

Security and Defence Days 2022

THE SEMINARS

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Introduction

Hon. Angelino Alfano
President of the De Gasperi Foundation

In keeping with De Gasperian inspiration which is the lifeblood of our Foundation from an ideal point of view, we wanted to direct the reflection of the «Security and Defence Days», organised in partnership with the Wilfried Martens Centre for European Studies, along two essential lines of Alcide De Gasperi's thought and work: Europeanism and Atlanticism. These two lines are, in turn, part of an essential framework for Italy represented by multilateralism, which since the Second World War has marked the very essence of the positioning and posture of our country on the international scene, within the broader framework of the United Nations.

For decades, Italy has firmly adhered to this approach, which constitutes the main and most precious legacy left to us by De Gasperi in terms of foreign policy. As Foreign Minister, I often found myself in the position of having to understand the thoughts of my interlocutors, who seemed to wonder how long I would remain in office, given the frequency with which governments change in Italy. I tried to reassure them by explaining that, despite being at that time the thirty-seventh Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Italian Republic, the country had not changed foreign policy thirty-seven times. Despite the changes of governments in fact, the guidelines of our foreign policy

have always remained stable and coherent, in the wake of the Europeanism and Atlanticism charted by De Gasperi.

What is happening today in Ukraine testifies to the fact that the heart of today's debate on NATO is not only about its nature and topicality, but also about its future strategic projection. We have lived in a time when it was thought that the end of the Warsaw Pact and the Eastern Bloc, along with the end of the Soviet Union, would take away NATO's function as a garrison of Euro-Atlantic security. This was based on the assumption that the threats from Eastern Europe had vanished. Moreover, in recent decades, we have experienced an exponential growth of threats to security from the Mediterranean, especially in an asymmetric form. It is enough to consider the foreign fighters and the establishment of ISIS almost on the borders of our Mediterranean Sea, to which has been added the colossal challenge linked to migration. All this contributed to making the question of the East appear to be declining.

However, history often proceeds by acceleration, and Russia's aggression against Ukraine has in fact accelerated processes that were already underway, placing the world in front of questions to which it is essential to provide answers, both in an analytical phase and in the implementation of concrete policies.

The pandemic had already highlighted the need for Europe to be more autonomous and independent in terms of supply chains. With the events taking place in Eastern Europe, we then had confirmation as to how much our continent needs to be independent in the energy sector.

This has led to a new development compared to the trends of recent years, namely the regaining of strength by NATO. Some leaders of Western countries had issued statements in which they considered NATO to be in a declining phase or in a state of advanced obsolescence. Recent events have again revealed its indispensable nature, due to the revival of the threat from Russia. NATO thus found itself having to take new

decisions quickly, decisions which had been absolutely unimaginable until just a few days before. The Strategic Concept, the document that defines the posture of the Alliance in the face of the challenges and threats of the international scene, was updated. The request for membership of neutral countries such as Finland and Sweden was received.

At the same time, the outbreak of war in Ukraine called into question the role of the European Union, the other backbone upon which Italy's foreign and security policy moves. De Gasperi was the main proponent of the project aimed at creating a «European Defence Community» and the flare-up of conflict with Russia has revived the discourse on common defence within the EU framework.

On this subject, the De Gasperi Foundation has strongly highlighted the need to advance the process of European integration also in this sector, a position that it fully shares with the Wilfried Martens Centre for European Studies. The occasion to build a common European defence system has already presented itself at various times throughout history and Europeans now have a responsibility not to let it slip away again without seizing the strategic opportunity. The strengthening of the common defence must not, of course, be an alternative to NATO and the transatlantic link with the United States, which has once again demonstrated its indispensability in the current crisis. It is by acting in a complementary manner that NATO and the EU can offer greater security to member countries and their citizens.

Over the past few years, we have seen growing threats to Western democracies: from the hybrid regimes, to attempts to interfere in electoral processes and internal affairs, to the so-called global commons on the high seas or in space. These are strategic issues that are essential for both present and future perspectives. Therefore, it is essential that the EU assumes the characteristics of a power that is not exclusively economic, since it is only by equipping itself with adequate defence

capabilities that it can effectively protect its interests and pursue its objectives in an increasingly complex and competitive international scenario.

Today we are not living in an ordinary time; rather, the historical phase we are experiencing is in many ways revolutionary. The digital and artificial intelligence revolution is accelerating processes with an intensity and impact that history has seldom known. In order to meet the challenges, the EU must necessarily untie the knots that have limited growth since its inception, and among these, the common European defence system remains in the foreground.

As an institute of research and political reflection, the De Gasperi Foundation continues to push in this direction, aware of the cost that inaction would have in the midst of the epochal changes that we are experiencing. History is not necessarily the bearer of goodness, but it can be if the men who act at a certain time in history move the situation in the direction of goodness.

Acting for the good of our communities means protecting our borders in the best possible way for the security and prosperity of our countries and European citizens, and this will only be possible by integrating more deeply within the EU and making the relationship with NATO even more synergistic.

This is our basic idea, which was passed on to us by Alcide De Gasperi, who said on the theme of the «European Defence Community» in 1951: «It is therefore against these seeds of disintegration and decline, of mutual distrust and moral decomposition that we must fight. We are aware that we must save ourselves, and with us our heritage of civilization and commonality of secular experiences».

We know how it ended. We know that before his death, on August 19th, 1954, De Gasperi confided that he was about to die with a thorn in his heart: the failure to realize the EDC. He was right because a few days later, the founding Treaty was rejected by the French National Assembly.

Decades have passed since that day. Another opportunity has presented itself before us and this time we must not fail to seize it.

SESSION 1

The new strategic concept and the war in Ukraine: charting NATO's route in a changing geopolitical scenario

Hon. Marco Dreosto
Member of the European Parliament

To talk about defence in this historical moment is extremely important, including among stakeholders and think tanks, which can contribute to the important decisions that political leaders are called upon to take. When we talk about defence, we are talking about national security, safeguarding national interests, technology, innovation, but not only.

With the Russian act of aggression against Ukraine, we have entered a new era, one in which we must realise that it is necessary to reaffirm our values, based on freedom, civil rights and democratic rights, which have distinguished Western countries from certain autocratic powers.

We have taken peace for granted too many times, from the end of the Second World War onward, forgetting that this peace was guaranteed by NATO, by that Alliance which has its cornerstone in the transatlantic relations that bind Italy and the other European countries to the United States of America.

On the very day of the outbreak of the conflict in Ukraine, February 24th, I was in Washington for an official visit of the European Parliament. It was organized by the Special Committee on Foreign Interference in all Democratic Processes in the European Union, including Disinformation (INGE), of which I am a member. On that occasion I was able to see how our

American ally had warned the European allies of NATO in advance of what was going to happen and how to maintain constant relations with the respective foreign affairs ministries.

For its part, the European Parliament immediately expressed its maximum support in favour of Ukraine and the Ukrainian people in the face of Russia's invasion, and reminded of the need to create a united and compact Western front to face the threats from Moscow and other actors such as China. These threats are both traditional and hybrid, which require new investments in the defence sector not only at national but also at European level, with a view to strengthening the common defence within the framework of the EU, in a complementary relationship with NATO.

If one wishes to be heard and have a greater say in the matter, it is essential to bear costs from an economic point of view. And here Italy is also called upon to do its part. Investing in defence means respecting the pacts that have been made with allies and that have guaranteed the peace and security of the country. Of course, these investments must not be an end in themselves, but must be translated into research, innovation and economic resources to be reallocated to our territories.

If, in terms of security threats, NATO is now more focused on Russia, this must not cause an imbalance of the Alliance to the north to the detriment of the Southern flank, the Mediterranean, which represents the centre of gravity of Italy's foreign and security policy. Although the instability in the region did not come from the area of conventional threats directed at the territories of NATO countries, it has had a negative impact on Europe, especially in terms of irregular migration flows and extremism. Therefore, it is necessary to ensure that the Alliance's attention to the Mediterranean remains high, without forgetting the Balkans, which with their unresolved problems call for constant commitment from both NATO and the EU.

Hon. Ivanna Klympush-Tsintsadze
Member of the Ukrainian Parliament

Many mistakes have been made by NATO which have paved the way for the Russian aggression on Ukraine. One of them dates back to the Bucharest Summit of April 2nd-4th, 2008, when the Heads of State and Government of the Atlantic Alliance proved to be wary of the possibility to extend the Membership Action Plan (MP) to both Ukraine and Georgia, so as to start their accession process into NATO. It was certainly a wrong decision, since the ambiguity shown in that particular moment represented in the eyes of Moscow a green light to move forward with the realization of its objectives: first, with the attack on Georgia, unleashed only a few months later, in August 2008, and then with the illegal annexation of Crimea and the opening of the Ukrainian front in Donbass in April 2014, until the full-scale invasion launched on February 24th.

This ambiguity is still there nowadays, despite the policies pursued by Russia, and it would be desirable that the new Strategic Concept, which is about to be approved at the upcoming Madrid summit, would remove it.

From the current scenario, strong doubts also arise about the Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty, which establishes the principle of mutual assistance in the event of an armed attack against one of the member states. What would happen if Russia

were to attack a country bordering Ukraine or the Baltic republics? For example, with unconventional methods, such as a cyber or a hybrid attack: would Article 5 be actually put into effect? Would those member States with greater military capabilities be willing to intervene? The new Strategic Concept should also provide reassurance on this point.

From the Ukrainian perspective, there is great anticipation for this document, but the previews on its content cast a shadow of uncertainty: the priorities that will be set out will be sufficient to effectively address the wide range of threats and challenges affecting the security of the countries of the Euro-Atlantic region? The debate on the need for the European Union to strengthen integration in the defence sector, by equipping itself with a common army with greater capabilities, is dictated by the growing skepticism towards the guarantee of protection of the European territory, and of the very Western values as well, in a transatlantic framework.

After the Cold War, NATO went into a «sleep mode» with respect to deterring Russia. Yet, Vladimir Putin had expressed in numerous speeches his intentions to re-establish Russia as an empire, and similar intentions were reiterated in the ultimatum sent to the United States and NATO by Moscow's Ministry of Foreign Affairs on December 17th, 2021. However, little was done by the Alliance to dissuade the Kremlin from taking the decision to invade Ukraine, which responds exclusively to the neo-imperialist ambitions of Putin and his administration.

The alleged threat posed by NATO enlargement was nothing more than an excuse to justify Russian military intervention in Georgia and today in Ukraine. However, the expansionist aims of the Kremlin go beyond the Caucasus or Ukraine. Putin has declared that he wants to resume the work of Tsar Peter the Great and this amounts to a threat to Poland, Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia, Finland and even Sweden. Indeed, there is nothing accidental in Putin's reference to

the twenty-one-year war in which Peter the Great succeeded in defeating Sweden.

Therefore, in the new Strategic Concept, reaffirming «collective security» as NATO's primary task to undertake a new «containment» of Russia, may not be enough. The new Strategic Concept should also provide the necessary reassurance regarding «crisis management». Already in the Western Balkans, Kosovo in particular, the Alliance was forced to intervene directly with a military operation, even without the approval of the UN Security Council. Today the perpetrator is a permanent UN Security Council member: does it mean that NATO should stand aside?

The new Strategic Concept cannot neglect these aspects, if it really wants to be a useful tool to guide NATO's course of action in the near future.

SESSION 2

NATO's future in uncertain times:
a new political direction suited
for a new era

Amb. Francesco Maria Talò
Permanent Representative of Italy to the North-Atlantic Council

Against the background of open conflict in Europe, the NATO summit in Madrid will take place in two weeks' time. This is an appointment that will bring with it some news of great importance. Before the outbreak of the conflict in Ukraine, we thought that war in Europe was a thing of the past, we expected that it was an emergency we would never have to experience again.

On the other hand, NATO was already preparing to change, or rather, to achieve another stage in that process of continuous adaptation that is part of its nature and that is characterized by the succession of strategic concepts. The Alliance was therefore already working to adopt the new Strategic Concept, the eighth, and this gives an idea of the importance of these documents, which are issued approximately every ten years.

The last Strategic Concept was in 2010, adopted in Lisbon, and it described a completely different world. It was said: Europe is at peace, Russia is a partner. China was not mentioned at all and the other challenges, what I call the challenges of the twenty-first century, were barely mentioned.

On the other hand, for some years now we have had to take into account a world that, even if saying this may seem trivial, is growing smaller and smaller, and therefore even the

challenges that come from afar, quickly reach us. What does this mean? That China, even if NATO remains a regional alliance, is a reality we cannot forget, and therefore we must cooperate with our partners in the Asia Pacific: Australia, Korea, New Zealand and Japan.

Here, for the first time, in Madrid, there will be the heads of government of these four countries and it is an unprecedented novelty.

The other novelty, in addition, of course, to the Strategic Concept and the fact of being in a situation of war, is the request of two important countries – this time not from the former Soviet bloc – that are asking to join NATO: Finland and Sweden. It is an interesting fact, if we think that the last Western European country to join NATO was Spain forty years ago, that we will hold this meeting in Madrid precisely to celebrate the fortieth anniversary of Spain's accession into NATO.

A few months ago, if I had been asked what the new Strategic Concept should look like, I would have answered: it must be a document that responds to the challenges of the twenty-first century. Among these there must be technological innovation. Maintaining technological advantage is a crucial issue. For the first time, not only in the seventy-three years of the life of the Atlantic Alliance, but I would say in the 500 years of the history of the West, it is no longer obvious that we have a technological advantage.

China aims to be ahead of us: it is a legitimate ambition, and it is an ambition that the Chinese themselves openly manifest. So, it is about running faster, not tripping up the opponent. Thus, NATO is equipping itself with completely new means and tools: there will be an accelerator driving innovation, a venture capital fund for innovation. Although small, it is a very important breakthrough.

Another topic of growing importance to consider for the near future is climate change, which is critical in its impact on our security and on military activities.

At the same time, looking closely at the present, we are faced with a situation that takes us back to the twentieth century, with the strengthening of the Eastern Front through the deployment of conventional weapons. For its part, Italy has already expressed its commitment to be more present in the East, with a leading role in the NATO presence in Bulgaria and a contingent in Hungary.

All this is in addition to what we have been doing for years in Latvia and in our air policing activities, which are very much appreciated, also because we carry them out with F-35s, as is happening now in Iceland.

Thus, NATO remains committed to its traditional activities, namely the core business of deterrence and defence, which is aimed above all at the East, but at the same time must look at new challenges. But should deterrence and defence look only to the East? No, because there is also the Southern flank, which traditionally is a matter of priority interest for Italy.

There was this basic natural contrast: the allies of Eastern Europe said: «Watch out for Russia», while we said: «No, beware of terrorism, the South». Now, Russia is also in the South, as is China, particularly in Africa.

And in Africa there are a billion people who are facing all possible challenges and difficulties that fuel one another: climate change, terrorism, the Russian presence, of course, and now also food insecurity resulting, we must always stress, from Moscow's aggression in Ukraine.

In the Strategic Concept, the South will still play an important role, it will not be forgotten. The threat of terrorism will not be forgotten. In addition, there will be China and, of course, there must be great attention at this time paid to today's Russia, which in these conditions cannot be a partner, as we hoped it could be in the past decades.

In any case, fortunately there is NATO. Fortunately, Alcide De Gasperi had us enter as a founding country of the Atlantic Alliance. An Alliance that has no precedent in human history.

In fact, never has an alliance lasted so long, never been so successful, because it has been seventy-three years since any of the NATO countries has been attacked (the only exception being the September 11th attack on the United States, and there we all joined forces and it cannot be said that the United States was defeated by that attack, as the terrorists would have wanted).

NATO continues to adapt. It survived the end of the original adversary, of the Soviet system, and continues to be for us an indispensable element of strength, of tranquillity, in the face of new challenges. Just think of Finland and Sweden, which until a few months ago did not think of requesting entry into the Alliance. I was personally in Helsinki and Stockholm last autumn for meetings with all the top political leaders, who said: «We are pleased that the door of NATO is open, we are next door, but thank you so much, we do not plan to enter». Suddenly, after February 24th, the situation changed and the two countries changed their minds.

Hon. Paolo Alli
Secretary General of the De Gasperi Foundation

When the De Gasperi Foundation, in 2019, organized an exhibition to celebrate the seventieth anniversary of NATO, what was particularly highlighted was NATO's ability from the end of the Cold War onwards to change, to transform. From an organization of pure deterrence, NATO has in fact progressively increased its political dimension, while maintaining the centrality of the military. The importance of NATO's ability to adapt and be resilient in the face of changing geopolitical scenarios is symbolized by the fact that among the major international organizations it is the only one to have within it a section specifically dedicated to transformation, the Allied Command Transformation in Norfolk, Virginia.

In the current scenario, characterized by the conflict in Ukraine triggered by Russia's aggression, NATO is mainly called upon to be politically resilient. This is not a task for the NATO structure per se, but for the governments of the Member States; thus, directly involving the political component at the national level. It has the responsibility to respond to the security demand of individual citizens of Alliance countries, which has grown during the pandemic and is now facing the return of conventional warfare, although the threat of various forms of hybrid warfare remains in the foreground.

Today's world no longer has protections. Military and technological adaptation, even in the cyber field, is not enough. There are political choices that only governments can make. What are they? For example, the accession of Sweden and Finland to NATO; the posture to be assumed with China which involves strengthening partnerships in the Far East with Australia and New Zealand; the need for increased attention to be paid to the Mediterranean and Africa, quadrants where Russia and China are also well present and active.

Another issue that would require the adoption of political decisions is the modification of the Washington Treaty: are some aspects of it still relevant or should they be updated? The question arises with regard to the definition of the defensive nature of the Alliance, which could be expressed by contemplating more explicitly the possibility of intervening in order to prevent an attack on the territory of one of the member States. Furthermore, the document does not clearly adopt a position relating to disputes that may arise between two NATO countries. These are issues that call for reflection far beyond the new Strategic Concept.

With regard more specifically to the approach to be adopted in the Far East, it is necessary to prevent Beijing from strengthening bonds with Moscow, removing the risk of a new bipolarization between democracies and autocracies; however, this prospect is now close to materializing, in the light of the votes expressed in the United Nations General Assembly on the conflict in Ukraine.

It is therefore opportune for NATO to maintain a balanced position. It should combine firmness and compactness on values, responsiveness and resilience with an attitude of caution, so that China does not follow the Russian example in considering the Alliance an enemy. At the same time, the opportunity to strengthen security cooperation with India should be seized, as already highlighted in a report for which I personally was spokesman as President of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly.

India today does not contradict Russia for geopolitical reasons, mainly linked to the rivalry with China, but this does not mean that there is no room for manoeuvre to establish a partnership that can be useful to the Alliance in the strategy to be adopted with Beijing. Taking into account the historical and cultural relations between India and Europe which are superior to those entertained by New Delhi with other players, the European Union could aim for a great economic-commercial agreement.

Remarks

H.E. Luigi Di Maio

Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation

As a result of Russia's attack on Ukraine, reflecting on the importance of Italy's transatlantic ties allow us to better appreciate their importance. The conflict in Ukraine, especially in its initial phase, has caused anti-NATO and anti-Western sentiments in our country to re-emerge. Although it was just a minority of academics and journalists who expressed those sentiments, they have proved to be very meaningful in the public debate. These commentators wanted Italy to assume a neutral posture with a consequent misalignment with the decisions of the Atlantic Alliance and even the European Union. Our country's membership in NATO has often been treated as an accessory of our foreign policy, non-essential and somehow replaceable, according by certain commentators, by a healthier equidistance from the actors in this conflict.

Beyond the value and strategic importance of the Alliance, often in the debates I listened to, I noted a profound superficiality, frequently deriving from the lack of knowledge of the historical facts that allow us today to belong to this part of the world.

For a thorough reflection on our consolidated international position, we can only start with a tribute to Alcide De Gasperi, the

statesman to whom perhaps most of all we owe our deep-rooted Atlantic position. On August 10th, 1946, he appeared at the Paris Peace Conference giving one of the most heartfelt and touching speeches in our history, the beginning of which I would like to recall: «As I take the floor to speak before this world assembly, I feel that everything – except your personal courtesy – is against me».

De Gasperi spoke as the Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of a defeated nation, he managed to persuade the victors of the genuineness of our intentions, succeeding to convince the Allies of the solidity of a renewed national spirit in which liberal-democracy and the pluralism of ideas had already been acquired, after the tragedies of Fascism, of the Pact of Steel with Nazi Germany, of the racial laws and the defeat of war. His personal credibility and diplomatic skills were what made him succeed in the enterprise of conquering for Italy the position in which we find ourselves.

It was an Italy that came in through the back door. After a few years, thanks to the efforts of men like De Gasperi, Italy would become one of the main member states of the Atlantic Alliance and shortly thereafter, one of the founders of the European Communities.

The historical awareness of belonging to this great family of values is not only testified to by the deeds of statesmen like De Gasperi, but also by the fact that he was an element of transversal consensus that today unites, with few and negligible exceptions, the entire Italian constitutional arch. Perhaps, those who advocate for neutrality, to better appreciate our current international position, need to review the sacrifices that our fathers made to bring us here.

With respect to the most topical issues, we are exactly two weeks away from a NATO Summit that promises to be of particular importance.

The meeting of the Heads of State and Government to be held in Madrid from 28th to 30th June was conceived as the culmination of a modernization process of the Alliance launched at the «Leaders' Meeting» in London in December 2019 and resulted in the NATO 2030 agenda, approved at the Brussels Summit in June last year.

That path of modernization will find its most important and complete moment of union in the approval of the new Strategic Concept of the Alliance.

However, the context in which the Madrid Summit will take place has been deeply disrupted by the unacceptable Russian aggression against Ukraine, which began on February 24th. It is a flagrant violation of the fundamental principles and agreements on which the current security architecture in Europe is based, accompanied by extremely serious crimes against the civilian population and dramatic humanitarian consequences. I would also remind you of the serious food crisis, caused by the Russian invasion, which is affecting many countries in the Mediterranean and Africa. Italy views this crisis with particular concern and is engaged on the frontlines at a multilateral level.

Today, the Euro-Atlantic community is therefore called upon to make a twofold effort: firstly, to guarantee the adequacy and robustness of Allied deterrence and defence, in the face of the far-reaching implications of Russian aggression against Ukraine; secondly, to complete the effort already underway to revise and adapt its strategic conceptions and the instruments available to defend the freedom and resilience of one billion citizens.

Regarding the first aspect, the extraordinary political unity with which NATO, the European Union and many other countries

reacted to the Russian invasion of Ukraine clearly emerges, when a very large majority of the United Nations General Assembly demonstrated by the vote of condemnation on March 2nd. If Moscow's calculation was that the Allied countries, Europe and more generally the community of democracies would abandon Ukraine to its fate, we can say that this calculation turned out to be spectacularly wrong.

Since the very first days of the conflict, the Alliance has activated its defence plans, increasing the level of readiness of its forces. It has undertaken a vast and profound initiative to strengthen defence arrangements to protect the Eastern flank, without distorting its purely defensive vocation but giving unequivocal proof of the firmness of the bond of mutual solidarity that pervades the Washington Treaty, the strength of which is found in the collective defence clause of art. 5.

NATO's political closeness to Ukraine and the value of the extraordinary capacity for resistance demonstrated by the Ukrainian Armed Forces for the security of the Allied Nations, are also the best demonstration of what Italy has always supported. In other words, the three «core tasks» of the Alliance envisaged by the Strategic Concept approved in Lisbon in 2010 are co-essential. «Collective defence», which concerns only the Allies, would be seriously weakened if it was not flanked by «crisis management» and «cooperative security», which contribute, through political dialogue and practical collaboration with non-member countries and other International Organizations, to the projection of a more extensive security, for the benefit of both the Partners and the Allied Countries themselves.

In the context of an Alliance that has demonstrated political compactness, operational capacity and clarity of purpose, Italy has reconfirmed its role as an attentive and generous Ally in

contributing to the strengthening of the Alliance's Eastern flank. We have considerably increased our already profiled commitment to all initiatives to defend the Eastern flank, in the domains of air, land and sea.

Equally important is the Italian contribution to all initiatives undertaken, outside the NATO framework, for economic, military and humanitarian support to Ukraine, for assistance to refugees fleeing the conflict, for the approval of the six sanction packages against Russia and for all other initiatives adopted within the European Union, United Nations, G7, Council of Europe and OSCE.

Regarding the second aspect, when considering this final part of the path that will lead us to the Madrid Summit, it is important not to lose sight of the important work underway for the implementation of the NATO 2030 Agenda, of which the new Strategic Concept will be the most significant element.

Ensuring security for our citizens and resilience for our democratic societies requires a holistic view of the challenges and threats that characterize our strategic environment and a capacity for medium and long-term planning.

During the Strategic Concept negotiations and in all areas of discussion in preparation for the Summit, Italy committed to promoting a 360-degree vision of the security environment and to highlighting the importance for collective security of the challenges of the Southern Flank. We do not have the luxury of focusing only on one adversary, or on a certain type of threat, in the face of a plurality of potential state and non-state «spoilers» acting in the traditional domains, land, maritime and air, in the cyber and space domains – to which it is no coincidence that the Alliance's attention has turned – and finally in hybrid activities or in the so-called infosphere.

What we call security is essentially «human security». It must, therefore, take into account all the factors upon which the resilience of our democratic societies relies as well as in relation to the technological challenges that today call into question the scientific advantage that Europe and North America have enjoyed in recent centuries.

In this regard, another cornerstone of Italy's vision in the field of security and defence policy is confirmed: the strategic nature of relations between the Atlantic Alliance and the European Union, and the need to further strengthen cooperation between NATO and the EU in many areas. We are convinced that a stronger and more capable Europe of Defence, in complementarity with NATO, contributes positively to a common transatlantic security. And this starts with two conceptual reference documents: the EU Strategic Compass and the next NATO Strategic Concept, to which Italy is also making an important contribution.

Today's challenges are many, serious and interconnected. NATO cannot aspire to equip itself with suitable instruments to respond to all of them, but it does have the responsibility to contribute to the systemising of the tools available to the transatlantic community. It may set itself the objective of developing some specific projects, as happened, for example, with the Defense Innovation Accelerator for the North Atlantic (DIANA) and the NATO Innovation Fund.

Along these lines, the Alliance is confronted with a changing and complex international scenario, without ever losing its roots, which are based in the precise and essential commitments of the Washington Treaty and which determine its DNA as a strictly defensive Alliance clearly delimited in the North Atlantic region. This is a very complex perspective, but also one of extraordinary importance. It is good that it is tackled

with the valuable contributions of the areas of politics, academia and civil society.

SESSION 3

The new security landscape in
Europe, NATO's Madrid Summit
and the European Union

Mr. Nicola de Santis

Head of the Engagements Section, NATO Public Diplomacy Division

Thank you very much to the Alcide De Gasperi Foundation, President Alfano, Paolo Alli for their leadership, and to the team of the Foundation, for promoting a better understanding of NATO's policies and goals. A lot of people talk about NATO and its policies, especially today, but facts sometimes are not well known, so I think there is no better way to realign perceptions and fight disinformation than providing a better understanding of NATO's policies and goals based on facts.

So, looking at the facts, I have been asked to talk about the Madrid Summit. The Madrid Summit is a Summit where historical decisions for the Alliance will be taken and I want to start by saying that this is not due to the war against Ukraine waged by Russia through an illegal aggression, which is targeting civilians and committing war crimes, destabilizing the region, threatening global peace and security. Of course, the illegal aggression against Ukraine is something that will be factored in the Madrid Summit, but the Madrid Summit is not only about this war.

The revision of the Strategic Concept, which happens every 9-10 years, started with the decision at the Summit in London in 2019, where the Allies tasked the Secretary General to bring together a group of international experts from all of the NATO

countries to update the way in which the Alliance will continue to fulfil its core security task of deterrence and defence. NATO is a defence organization, its core security function is to protect the member countries so that our democracies can flourish in an environment of security, stability, and peace. And this is the greatest achievement of the Alliance, which has allowed its members to enjoy the longest period of peace and security since the Roman empire.

Now, why was this process launched in 2019, under the banner of «NATO 2030», looking at the next decade? Because a lot of things have happened since 2010, when the latest Strategic Concept – which is still now valid, until the Heads of State and Government will change it at the end of the month – [was approved]. [The Alliance] had to take into account a different security [scenario], one which is characterized by challenges in the cyber space and in the space, by challenges which go from the pandemic to infodemic, cyber security, the fact that our security infrastructure, all of our civilian infrastructure relies on computers, from hospital to airports, and so on and so forth.

So, new challenges alongside the traditional ones, those of terrorism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and of small arms and weapons which are still a major issue. If we look at the Mediterranean, if we look at the south, we see how this proliferation of small arms and light weapons creates conditions of instability and insecurity, and [we also see how] the spill-over of conflicts from failing and failed states destabilizes security in the south as much as it is in the east.

So, the Alliance had to take into account new technologies, the way in which hypersonic [...] destabilize also the way in which we have been able to manage security internationally, and therefore we had to also see how these challenges could be addressed by the Alliance. President Alfano spoke about the impact of AI, artificial intelligence, which poses a number of

threats because we have technologies which are not only automatic, but become autonomous in the way in which they can wage the use of deadly force.

Of course, the members of the Alliance are democracies, the Alliance is based on the values of democracy, individual liberty, the rule of law, and we need to see culturally what it means to delegate the use of weapons to machines. Democracies have a number of ethical problems, have a problem of making this consistent with the rule of law, dictatorships and authoritarian states can simply do that, as we have seen for the disregard of civilian lives in Ukraine through this aggression of Russia.

So, the Alliance in 2019, in London, decided this process, «NATO 2030», which the Secretary General structured in a way that would address three components: how to strengthen the political dimension of NATO; how to strengthen the military, that is to say the defence dimension of the Alliance; and third [how] to develop a more global approach to security. Countries such as Australia, New Zealand, South Korea, Japan, are now partners that are invited in Madrid because there is also an approach there, without of course neglecting a holistic approach to security. We called it in 2019, in the London Summit, «a 360-degree approach», which means that an Alliance which is worth to be financed by parliaments, and therefore the money that taxpayers put into it, has to look at a way in which it will continue to provide for the security of its members in a different environment.

Now, this is the process for the Madrid Summit. Before, during the Cold War, the Strategic Concept was a highly classified document, it was a secret document. In Rome, in 1991, at the Rome Summit, was revised and made public for the first time and since then this is the fourth time that the Strategic Concept will be updated because NATO is an agent of change, it tries to shape change in the security and defence sphere.

There are also other challenges. The security implications of climate change, for example. In order to continue to provide

for the security of its members, the Alliance will have to see how climate change affects its ability to conduct missions, especially if we have to manage crises, because one of the core tasks of the Alliance still remains crisis management.

I was also asked to look at how this affects relationships with the European Union. I mentioned the Rome Summit in 1991. If you look at the Declaration of the Summit, which [took place] 30 years ago, it says that the emerging of the European security and defence identity will reflect into the strengthening of the European pillar within NATO, and will reinforce Transatlantic solidarity and cohesion.

This is very important, because since that moment, there has been an unprecedented way in which we moved forward in making NATO and the emerging of the European security and defence identity complementary to each other and mutually reinforcing. We need to avoid duplications, because it would cost too much to duplicate what NATO has in terms of structures, in terms of processes, but also in terms of capabilities. [We do not] have to create a duplication within the European Union, that is the reason why NATO moved through this idea of complementarity from the very beginning. The Secretary General at that time, Lord Robertson, and Javier Solana, who moved from being the Secretary General of NATO to the position of High Representative [of the EU for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy], negotiated agreements for the release, monitoring and recall of NATO's assets and capabilities, which would allow the European Union to use NATO's strategic command, in order to plan operations.

As you know, the European Union has the equivalent of the NATO's Council, the Political and Security Committee, the equivalent of the international security staff, which is called the EU Military Committee. It does not have a strategic command, it does not have a planning capability, that's why the mechanisms were structured in order to ensure this complementarity and make it become concrete.

In 2016, NATO and the EU signed a common declaration in which this complementarity came down into structuring a political dialogue between the NATO's Council and the EU Political and Security Committee, but also [into] the synchronization of meetings at the level of Ministers, the Secretary General invited to the ministerial meetings of the EU, the President of the Commission and the President of the Council invited to the meetings of NATO.

To quote President Draghi, when he was in the United States, even this crisis [in Ukraine] has made the complementarity between NATO and the EU stronger than ever because we have seen how, while NATO was reinforcing the defence of NATO's territory by developing aid battle groups in the east of the Alliance, the European Union was introducing those sanctions which were necessary to push for an end of the conflict.

During the meeting with President Draghi in Washington, President Biden thanked President Draghi for the work he has been doing to make this complementarity concrete amid the ongoing crisis, he praised his leadership, and said that he attaches a high importance to complementarity between NATO and the EU, which means that the Transatlantic dimension is very important.

During the last meeting of NATO's Council in Brussels, the President of the EU Commission and the President of the EU Council came to NATO's headquarters. And NATO's headquarters, for the first time hosted a meeting of the G7 at the level of Heads of State and Government. Therefore, complementarity is fundamental, and I am sure that at the Madrid Summit decisions to make this complementarity more concrete will also be taken.

Sen. Stefania Craxi
*President of the Foreign Affairs Committee,
Italian Senate of the Republic*

I would like to begin my speech, as a guest of this important initiative of the De Gasperi Foundation, by paying homage to a father of the homeland and of Europe. Alcide De Gasperi was a visionary who, together with other extraordinary men – I am thinking in the first place of Robert Schuman and Konrad Adenauer – comprised the mosaic of political leaders who were able to anticipate the future by tracing a path marked by dialogue, peace and cooperation.

Alcide De Gasperi had well in mind that if we limited ourselves to build – and I quote – «only common administrations, without any higher political will, drawing life from a central organization, in which the wills of the various nations can come together, to gain fresh decision and warmth in a higher union», we would run the risk that European activity would appear «to lack warmth and spiritual vitality». It was therefore very clear, in the eyes of De Gasperi, the correlation between a European army and the constitution of a nucleus of political power. I think that, before a common army, Europe's common foreign policy must come to be, which in recent years has not come to pass. Each nation has pursued Europe and foreign policy according to its own interests. Libya, for example, is a case in point.

De Gasperi often repeated the following. I will quote him again: «If we are to require the armed forces of the different countries to merge together into a permanent and constitutional organisation, and, should the need arise, to defend a greater fatherland, that fatherland must be visible, solid and alive. The European army should serve – always De Gasperi – to create a firm bridge between nations too often separated in the past by an abyss into which the whole of Europe has plunged».

With a thorn in his heart due to the failure of the EDC, De Gasperi died on August 19th, 1954, eleven days before the French National Assembly voted against the ratification of the treaty, which had been signed in May of 1952. When Prime Minister Mario Scelba warned him on the phone of that imminent negative vote, tears fell shamelessly on his old face – I quote the words of his daughter Maria Romana – «he left, aware that Europe would henceforth be unfinished and much more fragile. With the passing of the decades we have understood the reason for those tears, shed for a costly omission. Europe has ended up paying a high price in terms of irrelevance and division on the most delicate chessboards in the most problematic and incandescent areas of the world. The report of the bill that accompanied the treaty establishing the European Defense Community, began by recalling the present political situation, so fraught with unknowns for the European West, and for all that it represents in the civilization and spiritual values of the world».

I often quote history, because I think that a world that does not know history risks making the same mistakes over and over again. These words are absolutely prophetic and relate to today. Seventy years have passed since then, and today the ongoing conflict in Ukraine has swept away many illusions. History, however, has given us a second precious opportunity to respond to the concrete security demands of our citizens. A European defence system, a Permanent Structured Cooperation

(PESCO) is now a reality. But further steps must certainly be taken on the road to its strengthening. Europe can, and must, once again, become a protagonist, one single actor, and can do so with renewed exhibition capability in terms of security and defence. If space is left empty, it is occupied by someone else; the rules of physics teach us that this is so, even before the experience of recent history.

Today we are all in agreement, all political forces, in recognizing that, without a common defence system, Europe has less influence in foreign policy (although having a common foreign policy is necessary first) and is less strong on the international chessboard. It finds it more difficult to defend its own interests and is less cohesive internally, more inclined to waste collective resources. There is, of course, the issue of integration with the Atlantic Alliance. Here we need to speak very clearly: a common European defence and NATO must be complementary. Anchorage to the Atlantic Alliance and the vocation of Europe can, in no way, be called into question. Woe to us if, faced with this era fraught with dangers, the West were to divide. On the contrary, European defence must be considered crucial for the very life of NATO, which today is called upon to shift its axis and to look carefully at what is happening along Southern shores. With NATO's head very much turned to the East, we would risk finding our South exposed.

In the current historical context, the wider Mediterranean area also gives rise to critical challenges to global peace, security and stability. The *Mare Nostrum* is therefore the theatre of action, where Europe can and must be linked to NATO. By strengthening the Euro-Atlantic bond, there is a need for a greater and new leadership of Europe in the Mediterranean. The Mediterranean must once again become the protagonist of the European agenda precisely because of the relaunch of this Community project, which can also act as a link between the two sides of the Atlantic.

Thirty years ago, one of the great issues that undoubtedly required further study was the problem connected with the role of NATO – orphaned of its historical enemy – and its function in the post-Cold War world. Would the defensive link between the two sides of the Atlantic be maintained, or would American isolationist impulses and European claims to self-sufficiency prevail? We took this risk and it was one of the main dilemmas of recent decades. The Atlantic Alliance therefore needed to be rethought in its functions, in its approach to major international problems. In short, it was called upon to readjust to the postmodern era.

Then, a new, unexpected, unprecedented disorder tinged the global picture with gloomy colours. First the war in the Balkans, the instability in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, the growing doubts about the future of the European Community, as well as the role of the United States, exhibited to all the lack of a stable order of security in the post-Cold War period. Today we find ourselves in an even more unprecedented conflict, a conflict that has turned back the clock of history, and it is a conflict on the border of Europe. And so today we need to structure a line of coordination with the new demands of Community defence: first of all, by pooling the innovation processes of the armed forces, the only way to respond efficiently and to be able to adapt to the new asymmetric threats that have broken the paradigms of understanding the past. This is an asymmetric war that involves everyone; it involves the armed forces on the ground, but also energy and cyber security, as well as food, which Russia is using as a blackmail weapon.

That is why a new agenda must be defined for the wider Mediterranean, including the Balkans. Its approach must be changed, not only in terms of thinking exclusively of security, but also in terms of development. Because a world where people still die from hunger will never be a peaceful world. Thus, the issues of security and the issues of development are greatly

interconnected and, even today, that gap that divides the North and the South of the world, measured in profound distances, is the great social issue of our times. It is a grave threat to our security.

Hon. Mikuláš Dzurinda
President of the Wilfried Martens Centre for European Studies

I would like to take this opportunity to share my personal experience as Prime Minister of Slovakia, while the country was still not a member of the Atlantic Alliance. I took office in October 1998. The Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland, our neighbours, had already joined NATO, but Slovakia remained excluded from the NATO enlargement process, as well as from the EU one, due to the choices of my predecessor. Therefore, my aim was to put an end to this black hole in the middle of Europe and, when I visited the United States for the first time, I told President Clinton: «Mr. President, look at the map. There is a black hole in the very heart of Europe. We should delete it». He was a bit shocked: «Mr. Prime Minister, my dear colleague, you have missed the train».

However, being a leader, I had the duty to insist: «Mr President, we want Slovakia to join NATO». He answered: «Okay, I do realize it, but we miss a new configuration, similar to that between Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland». So, my response was: «There is a new configuration in my head». «Really? Tell me». And I said: «Double S». «Double S? What does it mean?» «It means Slovakia and Slovenia.» And he gave a big smile. «Why do you smile, Mr. President?» «Because you are very small fishes.» I did not give up, and continued: «There are already three

Baltic states, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, which joined NATO». And President Clinton replied: «Russia will never allow it».

This conversation happened in March 1999. After 5 years, Slovakia and Slovenia, together with Bulgaria and Romania, we became members of the Alliance. Why am I recalling this? Because I do not believe that NATO and the West are seen as a real threat for Putin and his administration. The issue is Ukraine as such, being a very special case for him. On the one hand, it is an emotional issue. Most Soviet leaders grew up in Kiev, which was an important centre for the education of the Communist or Soviet Union's best nomenklatura. Only Andropov and Gorbachev came from other regions or schools. At the same time, Ukraine is at the top of Putin's concern because from Kiev, from the Maidan square, the spark of freedom, the spark of reform, can jump to the Red Square in Moscow. This is the real threat for him.

At the beginning, I was very sceptical about Ukraine's ability to undertake a process of reform, due to the high level of corruption, which rejected any kind of change on a political, social, and economic level, both in Kiev and the countryside. Suddenly, we realized that it is possible to promote reforms also in Ukraine, and this scares Putin the most.

I would also like to emphasize the need to build our own European defence forces, operating in an integrated way with NATO, but under the umbrella of the EU, with a joint European military leadership. The EU has adopted a foreign and security policy, it established the Permanent Structure Cooperation (PESCO) in the defence field and a fund for defence expenses. Recently, a common battlegroup of five thousand troops has been launched, and the Conference on the Future of Europe highlighted the need to create a true joint military defence. However, to be wealthy is not enough, Europe needs to be much stronger as Europe. I negotiated with Putin several times, and I realized that you are attractive for him if you are very weak, not if you are strong.

Relying on the United States and NATO for Europe is not enough to face adequately Russia's aggressive policies, and more broadly, to address the challenges of the new global geopolitical landscape. Besides Russia, there is an increasingly assertive China, and some regional powers, such as Turkey or Iran. These countries are gaining ground at Europe's expense in the Middle East, Africa, but also in the Western Balkans.

The number and the scale of the frozen conflicts is enlarging, not shrinking. China represents a challenge for the entire democratic community. We all saw what happened in Hong Kong, and the growing pressure toward Taiwan, and I do not want to imagine a coordinated action of China challenging Taiwan and Russia challenging other neighbours. Such a picture is a nightmare.

The interest of the EU and the United States do not always have to be identical. We have to be aware of that, and ready on that, by adopting swift and bold decisions in the EU to create a common united European integrated defence forces, operating under a joint EU military command. These military forces, together with national armies, would represent the heart of the EU deterrence capabilities. The role of such forces would be to secure the NATO Eastern and Southern flanks, conduct crisis management operations in our immediate neighbourhood, and strengthen air and sea surveillance.

All of this without duplications or with competition with NATO. The right word is complementarity. This is what Europe should be about. If the EU comes to be a really reliable, equal, and strong pillar of NATO, it would be only good for the United States, and for the whole Transatlantic community, in which I have been so strongly dedicated to and in which I strongly believe in.

SESSION 4

Time to invest in Security and
Defence: political and technological
opportunities in a competitive world

Dr. Niklas Novaky
Senior Research Officer,
Wilfried Martens Centre for European Studies

The conflict in Ukraine has indeed highlighted the importance of modern technology in war fighting and deterrence, as well as resisting Russia's aggressive behavior. It has also highlighted how new technology can tilt the scale in favor of the defending parties, which can have access to superior technology that the opponent might not have, although it is a much bigger party.

Technology has always been a key element of deterrence, especially if we look into the recent history. Nuclear weapons were huge game changers, in the way deterrence strategies were developed during the Cold War. Before that, strategic bombers were also a major development that impacted the way that military planners canvassed deterrence strategies.

Military planners, strategists, analysts: they continuously have to keep up with the trends in technological development, because technology can really revolutionize and change the way war is fought, and the way war can be prevented through deterrence. The key change now is that digital and information technology has really become an increasingly important element in deterrence strategies, in war fighting, and also in conflict and capability development. This applies not just to the land and air domain, but in all the different domains of war.

If we examine some of the new weapons systems and platforms, such as the US F-35 fighter aircraft, it is basically a flying computer. There might be a pilot flying, but it is so advanced and full with different types of information technology, that it is practically a drone. In this case, the challenge is that these technologies need to be continuously developed, becoming a lot more expensive. Researching becomes very expensive, buying them is very expensive, and maintaining them throughout their life cycle is also very expensive. And no European country has today the resources to develop, procure, and maintain alone these sorts of massive next-generation weapon platforms, such as the F-35.

The Ukrainian conflict has really shown quite strongly that when we talk about technological deterrence, we do not really have to look only at massive and really expensive platforms, such as the F-35 aircraft. Satellite imagery was mentioned, and that can be a very key element when providing tactical support to units fighting on the ground. As for the drones, the Ukrainians have shown an incredible ingenuity in the way they have used drone technology to fight against the Russian tanks. This is one of the key lessons also for the European Union and NATO from the war in Ukraine: it is not necessary to match every Russian tank one by one, as it is possible to invest in these new next generation technology, such as the drones, developing a common European drone platform that can perhaps be more effective in destroying the clumsy Russian tanks if they ever decide to come across the border into the European Union or NATO.

To deal with many of these challenges that we have at the moment, the European Union has launched several major initiatives, such as the European Defense Fund, the Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO), and the Coordinated Annual Review on Defense, all of which seek to help the European Union develop the necessary capabilities that it will need to maintain its security, and also to contribute to the Transatlantic

burden sharing in the future. There are many different projects that have been already adopted and launched in these frameworks. In particular, the European Defense Fund is also financing the development of many very important next generation technologies, such as satellite technology, hybrid deterrence technology, cyber technology, and so on and so forth. So, the European Union is on the right direction at the moment.

This is not only a question of how much money we spend, or if we are spending enough money into these technologies. What European countries also have to ask is, how the money is spent. The biggest danger now, in a phase in which many European countries are increasing their national defence budget, is that the defence spending may increase in an uncoordinated way, and this might lead to an uncoordinated procurement of different capabilities, to an uncoordinated research of new technology, and then to an incredible waste in resources.

Therefore, whatever is done now with this new money is absolutely vital that it is coordinated as effectively as possible, by both the European Union and NATO. The European Commission published a very good analysis on this topic at the end of May, focusing on the current existing defence gaps in Europe. And this defence gap analysis includes several very good proposals on creating short-term mechanisms for increasing joint and coordinated procurement among the member States to fill these shortages that have come into existence, as they have provided arms and other equipment to Ukraine. This is indeed the way to go: it is not just about how much we spend, but also how we are spending the money.

Hon. Giorgio Mulé
Undersecretary of State, Italian Ministry of Defence

Today investing in security and defence technologies is a priority: we are in the era of Emerging and Disruptive Technologies – which represent a real paradigm shift in the geostrategic field, because they have started a multidisciplinary and multidimensional transformation. It is what on the Atlantic level is referred to as the «Age of Transformation».

Age and transformation are not an oxymoron; these two terms go together.

It is a technological transformation with a global, legal, industrial, social, ethical, environmental, energy, civil, military, virtual, operational impact – you see the complexity of the system. It is an inevitable transformation compared to the other transformations that accompanied epochal processes. It is a very rapid transformation because compared to the time to which history has accustomed us, the transition from one industrial transformation to another has been shortened by at least seventy-five years. If we think of the great military revolutions, those took place hundreds of years apart. And now we are in the midst of a further revolution of a reach and magnitude that are not completely controllable.

We can and must dialogue with this new era and seize its opportunities with a proactive mindset, with a transversal

approach, and with concrete initiatives by industry, academia and research, accompanied by an understanding of risks and even threats.

In Defence, for example, battlefield capabilities are increasingly linked and interconnected. They involve equipment, critical infrastructures, the security of supply chains, technological networks and human capital, touching on education, professional skills and cognitive behaviour.

Seizing technological opportunities which also become opportunities for investment and political connection in transnational collaboration projects means first of all intercepting the emergence of new technologies from their initial phases, especially those that are «dual» which from the field of Defence are increasingly finding wide use in private and civil sectors.

To this end, we must and can bridge the gap between civil and military industry, developing technology incubators, investing in the public (such as universities) and private (start-ups and SMEs). In this respect, the Defence will have to support, on the one hand, the protection of the intellectual property rights of inventors and their patents, and on the other hand, integrate their skills and eventual training needs.

Security and defence technology are a concrete opportunity to obtain European funds: dozens of EU programmes are now accessible, in whole or in part, to companies and to defence or dual research entities. NATO arrives with its Innovation Fund and private equity and mutual fund investors are ready to join. In this regard, I consider it my duty, and it is a source of pride, to mention the DIANA project (Defence Innovation Accelerator for the North Atlantic). Thanks to this, Turin – with great teamwork initiated by the Presidency of the Council of Ministers which embraced the Ministry of Defence and our permanent representation in Brussels – was chosen as the site of one of the nine start-up accelerators in the field of security, together with the «test centres» of La Spezia and Capua.

Finally, there is also the European Investment Bank, which has now found its path, while respecting its statutory limits, to support investments for security and defence.

The subject of Cyber has also been affected. It must be stated clearly: we are terribly behind in this area. That's terrible because the consequences derive from it are terrible.

We have a gap between OT Operational Technology systems (energy, air conditioning, transport, logistics, electronic systems, radar, etc.) and IT Information Technology networks (PCs, Servers, Routers, etc. and their networks) on which to intervene here and now. OT will increasingly meet IT. The threat of hacker attacks, until recently limited to the IT world, has spread to the OT world by exploiting the weakness of the system represented by the so-called «red dot» or the point of interconnection of the two worlds. An example is the following: think of the air conditioner in your home operated remotely through an application on your mobile phone. The air conditioner is the OT element, the command that passes from the mobile phone through a wi-fi network is the IT element. In the meeting between the command of the mobile phone and the reception of the air conditioner lies the criticality that we have defined as the red dot. By translation, the same principle applies between an airport control tower and runway radar.

The security of the country is staked on this. We have no idea about the vulnerability of systems. From trains to planes.

Before concluding, I would like to highlight how the war in Ukraine is giving a new and stronger acceleration to the process of European defence integration, which risks damaging those Member States less ready to adapt to change. On these grounds, unfortunately, Italy risks being penalized due to a slow, cumbersome decision-making process and legislation that is not in step with the times in many fields, including that of defence.

There is, however, something new that could prove useful to escaping the bureaucratic quagmire. Italy recently expressed

its opinion on the Defence Investment Gap Analysis, a joint statement by the Commission and the High Representative of the European Union to support the need to make spending efficient and optimize procurement procedures. The document starts with the observation of European shortcomings in each area of funding domain and foresees three objectives for European defence investments: Together (therefore cooperation programmes in research and technological development and acquisition, also to contain costs); Better (that is focusing on the priorities identified as European in the capacities to be met); European (a more competitive European industry as the strengthening of the European technological and industrial base has become strategic in a deteriorated geostrategic framework).

The declaration makes concrete proposals:

Establish a Defence Joint Procurement Task Force to coordinate Member States' purchases in the short term;

Establish a new financial instrument with a budget of EUR 500 million for the period 2022-24 to incentivise joint purchases by Member States and thereby strengthen European military industrial capabilities;

Prepare an EU framework for Defence Joint Procurement through the current EDF and EDA instruments and a new one, a regulation establishing a European Defence Investment Programme (EDIP).

Aim for greater support for the defence industry and joint procurement by the European Investment Bank.

At the same time, European procurement regulations should be put in place and new rules should be set for the defence industry.

Therefore, to the question: «Is it time to invest?», the answer can only be: «Yes».

And with the ability to understand this «time», its technology and its opportunities, the country maintains and strengthens its role on the stage of international, European and Atlantic

relations, showing itself to be a reliable, skilful and enlisted partner as always in its contribution to the protection of democratic values, thanks to being part of the Western vanguard in investments, technological research and skills training for security and defence.

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This booklet sums up the proceedings of the second edition of the «Security and Defence Days», the annual conference organized by the De Gasperi Foundation on the most topical issues relating to NATO, the European Union, and the role of Italy in the international scenario. Published in partnership with the Wilfried Martens Centre for European Studies, the volume features a selection of the remarks delivered by the distinguished speakers who joined the four sessions of the event, including government authorities, decision-makers, officials, policy-makers, scholars, and practitioners. Based on a multidisciplinary and synergic approach, the proceedings addressed the following topics: NATO and Russia's invasion of Ukraine; the Ukrainian perspective on the role of NATO and the EU towards Russia; the new NATO's Strategic Concept, the EU Strategic Compass, and the European «strategic autonomy»; the future of the NATO-EU partnership and of Transatlantic relations; the need for NATO and the EU member states to strengthen their security and defence capabilities; the new investment opportunities in the defence industry. The conference took place in Rome on June 14th and 15th 2022.

The **De Gasperi Foundation** was established in 1982 to promote the vision and the example of Alcide De Gasperi, the founding father of both the Italian Republic and the European Union. To fulfill its mission, the Foundation is engaged in study and research activities in the areas most relevant to De Gasperi's historical and political legacy: democracy and institutions, economy and social justice, geopolitics and security.

The **Wilfried Martens Centre for European Studies** was established in 2007 as the political foundation and official think tank of the European People's Party (EPP). The Martens Centre contributes to the formulation of EU and national policies, and serves as a forum where they can be discussed, putting forward new ideas and stimulating the public debate about the EU.



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