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*Klaus-Dieter Schwarz*

## The Future of Deterrence

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Stiftung Wissenschaft und  
Politik  
German Institute for  
International  
and Security Affairs

Ludwigkirchplatz 3-4  
10719 Berlin  
Germany  
Phone +49 30 880 07-0  
Fax +49 30 880 07-100  
[www.swp-berlin.org](http://www.swp-berlin.org)  
[swp@swp-berlin.org](mailto:swp@swp-berlin.org)

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### The Future of Deterrence

The strategy of deterrence seems to have become superfluous or unusable since the downfall of the Soviet Union. Some even maintain that the US has abandoned the strategy altogether. The concept of deterrence is also no longer found in discussions about European security policy, having been replaced by the idea of conflict prevention, preferably employing non-military means. All this sounds good, and it is. But, such a strategy is limited to the periods prior to and following the use of force in the course of a conflict. There is no getting around the fact that violence can often only be avoided or ended by the threat or occasional use of counterforce. Success at containing and moderating violent conflicts, or for that matter resolving and ending them, is dependent on using instruments that are appropriate to and correspond with phases of a conflict. This is the inevitable conclusion one reaches after an analysis of post-Cold War conflicts, and it leads to a number of consequences for the shaping of international and national policy as well as for deterrence.

Any reevaluation of the concept of deterrence has to begin with the realization that the reduction of the term and its substance to military, and particularly nuclear, means is outdated. This sort of thinking was justifiable in the unusual context of the East-West conflict, at least in terms of a general understanding of the concept. But the basic premise of deterrence itself is not obsolete: influencing the actions of another party in order to restrain them from doing something unacceptable by presenting them with the prospect that you will respond with something equally unacceptable. In short, using threats and, if necessary, punishment to change another's behavior. How one responds depends on the issue and the context of the threat. Many things can be used to deter. Even in the category of military means there are a variety of options to choose from in order to condition or change the behavior of an enemy. One can resort to deterrence in order to protect interests that are fundamental to a state's very existence, secure law and order, and strengthen normative standards of behavior. The ultimate aim of deterrence is to stop the use of violence in international relations.

It is the conclusion of the following study that deterrence will in the future remain a useful instru-

ment in the repertoire of security policy measures. It will no longer play the role it had during the bipolar and nuclear world of the East-West conflict with its clear and calculable threats. Yet, even so-called rogue states that seek weapons of mass destruction (WMD) can be deterred. They have a lot to lose, namely their power and their rulers' lives. Terrorists are in a similar situation; not suicide bombers, but rather terrorist organizations and their supporters and sympathizers. The consequences of state collapse present a more difficult situation, as it is hard to get civil wars under control using the traditional means of deterrence.

**Nuclear deterrence** will in the future continue to have a stabilizing effect and help prevent war, just as it did during the Cold War. Though it has lost some of its importance in terms of great power relations, the structure and doctrine of nuclear forces have hardly changed. There are still too many atomic weapons, and in the future even more states will possess such weapons. In some cases, the US tolerates nuclear weapons proliferation, while in other cases it opposes it militarily. Both tactics undermine the basis of the policy of non-proliferation and may intensify rather than minimize the problem of proliferation.

**Terrorism**, the strategy of the weak, has generated a new kind of war against Western civilization that is difficult to confront with conventional strategies. But it is not immune to deterrence tactics that prohibit it from achieving its political goals. The effect of terrorist attacks can be reduced by avoiding panic, persistent opposition, and direct defense measures. Above all, indirect measures are promising if terrorism can be isolated from its social base. A policy of anti-terrorism must therefore fight the actions, organizations, and sources of terrorism all at the same time.

**Civil wars** are among the most difficult security challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. They even destroy the structures that make it possible to accurately assess the goals and intentions of the parties to the conflict as well as to influence them with credible threats. In such conflicts, deterrence comes up against a muddled situation. Threats and the use of punitive measures may bring about more clarity, but they still leave the initiative up to the antagonists. What really counts is armed intervention, but few such operations have been able to achieve their goals. Western governments are therefore well advised to closely evaluate whether they can politically and militarily withstand sending armed forces into a civil war on foreign territory.

## The Concept

During the East-West conflict deterrence dominated and regulated superpower rivalry for four decades. Every foreign and security policy measure was taken with consideration for the needs and conditions of deterrence. Its purpose was to prevent a war between East and West, and three factors contributed to its success at this: firstly, the nuclear weapons, which were uniquely suited to this purpose like no other; secondly, the bipolarity of the international system, an exceptional case of balance of power (“balance of terror”); thirdly, a vital interest on both sides in avoiding a dangerous escalation of events, which resulted in a policy of “common security” (e.g. peaceful coexistence, arms-control, *détente*) that provided relative stability.

It was American policy which had the strongest influence on the strategy of deterrence. This fact makes the assessment of the presiding president, George W. Bush, particularly relevant. “For much of the last century,” he declared before graduates from West Point military academy, “America’s defense relied on the Cold War doctrines of deterrence and containment. In some cases, those strategies still apply. But new threats also require new thinking. Deterrence—the promise of massive retaliation against nations—means nothing against shadowy terrorist networks with no nation or citizens to defend. Containment is not possible when unbalanced dictators with weapons of mass destruction can deliver those weapons on missiles or secretly provide them to terrorist allies [...]. If we wait for threats to fully materialize, we will have waited too long [...]. We must take the battle to the enemy, disrupt his plans, and confront the worst threats before they emerge.”<sup>1</sup> Was deterrence then a strategy for solving the security problems of yesteryear?

First, it should be noted that President Bush did not declare the concept and the strategy of deterrence as outdated or invalid, as many commentators have claimed. This only holds true for those threats that

cannot be deterred.<sup>2</sup> What is true is that the strategy of nuclear deterrence—“the promise of massive retaliation”—has long been met with general skepticism within the American security debate, particularly among conservatives. Roland Reagan was the first US President to publicly question the strategy. His Strategic Defense Initiative was intended to suggest to Americans a vision of their country as once again being beyond harm’s reach. In reality, such a degree of invulnerability is beyond the state’s control, even if the current president is proceeding with the development of a national missile defense.<sup>3</sup> But the principle

**2** Preemption does not represent a divergence from deterrence. While she was still National Security Advisor to the President, Condoleezza Rice emphasized: “The National Security Strategy does not overturn five decades of doctrine and jettison either containment or deterrence [...]. But some threats are so potentially catastrophic—and arrive with so little warning, by means that are untraceable—that they cannot be contained [...]. Preemption is not a new concept [...]. But this approach must be treated with great caution. The number of cases in which it might be justified will always be small. It does not give a green light—to the United States or any other nation—to act first without exhausting other means, including diplomacy: preempting action does not come at the beginning of a long chain of effort. The threat must be very grave: And the risk of waiting must far outweigh the risks of action.” (Quoted from *A Balance of Power that Favors Freedom*, lecture at Manhattan Institute for Policy Research, New York, October 1, 2002.)

**3** The Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) of 1983, which was based on exotic technologies, was directed at defending against the Soviet nuclear threat of the time. Today, the Bush administration argues that the construction of a multi-layered missile defense system is necessary to defend against the threat of terrorism and rogue states such as North Korea and Iran. Both rationales are questionable given that a missile defense system could have done nothing to prevent the attacks of September 11, 2001, and no “rogue states” have to date access to intercontinental missiles. Moreover, the technological problems remain largely unresolved, above all defense against counter-measures (e.g. use of decoys, submunition, electronic jamming measures, etc.). The test results thus far have been unsatisfactory and do not live up to the desired capabilities profile. As a result, the completion of test facilities for the Midcourse Defense Segment in Alaska and California scheduled for 2005/2006 has been delayed. Since 1983, the US has spent more than \$70 billion (up to 2001) on the project and Bush has so far spent \$31 billion. An additional \$41 billion has been requested for the next four years.

<sup>1</sup> George W. Bush, Remarks by the President at 2002 Graduation Exercise of the United States Military Academy (White House, June 1, 2002).

of defense in place of reprisals has been gradually moving to the forefront of policy options since the Reagan years. Evidence of this shift includes the strengthening of conventional defense forces in the eighties (AirLand Battle)<sup>4</sup>; the policy of “counter-proliferation” in the following decade, consisting of a bunch of active and passive defense measures against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction; the strategy of “homeland security” in the aftermath of the terrorist attack of September 11, which has been institutionalized in a newly created ministry for increasing internal security<sup>5</sup>; and finally “anticipatory action to defend ourselves [the US].”<sup>6</sup> This last option is politically controversial and questionable in terms of international law and has proven to be extremely problematic in the case of the Iraq conflict.<sup>7</sup>

Critics doubt the reliability of a missile defense system, especially the realization of the boot-phase segment. They consider investment in this project to be a colossal waste of money. See James M. Lindsay and Michael O’Hanlon, *Defending America: The Case for a Limited National Missile Defense* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 2001); Charles Glaser and Steve Fetter, “National Missile Defense and the Future of U.S. Nuclear Weapons Policy,” *International Security*, Vol. 26, No. 1 (Summer 2001), pp. 40–92; and, especially, the Report of the American Physical Society Study Group on Boost-Phase Intercept Systems for National Missile Defense. Scientific and Technical Issues (July 2003).

**4** This concept, which posits that the staying power of conventional forward defense could be prolonged through attacking Warsaw Pact forces with “deep strikes” far into enemy territory using radar and long-distance missiles (JSTARS and ATACMS), lives on in the application of information technology in the armaments, leadership, and organization of armed forces (“Revolution in Military Affairs”).

**5** The Department of Homeland Security consolidates 22 agencies, from the Coast Guard to Citizen and Immigration Services, and 170,000 employees. The creation of this super agency is considered the biggest reorganization effort of the US government apparatus since the National Security Act of 1947.

**6** *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America* (Washington, D.C.: White House, September 2002) [herein referred to as NSS], p. 19; quoted here using the official English version, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/nsc/nss.pdf>.

**7** The Bush Doctrine is based on the belief that new threats make it no longer tenable to wait for proof of hostile intentions and emphasizes that self-defense is legitimate according to international law in the case of an imminent attack (Art. 51, UN Charter). This position is not contended, but rather the extension of the right to self-defense to the case of an attack that is not imminent, but which one anticipates as likely. Should one wait until a terrorist or nuclear mass murder is imminent or is already underway? International law also allows for the prevention of non-imminent threats, but only within the framework of the conditions spelled out

A large part of the criticism of the concept of deterrence is based on a lack of clarity about what the term entails. Glenn Snyder, one of the pioneers of deterrence strategy, describes it as a form of political power: “Defining political power generally as the capacity to induce others to do things or not to do things which they would otherwise do or refrain from doing, deterrence is simply its negative aspect. It is the power to dissuade another party from doing something which one believes to be against one’s own interests, achieved by the threat of applying some sanction.”<sup>8</sup> Thus, deterrence is, like power, a relational category that doesn’t exist *a priori*. Furthermore, it cannot be created unilaterally—neither with nuclear weapons, nor with unsurpassed military superiority. Rather, it is the result of the relationship between the side that wants to deter and the other side that is to be deterred by making apparent the relative costs and benefits of alternative behavior. Deterrence takes place in the minds of an opponent and relies on his more or less forced cooperation. Because the success of deterrence is measured in terms of events that do not take place, it is not even possible to determine precisely why an opponent cooperates. Such events may have been unlikely to occur in the first place, or a threat can have a deterrent effect even if the enemy claims to not have had any hostile intention. In other

in chapter VII of the UN Charter, namely with the approval of the UN Security Council. The actual point of contention is whether such action can be taken unilaterally. The Bush administration claims it can by arguing that this option is covered by Article 51 of the UN Charter. For all intents in purposes, this eliminates any difference between legal self-defense and the prohibition of an offensive attack (Art. 2, Para. 4, UN Charter). The US reserves the right to preventive self-defense against all potential enemies, “even if uncertainty remains as to the time and place of the enemy’s attack.” (NSS, p. 19.)

**8** Glenn H. Snyder, “Deterrence and Power,” *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 4, No. 2 (June 1960), p. 163. Other definitions of the concept: “the persuasion of one’s opponent that the costs and/or risks of a given course of action he might take outweigh its benefits” (Alexander L. George and Richard Smoke, *Deterrence in American Foreign Policy: Theory and Practice* [New York, 1974], p. 11); “the prevention from action by fear of consequences. Deterrence is a state of mind brought about by the existence of a credible threat of unacceptable counteraction” (*Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms*, Joint Pub. 1-02 [Washington, D.C., 1994], p. 115); “Deterrence can be a technique, a doctrine and a state of mind. In all cases it is about setting boundaries for actions and establishing the risks associated with the crossing of those boundaries” (Lawrence Freedman, *Deterrence* [Cambridge: Polity Press, 2004], p. 116).

words, deterrence is an elusive concept and an unreliable instrument because it does not function according to the rules of conventional linear logic.

There are numerous forms of deterrence, and they can be distinguished from one another in terms of what is to be deterred and how this can best be achieved. While they have different characteristics, in practice such differences are only relative and they overlap. This is because deterrence is extremely context dependent, in particular in terms of the concrete threat situation and the respective response that promises to be the most credible and the most effective. The following definitions are therefore to be understood as ideal-type descriptions.

**Immediate and general deterrence**<sup>9</sup>: The best known, but by no means most common form, is deterrence through the threat of harm in an acute conflict situation. It is also used during a war (e.g. intra-war deterrence) and as a means of preventing conflict before and after the outbreak of acts of war. Robust peacekeeping and peace-enforcement also rely on such a strategy. Its impact relies on three conditions. Firstly, the threat to the enemy must be communicated clearly. Secondly, the object of the threat must be convinced that its implementation would be more costly than the expected gains of his planned actions. And thirdly, the threat must be credible. The latter need not be certain; a relative probability that the threat will be carried out is sufficient.

Immediate deterrence is relatively rare, whereas general deterrence directed against a real but not immediate threat is more or less always present. The goal of general deterrence is to dissuade the enemy from ever even considering resorting to violence, as in the case of the East-West conflict. At the time, the political elites of both sides had internalized and institutionalized deterrence to such an extent through alliances, security guarantees, military balance of power, and arms control agreements that immediate deterrence was no longer necessary. In fact, neither side ever issued an explicit threat. At best, they used vague and indirect language. Today the global military presence and dominance of the US is a form of general deterrence. Recently this has been described using the French term “dissuasion,” which sounds more mild

<sup>9</sup> See Patrick Morgan, *Deterrence: A Conceptual Analysis* (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications, 1977), which first introduced the difference between “immediate and general deterrence” into the debate on deterrence.

than “deterrence” and is intended to dissuade others from engaging in an arms race with the world superpower and above all from seeking nuclear capability. “Dissuasion” means arms control for other powers, but not for one’s own forces.<sup>10</sup>

**Punishment and denial**<sup>11</sup>: Deterrence by punishment or retaliation is directed against an enemy’s civilian resources (countervalue), while deterrence by denial is directed against his military capabilities and scope for action (counterforce). The former strategy relies on fear and implies the use of “pure” violence, while the latter seeks to deny the enemy success through the use of active and passive defense measures. The option of massive retaliation has become less important in today’s world, but it is still a component of nuclear deterrence.

During the Cold War, defense had already become the more important strategy. The goal of defense is damage limitation. Achieving this does not require destroying the enemy’s entire power capabilities, rather his power need only be weakened to such an extent that it cannot be effectively used. This strategy has clear advantages over punishment, which harms the enemy, but leaves it up to him to decide how to respond. In such situations, the object of punishment frequently responds in ways the punisher had not intended, as shown by the many cases in which the indiscriminate use of violence has strengthened the enemy’s will. Targeted defense against enemy operations and destruction of his command and control centers, on the other hand, enables further control over his actions. Such was the case in Bosnia in 1995, when allied forces succeeded in rendering the Serbian C<sup>3</sup> system inoperable through air strikes and forced the Belgrade government to withdraw through a flanking Croatian-Bosnian ground offensive. In the areas of intelligence, communications, information processing, and target engagement, the “Revolution in Military Affairs” provides numerous

<sup>10</sup> “Dissuading future military competition” is labeled as the second defense policy objective of the US next to, (1) “assuring allies and friends”, (3) “detering threats and coercion against U.S. interests”; (4) “if deterrence fails, decisively defeating any adversary” (U.S. Department of Defense, *Quadrennial Defense Review Report* [Washington, D.C., October 30, 2001], pp. 11ff.).

<sup>11</sup> Glenn H. Snyder was also responsible for conceptualizing these types of deterrence. See his research monograph *Deterrence by Denial and Punishment* (Princeton, 1958); and *Deterrence and Defense: Toward a Theory of National Security* (Princeton, 1961), pp. 14–16.

ways for optimizing such “denial” capabilities and for minimizing collateral damage and loss. The disadvantage is that such capabilities are very expensive and have less of a deterrent effect than nuclear weapons, as shown in the history of warfare by the notorious failure of deterrence using conventional weapons. NATO’s strategy of “flexible reaction” therefore combined both options in order to reduce the nuclear risk and at the same time achieve as high a deterrent effect as possible.

**Central and extended deterrence:** There is a difference between deterrence that serves “only” to protect vital interests, i.e. securing one’s own territory against attack, and that which is supposed to guarantee the security of allies. Central deterrence is more credible than extended. The latter suffered a loss of credibility over the course of the Cold War as a result of the loss of American nuclear superiority. At the time, the belief prevailed, at least unofficially, that the only legitimate purpose of nuclear weapons was to deter the enemy from using his own atomic weapons.<sup>12</sup> The so-called Bush Doctrine calls even this purpose into question given the proliferation of WMD among tyrants and terrorists. Generally speaking, the doctrine questions the credibility of extended deterrence, and therefore it declares the pre-emptive elimination of such threats as a goal.

**Deterrence and compellence:** Threats need not only be applied in a passive-defensive manner, they can also be active-offensive in nature in order to force an enemy to change his current improper behavior or alter an undesired condition. This is known as compellence or coercive diplomacy.<sup>13</sup> But, this strategy is only relevant if deterrence has failed or was not even attempted, as for example in conflicts such as Cuba in 1962, the Falklands/Malvinas in 1982, Kuwait in 1990, and Kosovo in 1999. It works along the same lines as

<sup>12</sup> See Robert S. McNamara, “The Military Role of Nuclear Weapons: Perceptions and Misperceptions,” *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 62, No. 1 (Fall 1983), pp. 59–80.

<sup>13</sup> This difference was introduced into the debate on deterrence by Thomas Schelling, who defined “compellent threats” as “intended to make an adversary do something (or cease doing something)” as opposed to “deterrent threats” which are “intended to keep him from doing something”. See Thomas Schelling, *The Strategy of Conflict* (London: Oxford University Press, 1960). On the concept of “coercive diplomacy” see Alexander L. George and William E. Simons, eds., *The Limits of Coercive Diplomacy* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1994).

immediate deterrence and is also intended to avoid a war, but with the aid of demonstrative and, if necessary, limited use of military force, albeit measures that are clearly distinct from acts of war, i.e. attack or defense.<sup>14</sup> The difference between deterrence and compellence is not all that great, since both forms of threat are usually at work in situations of acute deterrence. This, for example, was the case in the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962 when the US compelled the Soviet Union to abandon its missile positions in Cuba (coercion) and prohibited any further ships carrying missiles to pass through the naval blockade (deterrence). It is typical in these sorts of situations that deterrence and compellence complement one another and become conflated. They should therefore be seen as complementary strategies that are inseparable in practice, particularly in situations of crisis management.

Nevertheless, it is important to note the difference. Practical experience shows that it is considerably easier to prevent others from doing something than to force them to change their behavior. This observation is confirmed by the sober record of the numerous cases of Western military intervention and economic sanctions in the post Cold War era.<sup>15</sup> Compellence is riskier than deterrence and can propel the adversaries into an escalation of threat and counterthreat, in which their roles as object and subject of deterrence change several times. This can result in fatal misunderstandings. Overcoming such a situation takes great effort and requires considerable political skill. It has therefore proven practical to couple coercive measures with positive inducements in order to counteract such a threat with a dual incentive. This “carrot

<sup>14</sup> Schelling therefore makes a distinction between coercion—of which deterrence is also a form—and the use of brute force, namely war.

<sup>15</sup> In their analysis of eight conflicts in the nineties (Iraq, Somalia, Haiti, North Korea, Bosnia, China, Kosovo, Afghanistan) Robert J. Art and Patrick M. Cronin conclude that compellence was successful 25% of the time, failed in 63% of the cases, and had an indecisive effect 13% of the time. See Art and Cronin, eds., *The United States and Coercive Diplomacy* (Washington, D.C., 2003). Economic sanctions also proved to be only mildly successful in a third of all cases. See the comprehensive study of 120 cases of sanctions in Clyde Hufbauer, Jeffrey J. Schott and Kimberly Ann Elliott, *Economic Sanctions Reconsidered: History and Current Policy* (Washington, D.C.: Institute for International Economics, 1990). See also Peter Rudolf, *Amerikanische Sanktionspolitik und Transatlantische Beziehungen: Konflikte und Gestaltungsaufgaben*, unpublished working paper, (Ebenhausen: Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, 1998).

and stick” method can achieve more than deterrence alone, if combined correctly.<sup>16</sup>

**Summary:** Deterrence is a multifaceted phenomenon that can be effective in diverse conflicts. It is executed above all with the aid of techniques of intimidation and the threat of punishment. It is a form of political power and can be applied by numerous means: political, economic, social, legal, and military. Deterrence is therefore misunderstood if it is reduced to its military security policy components, as was commonly the case during the Cold War. It is also reductive to see it as simply a typical element of traditional power politics in which the threat or use of force is employed in order to derive advantages and avoid disadvantages. It is decidedly more comprehensive in meaning and relies on the use of various complementary instruments of power, including not only “hard power,” but also the “soft” power of diplomacy. In this sense, it works together closely with diplomacy in the pursuit of foreign policy interests and efforts to shape the international order.

Deterrence is thus a political concept and, derivatively, a military one. It cannot be effectively used without a clear idea of what one seeks to achieve and how one intends to deal with conflicts and threats. Moreover, it serves as an instrument of diplomacy, which would be impotent without power. As such, deterrence can be seen as the bread and butter of diplomacy and politics that is necessary for dealing with conflicts and securing the peace. The ends and means of military deterrence must correspond to these tasks. That is especially true for nuclear deterrence, which is only legitimate as a means of gradually abolishing the use of violence in politics. This means, however, that nuclear powers are obligated to practice political and military self-restraint and to strengthen the workings of an international order based on the norms, rules and standards of political behavior, and cooperate in international organiza-

<sup>16</sup> For example, the withdrawal of American Jupiter missiles from Turkey in the Cuban Missile Crisis, which provided the Kremlin leadership a way to give in on Cuba without losing face. Such concessions are only effective after deterrence or compellence has brought about a change in the enemy’s cost-benefit calculations. Otherwise they could be interpreted as a sign of weakness. For a comprehensive analysis, see Alexander L. George and Richard Smoke, *Deterrence in American Foreign Policy: Theory and Practice* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1974); Alexander L. George and William E. Simons, eds., *The Limits of Coercive Diplomacy* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1994).

tions. That also means that military measures are bound to the legal norms and due process as defined by the UN Charter. This is also required by the proposed EU Constitution (Art. I-41) for determining the Union’s future common foreign and security policies.

The role of deterrence in contemporary international relations should be viewed from this realist as well as normative perspective.<sup>17</sup> It is no coincidence that deterrence works best when the agents involved act in as rational a manner as possible within the framework of a sufficiently regulated relationship, making their actions predictable and capable of being influenced. This was largely the case during the Cold War when the bipolarity of the international system and the exceptional character of atomic weapons simplified the prevention of war and conflict management through the use of deterrence, even when its application was not so easy in the case of specific conflicts (e.g. Korea, Vietnam, Cuba). Still, there were standards and rules of political and military behavior, the nuclear powers practiced political and strategic self-restraint, and they dealt with the risks of war very cautiously. All of this contributed greatly to the stability of East-West relations. These overarching conditions and structures of the international system have fundamentally changed since the upheaval in the world order. What is the context which now determines the role and importance of deterrence? What are the current conditions of the international system and related security problems that shape this context?

<sup>17</sup> On the normative aspects, see Freedman, Deterrence. Groundbreaking work in this area was done by the “English school” of international relations, see above all, Hedley Bull, *The Anarchical Society. A Study of Order in World Politics* (London, 1977). This led to the social-constructivist theory of international relations which posits that an actor’s behavior in the international arena is not only orientated towards his interests, but is also greatly influenced by norms that are developed through international discourse. Such norms make a claim to being universally valid. Examples include the prohibition of offensive war and genocide as well as UN Security Resolutions 1373 (2001) and 1540 (2004) against terrorism and the proliferation of WMD to non-state actors, which obligate all states to undertake legal and enforcement measures to combat these activities. Such norms make a considerable contribution to dismantling the anarchical system of international relations and can be strengthened through deterrence.

## New Overarching Conditions

Today, unlike in the past, there are no clear structures of conflict and cooperation and no clearly definable threats, and a stable world order does not appear to be on the horizon. As the old order disintegrated, there was hope that America's emergence as the sole super-power would be newly constructed within the framework of the United Nations and according to the rules of the UN Charter, which the US itself had taken a leading role in creating at the end of the Second World War. But the Bush administration has largely abandoned America's previous role as a leading global power in international cooperation for maintaining a functioning world order. Yet, without the authority and consensus of the international community, the military and political supremacy of the United States is insufficient for solving today's security problems. The transatlantic relationship, which up to now has been a fundamental element of the international system, is also in a state of upheaval.<sup>18</sup> At the same time, the number of actors relevant to security issues is growing, so that it appears that it is becoming increasingly more difficult to influence international relations with the aim of establishing political order. Contributing to this are the expansion of technology, an increasingly dense network of interactive processes, and the integration of mass media. This increases the importance of regional conflicts and fundamentalist movements, while at the same time it reduces the effectiveness of military security policies and traditional power structures. Science and technology make destructive capabilities available that serve to diminish the relevance of the power gap between state and non-state actors. These changes make it more difficult to perceive common threats and agree on security policy plans, both of which formed the basis of the West's strategic unity.

On the other hand, the likelihood of wars between great powers has decreased; not as a result of deterrence, but rather due to other factors (e.g. increasing

complex interdependence, the establishment of regional structures for cooperation, the expansion of democracy and market economies). The US, however, is preparing for a return to power struggles between great powers. China's ascension to a world power is being viewed with concern, and Russia's path is also uncertain. One can also not rule out the possibility of radical fundamentalists seizing power in Muslim states (e.g. Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, etc.). Conventional deterrence remains a useful instrument should developments in any of these states lead to international confrontation.

Today's threats to international order cannot be defined in the same way as the old threats. We now face unnamed and unpredictable enemies without clear hostile intentions or significant military capabilities. It is no longer a matter of threats to our existence that are massive, visible, and symmetrical, rather today's threats are diffuse, complex, and asymmetric. Even the sources, causes, and aims of the threats are hard to identify, pin down, and assess. This is true above all for what has often been declared as the main threats, namely international terrorism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and regional and intrastate conflicts, alongside all the other risks, such as state collapse, organized crime, environmental destruction, epidemics, poverty and so forth.<sup>19</sup> What is new is that as a result of globalization, threats and risks have become intermingled and have cross-border relevance. What isn't new is that how they are perceived differs from society to society. After September 11, the US views things in a dramatic light, while Europe tends to be more calm because the continent has long since gotten used to its vulnerability. The responses to the new threats also vary. The US favors military solutions ("war against terror," "preemptive actions"), while the Europeans prefer "preventive engagement."<sup>20</sup>

<sup>18</sup> See Helga Haftendorn, *Das Atlantische Bündnis in der Anpassungskrise* (Berlin: Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, February 2005 [S 5/05]); Ronja Kempin and Benjamin Schreer, *Rekonstruktion des Westens? Aus europäischen Fachzeitschriften, 2. Halbjahr 2004* (Berlin: Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, January 2005 [SWP-Zeitschriftenschau 1/2005]).

<sup>19</sup> See the relevant strategy documents such as the NSS or the European security strategy adopted by the European Council, *A Secure Europe in a Better World*, Brussels, December 12, 2003 (herein referred as ESS).

<sup>20</sup> A draft version of the ESS still talked about "preemptive engagement." In the document approved in Thessaloniki, the concept is based more firmly on political instruments within

Deterrence remains a key component of and an important form of interaction in international relations. It can also be effective against many of the new threats. Its aim of building up barriers to ward against dangers and to influence opponents with pressure, incentives, threats, and sanctions is so basic and so ancient that the claim that it has become useless comes as quite a surprise. Of course, the strengths and weaknesses need to be understood, and the concept needs to be adjusted to fit the times and the types of prevailing threats. Whenever possible, deterrence tactics are to be tried before the use of military force, particularly given that the effect of force is frequently contradictory and is not very convincing, as the military responses to conflicts since the end of the Cold War have shown. The fact that deterrence is unreliable and doesn't always work as intended is part of its nature. But the alternatives, like a policy of accommodation and weakness or conciliation or war, have even greater weaknesses. Thus it is all the more important to use deterrence measures cautiously and as part of a broad palette of security solutions. Moreover, it is necessary to thoroughly evaluate the new threats and dangers.

Deterrence is undoubtedly more precarious in the context of the new security situation than the old one. Back then, one could assume that the Soviet leadership would take a conservative approach to risks and would behave rationally, in terms of the logic of deterrence. Today the goal is no longer to avoid a world war, but rather to deter rulers and violent actors who find the status quo unacceptable and are willing to risk a great deal in order to change the current order. It is therefore difficult to determine what will deter or compel tyrants and terrorists, as NATO discovered in its bombing campaign against Serbia during the Kosovo conflict. They expected that Milošević would react to the allied force's air campaign as he had in the Bosnian conflict four years earlier and that it would be possible to bring him to his senses with a few attacks. In other words, the new threat situation is what makes deterrence problematic. It is not a question of a lack of rationality, but rather that there

the framework of a "strategic culture that fosters early, rapid and when necessary robust intervention. Preventive engagement can avoid more serious problems in the future." (Ibid., p. 11) The paper says decidedly little about which instruments and to what extent the EU will act preventively against which threats, apart from the general call for making the common foreign and security policy of the EU more active, more coherent, and more capable.

are now other political norms and their associated values, interests, and ideas about power at play which are foreign to Western civilization.

Dictators like Saddam Hussein and Slobodan Milošević were by no means "irrational," calculating tyrants. From their perspective, they acted in a thoroughly appropriate manner consistent with their goals, though granted their behavior was highly risky and they showed no reservations in terms of the means they used. But they too had interests that meant a great deal to them and that could be threatened, namely maintaining a hold on power and their own survival. Even religiously motivated terrorism is not "irrational." In order to achieve its goals, it requires a high degree of rationality and strategic capacity, both of which made it possible to carry out the attacks of September 11. Threats of retaliation, however, cannot deter terrorists from blowing up themselves and their victims. But deterrence tactics can be employed against their organizations and territorial bases in a targeted manner. This is especially true in terms of states that support terrorism. By contrast, it is much more difficult to control violent conflicts between citizens of the same state. But such conflicts can no longer be ignored; not only for humanitarian reasons, but because they threaten the international order, inasmuch as they are a source of the new threats and they provide new perpetrators of violence with a place to conduct their activities.

In the following sections the possibilities and limitations of deterrence will be looked at more closely in terms of the new major threats. This will be illustrated by examples drawn from typical cases of conflict and the perpetrators of violence that shape today's international relations, including the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction ("rogue states")<sup>21</sup>, international terrorism (al-Qaeda), and intrastate conflicts (the Balkans). Only the first of these major threats is still directly involved with nuclear deterrence, which during the Cold War was essentially all that was meant by the term deterrence. This raises the question as to the status of nuclear weapons in international relations and the importance of the problem of proliferation.

<sup>21</sup> The NSS defines "rogue states" as those whose regimes violently oppress their own inhabitants, violate international law, seek to obtain weapons of mass destruction, support terrorism and hate the US. See NSS, pp. 213ff.

## Nuclear Deterrence

At the end of the Cold War it was commonly believed that nuclear weapons had lost their central role as the decisive factor in international relations. After all, they are useless for the new scenarios of engagement—civil wars, humanitarian intervention, fighting terrorism—and for peacekeeping. There is also no direct relation between the size of nuclear arsenals and the extent of nuclear proliferation because there is no need for warheads in the hundreds or thousands in order to deter against a few dozen atomic bombs or fewer. Overcoming the East-West conflict also provided the chance to achieve security through mutual understanding instead of through “mutual assured destruction.” In fact, nuclear forces were drastically reduced, nuclear-free zones were established (e.g. Latin America, South Pacific, Southeast Asia, and Africa), atomic weapons programs were ended (e.g. Argentina, Brazil, South Africa, Iraq, and Libya) and the nuclear non-proliferation treaty was extended indefinitely. Still, the hope of comprehensive disarmament proved to be elusive.

Today the five atomic powers—the US, Russia, China, England, and France—still have over 16,000 operational nuclear weapons. If one adds to that the reserve stocks, the total comes to 36,500 warheads, around 98 percent of the global stockpiles.<sup>22</sup> The remaining 2 percent are distributed among the unofficial nuclear weapons states of Israel, India, and Pakistan, all three of which are important partners of the US. The United States and Russia still have a total of around 15,000 deployed atomic weapons, of which more than 10,000 are strategic. Both governments have agreed in the Strategic Offensive Reduction Treaty of 2002 (SORT) to reduce their active arsenal by a third to a maximum of 1700-2200 strategic warheads by 2012, reductions which they had already intended to undertake.<sup>23</sup> The US is planning a com-

prehensive upgrade of both its nuclear weapons and their delivery systems.<sup>24</sup> Russia’s arsenal is largely outdated and will likely fall under the agreed upon upper limit for stationary strategic warheads. Nevertheless, Moscow is undertaking considerable efforts to ensure that its strategic power does not fall too far behind that of the US.<sup>25</sup> China is also using strategic armament to signify its rise as a global power. The People’s Republic, which previously only had a minimal deterrent capacity, is eager to strengthen its second-strike capacity with land and sea-based nuclear forces in order to noticeably raise the threshold of US vulnerability and its ability to intervene.<sup>26</sup> France is also modernizing its atomic weapons and delivery systems, namely its SSBNs and bombers.<sup>27</sup> Only England, the smallest of the atomic powers is not planning any changes to its nuclear forces.<sup>28</sup>

Thus it is clear that the systems of nuclear deterrence are and remain in existence to a considerable extent. The expectations that the role of atomic weapons in military strategy, especially that of the US and Russia, would be marginalized are now

operationally deployed up to then and thereafter is left open. Withdrawal from the treaty is subject to providing three months notice.

**24** See William J. Broad, “U.S. Seeking to Redesign Atomic Arms for Longevity,” *International Herald Tribune*, February 8, 2005.

**25** Since 1997, Russia has deployed the SS-27 (Topol-M) with single and multiple warheads. This ICBM can be placed in silos or deployed from mobile stations. And a new class of submarines (Borey) with new SLBMs (Bulava-30) with multiple warheads is under construction. Multiple warheads, which are forbidden under START II, are Russia’s expected answer to the Bush administration’s cancellation of the ABM treaty. Putin’s announcement of the development of new and more potent atomic weapons is probably directed at the further development from MIRV to MARV.

**26** China currently has 282 strategic warheads, but only 20 ICBMs that could reach the US. According to CIA estimates, its arsenal of strategic missile forces will be increased by 75 to 100 warheads in the next 15 years along with a new delivery system that will ensure second-strike capability.

**27** France has 348 strategic warheads, of which 288 are on submarines, and already began in the nineties to redirect its nuclear doctrine towards regional enemies who possess WMD or intend to acquire them.

**28** England has 185 strategic warheads on submarines.

**22** See *SIPRI Yearbook 2004. Armament, Disarmament and International Security* (Stockholm, 2004), pp. 628–646. The USA had 32,500 warheads in 1967, the Soviet Union had at least 34,000 in 1989. See Patrick M. Morgan, *Deterrence Now* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp. 28 and 252.

**23** The treaty is only 475 words long. All it says is that the parties are required to fulfill their obligations by December 31, 2012. The number of strategic warheads that can remain

distant, even though this seemed appropriate after overcoming the “balance of terror.”<sup>29</sup> Indeed, an advisory opinion issued by the International Court of Justice in 1996 that declared that the threat and use of atomic weapons is “as a matter of principle” against international law seems to have been largely ignored.<sup>30</sup> The nuclear powers have, of course, made promises to disarm, as codified in Article VI of the non-proliferation treaty, and the final document of the 2000 NPT Review Conference outlines the demands of the non-nuclear states as to how this should be achieved. But the Five no longer feel bound by their promises.<sup>31</sup> Apparently they still highly value the political prestige associated with their status as permanent members of the UN Security Council and the deterrent effect that no other weapon has. On the other hand, the usefulness of nuclear weapons has declined in relative terms. Even the need for extended deterrence in Europe has noticeably receded.

Far more evident, on the other hand, are the disadvantages and risks of nuclear arms, which include, but are not limited to, accidents, false alarms, unauthorized use, theft, and proliferation. What is of greater concern than the issue of secure deterrence capabilities is the existence of nuclear weapons under dubious control, above all the nuclear legacy of the Soviet Union. This includes weapons that are insecurely stored and awaiting disarmament, a situation which led to the creation of the Cooperative Threat Reduction program.<sup>32</sup> At the same time, the US

and Russia continue to keep their active strategic forces on hair-trigger status with lead times of just a few minutes. As such, the risk of an accidental nuclear attack still exists and, given the miserable condition of the Russian forces, remains a serious problem. While both sides have distanced themselves from the Cold War policy of comprehensive redundancy in coverage and established a joint early warning system, one still has to ask why they keep their forces on hair-trigger alert despite their “strategic partnership.” It is a dangerous strategy that was already questionable during the Cold War and has become more questionable since.<sup>33</sup>

The option of a nuclear first-strike is also being maintained. From the outset, China renounced such a policy and the Soviet Union followed in 1982 as a propaganda move. The Western nuclear powers did, in fact, promise to abide by a limited no-first-use policy in connection with the Non-Proliferation Treaty (i.e. negative security assurances towards non-nuclear states). Yet, despite a thorough change in the security environment and conventional supremacy, the US and NATO still did not consider it advisable to give up this option because nuclear weapons “continue to fulfil an essential role by ensuring uncertainty in the mind of any aggressor about the nature of the Allies’ response to military aggression.”<sup>34</sup> The new Russian military doctrine argues in a similar vein in light of its conventional inferiority.<sup>35</sup> NATO no longer faces this problem any more, but the proliferation of WMD was reason enough for them to stick to their old position. England and France above all did not want their nuclear weapons to be considered “weapons of last resort” and, like the US, emphasized that the threat of WMD could only be confronted with the counter-threat of nuclear forces. Such a counterthreat, as critics of the official nuclear policy argue, is perfectly compatible with abandoning the option of a first-strike. It could even strengthen deterrence against attacks with WMD, thereby reducing the utility of

29 Leading American nuclear veterans of the Cold War like Paul Nitze, Fred Iklé and nuclear planners like General Lee Butler recommended in the mid-nineties “deep cuts” to at least 1000 warheads. The 1996 Canberra Commission on the Elimination of Nuclear Weapons, in which many mainstream strategists were involved, had similar goals.

30 See International Court of Justice, *Legality of the Threat or Use of Nuclear Weapons* (July 8, 1996), General List No. 958, [www.dfat.gov.au/intorgs/icj\\_nuc/unan5a\\_a.html](http://www.dfat.gov.au/intorgs/icj_nuc/unan5a_a.html). The majority of the justices, however, left open the question of the legality of the “use of nuclear weapons in an extreme circumstance of self-defense.”

31 See Oliver Thränert, *Die Zukunft des Atomwaffensperrvertrags. Perspektiven vor der Überprüfungskonferenz 2005* (Berlin: Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, August 2004 [S 28/2004]), p. 18.

32 Instituted in 1992 by the US Congress on the initiative of Senators Nunn and Lugar and since then expanded to become a G-8 project, this program has to date only managed to thoroughly secure 22 percent of the former Soviet Union’s nuclear bombs, some 43 percent only provisionally. It would take another 13 years to complete the program, according to Matthew Bann and Anthony Wier (Atom Project at Harvard

University), *Securing the Bomb: An Agenda for Action* (Washington, D.C., 2004).

33 See Remarks of Former Senator Sam Nunn (D-GA) Carnegie International Non-Proliferation Conference, June 21, 2004, [www.carnegieendowment.org/npp/publications/index.cfm?fa=view&id=1576](http://www.carnegieendowment.org/npp/publications/index.cfm?fa=view&id=1576).

34 NATO’s New Strategic Concept (Washington, D.C., April 23-24, 1999), Pt. 62.

35 Issued by President Putin in January 2000; see “Rußland senkt die Schwelle für den Einsatz von Kernwaffen,” *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, January 14, 2000, p. 1.

acquiring such weapons in the first place and drawing a clear line between conventional and nuclear warfare.<sup>36</sup> Nevertheless, the deterrence principle of “uncertainty” is still considered more useful than giving up the option of first-use, regardless of what the threat might be.

What is less known is that some 480 American nuclear weapons are still stored in six European NATO states, 150 of which are in Germany.<sup>37</sup> This is more nuclear weapons than China has. Such weapons were completely withdrawn from South Korea and Japan in 1991, a region where, unlike Europe, military threats still exist. The only thing that points to the fact that an immediate threat is no longer expected is the reduced alert status of the airplanes for delivering these weapons. Otherwise, they exist as before in order to maintain a deterrence capability and distribute the burden between the US and Europe as well as interlink their nuclear forces. This is, however, not very compatible with the new partnership with Russia and provides Moscow with an excuse to maintain its arsenal of tactical nuclear weapons. Burden sharing and interlinking could be realized through more appropriate measures such as force modernization, peacekeeping, and the establishment of rapid response forces. Moreover, the US, England and France have sufficient other nuclear weapons at their disposal. The planned restructuring of American armed forces and the Quadrennial Defense Review due this year, which also influences nuclear force planning, should be used as opportunities to withdraw American nuclear weapons stationed in Europe.

The Nuclear Posture Review 2002 (NPR) describes the future direction of American nuclear strategy.<sup>38</sup> In it, deterrence takes the form of a “New Triad,” comprising offensive and defensive armed forces as well as a “responsive infrastructure” that enables the strategic arsenal to be adapted to new threats. Conventional options and missile defense are to strengthen deterrence and reduce the dependence on nuclear weapons. This does not signify a relative decline in the impor-

tance of the nuclear factor, rather its renaissance. The NPR reinforces the doctrine of first-use of nuclear weapons and assigns them new roles in addition to the old ones of deterring Russia and China. The new uses include defeating hard, deeply-buried targets (HDBT), such as depots and production facilities for WMD and bunkers. The NPR calls for making nuclear target planning more flexible, extending the spectrum of their deployment, and replacing non-proliferation with counterproliferation using conventional and nuclear offensive weapons. The document lists rogue states as potential targets, the same states that are considered possible targets of preemptive or preventive military operations. Since the nuclear weapons currently available are not well suited to such tasks, a research and development program for a new generation of nuclear weapons—“more useable nuclear weapons” with less than 5 kilotons yield (e.g. mini-nukes, robust nuclear earth-penetrator)—was launched, and it was decided to reduce the time needed for the resumption of nuclear testing.<sup>39</sup>

The concept of this planning document is barely different from that of Cold War times. As was the case then, it is based on the premise that deterrence can only work if one is prepared to conduct a nuclear war. This sort of deterrence is likewise only considered credible if one has the means to limit an atomic war. Consequently, scenarios for conducting nuclear war remain under consideration and the technological pursuit of ever smaller nuclear weapons continues. This sort of thinking does not necessarily mean much given that nuclear planners are always considering hypothetical cases from which one cannot necessarily infer any political intentions. It only confirms that nothing has fundamentally changed in their way

<sup>36</sup> See David Gompert, Kenneth Watman and Dean Wilkening, “Nuclear First Use Revisited,” *Survival*, Vol. 37, No. 3 (1995), pp. 27–44.

<sup>37</sup> See Hans M. Kristensen, *U.S. Nuclear Weapons in Europe. A Review of Post-Cold War Policy, Force Levels and War Planning* (Washington, D.C.: National Resources Defense Council, February 2005).

<sup>38</sup> GlobalSecurity.org, “Report Nuclear Posture Review (Excerpts),” January 8, 2002, [www.globalsecurity.org/wmd/library/policy/dod/npr.htm](http://www.globalsecurity.org/wmd/library/policy/dod/npr.htm).

<sup>39</sup> See Charles V. Peña, “Mini-Nukes and Preemptive Policy. A Dangerous Combination,” *Policy Analysis*, (November 11, 2003), p. 499. Appropriations for the Robust Nuclear Earth Penetrator were rejected by Congress for Fiscal Year 2005, and the monies for other related measures were reduced. Nevertheless, the administration is sticking to this program and has requested funding for FY 2006. There are around 4000 warheads with between 5 to 0.3 kilotons yield in the current stockpile of nuclear weapons. Given this amount, the need for new nuclear weapons is not evident, especially since all warheads are continuously upgraded to the latest technical standards through the comprehensive Nuclear Stewardship Program, which maintains their safety and operability. This program is to be replaced in the near future by a “reliable replacement warhead program.” One gets the impression that these projects are primarily designed to find new tasks for the nuclear military-industrial complex.

of thinking or their conceptual framework. But, in connection with the geopolitical philosophy of the National Security Strategy 2002, it reveals the design of a hegemonic world order, which is also reflected in the nuclear order.

In the strategic balance of power triad, the US is at the top as the central power, with Russia and China as second-rate powers at the two other poles. All three have the capacity of mutual assured destruction, though in China's case with some qualifications. Russia is no longer in a position to demand strategic parity vis-à-vis the US, despite the "new strategic framework" of the Moscow Treaty that cements the partnership and is intended to bring about a new regulation of the strategic balance of power between offensive nuclear weapons and defensive missile systems. The future structures of strategic forces, as the treaty shows, are to be extremely flexible and unpredictable. It is also difficult to assess the extent of China's arms buildup as well as the role China plays in the power triad. On the one hand, Beijing supports the US in the war on terror and in the nuclear dispute with North Korea. On the other hand, it perceives the establishment of national missile defense and Theater Missile Defense in northeast Asia as well as the massive military presence of the US in Afghanistan and Central Asia as directed against it. Additionally, there is the perennial issue of Taiwan and the difficult relationship with Japan. Furthermore, China is locked into a nuclear triad with India and Pakistan. This could have a stabilizing effect on the region, but it also brings with it a dangerous risk of escalation. As such, a nuclear security situation is developing in Asia that entails complex and multipolar deterrence structures. The region has no international security architecture comparable to what exists in Europe, apart from a few bilateral security alliances with the US. Moreover, key aspects of the Cold War experience are lacking, the more so as cooperative arms control no longer plays an important role. Hence, the question of how strategic stability should be constructed in Asia-Pacific is an open one.

It would be worthwhile to have a sort of concert of great powers in which the US and its most important alliance partners along with Russia, China, and India pursue a common agenda for stabilizing the international order that goes beyond the war on terror. This should include, among other things, the containment and resolution of regional conflicts, a multi-lateral approach to non-proliferation and arms control, strengthening the "stateness" of weak states, and

the coordination of deterrence doctrines. The time is ripe for a form of collective security management that is either institutionalized within the UN Security Council or in some flexible form outside this body. It should also be capable of providing collective deterrence and, if necessary, using force against problem states. But such efforts at cooperation are non-existent and are not being pursued. There is cooperation on some matters, but at the same time competition over old and new spheres of influence.

Still, at least there are no serious problems between the great powers. As long as this remains the case, nuclear deterrence plays no role. But in Washington the future of international relations is viewed with suspicion. Although the National Security Strategy outlines a vision of "balance of power that favors human freedom" and a world "where great powers compete in peace instead of continually prepare for war," it is not talking about balance of power in the classical sense. Rather, it describes a distribution of power, a system, in which all important aspects are dominated by the US. The document declares, "We are attentive to the possible renewal of old patterns of great power competition. Several potential great powers are now in the midst of internal transition—most importantly Russia, India, and China." It continues that for this reason, "Our forces will be strong enough to dissuade potential adversaries from pursuing a military build-up in hopes of surpassing, or equaling, the power of the United States."<sup>40</sup> One could not summarize the US's claim towards deterrence and hegemonic power more clearly. The build up of a counter force is to be rendered without promise from the outset, while "bandwagoning" is expressly encouraged.<sup>41</sup>

This makes it clear that the new geopolitical and strategic order of the international system is to be determined by the US and comprises two elements. The first reassigns nuclear deterrence a key political role in which it is to bring about stability in relations between the great powers, though naturally no longer on the basis of a balance of power, but rather the unsurpassed military supremacy of the US. A key aspect is a nuclear capability that, depending on the develop-

<sup>40</sup> NSS, Introduction (pp. 3, 4), and pp. 29, 33.

<sup>41</sup> This leitmotif and governmental program of American world dominance is the work of the neoconservatives, who founded the "Project for the New American Century" in 1997 and held key leadership positions in the first Bush administration, particularly in the Pentagon and the Office of the Vice-President.

ment of international relations, can be rapidly built up again and adapted to new challenges. This supremacy not only secures American pre-eminence and the greatest possible freedom of action (at the cost of international cooperation) it also claims to benefit the entire world according to the maxim that what is good for the US, is good for the world. Supporters of this Pax Americana have little interest in how this can coexist with a vision of a cooperative world order; indeed, the neoconservative architects of the Bush Doctrine don't care about such concerns at all.<sup>42</sup>

At the same time, the US is undertaking all possible efforts to prevent members of the "axis of evil" from developing deterrence capabilities. This is the second element of the new nuclear order. The US will not accept a deterrence relationship with "rogue states" because it fears that deterrence would fail against a nuclear-armed enemy of this sort. The assumption is that dictators are as willing to use violence against an external enemy as they are against internal enemies and, moreover, they hate the US.<sup>43</sup> Consequently, Saddam Hussein was considered incapable of being deterred because he was too dangerous and fundamentally evil. But in terms of the cold logic of deterrence, the issue of which side is good and which side is evil is irrelevant. What matters are capabilities, one's own alliance obligations, and interests. However, the Bush administration's construction of an enemy image and the strategic argumentation it used to justify the Iraq war implies that an attack against a nuclear-armed regime in Iraq would not have taken place. In this sense, the US respects the possession of atomic weapons as a check on its own deterrence capabilities,<sup>44</sup> and hence, the administration wanted to pre-empt the danger of proliferation before deterrence had a chance to work as it does now in the case of North Korea.

42 See also Ernst-Otto Czempiel, *Welt im Umbruch. Die Pax Americana, der Terrorismus und die Zukunft der internationalen Beziehungen*, 4. Auflage, (Munich 2003); Harald Müller, "Defensive Präemption und Raketenabwehr. Unilateralismus als Weltordnungspolitik," in Bernd W. Kubbig, ed., *Brandherd Irak. US-Hegemonieanspruch, die UNO und die Rolle Europas* (Frankfurt a.M./New York 2003), pp. 103-113.

43 Cf. footnote 21.

44 See Robert L. Jervis, "The Confrontation between Iraq and the US: Implications for the Theory and Practice of Deterrence," *European Journal of International Relations*, Vol. 9, No. 2 (2003), pp. 315-337.

## Proliferation

Nuclear weapons are not offensive weapons.<sup>45</sup> They are attractive to states that seek international recognition or regional predominance, but are not useful in warfare because their capacity for total destruction is poorly suited to achieving the usual goals of war (e.g. territorial claims, economic interests, liberation of territory, etc.). They have not spared nuclear weapons states from wars, or for that matter, not even from defeat. Still, states that wish to defend themselves from superior neighbors have good reason to seek possession of nuclear weapons in the interests of self-defense. It's no coincidence then that the majority of cases of proliferation involve states reacting to existing nuclear threats: Pakistan reacted to India, which in turn reacted to China, and China for its part was responding to the superpowers in the East-West conflict.

Even rogue states don't pursue nuclear weapons with primarily aggressive intentions, rather they are responding to security issues that threaten their existence. Iran sees itself as surrounded by American military power (i.e. Afghanistan, Central Asia, Iraq, Kuwait, and the US fleet in the Persian Gulf), encircled by other nuclear powers (i.e. Russia, Pakistan, and Israel), and, moreover, stigmatized as an "outpost of tyranny," as President Bush described the regime of the Ayatollahs in his last State of the Union address. North Korea is confronted by an alliance between South Korea, Japan and the US. By its own account it

already has a few nuclear weapons, and even without them it has an effective deterrent in the form of over 10,000 heavy artillery guns that are within firing range of South Korea's capital. According to some Iranian circles, the US only attacked Iraq because it did not yet have nuclear weapons, whereas North Korea is treated with greater respect. If, however, both states cling to their nuclear ambitions, many observers fear that proliferation in both regions would continue.<sup>46</sup> Japan, South Korea and Taiwan might feel it is necessary to become nuclear powers, and the same goes for Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Syria. This would represent the worst-case scenario for the continued existence of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. Indeed, it would hardly be able to survive such a situation.

Up to now all states, both those with and those without nuclear weapons, were convinced that the proliferation of WMD would create instability worldwide. This consensus is embodied in the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), which all states have signed except Israel, Pakistan and India. Hence, the signatories see their security as being better protected by limiting the possession of nuclear weapons to a few powers than by deterrence capabilities that are spread throughout the world among many small states. Kenneth Waltz, the grand old man of the realist school, has long posited an opposing, unconventional position, arguing that "more may be better."<sup>47</sup> He argues that the logic of deterrence holds regardless of the form of government or the structure of the international system, including

<sup>45</sup> This is also true of biological and chemical weapons. Biological weapons (i.e. bacteria, viruses, toxins) are more effective than chemical weapons and both are easier to obtain than nuclear weapons. It is possible to defend oneself against biological and chemical agents, but they are not useful for modern warfare because biological weapons are too unpredictable and chemical weapons have only tactical value. According to the CIA, 16 states have chemical weapons programs and around a dozen have biological weapons programs, or the requisite capacity for such programs. The danger of terrorists getting a hold of WMD needs to be taken seriously, given the interest of al-Qaeda in weapons of terror. However, the likelihood of this happening appears small due to the high technical requirements for their production and deployment. Still, it is possible (e.g. the poison gas attack by the Aum sect in Tokyo in 1995). This section only deals with the impact of the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

<sup>46</sup> This was also the opinion expressed in *A More Secure World: Our Shared Responsibility*, Report of the Secretary General's High Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change (New York: United Nations, 2004), p. 40: "We are approaching a point at which the erosion of the non-proliferation regime could become irreversible and result in a cascade of proliferation." See also Kurt M. Campbell, Robert J. Einhorn and Mitchell B. Reiss, eds., *The Nuclear Tipping Point: Why States Reconsider Their Nuclear Choices* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2004).

<sup>47</sup> Kenneth N. Waltz, "The Spread of Nuclear Weapons: More May Be Better," London: International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS), 1981 (Adelphi Paper 171). He repeated his position in a debate with Scott D. Sagan in *The Spread of Nuclear Weapons: A Debate* (New York/London, 1995).

a multipolar world or even in turbulent regions. New nuclear powers would behave as cautiously as the old ones and avoid war as a means of politics. Therefore, it would be better to accept proliferation, which cannot be stopped anyway, and try to manage it instead of attempting to prevent it.

The vast majority of states have not followed this recommendation, and the number of nuclear powers has remained surprisingly low, contrary to the expectations and fears of “realists.” This says something about the success of the policy of non-proliferation. Still, its future is more uncertain than ever given the most recent cases of proliferation and the evident crisis in nuclear disarmament. In the US his policy is considered a failure and the country is preparing to live with the ramifications of the proliferation of nuclear weapons. In doing so, American policy is one of a double standard. It differentiates between cases of proliferation that it considers acceptable because the states involved are democracies and/or close alliance partners, and those that are unacceptable. Thus, for example, the Bush administration lifted the sanctions against India and Pakistan which his predecessor had only half-heartedly imposed and has established partnerships with both states, despite Pakistan’s military regime, whose support in the war on terror is desperately needed.<sup>48</sup>

At the same time, the administration used the nuclear stalemate between India and Pakistan to get the two rivals to bury their longstanding bitter hostility towards one another. Since they were freed from British colonial rule, they have fought four wars against each other, and nearly a fifth in 2002. Today New Dehli and Islamabad are negotiating a peaceful solution to their problems, including the conflict over Kashmir. They are also discussing measures to secure their nuclear forces against unauthorized use, accidents, and surprise attacks. Above all, this is due to pressure from the US.<sup>49</sup> Since the beginning

48 The strategic partnership between the US and India, established in November 2001, involves the areas of nonproliferation, civilian nuclear programs, space programs and high technology trade. In June 2004, Pakistan received the status of a “major non-NATO ally.” As such it gets preferential treatment in the areas of development aid and defense cooperation.

49 See Andrew C. Winner and Toshi Yoshihara, “India and Pakistan at the Edge,” *Survival*, Vol. 44, No. 3 (Fall 2002), pp. 69–86; Ashley J. Tellis, “The Strategic Implications of a Nuclear India,” *Orbis*, Vol. 46, No. 1 (Winter 2002), pp. 13–45; Victor D. Cha, “The Second Nuclear Age: Proliferation Pessimism versus Sober Optimism in South Asia and East Asia,”

of the nineties, India and China have also noticeably improved their relations, resolved border disputes, agreed on trust building measures, and expanded trade.<sup>50</sup> This shows that deterrence systems can have a stabilizing effect even in regions marked by long-standing power rivalries, such as those on the perimeter of the Indian Ocean.

It is, however, still too early to conclude as universally valid the optimistic thesis of the stabilizing effect of regional deterrence systems. The age of nuclear weapons is too short to be able to transpose the experience of the East-West conflict on to other regions or rivalries. This is especially true if conflicts are characterized by nationalist movements and territorial disputes, which were not issues between the East and West. The proliferation of nuclear weapons can be very dangerous when associated with conditions of unstable governments, internal turmoil, civil wars, and military coups. In addition, the new nuclear weapons powers lack secure second-strike capabilities, early warning systems, and reliable C<sup>3</sup> structures. The theft, self-construction, or purchase of nuclear weapons could also lead to nuclear terrorism, the neoconservative’s ultimate nightmare. This means that the efforts to prevent nuclear proliferation must not be allowed to flag. There should be no nuclear weapons unaccounted for, no new production of nuclear weapons-grade material, and no new nuclear weapons states.<sup>51</sup>

The concrete and most important issue is how to deal with rogue states. Should we fight them? Can we live with them? Or should we try to come to an understanding with them? A policy of robust counterproliferation represents a possible solution to the problem. The US National Strategy of December 2002 gives top priority to military options as a way of combating the

*The Journal of Strategic Studies*, Vol. 24, No. 4 (December 2001), Special Issue: Future Trends in East Asian International Relations, pp. 79–120; Karl-Heinz Kamp, “Wie sicher sind Pakistans Atomwaffen?,” *Internationale Politik*, Vol. 59, No. 9 (September 2004), pp. 51–56; Christian Wagner, *Jenseits von Kaschmir. Chancen einer Annäherung zwischen Indien und Pakistan* (Berlin: Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, October 2004 [SWP-Aktuell 46/2004]); Christian Wagner, *Eine “roadmap” für Kaschmir?* (Berlin: Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, April 2005 [SWP-Aktuell 18/2005]).

50 See Christian Wagner, “Die indisch-chinesischen Beziehungen,” in Ernst Reiter, ed., *Jahrbuch für internationale Sicherheitspolitik 2002*, Vol. 2 (Hamburg/Berlin/Bonn, 2002), pp. 305–324.

51 Graham Allison, *Nuclear Terrorism: The Ultimate Preventable Catastrophe* (New York: Holt, 2004).

proliferation of WMD. The strategy paper declares the need for “new methods of deterrence, including through resort to all of our options,”<sup>52</sup> which means missile defense, new nuclear weapons for attacking WMD, and conducting preventive war. Then comes traditional non-proliferation measures complemented by new instruments of denial such as the “Proliferation Security Initiative” which is designed to prevent the illegal transfer of nuclear technology and missiles.<sup>53</sup> Finally, the document discusses “consequence management,” which is concerned with how to respond to an attack involving WMD. This strategy also relies on the use of military means as well as increased civil defense measures. It is primarily about denial, not deterrence through the threat of military retaliation.

The question arises as to why the Bush administration is so convinced that classic deterrence won't work against rogue states. Naturally, such states are to be treated with great caution if they possess nuclear deterrence capabilities. But the same is true in the other direction—once they have acquired nuclear arms, they too are subject to the rules of deterrence. That could even make dealing with these states easier. Nuclear weapons tend to have a greater influence on those that have them than on those that don't. This effect was evident in the restraint shown by the superpowers during the crises of the Cold War as well as in the behavior of the other nuclear powers in their relations with one another. There is no logical reason to assume that this experience does not hold for relations between the militarily superior US and rogue states with a few nuclear weapons. Having them and being subject to threats from the US means finding oneself in a stalemate like that of the Cold War, with the key difference that in this case the US is dominating in all aspects of the relationship, both in terms of nuclear and conventional weapons (i.e. escalation dominance). Saddam Hussein did not use his biological and chemical weapons in the Gulf War of 1991 because the US had threatened unambiguously to overthrow his regime if he did. Thus, the possession of nuclear weapons not only does not improve the

strategic situation of rogue states, they have the opposite effect of making them more vulnerable.<sup>54</sup>

The American fear that deterrence is more effective against one side as opposed to the other is thus unfounded. Central deterrence works without limitations as long as rogue states cannot threaten the North American continent with missiles of strategic range. And extended deterrence with the help of alliances, security guarantees, and military operations can also put a check on rogue states should they attempt to intimidate or blackmail neighboring states with WMD, as happened in the Gulf conflict of 1990/91. Granted, the US could not at the time overthrow Saddam's dictatorship without provoking an attack with biological or chemical weapons, which had been put into position to protect the regime. Nor could the US force North Korea to disarm without risking a nuclear war. To this extent, rogue states can indeed be quite unpleasant if they are forced into a corner and their existence is threatened. There is, however, a simple solution to this problem of counter deterrence—stop threatening such states.

Be that as it may, the US views its military superiority as being challenged by the ongoing proliferation of WMD and ballistic missiles. America still considers it important to be capable of intervening in and to have a military presence in all parts of the world. It does not follow, however, that nuclear proliferation has led to a decline in the importance of deterrence. Rather, the American reaction reflects a “missionary-militant” worldview, which forms the basis of the expansive definition of American interests under the current administration. The principle of nuclear deterrence, on the other hand, would require coming to terms with the fact that, for better or worse, there will in the future be cases of mutual deterrence between the world superpower and a totally isolated and poor country like North Korea. This is not a catastrophe, not even if North Korea were to prove its nuclear power in the near future by testing an atomic bomb or if Iran insists on its rights as outlined in the NPT

52 *National Strategy to Combat Weapons of Mass Destruction* (Washington, D.C.: The White House, 2002), p. 3. See also George Perkovich, “Bush's Nuclear Revolution. A Regime Change in Nonproliferation,” *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 82, No. 2 (2003), pp. 2–8.

53 Proliferation Security Initiative: Statement of Interdiction Principles (Washington, D.C.: The White House, September 4, 2003).

54 Before September 11, Condoleezza Rice assessed the problem of deterrence with regard to rogue states as follows: “The first line of defense should be a clear and classical statement of deterrence—if they do acquire WMD, these weapons will be unusable because any attempt to use them will bring national obliteration.” (“Promoting the National Interest,” *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 79, No. 1 [January/February 2000], pp. 45–62 [60].) Nevertheless, following September 11, Rice, like Cheney and Rumsfeld, was for the Iraq War.

to enrich uranium and accepts that for doing so it will be subjected to international sanctions.

Should we try to come to terms with rogue states? What's clear is that without their cooperation, the problem of proliferation cannot be resolved. In the case of Iraq, the policy of multilateral arms control showed that it was capable of bringing to a halt all WMD-related activities, despite the regime's resistance, which was obligated to cooperate with UNSCOM. Libya's abandonment of its nuclear weapons program was also the result of sanctions and negotiations, and not, as Washington claims, the supposed deterrent effect of the Iraq war on Libya's leader.<sup>55</sup> As things stand, North Korea and Iran remain the most difficult cases. Neither Washington nor Pyongyang have lived up to the 1994 Agreed Framework between them. The US has at least shown willingness in the six-country talks to make some security concessions. In negotiations with Tehran, the EU 3 states of Germany, France, and Great Britain have achieved a temporary suspension of Iran's enrichment program and its acceptance of more stringent control. In both cases, however, America doesn't appear to have much leeway for responding to the motives and fears that have driven the two countries to pursue a nuclear deterrent. Indeed, it is comparable in size to the trust of both countries in American guarantees to depart from its demands of regime change. A solution to the conflicts is therefore not to be expected any time soon. It only seems possible if the security situation in both countries were to improve dramatically. But this is something that the system of nuclear non-proliferation does not provide them. Hence, it is advisable to avoid aggravating the conflicts. Instead, policy should be geared towards winning time in order to normalize relations with both states and, furthermore, to rely on deterrence. The current administration in Washington, however, appears incapable of such a degree of pragmatism.

55 Stephen D. Collins, "Dissuading State Support of Terrorism: Strikes or Sanctions? An Analysis of Dissuasion Measures Employed against Libya," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, Vol. 27 (2004), pp. 1–18; Martin S. Indyk, "The Iraq War Did Not Force Gadaffi's Hand," *Financial Times*, March 9, 2004.

# Terrorism

Terrorist violence has evolved from being primarily an intrastate threat to a challenge to the international order.<sup>56</sup> As such, it appears to have taken the place previously held by interstate war. This is especially true for the new terrorism, which not only seeks to change power relations within states, but also the international distribution of power. It is epitomized by the transnational network al-Qaeda, whose violent acts of terror burst the boundaries of traditional terrorism. In response to this threat the US is conducting a global “war on terror.” But against whom should this war be directed? What characterizes the new generation of terrorism? What does deterrence have to offer to confront this form of aggression?

Interestingly enough, terrorism and deterrence have one thing in common. They create fear, the former through the use of violence, the latter through the threat of violence. The difference is that deterrence reacts, while terrorism acts with the goal of spreading fear and horror in order to force a state to change its policy. It does so not by destroying the state’s military means with which the state defends itself and its interests, but through the emotional effect of the random, wanton use of violence, which is intended to wear down and ultimately break the political will of the state. In other words, it is a Clausewitzian “battle of wills” in which one side clandestinely determines the time, place, and manner of attack. In doing so, terrorists seize the initiative and

force the other side to constantly react. This can result in a cycle of violence of attack and retaliation, as illustrated by the Middle East conflict since the outbreak of the second Intifada.

This battle is based from the outset on an asymmetrical constellation of powers, means, methods, and motives. That is not unusual; symmetrical conflicts such as the one between East and West are rare in the history of warfare, whereas asymmetrical conflicts are more the rule. What is unusual and was previously only imaginable in fiction is the most extreme form of asymmetrical warfare, i.e. Osama Bin Laden and his holy warriors versus the “last remaining world power.” There were enough warning signals at the end of the nineties that al-Qaeda was planning an attack against the US (see, for example, the attacks on the Khobar base in Saudi Arabia in 1996, on the US embassy in East Africa in 1998, and on US destroyers in Aden harbor in 2000), and the signs only increased thereafter. But the signs went unheeded. The administration considered an attack by foreign terrorists on the American homeland as unlikely, despite the warnings of a few intelligence experts.<sup>57</sup> The reaction and the shock that followed this act of war was therefore all the more severe: America declared a “global war on terror.” Though the use of this phrase to describe the battle against terrorism has been criticized, inasmuch as there’s no doubt that terrorists should be treated as criminals and not as parties to a war, the debate about the appropriate terminology is tiresome. Of greater importance and consequence is the question of which form of terrorism the declaration of war is directed against.

There is no one form of terrorism per se, rather many terrorisms. Above all, it is important to differentiate between national and international terror-

<sup>56</sup> The US government defines terrorism as “premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against noncombatant targets by subnational groups or clandestine agents, usually intended to influence an audience” (quoted in Paul R. Pillar, *Terrorism and U.S. Foreign Policy* [Washington, D.C., 2001], p. 13). Peter Waldmann describes its typical form of action as “carefully prepared, shocking violent attacks from underground organizations against a political order.” (Peter Waldmann, “Das terroristische Kalkül und seine Erfolgsaussichten,” in Wolfgang Schluchter, ed., *Fundamentalismus, Terrorismus, Krieg* [Göttingen 2003], p. 88). See also Christopher Daase, “Terrorismus-Begriffe, Theorien und Gegenstrategien. Ergebnisse und Probleme sozialwissenschaftlicher Forschung,” *Die Friedens-Warte*, Vol. 76, No. 1 (2001), pp. 55–79. In international law there is to date no generally binding definition, especially due to different views regarding violent acts committed by national liberation movements. By contrast, international and state terrorism is fundamentally proscribed.

<sup>57</sup> See Richard A. Clarke, *Against All Enemies. Der Insiderbericht über Amerikas Krieg gegen den Terror* (Hamburg, 2004); National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States, *Final Report 9–11 Commission* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 2004).

ism.<sup>58</sup> The former is equated with internal resistance movements against specific states, their ruling order or occupation powers (e.g. Palestinian Islamic Jihad, Hamas, Hizbollah, ETA, PKK, etc.). Generally speaking, such terrorists have a local agenda, pursue clear goals, and are organized in closed, hierarchical structures. This is the world's most common form of terrorism, and it differs from the new type of Islamist terrorism. The goal of the latter is to use violence to force Western influence out of the Muslim world and, above all, to end US protection of Arab regimes (e.g. Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Gulf states, etc.). Only this type of terrorism is directed at Western society in general and the US as a world power in particular. They represent a self-proclaimed extremist sect that seeks to mobilize the Muslim world. According to some estimates, 10 to 15 percent of the world's Muslim population can be considered radical Islamists.<sup>59</sup> That is clearly no small figure, but it could even get much worse if one fails to distinguish between national and international terrorists and declares a war against all of them, as the US has done. It also does not help when other states (e.g. Russia and Israel) are given free reign to deal with national liberation movements in their territory as they see fit. This promotes alliances between various terrorist organizations and can promote a great sense of solidarity among the area's population with the goals of the terrorists (e.g. Chechnya, West Bank and Gaza, Iraq). The correct strategy in the war on terror should therefore involve separating international terrorism from national terrorists and the respective groups that support them within the population.<sup>60</sup>

The strength of al-Qaeda, which was originally a military organization and now forms the basis of the global Jihad movement, lies in its non-military character: its radical, apocalyptic theology and ideology, its transnational and decentral structure, and the use of civilian infrastructure for its performance of spectacular, wanton acts of violence. The classic thesis that terrorists want a big audience but

only a few victims no longer holds true. Now the success of terrorist violence is measured in terms of the global reach of "the propaganda of the deed." The worldwide effect of their attacks is evidence of deliberate, strategic planning and long-term operational preparation, and less that of heated emotions. Its arsenal includes suicide bombing, repackaged as an act of religious heroism. To a certain degree, this is terror's precision weapon. It is resistant to deterrence and in the eyes of followers it is as irresistible as it is charismatic. To followers it is not "irrational," rather it is part of the terrorist logic to cause the greatest amount of harm at little material cost and preferably to attack symbolic objects for their maximum shock value, thereby provoking the attacked state to react in a panicked manner. The attacks of September 11 were a direct hit on the economic and military centers of power in the US and killed at one stroke more people than all previous acts of international terrorism combined. The number of such attacks has risen considerably from an average of 3 per year in the eighties to 10 per year in the nineties to over 25 alone in 2000 and 2001. Only three percent of all terrorist attacks were carried out as suicide bombings, but they were responsible for around half of all the victims, even if one excludes September 11 as an exception.<sup>61</sup>

The instruments of deterrence are clearly inappropriate for dealing with terrorist suicide bombings. When terrorist rationale is combined with the promise of redemption and one's own death is accepted as part of the bargain, all threats of retaliation are doomed to failure. Contrary to the rules of asymmetric warfare, the state's options in the war on terrorism are severely limited. But when a state perceives that its existence is threatened, the norms of what is acceptable change and many constraints fall by the wayside, as, for example, in the case of Israel, which in the second Intifada has resorted to directly targeting leaders of terrorist organizations for liquidation. While the Israeli government has been heavily criticized for this policy, it can prove that its efforts have noticeably reduced the number of attacks.<sup>62</sup> It is

58 See Ulrich Schneckener, *Netzwerke des Terrors. Charakter und Strukturen des internationalen Terrorismus* (Berlin: Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, December 2002 [S 42/2002]); Lawrence Freedman, ed., *Superterrorism. Policy Responses* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2002); Herfried Münkler, *Die neuen Kriege* (Reinbek, 2002); Walter Laqueur, *Die globale Bedrohung. Neue Gefahren des Terrorismus* (Berlin, 1998).

59 Estimate according to Waldmann, p. 98.

60 See *National Strategy for Combating Terrorism* (Washington, D.C.: White House, February 2003), in which all terrorist organizations—national, regional, and global—are declared as enemies (see esp., p. 13).

61 See Robert A. Pape, "The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism," *American Political Science*, Vol. 97, No. 3 (August 2003), pp. 343–361; Scott Atran, "Mishandling Suicide Terrorism," *The Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 27, No. 3 (Summer 2004), pp. 67–90.

62 According to a press release from the Israeli Ministry of Defense from June 2004, the number of attacks were reduced by 80 percent between 2003-2004. See "Is Israel Winning the

questionable, however, whether, aside from the legal and moral concerns, targeted killings have a sustainable deterrent effect.

Despite decentralization and transnational organization, modern terrorism is reliant on state support. The same is and was true for national terrorist organizations, who were able to use territory in third countries as a place to retreat to and prepare their activities (e.g. IRA, ETA, etc.). But such territory can also become the target of military countermeasures, as in the case of Afghanistan in response to the crimes of September 11. The American campaign against the network of terror's center of power served both to retaliate against and overthrow the Taliban, which had maintained close political and personal relations with the network, as well as to deter future terrorist attacks. Although Bin Laden and the majority of his leadership circle were not captured, the organization suffered such heavy material and personnel losses that it was no longer capable of carrying out strategic operations of comparable catastrophic effect to that of September 11 or even to attack US soil. Since then, their activities have been limited to attacks against "soft" targets or they are focused on terrorist offensives against the new government in Iraq and the American forces there. This insurgency draws in Islamist terrorism like a magnet, but it also ties them down, thus enabling the concentration of anti-terrorist forces. In addition, al-Qaeda has lost its strategic refuge in Afghanistan and has reformed as a loose alliance of autonomous groups. Little is known as to whether and how political and operative control of the organization is still possible, but international terrorist networks have little future if they only have themselves to rely on and they are constantly on the run.<sup>63</sup>

The deterrent effect of this war on terror should not be underestimated. Those states that still support terrorism have been warned (e.g. Iran, Syria). Even

War on Terrorism?," *Newsbrief*, Vol. 24, No. 7 (July 2004), pp. 73–75.

<sup>63</sup> According to IISS, *Military Balance 2004/2005* (London 2004), at least 20,000 Jihad fighters were trained up until the overthrow of the Taliban. Around half of the 30 leaders and about 2000 fighters have been captured or killed since then. Only a small fraction of the remaining members of al-Qaeda belong to the hard core of the organization, with the majority having just supporting functions. It is estimated that al-Qaeda has support cells in some 60 countries. Around 1,000 al-Qaeda fighters are estimated to be involved in attacks in Iraq. However, they do not exert decisive influence on the Sunni resistance groups. See *ibid.*, pp. 378-385.

before September 11, the importance of state terrorism had declined, but it could be reduced even further through diplomacy and the threat of military action.<sup>64</sup> But, the prerequisite for destroying the terrorist network is that governments have complete control over their territory. One can hardly hold governments responsible for attacks that originate from their territory if they don't have the power to prevent them. The fate of the Taliban in Afghanistan also serves as a warning to the power elite in the Third World and gives them incentive to increase reform efforts in their states and re-establish a monopoly of violence within their territory, including seeking international aid to achieve these goals.

Of course, terrorism cannot be primarily thought of as a military problem, just as the events of September 11 cannot be answered with traditional strategies of war. This was already recognized in cases of conventional terrorism (e.g. Spain, Great Britain, Israel, etc.). Moreover, democracies cannot afford to fight back with great severity or, for that matter, set up concentration camps and reintroduce torture. If they do so anyway (see the considerable "collateral damage" of the military war on terrorism, Guantanamo, Abu Ghraib), they set a horrible standard for the world. The experience in Iraq shows once again that military force and occupation don't make terrorists more compliant, rather it provokes them.<sup>65</sup> What is called for is not just responding to violence with violence, but rather, above all, innovative defense measures against this new threat. In this regard, deterrence has more to offer than simple retaliation. Deterrence can

<sup>64</sup> This is also true of nuclear terrorism as the result of the theft, self-production or purchase of nuclear weapons or material. All three variants are imaginable, but cannot occur without state support. Without such support, the amount of fissionable material (i.e. highly enriched uranium [HEU], plutonium) necessary for building an atomic bomb should be impossible to obtain. The use of stolen or bought nuclear weapons also presents terrorists with technical problems that they are unlikely to be able to solve, such as cracking the weapon's electronic codes known as a Permissive Action Link (PAL). Furthermore, the origin of an atomic bomb can be traced following its explosion based on the characteristics of its fallout. The US is developing in its nuclear research laboratories methods of analysis that could be used to deter the transfer of nuclear weapons to unauthorized parties.

<sup>65</sup> According to US State Department statistics, the number of terrorist attacks in Iraq rose from 22 in 2003 to 201 in 2004, the respective victims from 501 to 1709, and the number killed from 117 to 554. See U.S. Department of State, Remarks on Release of "Country Reports on Terrorism" for 2004, (Washington, D.C., April 27, 2005).

deny success to terrorists using a variety of counter-measures, comparable to the way the Western policy of containment worked in the context of the East-West conflict. This sort of deterrence by denial is also useful for containing terrorism, and it should be considered the first and most important line of defense in the fight against the threat of terrorism.

A “war on terror” of this sort, which Israel has been the most effective at conducting, can be accompanied by the construction of physical barriers. The “security fence” along the border between Israel and the West Bank, which prevents Palestinian terrorists from entering Israeli territory, is an example of such a barrier. The measure has been internationally denounced as a land grab and hindrance to the peace process, but it has largely put a stop to suicide bombings and has contributed to a de-escalation of the conflict.<sup>66</sup> In a figurative sense, such “fences” have been constructed worldwide with the help of legal, police, and secret service measures.

The massive anti-terrorism efforts—including improving international cooperation; increasing security controls at borders, airports and traffic systems; better protection of sensitive facilities, and public and state events, and so forth—have had an impact and resulted in more arrests, convictions, and the uncovering of planned attacks before they take place.<sup>67</sup> Multilateral cooperation has been greatly increased in the oversight of financial movements and in the information sector and has led to international agreements and consultation measures that were unthinkable just a few years ago.<sup>68</sup> Intelligence services, too, which were accused of having failed to recognize the warning signs due to a fragmentation of competencies and a lack of exchange of information, have been reformed. Although it is difficult or nearly impossible to infiltrate terrorist cells, there are supporters of these networks, such as governmental and financial sponsors, whose relations to terrorism are easier to discover and thwart. It is also possible to observe,

<sup>66</sup> Jonathan Rynhold, “Israel’s Fence: Can Separation Make Better Neighbours?,” *Survival*, Vol. 46, No. 1 (Spring 2004), pp. 55–76.

<sup>67</sup> It is impossible to realistically quantify the number attacks thwarted by increased surveillance, etc. One therefore should be sceptical of the claim that more than 100 attacks have been uncovered in a timely manner, interrupted or deterred since September 11. See Rohan Gunaratna, “The Post-Madrid Face of Al Qaeda,” *Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 27, No. 3 (Summer 2004), pp. 91–100.

<sup>68</sup> See Jonathan Stevenson, “Counter-terrorism: Containment and Beyond,” London: IISS, 2004 (Adelphi Paper 367).

influence, and fight the physical nodes of the network (e.g. mosques and madrassas) and the activities that are conducted there (e.g. recruitment, communication, logistics, etc.).<sup>69</sup> The key is to systematically constrict the conditions necessary for the existence and operation of terrorism and to put so much pressure on terrorist organizations that they become so preoccupied with self-preservation that they don’t even have time to plan and carry out attacks or they are led to making mistakes.

One area that particularly offers opportunities for influencing the future of terrorism is the recruitment of new followers. Things which could sow the seeds of doubt and make recruitment difficult among those in terrorist groups’ spheres of influence include failed terrorist attacks, set-backs and defeats, and public criticism of the cult of martyrdom, which, after all, is incompatible with Islam. The recruitment potential for carrying out the type of attacks that al-Qaeda organized on September 11 is particularly limited.<sup>70</sup> It differs from the type of attacks that are carried out against Israel in that it places high demands on the perpetrators, who can therefore only be recruited from the educated classes. Potential assassins with this sort of background are likely to speculate over whether the attack is worth giving their lives for if they recognize that such a sacrifice has little effect, or in any case can’t seriously alter the existing balance of power. This sort of doubt is discouraging and can be used to prompt people to abandon terrorism. The more the denial of success works, the fewer the number of people there will be who are attracted to the thought of martyrdom. That is also true for terrorism’s social milieu, the sympathizers upon whose support, willingness to help, and provision of recruits the terrorists rely. If society withdraws its approval, terrorism will wither away. That is why a defensive strategy of denial also needs to address the followers and the causes of terrorism.

<sup>69</sup> See Paul K. Davis and Brian Michael Jenkins, *Deterrence and Influence in Counter-Terrorism: A Component in the War on al Qaeda* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2002); Brian Michael Jenkins, *Countering al Qaeda* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2002); Michael J. Powers, *Deterring Terrorism with CBRN Weapons: Developing a Conceptual Framework* (Washington, D.C.: Chemical and Biological Arms Control Institute, February 2001 [Occasional Paper 2]).

<sup>70</sup> On the psychology of assassins see Walter Laqueur, *Krieg dem Westen. Terrorismus im 21. Jahrhundert* (Berlin, 2004), pp. 106–146; Georg Elwert, “Charismatische Mobilisierung und Gewaltmärkte. Die Basis der Attentäter des 11. September,” in Schluchter, ed., pp. 111–134.

Deterrence by punishment and denial alone is insufficient. It must also be combined with a policy of compromise and engagement that seeks to influence the structures and the causes of the conflict. The real causes of terrorism are not, as international terrorists believe, to be found in the West or in the hostility between cultures and religions. Rather, it is located in the region itself and is the consequence of the missed enlightenment and modernization of Islamic society. This society is now in a deep crisis and it provides fertile ground for producing sympathizers and perpetrators of terrorism. Above all, criticism of the existing political and economic relations creates a considerable potential for protest among the middle classes. This protest potential is further politicized by local and regional conflicts, in particular the Middle East conflict. American policy in the region has also contributed to hostility towards the US and a sense of humiliation in the Arab world. To this extent, international terrorism is the product of policies that can longer be ignored, rather they must become the focal point of the “war on terror” in order to combat the root causes and the impact of terrorism.<sup>71</sup>

As such, the West’s most important goal in its war on terror should be to support the reformation of Islamic states. In Iran, for example, such reforms enjoy popular support. The way to support them exogenously is by normalizing relations, not ostracizing or threatening the country. The violently enforced overthrow of regimes, such as in Iraq, is also not the way to encourage reform efforts in Arabic society. On the contrary, this simply sends young recruits into the arms of terrorism. The same goes for Israel as long as it is unwilling to offer a fair solution to the Palestinians and continues with its policies of annexation and maintaining a hard-line. While the West does not have the power to change political and social relations in the Islamic world, it can create conditions conducive to bringing about the changes that are necessary to dessicate the central sources of terrorism, namely authoritarian regimes and the Middle East conflict. This includes a willingness to dialogue (e.g. the EU Barcelona Process, NATO’s Mediterranean Dialogue, and the “roadmap” of the peace process), considerable efforts at coordination at the national and inter-

national level, and political pressure, without which there will be no progress in the region.

<sup>71</sup> Ernst-Otto Czempiel, “Der politische Terrorismus,” *Internationale Politik*, Vol. 59, No. 7 (July 2004), pp. 74–81; Joachim Krause, “Eine neue Dimension: Europa braucht eine Strategie gegen islamistischen Terror,” *Internationale Politik*, Vol. 59, No. 4 (April 2004), pp. 75–83.

## Civil Wars

Terrorism and civil wars belong to the same class of the organized use of politically motivated violence directed against the established order. Civil wars often start with terrorist acts and encourage the building of terrorist structures. Indeed, the state under attack treats armed resistance movements as terrorism and labels them as such. While civil wars have recently become more relevant to the international system and have spread within it as a specific form of warfare, they remain intrastate conflicts. But they too have evolved such that, under the circumstances of continuing globalization and transnational linkage, the boundary between them and interstate war is increasingly blurry.<sup>72</sup>

There has been a noticeable and drastic increase in the frequency, duration, and brutality of armed intrastate conflicts since the end of the Second World War. Around 80 percent of all wars have been civil wars, and according to another way of calculating and defining wars, even as much as 90 percent.<sup>73</sup> The number has risen from an average of 10 per year in the fifties and sixties to 40 per year in the nineties. Nearly half of them lasted around five years, with 20 percent lasting 10 years or more. Three-fourths were decided by military means. These outcomes have proven to be more stable than civil wars that were resolved at the negotiating table. In the case of the latter, after a brief

interlude, violence broke out again 50 percent of the time.<sup>74</sup>

The defining characteristic of such wars is the extreme brutality and the virtual absence of rules with which they are conducted. The states on whose territory they take place have either fallen apart or have failed and are incapable of controlling the violence. Instead, the monopoly of violence falls partially or completely in the hands of non-state actors or ethnonational groups, including separatists, rebels, paramilitary militias, warlords, drug cartels, or criminals. The war is no longer only fought between state security forces, to the extent they still exist, and non-state groups that are hostile to one another. They are also targeted against one's own population who become victims or strategic targets of violence. In extreme cases, civilians are systematically harassed, exploited, displaced, and killed (e.g. Bosnia, Kosovo, Ruanda, Congo, Darfur, etc.). Often there is an amalgamation of state and non-state perpetrators of violence such that the distinction between public and private violence disappears and the war takes on a self-perpetuating course, engulfing the entire society in the process.<sup>75</sup>

It is more difficult to bring an end to civil wars than international wars. This is evident alone by the long duration of intrastate conflicts. They are a unique phenomenon of violence that have their own dynamic that is driven by unbridled violence. It is a form of violence that spreads, intensifies, comes to a head, and at some point is exhausted. During this cycle, it is impossible to predict when the conflict is ripe for a political solution. In contrast to interstate wars in which the use of violence is restrained by the rules of war and the professional leadership and discipline

<sup>72</sup> Peter Waldmann defines civil wars as "massive armed conflicts of considerable duration between two or more groups located in one state over the acquisition, distribution or division of state power. In addition to state-centric civil wars, there are also ones in which ethnic, religious or economic factors are at the forefront." (quoted in "Bürgerkriege," in Wilhelm Heitmeyer and John Hagan, eds., *Internationales Handbuch der Gewaltforschung* [Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 2002], pp. 368–389). See also Peter Waldmann "Bürgerkrieg—Annäherung an einen schwer faßbaren Begriff," in Heinrich-W. Krumwiede and Peter Waldmann, eds., *Bürgerkriege: Folgen und Regulierungsmöglichkeiten* (Baden-Baden, 1998), pp. 15–36.

<sup>73</sup> For the period from 1990 to 2003, SIPRI lists 59 large-scale armed conflicts in 48 different places, of which 55 were civil wars. See *SIPRI Yearbook 2004. Armaments, Disarmament and International Security* (Oxford, 2004), pp. 132–139.

<sup>74</sup> See Waldmann, "Bürgerkriege," p. 383; Bernhard Zangl and Michael Zürn, *Frieden und Krieg* (Frankfurt a.M., 2003), p. 178.

<sup>75</sup> See Mary Kaldor, *Neue und alte Kriege. Organisierte Gewalt im Zeitalter der Globalisierung* (Frankfurt a.M., 2000); Herfried Münkler, *Die neuen Kriege* (Reinbek, 2002). For the difference between old and new civil wars see Monika Hempel and Bernhard Zangl, "Von 'alten' und 'neuen' Kriegen—zum Gestaltwandel kriegerischer Gewalt," *Politische Vierteljahresschrift*, Vol. 45, No. 3 (2004), pp. 346–369.

of the armed forces, the potential for violence is amplified in civil wars by ethno-cultural and religious antagonisms. A number of causes play a role here, such as the memory of the various involved groups of repeated bloody conflicts, motives of revenge and retaliation, social inequality, and concrete material interests. But above all, it is a conflict over competing visions of the future after peace has been achieved—in other words, over which group will determine the identity of the country and have the upper hand politically and economically. This is a matter that is either decided violently by military victory or defeat or politically by negotiations. Even in the latter case, the party that succeeds in weakening the opposition militarily, not to mention numerically, has the better chance of getting its way.<sup>76</sup>

What importance does deterrence have for civil wars? Its aim of preventing the outbreak of violence, to limit it or quickly end it, clearly doesn't figure in the calculus and the behavior of the parties to such conflicts. They are more likely to have a deterrent effect on external actors which keeps them from getting involved. Intervening third parties have to count on the possibility that they themselves will be attacked, as in the case of the Balkans, Somalia and Ruanda. Nevertheless, other states almost always do get involved in civil wars, either by virtue of their actions or lack thereof, which in itself also has an impact on the course of the war. In general, it seems that their ability to draw out civil wars is greater than their capacity to bring them to an end. Arms supply is a contributing factor, even if they are accompanied by measures undertaken with good intentions, such as internationally negotiated truces and humanitarian aid. It can, however, be useful if neighboring states establish a credible threat of force, such as in the case of Haiti, in order to put pressure on the adversaries. The impact of such tactics is greater if the threatened intervention is authorized by the UN Security Council or a regional organization. If this fails to work and the threat is carried out, it is no longer a matter of simply deterring violence, rather it becomes a violent peace enforcement operation.

How does this sort of deterrence, i.e. compellence, work in cases of intrastate conflicts? The same necessary conditions that were discussed above for immediate deterrence (p. 9) also hold true for civil wars. To

<sup>76</sup> Peter Waldmann, "Eigendynamik und Folgen von Bürgerkriegen," in Krumwiede and Waldmann, eds., pp. 108-132, and Waldmann, "Bürgerkriege," p. 375.

wit, a clear message must be sent to the parties to the conflict that their behavior is unacceptable, the international community must accept and be capable of living up to its obligation to protect people from ethnic cleansing and genocide and to punish crimes against humanity, and, finally, there must be a willingness to follow up threats with action. This represents a form of extended deterrence, which is less reliable because it is not about defending one's own country against an immediate threat. Rather, it involves protecting the civilian population of another country and, not the least, bringing those responsible for war crimes, mass murder, and expulsions to justice. The latter is not simply a matter of retroactive justice; it is a key aim of future deterrence in the interest of protecting basic human rights.<sup>77</sup>

It is not easy for such deterrence efforts to appear credible in civil wars. After all, democracies show little tendency towards intervening in conflicts that don't immediately threaten their national interests. They are also not inclined to intervene early on—at a time when the use of limited military force could have a political impact that is impossible to achieve later on even with a much larger operation, particularly because by then there have already been high losses and great destruction. A considerable learning processes would be required in order to adjust to this new threat and, above all, to accept that states need to deal with recognizing and fighting intrastate conflicts early on. The use of deterrence early on also has a better chance of succeeding than later on. The effectiveness of late-stage deterrence is reduced because the opposing sides have already been heavily engaged in the conflict and maneuvered themselves into positions out of which they cannot come without suffering emotional and political damage.

The situation in the Balkans was extremely complicated after the multi-national state fell apart. Still, there were enough signs of things to come in Bosnia and later Kosovo. But they did not register with policymakers or they were not recognized and

<sup>77</sup> On the subject, see also a report commissioned by the UN Secretary-General, *The Responsibility to Protect*. Report of the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (Atlanta: International Development Research Centre, 2001). The significance of the report is its emphasis on the international community's responsibility of humanitarian intervention in cases of great loss of life as the result of a state's behavior, neglect or incapacity to act, or in cases of "ethnic cleansing" by murder, forced expulsions, terror or rape.

taken seriously until much too late. Consequently, opportunities for preventive action and deterrence were missed. As a result, later on the international community had limited scope for action and had to deal with the unintended consequences of military intervention and sanctions. The catastrophe in Sudan could have also been predicted. After the genocide in Ruanda, everyone declared that such gruesome acts must never be allowed to happen again. But instead of acting to prevent human rights abuses in Darfur, the international community responded with appeals, threats and mild sanctions; a fiasco of international responsibility. Liberia, Somalia, Mozambique, Ruanda, Bosnia, Congo—the names, and one could add to the list, stand for the failure or absence of humanitarian intervention in recent times.

There are also successful examples of preventing civil wars and containing the spread of civil war, such as the preventive stationing of peacekeepers in Macedonia, which contributed in no small measure to easing tension within the state as well as beyond its borders.<sup>78</sup> To date, this sort of military operation has remained the exception and is due to the following special conditions: the low-level of the intensity of the crisis, a clear goal and mandate, considerable international interest, and the willingness of the government of the affected country to voluntarily accept limits placed on its sovereignty, which is rare indeed. These sorts of interventions also suffer from the fact that success goes largely unnoticed. Heading off a civil war and preventing a state's collapse are not newsworthy and therefore produce no pressure to take political action. Although the general interest in long-term strategies for preventing state collapse and civil wars has grown, there still is no "culture of conflict prevention" akin to what UN Secretary General Kofi Annan has called for. Attempts by the EU to make better use of its capabilities for preventing or curbing violent conflicts have so far been largely disappointing.<sup>79</sup> As such, crisis management and measures to deal with the outcomes of conflicts still dominate.

<sup>78</sup> UNPROFOR stationed a contingent in Macedonia beginning in 1992. The mission continued as UNPREDEP in 1995, then as the NATO-led peace missions "Amber Fox" and "Allied Harmony" until March 2003, and thereafter as the first EU-led operation "Concordia" until December 2003. Today, some 200 EUPOL police officers are stationed there.

<sup>79</sup> See Reinhardt Rummel, *Konfliktprävention: Etikett oder Markenzeichen europäischer Interventionspolitik?* (Berlin: Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, November 2003 [S 45/2003]).

If civil wars are rarely prevented by threatening military intervention, the question arises whether and how civil wars can be brought to an end through the use of military force. Here I am not referring to old forms of warfare, but rather to new strategies for maintaining international order which rely on credible and robust enforcement measures based on the authorization of the UN Security Council, the highest legitimate authority for the intervention in "internal affairs." Success depends on this authority because an intervention only has a chance of being accepted and supported by and credible to those involved if its legitimacy and legal basis is clear.

As mentioned earlier, compellence should be considered a counterpart to deterrence. Like deterrence, it uses the threat of force, but the threats can be considered more radical in nature inasmuch as ultimatums are issued that entail clear demands, explicit threats, and a deadline by when the demands must be met.<sup>80</sup> Compellence can also include the conscious use of limited military force in order to add muscle to the threat. Such force should be as demonstrative as possible and serve as an example, and, if necessary, be aggressive, but it should also be clearly below the threshold of warfare, i.e. the destruction of armed forces and the occupation of territory. As such, the line between the threat of force and the use of force in the case of compellence is blurry. And it is equally difficult to distinguish between limited force and warfare, such as in the case of the Kosovo conflict. Everything depends on the success of the operation, which is measured in terms of how completely and quickly the opponent fulfils the demands placed on it. This is easier said than done.

First of all, there is the issue of timing. When is the right time to intervene? If the objective of the intervention is to end a civil war as quickly possible without exerting a great deal of force, the chances of success are best at the beginning and the end of a conflict. As long as the parties to the conflict are still fighting to win or trying to establish the most convenient position in anticipation of a threatened or welcomed intervention the chances of success are poor. Undoubtedly, early intervention has a more promising chance of success in addition to having less costly consequences. Reconstructing stable conditions

<sup>80</sup> See Lawrence Freedman, "Strategic Coercion," in Lawrence Freedman, ed., *Strategic Coercion. Concepts and Cases* (Oxford, 1998), pp. 15–36, and Gary Schaub, Jr., "Compellence: Resuscitating the Concept," in *Ibid.*, pp. 37–60.

after a civil war is a great deal more costly.<sup>81</sup> Acting early also has greater deterrent effect and demonstrates the decisiveness to impose clear prohibitions on the behavior of the parties to the conflict as well as to use sanctions if these are violated. Many observers of the Balkan conflict are convinced that if the US and NATO had reacted decisively to the Serbian bombing of the Croatian city of Dubrovnik in October 1991 this could have changed the course of the civil war.<sup>82</sup> Instead, the Dayton peace agreement for Bosnia came many thousands of deaths too late. It could have been reached much earlier if NATO states had been willing to display more credible deterrence.

Secondly, how much force is enough in order to alter or, if necessary, break the will of violent parties? Threatening force alone is too weak, as was evident by the many futile attempts in the four years of the Bosnian war. Even ultimatums, which were issued twice in these years (February 1994, August 1995), had only limited success and led to the most comprehensive military operation ever conducted by NATO, which finally brought the Bosnian conflict to an end. The successful use of limited force is, in any case, exacerbated by the lack of internal discipline and cohesion within the parties to the conflict. It has only a limited effect on the cost-benefit analysis of the conflicting parties, whose motivations and interests are asymmetric to those of the intervening parties. The former have a higher tolerance for incurring costs and consider the measures of limited force more as a sign of weakness and indecisiveness than of strength. That is why when NATO threatened or conducted air raids, the Serbs responded by committing acts of extortion and retaliation, taking peacekeeping soldiers as hostages or prisoners, blockading aid convoys, and breaking off negotiations. As a result, the use of force, despite its limited nature, caused more harm than good. It was not until the neutral position of the UN peacekeeping forces was abandoned—a policy which

was a failure from the outset—and clear partisanship in favor of the Croatian-Bosnian side was shown that the cost-benefit ratio changed to the disadvantage of the Serbian side. Indeed, military operations were progressively intensified (e.g. Operation Deliberate Force 1995, Operation Allied Force 1999) in order to force Milošević to withdraw from Bosnia and Kosovo. The “collateral damage” of the Kosovo conflict in particular (e.g. the acceleration of ethnic cleansing, the increase in the number of victims, refugees waves, the burden on neighboring states, and the destruction of vital infrastructure in Serbia) calls into question the humanity of this “humanitarian” intervention.<sup>83</sup>

Thirdly, added to the above are the internal problems of coalitions and their decision-making capacity. Given their military and technological superiority, a Western “Alliance of the Willing” should have no difficulty in destroying enemy forces and bringing about a rapid resolution to conflicts. Yet this does not turn out to be the case due to the numerous reasons for the self-restraint practiced by democracies in their use of military force, as was shown in the confrontations with Somalian militias, Serbian nationalists, and the Iraqi dictator. The fact that such conflicts represent only minor threats to the strategic or national interests of Western states, consideration for public opinion and coalition partners, an interest in avoiding losses and protecting the civilian population, and so forth—all of these factors combine and dictate that third parties try to achieve political goals with the smallest level of military engagement possible. How and by what means this can be achieved can lead to intense arguments over the implementation of military options, as was the case in the Kosovo conflict (i.e. over the choice of targets for air raids, the pros and cons of ground operations). Another possible point of contention is whether and when to conduct a military operation, as was the case regarding the sanctions policy against Iraq that was designed to enforce the conditions of the 1991 ceasefire. In such cases, the intervention is less determined by the goal than by the necessity of holding the alliance together,

<sup>81</sup> For example, the preventive stationing of UN peacekeeping forces in Macedonia only cost \$3 million. Had the conflict reached mid-level intensity, the bill would have been \$15 billion. In the case of Bosnia, conflict prevention would have cost around \$33 billion. So far, well over \$60 billion has been spent on peacekeeping, peace enforcement, and reconstruction. See Michael E. Brown and Richard N. Rosecrance, eds., *The Costs of Conflict: Prevention and Cure in the Global Arena* (Lanham, MD, 1999).

<sup>82</sup> Among them are the last US Ambassador to Yugoslavia, Warren Zimmermann. See his article, “The Last Ambassador: A Memoir of the Collapse of Yugoslavia,” *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 74 (March/April 1995), pp. 13ff.

<sup>83</sup> See Doreen K. Allerkamp, “The Risks of Conflict Intervention. Paradoxes of Coercive Diplomacy in the Kosovo Crisis,” March 2002, [www.maxwell.syr.edu/moynihan/Programs/euc/pdfs/No6.pdf](http://www.maxwell.syr.edu/moynihan/Programs/euc/pdfs/No6.pdf); Marie-Janine Calic, “Probleme dritter Parteien bei der Regulierung von Bürgerkriegen: Der Fall Bosnien-Herzegowina,” in Krumwiede and Waldmann, eds., pp. 217–240; Steven L. Burg, “Coercive Diplomacy in the Balkans: The U.S. Use of Force in Bosnia and Kosovo,” in Art and Cronin, eds., pp. 57–118.

and this weakens the diplomatic and military effectiveness of the undertaking. As a consequence, it is anything but easy to succeed in changing the will of fragmented opponents by the use of force or to coordinate a coalition of diverse actors and institutions (e.g. UN Security Council, NATO, EU, OSCE, Contact Group on the Balkans, etc.) and thereby maintain the effectiveness of the intervention.

These factors—the self-perpetuating dynamics of irregular violence on the one hand, self-restraint on the part of external parties in the deployment of force on the other hand, and a difference in the strength of motives and interests on both sides—explain why the strategy of compellence is so difficult to practice, especially in a climate of unbridled violence. It also explains why humanitarian intervention combined with the threat of force in the four cases of conflict in the nineties (Somalia, Haiti, Bosnia, Kosovo) was only successful in one case (Haiti). Here the offer of a “honorable” stepping down to the military rulers made a considerable contribution to the policy’s success. If such a way out isn’t available, the alternatives are either to end the operation (e.g. Somalia) and suffer a loss of credibility or step up the violence (e.g. Bosnia, Kosovo) and accept higher risks. Looking at the peace treaties that are finally arrived at after such a deployment of force, one finds the results are quite wanting. Dayton, for example, only served to confirm the results of ethnic cleansing and the power of the ruling nationalists. The political future of Kosovo remains up in the air, with the only difference being that after the conflict the Serbs have become the victims of ethnic cleansing, despite the massive military and civilian presence of the intervening power. The success of such peace treaties depends on this sort of presence for an indefinite period.

Still, the ending of the civil war in the Balkans is a success. But it has shown that humanitarian interventions involving military force in ethnonational conflicts are extremely complex and difficult. In any case, they are more difficult than military planners assume. They continue to classify such operations as “lesser-included cases” of armed conflict. As a result, they misjudge the environment, as the American forces are currently experiencing on a daily basis in the battle against terrorist resistance in Iraq. While the violent conflicts in the Balkans were influenced by special factors, they can still be viewed as representative of the new form of civil war. To this extent, one can derive conditions from them that are important for the success of military intervention in conflicts of

this type. These include: having clear political aims and engaging in consistent crisis management, conveying the demands on the opponent clearly and with a sense of urgency, sufficient domestic and international support, a high level of self-motivation, a willingness to take the initiative and threaten the opponent with convincing military consequences with a minimum of costs to oneself, and a combination of political and military pressure with political and economic incentives.<sup>84</sup>

This is a tall order of conditions and it is therefore rarely met, as the record of military intervention since the end of the Cold War shows. Above all, motivation is decisive, which is a standard problem for deterrence. If the opponent’s motivation is higher than one’s own, failure is inevitable. This is especially problematic in conflicts which don’t involve threats to one’s own vital interests, but do threaten the other side’s interests. This makes it all the more important to clearly formulate national and international interests, to work early on towards a diplomatic solution to the conflict, and to have military options available that make it clear to the opponent that one has the means to hit him quickly and decisively at little cost and risk to oneself, thereby forcing him to take the first step.

Each civil war is different. The effect of deterrence and military intervention by third parties in such conflicts are extremely dependent on the context. Thus, states and coalitions are well advised to review very carefully the conditions for success before they commit to intervention. Given the multitude of civil wars, democracies—which are by nature risk adverse and cost-conscious—are faced with the difficult question of which ones they should intervene in and which not. At the height of the Kosovo conflict, Prime Minister Tony Blair devised five test questions which can be used as a guideline for deciding whether to intervene: “First, are we sure of our case? War is an imperfect instrument for righting humanitarian distress; but armed force is sometimes the only means of dealing with dictators. Second, have we exhausted all diplomatic options? We should always give peace every chance, as we have in the case of Kosovo. Third, on the

<sup>84</sup> See Robert J. Art, “Coercive Diplomacy: What Do We Know?,” in Art and Cronin, eds., pp. 359–420; Christoph Bertram, “Multilateral Diplomacy and Conflict Resolution,” *Survival*, Vol. 27, No. 4 (Winter 1995/96), pp. 65–82; Peter Viggo Jacobsen, “The Strategy of Coercive Diplomacy: Refining Existing Theory to Post-Cold War Realities,” in Freedman, ed., pp. 61–85.

basis of a practical assessment of the situation, are there military operations we can sensibly and prudently undertake? Fourth, are we prepared for the long term? In the past we talked too much of exit strategies. But having made a commitment we cannot simply walk away once the fight is over[...]. And finally, do we have national interests involved?”<sup>85</sup>

**85** Tony Blair, *Doctrine of the International Community*, Speech by the UK Prime Minister (London: Foreign and Commonwealth Office, April 22, 1999). Blair added that these “new rules” would only work “if we have reformed international institutions [...]. If we want a world ruled by law and by international cooperation than we have to support the UN as its central pillar.”

## Conclusions

Deterrence had it relatively easy under the conditions of the East-West conflict. It needed to respond to known threats and keep these in check with credible military options. Today deterrence is more difficult because the overarching conditions of the international system and the security threats have changed. On the one hand, there is a lack of an effective international order, cooperative security policies, and a legitimate authority for carrying out sanctions and enforcement. These are all prerequisites for the effective use of deterrence as a means of politics and influencing the behavior of agents. On the other hand, new actors and amorphous forms of violence have come to the fore in a globalized and fragmented world. Terrorists, rogue states, fanatic national and religious movements, and participants in civil wars are hard to gauge and even more difficult to influence. At the same time, we have seen a decline in the importance of interstate wars as an international security threat. Thirdly, military means are not capable of eliminating and containing the new threats, and certainly not when used alone. The US and the EU see this similarly in their security strategies, but they don't agree on how to handle the threats. While the US overrates its military power, Europeans overrate international law and diplomacy. After all, international law and diplomacy don't work without power and threats. On the other hand, it is also not a good policy to abandon deterrence in favor of military solutions to security problems. Non-military means of enforcement also frequently fail to achieve their purpose when used alone. What is needed, therefore, is a conception of deterrence that is adapted to the new security problems and to carefully analyze the so-called new threats. Above all, these threats should be seen as distinct from one another, not overdramatized by lumping them together and generalizing about them. False analyses of threats necessarily results in false strategies and deliberate wars instead of necessary ones.

**Nuclear deterrence:** This form of deterrence has largely disappeared from public perception. Yet the importance and danger of nuclear weapons have not changed at all, only their political relevance for rela-

tions between the great powers. Meanwhile, their role has not been marginalized in the security plans of the US and Russia. While they have lost some importance vis-à-vis conventional weapons in American strategy, they remain a part of America's unrivalled military power that serves as the basis of American global hegemony in the form of dissuasion. At the same time, nuclear deterrence plays an increasingly bigger role in regional contexts, such as in relations between India and Pakistan, in East Asia—where a North Korea with nuclear weapons could spur a chain reaction—or in the Gulf Region, should Iran attempt to acquire nuclear weapons. It is to be expected that the logic of deterrence and its inherent pressure to act moderately and prudently in crisis situations also holds true for the new nuclear weapons states. But, the world will not become more stable through the proliferation of nuclear weapons. For its part, the US sees the future as having many nuclear powers, and it distinguishes between friends, competitors, and enemies. American nuclear weapons remain decisive for maintaining the peace vis-à-vis rivals, but they are virtually useless against the “axis of evil.” This is an odd notion, and it is only understandable if one finds as morally reprehensible as the Bush administration does the idea of bilateral deterrence between the US and equally implicated “rogue states.” But this scenario does not reflect reality, as the calculated behavior of the Iraqi dictator in the Gulf War of 1991 and thereafter demonstrates. The behavior of Tehran's theocratic regime vis-à-vis the US is another example. Thus, threats of retaliation are still effective, and the advantages of having nuclear weapons are fewer than the US government argues they are in its campaign against rogue states.

America's counterproliferation policy has paradoxical consequences. The fixation on the political and strategic importance of the proliferation of WMD leads to the perception that, given the emphasis placed on them, owning nuclear weapons is the surest way not only to deter the US and neutralize the American advantage in conventional forces, but also to persuade Washington to negotiate over security guarantees (see North Korea). At the same time, the new objectives of deterrence (e.g. denial, pre-emption,

mini-nukes) and the neglect of arms control does more to promote proliferation than contain it. The issue of nuclear weapons is therefore likely to remain one of the central problems in international relations and could in the long run become a problem for the US and its dominant position. This development will lead either to the spread of nuclear proliferation or to a fundamental reform of the politics of non-proliferation. What remains decisive is the willingness of the international community to proactively and preventively combat proliferation, above all by discouraging those states that seek to acquire nuclear weapons from doing so. This can be done by taking their security problems seriously and offering to cooperate with them, but also by delegitimizing WMD by means of effective arms control and substantial nuclear disarmament.

**Terrorism:** Historical experience teaches that a strategy of terror usually fails. In any case, it does not bring about the desired reversal of power relations. Terrorist movements have a tendency to overestimate their capabilities. While it is true that the new terrorism represents an extremely troublesome disruption in international relations, the new form of asymmetric warfare that it embodies is not a barrier to the use of deterrence. Successful defense against this threat begins with decisive measures to deny terrorists success and avoiding overreaction. Massive retaliation and the rhetoric of war unintentionally serve only the interests of terrorists. While immediate deterrence does not work if terrorists use their own lives as a weapon, their organization—leadership, logistics, and operation—is vulnerable. The networks of terrorist groups can only operate and exist if they have stable structures in place and fragile states provide them with a base for their activities. What is required, then, is to cut off state and non-state support, limit the attack capabilities and resources of terrorist groups through a mix of intelligence, police, and military measures, and systematically destroy the infrastructure of the networks. This strategy of prevention will only be successful in the long run, however, after terrorism has been deprived of its social and ideological foundation and the environment for extremism has been contained by measures designed to create a new political order. On the whole, the assumption that the war on terror will require a decades-long effort that will combine containment, deterrence, and international engagement is probably correct.

**Civil wars:** Deterrence is also possible in scenarios involving civil wars, albeit difficult. Contrary to the war on terrorism, states are reluctant to intervene in the internal affairs of other states. Although the Westfalian conception of sovereignty is outdated and the importance of human rights has grown in the public consciousness around the world, the lessons of failed interventions are clear. Without proof of direct national interests at stake, the political will necessary for successfully carrying through with such intervention cannot be mustered. Due to the collapse of all order, even immediate deterrence tactics have little impact, be they in the form of economic sanctions, arms embargoes, threats of force, or punishment of human rights abuses. What really counts is intervention by a credible international force.

The Balkans show what prerequisites need to be met for intervention in intrastate conflicts to be successful. The prevention, containment, and handling of civil wars is primarily the responsibility of neighboring states since they are immediately affected and are in a better position to deal with conflicts in their own region. They also know when international support is necessary for dealing with such conflicts. This is especially the case for regional organizations like the African Union. Rapid response forces need to be at the ready in order to deter against ethnic violence as well as to contain and end such conflicts as quickly as possible. In addition, there need to be incentives for cooperative behavior and appropriate conditions for negotiating a lasting solution to the conflict. Finally, the most difficult and time-consuming task involves re-establishing state order and reviving the economy. This concept of combining conflict prevention, peace enforcement, peacekeeping, and civilian reconstruction is very ambitious. But it is more successful than the approaches to date, which have largely neglected the problem of how to deal with state failure. The most important finding is that this task must be considered a key challenge for the international community and international security policy. Without a functioning state, all other security problems are also irresolvable.

**Credibility:** This is the key condition for effective deterrence. It is a psychological condition, not an objective one. In other words, it is a question of perception, which itself is strongly influenced by the interests and values at stake. Vital interests and established alliance obligations are always credible, while Western interests in peripheral conflicts are more

indeterminate. That is why civil wars are frequently not perceived as a threat to the peace until too late and are dealt with using insufficient means. It is precisely in these sorts of conflicts that the asymmetry of motivations works to the disadvantage of the decisiveness of external actors to prevail against resistance and the interests of the violent parties. That is why military intervention doesn't work when all efforts at peaceful conflict resolution have failed and the threat of violence also hasn't worked. In such situations, the opposing side is in the position to seize the initiative. That means one has to be willing and able to take vigorous action and to risk escalation. A gradual approach like in the 78-day long bombing campaign in the Kosovo conflict is misguided. Instead, being decisive from the outset is key. If such decisiveness and capability are lacking, this instrument of coercion should not even be taken up in the first place and a reaction to the crisis should be abandoned.

The credibility of deterrence today is based on the legitimacy of the international order and the strength of law, not the other way around. But it has become more difficult to reach a consensus in this matter than it was during the time of the East-West conflict due to today's conditions of an asymmetrical balance of power and conflict situations. This is evident by the erosion of the prohibition on the threat of or the use of military force that has taken place since then. If one does not want to simply adapt to this situation and accept the withering away of the influence of international law, the authority and capability of the UN Security Council must be strengthened. This includes clarifying the issue of under which conditions it is legitimate to engage in preventive and early intervention in order to combat the new threats. This cannot be left to the discretion of American power to define the rules, rather it has to be resolved by a multilateral process with the goal of re-establishing general trust in the international legal order and of circumscribing the capriciousness of great powers.

**Conclusion:** As a policy instrument, deterrence is not easy to use, dependent on the context of the situation, and unreliable. It is and will remain one of the possible means available for achieving security. If, however, given the increasing complexity and uncertainty of international relations, one wants to avoid relying on deterrence and its credibility, other political skills also need to be fostered. These include: reducing the fear of and the tendency to demonize adversaries, intelligence analysis of threats, research based

political consultation, offering incentives, multilateral arms control, preventive engagement, active and passive defense, reducing risks, nation and state building, etc. Since these capacities are insufficiently developed, there is little rationale for the assumption that deterrence has outlived its purpose and can therefore be neglected. What it really comes down to is combining deterrence with other means and methods of security policy in order to achieve the greatest possible impact. The actual political challenge is not how threats should be deterred, rather it is about how influence can be acquired. Deterrence is therefore most valuable when it is tied to a broad strategy of exerting influence and is implemented as a part of that strategy.

### Acronyms

ABM	Anti-Ballistic Missile
ATACMS	Army Tactical Missile System
C <sup>3</sup>	Command, Control, Communication
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
ESS	European Security Strategy
ETA	Euzkadi ta Askatasuna (Basque Homeland and Freedom)
EU	European Union
FY	Fiscal Year
G 8	Group of 8 (the seven leading Western industrialized countries + Russia)
HEU	Highly Enriched Uranium
ICBM	Intercontinental Ballistic Missile
IISS	International Institute for Strategic Studies
IRA	Irish Republican Army
JSTARS	Joint Surveillance and Target Attack Radar System
MARV	Maneuverable Re-Entry Vehicle
MIRV	Multiple Independently Targeted Re-Entry Vehicle
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NPR	Nuclear Posture Review
NPT	Non-Proliferation Treaty
NSS	The National Security Strategy of the United States of America
OSCE	Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PKK	Partiya Karkerên Kurdistan (Workers' Party of Kurdistan)
SDI	Strategic Defense Initiative
SIPRI	Stockholm International Peace Research Institute
SLBM	Sea-Launched Ballistic Missile
SORT	Strategic Offensive Reduction Treaty
SSBN	Ship, Submersible, Ballistic Nuclear
START	Strategic Arms Reduction Talks
UN	United Nations
UNPREDEP	United Nations Preventive Deployment Force
UNPROFOR	United Nations Protection Force
UNSCOM	United Nations Special Commission
WMD	Weapons of Mass Destruction