NATO’S RAISON D’ÊTRE AFTER THE COLD WAR

A Thesis
Presented to the MA Programme
of the OSCE Academy in Bishkek
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Arts in Politics and Security

by
Yrys Abdieva

December 2017
The OSCE Academy in Bishkek

STATEMENT OF THESIS APPROVAL

The MA Thesis of Yrys Abdieva has been approved by the following:

Payam Foroughi, Thesis Supervisor 7 December 2017

Kemel Toktomushev, Defense Committee Chair 7 December 2017

Aigoul Abdoubaetova, Academic Coordinator 7 December 2017

Alexander Wolters, OSCE Academy Director 7 December 2017
ABSTRACT

The aim of this Thesis is to analyze how the North Atlantic Treaty Organization’s (NATO) perceived threats have changed since the end of the Cold War and what reasoning NATO brings for its continued existence. To do so, this Thesis chronologically explores NATO’s threat perceptions to its members in the post-Cold War era, in addition to determining opinions of scholars on NATO’s continued existence. Using a combined methodology of discourse analysis of 22 speeches of NATO Secretary Generals (1990-2016) and six in-depth interviews with NATO officials and experts, this Thesis determined that unlike the Cold War era when NATO’s primary threat perception was the USSR (and communist ideology), and thus singular, in the post-Cold War era, the Alliance’s threat perceptions have been multiple. Analysis of NATO Secretary Generals’ speeches revealed that in the post-Cold War era, the word “Russia” was spoken 122 times and “terrorism” 70 times, while a significant stress was also put on possible “future” threats to the NATO alliance members. The study determined that NATO’s perceived threats after the Cold War have evolved from ethnic conflict in the Balkans to terrorism, to Russian aggression in Georgia and Ukraine, and to undetermined future threats. The combination of these threats were considered to be determinants of NATO’s raison d’être after the Cold War. This study also found that there are differences in justifying NATO’s existence with some scholars disagreeing with NATO’s official justifications of politico-humanitarian reasons of conflict resolution, democratizing, peace-inducing, and combating terrorism and rouge states, arguing, instead, that NATO’s raison d’être is to dominate Europe, to earn profits from weapons sales for its powerful members, in addition to deterring Russia in what may be a ‘New Cold War’.
# CONTENTS

STATEMENT OF THESIS APPROVAL ................................................................. ii
ABSTRACT ........................................................................................................... iii
LIST OF FIGURES ............................................................................................... v
ACRONYMS ......................................................................................................... vi
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ...................................................................................... vi

Chapters

One: WHY A FOCUS ON NATO? ........................................................................... 1

   Research question .......................................................................................... 4
   Hypothesis ....................................................................................................... 6
   Theoretical framework ..................................................................................... 6
   Research design ............................................................................................. 10
   Research significance ..................................................................................... 11

Two: LITERATURE REVIEW .............................................................................. 12

   NATO during the Cold War .......................................................................... 12
   NATO after the Cold War ............................................................................. 16
   NATO in the 21st century: A “New Cold War”? .......................................... 20

Three: ANALYSIS ............................................................................................. 29

   Hypothesis I: Terrorism and nuclear proliferation as new threats .............. 31
   Hypothesis II: Peace and stability as raison d’être ...................................... 44
   Hypothesis III: Stability vs. instability critique ........................................... 56
   NATO controversies and Trump’s speeches ............................................... 65

Four: CONCLUSIONS ....................................................................................... 72

REFERENCES .................................................................................................... 76

APPENDIX: LIST OF INTERVIEWS .................................................................. 81
LIST OF FIGURES

Figures
I: Example of how purpose, goals, and actions depend on threat........................................ 6
II: List of NATO Summits........................................................................................................ 29
III: List of NATO Secretary Generals ....................................................................................... 30
IV: Key words spoken by NATO SGs in Summits (1957-1989) ........................................... 32
V: Key words spoken by NATO SGs in Summits (1990-2016) ............................................. 32
VI: Key threats for NATO during the Cold War ........................................................................ 35
VII: Key threats for NATO in the post-Cold War era............................................................... 36
VIII: When “challenge(s)” was found in NATO SG’s Summit speech..................................... 44
IX: NATO’s raison d’être during the Cold War ......................................................................... 45
X: NATO’s raison d’être in the post-Cold War era .................................................................... 46
## ACRONYMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbr.</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABM</td>
<td>Anti-Ballistic Missile (Treaty)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU</td>
<td>European Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GDP</td>
<td>Gross domestic product</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IO</td>
<td>International organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISIS</td>
<td>Islamic State of Iraq and Syria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NATO</td>
<td>North Atlantic Treaty Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-governmental organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OSCE</td>
<td>Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R2P</td>
<td>Responsibility to Protect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SG</td>
<td>(NATO) Secretary General</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S.</td>
<td>United States of America</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USSR</td>
<td>Union of Soviet Socialist Republics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WMD</td>
<td>Weapon of mass destruction</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express deep gratitude to my Thesis supervisor, Dr. Payam Foroughi, for his enormous support and guidance during the whole thesis writing process from choosing topic to its submission. Also, I very thankful for Dr. Alexander Wolters for giving his critical insight towards formulating my research questions. My next gratitude goes to my family and friends for giving me moral support. And lastly, special thanks to interview participants who despite their busy schedule found time for in-depth interviews on the topic of my Thesis, NATO.
Chapter One

WHY A FOCUS ON NATO?

The Cold War (around 1947-1991) formed a significant part of world history that affected almost all countries on the planet. It was a period when the Soviet Union and the United States (U.S.) built up their conventional and nuclear armaments largely due to a clash of ideologies and interests. Among other things, the two camps deterred each other by building alliances.

A deeply divided Europe after the end of the devastating World War II, in turn, led to the creation of what William Wohlforth (2016) refers to as “history’s most deeply institutionalized and long-lasting counter-hegemonic coalition” (136), i.e. the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). Despite over a quarter century into the end of the Cold War, NATO, created on 4 April 1949 to counter “Soviet expansionism” (NATO 2012, 1), still exists today, even though its initial raison d’être, the Soviet Union, disintegrated in 1991. According to Pradik Nayak (1969):

“NATO was established to ensure the maximum pooled strength in the event of war and to deter [the] USSR by making it clear that if it upset the European balance, it would face the combined strength of ... [its] 15 ... signatories”(1050).

Today, NATO has 28 member states, with Montenegro having been the most recently joined, as of mid-2017. NATO is not only a military alliance, but also a political one, that claims to support democratic values, prevent conflicts, and provide “crisis-management operations” (NATO 2016). It was the 1948 Communist coup in Czechoslovakia which motivated the creation of NATO, while the USSR, in turn, formed the “Warsaw Pact” in 1955, a military alliance with East European communist states (Rice 2016). Since its inception 68 years ago, NATO claims to have
successfully dealt with a variety of crises ranging from the 1956 Suez crisis, the Bosnia crisis of 1992-1995, and the aftermath of the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks (hereafter “9/11”) with NATO’s involvement in Afghanistan (NATO website).

According to Timo Noetzel and Benjamin Schreer (2009), there had been “no alternative to NATO in terms of guaranteeing security in the Euro-Atlantic area” during the Cold War (213). With its political and military power, NATO has had a major weight when dealing with instability and crisis in the post-Cold War era, as well. NATO’s role has been discussed extensively by the U.S., the European Union (EU) and Russia in their official statements. After the Georgia (2008) and Ukraine (2014) crises involving Russia, NATO became a key issue on the among major stakeholders, with Russia blaming U.S. for NATO’s expansion, which it claimed threatens Russia’s security, and U.S. denying its supposed promise made for “not one inch Eastward” (Itzkovitz Shifrinson 2016).

Much of the new discourse has been contentious, even among NATO members, themselves. U.S. President Donald Trump, for example, during his presidential campaign in 2016 stated that he wants the U.S. to pull out of NATO due to high costs for the U.S. of protecting its allies. And while he had also referred to NATO as an “obsolete” organization while campaigning for president, soon after he became president, he said that NATO “is no longer obsolete” (Euronews 2017). Prior to Trump, U.S. President Barack Obama had also criticized NATO, having claimed that the EU NATO member states are like “free riders” who benefit from NATO but do not contribute sufficiently to it (Goldberg 2016). Many scholars, in turn, indicate that NATO is still relevant today due to new threats as terrorism, for which the Organization is the only effective tool to resolve and protect its member states from. According to both Paul Cornish (2004) and Kostas Ifantis (2007), in the post-Cold
War era, NATO has been able to transform its objectives from nuclear deterrence and counter-Soviet framework to one of counter-terrorism.

NATO proponents, such as Ifantis (2007), claim that the Alliance has transformed itself today to help such crises as Kosovo (1998-99), the fight against terrorism, and preventing the spread of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs). As such, in the post-Cold War era, NATO has been able to adapt itself to new perceived threats, and it has been able to expand its geographical scope and strategies.

NATO critics, on the other hand, point that from the start of George W. Bush’s U.S. presidency (2000-2008), NATO was criticized as an instrument of American foreign policy (Cornish 2004). They also point to the fact that NATO appears as a politico-military alliance, which implements political missions and excludes and discriminates against countries which do not accept its supposed liberal values, i.e. states which are not allied with the West. Furthermore, they claim, that the reason for the EU backing of NATO is that the EU does not have other security options and uses NATO instrumentally as its regional security tool. This is despite the fact that six EU members (Sweden, Austria, Cyprus, Finland, Ireland, Malta) are not NATO members.

Others scholars, such as Noetzel and Benjamin Schreer (2009), claim that the EU is hesitant to provide large resources for its own defense because it values peace missions, such as the UN’s “blue helmets,” and not operations made up of pure military power. Much of the division between the EU and NATO has happened due to the so-called “war on terror” where some EU members such as France have seen the US-led NATO at times as a source of conflict and not peace (Ifantis 2007). There is thus an internal conflict within NATO and the newly elected U.S. President Donald Trump had, as mentioned, at one point even called for “pull[ing] out of NATO,” which, given the U.S.’s massive contribution to it, would question the very existence
of NATO as an effective security organization (Gore 2016).

Given the divisions among scholars and politicians on NATO, including the recent political debates on NATO, make the topic of NATO important for research. Consequently, taking into account the long survival of NATO after the Cold War, the intent of this Thesis is to research NATO’s raison d’être since the end of the Cold War and collapse of the Soviet Union, including the ongoing scholarly debates on NATO’s existence after the Cold War.

**Research question**

Raison d'être is a French expression which is literally translated as “reason for being” and is also referred to as “the most important reason or purpose for someone or something’s existence” (Oxford Dictionary 2017). In the case of this Thesis, raison d’être implies that we are looking for justification of existence of NATO in the 21st century. This thesis aims to find out this raison d’être by looking at NATO’s perceived threats after the end of Cold War. Why particularly through threats is because NATO came into existence due to the presence of a threat: communism. NATO’s primary existence is thus determined by perceived threats to its members.

Figure I shows that threat is the main factor from which NATO’s aims, purpose and functions derive. In this figure, we can see the process where firstly, a threat appears because of which NATO was established, and later NATO established a purpose to end this threat. From this core purpose, NATO formulates its goals as bringing peace and stability to its members, and to achieve such goals, the Alliance initiates various action plans. Figure I is an example to justify why I chose to study threats to, in turn, determine NATO’s raison d’être. Today NATO has much more threats, goals, aims and actions.
To study NATO’s raison d’être, it is thus appropriate to study the evolution of its threats to learn against which threats exists that defines its purpose and actions. In addition, to find out NATO’s raison d’être, it is relevant to study its officially spoken reasons of existence, while for a fuller picture, it is also important to analyze the arguments of NATO experts, some interviewed for this study, to determine the reasons for NATO’s existence.

Therefore, the continued existence of the Cold War-created entity NATO in the post-Cold War era generates the key research question of this Thesis: *How has NATO’s perceived global security threats changed since the end of the Cold War?* This Thesis will also respond to the following sub-question: *How do NATO officials, NATO proponents, and NATO critics justify the Alliance’s existence in the 21st century?*
Hypotheses

This Thesis will test the following three hypotheses:

**H\textsubscript{1} (Terrorism and nuclear proliferation as new threats):** NATO’s perceived threats have evolved from countering aggression by the Soviet Union during the Cold War to fighting terrorism and the spread of nuclear weapons in the 21st century.

**H\textsubscript{2} (Peace and stability as raison d’être):** NATO officials justify the Alliance’s existence as the only alternative to bringing peace and stability to particularly Europe (but also selected other regions), arguing that NATO corresponds to the UN Charter while also critiquing UN’s lack of capacity.

**H\textsubscript{3} (Stability vs. instability critique):** Proponents of NATO in the post-Cold War era justify its existence as a force for stability and security given its ability to counter threats (terrorism, spread of WMD, humanitarian crises); but opponents claim NATO’s existence and expanding membership has created more instability in the world.

Theoretical framework

The theory of “organizational transformation” by Adrianna Kezar (2001) will be used in this Thesis to explain NATO’s evolution and transformation since the end of Cold War. Organizational changes affect the internal structure and processes and “change happens because environment demands change for survival” (29). It is thus reasonable that new global threats that have appeared have, in turn, required NATO to restructure its position after the collapse of the Soviet Union. This fits with Kezar’s reasoning that “change is mostly unplanned ... [and] is an adaptive or selection-based process” (31). After the dissolution of its main protagonist, one would’ve assumed that NATO would lose its meaning or raison d’être in the post-Cold War era, but unexpected phenomena appeared, such as the dissolution of Yugoslavia and the subsequent wars, including the Serbia-Kosovo conflict; the invasion of Afghanistan; and upheaval in Libya, which NATO chose to respond to by changing its aims and adapting to the new environments.
A number of scholars, including Ifantis (2007), Cornish (2004) and Noetze (2009), claim that the changes observed in NATO in the post-Cold War era have not been due to changes in leadership or agents, but that given the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the focus of the international threats have changed. As NATO evolves, “it interacts its environment, and continuously defines and redefines its institutional raison d’être” (Cho 2007, 2). In the post-Cold War era, according to Cho, the Alliance has gone through “a daunting situation under which an old structure has become increasingly incapable of coping with new challenges from the new environment” (2). Despite NATO having been left without an enemy after the collapse of Soviet Union, new threats (including Islamic terrorism, possible spread of nuclear weapons and an aggressive Russian Federation), have begun to appear in the international arena. Hence, NATO, in turn, has adapted its goals and missions to the new global environment.

Along with the Kezar’s (2001) “evolutionary model” of change, the “social cognition” model will also be used. This model states that “the reasons for change in organizations are tied to appropriateness and a reaction to cognitive dissonance,” i.e. “people simply reach a point ... at which values and actions clash” and to reconcile the two, “they decide to change” so as to avoid the discomfort of dissonance (45). In the case of NATO, according to Richard Sanders (2002), this dissonance arrived in the post-Cold War era and the disappearance of the Soviet Union, whereby “NATO became [or felt] increasingly irrelevant and needed a reason for its continued existence” (92) and “a new frame of mind or worldview” (45).

A changing environment, according to Cho (2007), “exert[s] critical impact” on how an organization “behave[s] and perform[s]” and how it responds to challenges, thus contributing to the organization’s “identity formation.” The physical
(and psychological) environment with its challenges helps to reshape “the old self, which has lost practicality and effectiveness, as obsolescence and desuetude” (10). Likewise, Hongwei He and Andrew Brown (2013) state that organizational identity is about “an entity’s attempts to define itself,” and implicates questions such as “who are we?” and “who do we want to become?” (5). An organizational identity is defined as a “central, enduring, and distinctive” set of values “that distinguishes the organization from others” (Cho 2007, 8).

Identities are partially created “through dialogue with external stakeholders” (Brown and He 2013, 6), and true identity and purpose are formed after experiencing certain crisis. The purpose or objective is a rationale of organization’s existence which guides it out of its static position (Cho 2007). Goals shape an international organization’s (IO) identity by regulating and controlling its activities. NATO, for example, has political and military goals as it claims to strive for promoting democratic values and commits itself to “peaceful resolution of conflicts” (NATO undated).

Sungjoon Cho (2014) gives the analogy of human and organizational identity. He states that as a person develops his or her identity and experiences crisis, organizations also experience similar processes, while psychologist Erik Erikson (2014) claims that children imitate adults by copying their behavior, and in adolescence they start defining themselves based on their beliefs, goals and their fitting in society. In the last stages of adolescence, teenagers experience multiple identification which conflicts with one another. With competition among society and socialization, an individual is able to overcome “role confusion” (similar to “cognitive dissonance”) and find or choose her own values and beliefs. Only after overcoming the current identity crisis does the individual become stable and secure to deal with
future crises.

An IO “is an autonomous, organic entity that owes its existence to its own incessant adaptations to ... [an] ever-changing environment, much like a human being” (Cho 2014, 377). As human beings pursue balance in life, the IO pursues equilibrium or balance vis-à-vis its external environment by adapting “its individuality in its institutional development” to survive (Cho 2007, 8). IOs sometimes face socialization pressures from their environment, forcing them “to diversify their institutional selves into multiple roles” as it happens with adolescents, what again contributes to identity creation. Identity establishment “may be accompanied by confusion, fatigue and stress: it is [thus] a crisis” (12).

If an IO cannot survive an identity crisis, then, it cannot be fully actualized and if it experiences confusion due to multiple identifications and cannot be committed to one coherent identity, its identity is diffused, thus the notion of “identity diffusion” (12). After the dissolution of the Soviet Union and appearance of new threats such as terrorism and nuclear weapons, NATO had to diversify its functions and be involved in tasks and aims such “democratizing” Libya, assisting in Iraq, and fighting the “war on terror” in Afghanistan. I thus argue in this Thesis that NATO, too, gained multiple roles after experiencing stress and has been experiencing cognitive dissonance.

Cho (2007) writes that as DNA influences a human’s present and future, the past determines the present and future activities of an organization in a path-dependency scheme. NATO, in turn, I argue, having been formed as a political and military organization still continues its politico-military path. Even if an organization becomes obsolete and ineffective, it cannot cease to exist, argues Cho. At face value, it seems reasonable, as asked by the Russian Federation’s President Vladimir Putin, that if there’s “no Warsaw Treaty, no Eastern bloc, not even Soviet Union; then why
“Is three NATO?” (quoted in Stone 2016). For Putin and many other observers, therefore, NATO is a Cold War organization and irrelevant today, but surprisingly it continues to exist. Cho (2007) states that organization’s “old habits die hard… [and that] relics of the old structure or culture remain” even within a new institutional frame (9). If this is in fact true, then Putin’s claim that NATO is a threat to post-Soviet Russia might also be true. I will explore some of these concepts and issues in more detail in later chapters of this Thesis.

**Research design**

The research for this Thesis will rely on qualitative methods. Among other things, **discourse and content analyses** will be conducted on 22 NATO General Secretary’s speeches from annual Summits 1957-2016, selected based on availability of speech materials. Analysis will be conducted on NATO’s proponents and critics of its continued existence in the post-Cold War era. In addition, six **in-depth interviews** with experts and NATO officials will be done to complement the above. Some NATO scholars have used process-tracing, historical development and interviews to develop their work. For my study, content and discourse analysis are appropriate for conducting research on the evolution of NATO’s threat perceptions because only through understanding official statements and experts’ work on NATO can we understand the pros and cons of justifying NATO’s continued existence. The limitation of this methodology can also be that discourse and content analysis are explicit and can only tell the official positions which often is different from reality. This problem will be countered in this Thesis via the use of expert interviews and reference to NATO critics.
Research significance

There are five points of significance of this Thesis: First, NATO turns 68 years old this year (2017). The Alliance has thus survived the Cold War and the associated threat of nuclear war, the collapse of Soviet Union, and post-9/11 Islamic terrorism and remains a force to be reckoned with. Second, there is an ongoing debate about NATO in America with the election of Trump, his statements about the obsolescence of the Organization and his consequent 180-degree change of mind and saying it is no longer obsolete (Euronews 2017).

Third, Russia blames NATO for expanding to the East, encroaching ever closer to the Russian Federation’s borders and blames NATO as a source of conflict in Ukraine and Georgia, including the placing of missile defenses in states with close proximity to Russia. In this West vs. Russia clash of perspectives, as this Thesis does, it is important to explore NATO’s aims and operations. Fourth, there is a division among scholars about reasons of NATO’s operations, whether they are for peace or instability, economic profit or Western hegemony in a “New Cold War” scenario. This research will explore these debates. And finally, fifth, NATO’s reason(s) of expansion and which current threats it is guided by are unclear. This research will fill this gap by exploring chronologically the perceived threats to NATO members, but also NATO itself as a perceived threat to Russia and its allies, while also analyzing NATO’s new goals after the collapse of the Soviet Union.
Chapter Two

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter is divided into three parts. It will discuss selected literature on: NATO during the Cold War, NATO after the Cold War, and NATO in the 21st century.

NATO during the Cold War

The Cold War was an ideological war between the capitalist largely democratic Western world and communist Soviet Union and its sphere of influence. Henry Kissinger (1994) refers to the “cultural gap” between the US and USSR. The U.S.-USSR division started right after the end of WWII when Nazi Germany was defeated. The “power vacuum” of post-WWII was alarming to the U.S.-led West (Kissinger 1994, 438). According to Kissinger, British Prime Minister Churchill opposed the Soviet domination, America’s President Truman wanted to hold an alliance together with the Soviet Union, and Stalin wanted payment for victory in the form of occupying new territories, but also sought Pan-Slavism (438).

After the end of WWII, Europe suffered economically and needed aid to recover its infrastructure and establish industries; in addition, Europe was fearing Soviet expansion and Germany’s aggression (CVCE 2016). At about the same time, the U.S. proposed the European Recovery Program (aka “Marshall Plan”) for Europe, which helped to recover the economies of Europe and build their cooperation. The USSR, however, refused to participate in the Marshall Plan (Bugarić 2014, 50), which contributed to the division of Europe. Sloan (2016) states that NATO appeared as a bargain between U.S. and Europe. U.S. would help Europe economically if Europe would use such help effectively and, if U.S. helped Europe militarily, Europe would
defend itself against the Soviet Union. With help from the Marshall Plan (worth around US$135 billion in 2017 prices), Europe created the Economic Community but it was not successful in organizing its own defense community (Sloan 2016).

By 1949, there were threatening security events such as civil war in Greece, tensions in Turkey, Soviet-backed coup in Czechoslovakia, communist gain in Italian elections, and a blockade of West Germany. The Czech coup increased the fear that the Soviets might sponsor other coups and bring about communist governments by using their “military muscle” (Kissinger 1994, 457). Due to such physical and territorial security concerns, the Truman Doctrine, established by U.S. President Truman, gave “financial and military aid to the countries threatened by Soviet expansion” (CVCE 2016, 6), aiming “not merely to contain Communism but to actively drive it back” (12). This necessity contributed to the formation of the military alliance of NATO.

There was also the UN which seemed weak in a growing Cold War aggression. In addition, there were views such as that of U.S. Republican Senator Arthur H. Vandenburg who claimed that the USSR had “the veto power” in the Security Council, and thus alternative measures were needed (Kaplan 2015, 206). Consequently, when the Vandenburb Resolution had passed in 1948 (on long-term European security), the negotiations for the North Atlantic Treaty began. After the negotiations, NATO was established with “a claim for moral universality”; as told by Kissinger (1994), “[NATO] represented the majority of the world against the minority of troublemakers” (460). Kissinger writes that NATO did not name a country against which it was aimed and instead it described the conditions under which the action will occur. The Alliance had values as support for “democracy, individual liberty, and the rule of law” and as Sloan suggests, probably this value foundation and valuing Euro-
Atlantic cooperation made the alliance survive after the Cold War (Sloan 2016, 9).

Right after NATO’s creation, North Korea attacked South Korea which was perceived by the Alliance members as Soviet aggression and this act made members to faster coordinate their military forces under a centralized headquarters. After one year of NATO’s creation, the idea of attack on one meant attack on all took practice (what is referred to as “Article 5” of the North Atlantic Treaty), which served as a deterrent effect against Soviet bloc (Nichols et al. 2012). At first, NATO was a treaty/security pact with the main function of Article 5 of mutual security which states the following:

“The parties of NATO agree that an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against all of them. Consequently, they agree that if such an armed attack occurs, each of them in exercise of the right of individual or collective self-defence will assist the party or parties being attacked, individually and in concert with other parties, such action as it deems necessary, including the use of armed force, to restore and maintain the security of the North Atlantic area” (The North Atlantic Treaty, 1949).

By this treaty requirement and overall NATO establishment, the U.S. was obliged to leave its “policy of isolationism” since WWI and take a leading position in defending Western Europe (Theodorelos 1992). Article 6 of the North Atlantic Treaty, in turn, states that the area of NATO action is “on the territory of any of the Parties in Europe or North America.” Other Articles oblige members to develop and improve their democratic institutions, construct collective military defense, to do political multilateral consultation, and to be open to new members to join (Haglund 2017).

At the beginning, 12 members joined together: Belgium, Britain, Canada, Denmark, France, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal and the U.S. Throughout and after the Cold War, the alliance has been growing. In 1952, Greece and Turkey joined, then in 1955 West Germany, in 1966 France, and in 1982
Spain. However, France withdrew its membership in 1959 due to not favoring U.S. dominance of NATO and perceived lost sovereignty. France started developing its own nuclear weapons; French President Charles de Gaulle withdrew France’s Mediterranean Naval Fleet and military forces from NATO’s command and removed foreign weapons from France, as well. France rejoined NATO’s military committee in 1995 but only in 2009 joined fully as a member (Ali 2012).

Member states did not join the NATO Alliance with one single purpose against the Soviet Union, but had several and potentially differing purposes, each their own. France did not want to deal with Germany on its own, UK wanted U.S. membership to deter successfully the Soviet expansionism and to stay as a global power, Canada wanted more political than military values, while West Germany wanted to return sovereignty over to its internal affairs (Sloan 2016).

After West Germany joined NATO on 9 May, 1955, the Warsaw Pact was signed in two weeks time after, comprising of Albania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, the German Democratic Republic (GDR, East Germany), Hungary, Poland and Romania. The Warsaw Pact was abolished in the end of Cold War, but NATO remained. Unlike the Warsaw Pact and the USSR, claims Kissinger, NATO defended “principles” not “territory” (Kissinger 1994).

At first, Europe fully relied on U.S. military support, but later when its economy got more or less developed, France and the UK became somewhat critical of the U.S. that it was too dominant in NATO and European affairs, and consequently developed their own powerful military capabilities, including nuclear weapons and submarines (Trueman 2015). By the last decade of the Cold War, NATO had a massive military force. In 1983, it declared its military capability possession in Europe as nearly 2 million ground forces, 90 divisions, almost 21,000 “main battle
tanks,” nearly 2,100 “anti-tank guided weapon launchers,” 182 submarines, 385 anti-submarine submarines, 314 capital ships, 821 other naval crafts, nearly 4,400 fighter aircraft, and 6,900 “anti-aircraft guns and surface to air missiles.” Realists would claim that due to NATO’s huge military capacity, the West was able to negotiate with USSR which brought the end of Cold War (Trueman 2015).

There were velvet revolutions which also contributed to the end of Cold War (a favorite argument of social and political constructivists), but it was mainly NATO’s détente of not allowing Soviet expansion and huge military response ability of NATO which brought the end of Cold War, claims Shea (2003). In Malta, on 3 December 1989, the Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev and U.S. President George Bush (Sr.), declared the Cold War as having ended (Chen 2006). Gorbachev had told the press that day: “We searched for the answer to the question of where do we stand now [and] ... We stated, both of us, that the world leaves one epoch of cold war and enters another epoch” (Rosenthal 1989). Still, many of Bush’s top advisors and media resisted this idea and started to believe the end having come only after the dissolution of the USSR, but also portrayed the end of Cold War “not as a mutual Soviet-American decision, which it certainly was, but as a great American victory and Russian defeat” (Cohen 2006, 25).

**NATO after the Cold War**

After the end of the Cold War and especially the collapse of the Soviet Union, there was a debate on the necessity of NATO. The majority of its member states were on the side that “the organization was no longer necessary” (Sayers 2011, 50). Many observers also agreed that NATO had become “increasingly irrelevant and needed a reason for its continued existence” (Sanders 2002, 92). The Alliance, however, did not disappear. Some write that since the end of the Cold War, NATO has changed along
with environmental changes according to its own principles of continuity and change: “As threats and challenges change, the Alliance evolves in an analogous manner” (Sayers 2011, 49), meaning that NATO is not a static organization but always modifies itself according to threat changes.

The post-Cold War NATO had two tasks: “[T]o foster dialogue and cooperation with former adversaries in the Warsaw Pact and to ‘manage’ conflicts in areas on the European periphery, such as the Balkans” (Haglund 2017). Indeed, in the immediate aftermath of the end of Cold War, NATO’s functions became those of “containing and controlling militarized conflicts in Central and Eastern Europe,” and also helping to prevent conflicts by “actively promoting stability within the former Soviet bloc” (Duffield 1994-5, 767). But the former Soviet bloc countries still possessed military capabilities, which meant that the “former threat had [possibly] not disappeared completely” (768).

For NATO, in the immediate years of the Post-Cold War, the principal threats were now in North Africa and Middle East and national ethnic, territorial conflicts in East and Central Europe (Duffield 1994-5). NATO was helping its members against “spillover of military hostilities … and from being drawn into conflicts” (769). The major operation in post-Cold War era for NATO can be said to have been the resolving of Yugoslavia conflict. In 1995, the Alliance intervened into the Yugoslav wars by striking Bosnian Serb positions in Sarajevo. The Dayton Accords between Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Republic of Croatia, and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia required each side and country to respect each other’s sovereignty and to settle conflicts peacefully; and this made for NATO troops to settle in the region by stationing an Implementation Force (IFOR) (Haglund 2017). In March 1999, NATO started massive air strikes against Serbia with the help of the peacekeeping Kosovo
The KFOR force (KFOR) to protect the Muslim ethnic Albanian population in Kosovo from Milosevic’s Serbian government forces (Haglund 2017).

According to Haglund, the crisis in Kosovo made Europeans to strive to be less dependent on NATO and to create their own crisis management force by deploying their own peacekeeping missions in conflict zones. This led to debates on the existence of NATO, some saying to dissolve the Alliance due to the disappeared enemy, while others saying to include Russia into the Alliance, and yet others claiming to transfer NATO in to a peacekeeping alliance, instead (Haglund 2017). In the end, however, he EU was incapable to create its alternative defense organization and still relies on NATO today (Haglund 2017).

In addition to military security, in the post-Cold War era, NATO began fostering democratic transition in Europe and the post-Soviet space through establishing programs and institutions such as the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC) and the Partnership for Peace (PfP) in which NATO helped to “reinforce democratic control of the armed forces and respect for civilian authority.” Overall, after the Cold War, NATO possibly contributed to having zero conflict among European states, due to increased transparency, “renationalization of ... security policies”; and the presence of American forces in Europe (Duffield 1994-5, 771).

NATO is trusted by its members since there are frequent consultations and exchange on information about defense missions, future planning, budget, and operations and if a member state has concerns, it can formally register them. NATO’s integrated military policies of its member states is thought to have reduced competition and national rivalry among member states and this denationalization of security policy has, in turn, forged a common identity among NATO members. Moreover, NATO socializes together military and government officials, what builds
cooperation and friendship, and reduces military self-sufficiency, increases dependency and collective planning of operations (Duffield 1994-5). U.S.’s huge contribution to the Alliance provides security to Europe and allows them to “limit their armed forces” (777). Without the U.S., there would be a fear that Germany would not limit its military capability and would dominate NATO and Europe and since Germany wants to be seen as a “reliable, predictable, and dependable partner,” the U.S. dominance in the Alliance allows it to have a low profile perception for Germany (784).

According to Andrew Michta (2009), NATO enlargement has been “an obvious pathway to security and democracy in post-communist countries and a means of stabilizing the grey zone of Europe” (364). For post-Soviet East European states, NATO in the post-Cold War has been the only credible option apart from the OSCE to “return to Europe” and avoid “geostrategic vulnerability” (365). At first, NATO did not push for immediate enlargement due to Moscow’s opposition and new Eastern states fragile domestic conditions. In the 1999 Washington summit, however, “NATO embarked on the path to further enlargement, naming partners and setting target dates” (367). According to Michta (2009), NATO was a very favorable option for post-Soviet European states due to the “region’s insecurity—geostrategic vulnerability and the historical discontinuity [of] state institutions.” Thus, “NATO enlargement was viewed as the preferred solution [for a potential] security dilemma” and “by joining NATO the post-communist states could anchor themselves in the West and “return to Europe” (366). The Alliance gave confidence and reassurance on external security, which allowed new post-Soviet member states to pursue their domestic agendas. An integrated military structure and Germany’s unification and its new democratic international cooperation values have, in turn, strengthened the inter-
Alliance trust and cooperation (Duffield 1994-5).

NATO enlargement was supported by the former U.S. President Bill Clinton’s administration who wanted to spread American values worldwide, but also by the “neo-conservatives” among George W. Bush’s (Jr.) administration (2001-2008) who wanted to enlarge the area of American power and influence” (Sloan 2016, 5). According to realists Stephen Walt and John Mearsheimer, however, NATO’s enlargement has been a great mistake, because it is leading to a possible “new Cold war” with Russia (quoted in Sloan 2016). The enlargement, critics claim, has been a direct threat to Russian security interests because Russia has claimed its “near abroad” as part of its national interests. Russian leaders and population have also viewed the U.S. and the West as enemies due to long historical competition between NATO and the Warsaw Pact (127). NATO was able to adapt easily after the Cold War by defining new targets and threats, most outside of North-Atlantic zone. It also expanded its membership by adding some post-Soviet states—the Baltics—which many claim have added strength to the alliance but was poorly received by Russia.

NATO in the 21st century: A “new Cold War”?
The Alliance in the new millennium appears to be favored by its members due to military operations outside Europe against the Taliban in Afghanistan and Qaddafi’s forces in Libya, in an apparent security assurance for the members; however, due mainly to the large costs of these operations, the question of burden sharing have emerged (Haglund 2017). The budget issue repeatedly came up in the new U.S. President Trump’s speeches in 2017, as well.

Many scholars claim that NATO is still relevant in the 21st century due to new threats as terrorism to which the Organization is the only effective tool to resolve and protect its members from. According to Paul Cornish (2004) and Ifantis (2007),
NATO has been able to transformed itself from a nuclear-deterrent and counter-Soviet frame to one of counter-terrorism. Ifantis justifies NATO’s continued existence claiming that it has transformed today to help not only to fight against terrorism, but to deal with such crises as Kosovo and counter weapons of mass destruction (WMDs). As such, in the post-Cold War era and the 21st century, NATO has been able to adapt itself to new perceived threats, and has been able to expand its geographical scope and strategies. Duffield (1994-5) agrees by saying that “the persistent existence of external threats” like Russian military power and conflicts in neighboring regions has, in turn, helped to justify the continuous existence of NATO (763).

Even if NATO protects the north Atlantic area, 9/11 showed that threats can be outside the European borders, but still affect the Alliance nations. Thus, NATO in the post-Cold War era has been engaged in “two enlargements and out-of-area missions” which altogether have made the Organization as both a political and military one (Micha 2009, 370). However, for such a transformation it has paid a “price, including renewed hostility from Putin’s Russia.” From this, scholars conclude that, overall, NATO is for peace and stability in the planet but sometimes its goals are not matched with Russia’s perspective. However, the dissolution of the USSR, and reunification and democratization of Germany had led to the transformation of the Alliance from a defense to a political organization “devoted to maintaining international stability in Europe” (Haglund 2017).

But this political Alliance is still not being favored by Russia. Some experts claim that Russian actions in Georgia and in Ukraine were justified as responses to the broken informal non-expansion agreement of NATO (Itzkovitz Shifrinson 2016). The broken promise made Russia to respond harsher and be distrustful to “Western diplomatic initiatives” (41). To counter that, U.S. policymakers state that “Russian
claims of a non-expansion commitment are a pretext for Russian adventurism” (7). Officially, however, U.S. proponents of enlargement state that enlargement is “the best way to begin the long process of integrating ... [the postcommunist European] states into regional political and economic institutions such as the EU” (Haglund 2017).

“NATO’s eastward march,” some experts claim, made Russia feel “isolated by upending the informal arrangement of 1990” (Itzkovitz Shifrinson 2016, 43). The expansion was one of NATO moving “into Russia’s backyard and threatening its core strategic interests” (Mearsheimer 2016). For Mearsheimer, the U.S. would not tolerate it if China built an alliance with Mexico and Canada and put military forces near its borders. According to Cohen (2016), however, the majority of U.S. officials blame only Putin for deteriorated relations. That may be because for many in the U.S., Russia is still “a defeated supplicant or [potential] American client state” (19).

The problem as to why the Ukraine crisis occurred, claim critics, is because the U.S. and associated analysts had thought that the end of Cold War meant the end of realism and spread of liberal internationalist values; And yet, Russia still has a realist mindset (Mearsheimer 2016). According to Cohen (2006), after the 1990s, the U.S. implemented two policies towards Russia: One is “decorative” and the other “reckless.” The decorative, for largely public consumption, was the “strategic partnership and friendship” with “happy-talk meetings between presidents ‘Bill and Boris’, then ‘George and Vladimir’” (Cohen 2006, 22). The reckless policy, however, was “a relentless, winner-take-all exploitation of Russia’s post-1991 weakness” (22).

Cohen states that the U.S.-Russian relations has become worse than during Cold War because in this new Cold War there is no détente, no dialogue and cooperation. Among other things, the Bush (Jr.) Administration abandoned the Anti-
Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty, decided to build an anti-missile shield, and talked about pre-emptive war and nuclear strikes, all of which “abolished long-established US-Soviet agreements that have kept the nuclear peace for nearly fifty years” (28). After 9/11, Bush announced Russia as a partner, and Russia initially helped with the training of the post-Taliban Afghan military, gave its approval of access to the U.S.-led coalition to air bases in Central Asia, and provided intelligence to U.S. counterparts. In return, however, Russia felt betrayed by the fact that U.S. withdrew from the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, put military bases for extended period of time in former Soviet countries of Central Asia and Georgia and, also, expanded NATO. The reasons the U.S. acted in this way is because of “the belief that Russia, diminished and weakened by its loss of the Soviet Union, had no choice but to bend to America’s will” (31).

As with during the Cold War, there are feelings of betrayal and mistrust on both sides today. Washington now feels deceived by Putin’s policies and Moscow has “complained bitterly” of NATO’s expansion (Mearsheimer 2016). If the U.S. government and media call Putin a “thug,” “fascist” and “Saddam Hussein” (Cohen 2006, 23), then for Russia, the West with NATO is the “enemy … at the gates” (28). There is a belief from Russian side that Washington’s goal “is to take control of the country’s energy resources and nuclear weapons” and use “NATO satellite states” to “de-sovereignize” Russia, turning it into a “vassal of the West” (33). Such Russian suspicions are simply ignored by Western governments and media. Overall, “NATO enlargement, EU expansion, and democracy promotion [have] added fuel to a fire waiting to ignite” (Mearsheimer 2016). It is as if the U.S. built an “iron curtain” via NATO and started encircling Russian borders (Cohen 2006).
Aside from “abrogating” the 1972 ABM Treaty with “its prohibition against nationwide missile defenses” in 2002 (Boese 2002), the U.S. has removed itself from a number of other partnership agreements with Russia. In 2006, U.S. Senator McCain called for harsh measures against Kremlin, put sanctions against Belarus, and convinced new NATO member Lithuania to end its friendship with Moscow (Cohen 2006). A Council on Foreign Relations report blames Russia’s getting “wrong direction under Putin” by meddling with ex-Soviet Republics and supporting Iran, and calls to reject future Russian elections as not fair and democratic (26). Cohen points out that, to counter the West, Russia is establishing all kinds of partnerships in economic, military and political areas with China, Iran other Middle Eastern anti-American governments, and supporting authoritarian regimes in Central Asia, and opposing democratic movements.

There are even familiar Cold War double standards such as “seeking allies and military bases in former Soviet republics, using its assets (oil and gas in Russia’s case) as aid to friendly governments, and regulating foreign money in its political life” (24). Moreover, when NATO is expanding, U.S. is justifying it by saying:

“it is ‘fighting terrorism’ and ‘protecting new states’; [but] when Moscow protests, it is engaging in ‘Cold War thinking’; when Washington meddles in the politics of Georgia and Ukraine, it is ‘promoting democracy’; when the Kremlin does so, it is ‘neo-imperialism’” (Cohen 2006, 23).

Even when U.S.-supported Yeltsin “overthrew Russia’s elected Parliament and Constitutional Court by force … it was ‘democratic reform’; [but] when Putin continues that process, it is ‘authoritarianism’” (23). Cohen claims that even though the Cold War ended de facto in Moscow by the collapse of Soviet Union, the “New Cold War” was revived in Washington. Why it started in Washington is because, as far as Washington is concerned, “the gravest threats to America’s national security are
The New Cold War started by the Clinton Administration by making two epic mistakes, says Cohen: First, treating Russia as a “defeated nation that was expected to replicate America’s domestic practices and bow to its foreign policies” and perceiving Russia as having “no autonomous rights at home or abroad; and, second, expanding NATO despite contrary promises, in turn provoking Russia to believe that the U.S. is indeed “imposing a new cold war on Russia” (25). “Someone is still fighting the Cold War, but it isn’t Russia,” claims Cohen (30). The Bush Administration’s strife for nuclear supremacy, in turn, provoked Moscow for nuclear build up and invest less on its economy, says Cohen. Thus, the “assumption that the [U.S.] had the right, wisdom and power to remake post-Communist Russia into a political and economic replica of America” and “that Russia should be America’s junior partner in foreign policy with no interests except those of the [U.S.]” led to the return or revival of the Cold War in the 21st century (30).

In the old Cold War, the U.S. media was very pluralistic, meaning there were debates on the nature of the Cold War, but today there is no such media. “Instead, influential editorial pages are dominated by resurgent Cold War orthodoxies, led by the [mainstream media such as the] Washington Post with its incessant demonization of Putin’s ‘autocracy’ and ‘crude neo-imperialism’.” Moreover, “a legion of new intellectual cold warriors” have appeared along with old Cold War lobbies that support the new Cold War rhetoric (29).

In terms of Georgia and Ukraine, Russia justifies its actions that they were “driven by mistrust” and “insecurity” (Itzkovitz Shifrinson 2016, 43). The West had been intervening into internal affairs of Russia by sending advisors and implementing missionaries “on how that nation should and should not organize its political and
economic systems” and actively supporting anti-Kremlin groups (Cohen 2006, 21). The West also funded organizations and people to spread Western values and democracy in Ukraine and other post-Soviet states (Mearsheimer 2016). Just around the commencing of Ukraine’s Maidan events in 2013, for example, the U.S. Assistant Secretary of State, Victoria Nuland, claimed that the U.S. had spent US$5 billion since 1991 to “build democratic skills and institutions” in Ukraine (Blumenthal 2014). Such perceived interventionist policies, real or imagined, have grown to call for regime change in Kremlin as illustrated in U.S.-backed color revolutions in post-Soviet space, claims Cohen (2006). He further says that though the old Cold War ended with Gorbachev who “emerged from the orthodox and repressive Soviet political class to offer a heretical way out,” today in the U.S., there is no such leader who would relieve the resurrected “Cold War orthodoxies” (35).

Max Fisher (2015) provides a slightly different perspective, and claims that Russia sees Europe as “dominated by an ever-encroaching anti-Russian alliance” and views the West as trying to use Russia’s weakness to “subjugate and destroy” it as U.S. and its allies did with Iraq and Libya. At the same time, due to internal economic problems which led to it losing its great status in the post-Cold War era, Russia wants to reassert its great power status by using foreign enemies, claims Fisher. Because Russia is losing control over Eastern Europe, it “fomented risks and crises there, sponsoring separatists in Ukraine and conducting dangerous military activity.”

Fisher (2015), too, claims that today’s world resembles the old Cold War: Moscow fears that the West is trying to destroy Russia, and East European states fear a possible Russian invasion. Poland, Finland, Lithuania, Sweden have prepared militarily for a possible crisis, while U.S. has been implementing military exercises near the Russian border, and Russia has even threatened to launch nuclear strikes in
case of conflict. Consequently, NATO is planning to increase its nuclear weapons use as a response to “Russia’s nuclear saber-rattling” and is increasing heavy military exercises in the Baltics—all three states of which are NATO members. Russia has begun a “hybrid war” by “militia violence, propaganda, cyberattacks,” writes Fisher, and the “ever-paranoid Kremlin” thinks that Western support for Ukraine is done to encircle and rob Russia. All such complex activities, Fisher argues, point to a new Cold War.

Fisher agrees with Cohen and applies realist theory to NATO/Russia case, stating that there is mistrust and unpredictability where both parties are not aware of the other’s intentions. If before the World Wars of the 20th century, both sides tried to avoid wars and maintain a balance of power, had red lines, and clear-set of rules, in the New Cold War, according to Fisher, Russia thinks it can win with nuclear armament and break and create rules. In this scenario, the Baltics is a place where Fisher surmises that the next war might start. If the Russian invasion of Ukraine caused sanctions, invasion to Estonia would cause the practical implementation of the Treaty’s Article 5, says Fisher. Even if Russia in reality were not to desire war with the West, “its bluffing and posturing has already created the conditions for an unwanted war,” claims Fisher. Russia has been regularly flying over NATO airspace with nuclear-armed crafts and this provokes tensions with the West; but in Russia’s eyes, they do it because of NATO’s military exercise near the Russian borders.

Fisher gives statements that Russia wants to destroy NATO by approaching the Baltic states being confident that NATO would not defend them, and this seems reasonable since according to a to a Pew Research Center public opinion poll, Western Europeans do not favor defending the Baltic states (Fisher 2015). Putin claims that he would protect Russian minorities outside of Russia, an excuse which
might be used as a pretext to meddle politically and militarily in the Baltics, as well. Overall, this crisis has led to somewhat a new Cold War as stated by Cohen and Fisher. Another researcher, Anne Applebaum, also says that “it is [the Ukraine crisis] splitting Europe against American leadership and possibly undermining the transatlantic alliance and plunging us into a new Cold War. It is bringing us closer to an actual war with nuclear Russia since we have been in the Cuban Missile Crisis” (quoted in Griffiths 2015, 12).

Many thus concur that NATO in the 21st century resembles a more stable politico-military organization, but one which faces problems of terrorism and Russian aggression. The scenario resembles a new Cold War for two reasons: From Russia’s point of view, it is NATO which is being aggressive, while from the Western point, the aggressive party is Russia. Consequently, there is now a confrontation between the West and East similar to the Cold War era. With this, however, the question still remains unclear: What is the raison d’être of NATO in 21st century? Does NATO exist to deter Russia, or to defend its members from other security threats, or simply has NATO lost its purpose of existence? The following section of this Thesis, Chapter Three, will be devoted to the provision of data and analysis of the hypotheses of this Thesis which cover the above questions. The raison d’être question will be answered based both on NATO’s own perceived threats and that of scholars’ justifications and critiques of NATO’s existence.
Chapter Three

ANALYSIS

This chapter is divided into three parts, corresponding to the three hypotheses of this Thesis: \( H_1 \): NATO’s threats, \( H_2 \): its official reasons/justification of existence, and \( H_3 \): scholars’ justifications of NATO. The analysis will rely on 22 speeches of 16 NATO Secretary Generals (SGs) during 1957-2006 NATO Summits (see Figure II), in addition to the responses from six indepth expert interviews.

**Figure II: List of NATO Summits**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>City</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1957</td>
<td>16–19 December</td>
<td>France</td>
<td>Paris</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>26 June</td>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>Brussels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>29–30 May</td>
<td>UK</td>
<td>London</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>30–31 May</td>
<td>West Germany</td>
<td>Bonn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>2–3 May</td>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>Brussels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td>29–30 May</td>
<td>UK</td>
<td>London</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>5–6 July</td>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>Rome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>7–8 November</td>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>Brussels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>10–11 January</td>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>Madrid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>8–9 July</td>
<td>U.S.</td>
<td>Washington, D.C.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>23–25 April</td>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td>Prague</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>21–22 November</td>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>Istanbul</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>28–29 June</td>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>Brussels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>25 February</td>
<td>Latvia</td>
<td>Riga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>2–4 April</td>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>Bucharest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>2–3 April</td>
<td>France/Germany</td>
<td>Strasbourg/Kehl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>19–20 November</td>
<td>Portugal</td>
<td>Lisbon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>20–21 May</td>
<td>U.S.</td>
<td>Chicago</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>4–5 September</td>
<td>U.K.</td>
<td>Newport/Cardiff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>8–9 July</td>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>Warsaw</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
NATO Summits are crucial to analyze because they are the venue where heads of states and governments of NATO member countries gather to take major decisions such as deploying troops to operations or missions, and accepting new member states, among other things. It is therefore important to analyze Summit meeting speeches to see the changes in the Alliance’s course of direction and its priorities. Content analysis of the NATO SG’s speeches during the regular Summit meetings will represent the official voice of the Alliance. There have been in total 16 NATO SGs since its creation (see Figure III). The Summit meeting speeches addressed to the Alliance members will be analyzed to determine the changes in NATO’s threat perception and also NATO’s justification of existence, i.e. its raison d’être.

Figure III: List of NATO Secretary Generals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NATO Secretary General</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>country</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baron Hastings Ismay</td>
<td>1952-1957</td>
<td>UK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paul-Henri Spaak</td>
<td>1957-1961</td>
<td>Belgium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dirk Stikker</td>
<td>1961-1964</td>
<td>Netherlands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manlio Giovanni Brosio</td>
<td>1964-1971</td>
<td>Italy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joseph Luns</td>
<td>1971-1984</td>
<td>Netherlands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baron Peter Carington</td>
<td>1984-1988</td>
<td>UK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manfred Wörner</td>
<td>1988-1994</td>
<td>Germany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sergio Balanzino</td>
<td>1994</td>
<td>Italy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willy Claes</td>
<td>1994-1995</td>
<td>Belgium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sergio Balanzino</td>
<td>1995</td>
<td>Italy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Javier Solana</td>
<td>1995-1999</td>
<td>Spain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baron George Robertson</td>
<td>1999-2003</td>
<td>UK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alessandro Minuto-Rizzo</td>
<td>2003-2004</td>
<td>Italy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jaap de Hoop Scheffer</td>
<td>2004-2009</td>
<td>Netherlands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anders Fogh Rasmussen</td>
<td>2009-2014</td>
<td>Denmark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jens Stoltenberg</td>
<td>Since 2014</td>
<td>Norway</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Hypothesis I: Terrorism and nuclear proliferation as new threats

**H1:** NATO’s perceived threats have evolved from countering aggression by the Soviet Union during the Cold War to fighting terrorism and the spread of nuclear weapons in the 21st century.

The above hypothesis on NATO’s evolution of threats will be tested based on the SG’s Summit speeches along with the data generated from the expert interviews conducted for this study. Figure IV lists a summary of the content analysis by way of the most repeated words of the NATO SGs during the Summit opening speeches held during the Cold War from 1957-1989. The same methodology was used to analyze the NATO SG speeches in the post-Cold War era (1990-2016). See Figure V.

As elucidated by Figure IV, in eight NATO Summits held during the Cold War era (1957-1989), NATO SG’s speeches contained the word “communism” 36 times, followed by “success” (24 times), “security” (21 times), and “Soviet Russia” (19 times). These words were repeated more than other strategic or key words by the SGs. Thus, based on the above basic content and quantitative analysis, we can conclude that NATO’s chief perceived threats during the Cold War were “communism” and “Soviet Russia,” with the main aim of common security.

All this may be obvious, but after the Cold War, during 15 summits (1990-2016) NATO SG’s most repeated words became “security” (161 times) followed by “Russia/Russians” (122 times), “defence” (98 times), “peace” (73 times), and “terrorism” (70 times). The least repeated words were “Soviet Union” (2 times) and “communism” (1 time)—obviously, due to the dissolution of Soviet Union. At the same time, based on the SG’s speeches, the use of words “common security,” “democracy,” “peace,” “stability,” and “freedom” have increased in Summit statements in the post-Cold War era. The word “challenge” also doubled in its frequency of use, from 18 times in the Cold War era to 32 in the post-Cold War era.
Figure IV: Key words spoken by NATO SGs in Summits (1957-1989)

Figure V: Key words spoken by NATO SGs in Summits
One intriguing statistic is that “Russia” (122 times) was stated almost twice more than “terrorism” (70 times) in the post-Cold War era. Based on this quantitative analysis, $H_1$ can be partially validated, as the new focus of NATO can be said to primarily be issues (positive or negative) emanating from the Russian Federation, followed by terrorism. But here, as it is not yet clear based on the data whether a reference to “Russia” in the post-Cold War has always been one of “threat” or might it be even a “partner,” a deeper content analysis is thus needed to fully test and potentially validate the hypothesis.

If in Summit speeches before the end of Cold War, the Soviet Union was perceived as not having “the same ideology and certainly not the same respect for men and people and individuals” (1957 Summit), by the time of the 1975 Summit, the NATO SG was claiming that the Soviet Union “lacks the crucial elements of public acceptance, adaptability to change and the ability to compromise.” And in the 1988 SG Summit speech, the Soviet Union was a country that denies “basic human rights and freedom to the peoples,” while in the 1989 Summit, the Soviet Union was said to have an “outdated ideology and inefficiency stand[ing] in stark contrast to our [Western] values and concepts.” All of these claims portrayed the Soviet Union as an undemocratic state in sharp mental contrast to the democratic West.

After the dissolution of Soviet Union, however, NATO’s Soviet enemy disappeared, but Russia (the state which formed the core of the USSR) appears to have become a key focus of NATO. Russia was stated 122 times after the end of Cold War and nearly in all Summits, the SG stated that the alliance needs to build partnership with Russia or Russia was described neutrally as being the “biggest neighbor” and “member of UN Security Council.” But from the negative side, Russia was a country to fear due to its huge investments “in modern defence capabilities over
many years, which has modernized its forces, its equipment, and has used military force against a sovereign nation in Europe, violating Ukraine's territorial integrity and sovereignty” (2016 Summit). Thus, Russia in the official SG speeches is portrayed as a militarily strong country which has committed an unlawful act of annexing Crimea.

From the positive side, as told by the NATO SG in the 2016 Summit, Russia was said to play “an important role in security challenges in and around Europe” and that it “cannot and should not be isolated.” However, also in the 2016 Summit, the SG stated that NATO should be transparent “to avoid misunderstandings, to avoid miscalculations”—a possible reference to the non-NATO state of Russia. Overall, from this analysis of Russia and NATO, it is not fully clear whether Putin’s statement that NATO’s sole threat is Russia is the case and, thus, to fully support H1, further qualitative analysis of NATO’s threat perceptions in the post-Cold War era is needed.

Figures VI and VII, as tables, list NATO’s threats based on SG speeches and use of specific words and phrases during NATO’s 22 Summits. During the Cold War, NATO’s threats were not only communism, but included other threats as well. Before elaborating on that, what is intriguing is that the Washington Treaty, which established NATO, does not point at one country as a threat, but the NATO SGs, on behalf of the Alliance, have actually pointed to a specific country (the USSR) as a threat. Based on content and discourse analyses, it is seen that apart from the Soviet Union, other threats included the NATO member states’ “public ignorance” of the Alliance’s work (1982 Summit). Hence, in at least one Summit, NATO experienced a feeling of non-appreciation or even irrelevance because, we can argue, it was assumed that when the public of member states are not interested in NATO’s work, then the Alliance loses its core meaning. However, again, in a later Summit, the Soviet Union came back into the discourse. Now, the most intriguing part are the threats after the end of Cold War.
Figure VI: Key Threats for NATO during the Cold War
(per NATO Secretary Generals’ Summit speeches, 1957-1989)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summit</th>
<th>Threats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1957   | • Sabotage by Soviet Union in security council  
         • Soviet imperialism  
         • Dictatorship |
| 1974   | • n/a |
| 1975   | • Totalitarianism |
| 1977   | • Concern over East-West relations |
| 1978   | • Concern over East-West relations and maintaining détente  
         • Political and military expansion of USSR |
| 1982   | • Public ignorance of NATO’s purpose and activities, its value, and perception of NATO as dangerous pro-war alliance |
| 1988   | • Military capability and potential of the Soviet Union  
         • Imbalances with Warsaw Pact in conventional forces & WMDs weapons |
| 1989   | • Unpredictable military power of neighbor (aka Russia) |

Figure VII shows the NATO SGs’ concepts and phrases used in the post-Cold War Summit speeches, which varies significantly in comparison to the data from the Cold War era (Figure VI) as the perceived threats appear to have widened in the post-Cold War era. At the same time, as seen, it appears that in 1990, based on the SG’s speech, there was no perceived threat to the Alliance, at a time when NATO was attempting to justify its existence by relying on future risks that might or might not even occur. At this time, NATO served as an “insurance company,” an expression used by the then British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher. Later, from 1994 up to 1999, NATO’s new threats appeared as intra-state wars and ethnic conflicts in the former Yugoslavia.
### Figure VII: Key threats for NATO in the post-Cold War era
(per NATO Secretary Generals’ Summit speeches, 1990-2016)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summit</th>
<th>Threats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1990    | • Future risk or danger  
          • Many potential instabilities, both within and without Europe                                                                         |
| 1994    | • Instability, crises and conflicts                                                                                                    |
| 1997    | • Divisions of Europe                                                                                                                  |
| 1999    | • Human suffering and massive violations of human rights in Kosovo                                                                       |
| 2001    | • n/a                                                                                                                                   |
| 2002    | • Terrorists and their backers, the failed states in which they flourish, and proliferating weapons of mass destruction                 |
| 2004    | • Risks and threats to our security well beyond the traditional NATO area of operations                                                   |
| 2005    | • Terrorism, fragile and failed states, and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction                                             |
|         | • Middle East                                                                                                                            |
| 2006    | • Instability, terrorism, drugs in Afghanistan                                                                                          |
|         | • Proliferation of WMDs, energy security                                                                                                 |
| 2008    | • Terrorism                                                                                                                             |
| 2009    | • Multiple risks and challenges, inherited from the past but also new.  
          • Afghanistan                                                                                                                      |
| 2012    | • Afghanistan-originated terrorism                                                                                                     |
|         | • Today’s threats are no longer confined within national borders                                                                         |
|         | • Many of the challenges of the 21st century; future is unpredictable                                                                     |
| 2014    | • To the East, Russia is attacking Ukraine.   
          • To the Southeast, ISIS committed horrific atrocities.  
          • To the South, violence, insecurity, instability (Mali, Sudan, Libya)  
          • Newer threats, such as cyber and missile attacks                                                                                 |
| 2016    | • Cyber attacks  
          • Hybrid warfare  
          • New challenges  
          • Afghanistan still faces serious instability and violence, terrorism, turmoil  
          • Illegal annexation of Crimea by Russia                                                                                             |
With 9/11, NATO shifted its threat perspective towards “terrorism,” but also the proliferation of WMDs, including threats from out of the European arena, particularly Afghanistan and Iraq. The threat of terrorism was stated from 2002-2016. However, from 2009, the Alliance along with terrorism feared for non-existent unknown risks of the future, as it did in 1990. A former NATO Policy Adviser, Angel Jose Castilla, says that from the East/West dichotomy, today, there are the threats of “Islamic radical extremism terrorism,” “China-North Korean strategic alliance,” “Iran,” and WMDs which are also Russia’s security concerns. However, we know that Russia supports Iran in its nuclear program development and is in partnership with China and North Korea (Ramani 2017). Moreover, Russia and China vetoed sanctions on using chemical weapons in Syria at the UN Security Council (Osborne 2017). Thus, US/NATO’s perceived threats are definitely not fully shared by Russia.

Later, in the 2014 Summit, a new threat was added to the agenda of NATO, that of the “Russian involvement in destabilizing the situation in eastern Ukraine.” Regarding NATO’s presence in Eastern Europe, Castilla states that “the Russian Federation has (a) begun building up its military capability faster, and (b) [has] decided to deploy its military influence in areas once belonging to what was the USSR, as well as, Syria.” In addition, Applebaum claims that fear that one day Russia might sell its nuclear weapons to other people makes NATO members fearful and see Russia as a threat. She also states that Eastern European countries after Ukraine and Georgia are afraid of possible Russian aggression and await the Alliance’s help to protect them when needed (Griffiths 2015). Hence, because of Russia’s actions, NATO is present in Eastern Europe.

---

1 Author interview with Angel Jose Castilla, Former NATO Policy Adviser during the Bosnian conflict, via Skype, 10 March 2017.
2 Ibid.
Rosario Puglisi, NATO’s Liaison Officer for Central Asia, also agrees, in that Russia’s actions in Georgia and Ukraine, including the “illegal annexation of Crimea, and aggressive rhetoric and military posturing near the borders of NATO,” pose a big threat to NATO members. Castilla also claims that “NATO has proven to be successful in that we have never been attacked by [the] Russian Federation military forces nor have we attacked them” and that NATO “cannot be validly and safely replaced at this time.” Thus, being ‘attacked by the Russian Federation’, not by the Soviet Union can possibly mean that NATO is there to deter today’s Russia. And lastly, Castilla points out that “NATO’s base geopolitical and security mission remain the same as on its inception. Simply: To provide regionally unified political and military resources to deter any western expansion of the once called USSR, now called the Russian Federation.”

Thus, per NATO’s former policy advisor, a nearly identical aim as the old remains, which is to deter (not the USSR, but) Russia, which shows that NATO’s threat is Russia along with secondary threats of terrorism and WMDs.

Other interlocutors, namely Gregory Gleason and Pál Dunay, professors at the George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies in Germany, think that the main threat to NATO is terrorism. Gleason states that “it will be a great tragedy if the democratic traditions of European society are overwhelmed by the pseudo-religious malevolence of terrorists.” And after the threat of terrorism, Gleason mentions a secondary threat which is “Kremlin’s plan to succeed in what the USSR never succeeded in doing to Europe.” Puglisi would agree when saying that after the end of Cold War and especially the dissolution of Soviet Union, Russia was not perceived as

---

3 Author interview with Rosario Puglisi, NATO Liaison Officer for Central Asia, via email, 24 September 2017.
4 Author interview with Castilla, op. cit.
5 Author interview with Gregory Gleason, Professor of Eurasian Security Studies, George C. Marshall Center European Center for Security Studies, via email, 3 October 2017.
“a constant military threat to Europe. The collapse was seen as an opportunity to normalize relations with countries of the former USSR, particularly Russia, which had locked itself and its “allies” behind the Iron Curtain for decades.”

From the last two Summits, as seen in Figure VII, NATO considers threats from three different geographical regions, even though North Africa is relatively far from its member countries. Thus, NATO shows itself as a globally involved humanitarian, developmental, conflict-resolving policeman by being present in Middle East, Eastern Europe and Africa.

Lastly, and more importantly, as told by Puglisi, NATO does not have one static threat because of being “a collective of 29 nations, so there is a wide variety perceived security threats.” Dunay also agrees with this and says that “smaller Western countries may also feel that terrorism is not a threat aimed at them primarily.” Thus, “states like Luxembourg or Portugal may face difficulties to find either Russia or terrorism very high on the agenda [of threats].”

In conclusion, in the post-Cold War era, it appears that NATO does not have one perceived threat, likely due to the individual perceptions of its 29 members, whereby each has its own perceived threat perception. But due to the consensus-based foundation of the Alliance, as agreed by all experts, NATO’s threats as a whole, has evolved and digressed from Soviet aggression to ethnic conflicts, political instability, terrorism, WMDs, Russian military actions, and even cyber attacks. There is also a division among scholars on the priority of threats. Some say it is terrorism, others say it is Russia. But most importantly, it is that all threats have been identified and there is

---

6 Author interview with Puglisi, op. cit.
7 Ibid.
8 Author interview with Pál Dunay, Professor of NATO and European Security Issues, George C. Marshall Center European Center for Security Studies, via email, 9 September 2017.
no clear cut response to what is the most urgent threat because a variety of threats are coming from outside of NATO’s zone. With that, I argue that $H_1$ is at least partially validated, or its null hypothesis was partially rejected.

**Other issues affecting NATO’s raison d’être**

Apart from the main external threats that NATO faces, there are internal problems that affect its raison d’être. The problems that will be discussed below—issues involving economics, internal disunity and identity crises—influence NATO’s work, effectiveness, validity, actuality, and reliability in 21st century, also being factors for the raison d’être of NATO in 21st century. If NATO cannot function properly for its avowed purposes and aims, then its raison d’être weakens.

I argue that NATO is facing problems of economics, internal disunity and identity crises in the 21st century. According to SG Summit speeches, these are recurring issues. In 1957, for example, the NATO SG stated that there are too many “individualistic national foreign policies” which makes it difficult to reach consensus among members. Similarly, in 1975 and 1988, the NATO SG claimed that it is “hard to reach common agreement” and “members forgetting the underlying coherence of the Alliance's approach.” In 1982, the SG pointed out that there is an “information vacuum that young people do not appreciate NATO and know its purpose.” And later, in 2008 there was the concern by NATO of the public and some members not understanding NATO’s efforts in fighting terrorism. In 1994, NATO had problems of its members not having “a clear vision of their objectives and share the same determination to succeed.” These were the issues publicly announced by the SG during Summits. I will also list additional underlying issues affecting NATO as brought up by various scholars, which may differ from NATO’s official position and goals.
One of the issues of concern to scholars of NATO has been that of the common agreement which was stated above by secretary generals during Summit meetings. Irving Kristol states that (supposedly in the 1970s), “the nations of Western Europe who are America’s NATO allies, since World War II [have] become increasingly ‘isolationist.’ They have no coherent foreign policy that looks beyond the geographical confines of Western Europe” (quoted in Myers 1981, 365). During the 1990s, while the EU wanted NATO’s focus on Europe, the U.S. wanted “an ‘expeditionary alliance’ [to] deliver security wherever it’s needed” (Michta 2009, 368). The current primitive example can be Macedonia’s membership being rejected by Greece’s “objection to the country’s name” (370). Noetzel and Schreer (2009) claim that the EU is hesitant to provide resources for defense because it values peace missions, not pure military power. The division between the EU and NATO has happened due to the so-called “war on terror” where some EU members as France have seen the US/NATO at times as a source of conflict, and not peace (Ifantis 2007).

Even if Europe and the U.S. share similar values, there are many differences between them in the way they perceive threats, and respond to threats. Sloan (2016) explains that the Atlantic Ocean has divided the U.S. and Europe more than it has united them as partners. Thus, the main answer to this difference, according to Sloan, is: “We are here, and they are there” (85). Proximity to the Soviet Union with Marxist ideology also separated the U.S. from Europeans. Many European states had communist parties during the Cold War, and many Europeans have an affinity for essential Marxist ideas of socialism and consequently had, and still have, social democratic parties, which supports government economic intervention and equitable allocation of resources.
On the other hand, the U.S. doesn’t have Marxist roots, nearly no socialist programs, or parties, which would be viewed negatively and disregarded and that is why the Soviet Union was perceived as the vital threat and later the collapse of Soviet Union was celebrated as the greatest victory in history. The contrast can be viewed that Americans saw the Europeans as being “too soft on communism” and Europeans saw the Americans as being “too hard on Communism” (Sloan 2016, 92). Up to today, there is a difference between American and European ways of thinking. For example, Europe after seeing the U.S. fail in Vietnam, doesn’t like pure military responses and, unlike the U.S., prefers, diplomacy, trade, and aid as “weapons of first resort,” which are less costly and more effective (93).

Critics point that during the George W. Bush’s U.S. presidency, NATO was criticized as an instrument of American foreign policy. They also point to the fact that NATO today seems as a politico-military alliance, which implements political missions and excludes and discriminates against countries which do not accept its values, i.e. primarily Russia and other states which are not allied with the West. At the same time, the reason for the EU state’s avowed backing of NATO is that the EU does not have other security options and uses NATO instrumentally as its regional security tool (Cornish 2014).

The current issue that NATO faces is the internal disputes over its budget and contribution of its member states. NATO faces issues of commitment of its member states to contribute “soldiers, materiel and, above all, political will” (Michta 2009, 370). Most of the NATO members are small and therefore have small militaries in comparison with U.S., which contributes the most. In 2012, the U.S. Defense Secretary Robert Gates stated that the NATO Alliance might be irrelevant if the budget issue will not be resolved. Finance issues are very important because it is a
point of division among NATO members. Even if everybody has agreed on stabilizing Afghanistan, for example, it has been a big financial burden which Europeans were not able to fully explain to their voters and were thus hesitant to contribute (Akulov 2012). There is internal conflict within NATO on this issue and the newly elected U.S. President Donald Trump has even called for “pull[ing] out of NATO,” which by itself, given the U.S.’s massive contribution to the alliance, would question the very existence of NATO (Gore 2016). As former and current U.S. presidents Obama and Trump both claim that EU states do not contribute sufficiently and are not even willing to give soldiers to fight the “common” threats of NATO. Thus, the U.S. feels that other members are free riders of NATO and do not contribute their share to NATO, while receiving free security.

The issue of goal-setting between the EU member states and U.S remains high as well. France, Germany and others disagree with NATO’s “strategies to suppress Islamist terrorism, solve the Palestinian-Israeli conflict and resolve other security issues” (Michta 2009, 373), while EU’s attempt to create a European Security and Defence Policy is not much welcomed by the U.S. In terms of enlargement, the UK, the Netherlands, Denmark and Italy favor it, whereas France is against. With regards to Libya, France and UK were highly interested in it whereas other members were not motivated by this operation. In addition, for the U.S., the South China Sea is an issue, but not for Germany which is trying to establish long-term partnership with China. Overall, it appears that “everyone inside NATO pursues its own goal”: The U.S. wants to be a global leader, Europe wants to use soft power and cares for climate change, and Central and Eastern Europe only care for Article 5 (Akulov 2012).

One of NATO’s actual threats stated by a number of scholars and NATO itself is Russian aggression in Georgia and Ukraine. According to Akulov (2012), however,
NATO would not have accepted it if Warsaw Pact had remained and started inviting NATO members to join the Pact and surround NATO countries by Warsaw Pact weapons. In addition, Akulov states that NATO’s attitude towards Russia has not been the best because despite the creation of Russia-NATO council, Russia has been kept “away from any participation in decision making process in the spheres that both sides agreed to cooperate on equal terms.” This geopolitical issue remains as one of the critical ones which is very much discussed among scholars.

All these issues lead to the debate of NATO’s existence. NATO faces economic, political, organizational and geopolitical problems, which challenge the core existence of the Organization. These issues question the strength and stability of the Alliance because if NATO cannot finance its operations, cannot decide its priorities and goals, cannot achieve unity among its members, then there is a fear of losing effectiveness and function and consequently, relevance.

**Hypothesis II: Peace and stability as raison d’être**

**H₂:** NATO officials justify the Alliance’s existence as the only alternative to bringing peace and stability to particularly Europe (but also selected other regions), arguing that NATO corresponds to the UN Charter while also critiquing UN’s lack of capacity.

In this section, firstly, NATO’s SGs’ justification of existence of NATO through Summit speeches will be analyzed and then the scholars’ view of the Alliance’s existence will also be provided.

As we remember from the above content analysis, the word “challenge” was spoken 32 times after the Cold War in NATO SGs’ speeches at Summits. Almost in all NATO Summit meetings, the SG spoke abstractly about challenges, at times not specifying the challenge. Some of the usage of the term can be seen by the list of statements in Figure VIII, all of which indicate that NATO faces many challenges and
Figure VIII: When “challenge(s)” was found in NATO SG’s speech

* “NATO’s structures ready to face the challenges of the 21st century” (1997);
* “Our strategy and our forces have been adapted to respond to the new security challenges” (1997);
* “NATO remains a community that faces up to challenges” (1999);
* “addressing many pressing security challenges” (2005);
* “enhance our political dialogue in ... face of the many challenges before us” (2005);
* “In a time of global threats and challenges” (2006);
* “to deliver 21st century solutions to 21st century challenges” (2006);
* “to face today's highly complex risks and challenges” (2006);
* “confronted with multiple risks and challenges” (2009);
* “NATO capable of responding to the security challenges of tomorrow” (2012);
* “find common solutions for common challenges” (2009);
* “In a dangerous world, we must continue to respond to ... multiple challenges with unity and with strength. We must ensure that NATO remains ready, able and willing to defend all Allies against any threat” (2014);
* “NATO always rises to every challenge. We stand ready to act together and decisively to ensure the common security of North America and Europe” (2014);
* “capabilities to meet new challenges” (2016).

Figure IX: NATO’s raison d’être during the Cold War
(Content analysis of Secretary Generals’ Summit speeches, 1957-1989)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summit</th>
<th>Focus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1957</td>
<td>• Contribute to European “idea”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 1974   | • With the Alliance, member countries are stronger and more secure  
        • Force for peace |
| 1975   | • Helped to maintain peace in North Atlantic area |
| 1977   | • N/A (no justifications were listed by the SG in this Summit) |
| 1978   | • Works politically and militarily  
        • NATO science committee celebrated 20 years of significant scientific and technological cooperation  
        • Regular consultations on CSCE (later OSCE) issues |
| 1982   | • necessary guarantee of liberty and fundamental values |
| 1988   | • collective determination to deploy and maintain a military capacity convinced the USSR to pursue arms control and disarmament  
        • contributes to democratic process among 16 sovereign nations |
| 1989   | • NATO has brought peace.  
        • The East is turning to the West  
        • Communism has failed  
        • strongest community—morally, politically, economically, militarily—that the West in all its long history has ever known. |
that, therefore, NATO feels ready to face these challenges. However, the abundance of unspecified challenges that the SGs have stated can mean that each SG is trying to make NATO very relevant and needed. In most of the speeches, the NATO SG would say that there are many challenges without giving examples and specifying them, only implying that due to the (unspecified) “challenges,” NATO is needed. That is why we can see that the word “challenge” repeated many times after NATO’s enemy, the Soviet Union, had collapsed. Only after 9/11 did NATO begin to specify the threats facing itself and its members.

How else has NATO justified its existence during the Cold War and after? For that comparative discourse analysis is needed, in addition to NATO officials’ views. For NATO officials’ views, three high ranking officials were interviewed, while discourse analysis was also conducted based on SGs’ Summit speeches during 1957-2016. The information listed in Figure IX is selected from spoken justifications in SGs’ Summit speeches, presented in a table format. As can be seen, NATO SGs have given multiple justifications for NATO’s existence during the Cold War, with the main justifications having been that NATO brought peace and contributed to the creation of the EU (an entity which was established as the European Coal and Steel Community in 1951). Moreover, according to the SGs, NATO protects liberty and human rights values and succeeded in ending Communism. Lastly, because of NATO, Europe is stronger, more secure and peaceful. Thus, NATO’s raison d’être during the Cold War was bringing peace, protecting liberty and freedom, and countering Communism.

Now, what are NATO’s justifications for its existence in the post-Cold War era? According to Puglisi, after “the dissolution of the Soviet Union [and demise of communism], it was in no way guaranteed that the breakup would be peaceful. As it
soon turned out, in the Balkans, Central Asia, and the Caucasus, ethnic hostilities were rekindled with serious consequences.\textsuperscript{9} In the post-Cold War era, in turn, NATO did not lose its relevance and justified its existence as a stabilizer in conflict zones. Figure X elaborates on this.

Since the Cold War, NATO has felt proud that states want to join the Alliance for peace, democracy, prosperity, freedom, and security reasons. According to a NATO SG:

“Many want to join our Alliance or at least develop closer ties to it … NATO owes its attractiveness to the security which it alone can guarantee … because it is the only functioning collective defence organisation on the globe … No new security order in Europe is conceivable without it … Under its umbrella, the dynamism of European unification can unfold … No international organization can replace the Atlantic Alliance to fulfill these missions” (1994 Summit).

Thus, in the post-Cold War era NATO has been proud to bring peace and security to the world and is proud that many countries want to join the Alliance. Puglisi agrees with this by saying that other “nations also viewed a relationship with NATO as fundamental to their own aspirations for stability, democracy, and European integration.” According to her, the world would be less secure without NATO. Puglisi claims that “many countries and millions of people rely on NATO for their security. If NATO would be dissolved … that would leave the citizens of these countries less secure.” And again, because NATO exists, Europe is stronger and united, she claims. However, in 1997 apart from saying that NATO helped in Bosnia, the SG statement was oriented towards future risks and challenges only:

“The Atlantic Alliance is determined to embark on a far-reaching partnership that will help to leave behind the divisions of Europe for good. We will ... pursue our efforts to make NATOs structures ready to face the challenges of the 21st century ... United by common purpose and shared values, the new Alliance stands ready to shape a brighter, more secure future ... The Alliance confirms its capacity to adapt to the new Europe, acting as a catalyst for the new security environment on the continent” (1997 Summit).

\textsuperscript{9} Author interview with Puglisi, \textit{op. cit.}
Figure X: NATO’s raison d’être in the post-Cold War era  
(Content analysis of Secretary Generals’ Summit speeches, 1990-2016)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1990 | • Europe overcame cycle of war and peace  
    • framework of stability and an instigator of peaceful change  
    • Now Europe is stronger and more integrated |
| 1994 | • the only collective defence organization in globe  
    • brings stability |
| 1997 | • crucial role in maintaining peace in Bosnia |
| 1999 | • always sought to promote peace in our countries  
    • source of stability, and a source of peace.  
    • Former adversaries have become friends, friends have become Partners, Partners have become full members of the Alliance.  
    • NATO remains firm in the face of unspeakable human suffering and massive violations of human rights in Kosovo. |
| 2001 | • dramatic transformation in the Balkans  
    • NATO remains the key forum where Europe and North America consult and cooperate together.  
    • NATO is as relevant as it ever has been in managing successfully our common security. |
| 2002 | • NATO was at the heart of Europe’s transformation in the 1990s. It reached out to heal a divided continent, and it acted to bring and then keep the peace in the Balkans.  
    • NATO is still doing these jobs, and doing them well.  
    • 9/11 |
| 2004 | • defend our values and to pass them on to future generations.  
    • defend each others’ security and territorial integrity.  
    • committed to addressing the risks and threats to our security well beyond the traditional NATO area of operations.  
    • We took the leadership of the International Security Assistance Force, which brings peace and stability to Afghanistan. NATO ships patrol the Mediterranean to maintain security. And we are assisting the multinational division headed by Poland in Iraq.  
    • NATO has become to ensuring our common security.  
    • America and Europe united in a strong Alliance – committed to defend and to promote our common values and shared interests, in the Euro-Atlantic area and beyond. |
| 2005 | • NATO’s role was, and is, to defend essential values – democracy, freedom, rule of law.  
    • defending our populations and territories from today’s security challenges – terrorism, fragile and failed states, and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. |
| 2006 | • In a time of global threats and challenges, North America and Europe still stand shoulder to shoulder in the unique solidarity that is the hallmark of this Alliance.  
    • Never before has there been a greater demand for the security and stability that NATO can provide. |
| 2008 | • the professionalism and dedication of the more than 60,000 men and women deployed in NATO-led missions and operations  
    • we honour, in particular, those who have given their lives on behalf of
our Alliance. We also honour those who have been injured in the course of our common effort.
- the ultimate sacrifice by laying down their life in the service of our Alliance.
- remarkable service that you [military] continue to make to peace, freedom and democracy.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Summary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>In these past 60 years, NATO has contributed to an unprecedented period of peace, freedom and prosperity for all its citizens.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 2012 | - defend the freedom and security of all our citizens.  
- over 135,000 men and women are deployed on NATO-led operations. Their daily actions have helped to save countless lives in areas of conflict, crisis, or catastrophe.  
- Our soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines, standing shoulder-to-shoulder with personnel from our partner nations, put their lives on the line every day. So that we can enjoy our lives free from fear and danger. |
| 2014 | - Surrounded by an arc of crises, our Alliance…represents an island of security, stability and prosperity  
- NATO is the world’s most powerful Alliance. And it will remain so  
- We have dealt a blow against international terrorism in Afghanistan and we have built up capable Afghan forces of 350,000 troops and police.  
- We are stronger together. We have proven that in Afghanistan.  
- Today, NATO protects almost one billion citizens, on both sides of the Atlantic. It helps manage crises. And working with partners, it remains an essential source of stability in an unpredictable world.  
- NATO always rises to every challenge. We stand ready to act together and decisively to ensure the common security of North America and Europe. |
| 2016 | - We have tripled the size of the NATO Response Force to 40,000, with a Spearhead Force at its core. Able to move within days  
- deliver twenty-first century deterrence and defence in the face of twenty-first century challenges  
- We have set up eight new headquarters to facilitate training and reinforcements in the eastern part of our Alliance.  
- We have also sped up our decision-making, and developed strategies to deal with hybrid threats and complex challenges from the south. |

From all these SG Summit speeches it is seen that NATO justifies itself for future risks and future goals. What is important here to notice is that NATO is fully confident that new insecurities will arise and that NATO will deal with them. After the 1997 Summit, in many other Summits, as well, the SG stated many future-oriented justifications. For example, in 2012, the SG claimed:

“We will continue to play our full part in building a world that is safer and more secure … NATO is capable of responding to the security challenges of tomorrow. Because no country, and no continent can deal
with them alone … United by shared values and a shared purpose, we can find common solutions for common challenges. So that the freedom, democracy and prosperity that our generation has enjoyed will be passed down to the next” (2012 Summit).

Therefore, after the Cold War and up to today, NATO has justified its existence for possible future insecurities that may arise.

In the post-Cold War era, NATO also seems to do more self-praising than during Cold War. In all Summits, the SG has always stated the enduring value of NATO which protects the North Atlantic from any threat. As the samples below demonstrate, the SG, in every anniversary of NATO, has stated that NATO brought peace, prosperity, and security to the globe:

- “For fifty years, this community has provided for the security of its members, protecting its nations against any form of aggression or intimidation” (1999 Summit);
- “An Alliance that started out 55 years ago with twelve member nations now has grown to more than twice that number, illustrating the enduring value of the transatlantic link” (2004 Summit);
- “For over 60 years, NATO has kept us safe. And it has helped keep the world secure” (2012 Summit);
- “For 65 years, our Alliance has played a unique role in ensuring our common defence and security” (2014 Summit).

In all anniversary years, especially in the post-Cold War, NATO has been praising and proud of itself for stability and peace that it has supposedly taken behalf of its members. Former NATO Spokesperson and current NATO SG’s Special Representative for the Caucasus and Central Asia James Appathurai states that NATO is “the only remaining command structure able to command large operations, outside of the US.”10

What is important in the case of Ukraine and Crimea issues is that NATO justifies its expansion and new partnership as bringing more democracy and security. Moreover, Russian actions in Ukraine and its aggressive rhetoric have showed “the

---

10 Author interview with James Appathurai, NATO Secretary General’s Special Representative to Central Asia, Email interview, 18 September 2017.
need for a strong conventional defensive capability” that NATO has. However, the paradoxical issue is that NATO SG Jens Stoltenberg stated in 2016 that “NATO poses no threat to any country. We do not want a new Cold War. We do not want a new arms race. And we do not seek confrontation,” he said during the Summit. And yet, right after this statement, the same SG claimed that “as we strengthen our deterrence and defence, we continue to seek a constructive dialogue with Russia.” The immediate question that arises here is: Which deterrence and against whom? And if the alliance does not desire an arms race, then why in the 2016 Summit did the NATO SG talk about increasing its military capabilities?

One of the important factors is that in every Summit, the SG states NATO’s main reason of existence is “security.” According to Puglisi, “the fundamental purpose of NATO has always been the same, to safeguard the freedom and security of its members. That role needs to be fulfilled regardless of the existence of the Soviet Union.” Appathurai also says that “the stability of the NATO area is an essential pillar of European stability” and that NATO’s “operations in the Western Balkans and Afghanistan have made the world safer.” He further says that “the Euro-Atlantic area without NATO would be much less secure.” At the same time, Appathurai also admits that NATO has failed in securing the Afghan and Libyan people, but that the Alliance will continue in its attempt to secure Afghanistan.

In terms of Libya, Appathurai claims that the failure is not on NATO’s shoulder only, but is shared among the international community. Puglisi, in turn, states that Afghanistan is more secure now than 15 years ago with the help of NATO and that Libyan civilians were better protected with NATO operation and that the

---

11 Author interview with Puglisi, op. cit.
12 Author interview with Appathurai, op. cit.
mission was successful\textsuperscript{13}—what Alan Kuperman (2013), a critic of NATO’s engagement in Libya, would vehemently dispute. Puglisi adds that since the creation of NATO, there have been no wars in Europe except the Balkans where NATO brought peace and now Europe enjoys “almost 70 years of peace and prosperity.” She also claims that NATO made former enemies as allies today because it contributes to military cooperation and transparency. Overall, in this line of reasoning, NATO’s main justification would be that the alliance brings peace to both Europe and outside of NATO’s traditional zone.

What is noticeable is that during the Cold War, NATO SGs were mostly justifying NATO’s existence by stating that it stands for peace and against any aggression, while in the post-Cold War era, the Alliance’s purpose became also one of humanitarianism such as helping Africa, the Mediterranean, and Kosovo, but also Iraq and Libya. For example, in the 2005 Summit, the NATO SG stated: “In Iraq, all 26 Allies are working together to respond to the Iraqi government’s request for support: by training Iraqi security forces, providing equipment, and helping to fund NATO’s efforts,” and that in Kosovo the alliance assists in the political process. According to Castilla, there is no such organization as NATO which was able to stop the “war crimes … crimes against humanity … religious and ethnic cleansing … rapes… [and] massacres” in the Balkans.\textsuperscript{14} As a result of NATO’s intervention, says Castilla, the Bosnian conflict was resolved. Castilla also states that the UN “failed” in this conflict by “allowing all of the parties to attack and destroy each other” because it “doesn’t have the military resources that NATO does” and that NATO was the only “viable and powerful option.”\textsuperscript{15} Thus, based on discourse analysis and personal interviews, I

\begin{footnotes}
\item[13] Author interview with Puglisi, \textit{op. cit.}
\item[14] Author interview with Castilla, \textit{op. cit.}
\item[15] Ibid.
\end{footnotes}
conclude that NATO has taken up a humanitarian role for itself in the post-Cold War era.

As alluded above with the Bosnian case, Castilla heavily criticizes the UN’s inability to resolve any conflict: “They [the UN forces] can barely protect themselves due to being lightly equipped, lightly armed (unlike the more heavily armed NATO), much less stop a war of any kind with suffering heavy losses of troops and costly military resources.” By criticizing UN, it appears Castilla is justifying NATO’s military missions. As a military advisor, Castilla believes that a conflict can be resolved only by military means as he claims: “I privately and often repeatedly advocated … begged the U.N. Ambassador Richard Holbrooke to convince President Clinton to order the U.S. intervene militarily [in Bosnia].” According to Castilla, the UN’s soft peacemaking mission does not work. As such, Castilla “advocated for the replacement of the UN peacekeeping force with NATO” because it was more effective. Only NATO was able to “force” actors to negotiate. Thus, if not with NATO’s enforcement under heavy military hardware, actors would not dare come to peace. According to Castilla, NATO is the only “alternative” in rapidly growing conflicts which “bring[s] peace and political stability.”

The NATO SGs have also emphasized in every Summit the Alliance’s protecting of values such as democracy, rule of law, freedom, and human rights. For instance, in the 1991 Summit, SG Manfred Wörner was quoted as having said: “Our Alliance has principles and the courage to defend them … [F]or us values have meaning.” Then, in 2001, SG Robertson claimed that the Alliance is “committed to peace, democracy and security—and committed to defending these principles together,” while in 2005, SG Scheffer referred to “our commitment to collective

16 Ibid.
defence, and our shared values,” and in 2014 SG Rasmussen said: “Our 28 countries are united in a commitment to common values: freedom, democracy and the rule of law.”

NATO works with IOs and NGOs in the “institution-building, governance, development, and judiciary reform,” which shows its commitment to democracy and rule of law values. Therefore, NATO justifies its existence by being committed to fundamental values, showing its democratizing purpose of existence. The reason NATO obtained its democratizing purpose is because after new threats appeared in the post-Cold War era, static military alliance could not help and NATO thus had to transform itself to apply “force in combination with diplomatic and humanitarian efforts to stop conflict[s] … [as] military power alone was not enough to ensure peace and stability.” After 2010, NATO began its involvement to deal with “all stages of a crisis—before, during and after,” an idea which is “at the heart of the ‘comprehensive approach’ where military might, diplomacy and post-conflict stabilization are combined.”

Lastly, there are economic justifications. With NATO, the members can share the military burden with other members and partners; for instance some countries “participate in programs run by the NATO Support and Procurement Agency to collectively purchase military equipment, supplies and services, thus reducing [expenses].” Moreover, without the Alliance, proponents argue that NATO members would be “economically and socially worse off as larger share of the states’ budget would be spent on military expenditure than social welfare.”

---

17 Author interview with Puglisi, *op. cit.*
18 Ibid.
19 Ibid.
In conclusion, when backing up $H_2$, there are various official justifications of NATO’s own existence after the Cold War. NATO’s raison d’être are peace, stability, conflict-resolving, democratizing, development, rule of law, transparency, and future risks. Therefore, the hypothesis is largely validated and the analyzed data have brought about more contributions by finding additional justifications. Most important is that the NATO SG Summit speeches have named justifications for the Alliance’s existence in every Summit, with justifications having been various, depending on the context, as ethnic wars, terrorism, and so on, what corresponds to Cho’s (2007) evolutionary model where he talked about adaptability of the organization depending on the external environment.

I argue that these justifications depending on variety of threats were tools of making the alliance necessary to the world. There are about 6,000 civilians along with many military personnel working for NATO (NATO 2014) where employees earn by “applying UN rates” and get all kinds of benefits (NATO 2017) and if NATO gets dissolved, then all 6,000 employees would lose their comfortable salaries. It is thus reasonable to posit that stakeholders, including benefiting governments and NATO bureaucrats, would like such a materially beneficial Organization to exist in perpetuity. This probably is also one of the reasons why the SG on behalf of NATO justifies the Alliance’s existence in every Summit. As such, if any threat in the world happens outside of North Atlantic, NATO can, theoretically speaking, relate itself to the new threat and claim that it is needed for real and imagined peace and stability. Therefore, the hypothesis is validated that NATO justifies itself as a peace and stability bringing entity, and, in addition, there were also found other arguments as economics, employment, humanitarian, and democratizing justifications for NATO’s existence.
Hypothesis III: Stability vs. instability critique

**H₃**: Proponents of NATO in the post-Cold War era justify its existence as a force for stability and security given its ability to counter threats (terrorism, spread of WMD, humanitarian crises); but opponents claim NATO’s existence and expanding membership has created more instability in the world.

The above hypothesis will also be tested via content analysis of NATO SGs’ Summit speeches and through interviewing NATO experts. It can be posited that the reasons why NATO exists determines its goals and missions and relevance. As discussed above, there are varieties of reasons why NATO continued to exist after the end of Cold War. Accordingly, NATO exists for political, economic, hegemonic, and humanitarian reasons. According to Michta (1989), NATO’s new member states have joined the Alliance for “the future defence against a specific adversary,” such as Russia, and this has served as “the central principle for the alliance” (368). The security provided by U.S. and Western human rights values have also attracted new members to the Alliance in the post-Cold War era (Sloan 2016). As such, NATO’s continued existence can also be a cause for a security dilemma vis-à-vis the West and Russia.

There are also reasons on part of NATO’s most powerful member, the U.S., for the Alliance to exist. Sloan (2016) states that by using NATO, the U.S. is able to far better protect its global interests, which includes the domination of Europe. “[NATO] presented assurances to the Soviet Union that were meant to look powerful, while [it] maneuvered to dominate post–Cold War Europe” (Itzkovitz Shifrinson 2016, 42). The ex-policy advisor of NATO, Castilla, in turn, claims that due to the “views that the U.S. was failing the world,” it (the U.S.) chose to intervene into the Bosnian conflict to protect its image of global police and hegemon through NATO, all
along doing so “in the name of establishing peace.”

Shireen Saleem (2012) agrees with this U.S. dominating of NATO reason as she states that after the collapse of the Soviet Union, there was no need for the existence of NATO but it still stayed “to control the weak states, and whenever weak states carry any action that threaten the economic interests of developed states, they [the strong] use their superior military power” (116). “Continued strong American backing for the alliance is further assured by the fact that NATO remains the principal institutional vehicle through which the [U.S.] can influence West European policies” (Duffield 1994-5, 785). Sanders (2002), in turn, states that NATO “escalated its efforts to foment ethnic wars in the Balkans to create excuses for its own military interventions in the region.” He says that “NATO’s interventions—so-called ‘humanitarian wars’—were then sold to the [Western and global] public as a means of settling conflicts between ethnic groups.” For critics as Sanders, “NATO’s real purpose is to expand the colonial spheres of influence of its member states and their corporate allies” (92).

In addition, Cohen is criticizing that NATO has bombed Yugoslavia without even UN’s agreement and supported Kosovo’s independence and everybody was fine with it and, thus, why Russia cannot take similar action (vis-à-vis Ukraine and Crimea, for example) is because a powerful U.S. can do anything it wants. It makes me think that Cohen would agree with other scholars who claim NATO is a foreign policy tool of the U.S., or that the U.S. uses NATO to legalize wars or to dominate Europe (Griffiths 2015). This might be agreed by Waltz (2000), as well, who stated that “the ability of the [U.S.] to extend the life of a moribund institution nicely illustrates how international institutions are created and maintained by stronger states.

---

20 Author interview with Castilla, op. cit.
to serve their perceived or misperceived interests” (20).

Itzkovitz Shifrinson (2016) claims that, through NATO, “the [U.S.] maneuvered to dominate post-Cold War Europe” (42). Many other authors do not agree with this. According to Pierre Hassner, for example, the main function of NATO in the beginning was “carry[ing] out the U.S. security guarantee, but this central element of the alliance has been both eroded and rebuilt according to periods and priorities” (quoted in Myers 1981, 375). Dunay states that “the U.S. is the ultimate security guarantor, and the only one that the Russian Federation takes seriously as a military “counter-weight” and that NATO is not equal to U.S. because NATO is a consensus-based alliance where U.S. has equal votes as other members. Therefore, Russia, which had “only a short-lived excursion to democracy [in the immediate aftermath of the Cold War] does not have a particularly good understanding of how an alliance of democracies work.”21 Even if the US is extremely important for NATO, “it does not mean that others [will] simply shut up!,” says Dunay. He brings an example from a May 2017 NATO meeting, where “the U.S. had to listen to dissenting voices, including from the Secretary General” and also during the 2003 Iraq operation, the U.S. “could not bring onboard several [NATO] members, including some powerful ones and had to stop short of an allied operation.”22 There are thus a division of opinion among scholars with one side claiming that the U.S. uses NATO to dominate Europe, and the other claiming that the reality of NATO is a de jure and de facto consensus without a U.S. domination.

There are economic reasons of NATO’s existence as well. When joining new members need to standardize “military training, weapons and other military equipment … to NATO’s exacting specifications [which] is a tremendous boon to

21 Author interview with Dunay, op. cit.
22 Ibid.
U.S. and European military industries that profit greatly from these expanded export markets” (Sanders 2002, 94). It can therefore be argued here that another reason for the existence of NATO and its expansion is monetary profits from the sale of weapons by its member states. Sloan (2016) states that in the European perception, during the Cold War, NATO members bought more American made weapons than European ones, hence, “American industrial profits, employment, and balance of payments all benefited from this one-sided trade” (97).

According to Sanders (2002), in 1996, an estimated four-fifths (80%) of the world’s military equipment was produced by NATO member states, while in 2000, the military budget of NATO members’ was nearly US$800 billion, equivalent to 60% of the world’s total military spending (Sanders 2002). Akulov (2012) concurs with the economic argument by saying that “half of the world’s military spending” is done by the U.S. and another quarter by the remainder of NATO nations. Considerably, NATO is like a “false legal shield, protecting the U.S. military from Congressional oversight,” claims Akulov, meaning that “war could be made legal by working through either the [UN] or NATO.” Thus, NATO seems as a good business tool for making large profits by arms manufacturers. Sanders (2002) also states: If NATO controls Eastern Europe, then Western powers have access to oil by securing pipelines through the Caspian Sea and Caucasus mountains.

Another speculative reason for the persistence of NATO in the post-Cold War era is based on Sander’s (2002) view that NATO is a tool for political interventions particularly in elections. For example, even if Albania’s 2002 elections were a “fraud (ballot box stuffing, ghost voters, selective disenfranchisement),” the NATO SG for the time, Robertson, had “pronounced the election fair and legitimate” (96). In addition, adds Sanders, NATO assisted “to enforce the cancellation of election results
in Bosnia, shut down the offices and transmission towers of media stations that were
critical of NATO’s presence and seized the assets of political parties that refused to
cooperate with them” (93).

Yet another raison d’être of the alliance after the Cold War is similar to
official justification of NATO which are values. According to Kriendler, “common
interests and values” as democracy, and consensus-based decisions attracted its
members to continue remaining with NATO.23 Dunay adds that, in fact, NATO is “a
value community of Western democracies.”24

According to Kriendler, however, new insecurity issues are strong
justifications of NATO. New risks have appeared in the 21st century that could be
solved by providing framework for cooperation with former adversaries and NATO
has been a convenient tool for this. Gleason also adds that there was no assurance that
all threats to Europe “have evaporated” and that NATO is there to defend “the
Transatlantic community in a world that is changing quickly.”25 Dunay agrees that the
reason behind an enduring NATO is that there is demand from its members for a
guaranteed security and NATO “was and is a strong guarantor.”26 However,
according to Waltz (2000), “NATO is no longer even a treaty of guarantee because
one cannot answer the question, guarantee against whom?” (19). Thus, the alliance
can guarantee security against abstract unpredictable vague threats, while its main
threat (the Soviet Union) has disappeared.

There are negative consequences of NATO’s existence and its operations, as
well. Per Sanders (2012), during the Yugoslavia conflict (1990-92), NATO breached

23 Author interview with John Kriendler, Professor of NATO and European Security Issues, George C.
24 Author interview with Dunay, op. cit.
25 Author interview with Gleason, op. cit.
26 Author interview with Dunay, op. cit.
its own Charter and various international laws such as dropping “20,000 bombs and missiles containing 80,000 tons of explosives … [which at times] targeted civilian infrastructure, including over 1,000 targets of no military significance, such as: schools, hospitals, fairs, bridges, roads, railways, waterlines, media stations, historic and cultural monuments, museums, factories, oil refineries and petrochemical plants.” As a consequence, “thousands of civilians were killed, at least 6,000 were injured and countless others, especially children, suffered severe psychological trauma” (92). Moreover, NATO’s bombing caused an ecological catastrophe in Yugoslavia as the Alliance used radioactive and highly toxic depleted uranium missiles and anti-personnel cluster bombs which are prohibited by the Geneva Convention. Moreover, some NATO troops are known to have engaged in the promotion of prostitution and even rape in both Bosnia and Kosovo, while some offending officers were sent home without criminal proceedings (Sanders 2012).

Other scholars as Vladimir Pozner and Cohen also claim that NATO brought more instability by triggering conflict with Russia. Cohen states that “NATO has brought us the greatest crisis in international affairs since the Cuban Missile Crisis” (quoted in Griffiths 2015, 37). Russia has in many times said that it does not favor NATO’s presence near its borders, but the 10-day NATO exercises every two years in Poland makes Russia suspicious. Even German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier has states that “whoever believes that a symbolic tank parade on the alliance's eastern border will bring security is mistaken … We are well-advised to not create pretexts to renew an old confrontation” (BBC News). About the eastward expansion, Pozner is saying that when Russians told about agreement to not move NATO an inch to the east after the collapse of USSR, “the U.S. said: We had an agreement with the Soviet Union, but you’re Russia” (quoted in Griffiths 2015, 34).
Pozner gives an analogy from Cold War that when the USSR put missiles in Cuba because U.S. put missiles in Turkey, the U.S. didn’t accept this by demanding removal and saying that “we will sink your ships if we have to,” Thus, Pozner is saying that it is reasonable that Russia will not allow NATO close to Russian border, similar to “America ... not allow[ing] missiles in Cuba” (33). In terms of Georgia and Ukraine membership, there is a division among scholars and politicians. If Russian politicians state that the Georgia and Ukraine incidences are a response to NATO’s possible expansion, for the West it is simply expanding security area. According to Applebaum, in the 2008 summit, NATO denied Ukraine and Georgia membership to NATO, however Cohen states that in 2008 NATO said that “membership remains open to Georgia and Ukraine” (31), thus, it is not clear who to blame for this conflict. Cohen states that “the Russians invaded Ukraine because the Russian political class believed that NATO was on its way not only to Kiev, but also to Crimea” (30). Thus, NATO seems (in eyes of Russia and some critics) to have started the conflict, not Russia. And lastly, Cohen states that

“Russia represents no threat to the Baltic states whatsoever. This notion that somehow Ukraine is also about the Baltics was conjured up by those members of NATO that have wanted to move the front-line, permanent NATO military infrastructure and bases to the Baltics right on Russia’s border for fifteen years, but have been prohibited from doing so and by an agreement with Russia” (73). “Remember when they thought they saw a submarine in the lagoon and never found it? They are running these fictitious threat operations that the Russians are coming, but it simply isn’t true” (74).

On the other hand, continuing this Ukraine and Georgia crisis, Garry Kasparov states that Putin’s aggression in Ukraine is needed “to survive politically” because he “has nothing else to offer besides foreign policy expansion,” thus, NATO serves as a deterrent tool so Russia does not start “provocations” in the Baltics (45). Applebaum, in turn, states that Putin uses negative propaganda that NATO is “a genuine military
threat” to Russia to “consolidate his power” (32). Therefore, in terms of Georgia and Ukraine crises, there is a division among scholars whether it is NATO who led to such crises or it is solely Russia’s responsibility. Here we cannot give a clear answer whether NATO triggered these conflicts and brought more instability.

Dunay claims that overall NATO contributed to more stability to the international world within and outside of its borders. For Dunay, even Afghanistan and Libya are in better shape than during Taliban regime or Qaddafi’s times. Castilla would agree with Dunay that NATO did bring some stability to conflict zones.²⁷ In terms of Libya and Afghanistan, Castilla states that “the Middle East is such a complicated region” with “so many different ethnic and religious focused factions … oppressing, attacking and killing … than any NATO force ever could.” He states that there was violence even before NATO came to these regions. As a result, NATO did not commit any major “catastrophe” because insecurity existed beforehand, he argues.²⁸ Lastly, Applebaum also agrees with the stability argument and states that by reassuring Russia through NATO, Central Europe was no longer in conflict as it was for two World Wars (Griffiths 2015).

On the other hand, some scholars state that NATO exists for humanitarian purposes. NATO began to assist the African Union (2005-2007), the government of Iraq (since 2004), Afghanistan (2003-2014), Somalia (2009-2016) and Kosovo (since 1999), in training their armies, in crisis management, helping to deter and in capacity building. Moreover, NATO assists the UN in helping to deliver food and deter pirates and helped during the crises in Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya (Sayers 2011). NATO in the post-Cold War “frame[d] a new purpose, such as protecting the environment, the drug trade, sponsoring student exchanges and developing energy-conservation technology”

²⁷ Author interview with Dunay, op. cit.
²⁸ Author interview with Castilla, op. cit.
Lastly, there is a very controversial argument according to Akulov (2012), which is that NATO has lost its raison d’être. For him, the Alliance was established “for that bipolar world which no longer exists,” a world where the main uniting point was Article 5 that is of mutual security of all member states against any attack. This, Akulov argues, is irrelevant today due to Europe being in peace and stability and also due to the U.S. taking unilateral decisions without consultation with other members. Moreover, argues Akulov, there is no unity in decisions among members. There is EU’s urge to create its own defense mechanism, and member states having small military budgets which affects the progress of military operations of NATO. If we look in the past history, Article 5 was only called once after 9/11 and NATO instead “pursued aggressively in attempting to justify its existence” (Akulov 2012).

Moreover, the alliance lacks one unifying purpose as shown in the failure in post-Qaddafi Libya, disagreements over Afghanistan, or controversial bombing of Belgrade in 1999, states Akulov. All these according to Akulov, show that today NATO has lost its raison d’être. In addition, Hassner (in Myers 1981) would somewhat agree with this. As per Hassner, the U.S. perceived common interests in the alliance is in fact its own interests and Europe is not happy with this. Therefore, according to Akulov and Hassner one might say NATO as a united coherent security tool has lost its raison d’être to fulfill its security tasks.

The above analysis showed experts’ views of NATO’s real existence after the Cold War. H₃ can thus be failed to be disproven because proponents state justifications as threats and insecurities, and on the other hand opponents state the negative raison d’être of NATO’s existence. Thus, there is a case for H₃, while in addition there were brought more findings from scholars on justification on NATO’s
existence. Overall, on the one hand NATO exists on the one hand as humanitarian, political, military, and value-committed security organization, which favor the stability argument, while and on the other hand, it exists for hegemonic, economically beneficial, political interventionist reasons which have brought some instabilities.

**NATO controversies and Trump’s speeches**

To analyze the new U.S. president’s position on NATO, a short discourse analysis will be made in chronological order. On 21 March 2016, U.S. presidential candidate Donald J. Trump stated in an interview with the *Washington Post* that NATO was created when the U.S. was rich but that now that the U.S. is heavily in debt, it is borrowing money to pay for Europe’s security. He also added that NATO’s “distribution of costs has to be changed” (quoted in Freisleben 2017). It thus appeared that Trump thinks it is unfair that NATO’s total military budget has a disproportionate amount of spending from the U.S. budget, which is used, in his interpretation, to pay for Europe’s security.

For Trump, during his campaign and early on in his presidency, NATO appeared to be an expensive Cold War entity which was not relevant any longer, especially given the alleged burden of costs on the U.S. However, he also thinks that “NATO as a concept is good, but it is not as good as it was when it first evolved.” On 27 March 2016, for example, Trump claimed:

“I think NATO’s obsolete. NATO was done at a time you had the Soviet Union, which was obviously larger, much larger than Russia is today. I’m not saying Russia’s not a threat. But we have other threats. We have the threat of terrorism and NATO doesn’t discuss terrorism, NATO’s not meant for terrorism” (quoted in Carroll 2017).

Later, on 2 April 2016, Trump claimed similarly: “Here’s the problem with NATO: it’s obsolete” (quoted in Parker 2017). Thus, for Trump, NATO had lost its relevance due to the Soviet Union’s collapse, the end of the Cold War and the emergence of a
new form of terrorism, which, in his opinion, cannot be dealt with by NATO. Only ten days later, however, on April 12, 2016, Trump met with the secretary general of NATO, Stoltenberg, who appeared to have changed Trump’s opinion about NATO. Afterwards, Trump started praising NATO for its 70 years of history, including its supposed “new” role of countering terrorism: “I complained about that a long time ago, and they made a change. Now they do fight terrorism. I said it was obsolete. It’s no longer obsolete” (quoted in Carroll 2017). NATO, however, could not have changed its direction over his campaign period. Moreover, NATO has been dealing with terrorism since the 1980s (Carroll 2017). Trump’s advisor, Anthony Scaramucci, tried to justify Trump’s inconsistent speeches by saying that “possibly one or two things in there that, in the President-elect’s own words, are obsolete … Don’t take him literally; take him symbolically.” It thus appears that populist politicians as Trump can change their opinions rather quickly to suit the situation. Even after Trump’s provocative speeches on NATO or Russia, the European leaders, as Germany’s Angela Merkel, did not react much because Trump’s statements for them, in the words of Europeans, seem to be “just cheap talks” with no practical meaning (Cassidy 2017).

By June 2016, when NATO had created its new post of Intelligence Chief, Trump said in his Twitter account: “See, when I said NATO was obsolete because of no terrorism protection, they made the change without giving me credit.” And later in July 2016 when he was asked how he is going to fight terrorism, he said: “We’re going to … get NATO involved because we support NATO far more than we should” and also further criticized the countries that in his opinion do not contribute sufficiently to NATO’s military strength, despite being “extremely rich.” Later, after three days, he wrote on Twitter: “Wow, NATO’s top commander just announced that
he agrees with me that alliance members must PAY THEIR BILLS [sic.]” (quoted in Freisleben 2017). And at the Republican National Convention in July 2016, Trump once again criticized rich U.S. allies for not “properly reimburs[ing]” the U.S. “for the tremendous cost of [U.S.] military protecting [them].” He said that such countries have “massive wealth. Massive wealth. We’re talking about countries that are doing very well. Then yes, I would be absolutely prepared to tell those countries, “Congratulations, you will be defending yourself” (quoted in Sanger and Haberman 2016).

On 12 January 2017, about a week before the end of Barack Obama’s presidency, Trumps’ new Secretary of Defense nominee, General Mattis, said: “I have had discussions with [Trump] on this issue [i.e. NATO]. He has shown himself open, even to the point of asking more questions, going deeper into the issue. He had been a critic of NATO for a long time and he did know about the general concept, perhaps not the details, which is not too abnormal for any politician” (quoted in Gordon and Chokshi 2017). Then, after 4 days, regarding the “obsoleteness” issue, Trump said once against that “I took such heat, when I said NATO was obsolete. It’s obsolete because it wasn’t taking care of terror. I took a lot of heat for two days. And then they started saying Trump is right.”

Later in February 2017, in a meeting with U.S. military officials, the now President Trump said: “We strongly support NATO, we only ask that all NATO members make their full and proper financial contribution to the NATO alliance, which many of them have not been doing” (quoted Freisleben 2017). And on 26 May 26 2017, in a meeting in Brussels with the NATO members, Trump said that the members are still not paying which is “unfair to the people and taxpayers of the United States” (quoted in Lea 2017).
Trump’s final statement about NATO ends with unfair payments within the alliance, which he wants to change. Trump’s core argument is not totally off the mark. If we look into NATO members’ military budget, the U.S. indeed spends the most—in both absolute terms and on a per capita basis. In 2016, for example, it spent 3.6% of its GDP on its military, while Germany, the second largest NATO member, spent 1.2% of its GDP on its military—i.e. one third the level of U.S. (Economist 2017). However, most NATO members have not reached the 2% target of military expenditure as percentage of their national income (GDP), which was agreed first in the 2006 summit with deadline to reach it in the 2014 summit.

The relative smaller amount of expenditures on military by other NATO members, it is claimed, is not necessarily because they do not want to spend more, but because such states face unemployment and other economic problems and consequently cannot spend as much as the U.S. or even Germany on their military as their share of their GDP, so claims Ivana Kottasová (2017b). Some NATO members as Iceland, for example, do not even have an army, or have very small armies. In addition, even if members do not contribute much to NATO, they implement military type activities outside of NATO’s original European sphere of operation by sending troops and bombers to places as Afghanistan, Kosovo or Libya (Kottasová 2017a). Sloan (2016) agrees with this by saying that “some allied contributions to Western security cannot be measured in terms of defense expenditures alone [and] European countries provide much more development assistance to less developed countries than does the U.S., and such efforts help to promote stability” (97).

On the other hand, as Linda Risso claims, states that have reached the so-called 2% target of military expenditures as percentage of their GDP, do not contribute much to the Alliance. For example, Greece spends most of its 2% of its
GDP on its military, but much of that sum goes to pensions and salaries, and UK achieved the 2% GDP mark “by shifting items from other departments, like intelligence and pensions, and not by increasing the budget in absolute terms” (Kottasová 2017a). All these details are not being raised by Trump, while also it is impossible to reach a target of 2% GDP on one’s military spending in the very near future (Kottasová 2017b).

Looking chronologically through Trump’s statements on NATO, starting from 2016 when he was a presidential candidate to months into his presidency in 2017, first, he talked about the unfair military expenditures by NATO members. He then said that NATO is obsolete, while soon after he said that NATO is no longer obsolete. Trump again scolded other members that they don’t pay what they should as their share towards their military, thus towards their alliance with NATO. The problem is that Trump does not dig into the issue and repeatedly demands payment from member states without knowing their economic situation and without providing nuanced solutions. On the other hand, “one could argue that the U.S. too faces many economic challenges, and yet it spends 3.6% of its GDP on its military. The likely reason for the disparity is that EU NATO members have come to inadvertently agree—as from the Cold War days—that the U.S. is a military/political hegemonic power that has willingly taken upon itself to protect the rest of the alliance in a disproportionate manner.”

It seems that Trump is trying to make other members of NATO to pay towards their military by shaming them as “free riders.” Usually politicians prepare well before making serious statements and they at least try to learn about the problem or issue being discussed in detail. But with Trump, he makes suspicious statements and

---

29 Email communications with Payam Foroughi, Research and Teaching Fellow, OSCE Academy in Bishkek, 2 July 2017.
only then does he study the matter more as he has done about NATO and how it is obsolete and does not deal with terrorism on one day, and it is no longer obsolete and it deals with terrorism on another day. What is important here is that Trump appears to be persuaded very fast by opinions of defence and NATO officials as if he lacks his own in-depth knowledge and analysis on NATO. That said his argument seems true on the U.S. disproportionate share of the large sum of NATO members’ defense expenditures.

And this controversy is not necessarily new. From the beginning of the Alliance, there were debates on whether the “costs of the Treaty were being fairly shared,” which is still an issue today (Sloan 2016, 7). In the beginning, members paid the infrastructure costs according to “ability to pay” formula, however, according to Sloan, in American eyes, some allies had stronger economies and were capable enough to pay more to their own security but the U.S. committed itself to global security. Throughout the Cold War, the U.S. thought that NATO’s European members needs to do more in the Alliance since it felt that U.S. “spending on its strategic nuclear capabilities contributed directly to Europe’s security.” Europe, on the other hand, thought that the U.S. was “overreacted[ing] to the threat”—especially by the mid-1980s—because the Soviet Union was becoming weaker and Gorbachev was looking for measures to get out from the “Cold War confrontation.” Moreover, why European members did not spend on their militaries, is because they were thinking that “British and French strategic nuclear capabilities” could deter any aggression (97).

In conclusion, there are multiple issues that the Alliance faces since the beginning and many of them still remain. The most current issues, such as the budget flare-up and differences in objectives between members despite common values,
affects the raison d’être of the Alliance in such a way that if the U.S. with Trump would leave NATO, then NATO without its largest contributor could not operate as before. As Kriendler states, Trump’s rhetoric on NATO has weakened the status of American “international leadership,” which, in turn, has affected NATO since the U.S., as NATO’s largest contributor, is the de facto face of NATO. And given its 29 state membership, it can be argued that it is hard to achieve consensus. Also differences in socialist and capitalist allies creates divisions among members in terms of budget allocation (socialist countries focus on pension, healthcare and education, while capitalists focus on the profit-oriented system). The issues described above and Trump’s rhetoric on the value of NATO have shaken NATO to its core by questioning its effectiveness, relevance and even raison d’être in the 21st century.
Chapter Four

CONCLUSIONS

NATO was born in a bipolar world and after the end of the Cold War it was able to adapt to the new environment, thus proving the evolutionary theory of change of Kezar (2001). As Appathurai says, NATO experienced an “identity crisis” after the demise of the USSR. This identity crisis was probably (in my opinion) because NATO was meddling between threats and was confused about its functions but “with the instability in Europe from Russia’s actions, and the threat of terrorism, it is clear [now] that the Alliance remains necessary.”

Threats are one of the defining factors of existence for the Alliance because it was establishment due to a large one: the Soviet Union. After the end of the Cold War and the Soviet demise, however, it was no longer clear what was the chief threat, if any, for NATO. In my opinion, threat existence determines the existence and validity of NATO because without a clear threat there is no point in investing and making efforts for the Alliance’s persistence.

Certainly, NATO’s threats have evolved since its establishment. Nevertheless, there is still no clear cut answer as to what is NATO’s sole or major threat in the 21st century. Some of the experts interviewed for this research, such as the former NATO Policy Adviser, Castilla, claim that NATO’s threat in the 21st century is Russia, others such as Marshall Center Professors Dunay and Gleason say the threat is terrorism. Scholars and NATO itself provide a list of threats including WMDs, cyber attacks, terrorism, the Islamic State (ISIS), Russian aggression, failed states, violence in Africa, and forms of humanitarian crises. All these challenges make NATO very

---

30 Author interview with Appathurai, op. cit.
31 Ibid.
relevant and needed as stated by scholars and the Alliance’s officials. Accordingly, they argue, the world would be in much worst condition if NATO did not help in places as the Baltics in late 20th century and Afghanistan in the 21st. Due to these arguments, scholars and NATO itself justify its raison d’être in the 21st century.

Nevertheless, NATO is not as strong and determined as before, both materially and objectively, as any organization faces some internal issues that affect its functions and overall existence. Due to budget issues, consensus-decision making issues, and disunity among its members, NATO’s raison d’être has been shaken. For instance, without unity in values, priorities and clear goals of member states, it is hard to agree on one operation and implement it effectively as seen by the Afghanistan and Libya cases. When some countries do not contribute much to the Alliance, then NATO cannot have enough soldiers, money and equipment to carry out its operations. Taking into account the many perceived threats to NATO, having problems in prioritizing threats and financing operations, it becomes very difficult to be an effective military and security Alliance. This possible ineffectiveness challenges the raison d’être of the Organization.

NATO’s raison d’être is defined by its threats which it faces, however, the raison d’être is not be unitary and varies. NATO is a multi-dimensional organization which serves many purposes at once. If before, in a bipolar black/white world, NATO had one sole threat of Soviet Communism, now in a more or less new bipolar or multipolar world, there are many threats and NATO is trying to be involved everywhere in the globe as Europe, Asia, Africa, Partnership for Peace programme, Mediterranean dialogue, Middle East operations and so on. As seen from this research, the Alliance now serves political, military, even humanitarian purposes and has spread out over the northern hemisphere of the planet with multi-functional
security purposes. NATO in the 21st century has multiple identities as humanitarian, at the same time military at the same time political. If applying the “identity crisis theory,” then as Cho (2007) describes having multiple identifications and not being committed to one coherent identity, it means that the alliance is experiencing “identity diffusion.” Thus, in contrast with previous descriptions, NATO can seem to lose its relevance due to stretching and losing its sole identity thus losing its raison d’être as also stated by Akulov (2012). And as Waltz (2000) states, “the question of purpose may not be a very important one; create an organization and it will find something to do. Once created, and the more so once it has become well established, an organization becomes hard to get rid of” (20). Therefore, even if NATO were to be no longer effective, it is hard to dissolve it, and thus it continues its irrelevant existence.

This thesis had a purpose of finding NATO’s raison d’être after the end of the Cold War and the 21st century. After the analysis of NATO SGs’ Summit speeches, in-depth interviews with NATO officials and NATO experts, and scanning of scholarly works on NATO, it was found that in the immediate aftermath of the post-Cold War, NATO’s threat disappeared but soon after new threats appeared. What is important is that NATO has not been faced with a singular static threat up until now in the post-Cold War era, rather the threats have evolved as from ethnic violence in Balkans up to terrorism since 9/11, and cyber attacks nowadays. In regards to these threats, according to NATO officials and experts, NATO has a valid reason to exist in terms of providing security and peace mostly outside of the North Atlantic zone because NATO believes (correctly so) that the outside world affects its internal member states’ security.

There are positive and negative justifications of NATO’s existence according to scholars. Some claim it exists for humanitarian purposes and brings more peace and
stability to the world, while others claim that the Alliance, to the contrary, brings more instability, exists as a tool of the U.S. to dominate the world, is there for earning profits and selling weapons by its members, and to intervene into politics of sovereign states.

In conclusion, in political science there is no absolute truth as in natural sciences and this Thesis as a political scientific analysis does not have a clear cut answer to the research questions asked in Chapter One, including an easy answer to NATO’s raison d’être, but it has provided all sides of arguments based on a broad analysis, meaning that I did not try to defend only one side, attempted to be objective, and provided both positive and negative justifications and tried to provide for all possible threats as perceived by NATO in order to see the full picture. Therefore, this Thesis provided various answers to the research questions posed and provided analysis of both proponents and opponents of NATO. It responded to three research questions and fully or partially validated three hypotheses in an attempt to achieve its intended research goals and in addition found additional information which contributed even more to the research knowledge gained during the analysis. I conclude by stating that there is no one absolute true answer but diverse ones on the nature of NATO’s raison d’être in the 21st century.
REFERENCES


APPENDIX: LIST OF INTERVIEWS

1. James Appathurai, NATO Secretary General’s Special Representative to Central Asia, Email interview, 18 September 2017.


6. Rosasia Puglisi, NATO Liaison Officer for Central Asia, Email Interview, 24 September 2017.