

WEDNESDAY 11 NOVEMBER 2015

Members present

Lord Balfe
Baroness Billingham
Baroness Coussins
Lord Dubs
Lord Horam
Earl of Oxford and Asquith
Lord Risby
Lord Stirrup
Lord Triesman
Lord Tugendhat (Chairman)

Examination of Witness

Dr Karl-Heinz Kamp, President of the Federal Academy of Security Policy, Berlin

Q161 The Chairman: Dr Kamp, can you hear me?

Dr Karl-Heinz Kamp: Yes, I can hear you perfectly, Lord Chairman. It is a privilege to be in that position.

The Chairman: It is extremely kind of you to agree to give evidence to us. Let me begin by thanking you very much for that and also for the paper that you sent us. As I think you realise, this is a formal meeting of the Committee. Therefore, what you say is being recorded and will be made public. If you want to go off the record, do say so. Otherwise we will assume that everything is on the record. You have been sent a list of questions, I think. But I am sure my colleagues will have other questions to ask as well.

I will kick off with the first question. The UK is clear that NATO should remain the cornerstone of European collective defence and that the EU common security and defence policy should therefore focus on crisis management. Other Member States

and the United States wish the EU to take more responsibility for its own defence. Where do you think there might be a middle ground between these two positions?

Dr Karl-Heinz Kamp: Perhaps I may start with one sentence describing my own position. I am a staunch Atlanticist and always was, and do not believe in the overambitious ideas of the EU acting independently in the military field. However, having said that, these ideological disputes—these beauty contests, if I may call them that—are long over and we have now a much more pragmatic approach.

I am happy to speak on the record. The Federal Academy, of which I am the President, is part of the German government, but I speak in my private capacity now. On your specific question, the point that the EU has to be focused on crisis management is no longer disputed. It is absolutely clear that any Article 5 operation is under the auspices of NATO. The middle ground that you asked about is what is happening now with the Ukraine crisis. We have NATO doing not the crisis management part, but the prevention of potential military attacks by Russia through deterrence and the strengthening of defence. That is one part. The other part is the EU, which is actually in the crisis management business, through sanctions, supporting Ukraine and reaching a gas deal. But the EU does not deal with any military means. No one speaks about battle groups in that respect. I think we have now found a natural share of labour that the big “ambitionists”, some 15 or 20 years ago when we had the “praline summit”, never envisaged. It has become clear through evidence and pragmatic necessity that, when we talk about European security and defence, it is always a Euro-Atlantic effort in which the EU has its role and in which the EU might act independently in a crisis management operation with the support of NATO or without it. Much of the fire is taken off the entire issue. The supreme relevance of NATO for the security of Europe is undisputed.

Q162 The Chairman: Thank you. Following up on that, what would be the implications, in your opinion, for the future direction of the EU common security and defence policy and for EU-NATO co-operation if the UK were to vote to leave the European Union?

Dr Karl-Heinz Kamp: My Lord Chairman, I am not in a position to take a view on whether or not the UK should do that. But I think that the implications of such a move would be severe, and not only on NATO-EU co-operation, which is a pretty tiny aspect of a much broader picture—by the way, as you know better than I do, that does not work that effectively anyway for a number of reasons. It would end in an overall weakening of Western—and I use that term intentionally—security and defence due to two reasons. First, we would have the Scotland problem, in the sense that the UK would have a severe problem with regard to its nuclear capacity. It is not for me to judge whether you would be able to deal with it, but it will be a problem. Secondly, Scotland might decide to stay, under whichever formula, in the EU. At the end of the day, I think Vladimir Putin would exploit this as a means of disunity. That is why I used this term “Western” specifically.

If I may add one thought, I think that Russia has a pretty clear strategy on what to do. I am not sure whether it is successful—I do not think it is. Strategy always has a goal and a way to that goal. I think the goal is to re-establish Russia's grandeur and its key position in international politics. The way to this goal is to find cracks in Western unity and to exploit and possibly widen them. This would certainly be one crack that Russia could widen. I am not sure whether this will have any impact on the UK decision, but the implications would be significant.

The Chairman: That is very interesting. Thank you very much.

Q163 Lord Stirrup: Thank you. Herr Doktor, you said that NATO is fundamental to European security. But we have been told that the Berlin Plus arrangements are dead in the water, therefore leaving the EU with no practical access to hard military capability. Do you agree with that assessment, and if you do, what practical and political steps do you think are necessary and can be taken to improve the mechanism between the EU and NATO?

Dr Karl-Heinz Kamp: Berlin Plus was agreed upon 15 years ago. It was a completely different time; a time when we did not have the experience in Afghanistan. In Afghanistan we realised from the beginning that Berlin Plus was pretty useless; not useless in itself but in Afghanistan we needed something completely different. We did not have an EU crisis management operation in need of capacities from NATO. We had a NATO crisis management operation, or a NATO-led, 50-nations crisis management operation that needed a host of other things, not least from the EU itself, to deal with the situation there. So we came to the famous term "Comprehensive Approach". It is a nice term, and we all use it, but it is very difficult to implement in reality because everyone likes to co-ordinate but no one likes to be co-ordinated. This is something with which Berlin Plus does not help us much. If someone says that Berlin Plus is dead in the water, it is probably because it was not able to swim.

At the same time, by the way, we have, once again pragmatically, a situation in which NATO has developed all the flexibility in the world to deal and to operate in a variety of combinations: NATO nations only; NATO nations with or without the US; NATO nations plus non-NATO nations; only European NATO nations; only EU NATO nations. That would be possible provided that it had the consent of the others.

You may lament or complain that Berlin Plus is dead—yes it is—but it does not change the course of the world that much. Probably it was needed as an evolutionary step to the situation where we are now, but I am not worried that it is basically dysfunctional.

Q164 Lord Horam: Herr Doktor, you very kindly sent us your policy brief of March 2015, *Closing Ranks: Aligning NATO and the EU's Strategic Priorities*, which we were all very interested to read. In that, you said that one option to reinvigorate EU-NATO co-operation might be for a European pillar within NATO. How exactly would that work?

Dr Karl-Heinz Kamp: My line of reasoning was that we have a fundamental change in our security requirements due to two developments in 2014. One is the attack of Russia on Ukraine, which means that Russia ended, once and for all, the partnership with the West—and by the way, this is not a bad-weather period but a fundamental climate change. The second is the situation in the new Middle East in which we have developments that are apparently beyond our control. Taking these two things together, we have a fundamentally new security situation and are back in the Article 5 world. Not having fully understood what this means and all the implications, we are now, step by step, developing this.

If this is the case, this also has an impact on the EU's ambition for military action, because the EU has two problems. As we said in the very first question—now, I will sound pretty much anti-EU; I do not mean it that way—if the EU's logic or reaction is crisis management, I do not see crisis management in major operations along the lines of Libya and potentially Syria happening. Why? Number one, we have intervention fatigue in all our societies because the result of our operations were, for a number of reasons, not that successful. Secondly, as I said earlier, there is not much that we can do, for example, in the Middle East. People say that we should fight the root causes in Syria. This is always right and always nice, but it is just not going to happen. To deal with the root causes in Syria means to get rid of Assad and to do it in a way that Russia accepts and that Iran finds nice, and in a way that we get to a post-war situation. This is just not going to happen.

This leaves the political field, the politically responsible people like you, in a completely new situation. We have to deal with the consequences, and refugees are one such, without being able to deal with the root causes. Having said all that, it is very unlikely, except for some small operations with a few people, that NATO as NATO, or the EU as the EU, will enter into a major crisis management operation; it would be on a bilateral basis or the basis of a coalition of the willing. If that is the case then the EU has a problem because its military ambitions are dependent on the logic of crisis management. NATO does not have that problem; even if it does not do any crisis management any more, crisis management is only one of its three core strategic functions. NATO always has its justification under Article 5 on self-defence. Actually, if you put my reasoning into an extreme case, the reasoning for EU military capacities is eroding. This leads me to the logic that, since we can imagine the necessity of using military force for all kinds of reasons, it does not make sense any more to split this into the EU doing crisis management and NATO working under Article 5. It would make sense to understand the European NATO members, or the EU members, as the caucus in NATO. Yes, we have some side issues, which you know better than I do—Turkey, Cyprus, Greece—but the overlap of members is so high that, at least conceptually, I would return to the idea of security that we had before St Malo. We also only have one set of forces, by the way, so why does it make sense to split this up? This is just an idea, kicking a stone to get it rolling, to look at how this is done institutionally. You will never cancel the St Malo agreement, but we must

understand that, as I said at the beginning, the beauty contest is over and the EU and NATO can act together. This was my basic reasoning.

Q165 Lord Stirrup: Herr Doktor, on this point, the key difficulty seems to be that within NATO you can have a variable-geometry NATO operation, as we have had in the past, but the military and political aspects of the operation are all considered in the same institution, NATO. Is there a prospect of a European operation, or NATO—essentially, the EU nations—being run not just militarily but also politically from inside NATO with no direct involvement of the EU institutions? Is that not going to be a really difficult practical problem with your suggestion?

Dr Karl-Heinz Kamp: You will have all kinds of practical problems, but the idea is to change the basic thinking of our political leaders. Not that I have the ambition to do that, but by writing such an article I was putting forward the idea that there was a different way of thinking about it. It would certainly depend on the contingency and on the political will of the nations involved. One thing surprises me on the point that you just mentioned: in many cases the same people are acting in different fora. They go to one forum and say this, then go to another and say that. For a political outsider like me, an amateur, that sounds a little bizarre. By the way, in my view this is the major flaw of this overambitious EU thinking: I cannot foresee a military crisis big enough to involve all the EU members but not big enough to also involve the US. In my view, there is always that natural link.

We have another positive development in dealing with these institutional problems. You are completely right, and I am not expert enough to understand how the different institutions in Brussels could interact. However, we have one fundamental change on the other side of the Atlantic, if you recall that the former US permanent representative once said that the EU developing its own military capacities would be a threat almost as big as the Soviet Union. Give me a break, with all due respect. So there the ideological thinking has dwindled significantly. We had long discussions about whether or not military improvements would happen within the EU or in NATO, and we were fighting back and forth. Now Washington says, "If the Europeans manage to strengthen their defence capacities, we don't give a damn where they are. We only care if they happen at all. What counts for us is that they're there". On that basis, accepting all your caveats on potential institutional difficulties, if it was decided by the leaders at top summit level, I do not think the Commission or the Council would create severe problems.

Q166 Baroness Billingham: Good afternoon. You have already touched on two parts of the answer to the question that I am going to put to you, which refers to the Berlin Plus arrangement. It has been suggested to us that there should also be a reverse Berlin Plus arrangement, which would allow NATO to call upon EU soft power assets and financing. Do you think that is a good idea? What assets could we mobilise? In what scenarios could you envisage such arrangements working?

Dr Karl-Heinz Kamp: In my humble view, although I am not an expert on tricky EU or NATO internals, Berlin Plus was an arrangement that had a bureaucratic background. It was necessary to negotiate to see what was possible or not. I will come to your point about Berlin Plus in a second, but first, what are we talking about? Basically, we are talking about the readiness of the US to grant its military capacities to the EU, and you need to negotiate the details of that. At the top level, it requires the willingness of the US to do that. If that is there, everything else is pretty much the nitty-gritty. I assume that a sharing of operational capacities would also have been possible even without the Berlin Plus agreement.

Now, let us transfer that to a reverse Berlin Plus. Many academics have had the idea of a reverse Berlin Plus, but what does it mean if you really think it through? What are the EU's soft power assets? The most important one is money. Do you really foresee that Washington will say, "You know what? We need a little money from the EU budget for a certain operation". If that were to happen, it might be because your Prime Minister, my Chancellor and the US President agreed on something, but not because we had a Berlin Plus, or reverse Berlin Plus, agreement. Once again, even if we had it now, I think a reverse Berlin Plus would have the same fate as the Berlin Plus. It stems from a time when we were discussing two different entities as if they were on different planets. Sometimes in Brussels, as you well know, to go from the EU to NATO was to go to hostile ground. That is over, so I do not see the necessity and I cannot imagine a real requirement, any contingency, in which such an agreement would be of any value.

Baroness Billingham: In my humble opinion, I think you are right.

Q167 Earl of Oxford and Asquith: I have a quick supplementary on that, Herr Doktor. You quite rightly point out that NATO has developed the concept of a joint task force, which will operate in a flexible way. I think that was adopted back in 1994 at the Brussels summit, but the first time it was used was 20 years later when Operation Inherent Resolve, I think it is called, against ISIL was started in October or December last year. At the latest count, that has about 60 or 61 nations associated with it. Do you think there is the political need or the political will to sharpen up that concept before it can be considered a credible potential tool?

Dr Karl-Heinz Kamp: Would you mind repeating the last sentence? The connection was interrupted.

Earl of Oxford and Asquith: Do you think that the concept of a Combined Joint Task Force needs to become a lot more credible and a lot more precise before it can be adopted as a practical tool?

Dr Karl-Heinz Kamp: I think the Combined Joint Task Force agreement was, first and foremost, like Berlin Plus and all these things, more or less about an intellectual concept being crossed in saying that NATO is not just nine to five but has changed. In 1994, we had a completely different situation. We all believed that we were surrounded by friends, and that has slightly changed now. If you recall, NATO at that

time was desperately trying to prove its relevance. We had all these pretty groovy—from today's point of view—ideas about NATO being a subcontractor of the UN and maybe doing crisis management, because hardly anyone could imagine a severe Article 5 crisis any more. That has now changed significantly. As I have said, I am a military layman, but the Combined Joint Task Force idea has been supplemented by so many practical agreements. We have arranged a number of practical ways of co-operating in Afghanistan, which were done pragmatically and as needed. We have today's idea of improving NATO's defence capacities without spending too much money—I will not comment on whether that is a good idea or not. The Germans brought in the idea—I forget the name of it—that other smaller nations should group around a leading nation for certain operations, which is now before NATO. I have gone blank about the actual acronym or the exact description. All these elements enable NATO to co-operate with non-NATO nations. I think we are perfectly fine doing this. It has been proven in Libya and Afghanistan. I do not think that it will, but should a Syrian operation become necessary, it would work there as well. I do not think that a formal sharpening of a concept that is basically 20 years old is necessary now.

Q168 Lord Dubs: Herr Doktor, I dare say you would agree that the disagreements or tensions between Turkey and Cyprus pose difficulties for closer EU-NATO co-operation. Do you see any signs that Turkey might modify or reconsider its opposition to Cypriot participation in formal EU-NATO meetings, and can anything be done to resolve this problem?

Dr Karl-Heinz Kamp: I think we all know that Turkey is a problem—probably the key problem, although not the only one. When it comes to the question of EU-NATO co-operation, my personal opinion, speaking in my private capacity, is that some of the allies happen to hide behind Turkey when it comes to better co-operation between NATO and the EU or when it comes to a more political discussion in NATO, which is deeply necessary. Then we have other nations that tend to block things and always point to the case of Turkey. So there is much that could be done. Do I have an idea of how to solve the Turkey problem? No, I do not, but sometimes I feel that if it were tackled at the top level it would not be impossible to solve it. But I do not understand how Turkey can block NATO from discussing certain issues. I am sorry, but I do not understand the logic. France, by the way, does the same thing, but if the other 26 wanted to discuss it, they could do.

With certain steps that require the full consent of all NATO nations, and formal decisions of course, every NATO member including Turkey has a blocking power. But much in NATO, as you know, is dealt with informally through tacit agreement, through silent procedure. I do not have an idea for solving this formally, but there needs to be political will. With the Ukraine crisis for instance, there was an urgent need for more NATO-EU co-operation on the issue of hybrid warfare, which is a national issue that has to be tackled by individual nations. We are talking about police forces and how to deal with the little green men—you do not shoot them but

send police and ask them for their passports. This is not happening and I am completely astonished. You can say that we have quadrupled the number of EU-NATO meetings from, I think, one or two in recent years to four now, but there is still much to do, and I do not think this is about just Turkey.

Q169 The Chairman: Do you think the current strategic review can make any difference in this context in terms of EU-NATO co-operation?

Dr Karl-Heinz Kamp: Do you mean the new NATO Strategic Concept or the current strategic review?

The Chairman: I meant the Mogherini exercise.

Dr Karl-Heinz Kamp: Once again, you are asking a non-EU expert. I found the 2003 EU strategy had an advantage and a disadvantage. The advantage was that it had a small number of ambitions, defined on paper in a straightforward way. That is the good news. The bad news is that it was not a strategy because it had no force behind it. Now, of course, it makes a lot of sense after 12 years to have a new concept. What I hear now from the Mogherini approach—forgive me for this simple talk—is that it is everything from Plato to NATO. The title alone—what is it, “global strategy”?—suggests that it is not like the NATO Strategic Concept, with the EU defining its military ambitions, which we can agree or disagree with, and realistically asking what it can do and what tasks it can undertake. I am concerned that this is, once again, one of these EU treaty papers with 750 pages which no one reads. I am missing focus.

The problems that you are pointing to are very precise. How do we deal with NATO and the EU? What about the EU’s crisis management capacities in a world which is reluctant to manage crises? How do we deal with a lack of resources on both sides? How do we deal with a US government who might redefine it? There are all these questions. This is my personal opinion. I hope I will be completely wrong, but they will be worried by the global ambition of the EU, even though the EU is not actually a global actor, at least not in the military field.

The Chairman: Thank you. Lord Balfe is going to ask a question about Turkey and NATO, which was later on our list of questions but follows naturally here.

Q170 Lord Balfe: Yes, Herr Doktor, I would like to follow up on the Turkey issue. The military in Turkey, which used to be all-powerful, has gradually been rolled back and is now a much less powerful force within the Turkish state. I wonder whether you see a further shift in the balance of power following the recent very decisive election of the party that has done the most to roll back the power of the military. Do you think there will be a shift in Turkey’s commitment and approach to NATO? You say that you are not an EU expert, and that is a different question, but my question here is about its approach to NATO.

Dr Karl-Heinz Kamp: My Lord, I worked for NATO for six years, and my experience is that on a number of issues NATO is not an easy ally. By the way, some allies are not easy either, and if you like we can now discuss who is the worst. On the other hand, I

have to grant that Turkey is in a particular geographic environment and being confronted by certain things. I am not supporting or justifying Turkish policies; I would wish for a different Turkish government, but we do not have that so we have to deal with them. At the same time, 10 Turkish cities now have a Syrian majority. We have to grant that Turkey has a number of problems that we have only to a much smaller degree, and that of course affects Turkish policy. Point number two is that yes, Turkey is exploiting its role, position and our need to deal with it. I still have not understood how the refugee question is changing the entire fabric of NATO and the EU, but for a number of reasons I have a concern that that is going to happen. So we have to deal with Turkey as it is. Do I see Turkey being a member of the EU? No, I do not. Not least, we would need public votes in a number of countries, including France, for that to happen. So Turkey will remain a difficult partner. On the other hand—maybe I am overoptimistic; I always am—Turkey is also in need of NATO's defence. The fact that the NATO Secretary-General declared NATO's readiness to defend Turkey in case of need is something that is important for Turkey as well. Would I prefer to have a different Turkey? Yes, I would, but unfortunately it is as it is and we have to deal with it. Mr Erdogan is a difficult person. He may be—once again, this is not to be quoted—overambitious. There is another term for that, which I do not want to use now. Still, that is the person that we have, and we must deal with him. I think we can deal with Turkey as we always did in the past. I think that Turkey realises two limitations to its own power. The first is the economy. I am not sure that the Turkish economy will go as well in the next 10 years as the Turks hope it will. Secondly, I think Turkey has understood that the ambition it was selling to us a year ago—"We are the bridge between Orient and Occident"—did not work out that way, and Turkey's other ambition of "No problem" did not work at all; Turkey has a lot of problems and is increasingly aware that it needs allies to deal with them.

Q171 Baroness Coussins: Turning to military capacity and resources within the EU, you will be aware that at the NATO summit in Wales a number of Member States promised to increase their defence spending to 2% of GDP. Do you agree with other witnesses who have suggested to us that that is not a credible promise? Secondly, considering the strategic context facing the EU, where would you say the serious defence shortfalls are within the EU, and where should Member States invest?

Dr Karl-Heinz Kamp: Is the promise made in Wales of spending 2% credible? Is it as credible, or indeed as un-credible, as all such promises have been in recent years, as they have been a couple of times? Is this only bad news? No, we have bad news and good news. Yes, only five countries in NATO today reach the 2% bar. The fact that Greece is the second best performer is probably not what we wanted to come out of the 2% promise. The good news is—I can say this at least for my own country—that we have a tidal change in the perception of our parliament on how to deal with defence spending. Are we keen on spending more and more? No, we are not, but a couple of years ago if you only mentioned the possibility of raising the defence budget, you would have heard an outcry of protest. That is over. An increase in

German defence spending—I will come to your question in a second—will happen homeopathically, as it always does in Germany, but the fact that it is happening at all is a fundamental change.

The bad news is that six European countries have increased their defence spending but six have cut it further. That is something that I find completely unacceptable. The fact that eastern European countries and even Baltic countries are among them scandalises me, again in my private capacity. It is unacceptable because, as the US President said a while ago, “We, the US, cannot take more care of Europe than it can take care of itself”. I think he is absolutely right. Where are we heading to? Will all NATO and EU allies fulfil their promise? No, they will not. In fact, with all due respect, I am not sure whether countries such as the UK, Poland or France would like Germany to match that figure; since our GDP is so high, that would mean a defence budget significantly higher than the UK’s, France’s or Poland’s. That might cause some political eyebrow-raising because we would end up in the range of some €55 billion. That is not realistic, and I think the German Chancellor said in Wales that our current level of 1.3% was unacceptable but 2.0% was unrealistic, so we would end up somewhere in between. There are ideas of different ways of measuring the contributions quality-wise. I am not sure whether they are credible as they are difficult to measure.

At the end of the day, once again, we have at least two pieces of good news. You can quote all the bad news in the world; indeed, there is too much bad news, and you are right to point to it. We are not spending enough on defence. Why? In many European countries we do not have an awareness of the threat. Germany in particular is not a country like the UK, which has a tradition of global responsibilities. We might have to learn that, as might other European countries. However, as I said, there are two pieces of at least slightly good news. The first is that there is increased awareness of the fact that we are in an Article 5 world, which requires different thinking about the budgets and resources that we are willing to spend on security. Having said all that, you see an increase in military capacities. You see that NATO, including its EU members, is much better at fulfilling its promises on the readiness action plan. Some countries, including Poland, were concerned after Wales and said that they had signed a nice declaration but would not actually implement it, but in general we Europeans, we Germans, did much more than other people believed we would. Is that enough? I am not sure, but at least the situation is not as bleak as some people portray it.

Q172 Lord Triesman: Good afternoon, Doctor. Your paper says that the strategic context “poses challenges”, but it looks sufficiently threatening to potentially generate enough political will in the Member States of the EU to take on a more capable military role and become a more capable military actor. If you look at the states’ national interests and traditions and the increasing reluctance across European politics and among political elites to intervene militarily, do you think there are any steps that could be taken to make the EU a more willing partner in engagement, or should we simply turn to NATO for that engagement?

Dr Karl-Heinz Kamp: My Lord, the fact that we have intervention fatigue in all our societies is in my view not so much because people do not want to intervene or take responsibility. I must say I am surprised by my own Government, who, in 2014, promised to take a greater international role. Believe it or not, they did, against the public will, so things are developing. The reason why we have intervention fatigue is that apparently, our possibilities to change things on the ground, particularly in the Islamic world, the greater Middle East and Africa, are limited. We have all experienced the completely surprising news and insight of what happens even with a successful operation. I would say that Afghanistan was not a failure—not at all. It was very successful. We achieved a lot but now we have a situation in which the people there burn the schools we have built and kill the teachers we have trained. So apparently, the idea that through crisis management operations, be they military, civilian or whatever, you can do some social engineering and improve a situation is overambitious. We all have to become humble.

I still have not yet figured out what went wrong in Libya. Basically, neither the EU nor NATO really assesses this and learns lessons from it. What went wrong? What was the moment when we failed? Are we really in a situation whereby this crisis cannot be tackled? So what I am saying is that this is not a case of our unwillingness or lack of insight about the need; it is just the realisation that if almost every crisis has become worse after our intervention, this leads to the public saying, "Sorry, guys, but this is not something we want to subscribe to". That is understandable. On the other hand, I am surprised to see that people are ready to fight.

Basically, we have two pieces of good news. First, people are ready to fight for defence reasons—as I said in relation to Article 5. I was surprised by the cohesion shown by the EU on sanctions, and I think Mr Putin was pretty much surprised by it. Sanctions work. We Germans had an easy say in the matter but a country like France or Italy, with its back more or less against the wall, has problems with the sanctions. But still the EU is holding together and NATO is holding together, although probably Portugal has a completely different threat assessment than Poland has. So this is pretty good news, which I find surprisingly stable. As I said, Mr Putin completely miscalculated our capacity to keep our cohesion.

The second piece of news is, remember what was said in all our societies—in the UK, Germany, and France—by the academics who all said that we are the post-heroic societies. Our societies are no longer willing to suffer harm. They are not taking casualties. Maybe the Brits and the French are because they have a tradition of doing so, and maybe the Americans are, but the Germans will not and the Poles will not. All our nations were in Afghanistan for 14 years; we all had casualties. We in Germany were allowed to refer to casualties. We were not allowed to call Afghanistan a war for quite a while. Even now, medals are awarded for bravery. So what I am saying is that the security policy maturation of those EU nations not as mature as the UK and France due to their history, is incredible. This surprises me but is this enough for the future? I do not know but it is certainly more than we had in 2001. I know that is not

an answer to the question, but I only can report about moods and feelings which I sense in my society and in the NATO societies.

Q173 Earl of Oxford and Asquith: Germany has shown its willingness to take a political leadership role in Ukraine and it has also undertaken its own security and defence review. If we just leave aside the issue of defence spending increases, which you quite rightly say can sometimes be a bit irrelevant to the assessment of building capacity, would you say that the German security review is likely to result in any recommendations for new political military capabilities for Germany, particularly within the EU?

Dr Karl-Heinz Kamp: My Lord, yes; as you say, Germany is taking greater responsibility, and it realises, stunningly, two effects which come with taking greater responsibility. I will come to your question in a second. The first is that Germany gets criticised, regardless of what it does. That is something the US, in part also the UK or France, as bigger international powers, are pretty much used to—namely, you are damned if you do and damned if you don't. This is a new experience for some of our key decision makers. The second insight is that politicians realise that engagement alone, which we show, and foreign policy activism do not lead to the solving of problems. This is a new insight. I can tell you that there has never been so much foreign policy in Berlin as in the last one or two years. We have had Kerry here and Netanyahu. At the end of that, we are not able to solve the problems in either Syria or Libya, or any of the issues which we have. It takes a while for politicians to digest this insight.

I come to your question about capacity. By the way, the term I was lacking before was the famous Framework Nations Concept. I am sorry; it escaped me earlier. How can we generate new capacities with limited resources? I always annoy my military colleagues here in the institute with my layman's comparison. I say to them, "Sorry guys; yes, I can understand your complaint about lacking resources, but if we take the defence budgets of all NATO and EU states together, and we add all the other ones from the axis of the good in the world—the West, the Swedes, the Australians, the New Zealanders, the Finns, and God knows what—we end up with some 70% to 75% of global military expenditure".

If this is not enough to cope with the challenges, something is wrong here. Then we come to the endless discussions on how to spend money wisely—do we have personnel costs that are too high?—but that is where we are. On the ideas in the Framework Nations Concept, smart defence was, with respect, a silly term more or less from the beginning; there is no such thing as a dumb defence. But the idea of more co-operation is the right one.

If I may add one catchword, which I missed in your set of questions, half a year ago we were discussing the European army vigorously. There was a huge debate that started in Brussels, and we had it in Germany. There will have to be pragmatic co-operation between the Dutch and the Germans, because the Dutch do not have any

tanks any more, and between many other European countries because they lack capacities, so we will get something like a European army. It will not be the army that people thought of—as an actor of the European state, or that sort of thing—but we will have the Europeans acting militarily, with or without the US and in a constructive manner. Our capacity-building will go that way.

In Germany, which you specifically asked about, we are now increasing our defence budget. That is the good news. The bad news is that most of that increase will be consumed by salary increases for the soldiers. However, at the same time we will have a chance. The signal is that we will constantly increase our defence budget, and we will use this to reactivate desperately needed issues. If you saw now where capacity-building is needed in Germany, for instance, you would not believe it. We have had an exercise in NATO on how to bring one brigade from Portugal to the Baltics. It took 21 days just to get all the permissions to get this thing done, with all the customs and regulations. It took another 10 days to find all the trains that were able to transport tanks. The entirely reforged industry for reinforcements that we had in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s is gone, so we have to start there. However, since the awareness is there, I think that we will have this. As you can see, we now have the VJTF with 4,000 men. Now we can debate endlessly whether that is enough. Given the 60,000 to 70,000 men being mobilised in a snap exercise, it may not be—but it changes Putin's risk calculus.

My last point, if I may, is that we will always have a debate in NATO and in the EU between those who say "Not enough" in eastern Europe and those who say "It is way too expensive already", such as Italy, France, Spain and Portugal, due to geography and different interests.

Q174 Earl of Oxford and Asquith: That is a very interesting exposition. I have a follow-up question from what you were saying about the last two years and how Berlin has been a hub for foreign policy-makers and people visiting. This Committee has heard evidence that the US increasingly sees Germany as its main interlocutor in the EU. Our simple question is: do you agree with this assessment? Particularly, what are the implications for German influence from within the EU in the NATO discussions?

Dr Karl-Heinz Kamp: My Lords, I fully understand the political sensitivity of this question because, in Germany, the Chancellor is well aware of the needs. Whenever Germany is a leading power or defined by others as the hub with regard to dealing with the Russian crisis—the German Chancellor had some 50 phone calls with Vladimir Putin—we are well aware of the fact that this might also cause eyebrow-raising, due to our history as an overambitious Germany. This is not the case. The German Chancellor tries particularly carefully to convey the message so that the practice is always to include the smaller allies—to keep them in the loop—and to deal with the other big ones. We are well aware that the UK and France are, in military capacities, far ahead of Germany and we are not competing with that.

So there is a high sensitivity not to raise the impression of a new German Großmachtstreben, or having big power ambitions. That is not there. Politics is made by people. I think that Mrs Merkel has a certain policy style, which goes well with certain crises now. The close US-German co-operation, which by the way was not always the case in the Obama-Merkel period, is not exclusive but inclusive.

There are press articles—not by me—saying, “Where is the UK in this entire business? Aren’t they lacking?” That is a decision for the UK to take on how to include itself in ongoing diplomacy. It would be nice if France could be less occupied with its own domestic problems, as it is now. The point I want to make is about the German government, due to their geographical position now. We have a German Chancellor who speaks Russian, because she learned it, and that almost automatically gives us a certain access to Russia. We have a certain economic weight, which comes with certain obligations. But there is definitely not an idea of monopolising any contacts. That is certainly not the case.

The Chairman: Dr Kamp, thank you very much. We have been speaking for an hour. I do not know whether any of my colleagues have any supplementaries. Lord Risby, who was unavoidably detained, may have a question that he would like to ask. No?

On behalf of the Committee, then, I thank you very much. We will send you a transcript of your evidence so that if there is anything you want to correct in that, you will have the opportunity to do so. I am really most grateful. We are very far down the track with this inquiry and you have helped to fill in a number of gaps. The clarity with which you responded was very helpful.