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Section V. Minimum Deterrence and the Assurance of Allies

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Section V

Minimum Deterrence and the Assurance of Allies

Introduction

The deterrence of adversaries and assurance of allies have been important U.S. defense policy goals for decades. These two goals are related, but have distinct differences. The differences can be attributed, in large part, to the fact that the success of deterrence depends on perceptions of and decisions by adversaries, while the success of assurance is dependent on the views of allies. Thus, a U.S. force and deterrence strategy that effectively deters one or more adversaries may not assure all allies.

Most Minimum Deterrence proposals overlook these distinctions and base nuclear force requirements only on the capabilities deemed necessary for deterrence. For these Minimum Deterrence proposals, no unique needs for the nuclear force derive from the policy goal of assuring allies. The National Institute for Public Policy (NIPP) 2013 report, *Minimum Deterrence: Examining the Evidence*, explored briefly the implications for nuclear force requirements for policy goals in addition to those for deterrence.¹ This paper will delve more deeply into the policy goal of assuring allies, identify common Minimum Deterrence assertions regarding assurance, and examine the implications of assurance for the size and composition of the U.S. nuclear force.

Background: Assurance as a U.S. Policy Goal

Through a collection of bilateral and multilateral alliances, both formal and informal, the United States has defense commitments to over 50 countries in Europe, Asia, the Middle East, and Latin America. These alliances were established to protect friends against aggression and serve U.S. interests. They help guard states, regions, resources, routes, and commerce critical to the military security, political freedom, and economic well-being of the United States. They increase U.S. international influence, augment U.S. military and intelligence capabilities, provide U.S. forces with access to overseas bases, and give the United States avenues for influencing the actions of those with which it is aligned. Alliance commitments are not only a matter of

¹ Keith B. Payne and James Schlesinger, *Minimum Deterrence: Examining the Evidence* (Fairfax, VA: National Institute Press, 2013), pp. 8, 45-49. Institute Press, 2013), pp. 8, 45-49.

detering and, if necessary, defeating common foes, but also assuring the allies who are threatened. To be assured, Allies need to have confidence in U.S. pledges of military support against aggression and remain comfortable with the agreed strategies and the means by which adversaries are to be deterred and allies defended.²

At first glance, assurance might seem to be the byproduct of a successful strategy to deter an opponent of both the United States and its allies—if the adversary is deterred, the ally should be assured. In reality, this may not be the case. In 1982, British historian and commentator Michael Howard published his seminal article on the linkage between deterrence and assurance. He observed that deterrence must be done in a way that prevents an opponent “from using military force to solve its political differences” with the United States and its allies, and at the same time “will be credible to [allied] leaders and acceptable—reassuring—to our own peoples.” It must be clear to the opponent that “in any attack...the costs will hugely outweigh the benefits, and to our own people that the benefits of defense will outweigh the costs.”³ Regarding the credibility and acceptability of the U.S. deterrence strategy by allies, Denis Healey, a British Labour politician and defense minister, often observed during the Cold War that “it takes only five per cent credibility of American retaliation to deter the Russians, but ninety-five percent to reassure the Europeans.”⁴ In other words, assuring some allies may be more demanding in certain ways than deterring the enemy. And, just as deterrence strategies need to be tailored to each adversary and consider the adversary’s national history, culture, values, and goals, so must assurance, if it is to be effective, be tailored to individual allies for specific situations.

To make its security commitments credible and acceptable to allies, the United States engages in various actions. These can include:

- establishing long-term relationships of political, economic, and cultural activities that are beneficial to both,
- routine consultations by senior leaders,
- formal military alliances,
- the combination of permanent and temporary deployment of U.S. forces to the region and the territory of the ally,

² Keith Payne, Thomas Scheber, Kurt Guthe, Mark Schneider, *Nuclear Guarantees, Extended Deterrence, and the Assurance of Allies* (Fairfax, VA: National Institute Press, 2009).

³ “Reassurance and Deterrence: Western Defense in the 1980s,” *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 61, No. 2 (Winter 1982/83), p. 322.

⁴ Denis Healey, *The Time of My Life* (London: Michael Joseph, 1989), p. 243.

- integrated military capabilities and joint exercises, and,
- for the most trusted allies of the United States, a commitment of extended deterrence that includes the U.S. nuclear umbrella.⁵

The United States provides nuclear guarantees to deter not only nuclear attacks, but also chemical or biological attacks, as well as conventional assaults sufficient to overwhelm general-purpose forces. As an added advantage, the nuclear umbrella can reduce the incentives for allies to obtain nuclear weapons of their own, an effect that aids nonproliferation efforts. Within the larger set of U.S. security partners, some 30 countries, including NATO members, Japan, South Korea, and Australia, are now covered by U.S. nuclear guarantees.⁶

History of Assurance as a Policy Goal

The U.S. goal of assuring allies has a history of continuity spanning more than six decades.⁷ Often the goal of assurance was implied, but not explicitly identified. For example, the U.S. vital interest in, and military commitment to, the security of Western Europe was formalized in the 1949 North Atlantic Treaty, in which the United States and the other signatories agreed that “an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all” and that “if such an attack occurs, each of them . . . will assist the Party or Parties so attacked by taking forthwith . . . such action as it deems necessary, including the use of armed force.” For European allies devastated by two world wars within a few decades, the treaty not only placed Western Europe clearly inside the U.S. defense perimeter but also led to many the joint activities—consultations, commands, planning, exchanges, deployments, operations—that sustain an alliance and generally strengthen ties among members. Over the years of the Cold War, U.S. presidents, secretaries of state, defense secretaries, and other officials reinforced the formal commitment to NATO through frequent statements of U.S. support, including references to the nuclear guarantee.

⁵ For an overview of various U.S. actions to provide assurance to the Republic of Korea and Japan, see: Keith Payne, Thomas Scheber, Kurt Guthe, *U.S. Extended Deterrence and Assurance for Allies In Northeast Asia* (Fairfax, VA: National Institute Press, 2010).

⁶ Secretary of Defense Task Force on DoD Nuclear Weapons Management, *Phase I Report: The Air Force’s Nuclear Mission* (Washington, D.C.: Department of Defense, September 2008), transmittal letter by James Schlesinger, task force chairman.

⁷ For an excellent summary of the continuity of U.S. nuclear force commitments to key allies, see Kurt Guthe, *Ten Continuities in U.S. Nuclear Weapons Policy, Strategy, Plans, and Forces* (Fairfax, VA: National Institute Press, 2008) pp. 17-21.

The United States began deploying nonstrategic nuclear weapons in Western Europe a few years after NATO was created. Their number peaked at several thousand in the late 1960s and early 1970s. In addition, the United States also explicitly designated part of its ballistic missile submarine force for the support of NATO, underscoring the link between U.S. strategic forces and allied defense.⁸

During the Cold War, the very large and diverse U.S. nuclear force, with thousands of forward-deployed nuclear weapons, appears to have been adequate for assurance goals as allies seldom expressed the need for additional numbers or types of nuclear weapons. However, deep cuts in the nuclear force announced initially by the George W. Bush administration in its 2001 Nuclear Posture Review (NPR) and subsequent cuts announced by the Barack Obama administration in the 2010 NPR appear to have triggered a keen interest among some allies to understand better U.S. deterrence strategies and how the residual nuclear force would deter adversaries of concern to them.⁹

According to DoD officials, the planned nuclear force of 1,700-2,200 operationally deployed strategic nuclear warheads (ODSNWs) set by the 2001 NPR was designed to serve a variety of defense policy goals, one of which was assurance. As one assurance-related factor, the size of the proposed nuclear force was determined to avoid a numerical disadvantage with Russia or any future adversary that U.S. allies might find unsettling. The number of operationally deployed warheads reflects, in the words of the Defense Department, “an assurance-related requirement for U.S. nuclear forces that they be judged second to none.”¹⁰ In fact, the “second-to-none”

⁸ These changes were first presented to the European allies in a top secret speech by Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara at a meeting of NATO foreign and defense ministers in Athens on May 5, 1962. The text of the speech, partly declassified in 1979, is available at the OSD/JS FOIA Reading Room, http://www.dod.mil/pubs/foi/reading_room/45.pdf.

⁹ For example, see Kurt Guthe and Thomas Scheber, *Assuring South Korea and Japan as the Role and Number of U.S. Nuclear Weapons are Reduced* (Fairfax, VA: National Institute Press, 2011).

¹⁰ Written response for the record in Senate Foreign Relations Committee, *Treaty on Strategic Offensive Reduction: The Moscow Treaty*, S. Hrg. 107-622, 107th Cong., 2d sess. (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 2002), p. 117. Following the framework of the earlier QDR, the NPR established assurance, along with dissuasion, deterrence, and defeat as the policy goals for U.S. nuclear forces.

standard for the U.S. nuclear force is a policy continuity that spanned almost half a century—from the John F. Kennedy administration through the George W. Bush administration.¹¹

In 2007, the leaders of both political parties in the United States sought informed views on the role of nuclear forces in the twenty-first century. To clarify nuclear policy and force structure issues, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008 initiated a bipartisan commission to consider the strategic posture of the United States. During the deliberation of that commission, a number of U.S. allies were invited to testify on their country's views regarding the value of U.S. nuclear forces for their security. The 2009 report of Strategic Posture Commission stated as an imperative, the United States must ensure that its “deterrent is strong and effective, including its extended deterrent for allies.” Furthermore, the commission reported, some “allies believe that their needs can only be met with very specific U.S. nuclear capabilities.” And, “[o]ne particularly important ally has argued to the Commission privately that the credibility of the U.S. extended deterrent depends on its specific capabilities to hold a wide variety of targets at risk and to deploy its forces in a way that is either visible or stealthy, as circumstances may demand.”¹² The commission recommended that the “United States should adapt its strategic posture to the evolving requirements of deterrence, extended deterrence, and assurance. As part of an effort to understand assurance requirements, steps to increase allied consultations should be expanded.”¹³ Thus, the bipartisan commission rightly suggested that the assurance of allies imposes unique requirements on the nuclear force.

Current Policy: Assurance Remains an Important Goal

The assurance of allies, including through extended deterrence, remains an important U.S. policy goal. Several documents and testimony which state and frame current policy stress the importance of assuring allies. The most recent NPR, published in 2010, lists “strengthening

¹¹ Kurt Guthe, *Ten Continuities in U.S. Nuclear Weapons Policy, Strategy, Plans, and Forces* (Fairfax, VA: National Institute Press, 2008) pp. 14-16.

¹² William J. Perry, chairman, and James R. Schlesinger, vice-chairman, *America's Strategic Posture: The Final Report of the Congressional Commission on the Strategic Posture of the United States* (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2009), pp. 15, 20-21.

¹³ Perry-Schlesinger, *America's Strategic Posture*, op. cit., p. 98.

regional deterrence and reassuring U.S. allies and partners” among the key objectives for U.S. nuclear weapons policies and forces.¹⁴

During the rollout of the Obama Administration’s 2010 NPR, then-Secretary of State Hillary Clinton described the extensive collaboration with allies during the NPR process. She stated, “The consultations that supported this process included more than 30 of our allies and partners. For generations, the United States’ nuclear deterrent has helped prevent proliferation by providing our non-nuclear allies in NATO, the Pacific and elsewhere with reassurance and security. The policies outlined in this review allow us to continue that stabilizing role.”¹⁵

The May 2012 public summary of NATO’s Deterrence and Defense Posture Review, stated “Nuclear weapons are a core component of NATO’s overall capabilities for deterrence and defence alongside conventional and missile defence forces. The review has shown that the Alliance’s nuclear force posture currently meets the criteria for an effective deterrence and defence posture.”

In March 2013, then-Commander of the U.S. Strategic Command, General C. R. Kehler, described succinctly the policy for assurance in testimony before the House Armed Services Committee:

Assuring U.S. allies and partners also contributes to deterrence by demonstrating to our adversaries that our alliances and coalitions are resilient and enduring. Our assurance efforts must leverage the strengths of the individual CCMDs, Services, and Agencies, and complement other efforts already in place or in planning. Assurance is not necessarily a byproduct of deterrence; it is a deliberate effort in itself and one that often requires additional resources beyond those needed for deterrence.¹⁶

In June 2013, the Obama Administration’s report to the Congress on its nuclear weapon employment policy, discussed the role of extended deterrence and assurance. The unclassified report stated that the United States would maintain a “wide range of effective response options

¹⁴ Department of Defense, *Nuclear Posture Review Report*, April, 2010, p. iii.

¹⁵ Defense Department Special Briefing: New Nuclear Posture Review, Speakers, Robert Gates, Secretary, U.S. Department of Defense, ADM Michael Mullen, Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, Hillary Clinton, Secretary, U.S. Department of States, Steven Chu, Secretary, U.S. Department of Energy, April 6, 2010, Transcript by Federal News Service, Washington, D.C., p. 4.

¹⁶ General C. R. Kehler, Statement of General C. R. Kehler, Commander, United States Strategic Command, Before the House Committee on Armed Services, March 5, 2013, pp. 3-4, available at: <http://www.stratcom.mil/files/2013-03-05-posture.pdf>.

available to deter potential regional threats” that should “provide substantial reassurance to our Allies and partners.” It went on to affirm that “the United States will retain the capability to forward deploy nuclear weapons with heavy bombers and dual-capable fighter aircraft, as well as its direction to maintain a strong strategic deterrent, should reassure U.S. allies and partners. In doing so, the guidance reaffirms the role of nuclear weapons in extending deterrence to U.S. Allies and partners and the U.S. commitment to strengthen regional deterrence architectures. The security and defense of our Allies and partners is non-negotiable...”¹⁷

The 2014 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) emphasized three pillars of defense: 1) protecting the homeland; 2) building security globally; and 3) projecting power and winning decisively. Regarding the second pillar, the 2014 QDR identified this pillar as: “Build security globally, in order to preserve regional stability, deter adversaries, support allies and partners, and cooperate with others to address common security challenges.”¹⁸ The QDR stresses the need for U.S. capabilities, including forward presence, engagement, and the U.S. nuclear deterrent, to “reassure our distant allies of their security against regional aggression.”¹⁹

The 2014 report of the National Defense Panel Review of the 2014 Quadrennial Defense Review stressed the continuity of various aspects of U.S. defense policy. “[F]or nearly seventy years, no matter which party controlled the White House or Congress, the United States has followed a policy of deep global engagement and leadership undergirded by a military capable of forward defense and effective global power projection.” Among those continuities, the report stated, “the United States needs to maintain the military forces and associated capabilities required to provide credible security assurances to those allies and partners and to protect and sustain the liberal international order.”²⁰

This background demonstrates that assurance, as a U.S. security objective and force determinant, has been a U.S. policy continuity for over half a century. The assurance of allies, including

¹⁷ President Barack Obama, “Report on Nuclear Employment Strategy of the United States Specified in Section 491 of 10 U.S.C., June 2013, pp. 8-9.

¹⁸ Department of Defense Report, *Quadrennial Defense Review 2014*, p. v.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. v-vi.

²⁰ William J. Perry, Co-Chair, John P. Abizaid, Co-Chair, *Ensuring a Strong U.S. Defense for the Future: The National Defense Panel Review of the 2014 Quadrennial Defense Review* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Institute of Peace, 2014), p. 12.

through extended deterrence commitments, remains important as evidenced by the report of the bipartisan Strategic Posture Commission, the most recent NPR and QDR, and policy documents and statements by U.S. leaders.

Contemporary Minimum Deterrence Proposals and Assurance

Minimum Deterrence proposals typically ignore the existence of unique requirements for the U.S. nuclear force to assure allies. For many of these proposals, the issue of extended deterrence and assurance of allies is never discussed. In general, such proposals assert or imply that the U.S. nuclear arsenal should be significantly reduced, the ability to deter adversaries should also assure allies, U.S. nuclear reductions should be welcomed by allies because they would encourage adversaries to follow suit and reduce their own nuclear arsenals, and U.S. conventional military capabilities are adequate for extended deterrence. Examples of such statements from advocates of Minimum Deterrence include the following:

- “The continued maintenance by the United States of thousands of nuclear weapons is not necessary to deter the nuclear threats its allies face today. Commitment is illustrated first and foremost by the strength of shared political and diplomatic relations. The United States should work closely with allies to strengthen common interests as a demonstration of its resolve to protect them.”²¹
- “Arguably the best way to strengthen the credibility of U.S. extended deterrence would be to stress that conventional capabilities of the U.S. and its allies alone are sufficient to defeat all foreseeable adversaries in any scenario other than nuclear war.”²²
- “...We surely do not need thousands of modern nuclear weapons to play this role [i.e., assurance of South Korea] vis-à-vis a country [North Korea] with a handful of primitive nuclear devices. In fact, strong conventional forces and missile defenses may offer a far superior option for deterring and defeating a regional aggressor. Non-nuclear forces are also far more credible instruments for providing 21st century reassurance to allies whose comfort zone in the 20th century resided under the U.S. nuclear umbrella. Precision-

²¹ Kingston Reif, “Nuclear Myths (and Realities),” *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, January 15, 2013, available at: <http://www.thebulletin.org/web-edition/columnists/kingston-reif/nuclear-myths-and-realities>.

²² George Perkovich, “Extended Deterrence on the way to a Nuclear-Free World,” *International Commission on Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament*, May 2009, p. 16, available at: http://icnnd.org/Documents/Perkovich_Deterrence.pdf.

guided conventional munitions hold at risk nearly the entire spectrum of potential targets, and they are useable.”²³

- “Some fear that reducing the American arsenal could cause allies to doubt the US commitment to their defense, thereby tempting them to acquire their own nuclear weapons. However, the continued US maintenance of thousands of nuclear weapons is not necessary to deter the nuclear threats our allies face today. Moreover, further arms control could actually benefit US partners: A US-Russia arms control process that addresses Russian nonstrategic nuclear weapons could reduce the threat posed by these weapons to America’s Central European and Baltic allies.”²⁴
- “[T]he continued presence of U.S. non-strategic nuclear weapons in Europe has become a convenient excuse for Russian officials to reject talks about reducing non-strategic nuclear weapons in general. To break this stalemate, the United States needs to work to convince NATO to withdraw the remaining U.S. nuclear weapons from Europe. ... Continued assurance of NATO allies with non-nuclear means should be done in a way that doesn’t deepen Russian concern over NATO’s conventional capabilities – and thus reinforces a Russian need for non-strategic nuclear weapons to compensate.”²⁵
- “The U.S. nuclear force structure is only one of the factors influencing China’s force posture decisions, but deeper reductions in U.S. operationally deployed nuclear forces than presently contemplated might contribute to dissuading China from a major buildup.”²⁶
- “...the Obama administration argues that bombers are a necessary triad leg because the ability to deploy them abroad reassures allies. These arguments are unconvincing for a variety of reasons. First, the U.S. ability to reassure allies depends ultimately on capability to deter, which a submarine-based force maintains, and on U.S. political will,

²³ Gen. (Ret.) James Cartwright *et al*, “Global Zero U.S. Nuclear Policy Commission Report: Modernizing U.S. Nuclear Strategy, Force Structure and Posture,” *Global Zero*, May 2012, p. 2.

²⁴ Kingston Reif, “Nuclear Weapons Cuts will make the United States Safer,” *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, March 6, 2013, available at <http://www.thebulletin.org/web-edition/columnists/kingston-reif/nuclear-weapons-cuts-will-make-the-united-states-safer>.

²⁵ Hans M. Kristensen, *Trimming Nuclear Excess: Options for Further Reductions of U.S. and Russian Nuclear Forces*, Special Report No. 5, Federation of American Scientists, December 2012, p. 33, available at <http://www.fas.org/programs/ssp/ nukes/publications1/TrimmingNuclearExcess.pdf>.

²⁶ Sidney D. Drell and James E. Goodby, *What are Nuclear Weapons for? Recommendations for Restructuring U.S. Strategic Nuclear Forces*, Arms Control Association, October 2007, p. 11, available at http://www.armscontrol.org/pdf/20071104_Drell_Goodby_07_new.pdf.

which depends on factors that technologies barely affect. Because a submarine-only monad provides the capability needed for deterrence, it should reassure allies.”²⁷

- “... if these alliances lead the United States to maintain expensive nuclear weapons capabilities, that is another reason to consider restructuring these security agreements, most of which are holdovers from the Cold War.”²⁸
- “Extended deterrence has run its course. It is time to admit it, so that the united States and its allies will no longer lean on a nuclear crutch and instead begin the more difficult (and admittedly more expensive) task of preparing its conventional forces for operations in support of U.S. friends and allies across the globe.”²⁹

Key premises of the Minimum Deterrence narrative³⁰ and logic that lead to proposals for deep nuclear cuts include the following:

1. Nuclear deterrence considerations no longer are pertinent to U.S. relations with Russia and China.
2. For situations for which deterrence might be relevant, deterrence will function reliably and predictably at low U.S. nuclear force numbers, now and in the future.
3. Deterrence considerations alone determine the size and composition of the nuclear force. (i.e., no special size or composition requirements exist for assurance or policy goals other than deterrence.)
4. Therefore, the nuclear force can be significantly reduced.

For most Minimum Deterrence proposals, the proposed reduction in the size and composition of the nuclear force includes the elimination of one or more legs of the strategic nuclear triad and the complete elimination of the nonstrategic nuclear force. However, if the goal of assuring allies does, in fact, place additional requirements on the quantity and types of weapons in the U.S. nuclear force, then Minimum Deterrence advocates cannot credibly justify the small nuclear force postures which they recommend—at least not without additional risk. The additional risk would derive from the potential for actions by allies and friends that were not sufficiently

²⁷ Benjamin H. Friedman, Christopher Preble, and Matt Fay, “The End of Overkill? Reassessing U.S. Nuclear Weapons Policy,” Cato Institute, 2013, p. 16, available at http://object.cato.org/sites/cato.org/files/pubs/pdf/the_end_of_overkill_wp_web.pdf.

²⁸ Friedman, Preble, and Fay, “The End of Overkill? Reassessing U.S. Nuclear Weapons Policy,” op. cit., p. 14.

²⁹ Thomas M. Nichols, *No Use: Nuclear Weapons and U.S. National Security* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014), p. 121.

³⁰ For a complete list of common Minimum Deterrence claims, see Keith B. Payne and James Schlesinger, *Minimum Deterrence: Examining the Evidence* (Fairfax, VA: National Institute Press, 2013), pp. xiii-xix.

assured by the United States. In such cases, allies could be motivated to abandon their alliance with the United States and, perhaps, become more closely aligned with another large power. Or, an ally that views the United States as an untrustworthy or weak partner may decide to go it alone and assume control for its own security. One concern is that countries that are sufficiently fearful for their security might be motivated to develop their own nuclear weapon capabilities.

The possible outcomes discussed above are not pure speculation. In the late 1990s, Japanese leaders debated whether to abandon its alliance with the United States and enter into a more cooperative relationship with China. This debate was triggered by the end of the Cold War and the seemingly outdated *raison d'être* for the 1960 Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security, large cuts in U.S. defense spending, increased demands for Japan to take greater responsibility for its own security, and the growth of the Chinese economy which offered the potential benefits of increased economic cooperation between China and Japan.³¹

The concern that un-assured allies might develop their own nuclear weapons has been a long-standing concern of U.S. leaders. For example, much has been written on past U.S. efforts to provide security assurances to allies and convince them not to develop nuclear weapons. Countries in this category include the Republic of Korea, Taiwan, Japan, Italy, Norway, Sweden, Germany, Turkey, and others.³²

As long ago as the Lyndon Johnson administration, U.S. nuclear guarantees have been recognized for their potential to combat proliferation. In November 1964, less than a month after the first Chinese nuclear test, President Johnson established the Committee on Nuclear Proliferation to advise him on preventing the spread of nuclear weapons. In a presentation made during the deliberations of that committee, Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara said he was “willing to pay a substantial price” to limit proliferation, including the provision of security guarantees to countries contemplating nuclear arsenals of their own.³³

³¹ Keith Payne (Study Director), Thomas Scheber, Kurt Guthe, *U.S. Extended Deterrence and Assurance of Allies in Northeast Asia* (Fairfax, VA: National Institute Press, 2010) p. 27.

³² Keith Payne, Thomas Scheber, Kurt Guthe, Mark Schneider, *Nuclear Guarantees, Extended Deterrence, and the Assurance of Allies* (Fairfax, VA: National Institute Press, 2009), pp. 38-45. Also see, David S. Yost, “Strategic Stability in Europe,” *Nonproliferation Review*, 2013, Vol. 20, No. 2, p. 209.

³³ Kurt Guthe, *Ten Continuities*, op. cit., p. 20.

Walter Slocombe, Under Secretary of Defense for Policy in the Clinton administration, called the U.S. nuclear umbrella “an important nonproliferation tool.” He explained,

[I]t has removed incentives for key allies in a still dangerous world to develop and deploy their own nuclear forces, as many are quite capable of doing from a technical point of view. Indeed, our strong security relationships have probably played as great a role in nonproliferation over the past 40 years as the NPT [Non-Proliferation Treaty] or any other single factor.³⁴

In the contemporary environment this concern about nuclear proliferation and U.S. security guarantees is not purely speculative; it has been voiced by allies who feel increasingly at risk.

This concern was expressed in a 2007 report by the Department of State’s International Security Advisory Board:

There is clear evidence in diplomatic channels that U.S. assurances to include the nuclear umbrella have been, and continue to be, the single most important reason many allies have foresworn nuclear weapons. This umbrella is too important to sacrifice on the basis of an unproven ideal that nuclear disarmament in the U.S. would lead to a more secure world....a lessening of the U.S. nuclear umbrella could very well trigger a cascade [of nuclear proliferation] in East Asia and the Middle East.³⁵

The preceding discussion provided examples of common Minimum Deterrence assertions regarding the assurance of allies in the contemporary security environment. Minimum Deterrence proponents hold the view that no unique nuclear force requirements follow from the U.S. policy goal of assuring allies. For Minimum Deterrence, the task of deterring adversaries is the sole determinant of the size and composition of the nuclear force. This premise is important for the overall Minimum Deterrence narrative that leads to a small nuclear force and, typically, to the proposed elimination of one or more legs of the strategic nuclear triad as well as the elimination of all nonstrategic nuclear forces.

The next section of this report tests the common Minimum Deterrence premise for assurance needs against the views of allies who face severe regional threats for which the U.S. nuclear force may serve important deterrent and damage-limiting roles. Since allies determine whether

³⁴ Walter B. Slocombe, Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, “The Future of Nuclear Deterrence,” Testimony before the Subcommittee on International Security, Proliferation, and Federal Services of the Committee on Governmental Affairs, United States Senate, February 12, 1997, p. 11.

³⁵ International Security Advisory Board, *Report on Discouraging a Cascade of Nuclear Weapons States* (Washington, D.C.: Department of State, October 19, 2007), p. 23.

or not they are assured, their perceptions and views should be important considerations for U.S. leaders in determining the size and composition of the nuclear force. Considerable evidence exists regarding the perceptions of U.S. allies about threats to them, the value of and need for certain U.S. nuclear weapon capabilities, the potential for conventional capabilities to meet those needs, and the implications if assurance needs are not met. Examining this evidence can test the common Minimum Deterrence premise that no unique nuclear force requirements exist for assurance and that conventional weapons can provide the needed assurance effect as nuclear weapons are reduced.

Views of Allies on the Security Environment and Assurance Needs

The examination of the views of key allies who are geographically located near significant threats will focus briefly on the consensus views approved by NATO allies and then examine more closely the perspectives of allies located in central and eastern Europe (CEE). In addition, the discussion will include views from Northeast Asian allies, Japan and the Republic of Korea (ROK).

NATO-Europe

Currently 28 countries are members of NATO. Unsurprisingly, the member countries bring a variety of perspectives on security needs. Views on the severity of the contemporary threat are of course affected by various factors, including proximity to potential threats and national history. Prior to the 2010 NATO Summit in Lisbon, some NATO officials even lobbied for the complete removal of all U.S. nuclear weapons from European territory.³⁶ Much has been written about the diversity of views within NATO on the need for U.S. nuclear weapons deployed to Europe and the nuclear posture in general. However, when fundamental alliance policy decisions are at stake, the importance of continued unity within the alliance is evident. In the past few years, NATO members have deliberated over important policy issues that have implications for the U.S. nuclear posture. These deliberations led to the most recent NATO

³⁶ For example, see Kirsten Grieshaber, "German Coalition Eyes Nukes and Health Care," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, October 25, 2009.

Strategic Concept (SC)³⁷ adopted at the Lisbon Summit in November 2010 and the NATO Deterrence and Defense Posture Review (DDPR) Statement³⁸ released during the May 2012 NATO Summit in Chicago. These documents provide the consensus NATO policy and strategy positions regarding the continued role served by the deployment of U.S. nuclear weapons to NATO Europe. NATO policy regarding the importance of nuclear weapons continued virtually unchanged with the 2014 NATO summit in Wales.³⁹

NATO Strategic Concept. The Strategic Concept (SC) provides the Alliance’s strategic priorities—the most fundamental propositions on which alliance policy and strategy are based. Among other propositions regarding nuclear weapons, the current SC document declares, “[d]eterrence, based on an appropriate mix of nuclear and conventional capabilities, remains a core element of” the Alliance’s overall strategy. The SC goes on to state that the circumstances in which the use of nuclear weapons might be needed are considered “extremely remote,” However, “[a]s long as nuclear weapons exist, NATO will remain a nuclear alliance.” Furthermore, the SC states that NATO will have the “full range of capabilities to deter and defend against any threat to the safety and security of our populations.” Therefore, NATO will “maintain an appropriate mix of nuclear and conventional forces.”⁴⁰ The SC makes clear that conventional forces are envisioned as a complement to the Alliance’s nuclear forces, not as a substitute. The term “appropriate” indicates that the mix of nuclear and conventional may need to change as the security situation evolves. Additionally, the Alliance initiated a follow-on review to clarify further what mix would be appropriate in the contemporary environment for deterrence and defense.

Deterrence and Defense Posture Review. The public statement on the findings of the NATO DDPR was issued on May 20, 2012 and built on the fundamental propositions outlined in NATO’s 2010 SC. Regarding the contributions of nuclear weapons, the DDPR stated, “Nuclear

³⁷ *Active Engagement, Modern Defense: Strategic Concept for the Defense and Security of the members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization*, November 19-20, 2010, available at http://www.nato.int/nato_static/assets/pdf/pdf_publications/20120214_strategic-concept-2010-eng.pdf.

³⁸ “Deterrence and Defense Posture Review Statement,” NATO Press Release (2012) 063, May 20, 2012, available at http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_87597.htm?mode=pressrelease.

³⁹ NATO Wales Summit Declaration, September 5, 2014, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_112964.htm.

⁴⁰ *NATO 2010 Strategic Concept*, op. cit., pp. 4-5.

weapons are a core component of NATO's overall capabilities for deterrence and defence alongside conventional and missile defence forces. The review has shown that the Alliance's nuclear force posture currently meets the criteria for an effective deterrence and defence posture."⁴¹ The document declared the openness of Alliance members to consider further nuclear reductions, but until conditions exist that warrant further reductions, an effective nuclear force would be sustained.

While seeking to create the conditions and considering options for further reductions of non-strategic nuclear weapons assigned to NATO, Allies concerned will ensure that all components of NATO's nuclear deterrent remain safe, secure, and effective for as long as NATO remains a nuclear alliance. That requires sustained leadership focus and institutional excellence for the nuclear deterrence mission and planning guidance aligned with 21st century requirements.⁴²

The DDPR also discussed the need for modern conventional offensive capabilities as well as ballistic missile defenses. Regarding defenses, the report states, "[m]issile defence can complement the role of nuclear weapons in deterrence; it cannot substitute for them."⁴³

Thus, as of May 2012, NATO made clear its collective decision to retain U.S. nuclear weapons deployed in Europe to contribute to the deterrence of adversaries and the defense of alliance members. This collective decision by NATO members occurred after Russia's invasion of Georgia in 2008, but before Russia seized the Crimea in early 2014. Russian actions against Ukraine and Russian military exercises in which nuclear use against NATO member states has been simulated by Russian forces have raised concerns about the Russian threat among NATO members, especially those in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE).

Of course, NATO members other than the CEE states have been alarmed by the actions by Russia under the leadership of Vladimir Putin. For example, in July 2014, the UK House of Commons Defense Committee issued a report on NATO defense and security. That report concluded:

The NATO alliance has not considered Russia an adversary or a potential territorial threat to its Member States for twenty years. It is now forced to do so as a result of Russia's recent actions. Events in Ukraine this year, following on

⁴¹ NATO 2012 DDPR, op.cit., p. 2.

⁴² Ibid., p. 3.

⁴³ Ibid., p. 5.

from the cyber attacks on Estonia in 2007 and the invasion of Georgia by Russia in 2008, are a “wake up” call for NATO. They have revealed alarming deficiencies in the state of NATO preparedness, which will be tough to fix. The UK Government should take the lead in ensuring that the NATO Summit addresses these threats in the most concrete and systematic fashion.⁴⁴

Central and Eastern European NATO Allies⁴⁵

Currently, several countries in Central and Eastern Europe have expressed great concern about their security—the Baltic States (Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia), as well as Poland and the Czech Republic. These states have a heightened sense of their security environment that arises from their geography and history. They have suffered from their geographic location between two powerful states, Germany to the west and Russia to the east. “Few corners of Europe,” it has been observed, “have found themselves the focal points of geopolitical intrigue, war and invasion routes and the resulting violence and destruction as much as the medium-sized and small countries of this region.”⁴⁶ They spent half of the last century under foreign control, occupied or dominated by Nazi Germany in World War II and then as satellites or parts of the Soviet Union during the Cold War.⁴⁷

With this unique history, CEE states have watched closely the actions by Russia and others that might threaten their independence and security. Statements by Russian leaders and actions by Russia’s military have been worrying for these states. The collapse of the Soviet Union allowed these states to declare independence, to trade more openly and travel more freely, and to eventually be accepted as members of the European Union and the NATO Alliance. In contrast, Russian president Russian President Vladimir Putin offered a distinctly different view when, in April 2005, he referred to the Soviet collapse as “the greatest geopolitical catastrophe of the

⁴⁴ House of Commons Defense Committee Report, “Toward the next Defence and Security Review: Part Two—NATO, Third Report of Session 2014-15,” July 22, 2014, p. 4.

⁴⁵ This section draws heavily on recent research by Kurt Guthe, *NATO Nuclear Reductions and the Assurance of Central and Eastern European Allies* (Fairfax, VA: National Institute Press, 2013) and is updated where appropriate.

⁴⁶ Ronald D. Asmus and Alexandr Vondra, “The Origins of Atlanticism in Central and Eastern Europe,” *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, Vol. 18, No. 2 (July 2005), p. 204, available at http://www.gmfus.org/galleries/ct_publication_attachments/foreignpolicyAsmusVondraCCAM.pdf.

⁴⁷ For a more detailed analysis of the views of CEE states and nuclear weapons, see Kurt Guthe, *NATO Nuclear Reductions and the Assurance of Central and Eastern European Allies* (Fairfax, VA: National Institute Press, 2013).

century.”⁴⁸ In addition, in August 2008, then-President Dmitry Medvedev claimed “privileged interests” in regions bordering Russia.⁴⁹ And, the Russian invasion of Georgia in August 2008, under the pretext of protecting ethnic Russians in separatist enclaves, triggered fears in CEE states with populations that include significant numbers of ethnic Russians. Russian leaders also rely on other coercive tactics with former Soviet client states. For example, on numerous occasions Russia has cut back or cut off entirely the delivery of natural gas contracted by other countries—most notably Poland, Georgia, and Ukraine.⁵⁰

In light of these attitudes and associated actions by Moscow, twenty former senior officials from the CEE countries (presidents, foreign and defense ministers, and ambassadors) concluded in a July 2009 open letter to the Obama administration that,

Our hopes that relations with Russia would improve and that Moscow would finally accept our complete sovereignty and independence after joining NATO and the EU have not been fulfilled. Instead, Russia is back as a revisionist power pursuing a 19th-century agenda with 21st-century tactics and methods. At a global level, Russia has become, on most issues, a status-quo power. But at a regional level and vis-à-vis our nations, it increasingly acts as a revisionist one.⁵¹

Russian military exercises have also provided reasons for CEE states to fear for their security. For example, the *Zapad-2009* (“West-2009”) exercise involved Russian and Belarusian military forces and was carried out in Belarusian territory near Poland and Lithuania and in the Russian enclave of Kaliningrad. In addition, the *Ladoga-2009* exercise was carried out in the Leningrad Military District in northwest Russia. Together, these military exercises were conducted in territory that borders several NATO allies—the Baltic states, Poland, and Norway—as well as Finland. These exercises involved an amphibious landing to reinforce Kaliningrad and a simulated nuclear strike against Poland. And, simultaneously, Russia’s Strategic Rocket Force

⁴⁸ Russian President Putin Delivers Annual State of Nation Address, April 25, 2005, Open Source Center, FEA20050425002821.

⁴⁹ Interview given by Dmitry Medvedev to television channels Channel One, Rossia, and NTV, August 31, 2008, transcript available at http://archive.kremlin.ru/eng/text/speeches/2008/08/31/1850_type82912type82916_206003.shtml. See also remarks by Medvedev at the meeting of the International Club Valdai in Moscow on September 12, 2008, transcript available at http://archive.kremlin.ru/eng/speeches/2008/09/12/1644_type82912type82917type84779_206409.shtml.

⁵⁰ Monika Scislowska, “Russia, Poland in spat over gas supplies,” *Associated Press*, September 11, 2014, <http://www.wtop.com/220/3699601/Russia-Poland-in-spat-over-gas-supplies>.

⁵¹ “An Open Letter to the Obama Administration from Central and Eastern Europe,” *Gazeta Wyborcza*, July 16, 2009, http://wyborcza.pl/1,75248,6825987,An_Open_Letter_to_the_Obama_Administration_from_Central.html.

which is responsible for strategic nuclear forces, carried out its own military exercise.⁵² One concern is that expressed by NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen who recently said, “We have seen the Russians improve their ability to act swiftly. They can within a very, very, short time convert a major military exercise into an offensive military operation.”⁵³

Another *Zapad* exercise was conducted in September 2013. This exercise was described by observers as massive in scale and, similar to *Zapad-2009*, involved an amphibious landing on the Baltic Coast. Following *Zapad-2013*, the chairman of the Lithuanian parliamentary committee on national security and defense characterized the maneuvers as “clearly aggressive and menacing” and believed they “confirmed the need for Lithuania to enhance NATO visibility in the region.”⁵⁴ Stephen Blank, a U.S. analyst that follows Russia closely, commented on *Zapad-2013*, “... in the face of a declining NATO, Russia still insists on refighting theater conventional, if not nuclear, war scenarios in Europe.”⁵⁵ CEE countries view these exercises as reasons for greater preparation and planning by NATO for their defense.

The 2014 invasion of Ukraine by Russia and the seizure of the Crimea Peninsula further fueled concerns over whether NATO would invoke “Article Five” and respond promptly and effectively to defend any CEE states that were similarly attacked. CEE countries also find troubling other

⁵² “Russia’s Strategic Missile Forces to Play War Games on Sept. 8-11,” RIA Novosti, September 7, 2009, available at http://en.rian.ru/military_news/20090907/156052331.html.

⁵³ Ian Traynor, “Ukraine crisis: Nato plans east European bases to counter Russia,” *The Guardian* (UK), August 26, 2014, available at <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/aug/26/nato-east-european-bases-counter-russian-threat>.

⁵⁴ Arturas Paulauskas, quoted in “Paulauskas: Information War Took Place Along with Zapad Exercise Near Lithuanian Border,” *Lithuania Tribune*, October 9, 2013, available at <http://www.lithuaniatribune.com/53210/paulauskas-information-war-took-place-along-with-zapad-exercise-nearlithuanian-border-201353210/>; and “Arturas Paulauskas, Chair of the Committee on National Security and Defence: ‘Zapad 2013’ Was Not a Mere Anti-Terrorism Military Exercise,” press release, Seimas (parliament) of the Republic of Lithuania, October 9, 2013, available at http://www3.lrs.lt/pls/inter/w5_show?p_r=4028&p_d=140638&p_k=2. For analyses of *Zapad-2013*, see Anna Maria Dwyer, *The Russian-Belarusian “West 2013” Military Exercise: An Alliance against External Enemies?* PISM Bulletin No. 102 (555) (Warsaw: Polish Institute of International Affairs, September 27, 2013), available at <http://www.pism.pl/publications/bulletin/no-102-555>; Andrzej Wilk, “‘West 2013’: The Belarusian and Russian Armies’ Anti-NATO Integration Exercises,” *East Week*, Issue 30/348 (September 25, 2013), available at <http://www.osw.waw.pl/en/publikacje/eastweek/2013-09-25/west-2013-belarusian-and-russian-armies-antinatointegration-exercise>.

⁵⁵ Stephen Blank, “What Do the Zapad 2013 Exercises Reveal?” Parts One and Two, *Eurasia Daily Monitor* (Jamestown Foundation), Part One in Vol. 10, Issue 177 (October 4, 2013) and Part Two in Vol. 10, Issue 180 (October 9, 2013), available at <http://www.jamestown.org/?id=70>.

types of hostile actions by Russia including cyber attacks, oil shutoffs, and activities by the sizable Russian-speaking residents living in Estonia and Latvia.⁵⁶

In August 2014, Matthew Kroenig, Senior Fellow at the Brent Scowcroft Center on International Security, and Walter B. Slocombe, former Secretary for Defense for Policy for President Clinton, authored an Atlantic Council report on the relevance of nuclear deterrence for NATO. They concluded:

The mission of deterring Russian nuclear use against NATO members and perhaps even reserving (or at least not purporting to give up) the option of nuclear first use is probably the nuclear mission on which there is the greatest consensus within the Alliance.⁵⁷

Kroenig and Slocombe also provide insight into the views of some European allies, including the CEE states, on whether or not NATO nuclear forces should be declared as a deterrent for more than just nuclear attacks.

An ultimately successful conventional defense [of eastern European allies against Russia] is likely to entail huge costs, especially to the immediate target of the aggression, and take a long time. The likely immediate victims, which could conceivably include the Baltic states or Poland, might therefore prefer that Russia be deterred not only by the prospect of conventional defeat resulting in their [i.e., NATO members'] potentially delayed and destructive "liberation," but also by the possibility that a Russian attack would be met by early nuclear strikes by the United States or other allies.⁵⁸

Indeed, recent revelations concerning Russia's non-compliance with the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty have been closely followed by CEE states. On July 30, 2014, Poland's Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued a statement citing the findings of the U.S. Department of State and concluding, "The current situation reaffirms the importance of NATO's nuclear deterrence policy..."⁵⁹

⁵⁶ Kurt Guthe, *NATO Nuclear Reductions and the Assurance of Central and Eastern European Allies*, op. cit., pp. 7-8.

⁵⁷ Matthew Kroenig and Walter B. Slocombe, "Why Nuclear Deterrence Still Matters to NATO," Atlantic Council Issue Brief, August 2014, p. 4.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ "MFA statement on information about Russia's non-compliance with the INF Treaty, Poland Ministry of Foreign Affairs Press Office, July 30, 2014 available at http://www.msz.gov.pl/en/news/mfa_statement_on_information_about_russia_s_non_compliance_with_the_inf_treaty.

As noted above by Kroenig and Slocombe, in the current environment the prospect of deterrence and defense by conventional means alone does not appear to fully assure the CEE states. Economic sluggishness in Europe and fiscal austerity measures have translated into stingy defense outlays. Defense spending in most non-U.S. NATO countries has declined steadily since 2008.⁶⁰ In 2012, only four of the 28 NATO members—the United States, UK, Greece, and Estonia—allocated the target of two percent or more of gross domestic product for defense.⁶¹

According to a recently published a report on CEE states and U.S. extended deterrence guarantees, CEE states value the continued deployment of U.S. nuclear weapons to Europe for a variety of reasons. The report concludes that countries on the eastern rim of the alliance see NATO’s nonstrategic nuclear capabilities as having four principal security benefits:

- 1) reinforcing the transatlantic link between the United States and NATO-Europe;
- 2) creating burden-sharing arrangements that strengthen alliance ties;
- 3) counterbalancing comparable Russian capabilities; and
- 4) hedging against potential future threats.⁶²

Numerous quotes from senior officials from CEE states reinforce each of these points.

Reinforcing Transatlantic Link. In April 2010 the Estonian foreign minister said, “The placement of American nuclear weapons in Europe preserves close transatlantic ties and allows for greater flexibility in deterrence.”⁶³ And, shortly before the May 2012 NATO summit, a Hungarian defense official stated,

The preservation of NATO’s credible nuclear capabilities remains a key pillar of collective defense and solidarity between Allies. We continue to believe that the forward deployment of U.S. tactical nuclear weapons in Europe as well as existing burden-sharing arrangements are important embodiments of the transatlantic relationship. Therefore, we see no pressing need for significant

⁶⁰ *The Secretary General’s Annual Report—2012* (Brussels: NATO Public Diplomacy Division, 2013), p. 11, available at http://www.nato.int/nato_static/assets/pdf/stock_publications/20130131_Annual_Report_2012_en.pdf.

⁶¹ *The Secretary General’s Annual Report—2012*, op. cit., p. 1; and Hugh Bayley, rapporteur, *Trends in Defence Resource Management in Europe and North America and the New Burden Sharing Debate: A Survey*, 168 ESC 07 Ebis (Brussels: NATO Parliamentary Assembly, 2007), paragraph 23, available at <http://www.natopa.int/default.asp?SHORTCUT=1169>.

⁶² Kurt Guthe, *NATO Nuclear Reductions and the Assurance of Central and Eastern European Allies*, op. cit., p. 17.

⁶³ Urmas Paet, quoted in “Foreign Minister Paet: Unilateral Disarmament of NATO Would be Dangerous,” Spokesperson’s Office, Estonian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, April 23, 2010, available at <http://www.vm.ee/?q=en/node/9375>.

changes to these current arrangements.... The Alliance's present posture is appropriate in light of the uncertainties and challenges we face....⁶⁴

In April 2013 the Czech permanent representative to NATO, highlighted the significance of the U.S. nuclear umbrella for the alliance: “the extension of the deterrence by the United States over the allies is crucial...without the United States we would have a very different alliance, if at all. And indeed, the extended deterrence is a very important part of keeping the alliance together.”⁶⁵

For several CEE allies, the permanent stationing of forces and deployment of U.S. nuclear weapons to Europe apparently provides greater assurance than temporary deployments and “deployable” nuclear capabilities that are based in the United States. For example, the Estonian foreign minister said, “The placement of American nuclear weapons in Europe preserves close transatlantic ties and allows for greater flexibility in deterrence.”⁶⁶ One U.S. analyst observed, “Nonstrategic nuclear weapons on NATO territory are a concrete reminder of the continuing U.S. commitment to the defense of Europe at a time when military spending cuts, force reductions, and the rebalance to Asia are raising doubts in Central and Eastern Europe about the strength of that commitment. Further diminution in the U.S. nuclear presence could be read as indicating, or encouraging, less U.S. support for the alliance.”⁶⁷

Of course other NATO members—the UK and France—also maintain nuclear weapons as part of an independent strategic deterrent force for each country. However, CEE countries apparently do not view these in the same category as the deployed nonstrategic nuclear forces that provide credible linkage to U.S. strategic nuclear forces. This was evident in an April 2013 Carnegie Endowment panel discussion on assurance, when a Polish analyst and former official commented,

⁶⁴ Peter Siklosi (deputy state secretary for defense policy and planning, Ministry of Defense of Hungary), “NATO Summit in Chicago—Hungarian Perspective,” *Transatlantic Files* [*Transatlanticke listy*], 1/2012 (Bratislava: Center for European and North Atlantic Affairs, n.d.), p. 9, available at http://cenaa.org/wpcontent/uploads/2012/05/Transatlantic-files-2012_1.pdf.

⁶⁵ Jiri Sedivy, “2013 Carnegie International Nuclear Policy Conference, Afternoon Concurrent Panel II: Extended Deterrence: Defining the U.S. Reassurance Requirement,” April 9, 2013, Federal News Service transcript, available at http://carnegieendowment.org/files/040913_NPCDAY2_ExtendedDeterrence.pdf.

⁶⁶ Urmas Paet, quoted in “Foreign Minister Paet: Unilateral Disarmament of NATO Would be Dangerous,” Spokesperson’s Office, Estonian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, April 23, 2010, available at <http://www.vm.ee/?q=en/node/9375>.

⁶⁷ Kurt Guthe, *NATO Nuclear Reductions and the Assurance of Central and Eastern European Allies*, op. cit., p. 18.

For Central Europeans, the United States remains key when it comes to providing assurance and extended deterrence in the NATO context and in the European context.

Sorry to French or U.K. participants who might be here...but this nuclear capabilities [sic] and other capabilities don't exactly do the job of assuring us about our security. And when it comes to this assurance, it's the political commitment, plus the mix of capabilities—as simple as that.⁶⁸

Nuclear Burden-Sharing. U.S. DCA and nuclear weapons deployed to Europe also provide important contributions to alliance cohesion resulting from the alliance's collective approach to nuclear planning, consultation, and burden sharing. In 2011, the then-defense minister of Estonia told a U.S. Strategic Command audience that “the nuclear burden sharing arrangement in NATO embodies the ultimate level of commitment and coordination between allies.”⁶⁹ That same year, a participant in a Tallinn roundtable on nuclear weapons and Baltic security referred to the NATO Nuclear Planning Group as the “spinal cord of the Alliance.”⁷⁰ At an alliance workshop held the previous year in Rome, a Polish participant warned that removal of U.S. nuclear weapons from Europe also would eliminate the nuclear consultations and exercises that constituted “one of the pillars of the Alliance.”⁷¹

Nuclear burden-sharing for NATO can involve a variety of tasks. These tasks can include providing sites for the storage of U.S. nuclear bombs, maintaining dual-capable aircraft and trained air crews, hosting U.S. DCA, and providing support capabilities for nuclear operations—for example, aerial refueling, reconnaissance, defense suppression, and electronic jamming. While CEE countries are strong supporters of nuclear burden-sharing, they themselves are not hosts to U.S. nonstrategic nuclear weapons or dual-capable aircraft. Some countries do,

⁶⁸ Quoted in Simon Lunn, “A Crucial Decision: NATO’s Nuclear Weapons in the Twenty-First Century,” in Malcom Chalmers and Simon Lunn, *NATO’s Tactical Nuclear Dilemma*, Occasional Paper (London: Royal United Services Institute, March 2010), p. 16 available at http://www.rusi.org/downloads/assets/NATOs_Nuclear_Dilemma.pdf.

⁶⁹ Mart Laar, speech at the U.S. Strategic Command Deterrence Symposium, August 3, 2011, quoted in Yost, “The US Debate on NATO Nuclear Deterrence,” *op. cit.*, p. 1429.

⁷⁰ Quoted in Paul Ingram, *NATO’s Nuclear Deterrence Posture and Baltic Security*, Personal report based upon a roundtable held on March 15, 2011 at the International Centre for Defence Studies, Tallinn, Estonia (Washington/London: British American Security Information Council, March 25, 2011), p. 5, available at <http://www.basicint.org/sites/default/files/NATO-TallinnRpt.pdf>, p. 6.

⁷¹ Quoted in David S. Yost, *The Future of NATO’s Nuclear Deterrent: The New Strategic Concept and the 2010 NPT Review Conference—A Workshop Report* (Rome: NATO Defense College, April 2010), p. 5, available at <http://www.ndc.nato.int/download/downloads.php?icode=193>, p. 10.

however, provide conventional capabilities that can support nuclear operations. In the 1997 “Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security Between NATO and the Russian Federation,” NATO member states declared “they have no intention, no plan and no reason to deploy nuclear weapons on the territory of new members, nor any need to change any aspect of NATO’s nuclear posture or nuclear policy—and do not foresee any future need to do so.”⁷² This restriction was intended at the time to provide reassurance for Russia regarding the military consequences of NATO enlargement. However, this pledge has been viewed by some of the newer alliance members as establishing a lesser class of NATO membership. Some CEE states have expressed interest in participating more fully in NATO nuclear burden-sharing. For example, some Polish officials are reported to have expressed interest in redeployment on their territory of nuclear weapons and dual-capable aircraft that might be withdrawn from elsewhere in NATO.⁷³

Following the recent provocations by Russia in Ukraine, some CEE officials have come to view U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe as increasingly valuable. In April 2014, Polish National Security Bureau chief Stanislaw Koziej said in an interview, “Nuclear deterrence is a very important factor that NATO has at its disposal, and it’s becoming increasingly important.” In the same article, Jiri Schneider, who served as the Czech Republic’s first deputy foreign minister until February 2014, said it was important for NATO to “show some muscle” in the face of Russia’s ongoing destabilizing actions in Ukraine and elsewhere. And, a March 2014 paper by the Center for European Policy Analysis recommended that NATO weigh ending its voluntary prohibition against the deployment of U.S. nonstrategic weapons in Central and Eastern Europe.

⁷² Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security Between NATO and the Russian Federation, signed in Paris, May 27, 1997, Section IV. Political-Military Matters, available at http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_25468.htm.

⁷³ Lewis A. Dunn, Gregory Giles, Jeffrey Larsen, and Thomas Skypek, *Foreign Perspectives on U.S. Nuclear Policy: Insights, Issues and Implications*, DTRA01-03-D-0017 (Ft. Belvoir, VA: Defense Threat Reduction Agency, December 12, 2006), p. 121, available at <https://www.fas.org/irp/agency/dod/dtra/foreign-pers.pdf>; and Karl-Heinz Kamp, *NATO’s Nuclear Weapons in Europe: Beyond “Yes” or “No,”* Research Paper No. 61 (Rome: Research Division, NATO Defense College, September 2010), p. 6, available at <http://www.ndc.nato.int/download/downloads.php?icode=208>.

“Nuclear deterrence in Europe should have some kind of European participation, simply for reasons of burden sharing,” Schneider said.⁷⁴

The events of 2014 in Ukraine illustrate the fundamental error in Minimum Deterrence judgments about Russian willingness to use military force to acquire territory and achieve its policy goals. President Toomas Ilves of Estonia summed up the current situation: “Everything that has happened since 1989 has been predicated on the fundamental assumption that you don’t change borders by force, and that’s now out the window.”⁷⁵ Recent Russian arrogance seems intent on intimidating former Soviet republics and client states that are now part of NATO. “Who will stop Russia? The Poles?” asks a popular Moscow weekly, adding, “The Russian tactical nuclear arsenal dominates Europe, and Russian jets can sink any US Navy ships in the Black Sea at will.”⁷⁶ Russian military doctrine describes the linkage between Russia’s nuclear forces for deterrence, coercion, and “de-escalation” and its conventional military capabilities. In fact, the 2010 version of Russia’s military doctrine defines regional war as one in which both conventional and nuclear weapons are used.⁷⁷ By ignoring this prevalent Russia view of nuclear weapons utility and the significance of the nuclear balance on U.S. allies, Minimum Deterrence advocates risk the failure of assuring allies who take such threats seriously.

The alliance may not yet be ready to take actions that contravene the nuclear provisions of the 1997 NATO Founding Act. Instead, the United States has initiated actions, both bilaterally and through NATO, to reassure threatened allies, especially those in Central and Eastern Europe. In June 2014, during President Obama’s visit to Poland, the White house issued a press release outlining measures for a “European Reassurance Initiative and Other U.S. Efforts in Support of NATO Allies.” Among other things, the initiative calls for the repositioning of equipment,

⁷⁴ “Former Warsaw Pact States Value U.S. Nuclear Arms as Deterrent to Russia,” Global Security Newswire, April 15, 2014, available at <http://www.nti.org/gsn/article/former-warsaw-pact-states-tout-importance-us-nuclear-weapons-europe/>.

⁷⁵ John R. Bolton, “NATO Is Still the Answer,” *Weekly Standard*, May 5, 2014, available at http://www.Weeklystandard.com/articles/nato-still-answer_787373.html.

⁷⁶ Pavel Felgenhauer, “Rebuilding the USSR,” *Eurasia Daily Monitor* Volume: 11 Issue: 81, May 1, 2014, available at [http://www.jamestown.org/single/?tx_ttnews\[tt_news\]=42296&no_cache=1#.U2PSjIctodw](http://www.jamestown.org/single/?tx_ttnews[tt_news]=42296&no_cache=1#.U2PSjIctodw).

⁷⁷ “The Military Doctrine of the Russian Federation,” February 5, 2010, available at http://carnegieendowment.org/files/2010_russia_military_doctrine.pdf.

rotation of ground forces and military planners, and partner capacity building.⁷⁸ Some Polish officials, however, did not appear to be reassured sufficiently by the very modest measures proposed in this initiative. In June 2014, the Polish magazine *Wprost* reported that during a private conversation the Polish Foreign Minister, Radek Sikorski was overheard saying that the Polish-U.S. alliance could alienate two key neighbors, Russia and Germany and was “worthless” and “even harmful because it creates a false sense of security.”⁷⁹ Two months later, during an on-the-record CNN interview, Sikorski explained that NATO members near Russia’s border feel particularly vulnerable to the new threat from the east. He said, “Unfortunately, the Russian actions in Ukraine don’t make us feel more secure, but less secure.” Sikorski said, “We want standing plans. We want bigger response forces.”⁸⁰

Countering Russian Capabilities. In addition to their perceived role in strengthening the transatlantic link and alliance cohesion, nonstrategic nuclear weapons are viewed by the eastern allies as a counter to the numerous tactical nuclear weapons in the Russian arsenal. CEE countries feel menaced by both the nearness and number of Russian weapons as well as verbal statements by Russian officials. In August 2014, the often bombastic vice speaker of the Russian Duma, Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, said during a television interview, “The Baltic States and Poland are doomed,” he said. “They will be wiped out. Nothing will remain there. The heads of these dwarf states should think who they are ...”⁸¹ And Russian actions and threats regarding Ukraine raise fears of similar actions against CEE states. The Ukrainian Minister of Defense, Valeriy Heletey, reported, “The Russian side has threatened on several occasions across unofficial channels that, in the case of continued resistance they are ready to use a tactical nuclear weapon against us.”⁸²

⁷⁸ The White House, Office of the Press Secretary, “Fact Sheet: European Reassurance Initiative and Other U.S. Efforts in Support of NATO Allies and Partners, June 3, 2014.

⁷⁹ “Leaked Tape Reveals Polish Foreign Minister Considers U.S. Alliance Worthless, *The Associated Press*, June 22, 2014.

⁸⁰ Jorge Benetiz, “NATO Eyes ‘Alliance Assurance’ Force,” *Defense News*, August 20, 2014, available at <http://www.defensenews.com/article/20140820/DEFREG01/308200031/NATO-Eyes-Alliance-Assurance-Force>.

⁸¹ “Zhirinovskiy: Baltic States and Poland will be wiped out,” <http://charter97.org/en/news/2014/8/11/110678/> August 11, 2014. Also quoted in: Anne Applebaum, “War in Europe is not a hysterical idea,” *Washington Post*, August 29, 2014.

⁸² Damien Sharkov, “Russian Has Threatened Nuclear Attack, Says Ukraine Defense Minister, *Newsweek.com*, September 1, 2014 available at <http://www.newsweek.com/russia-has-threatened-nuclear-attack-says-ukraine-defence-minister-267842>.

This is not the first time Russia has threatened nuclear weapon use against NATO allies that were formerly within the Soviet sphere of influence. For example, in August 2008, Russia's deputy chief of staff, General Anatoly Nogovitisyn, warned that any new U.S. "assets" [meaning missile defense sites] in Europe could come under Russian nuclear attack. He specified further that, by agreeing to host U.S. missile defense capabilities, Poland "is exposing itself to a strike 100 per cent."⁸³

NATO's nuclear weapons and dual-capable aircraft are not present in the countries that see Russian nuclear arms "right at NATO's doorstep," and size of the nonstrategic weapons inventory for NATO is on the order of one-tenth that of Russia's. Nonetheless, under present circumstances, CEE allies consider some weapons better than none and weapons somewhere on the Continent better than none at all. For Central and Eastern Europeans, part of the reason for retaining US nuclear weapons on European soil is their perceived value in deterring any potential external attack from or intimidation by Russia."⁸⁴

In September 2014, during the NATO summit in Wales, President Obama met with the leaders of the three Baltic states. He asserted, "You lost your independence before, ... With NATO, you will never lose it again."⁸⁵ The 2014 NATO Summit concluded with a declaration by the NATO Secretary General, "*In these turbulent times NATO must be prepared to undertake the full range of missions and to defend Allies against the full range of threats.*" NATO leaders at their meeting agreed to maintain a continuous presence and activity in the air, on land and at sea in the eastern part of the Alliance, on a rotational basis. They also agreed to create a spearhead unit within the NATO Response Force which would be a very high readiness force able to deploy at very short notice.⁸⁶

⁸³ Harry de Quetteville and Andrew Pierce, "Russia threatens nuclear attack on Poland over US missile shield deal," The Telegraph, August 15, 2008 available at <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/russia/2566005/Russia-threatens-nuclear-attack-on-Poland-over-US-missile-shield-deal.html>.

⁸⁴ This paragraph borrow from Kurt Guthe, *NATO Nuclear Reductions and the Assurance of Central and Eastern European Allies*, p. 21.

⁸⁵ Griff Witte and Craig Whitlock, "NATO faces specter of new threat from old foe," *Washington Post*, September 4, 2014, pp. A1, A8.

⁸⁶ NATO leaders take decisions to ensure robust Alliance, September 5, 2014 http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news_112460.htm. Also, see the "Wales Summit Declaration," issued September 5, 2014, paragraphs 5 though 12, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_112964.htm.

Hedge Against Future Threats. Although CEE countries value nonstrategic nuclear weapons primarily in terms of promoting alliance cohesion and checking Russian threats, they also recognize these arms are one type of insurance against what the Deterrence and Defense Posture Review report characterizes as “a variety of challenges and unpredictable contingencies in a highly complex and evolving international security environment.” The potential for Iran, which borders NATO ally Turkey, to develop a nuclear arsenal and trigger further nuclear proliferation in the region is one potential future threat of concern.⁸⁷

By maintaining nuclear-capable forces, weapons, and active and inactive weapon storage sites in Europe, NATO maintains the flexibility to adjust its nuclear force to better deter and respond to future threats. Given recent nuclear developments in Iran and provocative actions by Russia, the need to reposition or otherwise adapt NATO nuclear forces in response to future threats does not seem to be a remote possibility.

In summary, U.S. NATO allies in Central and Eastern Europe view the continued deployment of U.S. nuclear weapons to Europe important for a variety of reasons: reinforcing the transatlantic link; burden-sharing; counterbalancing Russian capabilities; and hedging potential threats. An opinion editorial in the August 17, 2014 edition of the *Washington Post* by former National Security Advisors Brent Scowcroft and Stephen Hadley and former National Security Council advisor Franklin Miller called for NATO to reaffirm the role of its nuclear arms at its September 2014 meeting in Wales. Part of the justification for this action was the importance of these U.S. weapons to the Eastern European members of NATO. They state,

The newer members joined NATO in large part to get under this nuclear umbrella, and they have been vocal in expressing their concern that withdrawing the weapons would symbolize a diminution in the U.S. commitment to defend them. Their concerns are heightened as they watch a recidivist Russia conduct exercises simulating nuclear strikes on Poland and the Baltic states, threatening nuclear strikes on nascent NATO missile-defense sites and continuing to deploy a bloated arsenal of several thousand short-range nuclear weapons.⁸⁸

⁸⁷ *NATO 2012 DDR*, op.cit., Paragraph 32.

⁸⁸ Brent Scowcroft, Stephen J. Hadley and Franklin Miller, “NATO-based nuclear weapons are an advantage in a dangerous world,” *Washington Post*, August 17, 2014.

Former NATO Supreme Allied Commander James Stavridis stated that he once thought the United States should consider withdrawing its nuclear weapons from Europe, but he has recently changed his mind. In a September 23, 2014 article, Stavridis is quoted as saying,

Withdrawing our relatively few weapons would be the absolute wrong signal at this moment. ...[G]iven Russian activities of the past months and the potential for a return to a period of significant friction between Russia and the alliance, I now believe we should keep the weapons in Europe, despite the costs and risks associated with doing so.⁸⁹

Minimum deterrence enthusiasts seem to ignore the important roles served by U.S. nuclear weapons deployed to NATO and the value attributed by member states, especially, CEE states, to the U.S. commitment to deter adversaries and defend them. As will be discussed below, this general conclusion from the empirical evidence from CEE states has much in common with the views by allies in Northeast Asia and elsewhere.

Northeast Asian Allies

Two U.S. allies in Northeast Asia, Japan and the Republic of Korea (ROK), are geographically in close proximity to three countries armed with nuclear weapons and other WMD—Russia, China, and North Korea. Japan and the ROK have unique histories, different perceptions of the sources of the most serious threats, and correspondingly different views on certain U.S. nuclear weapon capabilities and policies that are considered important for assurance. While the specifics differ for each country, what they share in common is the high value they attribute to certain U.S. nuclear capabilities and extended nuclear deterrence for their security.

Japan

History of U.S. Extended Nuclear Deterrence Guarantees to Japan⁹⁰

In 1952, a Mutual Security Assistance Pact between the United States and Japan set the stage for further security arrangements between the two countries. That pact was succeeded by the 1960 Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security, which declared that both nations would maintain and

⁸⁹ Ralph Vartabedian and W. J. Hennigan, “U.S. nuke arsenal in Europe to stay the same,” *MCT News Service*, September 23, 2014.

⁹⁰ For a more complete history of U.S. extended deterrence guarantees to Japan, see Keith Payne, Study Director, Thomas Scheber, and Kurt Guthe, *U.S. Extended Deterrence and Assurance for Allies in Northeast Asia* (Fairfax, VA: National Institute Press, March 2010), pp. 21-39.

develop their capacities to resist armed attack in common and that each recognized that an armed attack on either one in territories administered by Japan would be considered dangerous to the safety of the other. The United States provided the military capabilities; Japan provided the bases for forward-deployed U.S. forces.

In October 1964, in the immediate aftermath of China's first nuclear test, Japan's leaders began to worry that they might be held hostage to a nuclear-armed China. U.S. intervention in Vietnam was straining relations between the United States and China and Japanese leaders were uncertain how these new developments would affect continued U.S. willingness to meet its security commitments to Japan.

At the same time, U.S. officials in the Johnson administration grew worried about the potential flood of nuclear proliferation in the near future. Among those countries at the top of the list of proliferation concerns was Japan. In late 1964, U.S. intelligence warned the Johnson administration that the incoming prime minister and foreign minister of Japan were "hot for proliferation." In 1965, the new Japanese Prime Minister Sato Eisaku told President Johnson that, "nuclear weapons in Japan just make sense." He felt that if China had nuclear weapons, so should Japan.⁹¹ In the face of stiff U.S. opposition to Japan acquiring a nuclear capability, in January 1965, Sato secretly asked then-Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara to clarify that the U.S. commitment to Japan included U.S. protection with nuclear weapons. Sato reportedly declared, "Should a war breakout [between Japan and China], we expect the United States to immediately launch a retaliatory nuclear strike [against China]." The U.S. response formed the basis for the U.S. extended deterrence commitment to Japan.⁹²

During this same timeframe, a secret, nongovernmental study in Japan was examining the nuclear issue. The study's findings were summarized in a document called The 1968/1970 Internal Report. This study concluded that it was in Japan's interest to remain nonnuclear. This report provided the official rationale for Japan to set aside, at least for the time, the option of

⁹¹ Francis J. Gavin, "Predicting Proliferation During the 1960s: The Story of LBJ's Gilpatric Committee," paper presented at a conference on "Intelligence and Prediction in an Unpredictable World," Center for International Security and Cooperation, Stanford University, June 20-21, 2003, p. 22.

⁹² "SATO sought U.S. nuclear strike in Japan-China war," *Asahi Shimbun*, December 22, 2008. Cited in James L. Schoff, "Realigning Priorities: The U.S. -Japan Alliance & the Future of Extended Deterrence," Institute for Foreign Policy Analysis, March 2009, p. 27. Also see, Toshi Yoshihara and James R. Holmes, "Thinking the Unthinkable: Tokyo's Nuclear Option," *Naval War College Review*, Summer 2009, Vol. 62, No. 3, p. 61.

developing nuclear weapons. Japan signed the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in 1970, joining as a nonnuclear weapons state. A year later (1971), then-Prime Minister, Eisaku Sato, enshrined in a Diet resolution what became known as “Japan’s Three No’s”: Japan will not 1) possess, 2) manufacture, or 3) allow nuclear weapons to be introduced to Japanese territory. However, the commitment to foreswear nuclear weapons—especially in the wake of China’s emerging nuclear capability—continued to be controversial within Japan.

Japanese leaders indicated that Tokyo’s policy of Three Non-Nuclear Principles was dependent on other policies which included the continued reliance and dependence on U.S. extended deterrence guarantees. Following Japan’s initial signing of the NPT, it took six years of internal deliberation before Tokyo finally ratified its entry into the NPT regime. It did so only after West Germany joined the NPT regime and the United States agreed not to interfere with Tokyo’s nuclear material reprocessing capabilities associated with its civilian nuclear power program. According to a senior Japanese official, the most important factor that swayed the debate in favor of ratification was the U.S. offer of extended deterrence and the credibility of the U.S. nuclear deterrent.⁹³

During the Cold War, the United States maintained a large arsenal of both strategic and non-strategic nuclear weapons. No nuclear weapons were forward-deployed to Japan, however, the status of sea-based nuclear forces visiting Japanese ports was often opaque. The U.S. policy to “neither confirm nor deny (NCND)” the presence of nuclear weapons aboard any specific base or ship allowed both parties to circumvent, at least publicly, the issue of meeting Japan’s security needs and observing Japan’s “Three No’s.”⁹⁴

Immediately following the Cold War, the Japanese government expressed its intention to continue to rely on the security arrangements outlined in the 1960 Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security. However, the changing security environment raised new issues for Japanese leaders. The growing Chinese economy provided an opportunity for greater trade with China. At the same time, many in the United States began to view Japan as an economic competitor.

⁹³ Kurt M. Campbell and Tsuyoshi Sunohara, “Japan: Thinking the Unthinkable,” in Campbell et al., *The Nuclear Tipping Point: Why States Reconsider Their Nuclear Choices*, op. cit., pp. 222-225.

⁹⁴ “Asahi: Vice Foreign Minister Acknowledges Talks on Bringing U.S. Nukes Into Japan,” *Asahi Shimbun Online* in English, August 25, 2009.

During the mid-1990s, Japanese officials debated whether to remain closely allied with the United States or develop a closer relationship with China. Some Japanese leaders expressed worry that the United States would reject its alliance with Japan in favor of the economic benefits of closer ties with China.⁹⁵ The growing Chinese military capabilities and history of conflict between China and Japan made Tokyo nervous. The impressive performance of U.S. military forces during the 1991 Gulf War and lack of an adversary capable of challenging the powerful conventional military of the United States provided a compelling rationale for continuing the U.S.-Japan alliance.

In 1996, the Clinton-Hashimoto Declaration stated that the U.S.-Japan security alliance was the foundation for stability and growing prosperity in a post-Cold War East Asia.⁹⁶ The 1997 Defense Guidelines for the Japan-United States Defense Cooperation Agreement provided a start in a new direction. It included language that explicitly gave Japan greater responsibility for security matters in “areas surrounding Japan” and called for Japanese Self-Defense Forces to contribute to cooperative measures for supply and transportation in “the Far East” which Japanese governments have broadly interpreted to mean anywhere north of the Philippines.⁹⁷

The first decade of the twenty-first century brought further changes in the security environment for Japan. Significant events included the 9-11 terrorist attack in the United States and the U.S. preoccupation with fighting terrorists, dramatic nuclear reductions announced by the United States following the 2001 Nuclear Posture Review, the rapid growth of the Chinese economy and China’s expanding military capabilities, and the demonstration of the nuclear potential of North Korea as evidence by its first nuclear test in 2006.

The North Korean nuclear test in 2006 sent shock waves through national security circles in Japan. Tokyo sought and received high level U.S. reassurances that the ‘nuclear’ remained in the U.S. ‘nuclear umbrella.’ In May 2007, a joint statement by U.S. and Japanese foreign and defense ministers stated that, “United States extended deterrence underpins the defense of Japan”

⁹⁵ Joseph S. Nye, Jr., Prepared Statement for the House Foreign Affairs Committee, Subcommittee on Asia, the Pacific and the Global Environment, June 25, 2009, p. 4.

⁹⁶ Ibid., p. 2.

⁹⁷ Ibid., p. 4.

and that, “the full range of U.S. military capabilities—both nuclear and nonnuclear strike force and defensive capabilities—form the core of extended deterrence.”⁹⁸

In 2010, the United States and Japan initiated periodic meetings referred to as the Extended Deterrence Dialogue. This bilateral forum involves U.S. and Japanese officials who meet periodically to exchange views on potential security threats, deterrence strategies, and possible actions should deterrence fail. This forum provides an opportunity for Japanese officials to voice their views on regional threats and their security needs and for U.S. officials to explain how U.S. capabilities contribute to the deterrence of threats to Japan.⁹⁹

Contemporary Japanese Views on Security Threats

In mid-2014, the Japanese Ministry of Defense released its latest annual defense white paper. The report calls the security environment “increasingly severe” and singles out China, Russia, and North Korea as potential security threats involving cyber attacks, provocations on the high seas, and nuclear weapons.¹⁰⁰ In particular, the white paper cites the proliferation of WMD and ballistic missiles, as well as international terrorism and failed states, as posing “imminent security challenges.”¹⁰¹

China. Until recently, China was seldom listed as a potential threat in public Japanese documents, but private concerns over future Chinese actions were often behind politely worded statements. However, in response to the numerous provocative actions by China, many in regard to long-standing territorial disputes, Japan has dropped all pretexts over whether China is viewed as a threat. In Japan’s latest annual defense white paper, a new 30-page section describes the potential threat from China. Among the concerns listed are China’s nuclear build-up, the announcement in November 2013 of China’s New Air Defense Identification Zone in the East China Sea that extends over islands whose ownership is in dispute between Beijing and Tokyo,

⁹⁸ “Full Text of Japan-U.S. Joint Security Statement,” Tokyo *Kyodo World Service*, May 7, 2008, transcribed in Open Source Center, Doc. ID: JPP20070502969013.

⁹⁹ Brad Roberts, “Extended Deterrence and Strategic Stability in Northeast Asia,” National Institute for Defense Studies of the Ministry of Defense of Japan, NIDS Visiting Scholar Paper Series, No. 1, p. 14.

¹⁰⁰ Kyle Mizokami, “Japan’s ‘Increasingly Severe’ Security environment,” <http://news.usni.org/2014/08/06/japans-increasingly-severe-security-environment>, August 6, 2014.

¹⁰¹ Japan Ministry of Defense 2014 Annual Defense White Paper, Part 1: Security Environment Surrounding Japan, Section 1: Overview - Trends in the International Community, p. 2.

and incursions by Chinese ships, submarines, and aircraft into Japanese territory. In an unusual display of bluntness, the annual report states,

China has been sustaining large increases in its defense spending and broadly and rapidly reinforcing its military forces, mainly its nuclear and missile force as well as its Navy and Air Force. As part of such efforts, it is understood that China is strengthening its so-called “A2/AD” capabilities. In addition, China is working to improve joint operational capabilities, enhance capabilities for extended-range power projection, conduct practical exercises, cultivate and acquire highly-capable personnel for administering operations of informatized forces, and improve the foundation of its domestic defense industry. Furthermore, China has been rapidly expanding and intensifying its activities in the seas and airspace, including the East China Sea and South China Sea. In particular, China has adopted so-called assertive measures, including attempts to alter the status quo by coercive measures, in response to issues involving conflicting maritime interests. Japan has great concerns over such Chinese military activities, etc., together with the lack of transparency in its military affairs and security issues, and needs to pay utmost attention to them.¹⁰²

In addition, China has initiated other provocations toward Japan. For example, on July 8, 2014, several Chinese news agencies, including the web site of the *Global Times*, a widely-read tabloid published by the ruling Communist Party, published on its front page a map of Japan with mushroom-shaped clouds over the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The caption, written in both Chinese and English, read, “Japan wants a war again.”¹⁰³ Japan’s Prime Minister Shinzo Abe has “compared the current state of relations between Japan and China with the relationship between Germany and Britain before the first world war.”¹⁰⁴

The U.S. policy goal of “strategic stability” between the United States and China—announced in the 2010 NPR—has been of particular concern for some in Japan. This policy goal appears to have heightened concerns expressed years earlier by Japanese security analysts. Officials in Tokyo have often worried that China may decide to step beyond its current nuclear posture of minimum deterrence and develop a robust second-strike capability, perhaps with Japan as a primary target. Simultaneously, some Japanese experts worry that the “absolute supremacy” of U.S. nuclear forces may erode in the future. The worst-case scenario for these strategic thinkers

¹⁰² Japan Ministry of Defense 2014 Annual Defense White Paper, Part 1, Chapter 1: Defense Policies of Countries, Section 3: China, p. 4. http://www.mod.go.jp/e/publ/w_paper/2014.html.

¹⁰³ “Chinese Paper Prints Map of Japan Covered by Mushroom Clouds,” *Reuters*, July 8, 2014.

¹⁰⁴ Demetri Sevastopulo, “China Ramps Up Rhetoric Battle With Japan re: Disputed Islands,” *The Financial Times*, March 5, 2014, available at <http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/32f8c8d6-a40b-11e3-88b0-00144feab7de.html#axzz2v5erNIV3>.

is that an increase in Chinese nuclear capabilities and corresponding decrease in U.S. capabilities may lead the United States to accept rough parity with Chinese nuclear forces or even conclude a bilateral arms control agreement with Beijing to the detriment of the U.S. nuclear force. Such a step would be viewed as endorsing a Chinese limited nuclear strike capability against the United States, with a decoupling effect that would be devastating for Japan.¹⁰⁵

Russia. While Japanese officials have not often discussed potential threats from Russia in the post-Cold War environment, recent Russian military activity in the Pacific region and elsewhere (e.g., Georgia, Ukraine) has heightened Japanese concern. The 2014 white paper noted. “...between August and September 2013, the [Russian] Pacific Fleet conducted large scale exercises involving about 15,000 personnel, 50 naval vessels and 30 aircraft in the coast region, Sakhalin, waters off east of Kamchatka Peninsula, and Chukchi Peninsula. Notably, as part of these exercises naval infantry of the Pacific Fleet conducted landing drills on the Kuril Islands for the first time since the end of the Cold War.”¹⁰⁶ The Kuril Islands were seized by the Soviet Union at the end of World War II. Japan still claims the four islands in the southern Kurils and for decades has tried to convince Russia to return control to Tokyo. Japan protested the Russian military exercises, calling them “totally unacceptable.”¹⁰⁷ In addition, Russian Backfire bombers have carried out simulated cruise missile attacks on U.S. and Japanese missile defense sites in and near Japan.¹⁰⁸ To further heighten Tokyo’s security concerns, in July 2014 Russia and China held their largest-ever joint naval exercise in the Sea of Japan.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁵ Michael J. Green and Katsuhisa Furukawa, “Japan: New Nuclear Realism,” in Muthiah Alagappa, ed., *The Long Shadow: Nuclear Weapons and Security in 21st Century Asia* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2008), pp. 354-355.

¹⁰⁶ Japan Ministry of Defense 2014 Annual Defense White Paper, Part 1, Chapter 1: Defense Policies of Countries, Section 4: Russia, p. 9.

¹⁰⁷ Kyle Mizokami, “Russia Playing Politics With Alleged Submarine Confrontations,” August 26, 2014, <http://news.usni.org/2014/08/26/russia-playing-politics-alleged-submarine-confrontations?utm>.

¹⁰⁸ Bill Gertz, “Russian Bomber Conducts Practice Strikes on U.S. Missile Defenses in Asia,” The Washington Free Beacon, April 5, 2013, <http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2013/apr/5/russian-bomber-conducts-practice-strikes-us-missil>.

¹⁰⁹ “China and Russia hold their largest-ever joint naval drills,” BBC News, July 5, 2014, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-23198124>.

Japanese officials appear to be most concerned about potential threats from China and North Korea, however, Russia's aggressive actions have added to Japanese anxiety regarding its long-term security and regional threats.

North Korea. According to former-Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Nuclear and Missile Defense Policy, Bradley Roberts, the “renewed interest in extended deterrence in Northeast Asia follows from a nuclear-armed North Korea with long-range missiles.” According to Roberts, North Korean nuclear capabilities can pose three kinds of increased risk to Japan:

- North Korea may conduct further provocations by non-nuclear means, while feeling protected in doing so by its nuclear capabilities. These non-nuclear provocations may include those directed against Japan.
- North Korean leaders may miscalculate the responses from South Korea, Japan, and others and provocations could lead to war and unintended escalation. And,
- Possible “outright aggression” by North Korea.¹¹⁰

Various statements by North Korean officials have put Japan on notice that its nuclear capabilities could be unleashed aggressively against Japan. For example, in early 2013, the North threatened, “Japan is always in the cross-hairs of our revolutionary army and if Japan makes a slightest move, the spark of war will touch Japan first.”¹¹¹

The 2014 defense white paper used particularly blunt language to describe the official Japanese view of North Korea's policies and actions. It said,

...North Korea seems to maintain and reinforce its so-called asymmetric military capabilities by continuing to develop weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and ballistic missiles and by maintaining large-scale special operations forces. In addition, North Korea repeatedly uses provocative words and actions against relevant countries, including Japan. In particular, from March to April 2013, North Korea underscored that it would exercise its right to preemptive nuclear attack against the United States and other countries, and that the strike zone of its ballistic missiles included Japan, naming specific cities. ...Such military trend[s] in North Korea constitutes a serious destabilizing factor to the security not only of

¹¹⁰ Brad Roberts, “Extended Deterrence and Strategic Stability in Northeast Asia,” National Institute for Defense Studies of the Ministry of Defense of Japan, NIDS Visiting Scholar Paper Series, No. 1, p. 4.

¹¹¹ As quoted in Roberts, “Extended Deterrence and Strategic Stability in Northeast Asia,” p. 4. Citation: “North Korea states ‘nuclear war is unavoidable and declares first target will be Japan,’” *Express* (Tokyo), April 12, 2013. And, Max Fisher, “Here’s North Korea’s official declaration of ‘war,’” *Washington Post*, March 30, 2013.

Japan but of the entire region and the international community. Needless to say, North Korea's possession of nuclear weapons cannot be tolerated.¹¹²

Overall Security Environment. Following the release of the defense white paper, Japan's Defense Minister Itsunori Onodera summarized the 500-page report by saying, "The national security environment we face is shifting constantly ... the changes ... in the past several years have been drastic ..." Onodera also indicated that Tokyo would unveil several changes to Japan's defense policy. Perhaps the most controversial change under discussion is a policy that would give Japan's Self Defense Forces the authorization and capability to strike preemptively at enemy bases. Onodera said, "Until now, we've asked our allies, particularly the U.S., ... to protect Japan."¹¹³

One concern in Japan is the perception of the decline of U.S. power and influence concurrent with the growth of China's power.¹¹⁴ A July 2013 survey of 39 countries by the Pew Research Center reported that the "decline of U.S. influence is seen as inevitable."¹¹⁵ Of the 39 countries surveyed, Japan was the country for which the favorability differential between the United States and China was the greatest. Japan still views the United States as its preferred partner. However, Japan is taking on greater responsibilities for its own security. Japan is continuing to develop intelligence, surveillance, and missile defense capabilities, and is considering a preemptive strike capability that seems to push the limits of what is allowed under the passivist Japanese constitution. One Japanese view of the need for its own preemptive strike capabilities is the concern that, as threats to the United States grow, the United States may be less willing to take prompt action when Japan is threatened. U.S. policies that seek to reduce the roles of nuclear weapons and to consider a no-first-use policy have generated some anxiety in Japan.¹¹⁶

¹¹² Japan Ministry of Defense 2014 Annual Defense White Paper, Part 1, Chapter 1: Defense Policies of Countries, Section 2: Korean Peninsula, p. 2.

¹¹³ Yaku Hayashi, "Minister Says Japan to Bolster Its Defenses," *Wall Street Journal*, July 17, 2014, p. A10.

¹¹⁴ William Wan, "Global Attitudes Reflect Shifting U.S.-China Power Balance, Survey Concludes," *Washington Post*, July 18, 2013.

¹¹⁵ William Wan, "Global Attitudes Reflect Shifting U.S. -China Power Balance," *Washington Post Online*, http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/asia_pacific/global-attitudes-reflect-shifting-us-china-power-balance-survey-concludes/2013/07/17/7f51a94c-eeed-11e2-bed3-b9b6fe264871_story.html?hpid=z3.

¹¹⁶ Shunija Taoka, "'Nuclear Umbrella' Will Not Waiver as a Result of Obama's Call for Abolishing Nuclear Weapons," *Facta* (in Japanese), pp. 54-55, translation by JPP20090527036001. Also see, Takashi Sudo and Kazuhiko Kusano, "Questions About 'Nuclear Umbrella' as US Moves Towards Nuclear Arms Reduction—The Path Japan Should Take," *Mainichi Shimbun* (in Japanese), August 6, 2009, translation by JPP20090806033001.

Despite the rise of China's influence, many countries in the Pacific, including Japan, view their ties with the United States as far more important than their relationship with China. For Japan, the comprehensive military capabilities of the United States, especially the U.S. extended nuclear deterrence commitment, provide a sound basis for continuing the U.S.-Japan alliance.

Contemporary Japanese Views on Needed U.S. Nuclear Capabilities

Over the past decade, continued U.S. nuclear reductions have generated reactions from Japanese leaders who previously had been relatively silent on U.S. nuclear weapon policies and capabilities. In particular, Japanese officials expressed concern about the viability of U.S. extended nuclear deterrence commitments. As Japanese journalist Hidemichi Katsumata wrote in late 2007, Japanese defense officials are concerned that, “[i]n recent years, the United States has steadily decreased the number of strategic nuclear arms within the nuclear umbrella.”¹¹⁷

In the immediate wake of the 2006 North Korean nuclear test, Noboru Hoshuyama, former director general of the Defense Facilities Administration Agency and managing director of the Research Institute for Peace and Security, issued a report that recent aggressive behavior by North Korea was evidence of a weakening of influence of the United Nations Security Council and a decline in U.S. influence over international issues. The report went on to say that Japan must consider the dire security environment and “conditions would probably exacerbate further.” Of the recommendations that followed, the first recommendation was to study “concerns [for] improving the reliability of the nuclear umbrella and reviewing Japan’s “Three Non-Nuclear Principles” [of abjuring manufacture, possession, and introduction of nuclear weapons].”¹¹⁸

Even prior to the 2006 North Korean nuclear test, Japanese officials had begun examining options that might be needed to deal with growing regional threats. In the final report of one such study, former Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone opined that, “There is a need to also study

¹¹⁷ Hidemichi Katsumata, “Japan Should Create Own Umbrella,” Tokyo *The Daily Yomiuri* (Internet version), December 19, 2007, transcribed in Open Source Center, Doc. ID: JPP20071219969087.

¹¹⁸ “Japan: Ex-Defense Official Urges Nuclear Policy Review With Less US Involvement,” JPP20061206026003 Tokyo Research Institute for Peace and Security WWW-Text (in Japanese), December 1, 2006.

the issue of nuclear weapons. ... It's wrong to think that Japan can defend itself without addressing the nuclear issue.”¹¹⁹

This concern was echoed by the September 2009 report of the Japan-US Alliance Working Group who singled out China as a serious security concern:

Even as the USA and Russia downsize their nuclear arsenals, China may continue to modernize its nuclear forces. That would contribute to further deterioration of the strategic environment in East Asia. ... If China keeps on expanding its nuclear capabilities while the USA and Russia proceed with strategic reductions, however, the ability of the US to deter Chinese encroachments will decline.¹²⁰

The working group went on to warn that if the security environment vis-à-vis China worsens, Japan would have to take actions “toward a more advanced extended deterrence posture than the present one that rests almost exclusively on declaratory policy.” The report identified actions that could enhance the extended deterrence posture. These include:

- A bilateral planning group, such as NATO’s Nuclear Planning Group, to discuss how best to employ nuclear weapons for the defense of Japan;
- Modification of Japan’s Three Non-Nuclear Principles to allow the introduction of U.S. nuclear weapons into Japan;
- Japanese weapon delivery vehicles that could be armed with U.S.-provided (and controlled) nuclear warheads;
- Transfer of a limited amount of technology from the USA to Japan to enable Japan to quickly attain a limited nuclear capability.

Regarding this list of possible actions, the working group once again restated the importance of U.S. extended deterrence: “...as long as...the US extended deterrence remains credible, Japan would have no intention to build an independent nuclear force, even though it may be assumed to possess the necessary economic and technological wherewithal.”¹²¹

Japan is one of several allies that have recently been explicit that the U.S. extended nuclear deterrent is key to their assurance and they link their own willingness to remain nonnuclear to the continuation of a credible U.S. nuclear guarantee. To expand on this general theme, Japanese officials recently made the following points:

¹¹⁹ “Nakasone Proposes Japan Consider Nuclear Weapons,” *Japan Times*, September 16, 2006; and “North Korea’s Nuclear Threat: Is U.S. Nuclear Umbrella Effective?,” *The Daily Yomiuri (Internet version)*, March 20, 2008, transcribed in Open Source Center, Doc. ID: JPP20070320969116.

¹²⁰ “The Japan US Alliance Toward 2020,” p. 10.

¹²¹ Ibid.

- Some Japanese officials are seriously concerned about the credibility of the U.S. extended nuclear deterrent;
- If the U.S. extended nuclear deterrent loses credibility, some in Japan believe that other security options will have to be examined;
- Some in Japan see specific characteristics of U.S. nuclear forces as particularly beneficial for extended deterrence. Valued force characteristics include a range of nuclear capabilities: flexibility, promptness, and precision to allow U.S. deterrent threats that do not lack credibility because of excessive collateral damage;
- U.S. “superiority” in nuclear weapons may be helpful for U.S. extended deterrence responsibilities;
- The overall quantity of U.S. nuclear weapons is important to the credibility of the extended deterrent, and any further U.S. reductions should come only as part of a multilateral agreement for reductions among all nuclear weapons states.¹²²

During the deliberations of the bipartisan Strategic Posture Commission, representatives from a number of countries that are U.S. allies were invited to testify regarding the perceived importance of the U.S. nuclear umbrella. Following the release of the commission’s final report in the spring of 2009, several of the commissioners were invited to testify before the Senate Armed Services Committee. When asked about the views of key allies regarding the value of U.S. nuclear weapons, one commissioner responded:

We had the opportunity to listen to comments by a number of nations who were represented and presented their views to us. ... Those allies that are on the periphery of Russia and those allies that are on the periphery of China are concerned. They are concerned about whether or not the nuclear umbrella will be credible as they see it against the statements that have been made by potential adversaries.

Now, in particular, Japan—representatives from Japan have described in some detail the kind of capabilities that they believe the U.S. nuclear umbrella should possess. And so they have talked about capabilities that are—that can be stealthy and they can be transparent ...And then they would like capabilities that can penetrate our targets with minimum collateral damage and low yield and so on. Now, those are not the characteristics that we currently deploy. And so, the question is whether or not in discussions with our allies, that we will be able to accommodate their concerns.¹²³

¹²² As reported in: Keith Payne (Study Director), Thomas Scheber, Kurt Guthe, U.S. Extended Deterrence and Assurance for Allies in Northeast Asia, (Fairfax, VA: National Institute Press, March 2010), pp. 36-37. These points were made during 2008 in seminars involving a variety of Japanese officials.

¹²³ CQ Congressional Transcripts, Congressional Hearings May 7, 2009, “Senate Armed Services Committee Holds Hearing on the Report of the Congressional Commission on the Strategic Posture of the United States,” p. 32.

A 2010 report from the Japanese National Institute for Defense Studies expressed Tokyo's worry over future nuclear reductions,

Further progress in nuclear disarmament by the United States, if accompanied with a decrease in the role of United States nuclear weapons, may diminish the relative weight of the nuclear umbrella in the overall extended deterrence. In such circumstances, the US allies will inevitably feel less confident in the US nuclear umbrella. Much less confident in the case of Japan whose immediate neighbors are China that shows no signs of slowing down in its plans to bolster its nuclear forces and North Korea which is pushing ahead with the development of nuclear weapons.¹²⁴

Worries over possible U.S. nuclear reductions were heightened when the 2010 NPR announced a further U.S. nuclear drawdown and the retirement of the nuclear version of the Tomahawk Land Attack Missile (TLAM-N). The 2010 NPR report announcing the elimination of all TLAM-N referred to this weapon system as serving “a redundant purpose.”¹²⁵ Furthermore, the NPR report stated that its deterrence and assurance roles “can be adequately substituted” by other means.¹²⁶ This weapon may have been viewed as redundant by U.S. officials, but the perspective from Tokyo was quite different. Japanese officials had come to view the possibility of basing U.S. nuclear weapons in Japan or nearby as a pragmatic response to growing regional threats. Some in Tokyo saw the potential deterrence value of allowing U.S. Navy submarines carrying deployed nuclear weapons to temporarily enter Japanese ports. TLAM-N represented the only remaining U.S. option to deploy nonstrategic nuclear weapons at sea. To calm Tokyo's concerns over the pending retirement of TLAM-N, U.S. defense officials made numerous trips to Tokyo to discuss the implications for deterrence in Northeast Asia. Certainly the lesson here is the importance of understanding how each ally views regional threats and the U.S. capabilities that are important for extended deterrence and assurance.¹²⁷ In this case, the perspective from Tokyo was quite different than that of Washington, D.C.

¹²⁴ National Institute for Defense Studies, *East Asian Strategic Review 2010*, pp. 33-34.

¹²⁵ Department of Defense, *Nuclear Posture Review Report*, April 2010, p. 28.

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ For a more complete discussion of Japanese views on TLAM-N and the response to its announced retirement, see: David J. Trachtenberg, “US Extended Deterrence: How Much Strategic Force is Too Little,” *Strategic Studies Quarterly*, Summer 2012, pp. 75-76. Also, Kurt Guthe and Thomas Scheber, *Assuring South Korea and Japan as the Role and Number of U.S. Nuclear Weapons are Reduced* (Ft. Belvoir, VA: Defense Threat Reduction Agency, January 2011), DTRA Report No. ASCO 2011-003, pp. 54-55.

During a recent study conducted by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Japanese officials, analysts, and politicians were interviewed on extended deterrence issues. The resulting 2011 report, stated,

Some in Japan argue that the United States should not accept “mutual vulnerability” (as it is known in deterrence jargon) on the grounds that, for extended deterrence to be credible, the United States requires the ability to reduce, if not eliminate entirely, the damage it would suffer in a nuclear war with China.¹²⁸

Japanese defense analysts emphasize the need for U.S. capabilities to be able to limit damage to the United States and Japan. Accordingly, if the damage-limiting capability of the country providing the nuclear umbrella is superior to that of the aggressor, its threat to embark on a nuclear retaliation and nuclear exchanges will be all the more credible and its deterrent effect all the stronger. Following this logic, one official interviewed for the Carnegie study worried that deep nuclear force reductions would undermine U.S. damage limitation capabilities, with the result that the United States would become less willing to use nuclear weapons and that Japan and the United States would become “decoupled.”¹²⁹

Strengthening the Japan-U.S. Alliance

In February 2014, Japan’s Minister of Foreign Affairs spoke at the Munich Security Conference. He said, “In the Asian region, armament expenditures and the quantity of arms dealings are increasing by the greatest in the world. This is a major concern. Japan will further strengthen the Japan-US alliance, which has been the cornerstone of the region’s peace and stability.”¹³⁰

The theme of strengthening the Japan-U.S. alliance is prominent in Japan’s 2014 annual defense white paper which highlighted a variety of actions toward that goal. Specifically, “...U.S. Forces in Japan serve as deterrence against aggression towards Japan. Further, the realization of a stable

¹²⁸ James Acton, *Low Numbers: A Practical Path to Deep Nuclear Reductions*, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2011, pp. 37-39, available at: http://carnegieendowment.org/files/low_numbers.pdf.

¹²⁹ Ibid.

¹³⁰ Summarizing Comment by Minister of Foreign Affairs Mr. Fumio Kishida at the Munich Security Conference, February 1, 2014, http://www.mofa.go.jp/fp/nsp/page18e_000046.html.

U.S. military presence is necessary for a swift Japan–U.S. joint response based on Article 5 of the Japan–U.S. Security Treaty in the event of an armed attack on Japan.”¹³¹

The new National Defense Program Guidelines state that “in order to strengthen the deterrence and response capabilities of the Japan-U.S. Alliance, Japan will build seamless cooperation with the United States ranging from situations in peacetime to various situations, including cooperation in responding to “gray-zone” situations, while increasing the presence of Japan and the United States in the western Pacific region.” In addition, “Japan will also tighten the Japan-U.S. operational cooperation and policy coordination, including ballistic missile defense (BMD), bilateral planning and Extended Deterrence Dialogue.”¹³²

Although the most prominent theme among Japanese officials and commentators has been for the United States to maintain a diverse collection of nuclear capabilities to deter common adversaries and assure Japanese leaders, a minority in Japan appear willing to reconsider the option of Japan developing its own nuclear force. For example, in April 2009, a senior Japanese politician called for Japan to discuss allowing nuclear weapons within its pacifist constitution. Shoichi Nakagawa, former finance minister, suggested that Japan should examine the possibility of defending itself from potential attacks from North Korea by obtaining its own nuclear weapons. “It is common sense worldwide that in a purely military sense it is nuclear that can counteract nuclear,” Mr. Nakagawa was quoted as saying.¹³³

Overall, Japanese officials seek to strengthen the Japan-U.S. Alliance and capabilities that will support deterrence of the growing threats in Northeast Asia. Japan prefers that the United States continue to provide the requisite nuclear capabilities for the alliance and wants to be assured that U.S. nuclear capabilities are sufficient for a variety of contingencies. In addition, Japan continues to acquire capabilities that give it greater independence in security matters in its local area. For this purpose, Japan is modernizing its military capabilities which include anti-

¹³¹ Japan Ministry of Defense 2014 Annual Defense White Paper, Part III, chapter 2: Strengthening of the Japan-U.S. Alliance, Section 1: Japan-U.S. Security Arrangements, p. 5.

¹³² Japan Ministry of Defense 2014 Annual Defense White Paper, Part III, chapter 2: Strengthening of the Japan-U.S. Alliance, Section 2: Initiatives to Strengthen the Japan-U.S. Security Alliance, p. 18-20.

¹³³ Danielle Demetriou, “Japan ‘should develop nuclear weapons’ to counter North Korea threat,” *UK Telegraph*, April 20, 2009, available at: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/japan/5187269/Japan-should-develop-nuclear-weapons-to-counter-North-Korea-threat.html>.

submarine warfare, ballistic missile defense, intelligence and surveillance, and, possibly, conventional strike.

Japan Summary. In the contemporary environment most Japanese leaders and commentators generally agree that Japan should continue to rely on U.S. extended nuclear deterrence guarantees as long as that commitment—backed up by pragmatic U.S. policies and capabilities—remains credible. They specify that for their security the nuclear umbrella should include various capabilities and attributes. The desired capabilities and attributes cited during the past few years by Japanese representatives include the following: superior to all regional threats; credible; prompt; accurate; flexible; deployable to the region; able to limit collateral damage (e.g., low yields); and strong counterforce and other damage-limiting capabilities. Almost all Minimum Deterrence proposals recommend eliminating these capabilities from the U.S. nuclear force.

South Korea

The Republic of Korea (ROK) is another U.S. ally to which the United States had extended the protection of its nuclear umbrella. For over 60 years, the ROK has been threatened by its neighbor, North Korea. For nearly as long, the nuclear umbrella has covered South Korea. During that time, the nuclear guarantee has served two fundamental purposes: to discourage an attack by the North (extended deterrence) and to help give ROK leaders confidence in the U.S. commitment to the defense of the South (assurance).

History of U.S. Extended Nuclear Deterrence Guarantees to South Korea¹³⁴

The Mutual Defense Treaty between the United States and the ROK, signed in October 1953, two months after the Korean War armistice, was intended in large part to assure Seoul that South Korea would not be abandoned by the United States. The treaty declares the determination of the two parties “to defend themselves against external armed attack so that no potential aggressor could be under the illusion that either of them stands alone in the Pacific area.” Each recognizes

¹³⁴ For a more complete history of U.S. extended deterrence guarantees to Japan, see Keith Payne, Study Director, Thomas Scheber, and Kurt Guthe, *U.S. Extended Deterrence and Assurance for Allies in Northeast Asia* (Fairfax, VA: National Institute Press, March 2010), pp. 3-20. Also, Kurt Guthe and Thomas Scheber, *Assuring South Korea and Japan as the Role and Number of U.S. Nuclear Weapons are Reduced* (Fairfax, VA: National Institute Press, January 2011), pp. 9-36. Several citations and examples are drawn from these reports.

that “an armed attack in the Pacific area on either of the Parties... would be dangerous to its own peace and safety and declares it would act to meet the common danger.” Because an American military presence on or near the peninsula was, and is, considered by South Korea to be an essential earnest of the U.S. commitment, the treaty grants the United States “the right to dispose [its] land, air and sea forces in and about the territory of the Republic of Korea as determined by mutual agreement.”¹³⁵

In the 1970s, South Korean leaders worried about the U.S. defense commitment to its security. This was the result of weak U.S. responses to a series of North Korean provocations, the U.S. withdrawal from Vietnam, U.S. calls for greater self-reliance by Asian allies, American troop reductions in South Korea, and criticisms from Washington concerning human rights violations by the government in Seoul.¹³⁶ As part of an effort to bolster South Korean trust in the alliance, a unified U.S.-ROK command structure, the Combined Forces Command (CFC), was established in 1978. The CFC “was an important aspect of the ROK-U.S. military relationship and reduced South Korea’s feeling of insecurity.”¹³⁷ Under the CFC, the United States retained wartime operational control (OPCON) of ROK forces, but in 1994 peacetime OPCON was transferred to South Korea.

Although the 1953 defense agreement between the United States and the ROK does not include an explicit nuclear guarantee, the nuclear umbrella has been provided to South Korea for more than three decades “consistent with the Mutual Defense Treaty.”¹³⁸ Since 1978, the U.S. pledge of nuclear protection for the ROK has been reaffirmed by the secretary of defense in each of the annual Security Consultative Meetings (SCMs) with the South Korean minister of defense.¹³⁹

¹³⁵ Mutual Defense Treaty Between the United States and the Republic of Korea, signed October 1, 1953, ratifications exchanged November 17, 1954, in Department of State, *American Foreign Policy, 1950-1955: Basic Documents, Vol. I*, Department of State Publication 6446 (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1957).

¹³⁶ Keith Payne, Study Director, Thomas Scheber, and Kurt Guthe, *U.S. Extended Deterrence and Assurance for Allies in Northeast Asia* (Fairfax, VA: National Institute Press, March 2010) p. 5.

¹³⁷ Kang Choi and Joon-Sung Park, “South Korea: Fears of Abandonment and Entrapment,” in Muthiah Alagappa, ed., *The Long Shadow: Nuclear Weapons and Security in 21st Century Asia* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2008), p. 378.

¹³⁸ For examples, see 35th (2003), 36th (2004), 37th (2005), 38th (2006), 39th (2007), and 40th (2008) U.S.-ROK Security Consultative Meeting Joint Communiqués, DoD releases.

¹³⁹ DoD News Briefing with Secretary [of Defense Donald] Rumsfeld and South Korean Minister of National Defense Yoon Kwang-Ung at the Pentagon, October 20, 2006, DoD release.

For over 30 years, the communiqué issued at the end of each annual Security Consultative Meeting (SCM) between the U.S. defense secretary and the ROK defense minister has made it clear that South Korea is covered by the U.S. nuclear umbrella.¹⁴⁰ The October 2013 SCM communiqué, for example, reads,

The Secretary [of Defense] reaffirmed the continued U.S. commitment to provide and strengthen extended deterrence for the ROK using the full range of military capabilities, including the U.S. nuclear umbrella, conventional strike, and missile defense capabilities. To enhance effective deterrence options against North Korean nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction (WMD) threats, the [ROK Defense] Minister and the Secretary formally endorsed a bilateral “Tailored Deterrence Strategy Against North Korean Nuclear and other WMD Threats.” This strategy establishes a strategic Alliance framework for tailoring deterrence against key North Korean nuclear threat scenarios...¹⁴¹

In recent years, as the threat to the ROK has become more acute, the United States has reiterated its nuclear umbrella pledge to the ROK in various settings. For example, in June 2009, after a White House meeting with his South Korean counterpart, President Obama gave his own endorsement of the nuclear umbrella extended to the ROK. In response, President Lee Myung-bak stated, “this has given the South Korean people a greater sense of security.”¹⁴²

As part of its preparations for defending South Korea, the United States began deploying nuclear weapons in the ROK in the late 1950s. When it was necessary to deter Pyongyang or assure Seoul, American officials drew attention to deployed U.S. nuclear capabilities. In 1975, for example, shortly after the fall of Saigon, Secretary of Defense James Schlesinger hoped to ease anxiety in Seoul about the U.S. commitment to South Korean security by warning that “if circumstances were to require use of tactical nuclear weapons [to defend the ROK] I think that that would be carefully considered,” and added, “I do not think it would be wise to test [U.S.] reactions.”¹⁴³ In short, South Korea has been covered by a U.S. nuclear guarantee since the early years of the alliance.

¹⁴⁰ DoD News Briefing with Secretary [of Defense Donald] Rumsfeld and South Korean Minister of National Defense Yoon Kwang-Ung at the Pentagon, October 20, 2006, DoD release.

¹⁴¹ 45th U.S.-ROK Security Consultative Meeting Joint Communiqué, Paragraph 6, October 2, 2013, DoD release.

¹⁴² Remarks by President Obama and President Lee Myung-bak of the Republic of Korea in Joint Press availability, June 16, 2009, White House release.

¹⁴³ “Schlesinger Warns N. Korea U.S. May Use Nuclear Arms,” *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, June 22, 1975.

According to open-source accounts, the United States between 1958 and 1991 kept several types of nuclear weapons in the ROK. Depending on the timeframe, these weapons included artillery shells, warheads for surface-to-surface and surface-to-air missiles, atomic demolition munitions, and air-delivered bombs for DCA.¹⁴⁴ The number of nuclear weapons is said to have peaked at several hundred in the late 1960s and early 1970s and then declined to perhaps 100 nuclear artillery shells and bombs before all of the weapons were withdrawn in 1991. U.S. conventional forces stationed in South Korea and the nuclear arms deployed there manifested the American pledge, in particular the nuclear guarantee, to protect the ROK from aggression. And, like U.S. conventional forces, nuclear weapons, if needed, could be used in the direct defense of the South. Indeed, until the military balance on the peninsula shifted against Pyongyang, the U.S. nonstrategic nuclear weapons in South Korea were seen as an important offset to North Korean conventional advantages.

In 2010, the United States and South Korea initiated the Extended Deterrence Policy Committee. This bilateral forum involves U.S. and ROK officials who meet periodically to exchange views on potential security threats, deterrence strategies, and possible actions in the event that deterrence fails. This forum provides an opportunity for South Korean officials to voice their views on regional threats and their security needs and for U.S. officials to explain how U.S. and ROK capabilities contribute to deterrence of threats to the ROK.¹⁴⁵

Contemporary South Korean Views on Security Threats

Unlike its neighbor, Japan, ROK officials have not expressed significant worry about potential military threats from China or Russia. For the ROK, the primary security concern is from the Democratic Peoples' Republic of Korea (DPRK).

Provocations from North Korea. In the post-Cold War era, hostile actions by North Korean military forces and bellicose statements by North Korean leaders have given ROK officials numerous reasons to worry. The 1994 nuclear crisis, for example, was a confrontation that arose when North Korea removed spent fuel rods from its Yongbyon nuclear power reactor without the

¹⁴⁴ Hans M. Kristensen, "A History of U.S. Nuclear Weapons in South Korea," Nuclear Information Project, September 28, 2005, available at www.nukestrat.com.

¹⁴⁵ Brad Roberts, "Extended Deterrence and Strategic Stability in Northeast Asia," National Institute for Defense Studies of the Ministry of Defense of Japan, NIDS Visiting Scholar Paper Series, No. 1, p. 14.

required supervision by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). When the confrontation became acute, Pyongyang threatened Seoul with “a sea of fire.”¹⁴⁶ During the past decade, provocative statements and actions by the North have been numerous. They include the following:

Inflammatory Statements. In late March 2010, North Korea’s military threatened South Korea and the United States with “unprecedented nuclear strikes” as it expressed anger over a report about the two countries planning to prepare for possible instability in the totalitarian country, a scenario it dismissed as a “pipe dream.”¹⁴⁷ In early March 2011, in response to a joint ROK-U.S. military exercise, the DPRK again threatened to turn the ROK capital, Seoul, into “a sea of fire.” A statement from the DPRK Army said, “If the [ROK and U.S.] aggressors launch an attack against us under the guise of ‘a local war,’ the entire world will be a witness to resolute retaliation on the part of our armed forces and people in the form of a total war that has never been seen before,” and threatened “ruthless retaliation.”¹⁴⁸ Extreme statements such as this from the DPRK have become commonplace.

Nuclear Testing. In 2006, the DPRK conducted its first nuclear test. As of this writing, North Korea has conducted at least three underground nuclear tests and reports in South Korean newspapers indicate that ROK officials believe that North Korean ballistic missiles of various ranges are capable of delivering nuclear warheads.¹⁴⁹ Recently, reports have circulated in the United States and South Korea that North Korean ballistic missiles are capable of ranging Hawaii, Alaska, and the western United States.¹⁵⁰ In May 2014, South Korean President Park Geun-hye said that further nuclear tests by North Korea could have a nuclear domino effect and

¹⁴⁶ See Joel S. Wit, Daniel B. Poneman, and Robert L. Gallucci, *Going Critical: The First North Korean Nuclear Crisis* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 2004); Ashton B. Carter and William J. Perry, *Preventive Defense: A New Security Strategy for America* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 1999), pp. 123-132; and William J. Perry, in Senate Foreign Relations Committee, *North Korea Nuclear Agreement*, 104th Cong., 1st sess. (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1995), pp. 20-25.

¹⁴⁷ Kwang-Tae Kim, “NKorea Threatens ‘Nuclear Strikes’ on SKorea, US,” *Associated Press*, March 26, 2010.

¹⁴⁸ N. Korea Says Will Turn Seoul Into “Sea of Fire” If Attacked, CEP20110303964256 Moscow *Interfax* (in English), March 3, 2011.

¹⁴⁹ “North Korea can make ICBMs: Russian expert,” *Korea Times*, July 7, 2011.

¹⁵⁰ Jack Kim, “North Korea may be close to developing nuclear missile, some say,” Reuters News Agency, May 20, 2014, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/05/20/us-northkorea-nuclear-idUSBREA4J06020140520>. Also, Rachel Oswald, “Pentagon Finds North Korea Advancing Goal of Nuclear-Armed ICBM,” *Global Security Newswire*, May 3, 2013. Bill Gertz, “Report: N. Korea Has Nuclear Warheads for Missiles,” *Washington Free Beacon*, May 5, 2014.

provide North Korea's neighbors (i.e., Japan and South Korea) with a pretext to arm themselves with nuclear weapons.¹⁵¹

Possession of Chemical and Biological Weapons. According to one unclassified ROK report, the DPRK has at least 2,500 tons of chemical weapons, as well as several biological agents that could be weaponised. The DPRK is one of only seven countries in the world that has neither signed nor acceded to the Chemical Weapons Convention. It is a party to the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention. However, many analysts believe it violates its commitments by maintaining a secret biological weapon development program and possible stocks of weaponised agents (including anthrax, cholera and small pox).¹⁵²

Attack on ROK Naval Vessel. In March 2010, a DRPK submarine attacked and sunk the South Korean Navy corvette *Cheonan*. The *Cheonan* was operating within ROK waters at the time. The attack killed 46 ROK sailors. ROK media reported that the attack was planned by North Korea's Navy Command and approved by senior DPRK leaders, including Kim Jong-il. ROK sources suggested that the unprovoked attack was conducted to avenge the North's defeat in a November 2009 naval clash near Daecheong Island in the West Sea, to test out new stealth submarines and strategies, and to ratchet up tensions in order to facilitate leadership succession.¹⁵³

In response to the *Cheonan* attack, the United States committed to a series of joint ROK-U.S. naval exercises. A DoD press report stated, "These defensive combined exercises are designed to send a clear message to North Korea that its aggressive behavior must stop and that we are committed to together enhancing our combined defensive capabilities." In addition, on July 20, 2010, a DoD spokesman stated, "We also committed to ensuring sufficient combined force

¹⁵¹ Gerard Baker and Alastair Gale, "South Korea President Warns on Nuclear Domino Effect," *Wall Street Journal*, May 29, 2014.

¹⁵² North Korea's Chemical and Biological Weapons Programs, Report from the International Crisis Group, June 18, 2009, pp. 1, 10. Also see, Excerpts from ROK Defense White Paper 2006, KPP20070310042001 Seoul *Kukpang Paekso* '2006, in Korean, December 29, 2006, p. 25.

¹⁵³ N.Korean Top Leadership 'Closely Involved in Cheonan Sinking,' *The Chosun Ilbo*, May 27, 2010.

capabilities and the provision of extended deterrence through the U.S. nuclear umbrella, conventional strike, and missile defense capabilities.”¹⁵⁴

In another example of inflammatory rhetoric, North Korea issued an official statement saying that blaming NK forces for the incident was unfounded, that the joint ROK-U.S. military exercises were a provocation, and that the DPRK will to “use its mighty nuclear deterrence forces in response to the series of joint military exercises of the USA and South Korea in the Yellow Sea and in the Sea of Japan...” A statement from the DPRK National Defence Committee published by the Korean Central News Agency said, “It will be our holy war with American imperialists and [the] South Korean puppet regime, which intensify deliberately the tension in the Korean Peninsula,”¹⁵⁵

Artillery Shelling of Yeonpyeong Island. In November 2010, North Korea fired dozens of artillery shells at a South Korean island, killing two of the South’s soldiers and setting off an exchange of fire . The attack on Yeonpyeong Island came as 70,000 South Korean troops were beginning an annual nationwide military drill called “Safeguarding the Nation.” The exercise has been sharply criticized by Pyongyang. The South Korean Defense Ministry said that in addition to the two soldiers who were killed, 15 soldiers and 3 civilians were wounded.¹⁵⁶

“Houses and mountains are on fire and people are evacuating,” a witness on the island told YTN Television during the shelling, which lasted about an hour. YTN said at least 200 North Korean shells hit Yeonpyeong, which lies off the west coast of the divided Korean peninsula near a disputed maritime border.¹⁵⁷

Confrontations at sea near the boundary between North and South Korea were nothing new. A U.S. DoD spokesman said that naval skirmishes had occurred previously in the western sea in

¹⁵⁴ Department of Defense Transcript, “Media Availability with Geoff Morrell, Adm. Willard and a Senior Defense Official from Seoul, South Korea,” July 20, 2010.

¹⁵⁵ “Pyongyang To Retaliate To US, SKorea Provocations - KCNA,” CEP20100727950135, ITAR-TASS in English 1223 GMT 27 Jul 10.

¹⁵⁶ Mark McDonald, “‘Crisis Status’ in South Korea After North Shells Island,” The New York Times, November 23, 2010, http://www.nytimes.com/2010/11/24/world/asia/24korea.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0&pagewanted=print

¹⁵⁷ “North Korea shells South in fiercest attack in decades,” Reuters, November 23, 2010, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2010/11/23/us-korea-north-artillery-idUSTRE6AM0YS20101123>.

1999 and 2002. And in August, 2010, North Korea fired 110 artillery rounds near Yeonpyeong and another South Korean island.¹⁵⁸

Scraping the 1959 Armistice. In March 2013, North Korea announced that it was scrapping the 1953 armistice that halted hostilities on the Korean Peninsula. The North also stated that it would sever the “hotline” in use between the North and the South. The official statement from the DPRK news agency also said, “Since the United States is about to ignite a nuclear war, we will be exercising our right to preemptive nuclear attack against the headquarters of the aggressor...”¹⁵⁹

ROK Actions in Response to Threats. The ROK has responded to these severe provocations with strong statements of its own. For example, a South Korean Defense Ministry spokesman warned that the government of the DPRK will “vanish from the earth” if it wages a nuclear attack on South Korea. “If North Korea (DPRK) attacks South Korea with nuclear weapons, the Kim Jong Un regime will vanish from the earth by the will of the humanity,” ministry spokesman Kim Min-seok told reporters. According to the ROK Defense Ministry spokesman, South Korea is ready to “immediately retaliate” if attacked.¹⁶⁰

In March 2013, Defense minister-nominee Kim Byung-kwan, who was going through a parliamentary confirmation hearing, vowed to “substantially strengthen” deterrence against security threats. The South Korean military, which recently announced its plans to develop long-range missiles and a missile defense system of its own, has also said it will “strike back” at the DPRK and its” command leadership” if attacked.¹⁶¹

As the perceived threat from North Korea has grown over the past decade, South Korean officials have focused on damage-limiting capabilities such as missile defenses and prompt-response offensive capabilities that include a conventionally-armed, short-range ballistic missile. The ROK currently is developing a cruise missile with a range of 1,500 kilometers and a ballistic

¹⁵⁸ McDonald, “‘Crisis Status’ in South Korea After North Shells Island,” op. cit.

¹⁵⁹ Jack Kim and Louis Charbonneau, “North Korea Threatens Nuclear Strike, U.N. Expands Sanctions,” Reuters News Agency, March 7, 2013, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/03/07/us-korea-north-attack-idUSBRE9260BR20130307>.

¹⁶⁰ “S. Korea’s Defense Ministry Warns DPRK to ‘vanish from earth’,” *Xinhua*, March 7, 2013.

¹⁶¹ Ibid.

missile which, by agreement, is limited in range to 300 kilometers. ROK officials have pushed to be able to extend the range of these missile to 800-1,000 kilometers in order to be able to reach potential missile launch sites and underground facilities in the far northern reaches of North Korea.¹⁶² These non-nuclear offensive and defensive capabilities provide greater ROK independence than relying on the United States to preempt and defend South Korea from North Korean attacks.

Contemporary ROK Views on Needed U.S. Nuclear Capabilities

In recent years, some South Koreans have called for the return of U.S. nonstrategic nuclear weapons to their soil. In 1991, when Seoul agreed to the U.S. nuclear withdrawal, North Korea did not have nuclear weapons and there was hope that a combination of carrots and sticks would persuade Pyongyang to abandon its nuclear program and result in the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. But over the past two decades, efforts by the United States, South Korea, and others have failed to roll back that program. Since all U.S. nuclear weapons were removed from the ROK, North Korea has built nuclear warheads, staged three nuclear tests, and developed nuclear-capable missiles.¹⁶³ Clearly, at this time, the Korean Peninsula is not on a path toward denuclearization.

In 2006, just three days after the initial North Korean nuclear test, a group of former ROK defense ministers issued a statement urging redeployment of U.S. nuclear weapons to the peninsula.¹⁶⁴ In the view of an analyst at the Korea Institute for National Unification (an arm of the South Korean government), redeployment is necessary because the future vulnerability of the United States to North Korean nuclear-armed, long-range ballistic missiles will undermine the credibility of the U.S. nuclear guarantee. “There is doubt,” says this analyst, “that the United States could protect Seoul at the risk of nuclear attacks on New York or Los Angeles. The

¹⁶² “U.S. Digs in Heels in Missile Talks with Korea,” *The Korea Herald Online*, July 12, 2012. Also, South Korea develops ballistic missile aimed at North underground bases - Yonhap,” *BBC Monitoring Asia Pacific*, September 18, 2012. “Editorial: Upgrading missile defense,” *Korea Herald*, April 22, 2012.

¹⁶³ International Crisis Group, *North Korea’s Nuclear and Missile Programs*, Asia Report No. 168 (Brussels: International Crisis Group, June 18, 2009), pp. 9-11.

¹⁶⁴ “Former Defense Ministers Condemn N. Korea’s Nuclear Test,” Yonhap, October 13, 2006.

United States should consider redeploying tactical nuclear weapons to South Korea to effectively deter North Korea's threats."¹⁶⁵

After the 2006 North Korean nuclear test, South Korea requested and received a U.S. commitment for "immediate support to the ROK, including continuation of the extended deterrence offered by the U.S. nuclear umbrella..."¹⁶⁶ However, in the eyes of some U.S. allies, the U.S. nuclear umbrella has apparently shrunk in stature. As one U.S. analyst reported in 2013,

[S]ome influential South Korean strategists believe these extended guarantees have lost some credibility due to the decline in the size of the U.S. nuclear arsenal and the Obama administration's clear preference for using conventional forces or missile defenses while deemphasizing the potential role of nuclear weapons in U.S. military operations. They have been calling for either the United States to return tactical nuclear weapons to the South or for the ROK to develop its own nuclear arsenal. In addition, they have become convinced that the DPRK is determined to acquire a nuclear weapons arsenal, so that they believe the ROK needs a similar nuclear capability to deter potential DPRK military threats.¹⁶⁷

During the 28th Annual Conference of the Council on U.S.-Korean Security Studies held in Seoul in 2013, ROK participants reported that the DPRK's recent escalatory rhetoric and other provocations has reinforced the concerns of some South Korean strategists about the credibility of U.S. extended deterrence guarantees in Asia. In particular, as the DPRK develops longer-range ballistic missiles and the United States itself becomes vulnerable to North Korean nuclear strikes, the credibility of its extended deterrence guarantees to its Asian allies is being called into question. Some South Koreans at the conference, including former ROK general officers, already doubted that the U.S. officials would defend them against a DPRK attack if North Korea could destroy Los Angeles in retaliation. According to one report, they want the ROK to acquire its own national nuclear deterrent, whose use in response to an attack against them would be much more credible than that of a third party.¹⁶⁸ One U.S. participant at the conference summarized, "If South Koreans lose faith in the U.S. willingness or capacity to defend them, or they come to fear that potential foreign aggressors doubt the credibility of U.S. assurances, then

¹⁶⁵ Jeon Seong-hoon, cited in Lee Jong-heon, "Calls for Nuclear Weapons in South Korea," United Press International, October 21, 2009.

¹⁶⁶ The 38th Security Consultative Meeting Joint Communiqué," (U.S. Department of Defense, October 20, 2006), available at www.defenselink.mil/news/Oct2006/d20061020uskorea.pdf.

¹⁶⁷ Richard Weitz, "North Korean Threats Deepen Southern Nuclear Insecurities," TheDiplomat.com, July 4, 2013, <http://thediplomat.com/2013/07/04/north-korean-threats-deepen-southern-nuclear-insecurities/>.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid.

South Korea might pursue alternative security policies, including possibly seeking their own nuclear weapons.”¹⁶⁹

Some South Korean officials also see other practical uses that could be served by returning U.S. nuclear weapons to the Korean Peninsula. In April 2013, Dr. M. J. Chung, a seven-term member of the ROK National Assembly and 2002 candidate for the Presidency of South Korea, delivered the keynote address at a conference hosted by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. Chung clearly stated that his top priority is the eventual denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. To accomplish that goal, Chung called for the reintroduction of U.S. nuclear weapons to ROK territory. According to Chung, these weapons can be an “indispensable as a bargaining chip for the ultimate denuclearization of North Korea.” According to Chung’s logic, the existing U.S. nuclear umbrella is valuable in deterring North Korean nuclear use. However, to accomplish the long-term goal of denuclearization of the peninsula, he believes greater coercion is needed and the reintroduction of U.S. nukes would help serve that purpose.¹⁷⁰ In response to a question on why the status quo is not a viable long-term option. He replied,

If North Korea remains nuclear, South Korea or even Japan should consider [the] nuclear option. Suppose you are [the] president of South Korea or prime minister of Japan. Don’t you think ... it can be a culpable negligence for those politicians to do nothing against North Korea’s nuclear armament. South Korea and Japan should do something if North Korea is determined to remain nuclear.¹⁷¹

It is primarily the nuclear threat from North Korea that has been the cause of the ROK’s second thoughts regarding the U.S. nuclear weapons withdrawn from South Korea. However, ROK defense officials are also greatly concerned about the huge stocks of chemical weapons, and possibly, biological weapons possessed by North Korea. To help assure its ROK ally, the United States has taken a variety of actions. On March 11, 2013, National Security Advisor Donilon outlined the U.S. policy toward Asia. Regarding the DPRK’s threatening actions and statements from the DPRK directed against South Korea, Donilon said,

We unequivocally reaffirm that the United States is committed to the defense of our homeland and our allies. Recently, North Korean officials have made some

¹⁶⁹ Richard Weitz, “North Korean Threats Deepen Southern Nuclear Insecurities,” *TheDiplomat.com*, July 4, 2013, available at: <http://thediplomat.com/2013/07/04/north-korean-threats-deepen-southern-nuclear-insecurities/>.

¹⁷⁰ M.J. Chung keynote address at Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, “2013 Carnegie International Nuclear Policy Conference: Morning Keynote,” Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Washington, D.C., April 9, 2013, pp.6-8, available at: <http://carnegieendowment.org/files/0409carnegie-day2-morning-keynote.pdf>.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

highly provocative statements. North Korea's claims may be hyperbolic—but as to the policy of the United States, there should be no doubt: we will draw upon the full range of our capabilities to protect against, and to respond to, the threat posed to us and to our allies by North Korea. This includes not only any North Korean use of weapons of mass destruction—but also, as the President made clear, their transfer of nuclear weapons or nuclear materials to other states or non-state entities. Such actions would be considered a grave threat to the United States and our allies and we will hold North Korea fully accountable for the consequences.¹⁷²

Developing jointly acceptable views on deterrence and response capabilities for a variety of potential contingencies is the goal of joint U.S.-ROK talks on extended deterrence issues. These talks which have been held regularly since 2010 can give ROK leaders a better understanding of U.S. views on extended deterrence and the U.S. capabilities that underpin deterrence and can provide to U.S. leaders a better understanding of the unique perspectives and felt-needs of South Korean leaders.¹⁷³

ROK Summary. ROK officials and analysts clearly indicate the desire for the United States to retain the ability to deploy nuclear weapons and their delivery capability to South Korea. In addition, threats to the United States from North Korean long-range ICBMs have triggered fears that U.S. resolve to defend the ROK could waiver. Thus, the capabilities needed for the United States to defend itself against North Korean attacks and limit damage to itself and South Korea are viewed as important. As in the case of Japan, the kinds of U.S. nuclear capabilities that many ROK officials say are considered important—deployable weapons, prompt response, and damage limitation capabilities—are the capabilities that most Minimum Deterrence proposals would eliminate.

Other Friends and Allies

This paper has focused primarily on the views of U.S. allies that are in close proximity to nuclear-armed countries that are perceived as significant threats. As would be expected, these countries have been the most vocal about desired U.S. military capabilities—including the nuclear umbrella. The United States also has a number of other allies and friends that depend to

¹⁷² Remarks by Tom Donilon, National Security Advisor to the President - As Prepared for Delivery, "The United States and the Asia-Pacific in 2013," The Asia Society, New York, NY, The White House, Office of the Press Secretary, March 11, 2013.

¹⁷³ S. Korea, U.S. in plan to deter N. Korea's nuclear threat: report," *Japan Economic Newswire*, September 9, 2013.

varying degrees on the United States for security. These other allies and friends may not currently experience security concerns as severe as the NATO CEE states, Japan, and the ROK, but in the future could be threatened in ways that could call for the United States to adjust its nuclear posture to meet its commitments and policy goals. To illustrate the extensive scope of U.S. commitments, a few of these states and existing or proposed U.S. commitments to each will be discussed briefly below.

Australia. Australia is currently covered by U.S. extended nuclear deterrence commitments. More distant than other U.S. Asian-Pacific allies from potential threats from China and North Korea, Australia, as expected, is less vocal about its views on the specifics of the U.S. nuclear umbrella. The 2000 Defense White paper from the Government of Australia captured well the typical perspective from down-under:

A healthy alliance should not be a relationship of dependency, but of mutual help. In the long run, dependency would weaken the alliance, both in the eyes of Australians and in the eyes of Americans. For that reason, self-reliance will remain an inherent part of our alliance policy. There is one important exception to this principle of self-reliance. Australia relies on the extended deterrence provided by US nuclear forces to deter the remote possibility of any nuclear attack on Australia.¹⁷⁴

The Philippines. The United States and the Philippines signed a Mutual Defense Treaty in 1951. The treaty was reaffirmed by defense ministers in Manila in November 2011. The Manila Declaration commits the United States to “our shared obligations under the Mutual Defense Treaty and our mutual commitment to the peace and security of the region.”¹⁷⁵ Over the past few years, the Philippines has been a target of Chinese military actions to forcibly assert control over disputed territories. Philippine President Benigno Aquino “compared China’s increasingly assertive stance in Asia with the situation in Europe before the second world war when Hitler appropriated land from Czechoslovakia.”¹⁷⁶

¹⁷⁴ Government of Australia White Paper, “Defence 2000 - Our Future Defence Force,” Australian Department of Defence, 2000, p. 36.

¹⁷⁵ Joint Statement of the Philippines-United States Ministerial Dialogue, May 1, 2012, <http://www.philippineembassy-usa.org/news/2530/300/Joint-Statement-of-the-United-States-Philippines-Ministerial-Dialogue-30-April-2012/d,phildet/>.

¹⁷⁶ “North Korea’s Nuclear Threat: Reinforcing Alliance With U.S. Helps Bolster Nuclear Deterrence,” Tokyo *The Daily Yomiuri (Internet version)*, March 23, 2007, transcribed in Open Source Center, Doc. ID: JPP20070323969090.

Turkey. Turkey is a NATO ally whose government appears to hold complex views regarding contemporary threats and U.S. extended deterrence guarantees. In recent years, Turkey has valued the security of being a member of NATO, but the Government of Turkey has not always sided with the United States and other NATO allies on security-related issues. For example, it denied the United States access to its territory for U.S. land forces during the 2003 invasion of Iraq. Currently, Iran's steady march toward a nuclear weapons capability appears to be particularly concerning to Ankara and the Turkish population. In 2012, the Centre for Economics and Foreign Policy Studies conducted a survey of views by the public in Turkey. The survey asked, "In reaction to a possible threat from a nuclear-armed Iran, should Turkey develop its own nuclear weapons or rely on NATO's protection?" According to the survey's results, 54 percent of participants supported the option of Turkey's nuclear armament, while only 8 percent believe that NATO's security umbrella is sufficient, and therefore Turkey shouldn't develop nuclear weapons. Only about a third of respondents answered that Turkey should not develop nuclear weapons under any conditions.¹⁷⁷ One Turkish diplomat reportedly commented, "Voices will increase tremendously in Turkey for the acquisition of nuclear arms as a means of deterrence against Iranian nuclear arms."¹⁷⁸ A recent article by David Yost, a respected security analyst who specializes in researching views of officials in NATO countries, reported on the two competing views in Turkey. One view questioned the reliability of the U.S. extended deterrent under NATO's auspices. Officials in that camp cite the history of unreliable U.S. support for Turkey, such as after the 1974 Cyprus intervention. These officials are more likely to favor Turkey acquiring its own nuclear capability. Another camp with opposing views holds that, despite potential threats from a nuclear-armed Iran, Turkey's preference will be to rely on U.S. deterrence protection in a NATO framework, because "a national nuclear weapons program would entail unacceptable penalties—unaffordable political and economic costs."¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁷ "54 Pct of Turks Support Nukes if Iran Has Them," *The Journal of the Turkish Weekly*, March 29, 2012, <http://www.turkishweekly.net/print.asp?type=1&id=133087>.

¹⁷⁸ Lale Kemal, "Washington's Atomic Weapons on Turkish Soil To Come to the Agenda," *Sunday's Zaman Online* (in English), April 4, 2010.

¹⁷⁹ David S. Yost, "Strategic Stability in Europe," *Nonproliferation Review*, 2013, Vol. 20, No. 2, pp. 221-222. Also see, David J. Trachtenberg, "US Extended Deterrence: How Much Strategic Force is Too Little," *Strategic Studies Quarterly*, Summer 2012, p. 75.

Ukraine. When the Soviet Union broke into its constituent republics in 1991, Ukraine became independent and a nuclear power. At that time, Ukraine possessed the world's third-largest nuclear arsenal—approximately 1,800 strategic nuclear warheads, 560 air-launched cruise missiles, and 4,000 tactical nuclear weapons.¹⁸⁰ Officials in Ukraine were particularly fearful that, without special protection (e.g., nuclear weapons under its control), they would be vulnerable to coercion from Ukraine's long-time adversary, Russia. A variety of factors led to a decision in 1994 by Ukraine to give up all nuclear weapons on its territory and to join the NPT as a non-nuclear weapons state. The final agreement, the 1994 Budapest Memorandum, produced a commitment that was accepted by leaders in Ukraine and resulted in one less nuclear-armed state.¹⁸¹ The United States, Great Britain and Russia (and later France and China) agreed “to assure Ukraine's territorial integrity” in return for Ukraine giving up the nuclear arsenal it inherited. However, after Russia, a nuclear-armed state and a signatory to the Budapest Memorandum with Ukraine, seized the Crimean Peninsula, some in Ukraine expressed second thoughts. In early 2014, one Ukrainian official and presidential candidate declared, “We gave up nuclear weapons because of this agreement, ...Now there's a strong sentiment in Ukraine that we made a big mistake.”¹⁸² Five years earlier, on the occasion of the fifteenth anniversary of the signing of the Budapest Memorandum, then-Ukrainian President Viktor Yushchenko commented presciently, “The modern world is changing rapidly, and we have to admit that, since the conclusion of the Budapest Memorandum, it has not become safer. Unfortunately, not all countries have abandoned the use of weapons to promote their foreign political and foreign economic interests.”¹⁸³

Saudi Arabia and other Middle Eastern Arab States. In March 2014, then-Commander of U.S. Central Command Gen. James Mattis said that “at least one other nation” has told him that they will seek nuclear weapons if Iran goes nuclear.¹⁸⁴ This sentiment may not be limited to only one U.S. friend in the region. By one accounting, from 2007 to 2010, a total of 13 Middle Eastern

¹⁸⁰ Mitchell Reiss, *Bridled Ambition*, Washington, D.C.: The Woodrow Wilson Center Press (1995), pp. 91-92.

¹⁸¹ Amy F. Wolf, “Nuclear Weapons Proliferation: The Role of Security Assurances in Nonproliferation Policy,” Congressional Research Service Report for Congress, September 15, 1995, pp. 2-3.

¹⁸² Oren Dorell, Ukraine May Have to Go Nuclear, Says Kiev Lawmaker,” *USA Today*, March 10, 2014.

¹⁸³ “Ukraine Seeking Firmer Security Guarantees From Nuclear Posers - Yushchenko,” *Interfax* (Moscow), December 7, 2009.

¹⁸⁴ “Top General: At Least One Arab State to Go Nuclear If Iran Does,” Washington Free Beacon, March 5, 2014, <http://freebeacon.com/regional-nuclear-proliferation-likely-if-iran-goes-nuclear-mattis-says/>.

countries declared their intention to initiate or relaunch nuclear power projects.¹⁸⁵ These nuclear power and research projects can be used as stepping stones for other types of nuclear capabilities, including producing fissile material for nuclear weapons. In fact, Prince Turki al-Faisal, a former Saudi intelligence chief and ambassador to Washington, D.C., is reported to have declared, “We cannot live in a situation where Iran has nuclear weapons and we don’t. It’s as simple as that, ... If Iran develops a nuclear weapon, that will be unacceptable to us and we will have to follow suit.”¹⁸⁶

During the 2008 U.S. presidential campaign, then-candidate Hillary Clinton proposed that the American nuclear umbrella be extended to countries in the Persian Gulf region, such as Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, if they agree to relinquish their own nuclear ambitions.¹⁸⁷ Later, in July 2009, then-Secretary of State Clinton discussed the possibility of the United States extending “a defense umbrella over the region.”¹⁸⁸ The “nuclear” element of the U.S. defense umbrella was no longer explicit, but the goal of extending security commitments to other states in order to limit nuclear proliferation continued.

Early in 2014, Saudi officials appear to have signaled to Iran, the United States, and, perhaps, others that they are seriously concerned about security trends in the region. The Saudi’s prominently displayed long-range Chinese-made missiles in a Saudi military parade. According to a report from the Washington Institute for Near East Policy:

...the parade was to mark the conclusion of a major military exercise called ‘Abdullah’s Sword.’ A surprise feature of the parade was the inclusion of two Chinese DF-3 missiles, known as the CSS-2 in NATO nomenclature. These missiles were supplied to Saudi Arabia in 1987 and have long been based in the mountainous desert well south of Riyadh, from where they can target Iran. Today is the first time they have been seen in public.¹⁸⁹

The relevance for this paper is the growing motivations for U.S. friends and allies to acquire their own nuclear weapon capabilities if their security is threatened. In the future, the United States

¹⁸⁵ “Arab Nations Advance Quest for Atomic Power,” *Global Security Newswire*, July 15, 2010.

¹⁸⁶ Jason Burke, “Riyadh will build nuclear weapons if Iran gets them, Saudi prince warns,” *The Guardian*, June 29, 2011.

¹⁸⁷ Aluf Benn, Obama’s Atomic Umbrella: U.S. nuclear strike if Iran Nukes Israel,” available at <http://www.haaretz.com/hasen/spages/1045687.html>.

¹⁸⁸ James A. Russell, “Policy Conundrums in the Gulf,” *Strategic Insights*, Vol. VIII, Issue 5, December 2009, p. 1.

¹⁸⁹ Simon Henderson, “Saudi Arabia’s Missile Messaging,” April 29, 2014, available at <http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/saudi-arabias-missile-messaging>.

may have to discuss with Saudi and other leaders the potential for U.S. security guarantees in order to prevent a cascade of nuclear proliferation.

Summary of Views of Key Allies

This report has focused primarily on the views of U.S. allies already under the U.S. nuclear umbrella and who perceive significant threats from one or more countries.

- NATO CEE allies perceive the greatest threat as coming from a newly aggressive Russia. These states are adamant about the need for the continued deployment of U.S. nuclear bombs and NATO DCA aircraft in Europe. The DCA and weapons represent a tangible link to more robust and capable U.S. strategic nuclear forces based across the Atlantic.
- Japan has recently described the threats it faces from China, North Korea, and, because of its recent aggressive actions, Russia. Japan has been the most detailed about the types of U.S. nuclear capabilities needed for extended deterrence to be effective and credible. These include the ability to deploy nuclear forces to the Pacific region, as well as prompt, discriminate, visible, and damage-limiting capabilities.
- Threats to the ROK are primarily from North Korea which has a newly developed nuclear capability, a large chemical weapons stockpile, and, possibly, biological weapons. The ROK has been vocal about ensuring that U.S. nuclear weapons could be deployed to the Korean Peninsula, if needed. In addition, the potential for North Korean nuclear-armed missiles to reach the United States has prompted interest in ensuring that the U.S. has the ability to limit damage to itself while also defending and limiting damage to South Korea.

In addition, the United States also has allies—some of which are already covered by the nuclear umbrella—and friends that are not currently in close proximity to potentially severe threats. Australia is one example. These allies, as expected, are currently less vocal about the felt need for specific U.S. nuclear capabilities.

Some allies and friends face growing local threats but are not now covered by explicit U.S. extended nuclear deterrence commitments. For some countries, such as the Philippines, the United States has formal, broad security commitments; for Ukraine, the commitment is very specific and narrowly defined; for states in the Persian Gulf region, U.S. commitments are general in nature. U.S. officials have spoken publicly about extending the U.S. “security umbrella” or even the “nuclear umbrella” to some of these states to help control nuclear proliferation.

Currently the global security environment is dynamic and the anticipated norm is for further change. Shifts in the local security environments that increase or decrease the perceived threats to each U.S. friend and ally will likely to be accompanied by corresponding changes in the perceived security needs of each ally. Thus, the demands on U.S. military capabilities, including the nuclear umbrella, to assure allies and friends should be viewed as constantly shifting and in need of periodic tailoring. Therefore, the U.S. nuclear force needs to possess an appropriate collection of capabilities and be both flexible and resilient so it can respond to future developments.

The summary of views from selected allies discussed in this report is a snapshot in time. This snapshot is useful for the purpose of demonstrating that allies facing severe threats have specific views on attributes of the U.S. nuclear force that are perceived as beneficial for their security. These felt needs recently communicated by allies would not be met by Minimum Deterrence-proposed nuclear forces that would eliminate all nonstrategic nuclear forces, one or more leg of the strategic nuclear triad, and nuclear capabilities with the exception of second-strike response capabilities against societal and economic targets.

Allies Views of Conventional Capabilities for Extended Deterrence

In contrast to the empirical evidence presented here, Minimum Deterrence proponents assert that assurance and extended deterrence goals present no unique requirements for the U.S. nuclear force. They claim that improved conventional forces and missile defenses can maintain assurance in the face of deep nuclear reductions. These claims are dubious. Failure of proponents to specify which “advanced conventional capabilities” would be able to fill this role, what they would cost, and the type and level of missile defenses needed suggests the claim is more a debating point than a serious position.

Theoretically, there is no reason why the assurance of allies could not be achieved with a large investment in conventional forces that would be capable of overwhelming even a nuclear-armed, regional opponent. In principle, the United States could build an overwhelming conventional offensive and defensive force sometime in the future. However, over the near- to mid-term, such a goal appears implausible. Shrinking defense budgets will certainly constrain DoD’s ability to

develop, procure, and deploy new advanced conventional capabilities capable of operating in a nuclear threat environment and sufficient for deterrence and assurance purposes.

Nuclear and conventional forces serve related but distinct roles in the defense of allies. From the perspective of allies, especially those in close proximity to credible threats (e.g., NATO CEE states, Japan, and the ROK,) the two kinds of military capabilities are viewed as complements not substitutes—and allies want the protection of both. At a visceral level, allies believe an in-kind deterrent is necessary to prevent nuclear use.

Thomas Schelling, writing in 2009 on recent proposals to move toward a world without nuclear weapons, asked rhetorically, “Could a major nation maintain “conventional” forces ready for every contingency, without maintaining a nuclear backup?” Shelling responded, “I worry that the necessary scenario analyses to find the strengths and weaknesses, especially the weaknesses, of these proposals have not been done. ... I do not perceive that this analysis is being done before proposals are launched that would produce highly unfamiliar strategic-readiness situations.”¹⁹⁰

Apparently U.S. allies also remain unconvinced of Minimum Deterrence assertions that conventional deterrence would suffice. The 2012 NATO Deterrence and Defense Posture Review was clear on the point that conventional forces alone are not sufficient for deterrence. As quoted earlier, the DDPR states, “[d]eterrence, based on an appropriate mix of nuclear and conventional capabilities, remains a core element of the Alliance’s overall strategy.” And, “[t]herefore, NATO will maintain an appropriate mix of nuclear and conventional forces.”¹⁹¹

Japanese and ROK officials appear to share similar views. In Northeast Asia, periodic bilateral discussions between the United States and its allies, Japan and South Korea, focus on extended deterrence and plans to combat regional threats. A key continuing topic of debate among policymakers and experts from these countries is “whether additional steps need to be taken now to strengthen extended nuclear deterrence in Northeast Asia.” According to a former Obama administration defense official, a variety of proposals have been made by experts, including for example modifications to Japan’s three no’s policy to allow future nuclear deployments based on certain conditions, improvements to U.S. military infrastructure in the region (e.g., Guam) to

¹⁹⁰ Thomas C. Schelling, “A world without nuclear weapons,” *Daedalus*, Fall 2009, pp. 3-5.

¹⁹¹ *NATO 2010 Strategic Concept*, op. cit., pp. 4-5.

enable timely future deployments of DCA to the western Pacific, and creation of NATO-like nuclear consultative mechanisms.¹⁹²

M. J. Chung, an ROK official who was quoted earlier, was asked why he favored the reintroduction of nuclear weapons and why the same result could not be obtained through conventional capabilities. His response provides a unique South Korean perspective: “If our ultimate ... goal is winning the war, we can simply reinforce conventional forces. But if our ultimate goal is to prevent the war, then reinforcing of conventional forces itself has not helped very much. ... But winning the war is not our objective. We want to prevent the war, we want to deter the war. There’s a difference.”¹⁹³

Minimum Deterrence advocates err when they assert that conventional capabilities will be sufficient to assure allies. It is the allies who decide whether or not they are assured; numerous statements from NATO and Northeast Asian allies provide empirical evidence of the felt need for specific U.S. nuclear capabilities for extended deterrence and assurance. These capabilities are in addition to, not in place of, advanced conventional capabilities.

Summary and Recommended Way Ahead

Minimum Deterrence proposals call for deep U.S. nuclear reductions. These proposals are based upon a fundamental misreading of the scope and diversity of the strategic aims and risk propensity of potential adversaries as well as their views about the utility of nuclear weapons. These issues are discussed in depth in Section 4 of this series which focuses on “deterrence.” As was demonstrated in this section on “assurance,” Minimum Deterrence proponents also err by dismissing the views of U.S. allies regarding threats and the U.S. capabilities valued by allies for extended deterrence and assurance. Together, these erroneous perceptions of deterrence and assurance result in policy prescriptions which, if implemented, would lead to substantial reductions in U.S. nuclear capabilities, including warhead numbers, elimination of all nonstrategic nuclear forces, and the elimination of one or more legs of the strategic nuclear triad.

¹⁹² Brad Roberts, “Extended Deterrence and Strategic Stability in Northeast Asia,” National Institute for Defense Studies of the Ministry of Defense of Japan, NIDS Visiting Scholar Paper Series, No. 1, p. 27.

¹⁹³ M.J. Chung keynote address at Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, “2013 Carnegie International Nuclear Policy Conference: Morning Keynote,” Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Washington, D.C., April 9, 2013, p. 9, available at: <http://carnegieendowment.org/files/0409carnegie-day2-morning-keynote.pdf>.

Minimum Deterrence proposals also dismiss the felt need of allies for prompt nuclear weapons and other damage-limiting capabilities.¹⁹⁴ These capabilities are valued highly by allies who are concerned about increasingly potent threats to themselves and the United States and the prospect that their U.S. protector may have second thoughts if the U.S. homeland is at stake.

Examples quoted earlier in this section demonstrate that Minimum Deterrence proposals either ignore the unique requirements for extended deterrence and assurance, or state without empirical evidence that some combination of the following is valid: allies have grown strong enough to defend themselves; U.S. conventional capabilities are sufficient to deter and assure regional adversaries; and/or, alliances are outdated and should be restructured. Overall, Minimum Deterrence proposals conveniently exclude many types of nuclear capabilities that allies currently view as necessary. Of course, including these requirements would prevent Minimum Deterrence advocates from achieving their primary goal—a very small nuclear force.

Available evidence from key allies—in the form of verbal and written statements—demonstrates that, under current conditions, the small nuclear forces proposed by Minimum Deterrence advocates are inadequate for assurance purposes. The findings from this investigation are in agreement with other research such as by Naval Postgraduate School researcher David Yost on the views of officials in allied countries. For example, in June 2013, Yost reported, “Some European observers said that US nuclear force reductions to low numbers might be perceived as a disengagement from extended deterrence responsibilities in Europe and other regions.” Yost reported that one European official said, “Once doubts emerge about US capability and commitment, concerns will be acute, especially in Japan, South Korea, Poland, and the Baltic States.”¹⁹⁵

In a dynamic and dangerous world, Minimum Deterrence proposals risk the failure of assuring allies. Allies could lose faith in the credibility and strength of U.S. security guarantees, including extended nuclear deterrence commitments. The failure of assurance would degrade the United States’ leadership position in the world and could damage nuclear nonproliferation goals.

¹⁹⁴ For a more detailed discussion of Minimum Deterrence and damage-limiting capabilities, see Section 6 of this series.

¹⁹⁵ David S. Yost, “Strategic Stability in Europe,” *op. cit.*, p. 223.

This investigation of Minimum Deterrence and the views of allies for assurance and extended deterrence concludes with several recommendations listed below.

Understanding allies' perspectives can be critical for assurance. Perspectives of allies regarding threats, the functioning of deterrence, and extended deterrence requirements are likely to differ from perspectives in the United States. Since each ally is the determinant of whether or not it is assured by U.S. capabilities and commitments, continuing official dialogues with key allies on deterrence and extended deterrence will be important for developing a common understanding of threats, policies, declaratory statements, and force requirements.

Assuring allies can help support nuclear nonproliferation goals. Considerable evidence indicates that some key allies are already concerned about U.S. extended nuclear deterrence commitments given the direction of U.S. nuclear forces and policies. As a result, some allies are rethinking their past commitments to remain non-nuclear. In short, if adopted as U.S. policy, Minimum Deterrence definitions of U.S. force adequacy could stimulate pressure for nuclear proliferation and undermine U.S. nuclear nonproliferation goals. U.S. leaders will have to determine whether or not the assurance of allies and limiting nuclear proliferation is a higher priority than nuclear arms control and reductions. If so, some types of nuclear capabilities may need to be retained primarily for assurance purposes.

The nuclear force should be adaptable to changing requirements. Assurance needs are not static. Changes in context, such as an easing or worsening of the security environment, can result in changes in what allies seek for assurance. Thus, the U.S. nuclear force will need to adapt to changes in the future security environment. The exact nature of those changes cannot be known, but the future will almost assuredly call for the United States to continue to adapt its nuclear forces to be effective for the important goals of deterring adversaries and assuring allies.

Reject Minimum Deterrence. Because proposed Minimum Deterrence forces would exclude the types of nuclear capabilities that are valued most by allies facing significant threats, Minimum Deterrence proposals should be rejected. A preponderance of evidence demonstrates that U.S. allies to whom the nuclear umbrella provides shelter have unique felt needs for specific types of U.S. nuclear weapon capabilities that are absent from most Minimum Deterrence proposals.