

EU, NATO, US: 21st Century Alliance For Global Domination

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With France's reintegration into NATO's military command after a 33 year hiatus to be formalized at this year's Alliance summit in Strasbourg, which will also upgrade the 1999 Strategic Concept with increased emphasis on NATO-EU-US military integration, and with the EU intensifying the creation of a 60,000-troop rapid deployment force and its own and affiliated Nordic battlegroups for use around the world, the mutual relations obtaining among the three major centers of Western economic, political and military power - the EU, NATO and the US - require urgent examination.

To date the conventional wisdom in establishment circles has largely consisted of a set of four false dichotomies:

The progressively more ambitious development of EU military capabilities is in competition with if not a direct challenge to NATO and the strategic trans-Atlantic alliance with Washington.

NATO is a multilateral antidote to US unilateralism.

The EU is a principled practitioner of peaceful diplomacy whereas the US and NATO are often too hasty in relying on the military necessity.

The EU is a or even the main competitor of the US in Europe and increasingly throughout much of the world.

One is free to believe as many of these canards as one chooses, but the words and the actions of the policymakers and officials in charge of enforcing policy in the EU, NATO and the US foreign policy establishment refute them at every turn.

21 of 27 members of the EU are also members of NATO. Of the six that aren't, all except Cyprus (for the time being) - Austria, Finland, Ireland, Malta and Sweden - are members of NATO's Partnership for Peace program. Of the last five, only tiny Malta doesn't have a military contingent serving under NATO in Afghanistan, the Balkans and elsewhere.

Of the 26 NATO member states, only Norway and the US, Canada and Iceland, the latter three not in Europe and so not qualifying, are in the EU.

The three key players may occasionally quibble over secondary questions of tactics, timing and technicalities, but remain united over substantive and strategic concerns.

The EU and NATO have been military partners openly since 1992 when the Berlin Plus

agreement on joint sharing of military assets was signed.

Even EU members that aren't yet in NATO are affected by the continent's subordination to the bloc as the Alliance's 1999 Strategic Charter, still in effect, stipulates that the nuclear arsenals of the United States, in particular, but also of the United Kingdom and France, are "essential to preserve peace" and are "an essential political and military link between the European and North American members of the Alliance."

With the events of 1989-1991 bringing about the collapse of the post-World War II order in Europe and the world as a whole – the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact and the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (Comecon), the breakup of the Soviet Union and the violent fragmentation of Yugoslavia – the major Western powers immediately resumed plans for global domination interrupted after the two world wars and, having learned their own lessons from the latter, formed a condominium to share the spoils of the entire world, not just the multitude of former colonies, territories, protectorates and mandates, but parts of the globe never before available to them, including the former Soviet Union.

Confirmatory of this is a statement by NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer almost four years ago:

"NATO and the EU are making rather good progress in coordinating the development of modern military capabilities. I am optimistic that we can extend our cooperation to additional areas where we have a common security interest, where we can complement each other, and reinforce each other's efforts. And here I mean functional areas...such as the Caucasus and Central Asia."(NATO International, March 31, 2005)

Two months later then US Under Secretary of State Nicholas Burns, coming to that post after being US ambassador to NATO, spoke in a similar strain when he "welcomed a call by the NATO secretary general, Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, for the alliance and the EU to increase cooperation to ensure security beyond NATO's borders in Europe, Africa and Central Asia."(Associated Press, May 26, 2005)

Burns explained the division of labor intended, as least from Washington's perspective:

"Let's get it straight. NATO does the big military operations,' but the EU handles peacekeeping operations...."(Ibid)

In the intervening month, April of 2005, then German Defense Minister Peter Struck, addressing a conference on European security in Berlin, underlined the same point in affirming that "It would be totally wrong to view the development of European defense capabilities separately from advances within NATO," and "added that both NATO and the European Union are currently making efforts to be better prepared for out-of-area missions in a bid to adapt to a fast changing security environment.' (Deutsche Welle, April 13, 2005)

That is, the EU and NATO have designated all of the world except for its Western Hemisphere, that presumably belonging to the US (though even there NATO states are involved individually, severally and collectively), as fair game for military deployments.

Another qualitative shift from the pre-1991 international situation and reversion backward to the era of Western European colonial ambitions and pretensions, one of gunboat diplomacy and bayonets drawn against "unruly natives."

In fact the post-Cold War epoch has in essence returned Europe, the West in general and as much of the world as NATO states influence to not only the pre-World War II status quo ante but even further back to the 1800s and the apex of European colonial expansion.

Effectively if not formally the major Western powers have created modern equivalents of the Congress of Vienna of 1815 and the Congress of Berlin of 1878.

The first occurred toward the very end of the Napoleonic Wars with Bonaparte's defeat at Waterloo impending and laid the foundation for the Holy Alliance and its then new order, one which was to insure that never again would European thrones be challenged by the threat of republicanism.

The post-1991 dispensation has reenacted the proscription against the republican form of government and applied it to communist and other variants of socialism and indeed any popular political parties and movements that might defend the interests of the majority, inside Europe or outside it, vis-a-vis transnational – so-called Euro-Atlantic – elites.

The second model, that of the Congress of Berlin, was the opening salvo in redrawing national boundaries in the Balkans and commencing the scramble for Africa, which would be launched in earnest six years later at the Berlin Conference.

Similarities between then and the current period don't require much comment as they are glaringly evident.

The Berlin Conference, attended by representatives of Austria-Hungary, Belgium, Britain, Denmark, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal, Prussia, Spain and Sweden-Norway, opened up all of Africa, especially the Congo River basin and Great Lakes region, to the most brutal and cynical forms of rapine and plunder.

It was also the prototype of joint, collective Western European military and economic onslaughts against virtually defenseless nations, one not long afterward replicated in China in 1900 when military forces from Austria-Hungary, Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Russia and the United States invaded to suppress the Boxer Rebellion and protect Western economic interests.

To demonstrate to what degree the past is now the present, in a jointly written article in The Times of London last June George Robertson and Paddy Ashdown, about both of whom more later, asserted that "Multilateral co-operation at European level must...involve greater defence co-operation if it is to be taken seriously. The drive to create EU battle groups should be accelerated, made fully compatible with Nato response forces and should form the basis of an emerging European counter-insurgency capacity capable of operating in failed states and post-conflict environments." (The Times, June 12, 2008)

The feature, really a military manifesto and call to action for Western elites, also included the observation that "This will be vital if we are called upon...to extend public authority into some of the ungoverned spaces that globalisation is helping to generate."

And the piece culminated in this analysis – blunt, revealing and hubristic alike:

"For the first time in more than 200 years we are moving into a world not wholly dominated by the West. If we want to influence this environment rather than be held to ransom by it, and if we want to take hold of some of the worrying features of globalisation, then real,

practical multilateralism is a strategic necessity....”

Whether or not the desire of major Western powers and their governing class to hold onto, reclaim and expand global dominance can be seen by anyone else in the world as a necessity, the plan is decidedly strategic.

Unlike the maunderings of obscure academics redesigning the world and its national divisions in the safety of their own minds and plush chairs in university libraries, the pronouncement in *The Times* appeared there because its authors are anything but abstract theoreticians, historians or political philosophers.

They are major architects and ruthless implementers of the order they advocate, both tested in the post-Cold War or as they themselves may portray it post-modern laboratory that was the Balkans in the 1990s.

Lord George Robertson, former British Defense Secretary and still life-time peer and Baron of Port Ellen, was Secretary General of NATO from 1999-2004 succeeding Javier Solana, who has since gone on to become the High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy and the Secretary General of both the Council of the European Union and the Western European Union. In effect, the European Union’s collective foreign minister.

Paddy Ashdown was international High Representative for Bosnia and Herzegovina from September 2002 to May 2006, ruling with a brazen arbitrariness, highhandedness and ferocity that earned him the informal title of a former age, viceroy, one he arguably came by legitimately both because his father had been an officer in the British colonial service in India and because Ashdown’s mission and style were not only evocative of the past colonial era but were also emblematic of its current revival.

Nearly four years ago the International Commission on the Balkans, founded by among other institutions the German Marshall Fund of the United States, “issued a scathing critique of EU and UN policies in the Balkans.

“The commission asserts that democracy has been stifled in Bosnia ‘by the coercive authority’ of Paddy Ashdown, the EU’s high representative.

“The international representatives, the commission says, ‘dabble in social engineering but are not held accountable when their policies go wrong. If Europe’s neocolonial rule becomes further entrenched, it will encourage economic discontent....’”(International Herald Tribune, April 29, 2005)

As though to reward him for the above, a year ago Ashdown was being touted as a successor to his father’s former bosses on the Indian subcontinent, to wit what the press at the time referred to as “super envoy” to Afghanistan, and which one British newspaper described in these rhapsodic words:

“The proposed role would see Lord Ashdown being charged with uniting the efforts of both Nato and the UN in Afghanistan. Nato officials are understood to support his candidacy for a job with exceptional power.”(The Telegraph, December 6, 2007)

The Afghan government was less enthusiastic than Ashdown’s clique in the Western press and the position was not given him, thereby demonstrating the ‘pre-modern’ make-up and

temperament of the Afghan people, the adjective to be explained later.

What Ashdown epitomized to the Afghans, whether or not their government was aware of the antecedents, was the 'post-modern' position of former British diplomat and Cardinal Richelieu to Tony Blair's Louis XVIII in matters of foreign affairs, Robert Cooper.

The grey eminence in question is the author of two books, *The Post-Modern State and the World Order* (2000) and *The Breaking of Nations: Order and Chaos in the Twenty-First Century* (2003), and contributed a version of the first to the collection *Re-Ordering the World: The Long-Term Implications of September 11* (2002).

Cooper has been characterized as the father of the "new liberal imperialism" and was Tony Blair's Special Representative in Afghanistan after the invasion of 2001 for a brief period.

Like Robertson and Ashdown, he played a role in the enforcement as well the elaboration of rationalizations of imperial strategies and policies.

His first book, *The Post-Modern State and the World Order*, trifurcated the world's nations into pre-modern, modern and post-modern states; in no essential manner different in substance if superficially in style from those of his colonialist forebears in dividing the peoples of the world into civilized and uncivilized nations and cultures.

Variations of this worldview have resurfaced throughout the West after the end of the Cold War, and the new international order which followed permitted the major Western powers to dispense with halfhearted vows to respect the newly freed majority of humanity, often with genuine cultures far older and more venerable than those of their past colonial masters and the latter's North American allies.

After Ashdown was refused the opportunity to continue the family tradition in Afghanistan, he went to work as Javier Solana's right-hand man as Director-General for External and Politico-Military Affairs at the General Secretariat of the Council of the European Union, a position he holds today.

Cooper is also considered to have been instrumental in the creation of the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP), originally introduced as the European Security and Defence Identity at the NATO foreign ministers meeting in Berlin in 1996 where it was agreed that the Western European Union (WEU) would oversee its creation within NATO structures.

The ESDP is now effectively run by the High Representative of the Common Foreign and Security Policy of the European Union, Javier Solana, whose chief lieutenant Cooper is. The ESDP was first tested on the ground in Macedonia in 2003 when it took over for NATO and has remained the EU's main defense and military arm.

Macedonia, the second victim of NATO's 1999 war against Yugoslavia, was the prototype for the EU supplanting NATO occupation and interdiction forces, with the former's EUFOR Concordia succeeding the latter's Operation Allied Harmony.

In 2004 NATO again handed over a protectorate, Bosnia, under its Stabilisation Force (SFOR) to the EU and its EUFOR Althea operation.

In 2008 NATO started transitioning its Kosovo Force (KFOR) command, alone authorized

under UN Resolution 1244, to the European Union's Rule of Law Mission (EULEX), drawing harsh condemnation from Serbia and Russia.

In November of last year NATO turned over the far-reaching naval interdiction EUNAVFOR Operation Atalanta in the Gulf of Aden and the Horn of Africa to the EU, which was described as "something entirely new for the EU because it is taking place far from Europe itself....Operation Atalanta is an ambitious project. The area of sea to be policed is enormous...."(Radio Netherlands, November 21, 2008)

The joint EU-NATO "civilizing mission" to "ungoverned spaces" in the pre-modern and modern world is constantly expanding.

Earlier this month Giampaolo Di Paola, Chairman of NATO's Military Committee, enlarged on the triadic EU-NATO-US worldwide mission by heralding the "need for a new form of world governance in which NATO, the EU, and other major international organisations have a part to play." (ADN Kronos International [Italy], February 13, 2009)

What sort of world governance is meant and who the intended and self-appointed guardians of it are is worth an examination in some depth.

Officials in Brussels and Washington routinely invoke the term international community when it suits their purposes - and just as regularly ignore the wishes of the true community of nations when it doesn't.

The combined population of all 27 EU member states is under 500,000,000, less than a twelfth of the human race.

If the numbers from NATO states that aren't in the EU - the US whose 300,000,000 occupants match 40% of the EU number, Canada, Norway and Iceland - are added, the total is still barely over 800,000,000, less than one-seventh of humanity.

The main EU and European NATO states are the former colonial powers - Britain, France, Spain, Portugal, the Netherlands and Denmark and the second, 'place in the sun' contingent of Belgium, Italy and Germany.

Starting with trade missions that soon became monopolies, shortly afterward including military outposts and eventually complete economic, political and military subjugation, the major Western powers carved out broad expanses of territory in Asia, Africa, North and Central and South America and all of Oceania as their respective domains and spheres of influence.

Many NATO and EU states still retain the vestiges of that scramble for the world, especially overseas and other non-contiguous, mainly island, possessions originally seized from indigeneous inhabitants.

Britain, France, the Netherlands, Spain, Portugal, Denmark and the United States are in that category.

These are the states that forbid others, even in the European context, the right to exercise influence in territories that were an integral part of their country for several centuries, such as Serbia with Kosovo and Russia with Ukraine.

The main Western nations were also the perpetrators of the African slave trade, the largest forcible migration of people in human history with estimates of those transported across the Atlantic Ocean ranging from 10-30 million from the 16th to the 19th centuries.

Those involved included, on one or the other sides of the ocean, often on both, Britain, France, Spain, Portugal, the Netherlands, Denmark and later the United States.

One of the unspoken foundations of the trans-Atlantic community.

Outdated and discredited terms and concepts like the White Man's Burden, Manifest Destiny, a place in the sun, Lebensraum and empires upon which the sun never sets have been abandoned, but the underlying worldview and geopolitical objectives that motivated them have not and instead have been repackaged under new brand names over the past generation.

Western military forces have returned to nations that thought themselves forever rid of the them; for example, British troops are back in Afghanistan, Iraq and Sierra Leone; French ones in Haiti, returning on the bicentennial of its independence from France, and Cote d'Ivoire; American armed forces are back in the Philippines.

Not just a sum total of individual actions by allied Western powers, what has emerged is a systematic and international nexus of planned and coordinated deployments with precise and extensive geostrategic goals.

Notwithstanding the much-publicized difference of opinion concerning the 2003 invasion of Iraq, all 26 NATO states have military personnel assigned to Iraq and neighboring Kuwait under NATO Training Mission - Iraq.

Less than two years after the invasion the Alliance announced that "NATO's goal is to train 1,000 middle- and high-ranking security officers this year" and "the European Union has agreed to train some 700 Iraqi judges, prosecutors and prison guards." (San Francisco Chronicle, March 21, 2005)

Later in 2005 then US ambassador to NATO Victoria Nuland, former security adviser to now past vice-president Dick Cheney, asserted "We need once and for all to break down the rivalries — some real, some imagined — between the EU and NATO."

Her comments were characterized by a military website as advocating that "NATO and the European Union (EU) must establish a much deeper dialogue than in the past to address the wide range of military, political, equipment and funding issues that face the trans-Atlantic security community..."(Defense News, September 23, 2005)

The US's first ambassador to Afghanistan after the invasion of 2001, James Dobbins, who at the time was director of the International Security and Defense Policy Center at the Rand Corporation, reflected a similar stance in urging that "It is time, therefore, to stop asking what NATO can do for the EU, and begin asking what the EU can do for NATO. And Afghanistan is the place to start. This might best be done in a triangular dialogue between NATO, the EU and the United States."(International Herald Tribune, September 30, 2005)

To further demonstrate that the EU-NATO-US triangle affects more than just developments on the European continent, a month after Dobbins' comments Julianne Smith, the deputy director for international security programs of the US think tank the Center for Strategic and

International Studies, at a conference held by the CSIS, rued the fact that:

““Yes, they confer on the Balkans, but that is not enough. NATO and the EU should be talking about nonproliferation, the Caucasus, Ukraine, Moldova — the whole package.” (Defense News, October 14, 2005)

Klaus Naumann, former head of NATO’s Military Committee, spoke at the same conference and revealed more than he possibly intended to in bemoaning that “Europe is again being haunted by the ghosts of sovereignty,” meaning that residual love of one’s land and people is an impediment to the further consolidation of NATO’s and the EU’s unchallenged domination in Europe and beyond.(Ibid)

The following month the EU’s Javier Solana, former NATO Secretary General, said that the EU’s expanding military buildup and plans for global deployments were “not about replacing NATO” and instead “by becoming a stronger and more capable international actor, we will be a better partner for the United States,” citing the Balkans as the original testing ground for this triumvirate, “Through our concerted efforts, with the United States and NATO....”(Defense News, November 10, 2005)

The next month the aforementioned Klaus Naumann wrote a column which contained the demand that “The EU should...take steps to improve its ability to conduct operations. New EU Battlegroups should be strengthened through regular training and certification, preferably using NATO standards....” (Daily Times [Pakistan], December 1, 2005)

The piece also urged that “The two bodies must expand their strategic dialogue beyond their current focus on the Balkans and Afghanistan” and included the same recommendation made by Julianne Smith earlier that the EU and NATO must jointly escalate their intrusion into other areas including “regions such as Ukraine or Moldova.”(Ibid)

The integration of EU and NATO military and foreign policy continued apace for years and reached its crescendo at the NATO Summit in Bucharest, Romania in April of last year.

During the summit “US Permanent Representative to NATO Victoria Nuland asserted that the key to strengthening NATO was to build a stronger European Union.”(Der Spiegel, April 1, 2008)

A newspaper from the host country reported that “A high American official has recently stressed that, far from being considered a threat to NATO, the consolidated European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) is an immediate necessity....”(Nine O’Clock News, March 31, 2008]

The EU’s presidency was held by France last year and French President Nicholas Sarkozy was the prime mover in pushing for the EU-NATO-US axis at the Bucharest summit.

Though he wasn’t its only proponent:

“US President George W. Bush backed Thursday the idea that Europe should build up its own defence capability, French President Nicolas Sarkozy said, describing it as a ‘historic turning point.’

“Bush’s support for a ‘Europe of defence, as Sarkozy described the intervention, was voiced at a summit of NATO leaders in Bucharest....”(Deutsche Presse-Agentur, April 3, 2008)

Bush's speech at the summit reiterated that "NATO is no longer a static alliance....It is now an expeditionary alliance that is sending its forces across the world...." (USA Today, April 1, 2008)

His address also contained the by now routine denunciation of the post-World War II [1945-1991] order in Europe with "I said that Europe must overturn the bitter legacy of Yalta, and remove the false boundaries that had divided the continent for too long."(Ibid)

A Romanian news source reported of EU-US relations during the summit that "[T]he quality of Transatlantic cooperation is currently going through a profound transformation, adapting to the new post-Cold War conditions and preparing for a new type of global partnership."(Nine O'Clock News, April 3, 2008)

The same source a day earlier quoted former Romanian foreign secretary Mircea Geoana as claiming that "What this Summit is expected to bring about is....a new alliance of the 21st Century." (Nine O'Clock News, April 2, 2008)

To week after the summit concluded Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov in warning that NATO was bent on usurping the role and functions of the United Nations said, "This is....an attempt to form some new global union with a Western core wishing to claim all but UN functions." (Interfax, April 17, 2008)

With France as the main go-between, as holding the presidency of the EU and having announced its intention to rejoin NATO's military command, the drive for EU-NATO-US military symbiosis accelerated throughout last year.

In a dispatch with the headline "France trumpets EU defences, key plank for NATO future," French Defence Minister Herve Morin boasted of having "boosted the European Union's military capacities, a key condition for France to fully reintegrate into NATO."(Agence France-Presse, November 10, 2008)

Morin provided an idea of the rate of EU military buildup at a meeting of European defense ministers (most wearing both EU and NATO caps) in stating, "I can say, that as of November 10... we have already made substantial and considerable progress, probably as much as we have seen in 10 years."
(Ibid)

At the same time Jean-Francois Bureau, NATO's assistant secretary-general for public diplomacy, said that "Twenty-one of 27 EU nations are also members of NATO, and both organizations 'are active together in the same theaters of conflict.'

"From a NATO perspective, there is a huge need for even more cooperation' with the EU on military matters."(United Press International, November 12, 2008)

The same news report mentioned that, as in Iraq, the EU is training security personnel in Afghanistan.

In December of last year a draft declaration by the European Council on the enhancement of European Security and Defence Policy [ESDP] reaffirmed the goal of "strengthening the strategic partnership between the EU and Nato...."(Irish Times, December 11, 2008)

The above source added "EU leaders are also set to endorse a declaration on the

enhancement of capabilities of European Security and Defence Policy [ESDP], which will set new goals for the EU to be able to deploy 60,000 soldiers within 60 days and thousands of civilian personnel on at least a dozen simultaneous missions.”(Ibid)

Another account of EU plans for a 60,000-troop rapid reaction force reports that EU leaders issued a joint statement in which they “acknowledged the need to strengthen and optimize Europe’s defence capabilities and vowed to work more closely with NATO.”(Deutsche Presse-Agentur, December 12, 2008)

In another report from the same day French President Nicholas Sarkozy is paraphrased as affirming “the US no longer saw the ESDP as an aggressive policy against NATO, with both outgoing President George W. Bush and incoming President Barack Obama now supporting the EU policy.”

And is quoted as saying “It’s not a choice between the US and the ESDP. The two go together.” (EUobserver, December 12, 2008)

On December 9 British Foreign Secretary David Miliband and French Foreign Minister Bernard Kouchner signed their names to a joint opinion piece which included confirmation of the EU’s role in supplementing US and NATO arms and military involvement in the South Caucasus and the interchangeability of NATO and EU roles:

“[T]he EU sent over 200 civilian monitors to Georgia. They arrived within a few weeks of the hostilities....

“There is no such thing as a European army; nor is there a NATO army.

“There are national forces, which are used, according to the needs, for national or multilateral operations, whether in the European framework or the NATO framework.” (United Kingdom Foreign and Commonwealth Office, December 9, 2008)

Leading up to the April 3-4 60th Anniversary NATO summit in Strasbourg and Kehl, earlier this month the heads of state of the two host countries, French President Nicholas Sarkozy and German Chancellor Angela Merkel, wrote a joint commentary for Le Monde calling for greater EU-NATO cooperation and integration.

At the annual Munich Security Conference on February 7 British Foreign Secretary David Miliband while also advocating tighter integration of EU and NATO policies and actions invoked NATO’s mutual defense (war) clause:

“NATO provides a commitment to collective defence. The Article 5 Guarantee and the integrated military structures reassure each and every one of our Allies that their borders are inviolable.”(United Kingdom Foreign & Commonwealth Office, February 7, 2009)

US Vice-President Joe Biden’s speech at the conference was interpreted by a major German source as follows:

“The Americans will be scrupulously careful that the confrontation with Tehran does not develop into a one-on-one battle between the US and Iran. Biden’s message from Munich is the following: Every NATO country and every member of the European Union is now involved, as of today. This is the price for the new trans-Atlantic openness and cooperation.”(Der Spiegel, February 9, 2009)

That is, all NATO states are obligated to the US under Article 5 provisions - the Article was first invoked and acted upon after September 9, 2001 - and the EU is now so inextricably enmeshed with NATO that it too will continue to follow not only NATO but individual US policies and actions.

With the New Year the Czech Republic assumed the presidency of the EU.

It a news report called "Vondra calls for EU, NATO unity on Russia, missiles, gas," Czech Deputy Premier Alexandr Vondra marshalled support for the US missile shield radar site in his nation by stating "Europeans and Americans need to enjoy the same level of protection ... therefore it is important to develop the missile-defence system."(Deutsche Presse-Agentur, February 7, 2009)

It's not difficult to trace where matters are proceeding; the EU is becoming integrated with NATO to the point of merging its military, security and foreign affairs policies and programs with the Alliance, and as the US is not only a member, but the central foundation, of NATO, then the EU is also inescapably linked with and in effect subordinated to Washington.

Three days ago the US House majority leader Nancy Pelosi was in Italy where she appealed to not only her host but all of Europe regarding the Afghan War in claiming that "We have to make a judgement....And I mean we, Italy, the European Union, the United States, NATO - all of us - as to what is in our national security interests...."(Agence France-Presse, February 16, 2009)

Two days later Italy announced that it would deploy more troops to Afghanistan.

Western powers assembled under the banner of the NATO star reserve - arrogate to themselves - the exclusive prerogative of intervening in the regional and internal affairs of nations anywhere in the world and the sole right to employ military force beyond their borders.

Although paying lip service to the United Nations when it can be used against a targeted nation or to justify a war before or after the fact, Western leaders see no role for organizations like the 114-state Non-Aligned Movement, the 53-nation African Union, the 33 member Organization of American States, the 23 member Arab League, the 57-nation Organization of the Islamic Conference, the post-Soviet Commonwealth of Independent States and Collective Security Treaty Organization, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization or the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

Not in addressing global issues or even in playing a leading role in regional and local matters that impact the respective groups and their constituent member states directly.

One could be pardoned for reworking the NATO acronym as Nordic Aryan Teutonic Order.

Three days ago in a session of the European Parliament pressure was being exerted for the EU to integrate further with NATO.

Ari Vatanen, a member representing France, was among those commissioned for this purpose and said, inter alia, that the EU "can only fully realise its potential by developing a strong transatlantic tie and a complementary relationship with NATO."

To which German Member of the European Parliament Tobias Pfluger responded, "Every

effort to strengthen NATO via a closer cooperation with the European Union increases the potential for international conflicts. It will also lead to a further militarization of the EU's foreign policy and accelerate the tendency to use military force in order to 'solve' conflicts."(European Parliament, February 17, 2009)

The positions of Vatanen and Pfluger are not only opposing but exclusive, both in the sense that neither can accommodate the other and that they are the sole alternatives. This is no middle ground or third choice.

Europe, and the world as a whole, can either acquiesce in its domination by an increasingly expansionist and aggressive international military bloc - the first in history - or it can actively organize to dismantle it.

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