



NATO's Unlimited Reach Makes it a Global Threat

From the outset, since the demise of the Soviet Union and the dismantling of the Warsaw Pact, NATO became a meandering, rudderless entity - but only for a while. The US agonized with what to do with it after the fall of the Berlin Wall and the de facto end of the Cold War.

But NATO was too good a useful alliance to throw away just like that. It's not every day you get powerful nations to agree to fund your military R&D (Research and Development) to the tune of 2% of their GDP's while you promise them protection from would-be enemies.

The US retained NATO to keep Europe under its continued dominance even after the end of the Cold War - especially in terms of military supremacy. Europe has enjoyed relative peace since the end of WW2 that is why the current Ukrainian conflict has greatly alarmed them. However, US long-term global strategy does not align with Europe's borrowed peace hence the relentless expansion of NATO to the chagrin of Russian and the detriment of Europe's stability.

When Macron described NATO in November 2019 as clinically dead, and demanded that Europe establishes a force of its own, this worried America. This only convinced America to insist on strengthening NATO. The Ukraine war was a golden opportunity for it to prevent Europe from emerging from under its control, domination and hegemony. And this worked to deal a direct blow to European illusions of military self-reliance and independence, led by France, to escape the US. The inclusion of Finland and Sweden into NATO at the Lithuania summit only served to diminish Europe's dream! America must be ecstatic as it achieved two vital objectives; quashing Europe's escape attempts and extending NATO's eastward reach.

As for Ukraine...

When Biden stated "NATO leaders agreed that Ukraine would be a member after the war" (BBC, 12/7/2023), this clearly signaled America's refusal to let Ukraine into the alliance. It was therefore, not surprising this stance was in the final communiqué of the summit. NATO leaders did not come to extend an invitation to Kiev or announce a timetable for its accession, which it seeks, but they canceled a requirement to fulfill the so-called Membership Action Plan (MAP), which effectively removes an obstacle that was in Ukraine's way to join it. The outburst on twitter by Zelenskyy was, to say the least, pathetic, but he is learning a hard lesson. He's learning what the price of Western 'support' entails - humiliation and servitude at the expense of your people's blood! After Ukraine was egged on by the US to call for NATO membership now it has been denied — when it is too late because it set the rabid Russian bear upon it!

As for China...

The War in Ukraine clearly gave NATO a new lease on life. In fact, it never had it better. Quite audaciously, the US is contemplating extending NATO's reach to threaten China as if NATO's remit knows no bounds! The summit's communiqué mentions China in these articles; 6, 23, 24, 25 and 55.

"The People's Republic of China's (PRC) stated ambitions and coercive policies challenge our interests, security and values."

"The PRC employs a broad range of political, economic, and military tools to increase its global footprint and project power, while remaining opaque about its strategy, intentions and military build-up."

"We are boosting our shared awareness, enhancing our resilience and preparedness, and protecting against the PRC's coercive tactics and efforts to divide the Alliance. We will stand up for our shared values and the rules-based international order, including freedom of navigation."...and so on.

China didn't waste time in denouncing this move (China lashes back at NATO criticism, warns it will protect its rights. (Reuters) <https://www.reuters.com/world/china-opposes-natos-move-into-asia-pacific-region-warns-resolute-response-2023-07-12/>)

Macron sensed this in June and opposed it too. When NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg said NATO is considering opening a liaison office in Japan, Macron fired back saying: "The Indo-Pacific is not the North Atlantic, so we must not give the impression that NATO is somehow building legitimacy and a geographically established presence in other areas." Of course France has its reasons for this apparent Chinese support.

The inclusion of Japan, Australia and New Zealand and South Korea as observers at NATO

meetings does little to assuage China's concerns. This may be part of why Blinken's July visit was a failure since China refused to accept opening communication channels between their two militaries. So, America is now working to exert increased pressures on China, and it is using NATO to do this.

The Rest of the World...

The summit was awash with sweeping global policy statements from the Middle East, "our old partners in the Mediterranean Dialogue", to Africa and the AU. But this only means the US is trying to exert hegemonic control via NATO over these regions through and under the guise of 'deepening communication and cooperation' in the very regions where NATO members like the US, Britain and France are battling each other for regional influence (as seen in the string of West African coups recently).

New Arms Race...

The extension of NATO into the Asia-Pacific region to face off with an increasing belligerent China will only lead to another arms race similar or even more alarming than the Cold War one. The Vilnius communiqué stated in article 44. that "The strategic nuclear forces of the Alliance, particularly those of the United States, are the supreme guarantee of the security of the Alliance." Article 45. continued the theme of nuclear deterrence — without explicitly mentioning Russia ("Any use of nuclear weapons against the alliance would radically change the nature of the conflict (in Ukraine).") or China of course.

China is not sitting by idly watching this. China's military build up is a known fact with obvious facets for offensive deployment of force. Suffice to say, in the current case of US-China relations the Cold War is already underway - or 'Cold War 2.0' as egotistically coined by Niall Ferguson.

Conclusion

NATO is positioned to become a global enforcer for US interests, ignoring its stated 'North Atlantic' geographical limits and charter restrictions. Whatever clauses were laid down in forming NATO have been jettisoned in favor of global hegemony. If the US wished, NATO's remit would reach the moon! True enough, space is the next battleground for the powers so this may prove to be more than a sarcastic statement soon ("China Urges 'Peaceful' Space Cooperation as U.S. Grapples with UFO Debate" Newsweek).

This is a lesson for the Muslim Ummah in engaging with Western alliances and blocs. They can always reinterpret the clauses or charters of any alliance or agreement to cover whatever interests they deem necessary at the given time. Agreements always remain flexible.

This can be seen in history; whenever the West entered into agreements it was to create and build in the maximum level of flexibility for future maneuverings that we are witnessing now. This was apparent at all the major gatherings they had like the Treaty of Westphalia (1648), Congress of Aix la Chapelle (1818) in Europe, etc. The same was the case when they came to our lands to colonize them, drawing up treaties and agreements with the chiefs of tribes for trade (in the beginning) that were open to unjust modification. The Royal Niger Company was adept at this.

The idea of NATO as an overpowered ever-extending military bloc is a dangerous issue for the sake and wellbeing of humanity as a whole. It is an alliance of powerful nations, headed by the US, that possess nuclear capabilities and other weapons of mass destruction. The head of this hostile and aggressive bloc, the US, has shown it has no compunction or hesitation in using it to achieve its global self-interests to the detriment of the people in Ukraine. Who will be next? The world should not stand around to wait to find out. The solution to this is to fight and undermine the very idea of aggressive blocs like this by creating a global public opinion against. Only the onset of the Islamic Khilafah (Caliphate) State, whose time has come, can achieve this.

﴿وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا رَحْمَةً لِّلْعَالَمِينَ﴾

“And We have not sent you, [O Muḥammad], except as a mercy to the worlds.” [Al-Anbiya: 107]

**Written for the Central Media Office of Hizb ut Tahrir by
Salim Mohammad**