is a United Nations Security Council Resolution. And all member states abound by that resolution and I would expect Russia as well as other nations to live up to their international commitments according that that resolution.

Ms. Constanze Stelzenmuller: Right. Okay. I have (inaudible) waiting for a long time over there.

Female: Thank you, (inaudible) from the European Council on Foreign Relations--

Ms. Constanze Stelzenmuller: And Estonia.

Female: And Estonia. Yes. Everyone points that out these days.

Ms. Constanze Stelzenmuller: Well, (inaudible).

Female: I wanted, actually, to offer my two cents as to why Crimea and Georgia are different, and then ask how we deal with the implications. I think invading Georgia as well as Crimea were not easy decisions for President Putin, because actually his world view tends to be fairly legalistic. Meaning if you look at his speeches, he's been like that. When Crimea happened I was struck by how it happened because in Georgia when Russia invaded it was really terribly clumsy. But they had worked on the pretext. They had tried to really create kind of moral case for invasion and they stuck to it. In Crimea it was militarily swift and smooth. Very well done, I suppose. But they didn't work on the

pretext almost at all. They didn't care whether their pretext for invasion is believable. They almost wanted it not to be believable.

And I reached the conclusion that if in Georgia Russia violated the rules, but later pretended it had not then in Crimea it challenged the rules. And I think Russia wanted to send a message that it wants a different type--different principle to be valid. Basically, Russia is against one pillar of European order. Namely the principle at the end of the stage in the late '90's that countries are free to join alliances if they qualify. Russia wants to send a message that (inaudible) is no good. And this is all about NATO enlargement. President Medvedev made it clear that the Georgian invasion was about NATO enlargement, and President Putin was very clear that Ukraine was about NATO enlargement as well. And I think we have some sort of parallel, I think, even going on.

Many people in the West think that--Russia got away to easily in 2008 and that's why Crimea happened. I think many people in Moscow think that they tried to send them a subtle message in 2008. They didn't understand it. That's why we needed to take Crimea. So my question is--

Ms. Constanze Stelzenmuller: Thank you.

Female: --how do we go about it if there is this principle of free choice of alliances being challenged?

We don't want to intellectually rephrase it, but we were in no position to enforce it either. How do we go about it? Thank you.

Ms. Constanze Stelzenmuller: Who would like to take that questions?

Mr. Jaap de Hoop Scheffer: Well, we go about it not primarily in the military domain because we can't. Putin knows very well that we are not going to wage war over Crimea as we were not going to wage war over Georgia. For many, perhaps, a sad conclusion, but they are not NATO members so we are not going to wage war. What Putin, in my opinion, is doing, is giving his answer, perhaps a bit belatedly on the NATO and European Union enlargement in the sense that you have come closer to my borders. Free Choice. No promises broken, I'll now make sure--and that's why I pay so much attention to these other nations. That's Vladimir Putin has started with Crimea. He might not take all of the other territories, but he is going to create a ring--a protective ring of nations where he wants influence. He knows in Ukraine, because it is too big that he cannot have exclusive influence, but we should be careful that he does not create exclusive influence elsewhere and that's why I am saying that the political track is more important--is as important, I should say, than NATO and the military track.

And what, perhaps, Ambassador Grushko, I'll answer you on one of your questions which I think are relevant. I think it was after all not the right decision that after your invasion into Georgia we suspended talks in the NATO-Russia Council. I will give you that. I will give you that. But on the other hand, that's, as you know, was also a pre-planned invasion like we have seen in Crimea. The number of forces you have on the other side of the tunnel in Georgia does not justify that this happened overnight. But I want to give you your point that completely stopping talking to each other is in a diplomatic sense perhaps not the right way to go.

Ms. Constanze Stelzenmuller: Right. Um

Lord George Robertson: Can I just say--

Ms. Constanze Stelzenmuller: Of course.

Lord George Robertson: You have made some--a valid point, and I hope that NATO today that they--that the ambassador and Russia will be pulled in all of the time to hear what other people think of what is going on, and to, perhaps, explain and for collective--a collective examination of what the future might be. Because it's very, very important that we don't simply focus on this particular issue. We need to look at the ramifications elsewhere. If in 2002 Vladimir Putin thought that being on one side of an argument with the whole of the rest of the world on the other side as

they are today, and that that was not in Russia's interest then. They need to work out where next Russia is going to go if it is not going to find itself in isolation.

The second thing I would say is that you perhaps were looking at NATO because you've got three people who hold or held the position of Secretary General of NATO. But this is primarily going to be a matter for diplomacy in the other nations and especially in the EU. The Ukrainian economy is in dire trouble. And rescuing the Ukrainian economy and--

Ms. Constanze Stelzenmuller: (Inaudible) is shaking his head. We have a EU problem.

Lord George Robertson: And therefore, you know, the ability of the Ukrainian people to make a fair and reasoned decision about their future depends on that economic situation being rescued. And it being almost way beyond the capacity of the European Union and perhaps the international community. We are faced with another parallel huge dilemma and that is not going to be a matter for NATO.

NATO can stand firm, and will stand firm, and we--I rightly agree with everything that Anders had said this afternoon. But a bigger, huge problem is actually still in the off stage. And people like Kathy are going to have to grapple with that if we are actually going to

mean what we say in allowing the Ukrainian people to make a decision.

Ms. Constanze Stelzenmuller: Right. Thank you very much. I think we've had the Russian president on the couch for long enough, and we should indeed, as you have just entered, be talking about what needs to be done next. And I sense that Damon Wilson has been waiting impatiently to say some of things. But Damon before you say what I guess you are going to say because I heard you saying some of it this morning already, could you please say whether you think it is likely that any of that was going to happen and how you get from the current state of things to the desirable things in a realistic way?

Mr. Damon Wilson: Thanks, Constanze. Damon Wilson with the Atlantic Counsel. Part of what we were talking about this morning is how to insure there is a strategic response to what Russia has done in the Ukraine and so we are focused on sanctions today, but how a strategic response is impacted on whether we actually stand behind and back up the vision of a Europe whole and free, or whether we cower and back away from it. And we talked a lot about sort of means to build out a comprehensive set of actions that speak to this over time. My question for you is we've debated whether NATO enlargement played a role in Georgia and Ukraine, but what is the future of NATO enlargement?

What's actually the future of the EU enlargement? As part of our strategic response, do we stand firm behind the vision of a Europe whole and free free? Do we see a Montenegro back in play for the (inaudible) Summit? Do we see a Georgia map back in play for the (inaudible) Summit? Should we see momentum in the European Union to give a European perspective to the Eastern partners that actually do reform? I'd welcome your views on that.

Ms. Constanze Stelzenmuller: Who of you would like to tackle that? Mr. Rasmussen. NATO enlargement.

Sec. Gen. Anders Fogh Rasmussen: Yeah. Well, first let me describe the procedure we have decided before maybe elaborating a bit on my own view of this. We have decided that we should, of course, address the open door policy convincingly at the summit in Wales on the 4th and 5th of September. And to prepare that we will update assessments of each of the four aspirant countries, Georgia and Montenegro, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and Bosnia, Herzegovina. Then NATO foreign ministers will discuss this and take decisions when they meet by the end of June. This is the formal procedure which boils down to the answer-- the formal answer that it is premature to answer your question.

Now, having said that, I think what we have seen in recent weeks may have an impact on this. And I see this

in a strategic perspective. I think, also in relation to the question what do we do about it. I think what we can do about it is to speak a language that is understood in the Crimean. That means determination. That means Western unity. And it means giving a realistic Euro-Atlantic perspective to countries that so wish. And they have a right to choose their security policies and their alliances freely. They can choose an alliance. They can choose to pursue a non-alliance policy. It's for them to decide.

And I think we should be firm on that, and we should not grant a de facto veto right to third parties. This is my answer. And it means that it wouldn't be efficient just to reiterate open door language from previous summits. We have to move and actually, also, reflect the progress that has been made at least in some of the aspirant countries. I think that's as far as I can go at this stage.

Lord George Robertson: I think, Anders is inevitably, I think constrained in what he can say as I once was and Jaap once was, too, as well. Since we've left we can be slightly less constrained without, I hope, being at anyway disloyal because I think that this is a big issue and it's not just a short term issue. If people stop thinking in terms of the summit in September will get it wrong. I think we need to look at a broader canvas about how the Europeans especially

are going to organize their defense and security affairs, if you care. You know, I used to use the famous words of Enver Hodger, the dictator of Albania who once said, "Always remember," he said, "that along with the Chinese people, the Albanians make up one quarter of the world's population." And we've lived with that illusion that a lot of European nations are not spending money on defense, not building capabilities were are running the world because we have the United States to always pick up the pieces. You know, then Kosovo came along. They had to do 85 percent of the (inaudible) you know, that in each of the events it would come along. And I warned. At the time I was selling European defense. The day will come when a European crisis emerges and the Americans will stand back. Now, I didn't think it would be Libya, but it was Libya. And the Americans not only stood back, they actually took their commanders out of the integrated military structure, something even I wouldn't have imagined. So America is now in the business of participating, but not in leading. And that means that the Europeans have to sort of recognize they have-- their own fate is in their own hands. So, when we look at enlargement, what kind of security arrangement do we want and need? Actually the threats we'll all face in the future, leaving aside the important issue of today, is that all of the threats are common right across

Europe, to Russia, to Ukraine, to Georgia, Azerbaijan, Armenia, as well as to the Balkan countries and to Finland and Sweden as well.

Maybe we need to think a bit more ambitiously about a different framework, but one that still has the intrinsic strength that NATO has brought over its 65 years.

Ms. Constanze Stelzenmuller: I think the Russians have been trying to offer us one of those, and we haven't been all that interested. But I would like to give the floor..

Mr. Jaap de Hoop Scheffer: Without any doubt, his Lordship was referring to his famous pygmy speech, when he spoke about the Europeans during his mandate.

Lord George Robertson: Well, this was--perhaps Sweden wasn't the best place to make the speech, which was--this was a speech I made where I pointed out that the European Union was an economic giant, but a political pygmy. And the NATO council, the following week--the French Ambassador Benoit d'Aboville was incensed. He'd managed to say incensed from the previous week right through, in order to point out to me at the council meeting, he said, "You must remember, Mr. Secretary General," he said, "that anthropologically speaking," he said, "a pygmy is fully developed and has achieved his total size. The European Union has not yet done so."

Ms. Constanze Stelzenmuller: If I remember correctly, Ambassador d'Aboville was not a very tall man, himself. But I would like to hand over--

Lord George Robertson: Can I give you my response to him? I said, "Yes, Ambassador," I said, "but the average pygmy taking his poison dart blower to his lips, doesn't pretend it's a thermonuclear weapon."

Ms. Constanze Stelzenmuller: Right. Now, I have Gitte Bech, former defense minister of Denmark, another not very large country, but one with interest in this. Are you going to rethink the op doc from CSDP?

Ms. Gitte Bech: No, actually, that was not why I asked for the floor. I wanted to ask for the floor because I would like to address the issues about increased spending in the European NATO countries, because that has been a topic that has been discussed for a long time. But there's another part of the coin, which is deplorability. So, Mr. Rasmussen, do you prefer to have the European countries to increase their defense spending, but not being able to deploy their soldiers? Or do you prefer to have the defense spending as it right now, but have all the Europeans countries to be able to deploy their soldiers?

Ms. Constanze Stelzenmuller: Is that really a tradeoff?

Sec. Gen. Anders Fogh Rasmussen: Yeah, but not necessary. I mean, it's not either/or, you could do

both. But, of course, you point to an important element in this. It's not just a question about how much you spend, but also how you spend. And that's why I think a focus should be on the development of modern capabilities and flexibility and deployability. And that's actually how we're going to address this issue at the summit in September.

As an outcome of the NATO defense planning process, we have identified a number of critical shortfalls. And we will now focus on these shortfalls to try to prioritize, because we can't do everything at one and the same time; and, based on that, encourage allies to focus their future investments in those priority areas. In that respect, I was very pleased to see the European Council in December focus on certain capabilities that have been identified as critical shortfalls, in particular in Europe; namely, drones, observation drones, air-to-air refueling, and on top of that they also mentioned cyber defense and satellite communication. But that's the first time, actually, that the European Council has focused on the need for further investments in concrete defense capabilities. I appreciate that. It's an important input. We can build on that. And at the summit in Wales, hopefully reach a commitment to investment in critical areas. And I would consider that equally important, that we focus on

capabilities instead of a theoretical discussion on how big percentage of GDP is devoted to defense spending.

But on a final note, without money you can't invest in those capabilities. So it's not either/or. And for some countries, it's really been drastic cuts. In some countries, we have seen cuts up to 40 percent. It's much too much and we have to reverse that trend.

Mr. Jaap de Hoop Scheffer: May I add briefly, Constanze, that also--

Ms. Constanze Stelzenmuller: Very briefly.

Mr. Jaap de Hoop Scheffer: --looking at the first question on the screen there, that I do hope that European Union will also, and hopefully in close consultation with NATO--but we all know how difficult that is, that relationship--that European Union, at the same time, revises and modernizes its European security strategy, which dates back to Javier Solana in 2003. Hopefully, I say again, together with NATO, defining its interests and thinks a bit broader strategically, also about the nontraditional threats. But there's an EU-NATO collective responsibility, in my opinion; more specifically, as George Robertson was saying, that there might be crises where the U.S. would not be directly and immediately involved.

Ms. Constanze Stelzenmuller: Thank you very much. That leads over into something that would now finally use some of the wonderful technology provided by the

extremely nice SpotMe people, which is a poll. If you could pull up the polls of a question that I have suggested, let me see, there you go. What should NATO's mission be post-Afghanistan: Defense of Alliance territory; military operations outside of the EuroAtlantic area; helping non-NATO countries to defend themselves--some of you will have read the Gates article--German version of that is Ertüchtigung; and fourth, defense against nontraditional threats, like what Sonia was asking about, energy, cyber and others. If you could please vote now. Vote for one of the four. Vote often, vote early--no, sorry I didn't say that. Although I did try that earlier and it seemed to work. Let's see what the answer is. Well, you know, temptation is there: you succumb.

Lord George Robertson: We haven't got any, so we don't have a vote.

Ms. Constanze Stelzenmuller: Right. No, you don't. But you can say--you'll be giving your final words. There you go. Fifty-two percent, defense of Alliance territory. Well, well, well. Very useful. As some of you know, I'm also in charge of our annual survey, Transatlantic Trends. I'll keep that very much in mind. With that, let's move to our final--to give our panelists the final words, because Lord Robertson does have to get a plane at seven o'clock sharp. And you can say something to this, if you want. But I would like to

ask you a couple of questions. Starting with George Robertson, based on your own experience, Kosovo, the beginnings of Afghanistan, 9/11 and all the surprises that that entailed--and I remember, I think that when you started out in life, you were something of a lefty and had a connection with CND. So based on your own life trajectory and your experience as NATO Sec-Gen, what is the one important piece of advice that you would give Mr. Rasmussen's successor--male or female, who knows?

Lord George Robertson: I was--yes, I was a CND member when I was the age of 15, so that's a--but I can see it for both, to go on, was it a remarkable journey as well. But, what advice? Well, first of all, take that call. Don't do what that says. I think it would be totally wrong if NATO, you know, suddenly reverted to being an organization purely based on territorial defense. It's got to be more than that, because the territories cannot be defended on the territories of the countries. We have learned that, to our expense. The surprises that have caught us have shown that territorial defense is one component of Article V. That is right. But it's not the only one. Indeed the reason we have got so few deployable forces and countries as the former defense men have said, is because countries are still obsessed to the exclusion of the broader areas. And it takes to Xenia's (phonetic), which is,

there are threats out there. There are real challenges in the cyberworld, in climate security and resource wars and global terrorism and extremism and nationalism that are all coming along. And these have got to be on the priority area for NATO, both in capability terms but also in its politics. So my advice, inasmuch as it matters at all, is you make sure that the organization looks on a broader horizon than it does at the moment.

And, secondly, I would give one other brief bit of advice, and that is, I think it's still deplorable that Macedonia, which Anders has to call something else--as indeed I was obliged to in my day--that the republic of Macedonia is not allowed to join the Alliance. It's perfectly qualified to do so.

Ms. Constanze Stelzenmuller: Okay.

Lord George Robertson: And it's stopped from doing so right.

Ms. Constanze Stelzenmuller: Lord Robertson, I'm getting frantic signaling from over there. Mr. de Hoop Scheffer, what is the greatest challenge Mr. Rasmussen's successor will be facing?

Mr. Jaap de Hoop Scheffer: When I see those four points and I do away with the percentages now, seeing that there is a vital alliance which is capable, if and when necessary, of paying attention to all four of those points. I do not believe--defense of Alliance territory, fine, I'll fully support it. But having said

that, you can't neglect one or the others, and that means money and that means political will. And I say, again, that means a much better, closer NATO-EU relationship. I keep repeating my mantra. If we don't do that, with the Americans having all kinds of other obligations, then NATO will not succeed and the European Union will not succeed.

My answer would have been--we didn't vote--all four of those elements are relevant for NATO. Number one, of course, the most relevant--I agree very much with George--you can't do that on your own territory. But let's say, not doing something about (inaudible) threats would be self-defeating. We've discussed at length helping non-NATO countries to defend themselves. So, I mean, that would be my advice to his--to her or to him.

Ms. Constanze Stelzenmuller: Okay. Quite similar then. I have a different question for you, Secretary General. What's the most important personality trait your successor needs to have? That difficult?

Sec. Gen. Anders Fogh Rasmussen: Yeah, I would rather answer the other question. But let me do both, because they are interlinked, actually.

Ms. Constanze Stelzenmuller: Okay.

Sec. Gen. Anders Fogh Rasmussen: I think it's of utmost importance that NATO has a high profile leader. And not least, taking into account recent events, I

think determination, clear action-oriented approach are essential for the leadership of NATO. And that leads me to a couple of remarks on what is the biggest challenge. I would say, the most important task is to fight retrenchment. I see tendencies to become inward looking, or what I call retrenchment, I see those tendencies to be the most dangerous threat to our security, because retrenchment leaves behind a vacuum-- a security vacuum--and that vacuum will be filled by autocrats that will try to test us. And there are many reasons why we see tendencies to retrenchment. One, of course, is economic austerity. There are also political reasons.

So my plea is that my successor will focus on keeping a global perspective when it comes to security. And that's why I'm very much in agreement that--I would also give high priority to number one, defense of Alliance territory.

Ms. Constanze Stelzenmuller: Okay.

Sec. Gen. Anders Fogh Rasmussen: But, let's remind ourselves that we can't effectively protect our populations and our territory, unless we are also capable to go out of area, if needed, and defend against non-traditional threats and help non-NATO countries to defend themselves. So there's no contradiction between the four. On the contrary, they complement each other.

Ms. Constanze Stelzenmuller: Thank you. On that note, we know the next NATO Secretary-General, whoever she is, will have a lot to do. Please help me thank our panelists.

Mr. Craig Kennedy. Constanze, thank you so much. That was a terrific session. Gentlemen, I think in the nine years that we've done sessions on NATO, this was by far the most lively and interesting we've had. A big thank you to all of you. It was terrific. Now, it's my pleasure to introduce this year's Asmus Policy Entrepreneur Fellow, Julie Egan and Erik Brattberg. Julie and Eric, could you please stand? Where are they. There we go, back here. So this is a very competitive process. We end up with literally dozens of applications. We pick two each year. Julie is an economic advisor for the United States