

JUL 25 2013

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RESTRICTED SESSION
(MIDDLE EAST)

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"THE MIDDLE EAST/PERSIAN GULF AND NATO COMMON SECURITY"
DPC Ministerial Statement for Secretary Brown

The growing importance of cooperation between the U.S., our European allies and Japan outside of NATO is nowhere more critically important, at this time, than in connection with the Persian Gulf and Middle East.

I would like to briefly share with you U.S. security policy in the Middle East and, then, discuss with you possible areas of cooperation.

In the past few months events in the Persian Gulf and Middle East region, including the Egypt-Israel Peace Treaty, the collapse of order in Iran, eruption of war in Yemen, Iraqi leadership gains, and the rise of ethnic separatism, have suggested to us the importance of more US involvement and additional Western efforts in support of peace, moderation and stability in the area.

During a trip I took to Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Israel and Jordan last February, I outlined with regional leaders some of the basic elements of U.S. regional policy. These include:

1. Enhance regional perceptions of U.S. capabilities and resolve
2. Press for rapid progress in Arab-Israeli peace process
3. Expand U.S. involvement in regional security consultations
4. Enhance regional states' capabilities
5. Increase U.S. military presence in the region

The strategic stakes and ties the West has in secure relations in this region as well as the means to protect them must be safeguarded. The growing inter-relationship between instability in the Persian Gulf and threats to the security and economic well-being of the West underscore the need for our cooperation.

In addressing Western security interests in the region, there are cooperative actions that we could implement now to enhance security at

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relatively little cost. These actions could be undertaken while we continue to consider longer term alternatives for promoting Allied interests.

Areas of high priority for cooperative action are first, Transit Access. The efficiency and effectiveness of crisis operations would be greatly improved if notification and arrangement provisions were improved by both sides of the Atlantic; second, Military Training, which is perhaps the most critical area of need in all of the armed forces of the PG/ME; and finally, Joint and Multinational Exercises. The demise of CENTO has brought an end to the annual MIDLINK Exercise and the only regularly coordinated multinational Western presence in the Arabian Sea and Indian Ocean. Multinational exercises presently participated in by Allied forces could be augmented by additional Allies and include the forces of regional states. Such an initiative would be a most effective indication of Western resolve and cooperation for regional security. These exercises could take a variety of forms, such as small naval drills including patrol craft and joint air force exercises including tactical air or carrier based air. Joint exercises in the Indian Ocean in the autumn time frame would be most helpful.

I recognize that most US/European cooperation and activity in the Persian Gulf and Middle East will be bilateral. I would like to suggest that NATO serve as a clearinghouse for discussion and, to the extent possible, coordination of efforts affecting many of us. Perhaps SYG Luns could work on developing arrangements for such a clearinghouse function and report back to the PermReps. We would welcome comments on this concept of having the Secretary General set up a Special Coordination Committee so all of us can exchange views on activities outside of the NATO area.

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