

# Star Wars: Towards a Global 21st Century US-NATO “Strategic Defense Initiative”

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*Later this month the leaders of 28 NATO nations will celebrate an agreement on the formation of a missile shield to cover the entire European continent, in so many words ostensibly to protect Luxembourg and Iceland from Iranian and North Korean missiles. What in fact they will be ratifying is the dangerous escalation of a global, 21st century Strategic Defense Initiative. Star Wars.*

*In little more than a week the North Atlantic Treaty Organization will convene a two-day summit in Lisbon, Portugal with the heads of state and government (presidents and prime ministers) of its 28 member states.*

At the summit the world's only military bloc will endorse its new Strategic Concept, the first since 1999 and as such the first for the 21st century, a doctrine which will formalize NATO's role as an international military-security-political force and a rival to the United Nations in that regard.

The main items on NATO's Lisbon agenda will be the war in Afghanistan, the Alliance's first armed conflict outside Europe and the first ground combat operations in its history; the launching of a continent-wide interceptor missile system subsumed under U.S. global missile shield auspices; an analogous cyber warfare operation building upon initiatives like NATO's cyber defense center in Estonia and subordinated to the Pentagon's new Cyber Command; the retention of hundreds of American nuclear bombs on air bases in five European nations; a multiplication of new roles and missions from patrolling strategic sea lanes with warships to guarding NATO member states' energy interests in any - in every - part of the world.

As an illustration of the ever-broadening scope of the U.S.-dominated military alliance, in regard to the Afghan war in particular, where there are currently 140,000 troops from the U.S. and almost 50 other nations assigned to NATO's International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), leaders of various NATO partnership nations will also attend the Lisbon summit.

They could include participants from NATO's Partnership for Peace program in Europe and Asia: Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia, Finland, Georgia, Ireland, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Macedonia, Malta, Moldova, Montenegro, Serbia, Sweden, Switzerland, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan.

The Mediterranean Dialogue in Africa and the Middle East: Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia.

The Istanbul Cooperation Initiative in the Persian Gulf: Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

Contact Country allies in East Asia and the South Pacific: Australia, Japan, New Zealand and South Korea.

The NATO-Russia Council: President Dmitry Medvedev will be the first Russian head of state to attend a NATO summit.

The military commanders' Tripartite Commission of NATO, Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Official Troop Contributing Nations (TNC) for NATO's ISAF not in any of the above categories: Malaysia, Mongolia, Singapore and Tonga. Colombia has also pledged troops for ISAF and nations like Bangladesh are being pressured to do the same.

The 28 NATO member states and the partners listed above total 75 nations. Almost 40 percent of the 192 members of the United Nations. This is 21st century NATO, history's first global military alliance, one which has military forces - troops, equipment, warplanes and warships - deployed outside the territory of its member states in three continents: In Southeastern Europe, Central and South Asia, and Northeast Africa. Dozens if not scores of African nations are developing relations with NATO in tandem with the new U.S. Africa Command, which was created by U.S. European Command whose top military commander is also that of NATO in Europe.

On the eve of last year's NATO summit in Strasbourg, France and Kehl, Germany, French President Nicolas Sarkozy announced that he was bringing his country back into NATO's military command structure from which his predecessor Charles de Gaulle had withdrawn it in 1966.

France's full reintegration is emblematic of NATO's absorption of virtually all European states as full members and as candidates under progressively more advanced partnership agreements: The Partnership for Peace, Individual Partnership Action Plans, Membership Action Plans and nation-specific Annual National Programs.

Of the 44 European nations that are members of the United Nations, excluding microstates and including those in the South Caucasus, only one - Cyprus - is not a NATO member or partner, and the Cypriot government is under pressure from conservative opposition parties to join the Partnership for Peace. Only six of those 44 nations - Belarus, Cyprus, Malta, Moldova, Russia and Serbia - have not supplied NATO troops for the ISAF mission in Afghanistan.

When France rejoined NATO's integrated military command it was awarded two top military posts: Lieutenant General Philippe Stoltz was appointed commander of Allied Joint Force Command Lisbon, one of NATO's three operational commands, and Air Force General Stéphane Abrial became chief of Allied Command Transformation (ACT) in Norfolk, Virginia, one of NATO's two strategic commands, the other being Allied Command Operations at Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe in Belgium. Abrial is the first non-American to command ACT in the seven years of its existence.

At the three-day Halifax International Security Forum in Nova Scotia, Canada from November 5-7 General Abrial reiterated the NATO position on retaining American nuclear arms in Europe in language identical to recent comments by NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen and U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton. The ACT commander stated, "As long as the world is nuclear, the (NATO) alliance has to keep nuclear weapons."

[1] Last month “Clinton came out against proposals to remove the alliance’s remaining 200 tactical nuclear weapons from Europe, saying that NATO must remain a nuclear alliance as long as nuclear weapons exist.” [2] At practically the same time Rasmussen said that “The anti-missile defence system is a complement to nuclear deterrence, and not a substitute.” [3]

Last month German Chancellor Angela Merkel, whose nation had been presented as an advocate of removing U.S. nuclear warheads from Europe, including those in her own country, endorsed their retention in time for next month’s NATO summit, stating: “As long as there are nuclear weapons in the world, we need to have these capabilities, as NATO says.” [4]

On November 4 Rasmussen met with British Prime Minister David Cameron in London two days after a groundbreaking Anglo-French pact was signed “to create a joint military force and share nuclear testing facilities and an aircraft carrier.” [5]

No unimportant development, as “Britain and France together account for 50 percent of Europe’s operational military capability, 45 percent of its defense spending, and 70 percent of the research and development crucial to fight the wars of the future.” [6]

In an editorial published before the treaty was signed, British Defence Secretary Liam Fox wrote, “There are many reasons why this cooperation makes sense. We are Europe’s only two nuclear powers.”

In fact there is another nation in Europe with nuclear weapons, the only one that is not a member of NATO, the one against whom the nuclear weapons-missile shield dyad is aimed: Russia.

Fox continued by boasting that Britain and France “are the two biggest defence spenders in Europe and are the only two countries in Europe with real, large scale expeditionary military capability.”

“Since President Sarkozy came into office we have seen, with renewed vigour, an attempt to bring Europe and America closer together in partnership and cooperation, and real determination to bring France deeper into NATO where many of us believe she truly belongs....The French aircraft carrier Charles de Gaulle, including a British liaison officer already on-board, will soon be arriving in the Indian Ocean to provide greater air power for NATO in Afghanistan.” [7]

In Lisbon on November 19 and 20 NATO will maintain the position on U.S. nuclear weapons stationed at NATO air bases in Belgium, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands and Turkey that was confirmed in its last Strategic Concept adopted eleven years ago: “The supreme guarantee of the security of the Allies is provided by the strategic nuclear forces of the Alliance, particularly those of the United States; the independent nuclear forces of the United Kingdom and France, which have a deterrent role of their own, contribute to the overall deterrence and security of the Allies.”

There are between 200 and 350 U.S. nuclear gravity bombs in the five nations mentioned above, and as part of what is alternately called burden sharing and nuclear sharing they are, while technically owned by the U.S., assigned to the host countries to deliver them with their own bombers. That arrangement is an egregious violation of the Treaty on the Non-

Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty) which states: “Each nuclear-weapon State Party to the Treaty undertakes not to transfer to any recipient whatsoever nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices or control over such weapons or explosive devices directly, or indirectly....” [8]

In addition to the American nuclear weapons stored at NATO bases – in the case of Turkey in a country bordering Iran and Syria and only separated from Russia by either Georgia or Azerbaijan – France possesses an estimated 300 nuclear warheads and Britain 225. There may be as many as 900 nuclear weapons in Europe under the control of NATO powers.

The Lisbon summit will further commit to NATO training Afghan military and security forces to allegedly assume control of the war in their country in the next four or five years, even as U.S. and NATO troop strength is at a record high and yet more troops are arriving, but the most significant decision to be formalized in Portugal is that of subordinating all of Europe to a U.S. global interceptor missile system.

This May the Pentagon secured the first long-term deployment of anti-ballistic missiles in Europe, a Patriot Advanced Capability-3 battery in Morąg, Poland, 35 miles from Russian territory. Romania and Bulgaria agreed in February to allow the U.S. to base missile shield components on their soil, a land-based adaptation of Standard Missile-3 (SM-3) interceptors in Romania complemented by a missile radar site in Bulgaria. Poland has also agreed to host SM-3s, which are anti-satellite as well as anti-ballistic missiles. [9]

U.S. Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security Affairs Ellen Tauscher is promoting a missile shield radar site in the Czech Republic and NATO chief Rasmussen, when asked on November 1 about incorporating a radar facility in the Ukrainian town of Mukachevo into NATO’s missile system, affirmed: “I think this invitation should be open to our Euro-Atlantic partners, so it is also an invitation to Ukraine if Ukraine so wishes.” [10]

Despite the drumbeat of panic-mongering concerning non-existent threats to Europe – all of Europe, even as far west as the British Isles – emanating from the Persian Gulf and the Korean Peninsula, U.S. and NATO interceptor missile designs are, except for minor subsidiary facilities in Britain, Norway and Greenland, focused on Eastern Europe. From the Baltic Sea to the Black Sea, along Russia’s western flank.

But the preponderance of the latest discussions about, and controversy over, NATO cooperating with the European – and more than just European – component of U.S. worldwide interceptor missile plans affects Turkey.

Commentaries by sources within the nation and in neighboring countries have warned that the deployment of interceptor missile system elements in Turkey will have numerous negative, even dangerous, consequences.

The pressure brought to bear by the U.S. and NATO on Ankara, inevitably exerted in relation to NATO obligations, is designed to accomplish several geopolitical objectives that have nothing to do with alleged missile threats emanating from Iran, Syria or – even more absurdly – North Korea.

Turkey is being pressed to resume the role it played in the second half of the past century as the easternmost and southernmost outpost of NATO. As the West’s military spearhead

against the Soviet Union, later Russia, to the north and the Middle East to the south and east, stationing U.S. and NATO warplanes and nuclear bombs for potential use in those three directions.

Turkey has in recent years improved state-to-state relations and even security ties with Iran, Russia and Syria. Joining Washington's and Brussels' missile shield program would endanger - is intended to sabotage - those emerging partnerships.

In addition to the proposed inauguration of interceptor missile sites in Romania and Bulgaria, Turkey's neighbors on the Black Sea, two years ago the Pentagon opened an interceptor missile Forward-Based X-Band Radar base in Israel, accompanied by the first deployment of foreign troops - approximately 100 U.S. military personnel - in the nation's history. [11]

Washington is also planning to expand its sale of anti-ballistic missiles to American and NATO partners in the Persian Gulf - Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates - as part of unprecedented weapons packages worth \$123 billion. Those five states have been equipped with or will receive American anti-ballistic missiles ranging from short-range Patriot Advanced Capability-3 to medium-range Standard Missile-3 to medium- and intermediate-range Terminal High Altitude Area Defense missiles. [12]

The U.S. has also deployed ship-based SM-3s in the eastern Mediterranean Sea and the Persian Gulf and has plans to obtain and upgrade land-based facilities in the South Caucasus. [13]

Turkey is a key link in consolidating a potential first-strike missile interception system [14] from the Baltic Sea to the Caspian Sea, from the Red Sea to the Persian Gulf.

With complementary deployments in the east - Japan, South Korea, Australia, Taiwan and Alaska, both on the mainland and the Aleutian Islands - and in the Arctic Ocean, which the National Security Presidential Directive 66 of January 9, 2009 identified as an area targeted for missile defense purposes [15], as well as airborne laser and space-based missile shield elements, the U.S. plans to construct an impenetrable missile dome, coordinated with cyber warfare and Prompt Global Strike capabilities, that would make it invulnerable to retaliatory attacks. And to encircle the heart of Eurasia, not only North Korea but Russia, Iran and China, with a stratified system of interceptor missiles.

A recent commentary in the Russian press stated: "Should Turkey join the US and NATO missile defense plans, few will harbor doubts about Washington building a large-scale, far-reaching multi-echelon missile defense system. Poland, the Czech Republic, Bulgaria and Romania have already voiced readiness to become part of it. Undoubtedly, a powerful 'anti-missile umbrella' of this kind is unwarranted for repulsing an imaginary threat from Iran. As it happens, Iran has not come into possession of any ballistic missiles yet.

"[M]any military and political experts in Russia have come to the conclusion that by building such a system the United States seeks to offset the missile potential of Russia by deploying missile defense bases along the entire length of Russian territory. Washington is aiming for a global missile defense shield, elements of which are already being built in the Far East, in the Indian Ocean and in the northern seas." [16]

Former Joint Chief of Staff of the Russian Armed Forces Leonid Ivashov recently warned that

the further expansion of the U.S. missile shield program in conjunction with NATO has as its aim to “neutralize Russia’s nuclear missile potential.”

“We do not have other powers, except for the nuclear missile potential, to protect even a single part of our territories.” [17]

## Notes

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