



The European International Model United Nations 2016

North Atlantic Council



Photo source: *The Parliament: Politics, Policy, and People Magazine.*

NATO and Energy Security

Welcome Letter

Distinguished delegates,

A warm welcome to the North Atlantic Council (NAC) of The European International Model United Nations (TEIMUN) of 2016! In our role as an international body concerned with international security whereby all decisions need to be taken by consensus, the two topics we will be discussing in July will certainly give rise to intense debates. This issue, concerned with the role of the NATO in the field of energy security has become more and more central within the organisation and on the international field.

In this background paper, we will first of all discuss the current role of the NATO in this field. Hereafter, the current threats to international energy security will be discussed in light of the role that the NATO could play in addressing them. Finally, these matters will flow into the questions that a resolution must seek to answer.

For both issues, the Chairs encourage you to rely not only on the background papers, but also to actively undertake research about the issue and your country's position. In order to guarantee equal access to materials, this background paper will refer only to online, open-access sources. Seeking additional information through other sources is encouraged and seeing the importance of the NAC and the necessity to reach decisions by consensus, we hope that each delegate will be able to bring their own contributions to the discussion.

We look forward to what will undoubtedly be intense and high-quality debates and to meeting all of you in July!

Diplomatically yours,

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Introduction

“We must make energy diversification a strategic transatlantic priority and reduce Europe’s dependency on Russian energy.” – NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen at the Brussels Forum in March 2014.

In light of recent events in Eastern Europe, particularly in Ukraine, and other global destabilising factors, NATO Member States have recognised the need to focus more on the issue of energy security. Since the NATO is officially founded on the principles of collective security, energy security might not be a typical NATO subject. However, since energy security is a pivotal interest for modern societies and states, Member States have recognised that a disruption of this energy security can cause incredible damage to the any parts of government, including the military. With this in mind, NATO should (1) seek to pursue a strategic awareness of energy developments and their implications for international security; (2) develop competences to support the protection of critical energy infrastructure and (3) work towards improving the energy efficiency of its Member States’ military.

NATO’s Current Role in Energy Security

With the accession of Central and Eastern European Member States to the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation also came an increased focus on energy security. These states were dependent on energy systems developed during the Cold War, which made them rely on the Russian Federation for energy supply. These states viewed NATO as a forum to discuss these energy security concerns.¹

However, only after the gas crisis of 2006 did this issue became part of NATO’s agenda. This was during the Riga Summit of October 2006, where its communiqué asked the Council to “consult on the most immediate risks in the field of energy security, in order to define those areas where NATO may add value to safeguard the security interests of the Allies...”²

As modern economies will need more and more amounts of energy, in the form of oil, gas and other fuels, there is an increased competition on the global energy market. According to Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, former Secretary General of the NATO, the key question is how to convince emerging economic giants to adopt a cooperative, rather than a competitive approach to this market.³ Another concern is that most of the world’s oil is located in a small number of unstable countries, not particularly fond of Western democracies. All the while, these Western democracies rely more and more on imported energy, as their economic focus shifts towards other markets. This creates a dependency on, for example, Russian gas imports. Moreover, a concern for the NATO and its Member States is

¹ Michael Rühle, “Nato and energy security: from philosophy to implementation,” *Journal of Transatlantic Studies* 10, no. 4 (2012): 388-395.

² NATO, *Riga Summit Declaration*, (Brussels: NATO, 2015).

³ “Panel discussion withh NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen and former NATO Secretaries General Lord Robertson and Jaap de Hoop Scheffer at the Brussels Forum,” *NATO* (website), accessed May 1, 2015, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/opinions_108272.htm.

also the protection of critical infrastructure, as energy supplies now have to be found further and further in more isolated areas. Pipelines, for example, are often located in unstable areas and are prone to attacks, such as in the Nigerian Delta.⁴ A final concern should be for the environment and the security risks climate change brings, as environmental disasters can have profound impact on international energy security.

In his article, Jaap de Hoop Scheffer defines three main roles for the NATO. The first is to *protect and police* the international seas, since, for example, 20 per cent of the world's daily oil supply goes through the Strait of Hormuz. The protection of these critical choke points is increasingly recognised by the Alliance. The second main role of the NATO is to *foster partnerships* with other countries around the world, including major energy suppliers such as Russia and Qatar. Essentially, these partnerships help increase the NATO's ability to predict future trends and it can build trust between the members of the Alliance and the partners. Moreover, partnerships with other international organisations are key to sharing knowledge and responding effectively to future challenges. Similarly, Jaap de Hoop Scheffer also recognises the importance of private companies in this sector, since public and private interests are closely linked when it comes to the energy sector. Thirdly and lastly, he defines the *support* of NATO's Member States in dealing with energy-related challenges as the third role for NATO. Acknowledging that other organisations and mechanism might be better suit for this purpose, the role for the NATO in terms of consultation and common analyses on energy security strategies should not be underestimated. Another form of support can be identified, namely the practical assistance in emergencies, such as natural disasters or energy crises.

In the NATO Wales summit of 2014, the Heads of State of the NATO members supported the sanctions imposed on Russia, including those curtailing "... Russian access to sensitive defence and energy sector technologies," and thereby recognised the threat of Russia's influence over the European energy sector.⁵ These and other threats will be discussed in the next section of the paper.

Threats to International Energy Security

As mentioned in the previous section, threats to international energy security include (i) unstable states and regions and their role in international energy supply, (ii) the prevalence of Russian gas and energy in Europe, (iii) piracy and (iv) climate change. This section addresses these four threats and provides for a brief analysis.

Unstable states and regions

A large concentration of the international oil supply is located in politically unstable regions, making its supply unreliable at times. According to the International Energy Agency, the global energy system could fall short if turmoil

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ NATO, *Wales Summit Declaration* (Brussels: NATO, 2014).

in parts of the Middle East continues.⁶ For example, investments in oil in Iraq have dwindled enormously while the region has some of the easiest exploitable oil in the world. However, the instability in the country, due to ISIL and others has turned away investors. The chief economist of the IEA warned that if these trends continue, oil prices could rebound majorly.⁷

Another issue linking to the general threat of unstable regions is pipelines running through certain regions in Africa and the Middle East, including Uganda and Nigeria in Africa and Syria and Lebanon in the Middle East. An example of the dangers these pipelines face is in Nigeria, where an oil pipeline had been bombed on several locations following the arrest of an accused oil warlord. The spills caused by this kind of bombings are often massive and have severe impacts on oil supply and foremost on the Nigerian ecosystem and economy.⁸

Another example of a highly unstable oil-exporting area is Syria, where most of the state's oil fields have been taken over by ISIL, which uses its profits to finance their organisation.⁹ Even though the amount of exploited oil barrels has significantly dwindled after coalition air strikes, the sale of oil, mainly within the region itself, still makes up for a large part of the organisation's income.

The mainly oil-related threats falling under this subsection thus serve as a double-edged sword. On the one hand, international energy security is threatened by security risks in oil exploiting and transporting regions and on the other hand, bunkered or confiscated oil is used to finance terrorist organisations, creating a vicious spiral.

NATO can contribute to tackling these issues by fostering their partnership with partner nations in the region, including Iraq, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates. NATO could further developed practical cooperation in the fields of critical infrastructure protection and the management of possible disasters, either humanitarian or terrorism-related.¹⁰

Russia and Europe

An interdependent relationship exists between Russia and the EU, as on the one hand the EU imports a significant amount of its oil, gas, uranium and coal from Russia and the EU on the other hand forms the most important energy market for Russia. In numbers, Russia provides roughly 25% of all gas consumed in the

⁶ Emily Gosden and Andrew Critchlow, "IEA says global energy supply in danger from turmoil in Middle East and Russia," *The Telegraph*, November 12, 2014, accessed May 1, 2015, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/finance/newsbysector/energy/oilandgas/11225503/IEA-says-global-energy-supply-in-danger-from-turmoil-in-Middle-East-and-Russia.html>.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Hilary Uguru, "Bomb attacks on pipelines cause massive oil spill in Nigeria," *The Globe and Mail*, February 1, 2016, accessed May 1, 2015, <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/world/bomb-attacks-on-pipelines-cause-massive-oil-spill-in-nigeria/article28482833/>.

⁹ Erika Solomon, Robin Kwong and Steven Bernard, "Inside Isis Inc: The journey of a barrel of oil," *Financial Times*, February 29, 2016, accessed May 1, 2016, <http://ig.ft.com/sites/2015/isis-oil/>.

¹⁰ "Panel discussion with NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen and former NATO Secretaries General Lord Robertson and Jaap de Hoop Scheffer at the Brussels Forum," *NATO* (website), accessed May 1, 2015, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/opinions_108272.htm.

have started to regret that conditions for mutual cooperation and trust-building on the basis of international law do not exist.¹⁵

Maritime crime

According to the International Maritime Organisation, attacks on energy vessels make up a significant percentage of maritime piracy attacks, with 12% in 2006 and 24% in 2007.¹⁶ It cannot be proven that these vessels are targets per se. Two main concerns can be identified, namely the threat that the number of maritime attacks could increase and secondly, that pirates could cooperate with terrorist movements, meaning they could blow up large oil tankers.¹⁷

However, the energy supply from this region is relatively valuable to the European Member States. For example, the Gulf of Guinea is believed to have one of the vastest supplies of oil and gas in the world. However, this region is also plagued by a multitude of maritime crimes, including piracy, armed robbery at sea, oil bunkering and the dumping of toxic waste.¹⁸ These are all factors disrupting the exploitation and transportation of natural resources. Especially for the European Member States, the exploitations from this region can form a viable alternative to Russian energy supply, on the condition that these maritime threats will be dealt with.

NATO currently has several maritime activities around the world, including surveillance and patrolling and providing military capabilities to on-going missions.¹⁹ These operations are carried out by the Standing Naval Forces (SNF), including the NATO Shipping Centre (NSC) which provides a link between NATO and merchant ships, advising on potential risks and possible maritime interventions.²⁰

Climate change

A means to put the energy security debate on a wider agenda is to link it to the challenges climate change could bring, as it is widely recognised that it could cause humanitarian disasters, also affecting NATO, due to its supportive role in the case of these kinds of disasters.²¹ Moreover, climate change could have major impact on transportation routes in the high North due to melting polar caps and could have implications for the exploitation of natural resources; just as

¹⁵ "Relations with Russia," *NATO* (website), accessed May 1, 2016, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_50090.htm.

¹⁶ Donna J. Nincic, "Maritime Piracy: Implications for Maritime Energy Security," *Journal of Energy Security* (website), IAGS, accessed May 1, 2016, http://www.ensec.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=180:maritime-piracy-implications-for-maritime-energy-security&catid=92:issuecontent&Itemid=341%20Maritime%20Piracy:%20Implications%20for%20Maritime%20Energy%20Security.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ Ioannis Chapsos, "Stopping West African piracy is vital for Europe's energy security," *The Conversation*, March 27, 2014, accessed May 1, 2016, <http://theconversation.com/stopping-west-african-piracy-is-vital-for-europes-energy-security-24914>.

¹⁹ "NATO's maritime activities," *NATO* (website), accessed May 1, 2016, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_70759.htm#.

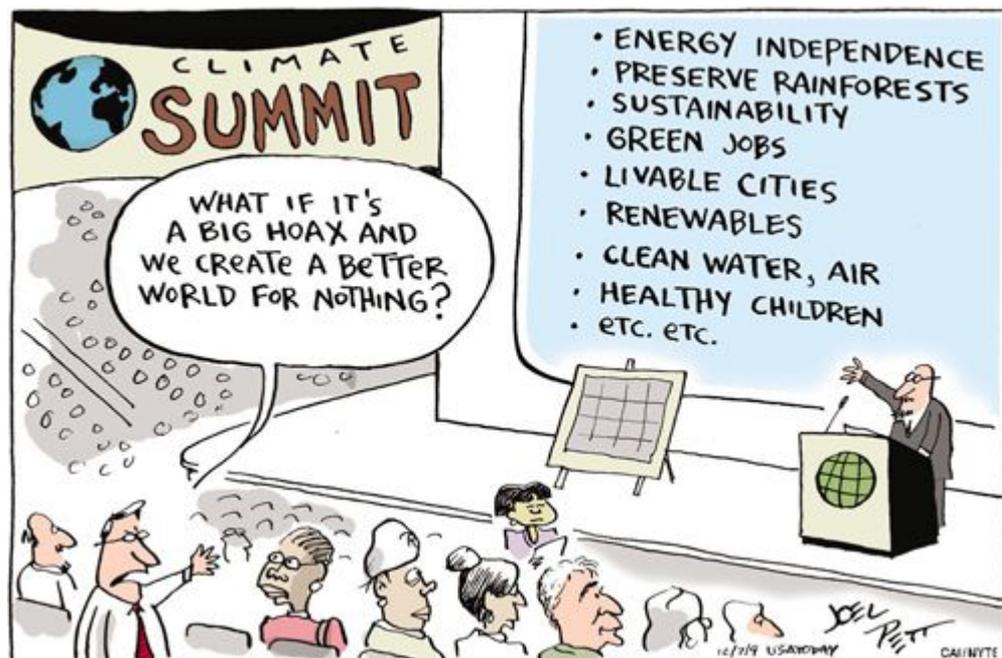
²⁰ *NATO Shipping Centre* (website), NATO, accessed May 1, 2016, <http://www.shipping.nato.int/Pages/NSC.aspx>.

²¹ Michael Rühle, "Nato and energy security: from philosophy to implementation," *Journal of Transatlantic Studies* 10, no. 4 (2012): 393.

the exploitation of natural resources itself has an impact on climate change.²² Climate change and environmental issues have been included in every NATO Summit Declaration in the recent years, recognising the importance of addressing environmental issues and their linkage to energy security.

The European Union has issued the Renewable Energy Directive in 2009, which includes the target for Member States to fulfill at least 20% of all their energy needs by the use of renewable energy.²³ This increase in the use of renewable energy, which can be produced in the domestic European market, could be an alternative to providing energy independency for European Member States.

Figure 2:
Planetsave.



Conclusion

Four main threats relating to international energy security have been identified in this background paper. These are unstable regions and states, dependency on Russian energy, maritime crime and climate change. In all these areas, a role for the NATO can be identified, whether that is a small or larger role. Currently, NATO focuses on the protection of critical infrastructure, both maritime and aground, on raising strategic awareness and on improving the energy efficiency of its Member States.

The tools NATO should apply to harness these issues are, amongst others, a closer cooperation with other international organisation and private parties, providing support to its Member States and the fostering of partnerships with

²² Marcus DuBois King and Jay Gullede, "The Climate Change and Energy Security Nexus," *The Fletcher Forum of World Affairs* 37, no. 2 (Summer 2013), accessed May 1, 2016, <http://www.fletcherforum.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/King-Gullede-37-2.pdf>.

²³ European Union, *Renewable Energy Directive*, (Brussels: European Union, 2009), <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:32009L0028&from=EN>.

states around the world. Within this framework, NATO can be a relevant actor in the field of international energy security.

However, the issues that the Treaty Organisation faces is that it is in need of recognition as a forum for the debate on these topics and a diverse array of Ally interests. An example of this is the heavy reliance on Russian gas by Eastern European states and the more autonomous position of the United States. NATO's image as an operations-driven organisation can prevent its members from discussing these issues for the fear of looking like the precursor to military engagement. However, the NATO should not be held hostage by conceptions of others and should find a way to create this political dialogue without it seeming provoking.

Questions a Resolution Must Answer (QARMAS)

1. To what extent should NATO be a forum for political dialogue on the subject of international energy security?
2. Should NATO play a more comprehensive role in maritime protection?
3. How can climate change be effectively incorporated into the energy security debate?
4. How can NATO, through its partnerships, offer protection of critical energy infrastructure?
5. Which steps should NATO take to effectively improve military energy supply?
6. What should NATO's role in the Europe-Russia gas dispute be?
7. How can NATO contribute to the diversification of European energy supply?
8. In which ways can NATO more closely cooperate with other international organisations in this subject area?
9. How can NATO improve its image as a valuable actor in the field of energy security?
10. What should NATO do to improve strategic awareness of energy security?

Additional Readings/Sources

In order to acquaint yourself further with the topic of energy security and the role of NATO in this field, please read the summit declarations of the following NATO summits:

The 2009 Strasbourg Summit;

The 2012 Chicago Summit;

The 2014 Wales Summit.

These summits declarations all include passages related to the topic.

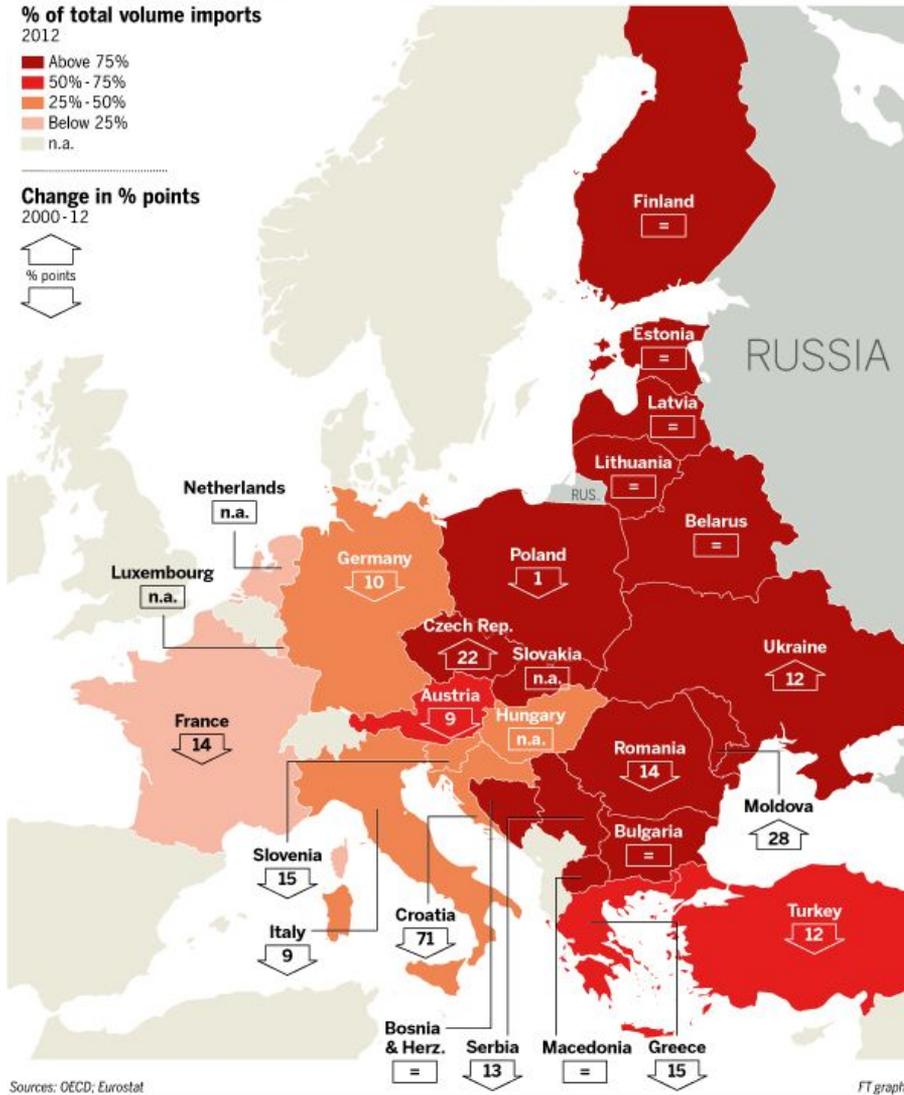
Appendix

Natural gas import dependency on Russia

% of total volume imports
2012



Change in % points
2000-12



Sources: OECD; Eurostat

FT graphic

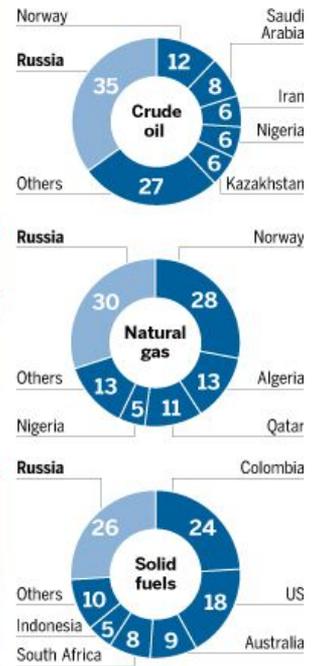
Top natural gas importers from Russia

Cubic metres (bn), 2012



EU 27 imports

% of extra-European imports (volume), 2011



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