

## **Executive Summary**

„Is arms control dead?“ This old question is being asked again in the current debate triggered by the highly likely deployment of an American National Missile Defense (NMD) system as part of the United States' overall Ballistic Missile Defense (BMD) policy. In addition to the NMD elements, BMD consists of the development and deployment of regional missile defense systems (Theater Missile Defense, TMD). This study argues with Mark Twain that reports of the death of arms control have been greatly exaggerated – provided the traditional approach is modernized in an adequate way. My *Modernized, Mutually Minimizing Missile Threat Concept* („*Quadruple M-TC*“) is an attempt to present such an approach.

President Clinton's announcement that he will leave the historical decision on deploying a National Missile Defense System to his successor gives „NATO/EU Europe“ a chance to position itself as a credible actor in the global Ballistic Missile Defense game. His announcement comes on the eve of the hot phase of the double U.S. election campaign for both the Presidency and (something that is often overlooked) for the powerful Congress. More importantly, the decision to delay comes at a time in European politics when France, the present incumbent of the EU presidency, has presented an ambitious charter for a politically stronger Europe. A diplomacy-driven concept means using the current lame duck period in American foreign policy (caused by the election campaign) in a constructive way and taking advantage of the current pro-Europe impulses in order to produce concrete results at the Nice Conference in December 2000.

Both President Jacques Chirac and Foreign Minister Hubert Védrine are committed to pushing the institutional reforms towards more unity, and they have stressed the role of joint projects and the importance of common security and defense policy. Echoing German Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer's proposal to revive Franco-German cooperation as a driving force toward more integration, both Chirac and Védrine have underscored the role of France and Germany as the „pioneer group“ in this process, while explicitly leaving open the possibility that additional allies could participate in implementing specific common projects. But one vital element is missing: a viable theme around which all interested Europeans can unite.

The conditions for a political alternative are exceptionally good, as Europe's repeatedly expressed concern about the negative impact of a National Missile Defense system on global and regional arms races (chapter 2) reflects an unusual common denominator on security issues. Important as they are, Europe's warnings neither constitute a sufficient policy nor do they initiate the necessary change of role. In order to be a serious player on the global BMD scene who is taken seriously in Washington, Beijing, and Moscow, Europe has to give up its traditional role as a reactive bystander. If the Old Continent is to become a credible and efficient political architect, the distinct European initiative has to address major U.S. rationales for deploying a comprehensive defense system while at the

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same time coping with European security concerns and providing a basis for Europe's common security and defense policy.

In order to fulfill these objectives, a conceptually adequate and politically convincing arms control concept has to meet clearly defined *objectives* and *criteria*, and it has to be based on transparent *premises*. Moreover, the objectives to be tackled have to be vital, the criteria must be both policy-relevant and feasible, and the premises have to be plausible (chapter 3).

The major *objective* of „Quadruple M–TC“ is to enhance security by mutually minimizing missile threats – defined not only in terms of the possibility of igniting global and regional arms races and regional instabilities (as the consequences of BMD deployment). Threats can also stem from the capabilities *and* intentions of countries with an existing or evolving Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) posture or from the technical deficiencies of already existing nuclear arsenals (especially in Russia).

As to the *criteria*, any successful concept initiated and implemented by Europe has to be both assertive and alliance compatible.

*Firstly*, the initiative should by design be *arms control-supportive* in terms of favoring and facilitating reductions on the way to a nuclear free world.

*Secondly*, „Quadruple M–TC“ has to be *affordable* – a policy of uncovered checks is doomed to fail.

*Thirdly*, any arms control-driven European initiative has to be *feasible* in political terms. Europe is not a global player, but it should act more forcefully and convincingly as a regional actor.

*Fourthly*, the concept has to be based on mutual intra-alliance respect for different political cultures as probably the major factor influencing different threat assessments and ways of responding to them. Different ways of designing one's security strategies are at stake here.

The *premises* are related to the nature of the threats, the role of nuclear deterrence, and (current) experiences and learning in dealing with problematic countries by primarily diplomatic means.

Despite the often cited „New Threat Paradigm“ which assumes that current and future dangers are diffuse and virtually uncontrollable, this concept starts from a different assumption with respect to threats from ballistic missiles. Based primarily on the most recent assessments by the U.S. and the German intelligence services, it concludes that the menaces for Europe can be focused (the official intelligence reports name a handful of „states of concern“).

When it comes to the role of nuclear deterrence, the concept assumes that there are no non-deterrable state actors – provided that a policy of nuclear or large scale conventional deterrence is communicated to all problematic states. It is hard to see which state (even the most shrewd leadership except if it is suicidal) would dare to attack the United States and its allies with Weapons of Mass Destruction.

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As to policy-related assumptions, „*Quadruple M-TC*” appraises the Clinton administration’s „carrots and sticks“ policy towards North Korea as the most promising and encouraging model. It shows the comparative advantages of a „Diplomacy First!“ approach. Both Washington and Pyongyang went through a remarkable process of learning nobody would have considered possible prior to their intensive interactions.

I apply the elements of „*Quadruple M-TC*“ in one of the two nuclear deterrence-related contexts (Russia) and in the context of Weapons of Mass Destruction (the example of Iran). I have chosen Russia instead of China, because in view of the long arms control history one can make clear which of the traditional elements are still valid and which components have to be added to my modernized framework.

Surprising (and outdated) as it may seem – in the current U.S.-Russian context the old world of Mutual Assured Destruction (MAD) is still a fact of life in strategic and operational terms. Nuclear deterrence is not dead, although its role has changed and decreased. This is emphasized in the „Talking Points”, presented presumably by U.S. delegation leader John Holum to the Russians in January 2000. They give enormous direct insights into the American negotiation position regarding the ongoing talks to modify the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty. Therefore, the major goals and means of traditional arms control are still relevant, especially the primary objective of preventing nuclear war by strategic stability.

In order to live up to its claim to be a „minimized” and „mutually” implemented approach, the modernized arms control concept must contain some new elements by definition. Given the broad array of threats, the traditional elements are not enough to deal with either the deficiencies of existing nuclear arsenals or the insufficient fissile materials and warhead controls. Moreover, successful arms *control* instruments can under today’s circumstances only signify drastic reductions in current nuclear arsenals. In accordance with the overall „Policy First!” approach, one caveat is important when using the term mutuality (i.e. cooperation). Cooperation is not a value *per se*. Rather, cooperation in non-military sectors should be given priority in western policy towards Russia.

European efforts to establish a dialogue infrastructure towards a problematic country such as Iran can build on a fundamental achievement of East-West relations during the Cold War: the recognition that an institutionalized arms control/reduction process in bi- or multilateral settings is vital to clarify or even solve the security concerns of the countries involved. Dialogue gives Tehran the chance to put forward its position, while the Europeans (to the extent that they are bothered at all) can express their concern about Iranian WMD activities. The „critical dialogue” which has already been started by countries like France and Germany could lead to a verifiable limitation of the Iranian Shahab missile program in a way that meets their security concerns. As part of a broader package deal, the Iranians could be offered economic assistance which in turn could be an element of a broader European policy towards the Gulf region. Thus, the „Diplomacy First!” approach can be conceptualized and implemented in a mutual arms control/threat minimizing approach in the Iranian/WMD-related context as well.

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Therefore, the Europeans are urged and encouraged to intensify and institutionalize their „Policy First!” efforts towards Russia, China, and problematic states such as Iran in order to present themselves as a distinct and credible player in the „BMD game” (chapter 4).

There are additional reasons why Europe cannot stay out of the BMD area. The next U.S. administration is likely to invite the allies on the Old Continent to participate in the NMD program, and President Putin has directly called upon the Europeans to embark on a cooperative anti-missile shield that could include the Americans as well. These offers require immediate, well-considered European answers (chapter 2). Of immediate concern is the question concerning the required national consent by Denmark and Great Britain to the modification of the radars in Thule (Greenland) and in Fylingdales. From an arms control point of view this issue could be seen as a litmus test of how serious the Europeans are about the ABM Treaty. Here, they can prove that they are not only bystanders in the „ABM Treaty game” between Washington and Moscow. By „Europeanizing” the required national consent, they should consider the radar question as a way of asking the U.S. to rethink its dubious plans.

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## 1. Introduction: The Need for a Modernized Arms Control Concept

I will deal with this topic on a policy and on a concept-related level. The NMD (National Missile Defense) question, together with the generally neglected problem of regional missile defense (Theater Missile Defense, TMD),<sup>1</sup> affects the nucleus of the traditional understanding of arms control. New times require new concepts. Therefore, a modernized arms control approach is necessary that integrates the achievements of the old notion developed and applied during the East-West conflict. Outlining elements of the *Modernized, Mutually Minimizing Missile Threat Concept* („*Quadruple M-TC*“) is not an academic exercise. What is at stake in defining the relationship between the two components of Ballistic Missile Defense and arms control is testing the validity and the comparative advantage of two ideas that can guide politics and policies: whether, *in the final analysis*, politico-diplomatic or military means are the cardinal instruments in enhancing security and in mutually minimizing the (yet to be defined) threats.

Developing an adequate concept on the basis of transparent premises, criteria and goals is an important way for Europe (= „EU/NATO-Europe“) to finally start an overdue discussion. In a first step, I deal with possible or even probable arms control-related issues and consequences of NMD *and* TMD (both components cannot and should not be separated). The problems and implications are discussed in three contexts. In a second step, I sketch some elements of my *Mutually Minimizing Missile Threat Concept*. It is recommended to the European actors as a „Diplomacy First!“ alternative as a way to become serious and visible players in the global „BMD game“. I apply the elements of „*Quadruple M-TC*“ in one of the two nuclear deterrence-related contexts (Russia) and in the context of Weapons of Mass Destruction (Iran). I have chosen Russia, and not China, because in view of the long arms control history one can make clear which of the traditional elements are still vital and which components have to be added in my modernized framework. As in the growing literature on BMD and arms control the development and operationalization of such a concept is missing,<sup>2</sup> I hope to fill this gap.

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This paper is a slightly revised version of Remarks for Discussion in Session III of the Seminar on „National Missile Defence and the Future of Nuclear Policy“ held at the Western European Union, Institute for Security Studies, Paris, June 9, 2000. I would like to thank Harald Müller as well as Una Becker, Matthias Dembinski, Berthold Meyer, Hans-Joachim Schmidt, and Niklas Schörning for their helpful comments. I also found the remarks of the participants in the Oxford Research Group’s „Consultation for Policy-Makers and Independent Analysts – NATO Response to American Plans for National Missile Defence“ very helpful. My special thanks go to Martina Glebocki and Mirko Jacobowski for their valuable contribution to this report. This paper differs from the Paris version in one respect: I use the acronym „*Quadruple M-TC*“ for my developed „Diplomacy/Policy First!“ concept (instead of „*Triple M-TM*“).

<sup>1</sup> To help clarify the terminology: NMD + TMD = BMD.

<sup>2</sup> See for instance the discussions published in: *Survival*, vol. 42, no. 1, 2000, and *The Washington Quarterly*, vol. 23, no. 2, 2000. For the German debate see Oliver Thränert (ed.), *Preventing the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction: What Role for Arms Control? A German-American*

## 2. Arms Control Issues and the Consequences of American NMD and TMD Policy in Three Different Contexts

### 2.1 First Context: Relations Between the United States and Russia

The arms control problems must be seen in the context of opposite views that will remain unsettled beyond the year 2000 – despite some cautious Russian signs at the June 4 and 5 Putin/Clinton summit suggesting that a compromise may be possible in the post-Clinton era. The issues which are being discussed worldwide focus on the fate of the ABM Treaty (Anti-Ballistic Missile) and touch the heart of arms control. The substance of the Treaty and its underlying philosophy of mutual vulnerability as the „cornerstone of strategic stability“ are heavily under attack. For most NMD proponents in the United States this Treaty is a relic of the Cold War.<sup>3</sup> There are two factions among the proponents, which draw different conclusions from the „antiquated“ document.<sup>4</sup> One group wants to abrogate the bilateral agreement unilaterally while the other one prefers – for a certain time at least – a joint way of adapting the Treaty to new circumstances and of reaching a compromise with the Russians. For NMD opponents the ABM Treaty is, regardless or because of the post-Cold War circumstances, the jewel of all arms control agreements so far concluded.

The major cleavage between proponents and opponents of BMD in the final analysis relates to the means to be used to minimize the threat. *Opponents* see politico-diplomatic means as the „*prima ratio*“, followed by already existing nuclear and conventional weapons („*secunda/ultima ratio*“) with the qualification that there is a) a considerable potential for (nuclear) force reduction and b) a necessity to drastically adapt the nuclear strategy and target policy to the new circumstances (there is a considerable overlap here with „moderate“ BMD proponents); for many opponents the existing conventional and nuclear forces are sufficient to meet the objective of enhancing security („*ultima ratio*“) while others would prefer the deployment of TMD to protect soldiers (nuclear and conventional forces as „*secunda ratio*“). *Proponents* do not ignore the means of prevention and deterrence, but they increasingly put the emphasis on protection by various forms of BMD. This tendency has the potential to dominate the others, especially the politico-diplomatic means of defense. In principal, BMD proponents reject the „Policy/Diplomacy First!“ approach. They embrace a „BMD weapons First!“ concept or a „Policy/Diplomacy, Too!“ concept.

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Dialogue, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, Analyseeinheit Internationale Politik, Bonn/Berlin, 1999, and Richard von Weizsäcker (Chairman), Gemeinsame Sicherheit und Zukunft der Bundeswehr, Bericht der Kommission an die Bundesregierung („Weizsäcker-Kommission“), Berlin, 23. 5. 2000.

<sup>3</sup> Many NMD proponents forget that they denounced the ABM Treaty as a relic during the East-West conflict itself.

<sup>4</sup> For a more nuanced categorization, see Bernd W. Kubbig, Aufrüstung vor Rüstungskontrolle. Amerikanische Raketenabwehrpolitik während der Clinton-Administration, HSK-Report No. 1, Frankfurt am Main, 1996 and along these lines: Mirko Jacobowski., Öffentliche Meinung, Gesellschaftliche Gruppen und Raketenabwehr in den USA, <http://www.hsfk.de/fg1/proj/abm/bulletin/pdfs/jacobow1.pdf> [1. 9. 2000].

I side with the „Policy/Diplomacy First!” group. Nuclear deterrence based on atomic weapons and accompanied by a corresponding targeting policy is still the central characteristic of the military relationship between Washington and Moscow. To be sure, the overall context has changed, as with the disintegration of the Soviet Union the ideological antagonism ended and the cooperative dimension has now become an even more important feature of the U.S.-Russian relationship.<sup>5</sup> The role of nuclear weapons has changed, too. They are seen by both sides as a hedge or as an insurance policy against unforeseen events. Nevertheless, whether we like it or not, both countries plus the Western Alliance still live in strategic and operational terms in the old MAD world (Mutual Assured Destruction).

As long as this MAD world is a fact of life, the ABM Treaty fulfills an important function as a „cornerstone of strategic stability”. But this function should not – and need not – be taken as a mere justification of nuclear deterrence. „Strategic stability” which can still be measured in quantitative and qualitative terms proves to be a meaningful category in the MAD context. There is leeway for deterioration (and also for improvement) in the conditions of deterrence. This is shown by the official „Talking Points“ as presented by John Holum, head of the U.S.-delegation of the bilateral ABM Treaty talks, on January 19/20, 2000 to his Russian counterparts.<sup>6</sup> This document shows that the U.S. has encouraged Moscow to adopt two highly problematic measures in order to guarantee its second strike capability. One suggestion is highly questionable from the traditional point of view of *arms race stability*. This indirectly proposed measure aims at relying „under the terms of any possible future arms reduction agreements“ on „large, diversified, viable arsenals of strategic offensive weapons consisting of various types of ICBMs, submarine-launched ballistic missiles and heavy bombers. Specifically, Russia’s proposal for START III would make it possible to have 1,500-2,000 warheads and even according to highly conservative hypotheses, Russia and the United States could deploy more than 1,000 ICBMs and submarine-launched ballistic missiles with nuclear warheads over the next decade and thereafter“.<sup>7</sup>

Under these conditions NMD deployment would block the very process of reduction that the NMD proponents cite as a major rationale for their position. On the contrary, it could lead to a further build-up. Preserving the ABM Treaty (or allowing minor modifications that are acceptable to the Russians), however, would consolidate „strategic stability“.

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<sup>5</sup> For an emphasis on the cooperative dimension, see Harald Müller, Von der Feindschaft zur Sicherheitsgemeinschaft – Eine neue Konzeption der Rüstungskontrolle, in: Berthold Meyer (ed.), Eine Welt oder Chaos?, Frankfurt am Main, 1996, pp. 399-426. – In contrast, I have emphasized the hegemonic dimension as the central feature of the three different contexts in which I deal with arms control and the BMD issue.

<sup>6</sup> For a more detailed discussion see Bernd W. Kubbig, Nach dem Moskauer Gipfel zwischen Clinton und Putin: Unstimmigkeiten und Handlungsoptionen bei der Raketenabwehr, HSFK-Report 9, Frankfurt am Main, 2000. See also PRIF’s Internet Program, devoted entirely to Ballistic Missile Defense issues, which contains further information and can be reached at: <http://www.hsfk.de/fg1/proj/abm>.

<sup>7</sup> John Holum, ABM Treaty „Talking Points“, Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, 2000, [http://www.bullatomsci.org/issues/2000/mj00/treaty\\_doc.html](http://www.bullatomsci.org/issues/2000/mj00/treaty_doc.html) [1. 9. 2000]).

Moreover, keeping the nuclear arsenals at a level which was not even justifiable during the East-West antagonism is not compatible with the disarmament obligations of the nuclear powers under Article VI of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).<sup>8</sup> This obligation was repeated by the signatories of the NPT Review Conference in May 2000, the five official nuclear powers included.<sup>9</sup> Against the backdrop of the proposal implied by Holum's „Talking Points“, this declaration, at least as far as the United States is concerned, can be interpreted as a misleading gesture for the global public. The „real“ negotiating position of the United States as presented by Undersecretary Holum does not strengthen the NPT regime.

The second measure in John Holum's „Talking Points“ is extremely risky from a *crisis stability* point of view (another term from traditional arms control theory which today still makes sense). The U.S document suggests that Russia continues to keep its nuclear arsenal on constant alert<sup>10</sup> and adopts a highly problematic launch-on-warning strategy.<sup>11</sup> One can argue, as Holum's „Talking Points“ do, that such a surprise attack is extremely unlikely. From the point of view of an American official (and military planner) this position is self-contradictory, as the military strategy and target policy (see above) is still based on the capability of the other side, not on its intentions.

One further (broadly discussed and hotly debated) arms „control“ implication regards Russia's announcement that it will withdraw from the START II Treaty (as required by the START II Bill of Ratification law passed by the Duma in April 2000) or from the whole arms control regime. Such a withdrawal would be a response to a unilateral abrogation of the ABM Treaty by the United States. As Alexei Arbatov, Deputy Chairman of the Duma's Defense Committee, recently observed: „Putin made a very strong commitment, which is on the record, that if the United States unilaterally withdrew [from] the ABM Treaty, Russia will withdraw from START II, and will go in for new MIRVed ICBMs. He also

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<sup>8</sup> Article VI of the NPT Treaty: „Each of the Parties to the Treaty undertakes to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament, and on a Treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control.”

<sup>9</sup> The corresponding sections read: „[...] The Conference agrees on the following practical steps for the systematic and progressive efforts to implement article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and paragraphs 3 and 4 (c) of the 1995 Decision on ‘Principals and Objectives for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament’: [...] 2. A moratorium on nuclear-weapon-test explosions or any other nuclear explosions pending entry into force of that Treaty. [...] 5. The principle of irreversibility to apply to nuclear disarmament, nuclear and other related arms control and reduction measures. [...] 9. Steps by all the nuclear-weapon States leading to nuclear disarmament in a way that promotes international stability, and based on the principle of undiminished security for all [...]” (Programme for Promoting Nuclear Non-Proliferation, PPNN Newsbrief – Insert, no. 50, 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter 2000, p. 8f.)

<sup>10</sup> „Russia now keeps its strategic arsenal on constant alert and apparently will do so even at START-III levels. Russian forces under START-III could make an annihilating counterattack even under conditions of a surprise disarming first strike by the USA in combination with a limited NMD system.“ (John Holum, ABM Treaty [op. cit.].)

<sup>11</sup> „(...) Russia's response to an assault would obviously be to send about a thousand warheads, together with two or three times more decoys, accompanied by other advanced defense penetration aids.” (Ibid.)

said... that Russia will withdraw from all regimes of arms control, including conventional arms control."<sup>12</sup>

Bluff? Bargaining chip? Credible option? Putin's remarks as quoted by Arbatov leave room for compromise in the case of a bilaterally negotiated result: contributing to the destruction of the arms control regime is risky for the Russians as well. It cannot be ruled out that the newly elected Russian President is prepared to negotiate a compromise with the next U.S. administration – and with the next U.S. Senate, which, especially after the April 17, 2000 letter from 25 Republican Senators to President Clinton, has established itself as the second American negotiating partner beside the next U.S. administration (under either a Republican or a Democratic President).<sup>13</sup> On the Russian scene Putin is only one player, albeit a powerful one. A bilateral agreement is politically only viable if it is stable – which, in turn, depends on the depth and breadth of the consensus in Russia. It has to satisfy the demands of major actors such as the military and defense industry. A fragile consensus in Russia implies a high political breakout potential – if not today or tomorrow, then perhaps the day after tomorrow.

The way to such a compromise, if one can be reached, will be rocky, costly, and probably long. Such bilaterally negotiated modifications would change the ABM Treaty from an unusually restrictive arms *control* agreement to an arms *management* treaty in the SALT and START tradition. This fundamental change is likely to make another element of the „old“ notion of arms control all the more relevant: the bilaterally agreed upon predictability of NMD plans as a precondition for creating arms race stability, and, thus, building confidence. Admittedly, from an arms control perspective there is also the danger that a profoundly changed ABM Treaty would turn into a farce.

A compromise, *if it can be achieved*, is likely to reduce or even eliminate many of the concerns that currently dominate the „strategic agenda“. But at the same time a bilateral agreement will probably transform the agenda in two respects. It will both underscore the Chinese fears and armament efforts, and put regional missile defense – and the danger of regional arms races between „defensive“ and offensive weapons – at the center of attention (see 3.4.1).

The arms control implications of NMD cannot only be dealt with on the strategic level, but have to be analyzed in broader policy terms of the asymmetric structure that characterizes the U.S.–Russian relationship. Here, on the power-related level, we have on the one side the „sole superpower“ (Samuel Huntington) United States, booming by virtually all military, economic, and „soft power“ standards. On the other side we have Russia, the decaying former nuclear superpower. This unequal situation leads to different motivations,

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<sup>12</sup> Alexei Arbatov on U.S.-Russian Arms Reduction, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Issue Brief, vol. 3, no. 16, 2000. – I have not been able to find public statements by Putin that support Arbatov's view.

<sup>13</sup> The bottom line of the Senators' letter is: „We must advise you that in our judgement any agreement along the lines you have proposed to Russia would have little hope of gaining Senate consent to ratification.“ The complete letter is published in: The Center for Security Policy, Publications of the Center for Security Policy, No. 00-F 28, p. 2 (<http://www.security-policy.org/papers/2000/00-F28.html> [1. 9. 2000]).

interests and objectives behind NMD deployment and the preservation of the arms control Treaty of 1972. They result in different – maybe partly manageable, maybe partly irreconcilable – world order perspectives. In my view, the United States is acting towards Russia both as a status quo and as a revisionist superpower and, thus, as the clear winner of the East-West conflict. The basic objective of the U.S. is to consolidate or even increase<sup>14</sup> the asymmetry of its relationship with the loser of the Cold War, and BMD is part of this. The United States bases this policy on a technology (and on an infrastructure) that *if it works in an efficient way* will be superior to that of the Russian potential – and, in fact, would be second to none.

Russia is instrumentalizing arms control and is influenced by nostalgia; the country is a would-be superpower whose former global reach has shrunk to a mere regional dimension. Its policy is shaped by the status-driven desire to deal with the United States from a position of power-related symmetry and strategic parity, and by challenging the United States' claim to a unique position.<sup>15</sup> The major driving force behind the Russian interest in a strict ABM Treaty and in affordable lower levels of nuclear warheads is the preservation of its second nuclear strike capability. The central problem with the current asymmetry of formerly equal military partners is that it is highly likely to shape both the above mentioned compromise which (if it comes about) will probably reflect the power disparity and, therefore, be in favor of American NMD plans. At the same time, it is also highly likely that the asymmetrical power structure will shape the leeway for bilateral cooperation. In my view it will severely limit the possibilities for a substantive, joint approach in the area of NMD/TMD.

Not incidentally, President Clinton's offer of early June to extend the American umbrella to all „civilized“ countries did not specifically include Russia (nor did the President say anything more concrete at the summit in Moscow). At the same time, Putin's counter-offer to build an NMD with the United States (and/or with the Europeans) may not only be a tactical ploy and a test balloon, but may be driven by the serious desire to reestablish the „Golden Age“ of strategic parity. A further motive may come into play here: Putin's desire to link Russia both to the high technology infrastructure of the West (because of the substantial expected considerable spin-offs from BMD) and to the Western/European security architecture. At this point it is hard to see how the differences between the Russian and the American positions can be bridged and translated into a truly cooperative approach. And there are no serious American signs of interest in a Theater Missile Defense (TMD) program against „sub-strategic“ missiles („sub-strategic“ as defined in the „Demarcation Agreements“ signed by both Moscow and Washington on September 26, 1997).<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> U.S. policy in Central Asia amounts to interventionism in the sphere of the Russian „near abroad“.

<sup>15</sup> „Rußland handelt nicht um den Status einer Weltmacht. Es ist eine. Das ist ihm bestimmt durch sein enormes Potenzial, durch Geschichte und Kultur.“ (Putin in: Die Welt am Sonntag, June 11, 2000.)

<sup>16</sup> For a more detailed discussion see Bernd W. Kubbig/Harald Müller/Annette Schaper, Die strategische Rüstungskontrolle zwischen den USA und Rußland: Erfolge – Probleme – Perspektiven, HSFK-Report 11, Frankfurt am Main, 1996, pp. 49-52.

Such a cooperative perspective is the cornerstone of an attempt by moderate BMD proponents to reconceptualize the traditional arms control approach. Colleagues at the Stimson Center have proposed a conceptual combination of gradual NMD deployment with a drastic reduction of nuclear warheads as a way to a defense-dominated world.<sup>17</sup> There are many problems with this approach in terms of feasibility and desirability. Two major obstacles can be mentioned: Hegemons do not like to share, especially not the goods which they consider to be at the cutting edge of technology. This is even more the case if one adds to the power-related aspect the probably more decisive factor: the strategic preference of the „sole superpower” to act in crucial areas of its foreign and security policy distinctly unilaterally (as opposed to a favored bi- and multilateral approach).

This does not exclude some dimensions of cooperation in the TMD area, but in general and in the final analysis, cooperation among the two unequal powers will not only be limited but is also likely to be implemented under conditions set by the United States. This is bad news for the advocates of a comprehensive and combined defense/offense cooperation. It is good for those who want to modernize the traditional arms control concept on the basis of predominantly politico-diplomatic means.

## 2.2 Second Context: Relations Between the United States and China

In my view, Beijing is the real NMD rationale on the somewhat hidden U.S. agenda. Unlike the Washington-Moscow dyad, the relationship between these two countries is not one between a superpower and a power in sharp decline. Rather, the NMD/TMD issue has to be seen from an American perspective as an effort to seek a *modus vivendi* with the emerging superpower – globally in the long term, regionally in Asia in the short term. The Ballistic Missile Defense policy of the United States is one central element of its new containment strategy towards China.

Although currently and for the time being mere paper tigers (one has to stress this again and again), the national (NMD) and the regional (TMD) defense systems could form a pair of tongs around China – and open political options for the United States in regional crises, especially those between China and Taiwan. The two variants of Ballistic Missile Defense seem to be designed as the counterbalance to the integrative component of the overall U.S. strategy towards China as represented by efforts of parts of the U.S. elite to permit and encourage Chinese participation in international institutions such as the WTO.

It is the combination of national and regional BMD components that makes an arms race between the United States and China highly likely. From today’s perspective, an arms build-up will not stop there. China’s nuclear response to a determined and efficient BMD policy is likely to trigger a chain reaction in India, Pakistan, and in other countries as well. A sober cost-benefit analysis has to weigh this frightening perspective against the above mentioned possibility of increased U.S. political options in China/Taiwan crises. One thing is already clear today: the outlook for arms control is poor. Beijing is in a position to

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<sup>17</sup> Henry L. Stimson Center (ed.), *An Evolving US Nuclear Posture*, Second Report of the Steering Committee Project on Eliminating Weapons of Mass Destruction, Report No. 19, Washington, D.C., December 1985.

credibly respond to a U.S. BMD build-up, and in this respect it plays in a different league than Moscow. The signs are already on the wall. The most visible one is perhaps the failure of the cut-off talks to take off in Geneva, because Beijing seems to think that it needs more weapons-usable material to build more nuclear warheads.

Both the quantitative and the qualitative dimensions of the arms race are at stake here. Qualitative aspects include the prospects of MIRVed missiles and Beijing's farewell to its current minimum deterrence strategy and movement toward war-fighting options. Beijing's nuclear build-up is certainly not driven by one factor. But the NMD/TMD element could at least accelerate current plans, provide an additional justification for them, and make it more difficult to transform China's traditional role as a rule-breaker to that of a constructive rule-taker. While it is clear that China has to recognize that its problematic export policy is part of the proliferation problem and plays into the hands of NMD proponents, a BMD policy that is not used as a bargaining chip is likely to close promising arms control options: to test whether Beijing's strong advocacy of the ABM Treaty in its currently restrictive form is mere bluff or a credible first step for adapting the bilateral agreement of 1972 by trilateralizing it. While this may sound utopian, the opposite extreme could be very realistic: that China would increase its build-up, if the United States and Russia implemented their cooperative endeavors toward a „Trans“-National Missile System.

### **2.3 Third Context: The Special Relationship Between the United States and Europe**

In the relationship between the New and the Old Continent, the arms control issue has at least four dimensions: a global one; a transatlantic one which is comprised of security-related and technology-related aspects; an intra-European (national) one; and finally a regional one.

The *global dimension* is the most obvious: „EU/NATO-Europe“ is well aware of the fact that the dangers of worldwide and global arms races will deeply affect the Old Continent and its foreign policy. Therefore, in one of its rare unanimous moves, Europe is acting as an entity as far as the American NMD plans are concerned. In their spring meeting in Florence, all foreign ministers, recognizing that they cannot prevent the United States from building a *National* Missile Defense System, established conditions for their „consent“; arms control is a major one in the sense that the ministers warned of the negative implications of arms races and of the break-down of the NPT regime. Most, if not all EU member states would probably be happy if the NMD plans would „implode“ or at least be delayed because of major technical shortcomings. The second preference would be a bilaterally negotiated consensus on the ABM Treaty between Washington and Moscow.

The *transatlantic dimension* comprises all vital aspects of the conceptual and political tension between arms control on the one hand and (extended) deterrence and alliance cohesion on the other. Despite the politico-diplomatic leeway that the Europeans give to both parties to the ABM Treaty in hammering out a compromise, the governments on this side of the Atlantic have set down a clear marker: a unilateral breach of the ABM Treaty would be a *casus belli* for NATO and could lead to a severe crisis within the Western Alliance.

Another aspect which would include the security and technology issue will become important if the next U.S. administration offers in a more specific way than President Clinton did in early June to extend the U.S. umbrella and to invite the European allies to participate in the NMD program. Here, the following questions arise:

- Will it be acceptable to say „No” for arms control reasons to such an offer, thereby risking tensions with the U.S. hegemon who might argue that his soldiers in Europe need adequate protection?
- Will the United States make such an offer more attractive by sharing technology with its closest partners<sup>18</sup> – an offer that could be described as serious provided the United States breaks with past and current practices and is prepared to fundamentally change its traditional „Buy American!”-based export control system? (Changing the rules that so far have led to the „transatlantic tragedy” in the context of the Medium Extended Air Defense System [MEADS]<sup>19</sup> could be a first yardstick for a serious offer based on reasonably equitable terms.)
- What transatlantic model might govern such an offer – the „partners in leadership” vision of an almost egalitarian alliance or the traditional hegemonic way of again basing the dominant U.S. role on a military technology, thus a) optimizing the chances for U.S. influence through NATO and b) counterbalancing the economic power on the Old Continent, the European moves for enlarging the EU and the greater efforts to build a „European caucus” within NATO?

The *intra-European (national) dimension* has a fundamental and an immediate aspect. The first category includes the future of arms control with respect to the nuclear arsenals of Britain and France. Will these countries preserve or increase their atomic weapons as a reaction to a U.S.-Russian compromise and a Chinese build-up? Or will Paris and London, recognizing the increasing devaluation of their weapons, be more eager to include them in official disarmament negotiations – thus demonstrating that they have begun to change their military and status-related identity? Of immediate concern is the question regarding the required national consent by Denmark and Great Britain to the modification of the radars in Thule (Greenland) and in Fylingdales. This issue shows that the National Defense System is not truly „national”. From an arms control point of view this issue could be seen as a litmus test of how serious the Europeans are about the ABM Treaty. Here, they can prove that they are not only bystanders in the „ABM Treaty game” between Washington and Moscow.

By „Europeanizing” the required national consent, they should consider the radar question as a way of asking the U.S. to rethink its dubious plans. As to the radar in Great Britain, this could mean at this point supporting political actors such as the House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee, whose report is in the words of the Committee Chairman Donald Anderson a „warning shot” to Washington.<sup>20</sup> This first British official document

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<sup>18</sup> For more detail see Bernd W. Kubbig, Nach dem Moskauer Gipfel (op.cit.).

<sup>19</sup> For more detail see Tobias Kahler/Bernd W. Kubbig, MEADS – A Transatlantic Tragedy? (forthcoming in our Internet Program at <http://www.hsfk.de/fg1/proj/abm>.)

<sup>20</sup> Quoted in: International Herald Tribune, August 3, 2000.

criticizing American NMD policy could indeed „help the government press its concerns with Washington, especially in light of testimony by Defense Secretary William Cohen (...) that the successful deployment of a national missile defense would ‘need to have the support of our allies.’”<sup>21</sup>

The *regional dimension* regards the development of politico-diplomatic and arms control-driven initiatives by the Europeans as a response both to the American „umbrella” offer (in terms of NMD and TMD) and to the evolving threat from problematic states such as Iran, Iraq, Syria and Libya (see esp. 3.4.2). This dimension also includes the prospect of a „defensive” – offensive arms race between Europe and these Middle East/Persian Gulf countries.

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<sup>21</sup> This is the view of T. Taylor from the International Institute of Strategic Studies, summarized in: *ibid.*

### 3. Designing a Serious Role for the European Actors in the „BMD Game”: The Modernized, Mutually Minimizing Missile Threat Concept („*Quadruple M-TC*”)

In this chapter I will briefly outline my „*Quadruple M-TC*”-concept in the hope of triggering a debate on a constructive role for Europe, i.e. a role that goes beyond that of an onlooker who would be glad if the Americans and Russians found a mutually acceptable compromise. At this historical juncture Europe should abandon its traditionally passive role and become an active builder („*Mitgestalter*”) of its own security policy. It is even not enough just to warn about the possible negative consequences of global and regional arms races. What is more, Europe will be in an unconvincing position if it supports the preservation of the ABM Treaty, while at the same time quietly allowing the United States to implement its seemingly *National* Missile Defense System.

Therefore, as indicated above, the Europeans should ask Denmark and Great Britain to use their required consent to the modernized radar stations as an arms control and security driven bargaining chip, in other words as a way of translating European concern into practice by blocking the whole military endeavor – or at least to acquire a say in this „National” enterprise with its clear transatlantic components. Accordingly, the Europeans should have a codified say in the design and in the further evolution of the NMD architecture. For instance, they should insist on a firebreak that makes it clear that NMD is designed only to meet the officially mentioned threat from a handful of rockets. Moreover, Denmark and Great Britain with European backing should have a codified say in further NMD design so that its capacities can be reduced if the perceived threat rationale recedes or diminishes – this would be the case if North Korea „imploded” and/or gave up its nuclear test programs, or if Iran and Iraq could be convinced to restrict their (potential) programs in a verifiable way.

Such a transatlantic *quid pro quo* seems to be a good beginning for a more equitable and cooperative design of the alliance. Given what is at stake, the Old Continent has an obligation to be assertive. But to put the transatlantic relationship in the security area on a less hegemonic footing requires more of Europe:<sup>22</sup> The Europeans have to show that they have ideas of their own and have the clout to initiate and implement them on their own and/or in tandem with the Americans. Such a concept will make them visible and give them credibility and a voice in Washington, Moscow and Beijing. In order to fulfill these goals, the *Modernized, Mutually Minimizing Missile Threat Concept* („*Quadruple M-TC*”) has to meet its clearly defined objectives and criteria, and it has to be based on transparent premises. With respect to the more credible role of Europe „*Quadruple M-TC*” will be

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<sup>22</sup> To be clear on this point: NATO works only as a hegemonic, i.e. asymmetric construction. By design, the U.S. has to play a greater role, while it is realistic to assume that Europe can only afford a smaller one. This does not exclude European efforts to reduce the asymmetry.

discussed in one variant of the two nuclear deterrence-related contexts (Russia) and in the context of Weapons of Mass Destruction (the case of Iran).

### 3.1. Objectives

The major goal of the „*Quadruple M-TC*” is to enhance security by mutually minimizing missile threats, which are defined as

- technical deficiencies of already existing nuclear arsenals (e.g. unreliable early warning systems which can lead to a hair-trigger situation, especially in times of tensions and crises, or to an unauthorized and/or accidental missile launch)
- a highly problematic strategic disposition because of a constant hair-trigger situation due to high-alert status and/or launch-on-warning situation
- insufficient fissile materials and warhead controls (stemming e.g. from deficient security and accounting systems, shortage of resources, unemployment of weapons specialists)
- the capabilities *and* intentions of countries with an existing or evolving Weapons of Mass Destruction posture
- the capabilities *and* intentions of sub-state actors (e.g. terrorist groups)
- the consequences of BMD deployments in terms of possibly igniting global and regional arms races and regional instabilities.

### 3.2 Criteria

Any successful concept initiated and implemented by Europe has to be *both assertive (not adversarial!) and alliance compatible*. The American plans already strain the transatlantic partnership – one has to bear in mind that the NMD system cannot be considered as a friendly act toward the U.S.’s allies France and Great Britain. For an efficient NMD, together with the feared Russian countermeasures, will make the French and British nuclear weapons potentially „impotent and obsolete” (Ronald Reagan). European arms control-driven efforts as the necessary intra-alliance counterweight might lead to additional stress within the transatlantic relationship, but this should not break the alliance, nor should European assertiveness signal to the Russians that they can drive a wedge between the transatlantic partners. A credible politico-diplomatic initiative is a litmus test for both sides of how serious the Europe-as-the-second-pillar rhetoric really is and what it can mean in practice.

By design, the initiative should be *arms control-supportive* in terms of favoring and facilitating reductions on the way to a nuclear free world – or, in other words, an adequate concept should not be an obstacle to this incremental process.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> I would like to thank Harald Müller for drawing my attention to this criterion.

The concept has to be *affordable*. A policy of uncovered checks is doomed to fail. Earlier cost calculations for a European umbrella made by industry representatives amounted to a double digit billion sum. This makes any idea of building a European NMD independent of the United States unrealistic from the outset.

The European initiative has to be *feasible* in political terms. Europe is not a global player, but it should act more forcefully and convincingly as a regional actor. Doing so would mean extending its responsibility, which in the New Strategic Concept was limited to the Euro-American sphere. To include North Africa, the Near Middle East and the Gulf region in the realm of an explicit politico-diplomatic initiative will probably have an important effect: it gives the necessary signal to liberal and moderate conservative decision makers in the United States such as Senator Lugar who have been waiting for a serious European counterproliferation endeavor. Appealing to the centrists in the United States will be vital because they, too, share the European concern that American unilateralism will unravel core multilateral institutions such as the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty. Engaging in such a formal dialogue would not simply duplicate what the U.S. already does. *Firstly*, there is the danger that the United States will invest more and more resources in, and place more emphasis on, non-diplomatic means. *Secondly*, there is a difference between pursuing „Diplomacy First!“ on a highly selective basis (U.S. policy towards North Korea), and designing it as the central element. *Thirdly*, unlike the United States Europe is not perceived by the problematic states as the „Great Satan“.

A European initiative has to be based on *mutual intra-alliance respect for different political cultures* as probably the major factor influencing different threat assessments and ways of responding to them. Different ways of designing one's security strategies from the perspective of vulnerability versus invulnerability are at stake here. The Europeans have to accept the American Pearl Harbor trauma which in part guides NMD plans in the United States. The U.S., in turn, has to accept that the Europeans have more than fifty years of experience with vulnerability as a *modus vivendi* as well as a policy guiding and security designing principle. At the concrete level of threat assessments the importance of the Pearl Harbor trauma is evident. The major focus and the findings of the Rumsfeld Commission on the „warning time“ issue as well as the somewhat hysterical reactions to the report cannot be explained without the presence and/or the instrumentalization of an „out of the blue attack“ experienced at Pearl Harbor in December 1941.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> The bipartisan Rumsfeld Commission which issued its Report on July 15, 1998, six weeks before the North Korean missile test, worked under the mandate of the Republican-dominated Congress. One of its major findings was: „The warning times the U.S. can expect of new, threatening ballistic missile deployments are being reduced. Under some plausible scenarios – including re-basing or transfer of operational missiles, sea- and air-launched options, shortened development programs that might include testing in a third country, or some combination of these – *the U.S. might well have little or no warning before operational deployment.*“ (Commission to Assess the Ballistic Missile Threat to the United States, Executive Summary, Washington, D.C., July 15, 1998, pp. 5f.; emphasis added). For an excellent critique see Joseph Cirincione, Assessing the Assessment: The 1999 National Intelligence Estimate of the Ballistic Missile Threat, in: *The Nonproliferation Review*, vol. 7, no. 1, 2000, pp. 125-137.

Reflecting a different „intelligence culture“ (especially the experience of being pilloried after a number of export scandals had not been detected by the German intelligence community), the German intelligence service’s report on WMD proliferation does not mention the „warning time issue“ at all.<sup>25</sup> In contrast to the American National Intelligence Estimates (NIEs), the specific political experiences manifest themselves in a detailed description of how the problematic countries acquired the WMD-capable components from western states, especially from Germany.

### 3.3 Premises

#### 3.3.1 Threat-Related Assumptions

In spite of the often cited „New Threat Paradigm“ which assumes that the current and future dangers are diffuse and virtually uncontrollable, this concept starts from a different assumption when it comes to threats from ballistic missiles. Firstly, as follows from the list of threats, Russian missiles (and warheads) are included and, therefore, have to be dealt with. Secondly, based primarily on the most recent U.S. National Intelligence Estimate of September 1999,<sup>26</sup> as well as on the October 1999 Report by the German Federal Intelligence Service on WMD Proliferation,<sup>27</sup> this concept assumes, that:

- As far as Europe is concerned there is (depending on the location of the observer) an emerging potential threat from Iran that can potentially reach Central Europe, Germany included.
- There is a potential threat from Iraq only if Baghdad is unchecked by adequate controls, implemented by credible means, and obviously to a lesser extent from Syria and Libya.
- In spite of the increased WMD-related cooperation among the problematic countries, the menace is focused (the official intelligence reports name a handful of „states of concern“), and the threat can be specified and qualified as „real“, („highly“) „unlikely“ or „possible“.
- One has to differentiate between the capability and intention of those countries with ongoing WMD activities (thus one should not repeat the mistake of the Cold War which led to worst-case analyses as a major rationale for constant arms build-up measures which were presented as mere *reactions*).
- One has to take the regional factors behind WMD activities into account.

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<sup>25</sup> Bundesnachrichtendienst (BND), Proliferation von Massenvernichtungsmitteln und Trägerraketen, October 1999, p. 23.

<sup>26</sup> U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, Foreign Missile Developments and the Ballistic Missile Threat to the United States Through 2015, USIS, EUR 514, 09/10/99. Robert D. Walpole, The Ballistic Missile Threat to the United States, Statement for the Record to the Senate Subcommittee on International Security, Proliferation, and Federal Services, February 9, 2000 (Typescript).

<sup>27</sup> Bundesnachrichtendienst, Proliferation (op. cit.).

- The problematic programs do not evolve in the sense of gaining a permanent technological momentum („Eigendynamik“) which occurs independently of changing political circumstances – be they domestic or international ones. Thus, those programs can be influenced from outside not only in the dubious sense that western nations and firms have helped those countries in acquiring the weapons potential about which the exporters now complain. WMD programs can also be influenced with the goal of slowing them down, reducing them or maybe even of eliminating them as a menace.
- WMD activities are not linear in the sense that they cannot encounter setbacks which lead to ups and downs.

### 3.3.2 *Deterrence-Related Assumptions*

There are no non-deterrable state actors – *provided that* a policy of nuclear or large scale conventional deterrence is communicated to all states considered as problematic. As Secretary of Defense William Cohen stated clearly on April 26, 2000:

„We have a retaliatory capability that if anyone should ever be foolhardy enough to launch a missile attack of a limited or expanded nature against the United States, they would be destroyed in the process. That ordinarily should be a sufficient deterrent for the North Koreans, Iran, Iraq or Libya or any other country that would seek to acquire this capability.”<sup>28</sup>

It is hard to see which state (even the most shrewd leadership except if it is suicidal) would dare to attack the United States and its allies by Weapons of Mass Destruction. In his statement of April 26, 2000, Secretary Cohen went on and addressed the added value of NMD which in his view might increase U.S. determination in crisis situations and ensure that the United States could never be blackmailed:

„But what we never want to be subject to is what I would say would be a nuclear blackmail situation, where a Saddam Hussein occupies Kuwait, possibly Saudi Arabia, or some other type of aggressive action.

And then you say, ‘Well, we’re going to put half a million troops in Kuwait, in Saudi Arabia, to drive Saddam out.’ And he says, ‘Wait a minute. If you seek to put troops in this region, you run the risk of me launching an attack upon New York, Washington or some of our major cities.’ That can have at least a change -- might force a change in our calculations as to whether or not we’re prepared to wage a conventional campaign against such a dictator. And so it could change, in fact, the way in which we conduct conventional operations.

We do not want to be in that position. We want to be able to say to a Saddam or to an Iran or to a Libya or wherever, whomever, that ‘You are not going to put us in that position, that we are going to carry out our international responsibilities, protect our national security interests; and your possession of five or 10 or 20, or whatever the number is, missiles is not going to deter us.’ That I think, is the principal benefit of

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<sup>28</sup> The Secretary was responding to a question from Senator Dorgan. (Unofficial typescript).

having this capability, not against Russia, not against a superpower, but against those nations who might otherwise try to impede us from carrying out the protection of our national security interests.”<sup>29</sup>

To cite a repetition of the „Saddam/Kuwait“-scenario is not at all convincing. There is ample evidence that the signals the U.S. gave to Saddam prior to his invasion of Kuwait were *not* as unmistakable as those mentioned by Secretary Cohen. Moreover, one has to ask which political and military decision maker in the United States will today and for the time being rely in the final analysis on the doubtful efficiency of an unproven BMD technology. Even if it became more reliable in the distant future, decision makers are likely to put their trust in the deterrent effect of nuclear and conventional means (to do otherwise would be to base U.S. policy and the fate of its soldiers on unacceptably dangerous illusions of security, as „defensive“ weapons are not likely to be reliable for the time being). The deterrent effect of the already existing weapons has been considered sufficient by important decision-makers up until now (thus emphasizing all the more the importance of the „Diplomacy First!“ approach). This is indicated by the following dialogue between Senator Carl Levin and Robert Walpole, National Intelligence Officer for Strategic and Nuclear Programs, National Intelligence Council, on February 9, 2000:

„Senator Levin: It’s been a long time that our troops have been at risk from North Korean missiles.

Mr. Walpole: Yes.

Senator Levin: Have they -- and our means of defense against those missiles for a long period of time was deterrence, threat of retaliation against them if they would use it? Before we had a Patriot, was that not the only defense we had against an incoming missile would be deterrence and retaliation?

Mr. Walpole: Well, we didn’t have a defense, but deterrence you could argue would have been a play, yes.”<sup>30</sup>

### 3.3.3 Policy-Related Assumptions

The insufficiently recognized and appreciated major achievement of U.S. foreign policy in the Clinton era – its „carrots and sticks“ policy towards North Korea – is the most promising and encouraging model for „*Quadruple M-TC*“ as outlined below. This brilliantly orchestrated trilateral policy, which deviates from the U.S. trend towards unilateralism, shows the comparative advantages of a „Diplomacy First!“ approach. Both the United States and the Stone Age regime in Pyongyang went through a remarkable process of learning. Nobody (including the partners themselves) would have considered this possible prior to their intense interactions.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Unofficial typescript.

<sup>31</sup> These unprecedented events include the diplomatic initiative by President Putin to visit North Korea which underlines his „Policy First!“ approach (it should be noted that U.S. decision-makers have for decades been hoping to see the USSR/Russia adopt this policy of prioritizing political over military

The United States, which seemed to start its negotiations from the assumption that it was dealing with an irrational regime, had the opposite experience. Washington encountered a tough, business-like benefit-maximizer who was willing to trade considerable political concessions – especially the delay, if not the foregoing of its second ballistic missile test,<sup>32</sup> for hard currency. North Korea, in turn, encountered a „sole superpower“ that was also prepared to compromise. This triggered a political process in the region whose positive dynamics, especially between Pyongyang and Seoul, could lead to new political horizons which previously seemed unthinkable. (Thus, on the level of the official U.S. vocabulary, North Korea has changed from a „rogue“ country to a „state of concern“.)

To be sure, at this point of writing (August 2000) it is not clear whether the U.S. will get a verifiable termination of North Korea's entire missile (test) program, nor is it certain that a deal can be struck in which the regime drops its international ballistic missile program if other countries launch two or three satellites a year for Pyongyang at their expense. A National Missile Defense System, however, seems not only to be unnecessary for the achievement of these unprecedented results, but even counterproductive. Firstly, an „NMD equipped“ United States which considered itself to be invulnerable would have had no incentives to start the negotiations with Pyongyang. Conversely, to be vulnerable increases willingness to cooperate and reach compromises. Secondly, it is probably not incidental that William Perry, President Clinton's Adviser for North Korea, did not mention NMD when he testified on October 13, 1999 before the House International Relations Committee on his successful mission to North Korea. This was the very day when Undersecretary of Defense for Policy Walter Slocombe presented to the House Armed Services Committee the questionable rationale behind the administration's NMD deployment policy:

„(...) we continue to base our NMD efforts on the assessment, reflected in the NIE, that North Korea probably will test the TD-2 (Taepo Dong, B.W.K.) this year.“<sup>33</sup>

Both the Republican-dominated Congress and the Democratic administration, with its announced deployment decision, face a dilemma. The success of policy toward North Korea makes NMD superfluous. Conversely, determination to deploy NMD could force the administration to give up its extremely productive policy approach (this will be even more true if George W. Bush becomes the next U.S. President).

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solutions). To adopt a concept that puts policy first means at the same time to have the Russians on board, which in the Korean case constitutes a good example of a cooperative effort.

<sup>32</sup> See Sebastian Harnisch, *Erst verhandeln, dann rüsten? Die nordkoreanische Bedrohung in der amerikanischen Raketenabwehrdebatte*, <http://www.hsfk.de/fg1/proj/abm/bulletin/pdfs/harnisch1.pdf> [11. 9. 2000].

<sup>33</sup> Walter B. Slocombe, *Testimony, House Armed Services Committee, Hearing on National Missile Defense, October 13, 1999, p. 2. (Typescript).*

### 3.4 Elements

„*Quadruple M–TC*” is a *modernized* arms control/threat minimizing approach which has to be designed in a context-dependent way, although some elements might overlap. The first context is the nuclear one, which from an American perspective concerns the relationship between the United States on the one hand and Russia and China on the other. If Europe wants to become a player within this nuclear power triangle, the conceptualization of „*Quadruple M–TC*” enables the Old Continent to develop arms control criteria for monitoring and judging (American) BMD-related policies. Europe cannot stay out of the BMD area, as President Putin has directly called upon the Europeans to embark on a cooperative undertaking that could include the Americans as well. Moreover, if it came to a U.S.-Russian compromise on ABM Treaty modifications then the question of sub-strategic defense systems against short- and medium-range missiles will become even more prominent. The second context concerns European policy towards „states of concern” in North Africa (Libya), the Near/Middle East (Syria) and the Gulf region (Iran, Iraq), and towards North Korea.

#### 3.4.1 „*Quadruple M–TC*” in the U.S.-Russian Context

A modernized arms control approach implies by definition that it builds on the traditional concept by integrating those elements which are still valid in the new international circumstances. As indicated above, in the context of the conceptually and operationally still relevant „MAD world”, core elements include the major goal and means of traditional arms control, the primary objective of preventing nuclear war by strategic stability (with parity as a variant) defined as assured by:

- A second strike capability;
- Renunciation of a first strike capability/no use of nuclear arsenals for political purposes;
- Predictability of the arms race (arms race stability);
- Arms limitations/freeze/deep arms reductions/disarmament;
- Crisis stability.<sup>34</sup>

Cost and damage limitation, the further objectives of the traditional arms control triad, remain relevant, although the notion of damage has to be reconsidered (which I will not do here). Nevertheless, the history of arms control cannot be written in a linear way as if the end of the East-West conflict had not occurred. The dissolution of the Soviet Union is a matter of fact, but so is the existence of Russia with its (hollow) claim to be a superpower and of China as a serious regional and emerging superpower on the global scale. In the case of the U.S. and Russia, a modernized concept has to take these factors into account.

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<sup>34</sup> See Bernd W. Kubbig, (Re-)Defining and Refining the Criteria for Nuclear Arms Control: Theory and Praxis, in: Bulletin of Peace Proposals, vol. 16, no. 3, 1985, pp. 199-223, esp. p. 207.

Breaking distinctly with past, successful arms *control* instruments in the U.S.-Russian relationship should now mean drastic reductions in current nuclear arsenals. There is considerable room for cuts to a reliably verifiable number of, let's say, 500 to 300 nuclear warheads without any need for an „insurance policy“ provided by NMD (leaving aside the fact that any continental missile defense system is based on largely unconvincing WMD-related threat assessments as well as on unproven technology).

In addition to the level of goals and means one has to consider a third element – conditions for successful arms control/deep arms reductions. Under today's circumstances one can directly adopt one restrictive factor (energetically contested by NMD supporters) from the traditional concept: freezing/slowing down the innovation of military technology in terms of National Missile Defense. As the controversy about the U.S. „Talking Points“ shows in a nutshell, any NMD system has to be seen in the „real“ world context. Capabilities, intentions, and perceptions matter. In each respect, the rationales behind American NMD are not convincing.

The critical arms control-driven test for assessing the planned NMD deployment is whether it improves, worsens or leaves security problems about the same. The worldwide reactions so far show to an overwhelming degree that the American plans are perceived as likely to lead to a deterioration in security problems. This is because the envisioned architecture and the planned interceptors do not live up to the literal meaning of the word „defensive“. They can, because of their (up-graded) range, hit targets beyond the U.S. border, and are therefore inherently or explicitly offensive weapons. More importantly, even if they were „defensive“ in a strict sense, they have to be seen as part of an overall offensive (both nuclear and conventional) posture. Moreover, they have to be considered within the context of a military strategy that seeks in the ultimate analysis global U.S. dominance based on the exploitation of the most „advanced“ technology. In the words of the United States Space Command „Vision for 2020“, which is presented under the motto: „SPACE ... the Warfighters' Edge“:

„US Space Command -- dominating the space dimension of military operations to protect US interests and investment. Integrating Space Forces into warfighting capabilities across the full spectrum of conflict.“<sup>35</sup>

It is this very objective that is the enemy of a modernized arms control concept in all its dimensions. Today, the obviously unrestrained „sole superpower“ is the major hurdle to arms control. For its crucial actors are again using notions such as „superiority“. This term, which one would think would and should not have survived the end of the Cold War, is now especially being used in the sense of superiority in the information sector.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> United States Space Command „Vision for 2020“, p. 3 (<http://www.spacecom.af.mil/usspace>). – General Howell M. Estes III is cited with the following „vision“: „The increasing reliance of US military forces upon space power combined with the explosive proliferation of global space capabilities makes a space vision essential. As stewards for military space, we must be prepared to exploit the advantages of the space medium. This Vision serves as a bridge in the evolution of military space into the 21st century and is the standard by which United States Space Command and its Components will measure progress into the future.“ (Ibid.)

<sup>36</sup> See Kubbig, (Re-)Defining (op. cit.), esp. p. 207.

A modernized arms control approach implies by definition new elements. Given the broad array of threats summarized above (see 3.1), the traditional elements are not enough to deal with either the mentioned deficiencies of existing nuclear arsenals or the insufficient controls on fissile materials and warheads. In fact, the measures to deal with some of these menaces have become themselves a modern and conceptually enriching part of traditional arms control (the cooperative „Nunn-Lugar-Initiative”, a U.S.-Russian early warning center as agreed upon at the Clinton/Putin Moscow summit in early June 2000). Nevertheless, a modernized arms control approach has to be broader and include measures against threats that have not been addressed or even solved in a cooperative, productive and durable way – especially the constant hair-trigger situation due to high-alert status and/or launch-on-warning. As indicated above, from today’s point of view the deployment of NMD would not improve but worsen the perspectives for a necessary de-alerting solution.

As a *mutual* arms control/threat minimizing approach „*Quadruple M-TC*” is designed to be a cooperative effort, be it bi-, tri- or multilateral. Unilateralism seeking short-term advantages is the enemy of this concept. I have indicated several times that the real challenge of conceptualizing arms control in the U.S.-Russian context is to cope with cooperation in the context of asymmetry. This reality is far removed from the notion of a cooperative and symmetrical („fair/reciprocal technology sharing“) approach. The United States would have to adopt a completely different philosophy and break with the whole tradition of its strict export system which is aimed at controlling rather than sharing.<sup>37</sup>

But cooperation in military affairs is, according to my framework, not a value in itself. It has to prove that it is indispensable and that the goals cannot be reached by a „Diplomacy First!“ approach.<sup>38</sup> This applies also to the Russian context. „Mutuality” strengthens Europe’s broader role in the East-West relationship. The function of the Old Continent should indeed be based on cooperation, and Europe should work as a hinge and intra-Alliance counterweight to the current policy of the „sole superpower” which seems to have written off Russia as a serious partner. But Europe should qualify the contents of the cooperation and set the right priorities. What Moscow needs most of all, is in my view economic help and the reassurance that it is linked to the western security architecture. Here, the Europeans should make sure that this security system is not dominated by

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<sup>37</sup> See Kubbig, Nach dem Moskauer Gipfel (op. cit.).

<sup>38</sup> In this crucial respect „*Quadruple M-TC*” is different from a number of conceptually promising studies which were mostly published in the early 90s have not been taken into consideration in recent years. These studies focus on the notions of cooperation and of „security communities” and, thus, provide a productive starting point for expanding my own concept by including Non-Governmental Organizations. Such an extended version could focus on the establishment and role of transnational communities which would not be built around new („defensive”) weapons systems, but instead around the „Policy/Diplomacy First!” concept. See in this context Ashton B. Carter/William J. Perry/John D. Steinbruner, A New Concept of Cooperative Security, The Brookings Institution, Washington, D.C., 1992; Center for Strategic and International Studies/Council on Foreign and Defense Policy Moscow (eds.), Harmonizing the Evolution of U.S. and Russian Defense Policies, Washington, D.C., and Moscow, 1993; Fred Charles Iklé, The case for a Russian-US security community, in: James E. Goodby/Benoit Morel (eds.), The Limited partnership: Building a Russian-US Security Community, Oxford, 1993, pp. 9-22; Müller, Von der Feindschaft (op. cit.).

NATO, but that the civilian institutions – the OSCE and the EU – have an increasing role to play.<sup>39</sup>

As a concept that seeks to enhance security *by minimizing the threats*, „*Quadruple M–TC*” addresses the above-listed array of Russia-related menaces (see 3.1) without leading to new arms races. Therefore, it is assumed here that a „Diplomacy First!” concept has a comparative advantage over an „NMD-First!” approach. But Russia’s unsafe weapons and missiles are not only a risk. Moscow itself feels threatened by the WMD activities of other states. Here the question arises whether Europe should cooperate with Russia in developing and deploying Theater Missile Defenses against tactical missiles. Here again, in accordance with the overall „Policy First!” approach, cooperation in non-military sectors should be given priority and a chance to prove its efficiency towards countries such as Iran (see 3.4.2). There are additional reasons for not embarking on joint projects in the Theater Missile Defense area:

- Moscow has not yet presented a comprehensive and coherent threat analysis that guides its policy in this field.
- Pushing for European-Russian cooperation in the TMD area would contradict Moscow’s principal emphasis on political solutions of the WMD proliferation problem, as its position towards North Korea documents. President Putin’s visit to Pyongyang was aimed at emphasizing this approach as an alternative to the American stress on NMD.
- Initiating joint TMD projects would reveal irreconcilable differences of interest between the Europeans and the Russians: for example, Moscow provides assistance to Iran in WMD-related matters which are seen by Europeans as a threat.
- Embarking on European-Russian TMD projects could strengthen Russia’s defense industry which, in turn, could increase the economic incentives to export missiles to countries which are seen as a menace to Western Europe. The controversy over the deployment of Russian anti-tactical ballistic missiles in Cyprus is a telling example.
- Joint programs are likely to violate the established criterion of alliance compatibility, as the United States may object to Russian projects (this is shown by the negative U.S. assessment of Putin’s recent BMD proposals).

#### 3.4.2 „*Quadruple M–TC*” in the Context of „*States of Concern*”: *The Case of Iran*

A modernized European (or common transatlantic) „Diplomacy First!” approach towards a problematic country such as Iran can build on a fundamental achievement of East-West relations during the Cold War: that an institutionalized arms control/reduction process in

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<sup>39</sup> See Putin in: Die Welt am Sonntag (op. cit.): „Wir beobachten mit höchster Aufmerksamkeit, wie sich die Europäische Union, die OSZE, die Nato, der Europarat, die regionalen Organisationen entwickeln. Insbesondere die Versuche, die Nato ins Zentrum des sich formierenden europäischen Sicherheitssystems zu stellen, beunruhigen uns. Dadurch wird die Rolle der OSZE objektiv geschwächt, die für die ausbalancierte Garantie der Interessen ausnahmslos aller europäischen Staaten von entscheidendem Gewicht ist.“

bi- or multilateral settings is vital to clarify or even solve the security concerns of the countries involved. This concept can and should in an assimilated version be translated into the European-Iranian context. It gives Tehran the chance to put forward its position, while the Europeans (to the extent that they are bothered at all) can express their concern about Iranian WMD activities.

The establishment of such a dialogue infrastructure, therefore, requires on the part of the „EU/NATO Europeans” as a *first step* an understanding among themselves about the need for such a process. Therefore, a joint European threat assessment will be the *second step*. Its outcome will be the basis for the entire process (these results should not be considered as static, but rather as dynamic as they have to be seen in light of Iranian weapons development). Given the different political cultures within Europe and the different zones of security on this side of the Atlantic (Turkey is already within the reach of the Shahab III missile which for the first time was successfully tested on June 15, 2000),<sup>40</sup> one can expect difficulties among the European players. Nevertheless, it should be possible to agree on common denominators that guide future policy.

Such a common understanding is also important with respect to the United States, as it communicates the „power of interpretation” („Definitionsmacht”) on the part of the Europeans – a form of „soft power” which signals a partial decoupling from the U.S. on substance and, therefore, should not be underestimated. For the threat assessment determines the extent to which the identity of the Alliance needs to be based on „out of area” dangers or whether its coherence is based on values.<sup>41</sup> If the common European approach leads to the assessment that there is no immediate or only a low threat or that the menace is likely to be manageable, then this means greater leeway for the Europeans in balancing the intra-Alliance structure in favor of less asymmetry.

As far as Iran is concerned, the establishment of a dialogue infrastructure requires Tehran’s willingness to break with its past negative attitude to a „critical dialogue”. The prerequisite that Iran should wish to become part of this process shows both the weakness and the strength of this „Policy First!” concept. If the other side blocks, there will be no dialogue. But as recent developments in Iran have shown, even seemingly static societies are in ferment and produce admittedly fragile results which could translate into an interest in entering into a dialogue with the Europeans. Therefore, as a *third step*, the „EU/NATO-Europeans” should seize this window of opportunity and simply start the process. It does not need to be built from scratch, as countries like France and Germany have already started the dialogue.

Paris and Berlin could be the nucleus of and the main actors in such a common European initiative. Foreign Minister Fischer’s first visit to Tehran already contained important elements of a „*Quadruple M-TC*”, especially the components of the bargaining chip,

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<sup>40</sup> See Aerospace Daily, July 19, 2000.

<sup>41</sup> See Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer in: Der Spiegel, May 15, 2000, p. 39.: „Ich denke, ein Bündnis ohne Außendruck aufrechtzuerhalten, ohne gemeinsame Gefahr, die es abzuwehren gilt, ist wesentlich komplexer und schwieriger. Und das gilt nicht nur für militärische oder politische Belange, das gilt insgesamt für die Beziehungen.”

linkage and the embeddedness of the arms control/threat minimizing approach in a broader European/Iranian (Gulf region) framework. These are elements from traditional arms control and negotiating theory which can be brought to life again and have the potential to be innovative and successful in this new context (see below).

As in the Russian/nuclear deterrence context, „*Quadruple M-TC*” is a mutual arms control/threat minimizing approach in the Iranian/WMD-related context as well. Its explicit approach – and crucial comparative advantage over a weapons-based concept – is that it is by definition inclusive in a direct and non-selective way. It is designed to communicate and cooperate directly with the target „state of concern”, before it embarks on strategies of selective cooperation (i.e. with Russia in the area of missile defense) in order to provide protection against other countries. „*Quadruple M-TC*” considers from today’s perspective such a strategy that excludes problematic countries to be premature and potentially counterproductive – premature, because the „Diplomacy First!” imperative explores by definition the possibilities of political solutions; counterproductive, because a premature European (/Russian) deployment of territorial and/or Theater Missile Defense systems is likely to trigger new regional and unaffordable arms races that could easily get out of control.

In implementing the initiated dialogue infrastructure as the *fourth step*, the above mentioned elements of the traditional arms control approach become vital in order to enhance security. If the „EU/NATO-Europeans” conclude that there is a threat then it would make sense to seek a verifiable limitation of the Shahab missile program in a way that meets their security concerns. As part of a broader package deal, the Iranians could be offered economic assistance („linkage”) which in turn could be an element of a broader European policy towards the Gulf region („embeddedness”). The Iranians will probably learn during an institutionalized dialogue (as did the North Koreans with the United States) that the Europeans might eventually turn to a weapons-based response to Tehran’s unrestrained WMD activities („bargaining chip”). (The Europeans, in turn, will probably be confronted with their past by learning how their dubious export policy especially towards Iraq contributed to the Iranian build-up.)

As in the case of Russia, a cooperative approach with a problematic country such as Iran is not only likely to minimize (or reduce) the technical roots of the threats, which would be an outstanding achievement in itself. „*Quadruple M-TC*” also has the potential to target and incrementally change the domestic (and regional) conditions that have led to the dynamics of Tehran’s WMD activities by strengthening the reform-oriented factions within Iranian society. While it would be unwise to expect too much from an arms-related approach (as the experiences with arms control during the Cold War repeatedly showed), a spill-over from this policy area to other sectors should not be excluded. Be this as it may, in view of the ongoing struggles between the backward and forward looking groups in Iran the proposed dialogue could play into the hands of the reformist camp, while the deployment of BMD systems (of whatever variant) will do just the opposite. As an optimist one may regard the positive influence from outside as a first step on a long journey to more democracy.

#### **4. Conclusions: Europeans, Give the „Diplomacy First!” Concept a Try!**

The *Modernized, Mutually Minimizing Missile Threat Concept* based on differentiated premises, fulfilling the listed criteria, and aimed at tackling the broad array of identified menaces promises to be conceptually superior to the „Weapons First And Diplomacy, Too!” approach. If taken seriously, it brings Europe onto the BMD scene and makes it a visible and credible actor. This is the necessary prerequisite for the Old Continent to raise its profile with an innovative concept that builds on its traditional and well-proven strengths which in the WMD sector could become part of its often proclaimed defense and security identity.

The prospects of designing and implementing such a concept are good for two reasons. *Firstly*, President Clinton’s announcement that he will leave the historical decision on deploying a National Missile Defense System to his successor gives „NATO/EU Europe” additional time. *Secondly*, his decision not to decide comes at a time in European politics when France, the present incumbent of the EU presidency, has presented an ambitious charter for a politically stronger Europe. A diplomacy-driven concept means using the current lame duck period in American foreign policy (caused by the election campaign) in a constructive way and taking advantage of the current pro-Europe impulses in order to produce concrete results at the Nice Conference in December 2000.

Both President Jacques Chirac and Foreign Minister Hubert Védrine are committed to pushing the institutional reforms towards more unity, and they have stressed the role of joint projects and the importance of common security and defense policy. The French initiative reflects a new round of productive discussions in Europe triggered by the visionary speech by German Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer. Echoing his proposal to revive Franco-German cooperation as a driving force toward more integration, both Chirac and Védrine have underscored the role of France and Germany as the „pioneer group“ in this process, while explicitly leaving open the possibility that additional allies could participate in implementing specific common projects.

If Europe wishes to design, initiate, and implement such a policy it will have to do its homework before it starts to look outwards:

- Towards its most important ally with the task of preventing him from becoming an arrogant and thus unwise winner of the Cold War by humiliating Moscow, forcing China into an arms race, and by excluding problematic countries such as Iran from a „Policy First!” strategy; in other words, Europe needs to challenge the United States conceptually and to ask Washington to return to its tradition of being a good, i.e. self-restrained, multilateral-minded, compromise-oriented and treaty-respecting hegemon. It may sound awkward, but Europe needs these reassurances and confidence-building measures from its most important ally.
- Towards Russia in order to encourage the former nuclear superpower to adapt to new circumstances, i.e. by giving up its nostalgic superpower desires, developing its

economic strength and prioritizing a politico-economic coupling to the western security framework instead of embarking on unaffordable, dangerous, and premature pan- and trans-European Ballistic Missile Defense dreams.

- Towards China with the goal of transforming this country from part of the non-proliferation problem into a player that is more and more part of the urgent solutions.
- Towards a „state of concern” such as Iran with an offer of critical arms control dialogue.