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**THE UNITED STATES' CHALLENGES
IN THE CHICAGO SUMMIT**

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THE UNITED STATES' CHALLENGES IN THE CHICAGO SUMMIT

Abstract:

The U.S. is the main military power in the world and it is far from its decline. The world is not unipolar and the recession has harmed the West. Obama takes organizations like NATO to lead the world from behind. The Alliance is vital to American security and its allies with shared values such as democracy, respect for human rights and the rule of law. The priorities of the Chicago Summit coincide with the U.S.: a safe and orderly transition in Afghanistan to defeat *Al-Qaeda*. Capabilities adapted to the economic crisis because NATO is a collective security Alliance but also a cooperative security organization can achieve its military targets sharing structures and financial burdens. Finally, the Alliance has become a magnet that will create a hub of trusted partners to maintain global security.

Keywords:

U.S., NATO, Chicago Summit, Afghanistan, Smart Defense, capabilities, austerity, hub for security partnerships, missile defense, deterrence, ISR.

***NOTE:** The respective authors are responsible for the ideas contained in the *Opinion Documents*, which do not necessarily express the opinion of the IEEE or of the Ministry of Defence.

INTRODUCTION

The Chicago Summit is not another meeting of the United States' allies. The issues that are going to be discussed are important and thorny for the country, which is still the world's main military power. With a presidential campaign this November and an election campaign underway, the United States faces the summit with several challenges in its portfolio, such as: the Afghanistan "post-war", how to maintain the needed defence capabilities in order to act in a period of budget cuts and austerity, the relations with Russia and the missile shield and the strengthening of the Alliance by expanding its global partners network.

The U.S. society was tired of the two great wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Spending was unsustainable and, with Obama's arrival to power, multilateralism was promoted along with the doctrine of leading from behind, as was the case in Libya, which does not mean that the country is declining as first military power. The United States has a weakened economy and a Democratic administration more in favor of social than defense policies, which are expected to suffer cuts during the next years if Obama remains in power. This president will, just as the previous administration, strengthen its military engagement in the Asia-Pacific region to restrain China's ambitions to the detriment of the transatlantic axis.

THE AFGHAN TRANSITION

In recent years, Afghanistan has been the biggest challenge of the United States' military within NATO. Afghanistan is a country with a corrupt government whose economy is dominated by a criminal oligarchy politically connected with businessmen. 97% of Afghanistan's GDP comes from military and international aid. Afghanistan is the world's largest heroin and cannabis producer. Afghan opium crops, which account for 74% of the global production, are very important for the warlords, the corrupt government officials, the Taliban and many Afghans from poor backgrounds.

The U.S.' objective in the region is to change the ISAF's mission by 2013 from a combat one into a supporting mission of the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF). This does not mean abandoning the Afghan people to their own fate, as either United States' or the ISAF's troops will be prepared in case they have to enter into battle. The Chicago summit will set the new road map to be followed from 2014 in the new cooperation phase.

The transition in the Asian country must be a success both for Obama and the Alliance. The U.S. president, who is already in campaign, paid a surprise visit to the Bagram and Kabul bases. Obama gave a speech to the American people a year after the death of Osama Bin Laden. In that speech he justified the sacrifice of over half a million troops to protect the U.S. security. The goal set by the U.S. is to stop Al Qaeda from ever using the Asian country in order to attack the United States.

The U.S. president signed a pact with his Afghan counterpart, Hamid Karzai, guaranteeing that the transition will allow the Afghan people to ensure their territory's safety. About 23,000 troops will leave Afghanistan at the end of the summer of 2012 and there will be more cuts in the number of troops until the end of 2014. Even so, the Afghan people will not be left alone. The U.S. will cooperate with their security forces until 2024 even though no

permanent bases will be built in their territory. The agreement with Karzai ensures the involvement of the United States and its NATO allies in Afghanistan's future, stability and reconstruction. This is a long and complicated task for the weak Afghan government that has already suffered chained suicide attacks in several cities across the country. Furthermore, the U.S.' military presence has been complicated by the burning of Korans or the killing of civilians by a U.S. soldier. Everything indicates that there is a need for a long-term approach, about 20 or 30 years, to fight terrorism and deal with its causes. This means using social, economic and political tools, as well as an effective surveillance. This way, better results can be obtained in comparison to the ones obtained when only military force is used.

Hollande's victory in France means that there are some obstacles to overcome since he, as the new French president, has suggested during his campaign that his soldiers will leave the country by December 2012, two years before everyone else. The number two of NATO in Afghanistan, the British lieutenant general Adrian Bradshaw, has expressed his desire that Paris should continue with its commitment to the mission "We have a strong feeling that they are going to find the way to keep being active participants of this coalition until the end of 2014 and we believe that there exists a strong possibility", he stated. The policy of the Alliance is based on the concept that "we went together, we leave together" and, in fact, this will be the commitment that will undergo ratifications in the Summit that the Heads of State and the NATO will hold in Chicago and in favor of which the U.S. will pressure the rest of the allies.

Moreover, the plan establishes an important financial assistance for at least 10 years and cooperation paths in different civil areas. This will demand the implication of European governments with domestic problems that Obama must convince. Washington has said that the 50 countries that are part of the mission must contribute with a yearly sum of 1,300 million Dollars between 2015 and 2018 and that the Afghan government must give another 500 million Dollars. The United States commits itself to contribute "all the rest" up to the 4,100 million Dollars that are necessary to maintain the Afghan forces of about 228,500 soldiers according to NATO sources. Spain has been asked to contribute 30 million Dollars between 2015 and 2018.

According to the Pentagon, currently about 330,000 members of the Afghan security forces receive training from the coalition troops, the Afghan security troops have gone from 276,000 members to the current 330,000 members in the last year and the objective is to reach 352,000 members in October, as was established in the Lisbon calendar in order to deal with the attacks by the insurgency.

The US president did not reject to negotiate with the Taliban as long as they break their relation with *Al-Qaeda*. The destruction of this terrorist network is a challenge. However, stability in Afghanistan is not possible without the agreement of their neighbor Pakistan, whose relationship with the U.S. has been weakened by the use of drones and Bin Laden's death. The security situation in the areas that border with Pakistan and Iran is not ideal. However, amongst all, special attention should be paid to what happens in the frontier with Pakistan (2,640 kilometers) where the Taliban militia is established and *Al-Qaeda* has its bases. In that frontier area, the Taliban terror extends itself to areas of Pakistan such as the

Valley of the Swat where murders and repression have been commonplace. Finding a way to cooperate with Islamabad is another challenge for the U.S. This is why it is not understood why Pakistan has not been invited to the most important summit of the last years, the meeting at which the road map concerning the future of the Afghan mission will be set. The Alliance maintains a pulse with the authorities of Islamabad due to its closing, six months ago, of the supply routes for the troops in Afghanistan and this seems to have been the reason Pakistan was not invited. Instead of inviting the Asian country NATO has invited Qatar, Morocco and Saudi Arabia.

THE CAPABILITIES IN TIMES OF CRISES

Another big debate that will surface during the Chicago summit and that worries the U.S. terribly is that concerning the capabilities. The new threats require a flexible, fast, effective and manageable display of the allied military forces. This vital need conflicts with the austerity the Western countries are undergoing. The financial crisis has forced the U.S. to reduce the budget of its Department of Defense by 450,000 Dollars for the next ten years. Washington will insist once again for the Europeans to take on their responsibilities on the expenses and set their priorities. The Atlantic Alliance is not spared from the recession and it must face a future of austerity and financial cuts without leaving critical capabilities aside, such as the antimissile defense system and the intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance system (ISR).

Antimissile defense system

The antimissile shield, *European Phased Adaptive Approach* (EPAA), was an agreement between the 28 members of the Alliance in Lisbon to create and deploy the system with the objective of protecting the territory, the population and NATO's European forces. It is also the origin of tensions between Russia and NATO. In order to prevent conflicts, the Alliance has renewed its offer to Russia in order to continue and expand the bilateral cooperation, especially with respect to the antimissile defense, a matter in which both parties have been in conflict during the last year.

The dialogue between Russia and NATO about the possibility of creating a joint antimissile system began in the year 2000 but it was interrupted when George Bush's administration announced the withdrawal of the Soviet-United States agreement of 1972 that limited both countries' display of these systems. Barack Obama's decision of stopping the installation of the third block of the antimissile defense in the European region weakened the tension in the relations between Moscow and Washington. The negotiations about cooperation began again when the Secretary General of NATO, Anders Fogh Rasmussen, supported the project of the joint system in 2009.

Consensus was at the center of NATO after the modifications that Obama introduced to Bush's shield. The U.S. diplomacy reached a compromise with the countries that made it the most difficult (Poland and the Czech Republic). Moreover, NATO went even further by lending a hand to Russia and offering it to cooperate in the creation of an antimissile shield from Canada to Siberia. In 2010 Rasmussen considered that the antimissile system should

include Russia because the cooperation would contribute to create more security in the continent. One of the problems that arose was to share information about the antimissile defense technology with the Russians. Another one, that Moscow talked about a new European security architecture that NATO would be part of but leaving the United States out.

Finally, NATO and Russia agreed during the Lisbon summit (November 2010) to study a possible antimissile cooperation, but from the moment that the Alliance rejected to share the same system with Moscow the Russian authorities increased their hostility towards the allied project. In fact, the former president, Dmitri Medvédey pointed out in early May that the adoption of unilateral decisions related to antimissile defense could lead to confrontation and a new arms race. The Obama administration aims at strengthening the ties through the shield but currently, this does not seem possible after Putin came to power as president. According to the undersecretary of State, Philip Gordon, "NATO is not a threat for Russia, as long as Russia is not a threat to NATO". The differences in the Libya intervention, about Syria or in Georgia, together with Clinton's critics about the fairness of the presidential elections have led to the cancellation of the parallel summit between the Alliance and Russia.

The antimissile shield would only cost 200 million Euros for ten years. This cost would have to be divided between the 28 members of the Alliance. For NATO the envisaged would provide a complete geographical protection against real threats such as Iran or North Korea. The U.S. has promised to do whatever is necessary to deploy it in 4 phases. The first phase of the antimissile system has already begun. Ivo Daalder, permanent representative of the U.S. in NATO explains, "In Chicago we will be capable of taking the lead and controlling the antimissile system, as well as providing a limited defense to a specific territory against a particular threat." He adds that the U.S. will work alongside the European countries with the objective of ensuring the capacities to defend themselves against ballistic missile threats. The U.S. has agreed with Turkey, Poland, Romania, Spain and Germany the deployment of critical elements of the U.S. antimissile system. There are also agreements with the Alliance to integrate them in the NATO system and any partner capable of defending itself against ballistic missiles can contribute to the project in order to defend itself of the growing threat from the Middle East. The United States is the only country with enough technology to develop the system and for some European countries accepting it will mean a future nuclear deployment of the United States in Europe.

Review of the Nuclear Deterrence

The Alliance contemplates the antimissile defense as a complement to the non-stop nuclear deterrence, against other nuclearized States and the terrorist groups. The shield should serve to avoid the attacks by who do not fear the nuclear deterrence. Moreover, as the US secretary of State, Hillary Clinton, already mentioned in 2010, as long as there are nuclear weapons in the world, the United States will have an atomic arsenal in order to guarantee the allies' security. Rasmussen agreed and he highlighted the need for a credible nuclear deterrence although efforts should be put towards in order to achieve a world without

atomic weapons. Chicago's challenge consists on identifying which is the appropriate mix of conventional and antimissile defense nuclear capabilities that NATO needs.

In 2010 Germany, Norway, the Netherlands and Luxembourg asked to discuss the convenience of having in Europe between 200 and 240 U.S. atomic bombs. Up to now, there have not been any official statistics about the quantity of U.S. nuclear weapons there are in Europe. However, it is known that five of NATO's member countries have them: Belgium, Germany, Italy, Holland and Turkey, and some countries even have airplanes that can transport them. In a scenario of financial cuts as is the current one some countries could give up the bombs in their territory and the double capacity airplanes. This way, The U.S. could store the B61 in Turkey and the airplanes would stay in Italy with a piloting unit of the allied air forces.

The Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance System (ISR)

Regarding the Intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance system (ISR), the United States and France have presented a proposal so that the allies collaborate in the development of those capabilities, which has been one of the big gaps of the European allies, as the operation in Libya demonstrated, together with the aerial resupply capabilities. Nevertheless, this last project will be coordinated by the European Union and the ten countries that will participate, among them Spain, also compromise to put the new capabilities at NATO's disposal.

In Libya between 70 and 80% of the ISR capabilities were set by the United States, which is why the NATO Secretaries of Defense have agreed to buy a land surveillance system with five drones supplied by thirteen of the allies. The spy airplanes will allow military commands to control and supervise what occurs on land in future missions to take action precisely and with the less collateral damage possible.

Smart Defense

Beside the already mentioned critical capabilities' priority, another aspect that Chicago wishes to discuss is how to spend more intelligently (Smart Defense) because there are fewer resources but they can be put to a better use if they are used jointly. The United States points to several areas in which that objective is possible: Airplanes for transporting troops and materials, antimissile system and air patrol.

The objective is for some allies to prioritize and specialize themselves in some specific capabilities and to delegate others in the rest of the countries. A country will compromise to direct and coordinate each project with the help of a small group of allies. However, this requires a great level of confidence between the countries that have to work together in each project. For example, in 2010 France and the United Kingdom agreed to cooperate intensely in the field of security and defense. The treaty included more joint trainings and allowed both countries to share transportation airplanes and the capacities of the aircraft carriers of both forces. It also enables to make the most of the resources in times of financial crisis through the joint acquisition of military equipment. France and the United Kingdom

also take part in the nuclear defense in spite of having totally different deterrence systems. London previously checked with Washington since a treaty in force between the United Kingdom and the United States prohibited London from sharing its nuclear secrets with any other country, due to the fact that the British deterrence force based on the Trident missile, greatly depends on technology from the United States.

Air Patrols in the Baltic

Another point to discuss in Chicago mentioned by the Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton, are the NATO air patrols over the Baltic Sea. In 2004 the Baltic countries did not have airplanes to guard their air space and NATO carries out this task. In exchange, countries such as Estonia are doing an enormous effort to deploy troops in Afghanistan with the greatest number of injured per capita. This is an example of how to spend intelligently and in a joint manner.

STRENGTHENING OF THE WORLD PARTNERS' NETWORK

The so-called NATO 3.0, resulting from the Lisbon summit, is an alliance of 28 countries centered on operations. During 2011 there were 6 operations taking place in 3 continents: Afghanistan, the Gulf of Aden against terrorism and piracy, in the Balkans to help with its stability in the Mediterranean against terrorism, a training mission in Iraq and another one for the protection of civilians in Libya. However, this new NATO is not only an operational Alliance but it also seeks (in part due to the Arab Spring) the construction of global security through the cooperation of strategic factors. Working with a greater number of partners allows NATO to increase its legitimacy, share financial difficulties and benefit from other's financial difficulties. The United Nations, the EU, the OSCE or the Associations with the Mediterranean can be partners that help guarantee the security of their allies. Opening new cooperation helps the Alliance broaden its strategic influence scenario in Asia.

In Europe, States that are not allies such as Austria, Finland, Georgia, Sweden and even Switzerland see NATO as a vital institution for the promotion of security and they cooperate and contribute with troops and money in some operations and activities.

In Asia, the perspectives have changed and NATO starts to be well received not only in Australia. New Zealand and South Korea, the latter with 500 soldiers in Afghanistan, and even Japan provide vital resources to the Asian country and see the Alliance as a key factor of international security.

In Africa, between 2005 and 2007 NATO transported African Union troops to the Darfur region. In the last year the Alliance was asked for an air exclusion zone and the deployment in Sudan of the NATO response force.

Troops were also sent to Somalia from Uganda and Burundi for counterinsurgency operations. The Alliance has used the autonomous state of Puntland as an operations base of the naval mission in the Gulf of Aden. In Djibouti one of the main headquarters of the

Combined Forces of the Pentagon in the Horn of Africa can be found, with 2,000 American soldiers and 3,000 French soldiers besides British, Dutch, German and Spanish troops.

The Mediterranean and the Middle East

In the Mediterranean and the Middle East, the revolutions in the North of Africa and the Arab countries also have a spot in NATO's agenda to develop the collaboration with the countries in both areas. NATO has been collaborating in those regions of the world for some time through the Mediterranean dialogue that began in 1994 and that has joint programs with Morocco, Mauritania, Tunisia, Algeria, Jordan, Egypt and Israel. As well, through the cooperation initiative of Istanbul that since 2004 has built up the relationship with the neighboring monarchies of Iran and the Gulf of Persia and that is close to Saudi Arabia and Oman.

The military intervention in Libya has strengthened that collaboration. The United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Jordan or Morocco preferred to work in the military operations through the Alliance. Qatar and the United Arab Emirates provided 18 combat airplanes. Two months after the beginning of the war against Gaddafi the cooperation administration of the Gulf (Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates) invited the other monarchies of the Arab world, Jordan and Morocco, to join them. After the dictator's death, NATO invited Libya to be part of the Mediterranean Dialogue and Libya could be the next partner. Moreover, in little time Iraq and Yemen could also become partners through the Istanbul initiative. Even the president of the Palestinian Authority, Mahmoud Abbas, said in August 2011 that NATO should administrate the security of the future Palestinian State under the command of the United States.

The United Arab Emirates have become the first Arab state to open an embassy in the headquarters of NATO. The Alliance and its partners of the Cooperation Administration of the Gulf are reviewing the relationship between both organizations to attract the 350 million citizens of the Arab world to the orbit of NATO's global and regional agenda. The United States is trying to improve the relations with the Gulf States to build up the security in the area that is integrated by air and naval patrols and defense missiles with the aim of offsetting Iran.

How to react towards a nuclearized Iran

The Obama administration wishes to keep a low profile in the debate on Iran, because of the current electoral period. An Israeli attack on Tehran would be terribly harmful for the recovery of the U.S. economy and would cause the increase of oil prices, which in turn would affect the electoral campaign. The republicans have proved, up until now, to be much more belligerent towards the Iranian theocracy and have welcomed an attack on Persian nuclear plants.

Currently, the allies are not debating in the NATO framework, how to react to a nuclearized Iran or to a presumable Israeli attack on Iran. They are not doing so because usually it is Turkey who defuses Iran, as it intends to become a "democratic" model and a regional

power. Furthermore, Turkey borders with Iran and is also part of the missile shield in case Tehran threatens Jerusalem. However, each country is preparing individually for this type of contingencies. The United States has already sent a second aircraft carrier to the area, the French and UK fleet are heading towards the Strait of Ormuz and Russia is relocating troops on the border with Azerbaijan.

Iran has become a key issue and a major test for NATO. If it manages to obtain nuclear armaments, this will become a serious concern for the alliance partners, because it will mean that the non-proliferation regime has failed, as other countries such as Saudi Arabia or Egypt will also wish to attain nuclear weapons. In the short term, the Iranian threat has forced the Gulf countries to live under U.S. protection, especially after the rift between them deepened after the Iraq War. The Americans have equipped Saudi Arabia and the UAE with F-15 aircraft worth 30 billion dollars. In 2010, the U.S. negotiated with Saudi Arabia the biggest trade agreement on weapons of its history, providing so-called bunker buster bombs, F-15 aircraft, Apache and Blackhawk helicopters and Patriot-2 missiles. The Arab Emirates were also provided with the same type of bombs and other ammunition and Oman, Kuwait and Bahrain are also included in the American agenda. The aim of all this would be to create a military coalition against Iran in the Persian Gulf.

The Syrian dilemma

Furthermore, NATO is not keen to carry out an intervention in Syria, where a confrontation between Sunnites (Saudi Arabia and *Al-Qaeda*) and Shiites (Syrian alawites and Iran) is taking place. For the U.S., the decision to intervene is a political one and there has to be a consensus of the 28 members. Moreover, three conditions must take place: a proven need, which does exist in the case of Syria, as the humanitarian disaster is patent and there have been more than 8,000 casualties, a legal basis, which at present does not exist because the UN has not adopted a resolution due to the Chinese and Russian veto in the Security Council; and regional support that is non-existent because neither the Arab League nor the opposition have asked for a military intervention.

The Gulf monarchies, together with the Arab League, promote the solving of the crisis and are also in favor of a UN force that would put a stop to the killing. It is somewhat paradoxical that it is those who repressed the uprising in Bahrain, along with the Gulf Co-operation Council, the same who are now leading the uprising in Syria, even though they are doing so to contain the Shiite enemy.

Furthermore, we must not forget that towards the end of February the leader of *Al-Qaeda*, Ayman Al-Zawahiri, called for the Muslims to travel to Syria in order to fight against the alawi dictatorship. For Qatar and Saudi Arabia, the priority is to overthrow pro-Iranian governments such as Assad's, even though they are not in favor of transitions towards a democracy. The Gulf countries would support the supply of the Syrian opposition with arms, which could come from Jordan or from the Lebanon, despite the internal problems this could cause with the Hezbollah in the Land of Cedars.

A Community of values

If NATO came into action with these countries, some of its fundamental principles would be distorted, because the Alliance is not only a military one but also a community of values included but not limited to democracy, the respect of human rights or the rule of law. Without respecting these principles, NATO would become a very different alliance. However, the Alliance is still open to European democracies capable of assuming the responsibilities and obligations of being an ally. Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Montenegro and Georgia are working closely with the NATO allies. Macedonia already complies with the criteria and the United States is doing all it can to convince Greece so as to obtain its approval for Macedonia to become part of the Alliance. Obama also supports the defense cooperation with Georgia and the modernization of its capacities in spite of the differences with Russia.

CONCLUSIONS

The United States faces several challenges in the Chicago summit:

- To give meaning to NATO by managing to ensure an orderly and safe transition in Afghanistan without abandoning the Afghans to their own fate and to make *Al-Qaeda* disappear.

- To maintain the operating and military capacities which are a priority in crises and cutting times in a productive and intelligent way and to improve the relationship with Russia in spite of the anti-missile shield.

- To expand the partner network on a global scale.

These very complicated challenges are the ones the major military power in the world is facing. At present and due to the wearing out suffered in Iraq and Afghanistan, the US is in favor of multilateral action in the framework of international law.

After the Chicago Summit, NATO must be a hub for global security and this means it must not forget its cornerstone values: democracy, human rights and the rule of law. The Alliance must continue to attract those countries that rebel against tyranny and walk towards democracy, and the US, as its main ally and bastion, must lead the process.

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