

NATO'S NEW ROLE

The Alliance's Response to a Rising China

Zinaida Bechná and Bradley A. Thayer

Russia's actions in Crimea and Ukraine have been momentous in their consequences for the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). Moscow has instilled new life in the almost seventy-year-old alliance. Doubts about its relevance and utility in the post-Cold War period have faded, at least for the time being, as leaders ponder what Russian leader Vladimir Putin will do next to challenge the alliance. This uncertainty weighs heavily on the heads of state and government of NATO's twenty-eight members.¹ NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen characterized the situation well when he wrote, "In these turbulent times NATO must be prepared to undertake the full range of missions and to defend Allies against the full range of threats."²

These are indeed turbulent times. But this is not a novel situation for the alliance. Since its 1949 founding, NATO has experienced and survived many crises, including those in Berlin in 1958 and 1961, the Multilateral Force debate after the Cuban missile crisis of 1962, and the deployment of intermediate-range ballistic missiles in the 1980s. With the end of the Cold War, NATO confronted another crisis: one of confidence.

Our central argument is that the transatlantic relationship is challenged by not only Russia's *Machtpolitik* actions in Crimea and Ukraine but also the rise of China and the lack of a shared security identity between the United States and

major NATO members. The deleterious consequences of China's rise are discerned increasingly well from Washington. As a result of Beijing's rise and the U.S. strategic rebalancing to Asia to reassure allies there and deter potential aggression, Europe is less important to the United States than

Zinaida Bechná is an assistant professor in the Department of International Relations and European Studies, Masaryk University, Brno, Czech Republic. Bradley A. Thayer is a professor of political science, University of Iceland.

it was during the Cold War.³ Yet a strong U.S. commitment to NATO remains important precisely because of the expansion of China's capabilities and the risk it poses to NATO.⁴

The consequences for NATO of the rise of China must be analyzed to identify policy solutions that will prevent a decline in the transatlantic alliance. To contribute to this objective, we review the major military, political, and normative aspects of the NATO alliance and argue that an explicit "Norms and Principles" component within NATO should be created to reinforce Western identity so as to help the organization remain unified in the face of a rising China.

Our argument is significant for two reasons. First, the rise of China has the potential to drive the transatlantic alliance apart. This is only in part because the United States increasingly is focused on China as a hegemonic threat. Before Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the U.S. commitment to NATO was under strain as a result of the Obama administration's reorientation to confront the rise of China.⁵ Russia's actions have given the United States pause, and Washington is laboring to increase its presence in Europe while doing the same in Asia. In contrast, many in Europe view China not as a threat but as an increasingly sophisticated market, trading partner, investor, and lender. Generally, European capitals seek to maintain excellent relations with Beijing.⁶ Should this divergence continue to grow, it could place the United States and Europe at strategic loggerheads.

Second, a basic tenet of strategy is to divide your adversary from its allies and even win those allies over to your side. Thus, strategists should expect that China will seek to divide the West, if China's rise continues and security competition intensifies.⁷ A United States allied with Europe is a far stronger competitor than a United States divided from major European allies, who may remain observers or de facto neutrals in a Sino-American crisis. Accordingly, as Sino-American security competition increases, it is reasonable to expect that China will try to divide the United States from key NATO members through diplomatic and economic means. Members of the transatlantic community should anticipate this challenge and be prepared to meet it. In doing so, the normative aspect of the alliance can play a key role.

NATO AS A MILITARY ALLIANCE

NATO's historical role as a military alliance was to deter attacks on its members and defend them if necessary. NATO was spectacularly successful in this during the Cold War, and we submit that this should not change—NATO's military role remains significant.

Historically, NATO was designed as a military alliance to protect security, and it has been most effective and successful in performing this difficult task for over forty years.⁸ Indeed, NATO has proved to be one of the most successful alliances

in history.⁹ It served as an instrument to build sustainable security on the inter-governmental level. The key objective was to contain the Soviet threat. NATO provided the security umbrella under which European states were able to bury ancient hatreds and unite against a common threat.

With the end of the Cold War, the complicated and rather messy institutional security frameworks—not only NATO, but also the World Trade Organization, Western European Union, European Community, and Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe—were the result of a correlation of military, political, and economic efforts designed to advance European security in an evolving world. But despite the proliferation of new institutions and alliance missions, the central military concern over Russia never went away. The principal military role of the alliance remained to secure members, especially new member states on Russia's periphery, against the Russian threat. Events in Estonia in 2007, in Georgia in 2008, and against Ukraine today demonstrate that the concern over the actions of Putin's Russia is significant, and thus NATO's military mission should remain in place.

NATO AS A POLITICAL ALLIANCE

NATO is also an alliance, so it is a political creature. As with its military role, we argue that this should not change. In essence, the political problems during the Cold War were threefold.

The first major challenge for the alliance was to incorporate West Germany into the alliance, despite a legacy of tremendous resistance to German rearmament, particularly by the French.¹⁰ The hatred and fear directed toward Germany were unparalleled and served as a source of tension within the alliance.

The second challenge was to maintain the coherence and unity of the alliance whenever a significant alliance member chose to leave its military structure or to select neutrality. This was a central concern of Washington in the case of West Germany. As diplomatic historian Marc Trachtenberg argues, the fear that West Germany would accept a Soviet offer of unification in return for German neutrality was considerable in the 1950s and again with the appeal of Gorbachev in the mid- and late 1980s.¹¹ Yet France was a major concern in this respect as well. De Gaulle's 1966 decision to remove France from the military structure of the alliance but remain within the political structure was a major, albeit temporary, crisis for the alliance.

The third challenge was the fundamental question of the credibility of the U.S. commitment to maintain a robust, extended deterrent in the face of the growth in military power of the Warsaw Pact, particularly after the 1968 invasion of Czechoslovakia, and the continuation of the buildup in conventional and nuclear forces into the 1970s and 1980s. U.S. credibility also fluctuated owing to

strategic setbacks the United States encountered, especially the fall of Saigon in 1975 and the Iranian Revolution of 1979. The degree to which such events might have emboldened the Soviet Union is less significant than the perception among NATO members that the U.S. commitment to NATO was weakening. Reassuring the Europeans—in the face of the ups and downs of political debates in the United States; concern over U.S. decline with relation to a rising Japan; and the significant, threatening Soviet buildup—was a substantial task.

In the post-Cold War period, the political situation is positive. Germany is unified and a core member of the alliance. Moreover, since 2009 France has once again been participating fully in the military command structure of the alliance. In addition, the extended deterrent of the United States is not questioned in the manner it was during the Cold War. Yet despite these improvements, the alliance confronts major political problems. First, the United States is a hegemon in relative decline in relation to China and, as a result of China's economic and military growth, U.S. military resources and political attention are increasingly drawn toward Asia. This generates concern within the alliance, especially as Russia under Putin has taken a more belligerent course.¹²

These concerns are significant now, and have the potential to become worse in the future, as they are the seeds out of which might grow a “decoupling” of the alliance. All else being equal, a tight coupling of NATO's military capabilities and political intent augments the alliance's deterrent capability and its political health. The threat from Russia is not the threat from the Soviet Union, to be sure. However, the lopsided nature of the threat from China—an increasing threat to the United States and its interests but a far lesser threat to European states—does introduce the potential for divergence.

Within the alliance, perceptions vary considerably regarding the threat China poses. For example, May-Britt Stumbaum, an expert on the European Union (EU)–China relationship, argues that, “given their significantly different global outlooks, the United States and the European Union differ fundamentally in their perceptions of China's rise.”¹³ She submits that

Europe does not and will probably never share the United States' hard power perspective on Asia-Pacific. The U.S.' rebalancing to Asia-Pacific was spurred by strategic military consideration and is seen in an economic view only secondarily. . . . For the Europeans, and particularly Germany, the Asia-Pacific region and the relationship with China is shaped by the “tyranny of distance,” with Russia in between consuming most of the strategic thinking and resources that Germany and Europe entertain eastward.¹⁴

Moreover, some European analysts, like Chinese ones, tout the importance of multipolarity in global politics, and the necessity for strategic cooperation in

the EU-China relationship.¹⁵ For instance, Gustaaf Geeraerts asserts that, “as [a] consequence of increased international engagement and increasing economic interests abroad, Europe and China are geopolitically more proximate than ever before.”¹⁶ As these arguments suggest, this introduces the possibility that a wealthier and more prominent, powerful, and assertive China will be able to entice some European states into passivity, or even neutrality, in the event of a Sino-American crisis or confrontation.

NATO AS A NORMATIVE ALLIANCE

Although the normative component may be overlooked, given the traditional emphasis on the other two responsibilities, NATO has always incorporated this aspect. Among its members, the alliance advanced political principles regarding individual liberty, democracy, human rights, and due process and the rule of law. NATO represented political norms as much as it did military power, and these norms provided a stark contrast to oppression within the Soviet bloc.

NATO's normative component advanced four major objectives:

- It defined national security and united alliance members.¹⁷ It served as the ultimate reason for the struggle with the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact. Freedom and human rights were legitimate and superior to totalitarianism, and had to be defended against threats.
- It defined what the alliance was and was not: normatively, NATO was the opposite of the Warsaw Pact—a bastion of freedom opposed to tyranny.
- It provided a standard against which the domestic politics of member states would be measured.
- It served as a weapon to undermine the legitimacy of communism in the minds of the Soviet peoples, Soviet allies, and others worldwide, just as the Soviets attempted to undermine NATO.

The normative content was not fixed but evolved to include opposition to racism and strongly nationalistic political sentiments, with all components remaining important.

Of course, the alliance was not perfect in its adherence to these norms during the Cold War or after. NATO sided with many authoritarian governments with dismal human rights records. Yet it is equally true that at different times in the course of the Cold War the alliance exerted significant pressure on Spain to democratize, and it helped to stabilize the relationship between Greece and Turkey.¹⁸ The alliance worked to establish stable civil-military relations and to professionalize the militaries of these countries. It worked to foster democratic norms in these cases, as well as in the post-Cold War era. It has had considerable

success in transforming NATO from an alliance composed of a mix of authoritarian and democratic governments to a fully democratic alliance.¹⁹

While NATO is a military and political alliance, it is also a Western alliance, so one of its aims is to protect and advance shared Western values and norms. With the end of the military and political threat from the Soviet Union, NATO had an opportunity to place greater emphasis on Western identity and values. The role of NATO evolved toward a “European security identity.”²⁰ In essence, this identity meant supporting democracy in aspiring members. Indeed, to the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, “democracy” meant membership in the Western alliance and their commitment to accept its values and norms. As during the Cold War, the alliance proved to be not only a military institution but a democratic political organization as well, one that supports “a set of values that run counter to military nationalism, chauvinism, and racism” by promoting a military that is characterized by subordination “to elected officials, parliamentary control over defense budget[s], civilian expertise throughout the military-security apparatus, and respect for human and civil rights among conscripts.”²¹

These democratic standards were also evinced in the “Study on NATO Enlargement” of 1995.²² The document illuminated core principles and norms for each country joining the alliance during the three rounds of enlargement after the Cold War. It defined requirements applicable to future members of NATO (even though it avoided an explicit formulation). The main requirements were four: (1) a stable, democratic political system; (2) support of the population for the country’s accession to NATO; (3) military readiness; and (4) elimination of all unresolved territorial disputes with neighboring countries, and strengthening of integration tendencies.²³

The study’s overall emphasis was on political rather than military criteria, and political readiness for accession to NATO was also given increased attention in the three rounds of expansion occurring in 1999, 2004, and 2009. Certainly, the common threat from the USSR created NATO in 1949. However, well before the demise of the Soviet Union, Europe and the United States shared democratic values, a security identity, and institutional ties that bound them. Both sets of factors—military power and values—will help to shape and sustain the future of transatlantic relations in conjunction with other factors, including perceived interests and threat assessments. Europe and the United States have much more in common with each other than with any other major powers in the world. Indeed, when we reflect on the alliance’s history, we can see that NATO has always had an important normative component. NATO’s “normative pillar” has weathered many “normative storms,” just as have the military and political pillars.²⁴ Yet, in the present period, as NATO faces the profound challenge of the rise of China,

the normative component will play an even larger role: as the cement for the alliance.

THE RISE OF CHINA AND ITS IMPACT ON THE TRANSATLANTIC ALLIANCE

Whether China and the United States are destined to compete for domination in international politics is one of the major questions facing practitioners of that discipline. The answer depends to a large degree on whether China will be accommodated within the international system led by the United States or will seek to compete with the United States, resulting in intense security rivalry between Beijing and Washington. While there are excellent arguments in favor of the former position, our study assumes that the future of the relationship will be confrontational.²⁵

We recognize that China's impressive economic growth is slowing, in part owing to the 2015–16 collapse of the stock market, but that it nevertheless remains positive. China will become an economic superpower; but Beijing does have serious economic problems, such as increasing resource scarcities, pollution, and other environmental destruction, as well as ubiquitous corruption, a collapse of trust in personal and commercial relationships, and gross disparities in income and regional development. Huge inefficiencies and losses are likely to result in a leveling off of China's economic growth.²⁶

Although our argument is not deterministic, we are pessimistic about the future of the Sino-American relationship because of structural and domestic factors. Briefly, there are five major reasons for despair when we consider the likelihood of Sino-American security competition.²⁷

First, China has numerous border disputes in the South and East China Seas and with India, and of course there is tension with Taiwan. Each of these conflicts is dangerous, particularly those in the South China Sea, owing to the perceived national security interests of Beijing, Washington, and allies, including the risk of intentional or inadvertent escalation.²⁸

Second, we must consider Beijing's and Washington's conflicting grand strategic interests. The world has witnessed China's abandonment of Deng's Twenty-Four-Character Strategy and his talk of a "peaceful rise" in favor of rapid military expansion and what can only be described as a strategic autism, or tone deafness, that has alarmed Australia, Japan, India, and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations states, to the benefit of the United States. Unfortunately, unless Beijing changes its trajectory, it is on a collision course with Washington. The United States faces an increasingly hostile China, a fact that is regularly on display in the East and South China Seas and in international forums.²⁹ China's actions over the

last few years have been increasingly bold, including in its abandonment of any apparent concern over consequences.

Third, the systemic problems of alliances, mutual concerns over credibility, buck-passing, “chain ganging,” and abandonment confront the United States within the explicit or de facto alliances it maintains with Japan, India, and the Philippines (the relationship with Vietnam is warming as well).³⁰ Positive relations with these states provide prodigious benefits, but also introduce pathways to conflict with China, such as by emboldening an ally to take precipitous action.³¹

Fourth, there are structural causes of conflict. The classic problems of international politics stem from anarchy; that condition intensifies the security dilemma and contributes to spirals of misperception. The world has witnessed increased Chinese demands; until recently they have been largely economic, but increasingly are political and territorial, particularly in the East and South China Seas. Such demands cause a reaction in Washington.³² This provokes a response from China—and thus starts a spiral of increased tension, greater mutual suspicion, and more-intensive security competition.

Fifth, at the domestic level, even if the Chinese leadership wants to present a peaceful stance, its ability to do so will be jeopardized by domestic changes in China. According to Susan Shirk, given the lessons the Communist Party took from Tiananmen—avoid public splits, suppress popular movements, keep the People’s Liberation Army on the party’s side—today’s increasingly virulent nationalism, spreading mass protests, and availability of information through the Internet and commercial media may destabilize China by provoking a reaction from the deeply insecure Chinese leadership.³³

We do recognize that responsible Chinese leadership may find an avenue by which to avoid confrontation with the United States and Japan.³⁴ However, working against this possibility is a motivation for conflict that is rooted in an internal fragility resulting from the leadership’s need to prove to the public, the military, the internal security agencies, and indeed China’s leaders themselves that they are staunch defenders of national pride and sovereignty.³⁵ Thus, to back down in a crisis would entail considerable risk for the regime. Moreover, should internal destabilization occur, perhaps as a result of economic inequality or a push for greater liberalization, the risk of war with the United States and other powers would greatly increase. Any such crisis always brings with it the increased possibility of misperception, as well as a heightened fear that foreigners may exploit domestic instability to destabilize the country.

Stefan Halper argues that the threat China poses is greater by far than has been recognized.³⁶ The threat is not just a military or economic one; it arises also from a new market-authoritarian model, one that provides both rapid growth

and stability, and thus the promise of a better quality of life. Absent are Western freedoms, including the possibility of political plurality or opposition.

China's modernization has provided the most compelling demonstration of how to liberalize economically without surrendering to liberal politics. China's success has provided three major advantages to China. First, China undermines American power and Western economic institutions. Second, as a matter of ideological struggle, China is also seen as a success—a rising economic and military power—in contrast to a United States in relative decline. Third, China's success assists with building alliance relationships, and gives developing countries and emerging markets the freedom to deny Western conditions of financial engagement. For example, China provides states in economic crisis, such as Angola, Cambodia, Chad, Iran, Myanmar, Sudan, Uzbekistan, and Venezuela, with an alternative to following the dictates of Western institutions such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. Beijing's creation in late 2015 of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank was a major step in that direction. Also, such countries no longer must choose between emulating the Western model and rejecting capitalism, because China provides a model of market-based economic development and modernization paired with authoritarianism.

To Halper's concerns we would add that China's rise carries with it the explicit rejection of fundamental Western norms held by NATO members. While many violations of Western norms in the realm of human and civil rights occur within China, of particular importance today is the lack of a strong culture of antiracism. In his exceptional study of contemporary China, Martin Jacques writes that "there is a widely held view, not least in East Asia, that racism is a 'white problem': it is what white people do to others. In both China and Taiwan, the official position is that racism is a phenomenon of Western culture, with Hong Kong holding a similar view. This is nonsense."³⁷ Jacques notes the ubiquity of racism in China: "All peoples are prone to such ways of thinking—or, to put it another way, all races harbour racial prejudices, engage in racist modes of thought and practice racism against other races. Racism, in fact, is a universal phenomenon from which no race is exempt, even those who have suffered grievously at its hands."³⁸

Racial discrimination arising in a potentially unstable empire with an embattled Communist Party could have grave consequences for regional stability in Asia. Moreover, in China we see the resurrection of the ideal of a racially based state through the myth of a Chinese people of the same race, blood, and culture. The myth of descent from the Yellow Emperor is the basis of a racial nationalism and xenophobia that submits that there are primal biological and cultural bonds among the Chinese that cannot be altered.³⁹ These bonds compel a common adherence to state patriotism and nationalism. The Chinese are said not only to

share a common ancestry but also to derive from progenitors who, in the distant past even before the reign of the Yellow Emperor, separated themselves from non-East Asians, thus becoming the “core of the yellow race.”⁴⁰

For M. Dujon Johnson, an African American sinologist who lived for many years in China, Chinese racism is endemic—such an obvious aspect of life that the fact of its existence is not worth discussing: “In Chinese society one of the reasons that the issue of race and racism is rarely discussed openly . . . is because racism is universally accepted and justified behind the veil of Asian cultural values.” He continues, “[T]hose who hold these views consider . . . [Chinese] cultural perspectives of other ethnic groups to be unassailable no matter how inaccurate or offensive they may be.”⁴¹ Johnson states that his experiences have demonstrated to him “on a daily basis how life in Chinese society is racially segregated and in many aspects similar to a system of racial apartheid.”⁴²

While the growth of Chinese power will have many positive elements for the Chinese, and perhaps for the global economy, it is unfortunate for the advancement of human rights in international politics that China remains authoritarian, with discriminatory beliefs still accepted in the public sphere. The growth of Chinese power is inextricably linked to an ideology that does not share NATO’s concern for individual freedoms, human rights, and antiracism, and thus is a major normative challenge to the West.

THE IMPLICATIONS FOR NATO: WESTERN VALUES IN THE FACE OF CHINA’S RISE

NATO has confronted threats before, but the rise of China is unlike any previous challenge. To a considerable degree, this is because there is gross disparity among alliance members in their views of the threat Beijing poses. In Washington and among Asia-Pacific allies, there is growing awareness of the adverse geopolitical consequences of the rise of China. At the same time, for European alliance members the rise of China is a positive economic development and does not represent a security threat.⁴³ This is evident from the recent trends in the EU-China relationship, particularly Chinese investment in the EU. As Nicola Casarini writes: “Since the advent of the financial crisis, the eurozone has been experiencing a massive surge in outbound direct investment by Chinese firms—a trend that is likely to accelerate in the future, as the debt crisis provides big investors with lucrative opportunities.”⁴⁴ She continues:

In March 2012, the Chinese government also injected \$30 billion into the China Investment Corporation (the Chinese sovereign wealth fund) to be used specifically for acquiring industrial and strategic assets in Europe . . . [while] the “strategic partnership” launched in 2003 has also become highly institutionalised: alongside an annual

EU-China summit and HED [High-Level Economic and Trade Dialogue] there is now an EU-China High-Level Strategic Dialogue . . . [that organizes discussion along specific topics:] political dialogues, economic and sectoral dialogues (of which there are now more than 80), and people-to-people dialogues.⁴⁵

This situation opens an avenue for China to divide the Western alliance. China is likely to do so because in a confrontation with the United States, China will want to weaken the United States by isolating it from as many of its allies as possible. This is unlikely to be accomplished in East or South Asia, because of the threat China's rise poses for the countries there. However, China is not usually perceived as a direct threat to Europe. As Oliver Bräuner, a researcher at the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, argues, "China is generally not regarded as a military threat. The EU and its member states do not have any direct hard security interests in the Asia-Pacific region. Europeans have not followed the United States in its so-called pivot (or rebalancing) to Asia that was announced by the Obama administration in October 2011"; "the EU and its member states remain very much focused on security threats originating from its immediate neighborhood, namely, the Middle East, Northern Africa, and, to a certain degree, Russia."⁴⁶ In Bräuner's assessment, the "EU-China relationship continues to be dominated by the economic interests of individual member states, both in trade and increasingly in investments. Furthermore, owing to a lack of direct security interests in the Asia-Pacific, Europeans do not generally see China as a security threat or a strategic competitor," and so "the EU has so far failed to develop a strategic approach toward the potential security implications of transfers of European militarily sensitive technologies that goes beyond the existing arms embargo and currently lacks effective mechanisms to control the flow of such technologies to China."⁴⁷

Consequently, China will have every incentive over time to grow its economic, political, cultural, and social ties in Europe in an effort to supplant the United States as the major partner of European states. Clearly, this effort will be less successful in a country such as Great Britain that has a "special relationship" with the United States. It also will be less enticing for NATO members along the Russian periphery that are heavily dependent on NATO's military commitment. However, for many European states, particularly those that are heavily indebted, China's wealth might make China a more valuable ally than the United States.⁴⁸ First, China will be a significant potential lender for European states, and Beijing's importance in this role will only grow as European debt increases. Second, China will be able to capitalize on anti-American sentiment. Third, as it does today, China will be able to serve as a critical market for European goods as well as a manufacturing source for European industries and consumers. Fourth, we

should expect China to be very creative in its efforts to gain influence and in its messaging to targeted states. The confluence of these factors means that some NATO members may be gradually but increasingly drawn away from active support for the NATO alliance. Accordingly, we should recognize that Europe might become a zone of competition between the United States and China.

In response, NATO must strengthen its normative component that serves not only as a common bond uniting alliance members but as an enforcement component as well. As noted earlier, the NATO alliance's normative aspect had a powerful effect on its members during the Cold War and afterward. NATO will depend on that normative aspect once again as an enforcement mechanism to ensure not only that alliance members do not align with China but equally importantly that they recognize that China violates fundamental Western norms and therefore is unacceptable as a strategic partner.

Ideally, the United States would be able to maintain the alliance through a common perception of both threat and normative considerations. However, as this study has emphasized, alliance members are unlikely to share a common threat perception (although some NATO allies are alarmed at China's actions in the South China Sea), so the normative component will be particularly important. And the normative aspect should not be underestimated, particularly regarding its influence on European states, which place considerable emphasis on the normative elements of international politics.⁴⁹ This may provide a foundation on which NATO can build a unified Western response to the rise of China.

To that end, we advocate that NATO consider creating a "Norms and Principles Committee" to advance two broad objectives:⁵⁰

The first is to ensure that all current and prospective alliance members abide by the political norms and principles necessary to ensure that the alliance as a whole is animated by the right ideology. An alliance such as NATO does not constitute simply a response to a threat. It serves as a major political, military, and normative force in the transatlantic area. Its normative power is significant—sufficient to ensure that the alliance promotes its shared norms, which serve to illuminate its differences from authoritarian governments in China and Russia.

Second, such a committee would be able to advance these values beyond the present alliance membership. Building on steps the alliance already takes with prospective members, establishing a "Norms and Principles Committee" would underscore the importance of adherence to political liberty and human rights, not only as a condition for membership, but as a guidepost for potential partners, such as Japan, India, other U.S. allies, and even current adversaries around the world.

Despite the difficulties in achieving respect for human and civil rights, there is a clear distinction between respect for these values in the West and in China.

The West has moved in the right direction, toward societies that are more open, tolerant, and inclusive; China has not. That stark difference between these societies reflects the divergent norms that animate the West in contrast to China, and it can serve in the future as NATO's foundation as the alliance's military and political roles shift in relative importance.

This study has explored the multifaceted implications for NATO, including its health as an alliance, of the rise of China. The military and political rationales for NATO remain sound, and our analysis should not be interpreted as an effort to detract from the importance of those aspects. This is especially so given the uncertainties represented by Vladimir Putin's Russia, which remains a significant threat to NATO members and to stability in Europe.

At the same time, as we have stressed, the rise of China has the potential to damage greatly the transatlantic foundation of the alliance owing to the multifaceted nature of that rise and the dependence many modern economies have on China. To maintain the unity of the alliance, we urge that the normative element serve as the common thread, as it represents the starkest delineation between the West and China. The normative emphasis remains the surest foundation for the alliance in a time of divergent threat perceptions and conflicting interests.

In spite of having identified the risks China's rise poses for the alliance, we fervently hope that the tension in the Sino-American relationship will decline in the future. While it is difficult at present to discern any immediate cause for such a reduction, perhaps some future liberalization in China will permit such an outcome. Indeed, in the event of political liberalization, NATO may become China's greatest ally against Russia. The same normative interests that unite the transatlantic alliance may serve as an instrument of support should China undergo democratization.

However, in the present lamentable situation, China and the United States appear headed for a clash; and in these circumstances the West must recognize that it is shared political principles that provide the foundation for its shared political system. Western nations have fundamentally transformed their societies in a positive direction, and they must recognize that fact. Aligning with a state—no matter how economically powerful—that explicitly rejects Western norms might arrest the progress of those norms, or even perhaps open the door to their reversal, including in the West.

NOTES

1. Soon to be twenty-nine member states, with the addition of Montenegro. At the time of writing, Montenegro was not yet a member.
2. Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen points out that the character of the international security has changed, in "NATO Leaders Take Decisions to Ensure Robust Alliance," *North Atlantic Treaty Organization*, 5 September 2014, www.nato.int/.
3. For example, see the lack of emphasis the Obama administration placed on Europe in its *Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership: Priorities for 21st Century Defense* (Washington, DC: 5 January 2012), available at www.archive.defense.gov/.
4. For an interesting analysis of the tensions in defense spending between the United States and European members of NATO, see Jan Techau, *The Politics of 2 Percent: NATO and the Security Vacuum in Europe* (Brussels: Carnegie Europe, 2015).
5. An excellent overview of the pivot to Asia is provided by Aaron L. Friedberg, "Bucking Beijing: An Alternative U.S. China Policy," *Foreign Affairs* 91, no. 5 (September/October 2012), pp. 48–58.
6. For example, the Greek government supports Chinese investments in Greece's privatization process and is in favor of strengthening bilateral cooperation. "Beijing is seen in many quarters of Europe as something akin to an economic savior. The price might be steep." Minxin Pei, "The China-Europe Lovefest," *National Interest*, 25 June 2014, www.nationalinterest.org/.
7. We recognize that China's rise is not preordained and evaluate this in more detail below. The fundamental point is that its economy will grow at rates greater than that of the United States, causing a redistribution of power in the international system.
8. Lawrence S. Kaplan, *NATO Divided, NATO United: The Evolution of an Alliance* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2004).
9. John Duffield, "Why Is There No APTO? Why Is There No OSCP? Asia-Pacific Security Institutions in Comparative Perspective," *Contemporary Security Policy* 22, no. 2 (2001), pp. 69–95. See also Celeste A. Wallander, "Institutional Assets and Adaptability: NATO after the Cold War," *International Organization* 54, no. 4 (2000), pp. 705–35.
10. F. Roy Willis, *France, Germany and the New Europe 1945–1963* (Stanford, CA: Stanford Univ. Press, 1965).
11. Marc Trachtenberg, *A Constructed Peace: The Making of the European Settlement 1945–1963* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton Univ. Press, 1999).
12. John J. Mearsheimer, "Why the Ukraine Crisis Is the West's Fault," *Foreign Affairs* 93, no. 5 (2014), pp. 77–89.
13. May-Britt U. Stumbaum, *Toward a Transatlantic Approach to Technology Transfers to China* (Washington, DC: German Marshall Fund of the United States, 2010), p. 1, available at www.gmfus.org/. For different threat perceptions between the United States and European members of NATO, see Roland Benedikter, "China, die USA und die Europäische Union: 'Engere Beziehung' als Symptom der Spaltung des Westens?," in *China: Situation und Perspektiven des Neuen Weltpolitischen Akteurs*, ed. Roland Benedikter and Verena Nowotny (Wiesbaden, Ger.: Springer, 2014), pp. 169–211.
14. May-Britt U. Stumbaum, "Transatlantic Cooperation on China: More Than an Ocean Between," *American Institute for Contemporary German Studies (AICGS)*, 8 December 2014, www.aicgs.org/.
15. Krzysztof J. Pelc, "Europe's Role in China's Transition to Superpower Status," *Transition Studies Review* 16, no. 2 (2009), pp. 343–51. See also David A. Scott, "Multipolarity, Multilateralism and Beyond . . . ? EU-China Understandings of the International System," *International Relations* 27, no. 1 (2013), pp. 30–51, and May-Britt U. Stumbaum, "How to Make the Strategic Partnership Work: EU Cooperation with China in Security Affairs," *Clingendael Asia Forum*, 12 July 2012, www.clingendael.nl/.
16. Gustaaf Geeraerts, "China, the EU, and the New Multipolarity," *European Review* 19, no. 1 (2011), p. 65.
17. Melvin P. Leffler, *A Preponderance of Power: National Security, the Truman Administration, and the Cold War* (Stanford, CA: Stanford Univ. Press, 1992), p. 13.

18. On NATO's role in the democratization of Spain, see Javier Tusell, "The Transition to Democracy and Spain's Membership in NATO," in *Spain's Entry into NATO: Conflict-ing Political and Strategic Perspectives*, ed. Federico G. Gil and Joseph S. Tulchin (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1988), pp. 11–20. For an analysis of the impact of external actors in Spain's entry into NATO, see Beata Wojna, "Spain's and Poland's Road to NATO: The Problem of Continuity and Change in the Foreign Policy of a Democratising State," *European Review of History—Revue européenne d'histoire* 15, no. 5 (October 2008), pp. 533–47. Of course, NATO was not perfectly consistent over the history of the alliance in its effort to spread democratic norms among its members, particularly in the cases of Turkey, Greece, and Portugal. Understandably, given the threat, NATO's principal aim during that period was not to spread democracy but to deter Soviet and Warsaw Pact aggression. During the Cold War, democracy was not a prerequisite of membership. Today, in a different environment, democracy is a requirement for membership. See Harvey Waterman, Dessie Zagorcheva, and Dan Reiter, "NATO and Democracy," *International Security* 26, no. 3 (Winter 2001–2002), p. 229. In addition, NATO has more potential to influence democratization and does so through a variety of platforms and initiatives, such as partnerships in southeastern Europe, the Mediterranean, the Middle East, Central Asia, and the Caucasus, as well as state-building enterprises in the western Balkans and Afghanistan.
19. Andrew A. Michta, "NATO Enlargement Post-1989: Successful Adaptation or Decline?," *Contemporary European History* 18, no. 3 (August 2009), pp. 363–76. Michta has argued that NATO supports democratization of post-Communist countries. Daniel Reiter argues the opposite; see his "Why NATO Enlargement Does Not Spread Democracy," *International Security* 25, no. 4 (Spring 2001), pp. 52–54.
20. NATO, "The Alliance's Strategic Concept: Approved by the Heads of State and Government Participating in the Meeting of the North Atlantic Council," press release NAC-S(99) 65, 24 April 1999, www.nato.int/.
21. Rachel A. Epstein, "NATO Enlargement and the Spread of Democracy: Evidence and Expectations," *Security Studies* 14, no. 1 (January–March 2005), p. 65.
22. NATO, "Study on NATO Enlargement," 3 September 1995, available at www.nato.int/.
23. Zdeněk Kříž and Zinaida Shevchuk, "Georgia Readiness for NATO Membership after Russian-Georgian Armed Conflict," *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 44, no. 1 (2011), p. 90.
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25. For example, see Edward S. Steinfeld, *Playing Our Game: Why China's Economic Rise Doesn't Threaten the West* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 2010). Arguing from a security rather than an economic perspective is Bates Gill, *Rising Star: China's New Security Diplomacy* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 2007).
26. Describing these economic difficulties are Ho-fung Hung, *The China Boom: Why China Will Not Rule the World* (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 2016); James Kyngé, *China Shakes the World: A Titan's Rise and Troubled Future—and the Challenge for America* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2006); and Carl E. Walter and Fraser J. T. Howie, *Red Capitalism: The Fragile Financial Foundation of China's Extraordinary Rise* (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley, 2011). For an excellent analysis of how

- environmental problems are hindering the Chinese economy, see Elizabeth C. Economy, *The River Runs Black: The Environmental Challenge to China's Future*, 2nd ed. (Ithaca, NY: Cornell Univ. Press, 2010).
27. These are drawn from Bradley A. Thayer, "Humans, Not Angels: Reasons to Doubt the Decline of War Thesis," *International Studies Review* 15, no. 3 (September 2013), pp. 405–11. Also see Michael Pillsbury, *The Hundred-Year Marathon: China's Secret Strategy to Replace America as the Global Superpower* (New York: Holt, 2015), and Michael D. Swaine, *America's Challenge: Engaging a Rising China in the Twenty-First Century* (Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2011).
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 33. Susan L. Shirk, *China: Fragile Superpower* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 2007). For a related argument, see Teresa Wright, *Accepting Authoritarianism: State-Society Relations in China's Reform Era* (Stanford, CA: Stanford Univ. Press, 2010).
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 38. *Ibid.*
 39. John Fitzgerald, "The Nationless State: The Search for a Nation in Modern Chinese Nationalism," *Australian Journal of Chinese Affairs*, no. 33 (January 1995), pp. 84–90.
 40. Barry Sautman, "Myths of Descent, Racial Nationalism and Ethnic Minorities," in *The Construction of Racial Identities in China and Japan*, ed. Frank Dikötter (Honolulu: Univ. of Hawai'i Press, 1997), pp. 75–95.
 41. M. Dujon Johnson, *Race and Racism in the Chinas: Chinese Racial Attitudes toward Africans and African-Americans* (Bloomington, IN: AuthorHouse, 2011), p. 31.
 42. *Ibid.*, pp. 147–48.
 43. An excellent review of these positions can be found in Aaron L. Friedberg, "The Debate over U.S. China Strategy," *Survival* 57, no. 3 (June–July 2015), pp. 89–110, and Aaron L. Friedberg, *A Contest for Supremacy: China,*

- America, and the Struggle for Mastery in Asia* (New York: Norton, 2011).
44. Nicola Casarini, "The EU-China Partnership: 10 Years On," European Union Institute for Security Studies *Issue Brief*, no. 35 (October 2013), p. 3.
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 46. Oliver Bräuner, "Beyond the Arms Embargo: EU Transfers of Defense and Dual-Use Technologies to China," *Journal of East Asian Studies* 13, no. 3 (2013), p. 457.
 47. Ibid. See also Ronald Vogt, ed., *Europe and China: Strategic Partners or Rivals?* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong Univ. Press, 2012); Jing Men, "EU-China Relations and Diplomacy: Introductory Note," *European Foreign Affairs Review* 19, no. 3/1 (2014), pp. 1–3; and David Scott, "China and the EU: A Strategic Axis for the Twenty-First Century?," *International Relations* 21, no. 1 (March 2007), pp. 23–45.
 48. China's investments in strategic industries and property markets within the European members of NATO are seen "as using Europe as a hedge against the United States." Valbona Zeneli, "Why Is China So Interested in Central and Eastern Europe?," *The Globalist*, 11 June 2014, www.theglobalist.com/. The growing trend of Chinese direct investment in the EU is evident; see Jamil Anderlini, "Chinese Investors Surged into EU at Height of Debts Crisis," *Financial Times*, 6 October 2014, www.ft.com/. See also Simon van Driel (general rapporteur), *Confronting a Difficult Budgetary Environment: Economic Crisis, Fiscal Consolidation and the Risk of Europe's Strategic Irrelevance*, General Report 179 ESC 11 E bis ([Brussels]: NATO Parliamentary Assembly, Economics and Security Committee, October 2011).
 49. Ayse Kaya, "The EU's China Problem: A Battle over Norms," *International Politics* 51, no. 2 (February 2014), pp. 214–33. See also Natalia Chaban, Serena Kelly, and Martin Holland, "Perceptions of 'Normative Power Europe' in the Shadow of the Eurozone Debt Crisis: Public Perspectives on European Integration from the Asia Pacific," in *Importing EU Norms: Conceptual Framework and Empirical Findings*, ed. Annika Björkdahl et al. (Wiesbaden, Ger.: Springer, 2015), pp. 57–77.
 50. Our intent here is to delineate the two major objectives of the committee. Clearly, NATO would have to consider the merits of establishing a committee dedicated to these objectives versus subsuming them under established committees.