



Executive Summary

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NATO MISSILE DEFENSE AND THE EUROPEAN PHASED ADAPTIVE APPROACH: THE IMPLICATIONS OF BURDEN SHARING AND THE UNDERAPPRECIATED ROLE OF THE U.S. ARMY

**Steven J. Whitmore
John R. Deni**

The 2010 North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) decision to expand its ballistic missile defense program was somewhat surprising for several reasons, including lukewarm European public support for ballistic missile defense and tightening defense budgets on both sides of the Atlantic. Nevertheless, the Alliance has moved forward with a significant expansion of the program, stating its intent to defend all European member state territory and populations, and declaring at the Chicago summit in 2012 that the Alliance had achieved an interim capability.

The reasons for the Alliance decision in 2010 were several, but critical among them was the U.S. Government's offer to include the new European Phased Adaptive Approach (EPAA), announced by the Barack Obama administration in September 2009, as the centerpiece of the NATO ballistic missile defense program. For cash-strapped European members of the Alliance eager to influence NATO's ballistic missile defense efforts but unable to devote funds on par with the United States, Washington's proposal to include the EPAA framework in an expansion of the Alliance missile defense effort comprised an offer too attractive to refuse.

Nonetheless, and despite the American offer to provide the EPAA as the lion's share of NATO's expanded ballistic missile defense program, Washington made clear to its allies

that it expected them to contribute to the common defense. In response, several allies have offered land or facilities, and many have pledged to provide future capabilities and assets. However, few have actually contributed tangible ballistic missile defense assets to date in terms of missile interceptors, radars or other sensors, or ballistic missile defense-related platforms. Given differing threat perceptions and declining defense budgets, it seems very likely that tangible Alliance contributions, in the form of sensors and interceptors in particular, will remain minimal over the next decade.

A lack of tangible allied contributions is likely to have significant implications for the U.S. Army, which has an important but largely underappreciated role in NATO missile defense today. In particular, the Army is likely to face increased manpower demands, materiel requirements, and training needs in order to meet the demand created by the NATO ballistic missile defense program. Additionally, Army units involved directly in or in support of ballistic missile defense are likely to face a higher operating tempo (OPTEMPO) than currently projected. As a result of all these increased requirements—some of which the Army and the Department of Defense (DoD) currently foresee, and some they do not—it seems unlikely that current Army and DoD budget projections in

this regard will prove valid. Instead, all available evidence currently points to increased budgetary requirements as well. In conclusion, it appears that the Alliance's decision in 2010 to cover all Alliance territory and populations in Europe coupled with Washington's offer of the EPAA as the centerpiece of the new NATO ballistic missile defense system will together require the U.S. Army specifically, and the United States more broadly, to contribute more than expected to the ballistic missile defense of European territory and populations. In turn, this will exacerbate the perceived imbalance in transatlantic burden-sharing, particularly if the EPAA provides little, if any, benefit to the defense of U.S. territory, given Washington's decision to cancel Phase 4 of that framework.

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