Norwegian Ministry
of Foreign Affairs

Meld. St. 36 (2016–2017) Report to the Storting (white paper)

Setting the course for Norwegian foreign and security policy

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Recommendation of 21 April 2017 from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, approved in the Council of State the same day. (White paper from the Solberg Government)

1 Background and summary

Norway's current security situation is more challenging than it has been for a long time. Unpredictability has become the new normal. The world as we know it is changing. Cooperation is being put to the test.

Eight years ago, a white paper on the main features of Norwegian foreign policy was presented to the Storting (Norwegian parliament).[1] Many of the conclusions reached in 2009 are still valid today. But the security environment has changed dramatically, and this has implications for Norwegian policy. In autumn 2015, the Government launched a project entitled 'Setting the course for Norwegian foreign and security policy' to review all aspects of Norway's security policy.

Over a period of 18 months, the project held a series of events bringing people together for a broad debate on the main contours of Norwegian foreign and security policy. Input was also gathered from research groups at home and abroad. The project culminated in the launch of this white paper, which presents the Government's views on the course Norway should follow to ensure that we are as well equipped as possible to tackle today's more challenging and unpredictable security situation.

The policy choices described are based on the Government's political platform, which states that: 'In terms of shared interests and values, Norway will continue to be closest to the Atlantic, European and Nordic communities. The Government will actively seek to cooperate with new partners and take part in global activities. At the same time, changes in the political, economic and military balance of power make it essential to maintain an even stronger basis in the values and political orientation of our Western community of neighbours, allies and trading partners.[2]

Trends

Norway's security and economic stability are dependent on alliances and cooperation with other countries. Changes in the political and military priorities of close allies, in the EU, in Russia's economic and political situation and in the framework for international trade have significant consequences for Norway.

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1 Report No. 15 (2008–2009) to the Storting*: Interests, Responsibilities and Opportunities. The main features of Norwegian foreign policy*

2 Political platform for a government formed by the Conservative Party and the Progress Party. Sundvolden, 7 October 2013

Russia's annexation of Crimea in spring 2014 and the destabilisation of eastern Ukraine have changed the security landscape in Europe. State security is being challenged once again. As a result, NATO is turning its attention back to collective defence, and expectations of the EU in the area of security are increasing. In the north, Russia is strengthening its military capabilities and presence. This has implications for Norway.

To the south of Europe, a long belt of instability has developed near the EU's external border. This is having far-reaching and direct consequences for Norwegian security. The number of refugees and other migrants is higher today than was envisaged a few years ago, and there are strong indications that migratory pressure on Europe will increase. Climate change is exacerbating risks and unpredictability, particularly in fragile states and regions.

In Europe, cohesion within and between countries is being challenged. The UK's decision to leave the EU highlights this. At the same time, the need for European leadership is greater than it has been for a long time. Security threats are moving closer to Europe, and are not felt as strongly on the other side of the Atlantic.

We are now seeing major changes in US foreign and security policy. This is affecting transatlantic relations.

Competing interests and disagreements between major powers are undermining joint efforts to promote international peace and security. The UN is the world's most important body for conflict management. However, in certain key areas the members of the UN Security Council are not managing to uphold their responsibilities under the UN Charter. Shifts in the balance of power are undermining support for international norms such as respect for human rights. Increased polarisation is making it difficult to develop new international agreements and common solutions.

The ability and willingness of states to pursue their goals through conventional military force, covert operations and cooperation with non-state actors is increasing. The vast array of information sources combined with targeted disinformation activities can create uncertainty and sow doubt among the population. This is making crisis management more difficult than it was in the past.

Globalisation is continuing, and its impact on our societies is far-reaching. At the same time, forces opposed to globalisation have gained strength. In several countries, political protest parties are competing for power. Several of these are advocating nationalist and inward-looking policies. In a position of power, they could pose a threat to our foreign and security policy interests and could make binding international cooperation and trade more difficult.

The unpredictable nature of the world today and the increasingly complex challenges we are facing make targeted and coordinated efforts at the national, European and international levels essential. The objective of this white paper is to contribute to these efforts. Together with the Long-term Defence Plan[3] and the white paper on public security,[4] it forms part of the Government's work to strengthen security and emergency preparedness.

Policy choices

Norway has a long tradition of continuity in foreign and security policy, and there is broad consensus on the values that underpin our policy: democracy, human rights, and respect for international law. But our policy cannot be static. We must adapt to the changing security environment and make conscious choices in order to safeguard Norwegian interests and defend the values we believe in. The Government has identified the following three main courses of action as crucial for safeguarding Norwegian security in these times of change:

Maintaining and building on the well-established principles of Norwegian security policy by:

- seeking to maintain our close transatlantic ties and further developing our long-term security policy cooperation with the US.
- supporting NATO adaptation with a view to strengthening the Alliance's collective defence against both old and new security threats.
- strengthening Norway's defence capabilities and facilitating a greater Allied presence and more frequent Allied exercises in the north.
- further developing cooperation with Russia on the basis of common interests and a consistent and predictable policy.
- seeking to maintain and further develop the international legal order and to strengthen the UN and other international institutions; promoting human rights, the rule of law and democracy; responding to serious violations of international law.

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3 *Capable and sustainable.* Long-term Defence Plan, 17 June 2016

4 Meld. St. 10 (2016–2017) *Risk in a safe and secure society.*

– working to promote balanced, mutual, irreversible and verifiable nuclear disarmament and prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

Strengthening the European and Nordic dimension in Norwegian security policy by:
– developing closer security policy cooperation with selected European allies.
– helping to enhance European civilian and military crisis management capacity, and promoting effective control of external borders, close police and intelligence cooperation, and anti-radicalisation and integration measures.
– promoting closer cooperation between NATO and the EU.
– intensifying security policy dialogue and cooperation in the Nordic region.
– safeguarding and strengthening multilateral institutions and conventions that promote democracy, human rights and the rule of law.

Intensifying Norway's efforts in Europe's unstable southern neighbourhood by:
– implementing our strategy for efforts in fragile states and regions.
– increasing aid to the unstable areas in the Middle East, North Africa and the Sahel.

Part I of this white paper provides an analysis of security policy trends. Part II answers two key questions: How are these trends affecting Norwegian security? And what consequences should this have for Norwegian security policy?

Part I
Security policy trends

2 The Euro-Atlantic area

European and transatlantic cooperation based on shared values and interests is the key to peace and stability. This cooperation is now being challenged from within, as a result of trends such as changes in the security architecture, economic developments, and a tendency towards polarisation.

2.1 Security architecture

The Euro-Atlantic security architecture is based on the UN Charter. The principle of collective defence, enshrined in Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty, is at the core of transatlantic cooperation and is fundamental to Norwegian security. Norway also has benefited considerably from European cooperation arrangements since the end of the Second World War. These cover a wide range, from far-reaching integration projects to regional cooperation forums and pan-European organisations. Together, they have enhanced cooperation, trust, conflict resolution and security in Europe.

In the late 1990s and 2000s, the European and Euro-Atlantic cooperation structures were expanded to include a number of new countries. The goal of EU and NATO membership became a powerful driver of democratic reform. Democratisation and the inclusion of former Eastern bloc countries in European and Euro-Atlantic structures erased old dividing lines and brought with it peace, predictability and stability. Many countries made defence cuts.

Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014 changed the security situation. As a result, NATO has shifted its attention from out-of-area crisis management to collective defence and deterrence within the NATO area. Cuts in defence spending have been halted in most countries, and NATO's presence in its Eastern member states has been strengthened in response to uncertainty about Russia's intentions and its increased military capabilities.

Through this process of adaptation, NATO has demonstrated a high level of cohesion. However, security threats affect the soon-to-be 29 NATO member states[1] in different ways. This influences national priorities. Moreover, there are growing disparities between member states in levels of political, economic and military development. Over time, the NATO area has become less homogeneous. NATO is considering whether to begin work on a new Strategic Concept, to be issued in connection with its 70th anniversary in 2019.

Relations between the US and its European Allies are also part of this picture. Today's challenges are not experienced in the same way or with the same intensity in Europe and the US. Our shared history is receding into the past. The major waves of migration across the Atlantic are becoming a more distant memory. Younger people today are not bound together as we were in the past by shared experiences such as the liberation and reconstruction of Europe after the Second World War or security cooperation during the Cold War.

The US contributes over 70 % of NATO's overall defence spending.[2] Norway and the other Allies cannot simply assume that the US will maintain its current level of military interest and engagement in Europe in the future. In the US public debate, investments in European security are being weighed against other priorities. In 2014, NATO member states agreed to aim to increase their defence expenditure and move towards spending 2 % of their GDP on defence within a decade.

Greater diversity within NATO is encouraging new forms of cooperation. Closer cooperation between smaller groups of countries, involving both Allies and non-Allies, increasingly reinforces and complements NATO's efforts. Norway's cooperation with countries such as France, the Netherlands, the UK and Germany provides examples of

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1 Montenegro is in the process of joining NATO. On 10 January 2017, the Storting (Norwegian parliament) gave its unanimous consent to Montenegro's accession as the 29th member of NATO.

2 NATO (2016), Defence expenditures of NATO countries 2008-2015. Press Release PR/CP (2016) 011. Available at http://www.nato.int [accessed 13 March 2017].

this, as does its cooperation with the other Nordic countries and the Baltic states.

The EU binds its member states closer together in more areas than any other organisation. By imposing conditions on candidate countries and other partners, the EU has also promoted stability and democratic reform in neighbouring countries. The EU's ability to promote a positive path of development in these countries is of vital importance to the security of Europe as a whole. However, major challenges remain relating to corruption, an inability or lack of willingness to fulfil joint commitments, and a lack of reforms in the countries in question.

Several of the Western Balkan countries have made significant progress in recent years, but the stability of the region cannot be taken for granted. Integration into the EU, which has been widely supported in the Western Balkan countries, is a slow process. Unemployment is high, corruption is widespread and living conditions are poor. External actors that oppose European integration are becoming increasingly active. They are cooperating with local forces that see that it is to their advantage to play on national and ethnic tensions to maintain the status quo.

Turkey plays an important role in ensuring regional stability, has close ties to the EU and is an important ally in NATO. However, Turkey is facing major security problems relating to the Middle East conflicts just across the border, the attempted coup in 2016, and frequent skirmishes between terrorist and armed groups and the country's security forces. Several million refugees have sought refuge in Turkey. The political situation in the country gives cause for concern. There are increasing restrictions on freedom of expression and the press, the human rights situation is deteriorating and the rule of law is being undermined. The country is becoming increasingly polarised.

Reaching agreement on an ambitious common foreign and security policy can be difficult for the EU. Nevertheless, the EU plays a key role in this area, both within and outside Europe. The EU has also developed extensive cooperation on civil protection and emergency preparedness and response.

The heightened security situation in and around Europe, the UK's withdrawal from the EU and US demands for Europe to take more responsibility for its own security have revived discussions about the EU's foreign and security policy role. In the long term, this could result in closer cooperation between member states. This cooperation is likely to be developed first between small groups of countries.

2.2 Economic development

For over 60 years, close economic and political cooperation has strengthened the ability of European countries to invest in security in the broadest sense of the word. After the fall of the Berlin wall, even more Europeans were able to benefit from the progress being made. The establishment of the internal market in 1993 and the enlargement of the EU created new opportunities for growth across Europe. Norway has benefited from this through its participation in the EEA Agreement.

The combined GDP of the eurozone countries is now back to the same level as it was before the financial crisis hit Europe with full force in 2009. However, high levels of government debt are reducing the economic room for manoeuvre in many countries.

Demographic changes will put increasing pressure on national budgets. The share of economically active people in the population is declining in most European countries, while the share of elderly people is increasing.[3] These trends are the result of low birth rates and higher life expectancy. In Norway too, the number of elderly people is growing more rapidly than the number of people in employment.[4]

Budgetary pressures, growing competition from emerging economies, an ageing population, technological developments and the need to limit global warming mean that there is a need for transformational change. Norway is one of a number of countries that are well placed to succeed in this process, with a sound framework that creates a fertile environment for innovation.

However, there are substantial social and economic disparities between countries in Europe. The continent includes some of the most competitive economies in the world, but there are also countries where corruption, organised crime and a dysfunctional public sector are impeding economic growth. There are also marked disparities within countries, particularly in areas that were hit hard by the financial crisis.

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3 Eurostat (2015), *People in the EU: who are we and how do we live*? Available at: http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat [accessed 13 March 2017].

4 Statistics Norway (2014), *Befolkningsframskrivinger 2014-2100* ('Population forecasts 2014-2100') (Norwegian only) Available at: www.ssb.no/befolkning [accessed 13 March 2017].

2.3 Extremism

Violent extremism in its various forms is a serious security threat to Norway and other European countries. Some extremists threaten the security of minorities. Others direct their hatred at society as a whole. What they have in common is a desire to sow discord and undermine the values on which European societies are based.

The number of people killed in terrorist attacks in Europe has fallen since the 1970s and 1980s. However, unlike the primarily ethno-nationalist and separatist terrorism of previous decades, today's acts of terrorism are not limited to any specific geographical area. In Norway and many other European countries, the fear and risk of a terrorist attack is therefore greater today.

More than 5 000 foreign terrorist fighters from Europe have travelled to Syria and Iraq to join violent extremist groups. According to the Norwegian Police Security Service (PST), some 40 people with close links to Norway were staying in ISIL-controlled areas at the beginning of 2017.[5] Foreign terrorist fighters who have returned to Norway pose a security risk. The threat from remote radicalisation is considered to be at least as great as that from people who have acquired combat experience abroad. The threat from far-right groups is growing.

The terrorist attacks in Europe in recent years and the threat posed by violent extremists make it essential to strengthen European cooperation on information sharing, border control, intelligence, crime fighting and asylum policy. These developments have also raised awareness of the importance of social and economic development and of safeguarding democracy, fundamental rights and the principles of the rule of law. The threat of terrorism highlights the need to combine stabilisation efforts in countries in Europe's neighbourhood with stronger civil protection and emergency preparedness at the national level.

2.4 Polarisation of society

There is growing support for protest movements and protest parties in a number of countries, while support for traditional political parties has weakened. Some of the protest parties respect democratic rules, while others challenge fundamental principles, human rights and democratic values, and are ideologically or otherwise linked to authoritarian models.

Political polarisation has a clear foreign and security policy dimension. Although protest parties and movements may have different starting points, they are united by a distrust of the authorities and the political system. A number of them express a lack of faith in binding international cooperation, are sceptical of international trade and have an exaggerated belief in the ability of the nation state to tackle today's challenges alone. If these parties are increasingly able to put their policies into practice, this could pose a threat to cooperation in NATO and the EU, and weaken Europe's ability to take collective action. We cannot rule out the risk that security policy in Europe will be 'renationalised'.

Moreover, increasing polarisation could make European countries vulnerable to negative external influences, in the form of disinformation campaigns and other destabilising activities. This could result in further polarisation and greater differences of opinion in and between European countries on important foreign and security policy issues.

[5] Norwegian Police Security Service (2017), Threat Assessment 2017. Available at www.pst.no [accessed 13 March 2017].

3 The Arctic and Russia

Developments in the Arctic are crucial to Norwegian security. Increasing international interest in the region is creating both opportunities and challenges. Bilateral cooperation between Norway and Russia in the north functions well in many areas, but Russia's military actions and foreign policy conduct give cause for concern.

3.1 The Arctic

Major players such as the US, the EU, Russia and China are increasingly promoting their interests in the Arctic. A number of countries are demonstrating their interest in the region through political engagement, investments in business and technology, and research. Climate change and easier access to sea areas and natural resources have led to increasing human activity in the Arctic. Similar trends can also be seen at the opposite end of the world, in the Antarctic. The growing interest in the Arctic is creating opportunities for closer cooperation, but also means that competing interests may emerge.

Since the end of the Cold War, the interests of the Arctic coastal states in the region have been largely compatible. The level of tension has been low, cooperation has been successful and the Law of the Sea has been upheld. As new actors with other interests and ambitions increase their engagement in the Arctic, more needs to be done to ensure continued respect and understanding for Norway's views.

Russia is a key player in the Arctic, not least because of its geographical location. According to its strategies and doctrines, Russia's goals include securing access to energy resources and to the Northeast Passage as a transport corridor, and maintaining Russian control and influence in the region. However, Russia is investing less than planned in the Arctic, largely because of low energy prices. Moreover, the volume of shipping using the Northeast Passage is smaller than expected.

There is a high level of military activity in the region. Russia's nuclear deterrence and retaliation capabilities are based on the Kola Peninsula, just to the east of the Norwegian-Russian border. These strategic weapons have been significantly upgraded as part of the modernisation of Russia's armed forces, which began in 2008. The region has great military and strategic significance. In the event of a security crisis, Russia could increase the readiness of these forces. This would reduce Norway's freedom of action and movement on its own territory and limit Allied access to the North Sea and the North Atlantic. A situation of this kind would make it more difficult for NATO to provide supplies and reinforcements for the defence of Norway and other Allies.

Military cooperation between Norway and Russia has been suspended following Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea and its other violations of international law in Ukraine. However, despite today's more complex security situation, Norway and Russia have maintained bilateral cooperation in a number of important areas.

Norway and Russia share an interest in maintaining stability and predictability in the Arctic. Ensuring respect for the Law of the Sea is in the interests of both countries. Russia's conduct in the Arctic has generally been in line with international law and bilateral agreements and accepted practice. Practical cooperation in a number of areas (search and rescue, fisheries management, nuclear safety, environmental protection and people-to-people cooperation) enhances regional stability.

3.2 Russia

Russia's great power ambitions have become clearer since the turn of the millennium. Its rhetoric has become tougher and has been matched by actions that underline Russia's desire to dominate parts of its 'near abroad' and play a more prominent role internationally. Attempts to restore Russia's international status are widely supported in Russia.

Russia's ambitions are being reinforced by a considerable strengthening of its military power.

As a result of the modernisation process, Russia's military forces have become more coordinated, flexible and mobile. During exercises in Norway's neighbouring areas and its operations in Ukraine and Syria, Russia has demonstrated the use of conventional long-range precision missiles and its ability to conduct Anti-Access/Area Denial operations and secure control of airspace. Russia's military capabilities mean that it has a wider range of options available if any kind of crisis or conflict arises. This has implications for Norwegian and Allied security.

Russia's interventions in Georgia in 2008 and Ukraine in 2014 show that Russia is willing and able to use all the instruments of state power, including military force, to safeguard its interests. The use of military force in violation of international law creates uncertainty. The current tensions between Russia and the rest of Europe are also affecting the Western Balkans.

NATO has responded by strengthening its presence in its easternmost member states. The EU has taken a unified stand and adopted restrictive measures against Russia in response to the violations of international law in Ukraine, thus strengthening its position as a security policy actor. Norway is contributing to steps to strengthen NATO's presence on its eastern flank and has aligned itself with the EU's restrictive measures.

Russia's military campaign in Syria demonstrates that Russia also has ambitions beyond its 'near abroad'.

Nuclear weapons play a key role in Russian security and defence policy, and the modernisation of weapons systems is continuing. Russia has not wanted to make further cuts to its nuclear arsenals.

Russia's 2015 national security strategy describes several aspects of NATO's activities as a threat. Practical cooperation between NATO and Russia has been suspended following the annexation of Crimea. NATO-Russian relations are now at their coldest since the fall of the Berlin Wall.

Norwegian-Russian relations will continue to have their ups and downs in the years ahead. Russia's desire to be the dominant power in what Moscow regards as its sphere of influence conflicts with international principles relating to the right of countries to determine their own foreign policy and choose their own alliances.

There is a growing gap between Russia's great power ambitions and what the Russian economy can support in the long term. The economy is highly dependent on oil and gas, and lower energy prices have hit Russia hard. Growth was already slowing while oil prices were still high. The fall in oil prices has accelerated the decline. Since the end of 2014, GDP has shrunk and people's purchasing power has decreased.[1] The combination of low, and in periods negative, population growth and a large post-war generation that is now ageing is creating further challenges.

Over the past few years, investment in civilian infrastructure has been inadequate and there have been major cuts in public spending. Until recently, the exception has been the defence sector, where modernisation and investment have been a high priority since 2008. During this period, defence spending has accounted for between 4 and 5 % of GDP, but there has been a slight decrease in the last couple of years.[2] Russia is expected to continue to give priority to the defence sector even if the situation in the Russian economy remains difficult.

Weak growth raises fears of internal unrest. This could be one of the reasons why the authorities have been tightening their grip on civil society in recent years. Freedom of expression is highly restricted. The media is largely under state control.

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1 World Bank (2016), *The Russian economy inches forward: Will that suffice to turn the tide?* Russia Economic Report 35. Available at: http://documents.worldbank.org [accessed 13 March 2017].

2 Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (2016), *Trends in military expenditure, 2015.* Available at: www.sipri.se [accessed 13 March 2017].

4 Europe's neighbourhood

Norway's security is increasingly affected by instability in Europe's southern neighbourhood. Parts of the Middle East, North Africa and the Sahel are experiencing crises. While growth is strong in several sub-Saharan countries, challenges relating, for example, to poor governance, rapid population growth and climate change are making the continent vulnerable. To the south east, Afghanistan and Pakistan are still a safe haven for violent extremists and a source of instability, both within and outside the region.

4.1 The Middle East and North Africa

Regimes have fallen, and new ones have taken their place. The Arab Spring uprisings have not led to better living conditions for people in the Middle East and North Africa. More people are living in situations of war and conflict than before the uprisings. An exception here is Tunisia, where the population and civil society have so far managed to keep democracy alive. But the situation is fragile. Continued progress cannot be taken for granted. International support will be necessary for a long time to come.

In Syria and Iraq, millions of people have been driven from their homes. Civilians have been hit in targeted attacks on schools, hospitals and local communities. International humanitarian law is being violated. The suffering is immense. The violence has put a major strain on the neighbouring countries. The rivalry between Saudi Arabia and Iran continues. The balance of power between several of the major powers in the region is changing.

As long as the Israeli–Palestinian conflict remains unresolved, it may exacerbate other conflicts in the region. It is therefore crucial that this conflict is resolved.

The situation in certain parts of the Middle East and North Africa is creating a further breeding ground for violent extremism. Extremism is on the rise and brutality is increasing. Sexual violence is widespread. Inadequate government control over territory and weak governance are allowing extremists to operate more freely in countries like Syria, Iraq and Libya.

Societies in the Middle East and North Africa are becoming less tolerant. There is a tendency towards extremist religious interpretations. There is less tolerance of people from other religions or with other religious views. Hostile images are created and extreme views on all sides are intensified.

Military and civilian efforts have, to some extent, succeeded in halting the advance of extremist groups. But the fight against violent extremism will require far more. The underlying problems related to social, economic, political and ideological development have to be solved. Sectarian and other divisions are putting nation states under pressure.

Population growth in the region is high. A shortage of employment opportunities and unequal distribution of resources are creating bleak prospects for large numbers of young people. In parts of the region, the low level of investment in education gives cause for concern. Women are, to varying degrees, being excluded from the labour market, and the economic potential they represent is thus not being used. The economic repercussions of the conflicts are affecting major parts of the region. The impacts of climate change are also undermining people's livelihoods. This could further intensify existing security threats.

A number of oil-dependent economies in the Middle East and North Africa are feeling the effects of lower oil prices. When an economy shrinks, the country's governance model can be shaken to the core. A number of oil economies transfer large sums of money to other countries. If these transfers are discontinued, some recipient countries will face serious financial challenges.

In recent years, the US has played a less prominent role in the Middle East and North Africa, following a long period of costly military interventions. The shale oil revolution has made the US less dependent on the oil fields in the Gulf. It is uncertain whether the US will want to increase its military and political engagement in the Middle

East again. The country's oil independence will, in any case, give it greater freedom of action and make US policy in the region less predictable than it used to be. Nevertheless, the US has taken on a key leadership role in the broad international coalition that has been formed to combat ISIL.

The reduced US presence has created more space for other actors. China is investing heavily in many parts of the world, including in the Middle East and North Africa, and these investments can contribute to economic development and stability. Russia's military engagement in the conflict in Syria is a new development. With its increased military presence and the deployment of advanced weapons systems, Russia has established itself as a force to be reckoned with in the eastern Mediterranean. It is difficult to judge what role Russia will play in the Middle East in the time ahead.

Unrest in parts of North Africa and the Middle East is creating real security threats for Norwegian individuals and companies in the region. In addition, some Norwegian nationals are directly involved in the fighting in Syria and Iraq. However, the number of Norwegians travelling to Syria as foreign terrorist fighters is falling.[1]

One of the consequences of the situation in parts of the Middle East and North Africa is that more refugees and other migrants are travelling to European countries. Parts of the region are also transit areas for migrants from further south. Even if the most acute crises are alleviated, migratory pressure will remain high in the years to come.

4.2 The Sahel and the Horn of Africa

Weak governance in countries such as Libya is making Europe more exposed to challenges from areas further south. The unstable region that extends from the Sahel to the Horn of Africa is becoming part of Europe's neighbourhood, in terms of security. Instability in this region could also have a negative impact on more stable countries south of the Sahara.

Africa's ongoing conflicts are mainly internal. Many of the parties to these conflicts are non-state actors that are able to gain ground in areas where government control is weak. This in turn creates a breeding ground for organised crime and violent extremism – challenges that also spread to Europe.

The growth of terrorism is particularly evident. Both the number of African countries affected and the number of victims have increased considerably over the years. Groups that are loosely connected to al-Qaida and ISIL have gained a foothold in North Africa and in the belt of countries stretching from the Sahel to the Horn of Africa. In 2015, nine African countries were included in the list of the 20 countries in the world that are hardest hit by terrorism.[2] In the same year, Boko Haram was the world's second deadliest terrorist group, after ISIL. The terrorist groups in the region are also a threat to targets in sub-Saharan Africa and in Europe.

Many people in sub-Saharan countries have experienced positive economic and political development in recent years. Nevertheless, they remain vulnerable to terrorism and other external shocks such as unrest in neighbouring countries, natural disasters, the impacts of climate change, environmental crime and epidemics. The Ebola outbreak in West Africa in 2014-2015 is an example of the way in which such challenges can affect security in Europe.

Instability in the belt of countries that extends from the Sahel to the Horn of Africa is expected to continue. International efforts under the leadership of France and the UN have produced results in some places, but there is still a long list of challenges waiting to be resolved. In the short term, there are few signs that states in the region are becoming stronger. The capacity to tackle large-scale crises is limited, and government control over large areas of land will continue to be weak. The same is true for sea areas off the Horn of Africa and in the Gulf of Guinea. It is difficult to achieve effective cross-border counter-terrorism cooperation. The African Union's military peace efforts have been strengthened, but the AU does not have the capacity to address all the challenges.

The international community must therefore be prepared for continued threats of terrorism and organised crime in the region. This will put considerable pressure on limited resources for crisis management, capacity-building and long-term aid. At the same time, it will be important to ensure that preventive efforts and economic development continue in the areas south of the Sahara.

[1] Norwegian Police Security Service (2017), *op.cit.*

[2] Institute for Economics and Peace (2016), Global Terrorism Index 2016. Available at http://economicsandpeace.org [accessed 13 March 2017].

It is expected that migratory pressure on Europe, and on more prosperous African countries and cities will remain high. This is due to factors such as continued instability in the Sahel, the Horn of Africa and certain parts of North Africa, rapid population growth, a young population, weak economic development and unemployment. Today, Africa's population totals 1.2 billion. This figure is expected to double by the middle of the century.[3] The level of migration will depend on factors such as the ability of the countries of origin to create inclusive growth and jobs. External border control, immigration management and efforts to combat organised crime are inadequate in many places.

The continent faces long-term challenges that are not in themselves threats to security, but could affect stability and security in countries that fail to adapt successfully. Climate change is one example. The Middle East and Africa are among the parts of the world that are expected to be hardest hit. Global warming will cause widespread drought and flooding, crop failure will be more common, there will be less access to clean water, and food security will be threatened. Modernisation of agriculture and a transition to climate-resilient crops will help, but in some places agriculture will no longer be possible. This will force people to migrate and will become a source of political and social unrest.

The capacity to build resilience and adapt varies from country to country. This will have consequences for Norwegian efforts in areas such as humanitarian aid, development, promotion of good governance, peacekeeping activities, business promotion, consular services, and our efforts to combat terrorism and organised crime, including environmental crime.

4.3 South Asia

After 15 years of extensive international efforts – both civilian and military – the situation in Afghanistan remains fragile. Rivalry for power and influence continues. The level of conflict between various rebel groups and the central authorities is as high as ever. And unless there is a breakthrough in the peace process with the Taliban, it is likely to remain so.

Continued international engagement is crucial for preventing the situation from deteriorating drastically. The withdrawal of international forces has been postponed so that adequate support and further training can be provided to Afghan security forces.

In addition to military support, Afghanistan will, for the foreseeable future, continue to depend on a high level of aid from international donors in order to avoid collapse.

The country still harbours violent extremists, although less so than previously. If the level of violence increases and the central authorities are weakened further, there is a greater risk that Afghanistan will once again become a safe haven for international terrorist groups.

In 2016, Afghanis made up the second largest group of migrants to Europe,[4] and emigration from Afghanistan is expected to remain high.

It will not be possible to achieve lasting stability without a peace process with the Taliban. None of the parties is expected to win a military victory. There is still considerable distance between the parties. Any peace agreement will require extensive engagement by the international community and the regional powers, not least to ensure the participation and rights of women and other vulnerable groups. Even after a peace agreement is reached with the Taliban, we can expect that other violent groups will continue to operate in the country.

Violent extremists are also a serious threat in Pakistan. A major military operation over the last few years has helped to reduce the level of violence, but terrorism is still impeding the country's development. The situation of religious minorities is also a serious cause for concern. It will be difficult to eradicate terrorism without positive economic development, greater focus on education, and efforts to counter radicalisation. There are few signs of progress in these areas.

India and Pakistan are both strengthening their nuclear arsenals, in quantitative as well as qualitative terms. Doctrines are changing and it is expected that nuclear weapons will play a more prominent role in deterrence in South Asia. This development gives grounds for concern as the countries' conflict over Kashmir remains unresolved and tensions are running high. There are regular skirmishes between Indian and Pakistani forces, and there is little prospect of a solution.

[3] UN (2015), World Population Prospects. Available at https://esa.un.org/unpd/wpp [accessed 1 March 2017].

[4] Eurostat (2016), *Asylum quarterly report*. Available at http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/ [accessed 13 March 2017].

5 Global balance of power

The emergence of new centres of economic and military power is altering the political balance of power in the world. New actors – both state and non-state – are appearing on the international political scene. Some of them are challenging states, existing rules and multilateral institutions.

5.1 Economic centre of gravity

The importance of a strong economy for a country's security cannot be overstated. Economic strength enhances resilience in the face of difficult situations and makes it possible to give priority to defence and promote national interests.

Very few countries are in a better economic situation than Norway. We have an advanced economy with access to abundant natural resources, which we manage with a long-term perspective. Norway's financial position is unique. Under the EEA Agreement, Norwegian companies have access to a 'domestic market' of more than half a billion people.

Developments in the international economy and in international trade and finance policy have a major impact on Norway's open economy. Norway is the world's eighth largest oil exporter and Europe's second largest gas supplier. Changes in global energy markets, significant fluctuations in oil and gas prices and the green transition affect Norway's economic and security interests.

Norwegian companies abroad depend on stable, predictable framework conditions and an acceptable security situation. Given the fact that the Government Pension Fund Global has investments of more than NOK 7 700 billion, developments in the world's financial markets are also highly significant.

Since the start of the millennium, many Asian countries have experienced a high level of growth. Asia's importance for the world economy has thus increased. There is every indication that this strong growth will continue, although at a somewhat slower pace. China is becoming an increasingly important actor in international trade regimes at both global and regional level. With major foreign investments, including in Norway and other European countries, China is now an integral part of the world economy. The establishment of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank and the New Silk Road initiative reflect China's ambition and capacity to take on a leading role in global development.

Most of the world's economic growth will be take place in countries outside Europe. In parts of Africa and Latin America, there is considerable potential for economic growth in the years to come. These markets offer major opportunities for the Norwegian business sector.

As the economic centre of gravity moves eastwards and southwards, more people are being lifted out of poverty. Never before have so many people benefited from such high levels of welfare and cooperation as today. Globally, economic growth has doubled in the last 20 years. The proportion of people living in extreme poverty has been halved during the same period. However, there are many people who are living just over the extreme poverty threshold, and the gap between rich and poor is becoming increasingly visible in many emerging economies.

At the same time, a middle class is emerging in many countries. This group has a purchasing power that allows a level of consumption beyond mere necessity. The middle class is more assertive and demands more of the authorities in terms of economic and social progress.

In parallel with the emergence of new centres of economic power, there has been rapidly increasing economic integration between countries all over the world. One of the driving forces behind this development is the reduction of national trade barriers. Most countries are pursuing a more open economic policy than previously. Tariffs have been reduced. Protectionism has been on the wane for many years. Now once again there are strong voices calling for less free trade and greater protectionism. Their words are being translated into action. These trends towards protectionism are creating uncertainty and threaten our fundamental interests. Norway is one of globalisation's clear winners.

Lack of progress in multilateral trade negotiations has led to more regional agreements being negotiated in their place. International trade cooperation has thus become more fragmented.

Technological developments play a key role in today's more integrated world economy. To begin with, globalisation was driven by technological advances in the transport and manufacturing sectors. The integration we have seen in recent decades has been made possible by the dramatically improved opportunities for exchanging information. The availability of cheap labour will become less critical for where production takes place. Specialised skills and access to technology and infrastructure will become more important. This will be a positive development for Norway's and other European countries' economies, which cannot compete on the basis of cheap labour.

A more integrated world economy and free trade have many advantages. Peaceful development is a prerequisite for open markets, and this is in everyone's interests. Today, the economies of rival major powers are closely interconnected. Economic interdependence between countries has a stabilising effect and helps to prevent conflicts. The G20 cooperation shows that we have come a long way from the situation we had during the Cold War. However, closer economic ties also mean that negative incidents in one part of the world can more easily and more quickly have consequences in a quite different part of the world, as was illustrated during the global financial crisis of 2008.

Although free trade is good for society as a whole, many people feel they have missed out on the benefits of globalisation. In some countries, distribution of wealth has been uneven and social and economic disparities are growing. In some advanced economies, the middle class is under pressure and certain social groups have not seen any increase in real earnings. This creates discontent and fuels support for protectionist policies. Turning away from free trade and open markets will jeopardise growth both in advanced economies, like Norway, and in developing countries, where the prospects of further poverty reduction will be weakened.

5.2 Military strength

Countries that were previous marginal in terms of their political power are wielding more influence in international politics. Growth and development are being translated into increased military power. Rivalry between emerging and established major powers is creating uncertainty and unpredictability at the global level. It is crucial for Norway's security that we understand these developments and their consequences for NATO and key allies.

India and China have given their national defence high priority. They are investing heavily in advanced military equipment, and are developing military capabilities that will allow them to exercise power beyond their neighbouring areas. Several neighbouring countries are also rearming. In addition, less wealthy countries and non-state actors can make use of technology to develop more effective weapons. Several countries in the eastern parts of Europe, the Caucasus and the Middle East are substantially increasing their defence expenditure.[1]

Nevertheless, the US will maintain its position as the world's only military superpower for the foreseeable future. The US alone accounts for more than a third of the world's military expenditure. It also has the most technologically advanced armed forces. With alliances covering large parts of the globe, the US's military power is unrivalled. Thus, while the US's lead has been reduced somewhat, particularly in terms of technology, the gap between the US and other major powers remains considerable.

Among the other NATO members, however, the willingness to invest in the defence sector varies. The goal adopted by the NATO countries to work towards spending 2 % of their GDP on defence with at least 20 % of this on investments, has not been met. Europe's advantage in terms of military technology will shrink unless more is invested in research and development.

The US may be drawn more closely into the security situation in Asia in the years ahead. The situation on the Korean Peninsula remains tense. In the South and East China Seas, there is a risk of heightened tension and major power rivalry. Territorial disputes in these waters remain largely unresolved. Civilian and military infrastructure has been developed in disputed parts of the South China Sea. A conflict in this area would affect world trade and regional stability. An increase in tension between China and the US would have repercussions for development in the Asia–Pacific region. It could also have negative consequences for Norwegian economic interests.

At the same time as major regional powers are rearming, countries with less advanced defence

[1] Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (2016*), op. cit.*

capabilities may offset some of the major powers' superiority by investing in certain types of weapon systems. Moreover, the operations in Iraq and Afghanistan have demonstrated the limitations of military force. Basic guerrilla warfare tactics employed by opponents that are weaker in every way have made it difficult to achieve the desired results. This hard-earned experience will affect the willingness to use large-scale military ground forces for a long time.

The nuclear agreement with Iran is historic and a victory for non-proliferation efforts. At the same time, a number of states and other actors are showing a renewed interest in weapons of mass destruction. Tensions between the nuclear powers India and Pakistan are high. Developments in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) give cause for concern. The DPRK is in the process of taking the step from carrying out nuclear tests to developing delivery systems and full-scale nuclear weapons for military use. The sanctions imposed by the international community in response to the nuclear tests have not in themselves been sufficient to stop the weapons programme. A DPRK with operational nuclear capacity will have a destabilising effect and further increase the risk of proliferation.

More than 20 years after the nerve gas attack on the Tokyo metro, the use of chemical weapons in Syria has again highlighted the dangers of such highly toxic chemicals. There is a risk of weapons of mass destruction being used in a terrorist attack, and this includes the use of chemical, biological and radiological material. The international community is working to secure such material and reduce the number of sources. In the hands of terrorists, the materials in question would not necessarily constitute effective weapons of mass destruction, but would spread fear.

The threat of cyber attack is increasing.[2] As societies have become more dependent on information technology, they have also become more vulnerable. The possibility of a cyber attack is now one of the fastest growing threats to public security. Relatively few resources are needed to achieve a major disruptive effect. Digital intelligence operations and digital warfare are an important part of modern defence in many countries.

The possibility of concealing one's identity can make such methods attractive in peacetime as well.[3] The interference of foreign powers and other actors in democratic processes is a growing problem. Cyberspace structures are nebulous and largely owned by private multinational companies. This makes it difficult for governments to keep up with developments and protect vulnerable critical infrastructure.

5.3 Political influence

Increased polarisation in international politics is challenging established rules and making it difficult to further develop international law. Rules that are enshrined in the UN Charter are not respected in many places. Universal human rights are under pressure. Liberal democracies are losing influence. This is a threat to our values and positions in international negotiations and may affect political developments. In the worst case, this could undermine democracy and stability in our own country.

Multilateral institutions and conventions that promote democracy, human rights and the rule of law, and that we have built up over several decades, are under increasing pressure, both politically and in terms of resources. Institutions like the Council of Europe and the OSCE have played an important role in promoting the rule of law and stability in Europe. They are at the centre of the battle of values that we are now seeing in our part of the world too. Institutions in other parts of the world are less developed. Closer cooperation within organisations such as the AU and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) is needed in order to promote stability. At the global level, the institutions of the UN and the UN system are in a class of their own, but there is still a huge gap between the normative resolutions that are adopted and the individual countries' ability to implement them in practice.

Nevertheless, most countries are still willing to cooperate within the multilateral system, which was developed against the backdrop of the balance of power at the end of the Second World War. This cooperation produces results: the Sustainable Development Goals, the Paris Agreement on climate change, the agreement on financing for development, the free trade reforms, and the nuclear agreement with Iran. At the same time, emerging powers are calling for representation in

[2] The Norwegian Intelligence Service (2017), *Fokus 2017*. Available at https://forsvaret.no/fokus [Norwegian only, accessed 13 March 2017].

[3] Meld. St. 37 (2014–2015), Global security challenges in Norway's foreign policy – Terrorism, organised crime, piracy and cyber threats.

international institutions, for example in the UN Security Council, to better reflect today's geopolitical balance of power.

The Security Council has a unique global mandate to authorise the use of armed force, impose binding sanctions, establish peace operations, and refer cases to the International Criminal Court. So far, the permanent members of the Security Council have shown varying degrees of willingness to introduce reforms. In the multilateral financial institutions, such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, on the other hand, voting power reflects the economic weight of the members.

If international institutions fail to carry out the necessary reforms, they risk losing their relevance and legitimacy. As a result, informal, overlapping structures could partially replace the traditional multilateral frameworks. This would not be in Norway's interests.

China's strong economic growth and increased military capacity have made the country a major security policy actor both regionally and globally. The expansion of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, an intergovernmental organisation for economic, political and military cooperation in Eurasia, is strengthening Chinese influence in the region. China is increasingly taking on a leadership role in the international arena, for example, it is a major contributor to UN peace operations. China is playing a key role in setting the agenda for international cooperation.

It is not just between countries and regions that the balance of power is changing. Urbanisation is turning major cities into centres of power. Non-state actors are playing a more prominent role. Multinational companies, civil society and other groups with common interests are gaining influence. Communications technology makes it possible to identify and bring together forces that share the same aims, at almost no cost.

Some non-state groups constitute a security challenge that can undermine fragile states and threaten global targets. Examples include militia groups, criminal networks and violent extremists. States may also make use of groups like these to achieve their goals covertly through proxy wars and hybrid warfare.

Part II
Security policy choices

6 Cohesion in Europe

The majority of Norway's close allies are European countries. In Europe, we have partners with whom we share values and interests. And Europe is where the economic basis for Norwegian security and welfare is laid. That is why the Government's policy platform states that Norwegian foreign policy starts in Europe.

Today, European countries are struggling to maintain cohesion at the national and European level. At the same time, there is a great need for European leadership.

NATO, the EU, the OSCE and the Council of Europe make up the cornerstones of the European security architecture. Norway participates in all these organisations, but is not an EU member.

Although we have close ties to the EU through binding agreements and arrangements, being inside the union is very different from being outside, and this applies to security policy too. Norway does not participate in EU decision-making. Nor do we take part in the ongoing dialogue – formal or informal – between the member states. We have to promote Norway's interests vis-à-vis EU institutions and member states in other ways. This is why the Government considers it vital to allocate more resources to Norway's embassies in the most important EU countries.

The other Nordic countries are of particular importance for Norway. The rapidly changing world we are living in highlights the need to defend the Nordic community of shared values and mutual understanding. We intend to intensify our cooperation with the other Nordic countries by taking the initiative to hold biannual foreign ministers' meetings.

Norway's relationship with the EU affects how we can, and should, promote Norwegian policies in Europe. But the substance of the Government's policy is not determined by our institutional links to the EU. Rather, it is determined by our interest in contributing to a secure, free and economically strong Europe.

6.1 Security

The US security guarantee, as enshrined in Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty on collective defence, is essential to the defence of Norway and all NATO Allies. But it does not absolve Norway or other European Allies of the responsibility to invest in their own security. Norway will shoulder its responsibility for security by contributing to European cooperation and helping to find common solutions to transnational challenges. A number of the current challenges in and around Europe can only be addressed by combining traditional foreign and security policy measures with measures in other policy areas. Terrorism and organised crime are examples of challenges of this kind, as are the challenges relating to migration and integration. The EU is an important partner for Norway in our efforts to address these challenges.

Norway will contribute to a strong European civilian and military crisis management capability, effective control of external borders, close cooperation between European police and intelligence services, and cooperation to counter radicalisation and promote integration.

Crisis management. We must be prepared for new crises, and have the necessary structures and resources in place to deal with them. Good coordination at the national level and binding European cooperation are essential if we are to succeed in this.[1] We are best able to safeguard our security when the countries of Europe stand together. It will therefore often be in Norway's interests to seek common European solutions and support EU measures, whether this is in the context of military and civilian operations, restrictive measures, or public security. Justice and home affairs is a priority sector for the EEA and Norway Grants in the period 2014-2021.[2] The aim is to

[1] Meld. St. 10 (2016–2017), *op.cit.*

[2] The EEA and Norway Grants scheme consists of two financial mechanisms: the EEA Grants (EUR 1548.1 million, or around NOK 13.75 billion) and the Norway Grants (EUR 1253.7 million, or around NOK 11.12 billion). These figures are for the period 2014-2021.

facilitate cooperation on prevention and preparedness.

The Government welcomes the fact that the EU is further developing its crisis management capability. It will be in the interests of Europe as a whole that the EU crisis management structures are inclusive. The Government will seek to ensure that non-EU countries that contribute to the EU's military and civilian operations have more opportunities to participate in the planning and implementation of these operations. Given its decision to leave the EU, the UK could be a partner in this work. The Government is also seeking to establish arrangements that will enable Norway to participate more closely in the processes leading up to, during and after EU decisions on restrictive measures. This would help to ensure that Norwegian views are taken into account and that the implementation of restrictive measures is as uniform and effective as possible.

In the European Defence Agency, we will work to ensure that cooperation and joint projects maximise the output and efficiency of Europe's defence spending. More effective use of the total defence resources available to Europe will increase the security of the continent.

Through the EEA Agreement, Norway takes part in the EU Civil Protection Mechanism. The Government will continue its close cooperation with the other Nordic countries and with the EU on civil protection, including prevention, preparedness and crisis management. Our cooperation with other European countries makes it easier for us to ask for their assistance should Norway experience a crisis that is so severe that we cannot deal with it on our own. It also means that we can assist other countries should they find themselves in a similar situation.

Control of external borders and cooperation in the area of asylum. Better control of the external borders of the Schengen area and enhanced information exchange are needed to secure the borders, ensure that border crossings are made in an orderly manner, and reduce the risk of terrorist attacks. The Government therefore supports the EU's efforts to gain better control over the external borders of the Schengen area.

European countries need to improve their joint system for processing asylum applications and for the effective return of migrants who have had their asylum applications rejected. Norway is an associate country of the European Asylum Support Office (EASO), which has become Europe's most important forum for cooperation in the asylum field. Through EASO, Norway sends experts to assist EU countries that receive a large number of refugees and other migrants. The Government intends to continue to provide this assistance and supports the proposal to develop a stronger European asylum agency.

Security and police cooperation. In order to be able to fight terrorism and international organised crime effectively, the Government would like to see better information sharing and close cross-border cooperation in Europe. As part of the work to follow up the white paper on global security challenges, the Government will strengthen its cooperation with the EU in these areas.[3]

The Government attaches importance to fully exploiting the opportunities that exist under Norway's cooperation agreement with Europol, which is the main agency for efforts to combat transnational crime in Europe. This agreement facilitates the exchange of information and makes it easier to seek assistance in major investigations involving a number of countries. The Government has ensured that Norway is able to participate in Europol's new centre for countering terrorism, the European Counter Terrorism Centre (ECTC). This centre is a valuable supplement to the informal Counter Terrorist Group (CTG), which brings together security services from all EU countries, as well as from Norway and Switzerland.

The cooperation between EU countries on surrendering people who have committed a serious crime or are suspected of having committed such a crime (the European Arrest Warrant) enhances Europe's ability to combat terrorism and organised crime. Norway has already concluded an agreement with the EU on joining the European Arrest Warrant, and the Government is working to ensure that the agreement can enter into force as soon as possible.

New technology is making it easier for terrorists and other criminal networks to share information in real time, recruit new members and carry out operations. Under Norway's agreement on participation in the Prüm cooperation, the Norwegian authorities are able to search directly in other countries' databases for fingerprints, DNA and vehicles. Likewise, other countries' authorities can search in our databases. In order to ensure adequate protection of privacy, the Government is promoting the development of stringent, common European rules and standards in these areas.

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[3] Meld. St. 37 (2014–2015), *op.cit.*

Promoting integration and countering violent extremism. The Government is well under way with its work to implement the Action Plan against Radicalisation and Violent Extremism, both at the national level and by strengthening Nordic, European and other international cooperation.[4] The Government will continue to make use of the recently established Nordic network for countering violent extremism. We have also played a leading role in developing cooperation at the European level in this area, for example by promoting the establishment of the European youth network against violent extremism.

We are continuing our engagement in the EU Radicalisation Awareness Network, and in the informal group of European countries seeking closer cooperation to address the security threat posed by foreign fighters.

New citizens must be integrated into society swiftly through courses, training and employment. European countries have much to gain from sharing experience of their work in this area. The Government will attach particular importance to following up the Nordic cooperation project on the integration of refugees and immigrants. We must prevent the development of parallel societies that could lead to marginalisation and provide fertile ground for radicalisation.

Wider European cooperation. Europe will not be stable unless there is democracy in all parts of the continent, combined with strong state institutions and economic development. The Government will therefore support reforms in countries that are seeking closer integration with the EU. The support we give has greatest effect if it is coordinated with the efforts of the EU and its member states.

In Eastern Europe, the Government is concentrating its political and economic support on Ukraine, Georgia and Moldova, all of which have entered into association agreements with the EU. In particular, greater stability and development in Ukraine would enhance the security of Europe as a whole. The Government will maintain a high level of assistance to the country, particularly in areas where Norway is well placed to make a contribution: energy sector reform and increasing energy efficiency, promoting the rule of law, good governance and harmonisation with EU norms and standards, and economic reforms.

The Government will also continue to support the political reform process through regional and international organisations, in particular the OSCE and the Council of Europe. The EU is a key partner as donor and coordinator of the assistance. We will also promote closer cooperation between NATO and Ukraine.

The Government will double its assistance to the Western Balkans, to support the countries' reform programmes and thus speed up their integration into the EU and NATO, in line with their own ambitions. Strengthening the rule of law, promoting cooperation and reconciliation between the countries, advancing the development of sustainable economies, and strengthening civil society are still priority areas. We will also continue our long-standing cooperation on defence and defence reform. More emphasis will be placed on measures to combat religious radicalisation.

Norway will seek to strengthen the ties between Turkey and the rest of Europe, and to promote stability in Turkey's neighbouring areas. Challenges to the rule of law and the growing constraints on freedom of expression in Turkey give serious cause for concern. The Government will support the Council of Europe and the OSCE's efforts to promote the development of the rule of law in the country. Civil society is playing an important role in safeguarding fundamental human rights.

6.2 Freedom and human rights

Key objectives of the Government's foreign and security policy are to safeguard democratic institutions, protect citizens' rights and freedoms, and support civil society, including in our part of the world.

Democratic institutions. The Government will continue to actively promote the rule of law and democracy in Europe through the EEA and Norway Grants and in cooperation with the EU, the Council of Europe, the OSCE and other organisations and individual countries.

The Government is supporting the Council of Europe's efforts to promote democracy in Europe. The fight for freedom of expression, freedom of assembly and freedom of the press is now more important than it has been for a long time. Norway will support the OSCE's work to promote good governance, through the organisation's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights. We will continue to participate in election observation missions, provide project support, and share Norwegian expertise.

[4] Norwegian Ministry of Justice and Public Security (2014): *Action Plan against Radicalisation and Violent Extremism*.

Norway will also continue to participate in the European Endowment for Democracy, a funding mechanism that gives support directly to local actors working to bring about democratic change in the EU's neighbouring countries to the south and east.

Rights and freedoms. Promoting respect for human rights is part of the Government's efforts to address and prevent crises and conflicts in Europe. European countries have committed themselves to a number of human rights obligations. The main challenge lies in ensuring that the countries fulfil these obligations. The Council of Europe plays a key role in this respect. The implementation of the judgments of the European Court of Human Rights must be monitored. The Government is deeply concerned about the fact that certain member states of the Council of Europe are undermining the Court's authority and status.

We will strengthen the European Court of Human Rights by seeking to improve supervision of the implementation of judgments. For example, we will continue to use the EEA and Norway Grants to promote the enforcement of judgments in the beneficiary countries.

Civil society. Well-functioning democracies depend on the existence of a strong civil society. The EEA and Norway Grants are Norway's main contribution to supporting civil society in Central Europe. In the period 2014-2017, 10 % of the funding provided under the scheme will go to NGOs.

Strengthening civil society is a key priority in the Government's long-term efforts in Eastern Europe. In Russia, this work has become particularly difficult, largely because of the 'foreign agents' law. Despite this, the Government is maintaining its engagement for civil society in Russia, by providing support for cooperation between Russian and Norwegian organisations and keeping in regular contact with human rights defenders and NGOs.

6.3 Economic strength

Binding cooperation based on common rules is not only essential for ensuring positive economic development; it also helps to reduce the level of conflict between European countries.

Under the EEA Agreement, Norway is part of the European cooperation. The Agreement links Norway to common mechanisms for peaceful problem-solving in Europe, promotes growth and welfare in Norway, and enhances our economic strength and thus our ability to invest in security.

Almost 80 % of Norwegian exports go to the EU. Thanks to the EEA Agreement, Norwegian companies enjoy a level playing field in the European market. The Agreement also helps to strengthen Norway's cooperation with other European countries on common, cross-border challenges in areas such as climate change and the environment, research and education, health, consumer issues, and civil protection. In the Government's view, it is therefore in Norway's national interest to safeguard the EEA Agreement.

The Government will seek to ensure that the EEA Agreement functions well. We will implement common rules correctly and on time, and we will promote Norway's interests by taking part in the development of these rules. Through the EEA and Norway Grants, we will help to reduce social and economic disparities. The transition to more knowledge-based, green and digital societies is one of the main priorities of the Government's European policy in the years ahead, and of the Norwegian presidency of the Nordic Council of Ministers in 2017.[5]

The UK's decision to withdraw from the EU means that the internal market will probably lose its second largest economy. The Government attaches importance to maintaining Norway's close political and economic ties with the UK. The Government's aim is to have close trade policy cooperation with the UK after its withdrawal from the EU.

[5] The Nordic Council of Ministers (2016): *Programme for the Norwegian presidency of the Nordic Council of Ministers in 2017*. Available from http://www.norden.org [accessed 14 March 2017].

7 Security in the Arctic

Stability, international cooperation, respect for the Law of the Sea, and good neighbourly relations are all important for ensuring security in the north.

For many years, Norway has pursued an active Arctic policy and a policy of engagement with Russia. Using our common interests as a basis, we have sought contact, we have established cooperation, and we have built trust. Although Norway's relations with Russia have changed since 2014, the Government attaches importance to continuing most areas of our cooperation in the north. This applies to both institutional cooperation and informal people-to-people cooperation.

Not only is the cooperation valuable in itself; it also has an important security policy function. People and institutions on both sides of the border meet and forge ties. Cooperation fosters understanding and builds trust, both at the local level and between the capitals.

Most of Norway's military cooperation with Russia has been suspended. Nevertheless, Norway is seeking to reduce the likelihood of misunderstandings and dangerous incidents by showing openness about military activities. Norway has shown greater openness concerning NATO exercises and other exercises than is required under our international obligations.

In order to safeguard security in the Arctic, the Government has maintained the direct lines of communication between the Norwegian and Russian armed forces, the cooperation between our coast guards and border guards, search-and-rescue cooperation, and the mechanisms under the Incidents at Sea Agreement. The Norwegian and Russian coast guards are working constructively together in areas such as fisheries management and search and rescue at sea.

NATO is important for maintaining stability in the north. The Alliance provides a clear and predictable framework and a level of security that Norway could not achieve on its own. Whenever we need to deal with difficult security issues, we are stronger and more secure as part of the Alliance, and as part of the community of shared interests and values that is Europe.

International law provides clear rules and mechanisms for dealing peacefully with disagreements. Compliance with the Law of the Sea is vital for Norwegian interests in the north.

A strong Norwegian defence and Allied exercises. Even though there is stability and cooperation in the Arctic, it is important that NATO always has up-to-date information on developments in the region and is prepared for the possibility that the situation could change. The North Atlantic Treaty sets out that all allies are to maintain and develop their capacity to resist armed attack.

The Norwegian armed forces must be able to carry out assignments within Norway as needed, contribute to credible deterrence, and help maintain Norway's role and expertise in the Arctic. At the same time, Norway must have close ties to key allies. Allied presence in the north strengthens NATO's credibility, and regular exercises must be carried out based on defence plans. The measures set out in the Long-Term Defence Plan strengthen the basis for receiving Allied support.[1] Participating in exercises gives us and our Allies valuable practical experience. Given the large sea areas involved, the Government will work to ensure that NATO strengthens its maritime capabilities.

Situational awareness and knowledge. In many ways, Norway is NATO in the north. With this comes responsibility. Norway has developed in-depth knowledge of developments in the region through changing times. The Government will ensure that Norway continues to follow developments in the region closely and keeps its allies informed on an ongoing basis.

Stationing of foreign forces. Ever since Norway joined NATO, its policy has been to have no permanent bases for foreign combat forces on Norwegian soil, provided that it is not attacked or under threat of attack. This policy has not prevented an Allied presence on Norwegian territory,

[1] Prop. 151 S (2015–2016), *op.cit.* (Norwegian only)

for example in the form of stores of Allied military equipment and periodic exercises. The Government will continue this policy.

Nuclear weapons policy and port visits. As a NATO member, Norway is part of the Alliance's nuclear weapons policy. However, Norway has made it clear that nuclear weapons are not to be stationed on Norwegian territory in peacetime. This policy has helped to reduce conflict and ease tensions. Norway has also stipulated that foreign military vessels that call at Norwegian ports must not have nuclear weapons on board. The Government will continue this policy.

Svalbard policy. The Government upholds the overall objectives of Norway's Svalbard policy, as set out in the white paper on Svalbard.[2] These objectives have remained unchanged for a long time, and they have a firm basis in Norway's national interests. A long-term and consistent Svalbard policy helps to promote stability and predictability in the north.

Norway's efforts in the Arctic promote Norway's interests in the north. The Government has increased the annual allocations to these efforts to ensure long-term investments in knowledge, industry, infrastructure and emergency preparedness. The Government will maintain a high level of investment in the coming years. New priority areas include enhancing the capacity of the border guard, and a number of research programmes whose funding will be increased. The Government will present a new Arctic strategy during spring 2017.

Regional organisations. Sound cooperation structures based on trust and openness will reduce the potential for conflict. The Arctic Council brings together all the Arctic states at government level and is the most important arena for intergovernmental cooperation in the region. The Government will support the Council's key role.

Norway will work to ensure that the fruitful cooperation between the coastal states bordering the Arctic Ocean (the US, Canada, Denmark, Russia and Norway) is continued and further developed.

The Barents cooperation between Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia – like the cooperation between Norway and Russia in the Arctic – helps to build trust between the neighbours in the Barents region. The cooperation comprises a number of working groups, in which representatives of regional and national authorities meet to find solutions to common challenges, for example in the areas of health, emergency preparedness, and search and rescue. The Government will maintain Norway's strong engagement in the Barents cooperation.

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[2] White paper on Svalbard (Norwegian only): Meld. St. 32 (2015–2016), Svalbard.

8 Transatlantic cooperation

Norway's security is dependent on close transatlantic cooperation and the US security guarantee. In order to maintain this cooperation, and also to put us in a better position to address the challenges we are facing, it is vital that Europe takes on more responsibility for allied security.

The capacity and willingness of NATO member states to shoulder this responsibility and continue the development of NATO varies. This is encouraging closer cooperation between smaller groups of countries. The Euro-Atlantic area has become less homogeneous, which means that we need to step up our efforts to maintain political cohesion, solidarity and a commitment to joint solutions within the framework of the Alliance.

The Government will promote a strong and adaptable NATO Alliance, maintain close bilateral relations with the US and strengthen political and military cooperation with selected allies.

8.1 An effective NATO Alliance

NATO is the only organisation in Europe that has real collective defence commitments and capabilities. If NATO is to remain strong and united, it is essential that it is able to deal with the security challenges facing its members through credible deterrence and defence. The military capacity, political will and ability to adapt the Alliance to the changing security environment are vital. The Government will seek to strengthen NATO as a military alliance and as a forum for security policy dialogue, and will play its part in ensuring the continued adaptation of the Alliance.

Shared political values. The Government will promote political cohesion within the Alliance with a view to maintaining NATO solidarity and effectiveness. Norway will play its part by enhancing joint situational awareness through exchange of intelligence, regular political dialogue and promoting closer links between NATO and national defence headquarters. Norway will also propose regular consultations between NATO and key partner countries.

Core tasks. Norway will play its part in ensuring that NATO is able to perform all three of its core tasks: collective defence, crisis management and cooperative security. The dramatic changes in the international security environment highlight the importance of fulfilling all three of these. The Government will do its part by increasing Norway's contribution to NATO's collective defence, continuing to provide troops for NATO operations, maintaining Norway's engagement in security sector reform and capacity building in NATO partner countries, and promoting cooperation between NATO and the EU.

Defence capabilities. Norway will seek to strengthen NATO's defence capabilities. In the new Long-term Defence Plan, the Government sets out its intention to substantially strengthen the defence sector. This will also benefit the Alliance. The Government will follow up the decision made at the NATO summit in Wales in 2014 to gradually increase defence spending and to aim to move towards spending 2 % of GDP on defence within a decade. The Government will therefore continue to increase the defence budget. It will continue to use over 20 % of the defence budget on investments and give priority to military capabilities that enhance NATO's overall defence capabilities.

Operations. The Government will give priority to providing troop contributions to international operations through NATO or in cooperation with our close allies. The NATO framework provides the greatest security for our troops and ensures the highest degree of political control. Regular operational cooperation also promotes cohesion within the Alliance and enhances Allied defence capabilities.

Partnerships. Norway will seek to ensure continued close cooperation between NATO and its partners. The Government will give priority to partnerships that strengthen the security of the Alliance. We will continue to support the development of closer NATO cooperation with Sweden and Finland.

The Government will continue to provide practical support through NATO to enable partner

countries to participate in Allied operations, and will maintain political dialogue to enhance joint situational awareness. Norway will also advocate allocating a larger share of NATO support for partnership tools to stabilisation and crisis prevention efforts in NATO's neighbouring areas.

The Government will support initiatives to strengthen cooperation between NATO and other key actors engaged in crisis management, such as the UN, the EU, and the African Union (AU). NATO's partnerships across the globe are also important in this context. Partnerships with countries in Asia enhance the Alliance's situational awareness and improve the capacity for cooperation on common security challenges.

Adaptation. The Government supports efforts to further develop NATO's role and responsibilities. NATO cannot and should not replace other security policy actors, such as the UN, the EU, the OSCE and the AU. However, in order to maintain a strong and united Alliance, it is important that NATO can provide a credible response to the security challenges its member states are facing. The Government will support efforts to adapt NATO's three core tasks and its command structure in line with the changing security environment, including in the areas of cyber security and counterterrorism.

Funding. The Government will play its part in ensuring that NATO has sufficient financial resources to carry out its tasks. Joint NATO solutions are cost-effective and an expression of solidarity. The Government will promote more common funding of NATO activities and seek to ensure the effective use of resources.

8.2 US-European cooperation

The US security guarantee is vital for the security of the European Allies. Shared transatlantic interests and values underpin the willingness to invest in each other's security and the ability to provide a united response to crises. At a time when policy is changing both in the US and in various European countries, we must seek to defend our fundamental values and maintain cooperation in areas where we have common interests.

The US has been calling more and more strongly for the European Allies to take on greater responsibility for security. This would not replace the US security guarantee, but could strengthen Allied solidarity, and enhance our collective security and ability to carry out joint operations. In order to meet Europe's needs and strengthen transatlantic relations, European Allies must increase defence investments and contribute a larger share of NATO's overall defence expenditure.

Political contact. The Government will maintain Norway's close relations with the US and seek cooperation in areas of mutual interest. We will seek to ensure that NATO remains the preferred forum for security dialogue across the Atlantic on the full range of security issues. In order to promote our values and interests as effectively as possible, the Government will draw up a strategy for Norway's long-term relations with the US.

Transatlantic trade. The reduction of trade barriers has promoted close economic cooperation between Europe and the US. There is now little prospect of a successful conclusion to the negotiations on the Transatlantic Trade Investment Partnership (TTIP). Nevertheless, the Government will continue to emphasise the importance of free trade for economic development and security in Europe and the US.

European defence capabilities. The Government will advocate that European countries should contribute more to strengthening Allied defence capabilities. Norway will take steps to achieve the ambitious goals set out in the Long-term Defence Plan, and will make use of the NATO Defence Planning Process to promote a similar level of commitment from other European Allies. The Government will also continue Norway's participation in multilateral cooperation and ensure that Norwegian troops participate regularly in the NATO Response Force, in NATO's enhanced forward presence in the Baltic states and in Allied training and exercises.

Troop contributions. The Government will encourage European countries to continue to make important contributions to Allied operations. At a time when several countries have made cuts in their ground forces, it is essential that Norway and the other European Allies maintain the capacity to participate in joint operations. The Government also wants NATO to continue its work to facilitate the participation of partner countries in international crisis management.

Cooperation with the EU. In order to deal effectively with complex crises, it is important that Europe and the US share a common threat perception. Close and extensive cooperation between NATO and the EU is important in this context. The Government will support schemes to increase exchange of information, promote closer political dialogue and improve coordination of training and exercises.

Nordic cooperation. Close Nordic and Nordic-Baltic security cooperation strengthens Europe's overall contribution to peace and security. The Nordic countries have gained valuable experience from joint participation in international operations and cooperation on security sector reform. Our close relations with Sweden and Finland will be important in the event of a security crisis in our neighbouring areas.

The Government will therefore maintain close dialogue with Nordic and Baltic countries on developments in neighbouring areas and will further develop the Nordic Defence Cooperation in areas where this will enhance our defence and security efforts. The Nordic and Baltic countries have different forms of association with NATO and the EU. Cooperation between these countries therefore also provides good opportunities for promoting initiatives that can strengthen security cooperation between NATO and the EU.

Stabilisation. The Government will support greater European engagement in stabilisation efforts in Europe's southern neighbourhood, using a broad range of tools, from military operations to conflict prevention and resolution efforts. Instability in this region has created a breeding ground for international terrorism, which also poses a threat to the US. Effective European stabilisation efforts will thus also strengthen transatlantic security.

8.3 Cooperation with selected allies

A strong NATO Alliance is the best framework for safeguarding and enhancing Norway's security. The Government will give priority to cooperation with selected Allies where this will strengthen Norway's capacity to deal with a security crisis or armed conflict. In recent years we have, for example, sought to establish closer cooperation with certain Allies on defence procurement and the development of defence capabilities. By making this a strategic priority, we are not only taking deliberate steps to further develop our practical cooperation, but are also strengthening our foreign and security policy dialogue with these countries.

Defence cooperation. The Government will further develop particularly close military cooperation with the following key Allies: France, Germany, the Netherlands, the UK, and the US. In recent years, Norway has developed increasingly close cooperation with these countries on policy development, force generation, defence-related development and procurement, and training and exercises. This cooperation enhances our defence capabilities and is more cost-effective than if each country were to carry out these tasks separately. Cooperation in this area also strengthens our political ties with key Allies. Norway will continue to take steps to deepen its cooperation with this group of countries and will initiate new partnerships that benefit both the countries involved and NATO as a whole.

The Government considers it important to ensure that any capabilities that are developed directly correspond to the needs of the Alliance and that other Allies that wish to take part in cooperation in this area are able to do so.

Dialogue on foreign and security policy. The Government will strengthen foreign and security policy dialogue with Allies with which we have particularly close defence cooperation. Closer political contact is vital for ensuring joint situational awareness and an effective response in the event of a crisis. Civilian instruments are also needed to address many of today's security challenges. It is therefore important that we have regular talks with our closest allies on all aspects of security policy. Norway will therefore intensify its foreign and security policy consultations with France, Germany, the Netherlands, the UK and the US. The Government will ensure that Norway's embassies in these countries and the Norwegian Delegation to NATO have the capacity to take on this task.

9 Disarmament and non-proliferation

Combining credible deterrence with a commitment to disarmament and arms control is a long-standing tenet of Norwegian and Allied policy. This combination enhances our collective security and is achieved by both strengthening defence capabilities and implementing mutual cuts and controls on certain categories of weapons.

Since the end of the Cold War, the former Eastern and Western blocs have made significant cuts in both strategic and conventional forces. The US and Russia have made deep cuts in their nuclear arsenals through a series of bilateral agreements. Conventional forces in Europe have been substantially reduced since 1989.

Efforts to prevent weapons of mass destruction from falling into the wrong hands are another important element of security policy. The spread of such weapons both to new state and non-state actors poses a risk to our security. Easier access to advanced technology is making non-proliferation efforts more difficult. In some cases, tensions between the major powers are preventing agreement on effective countermeasures.

9.1 Weapons of mass destruction

On 26 April 2016, the Storting adopted a unanimous decision[1] asking the Government to work actively towards the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons and to promote the implementation of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). The decision also asked the Government to play a leading role in efforts to promote non-proliferation and disarmament, with a view to achieving balanced, mutual, irreversible and verifiable elimination of nuclear weapons. The Government was asked to take a long-term approach to efforts to secure a legally binding framework for achieving this.

Realising the vision of a world free of nuclear weapons is one of NATO's stated aims. At the same time, NATO has made it clear that it will remain a nuclear alliance as long as nuclear weapons exist. Nuclear disarmament must be balanced and mutual. Norway will take a long-term approach to disarmament in line with the Storting's decision and our obligations as a NATO member. For nearly 40 years, the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) has been a cornerstone of global security. It sets out clear disarmament obligations that must be respected.

Balanced disarmament. Effective and legally binding agreements are essential to ensuring further progress on disarmament. The Government will work to maintain and strengthen the existing framework, call on remaining states to ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, and seek progress in the negotiations on the Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty. There are already arms control agreements in place on strategic nuclear weapons and medium-range ballistic missiles, but none on tactical nuclear weapons. Initiatives to increase transparency as regards tactical nuclear weapons would be a step towards an agreement on their regulation.

Verifiable disarmament is vital to ensure that existing agreements are implemented in practice. The parties to these agreements and the rest of the world must be confident that nuclear weapons that are due to be dismantled are actually destroyed. We must also ensure that sensitive, highly classified nuclear technology does not fall into the wrong hands. Norway has been working with the UK for many years to develop verification systems with a view to preparing the ground for further cuts in nuclear arsenals. This partnership has now been expanded to include the US and Sweden. The Government will continue this work. At the UN General Assembly in October 2016, Norway put forward a resolution on nuclear disarmament verification, and received broad support for its efforts in this area.

Assistance in implementing agreements. Norway has valuable experience of assisting countries with the practical implementation of disarmament agreements. For example, as part of the nuclear agreement with Iran, we have provided funding and expertise for the transport of enriched uranium out of Iran and its replacement with natural uranium for use in Iran's civilian

[1] Storting Decision no. 623 (2015–2016)

nuclear programme. Norway also participated in the operation to remove chemical weapons from Syria. The Government will build on this experience and strengthen Norway's capacity to contribute to similar operations in the future.

The Government will maintain Norway's support for the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Biological Weapons Convention.

Securing nuclear facilities and nuclear waste. Through the Nuclear Security Summit process, Norway has played a role in developing practical security measures in a number of fields. The Government will continue and complete the nuclear clean-up programmes in Russia and Ukraine. The Government will also call for the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to be adequately funded and will maintain Norway's support for the IAEA´s Nuclear Security Fund.

9.2 Conventional forces

The system of conventional arms control in Europe is under pressure. Russia has unilaterally suspended the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE Treaty). The Treaty on Open Skies (OS) and the Vienna Document promote knowledge and trust, and are vital in today's tense international situation.

Meaningful conventional arms control in Europe is not possible without the participation of Russia. The principles of reciprocity and verifiability that are so vital in nuclear disarmament also form the basis for conventional arms control and disarmament. Today, at a time when relations between NATO and Russia are tense, there is a poor negotiating climate and little room for manoeuvre. However, we should bear in mind that some of the most important breakthroughs in disarmament were made at the height of the Cold War. NATO unity on these issues is essential if we are to make further progress.

New arms control regime. The Government will participate in efforts to develop a new regime for conventional arms control in Europe. We are seeking an open and inclusive process, preferably through the OSCE. We must take into account the military developments since the CFE Treaty was negotiated and consider including new weapons systems in a future conventional arms control agreement.

OSCE chairmanship. The OSCE is the main arena for negotiations on conventional disarmament and arms control in Europe. Much of the security policy dialogue between NATO member countries and Russia takes place in the OSCE. The OSCE plays an important part in promoting democracy in Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia. It is also playing a key role in Ukraine.

Norway held the chairmanship of the OSCE in 1999. The Government will put Norway forward for the chairmanship again in 2020. A key aim for a Norwegian chairmanship would be to promote confidence-building, transparency and détente.

10 Stability in Europe's neighbourhood

Fragile and failed states prevent development and undermine regional and international security. Promoting stability and development in fragile countries is good security policy.

The UN Millennium Development Goals were ambitious. Nevertheless, the target to halve the proportion of people living in extreme poverty was met. Today, an increasing number of the world's extreme poor live in fragile countries. If we are to achieve the first of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals, SDG 1: end poverty in all its forms everywhere, we must turn our attention to these countries. This is one of the main reasons why the UN has called on the international community to give priority to efforts in fragile states.

Stabilisation efforts in fragile states do not in any way undermine efforts to reduce poverty; rather, they are essential to eradicating poverty. Conflict hampers development. Inclusive growth that also unleashes the economic potential of women lifts people out of poverty and reduces the risk of instability spreading. Moreover, stabilisation efforts in fragile states have a positive impact on development in more stable developing countries and should prevent new crises from emerging.

Intensifying Norway's efforts in fragile states and conflict areas entails risks. The security situation in these areas is difficult, and this increases the risks to Foreign Service employees and partners. Financial irregularities and corruption are also often widespread in these countries. However, it is important to remember that there is also great potential to make a difference. We can achieve far more through stabilisation and conflict prevention than we can through post-conflict reconstruction. There needs to be a somewhat greater willingness to take financial risks and more flexibility in the use of long-term aid.

In order to ensure that Norway's efforts in Europe's neighbourhood have maximum impact, any measures implemented must be coordinated as far as possible with those of the UN and the EU. The Government will also strengthen cooperation with NATO, the African Union (AU) and certain individual countries. Close cooperation and coordination between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other relevant ministries will also be needed. Enhancing respect for human rights is a key component of all our efforts to promote peace, stability and security. Particular importance is attached to the rights and needs of women and children.

10.1 Strategy for fragile states and regions

The Government is drawing up a strategy for Norway's efforts in fragile states and regions that considers the whole range of instruments that can be used to promote stability. Aid, business development, peace and reconciliation diplomacy, various forms of capacity building, and military contributions can all be used. The instruments chosen and the way they are combined will vary from case to case.

Stabilisation is a comprehensive process that involves building mutual trust between the authorities and the population, and promoting better governance and long-term development.

Norway's stabilisation efforts are broad in scope. Support provided by Norway is generally used as a political tool to strengthen local social structures. Stabilisation efforts should provide a basis for more long-term development efforts and peacebuilding.

In geographical terms, the Government intends to target its stabilisation efforts towards the belt of countries stretching from Mali in the west to Afghanistan in the east. Developments in these countries are having an increasing impact on Europe.

Our work must be based on experience gained from previous stabilisation efforts. The lessons highlighted in the Afghanistan report are important.[1] Norway's substantial civilian and military contribution in Afghanistan showed that we must

[1] Official Norwegian Report 2016: 8 on Norway's involvement in Afghanistan 2001–2014 (currently being translated into English).

have realistic expectations of what can be achieved. An integrated approach is needed to ensure that the various efforts do not counteract each other.

Norway's efforts in fragile states will focus on the following six areas:

Humanitarian efforts. Greater engagement by the international community is needed to address more protracted and complex crises. The gap between humanitarian needs and the funding available for humanitarian efforts is growing. The Government has significantly increased its allocations for humanitarian aid in response to the crises we have seen in recent years, and will continue to give priority to emergency aid and other humanitarian efforts.

To be able to reach and help civilians affected by today's armed conflicts, it is more important than ever to be neutral and impartial, and to target efforts towards those who are most vulnerable, regardless of where they come from or where they are. These principles underpin all Norway's humanitarian efforts.

Conflict prevention and peace and reconciliation diplomacy. Conflicts can only be resolved through political solutions. Norway, with its resources and experience of peace and reconciliation diplomacy, is well placed to play a role in this area. By becoming involved at an early stage of the process, we can significantly reduce financial and humanitarian costs. Recognition of the need for a long-term approach and for good networks that include all affected parties, and a willingness to use aid funds to support peace processes are among the factors that put Norway in a particularly good position to contribute. Women's participation is vital for ensuring the credibility of peace processes and for promoting a sense of ownership.

Norway will seek to strengthen the ability of the UN and the AU to identify potential conflicts early on and to rapidly implement preventive measures. The Government will also support established local conflict resolution mechanisms. In order to strengthen our strategic partnership and cooperation with the AU, the Government will appoint an ambassador to the AU. The Government will allocate more resources to Norway's peace and reconciliation efforts.

Security. Sometimes it is necessary to use military force to promote stability. This must be considered in conjunction with other instruments to be used. Any action taken must be based on a realistic assessment of the prospects for stabilisation and reconstruction. Norway will support efforts to reform UN peacekeeping efforts and strengthen the AU's expertise in carrying out peace operations.

Support must be provided to fragile states to enable them to deal with security threats such as violent extremism and organised crime more effectively. The Government's efforts in this area are described in detail in the white paper on global security challenges.[2]

Measures to prevent and combat sexual violence are to be integrated into all Norway's peace and security efforts, and we will work to improve legal protection for all those who are subjected to abuse.

Human rights, democracy and the rule of law. As set out in the Government's white paper on human rights, good governance and respect for human rights and the principles of the rule of law are essential for achieving lasting stability.[3] In many countries, oppression, wars and conflicts are creating fragile and lawless states. States' monopoly on violence is being challenged, and some are no longer able to fulfil their duties to their own citizens. States must be capable of performing state functions if they are to uphold international law, ensure compliance with national laws and rules, and fulfil their obligations to their own citizens.

Strengthening the capacity of the justice and security sector is crucial for enabling countries to deal with challenges to their stability. Norway's efforts must seek to build robust states based on the rule of law and to develop more inclusive and open societies that help prevent structural discrimination and corruption. Training activities and efforts to strengthen government institutions are vital components of this work. A well-functioning state based on the rule of law is also crucial for the development of an effective tax system and for combating illicit financial flows and corruption.

Inclusive growth and basic social services. In the Government's white paper on private sector development in Norwegian development cooperation, wealth creation in the private sector is described as the engine of economic growth. Inclusive economic growth and job creation reduce poverty.[4] Ensuring access to basic services such as health and education strengthens a

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2 Meld. St. 37 (2014–2015), *op.cit.*

3 Meld. St. 10 (2014–2016), *Opportunities for All: Human Rights in Norway's Foreign Policy and Development Cooperation.*

4 Meld. St. 35 (2014–2015), *Working together: Private sector development in Norwegian development cooperation*

country's capacity for value creation. Norway is giving particular priority to efforts in the areas of health and education. We will also assist fragile states in their efforts to create a predictable framework for the business sector.

Refugees and migrants. The sudden influx of large numbers of people is particularly difficult for weak and fragile states to deal with. At worst, this can lead to conflicts or humanitarian crises spreading to new areas. It is therefore vital that the international community strengthens the capacity of host and transit countries to deal with mass migration. Better coordination of development aid and humanitarian assistance for refugees and migrants could help to ensure a more sustainable approach to dealing with flows of refugees and migrants in the neighbouring areas.

Norway will seek to ensure that the basic needs of refugees and internally displaced people are met. This includes ensuring access to education for children, the right to protection and the opportunity to work. We will also support international efforts to strengthen border controls, reception facilities and immigration systems in fragile states.

10.2 Aid to fragile states

Aid to fragile states is part of Norway's broader stabilisation efforts. Our aim is to help countries emerge from conflict, to prevent state collapse and to reduce fragility. Helping people in need is a humanitarian imperative in any crisis situation. At the same time, humanitarian aid combined with development aid provides a basis for positive social and economic development. This is also in our interests. More peaceful and more equitable development in fragile countries is important for combating violent extremism.

There is a clear link between security and development. Donor countries are increasingly recognising this, and are taking a more coherent approach to aid policy and security policy. The white paper on global security challenges sets out the Government's intention to strengthen Norway's aid and development efforts in areas of significance to security policy.[5] It is clear from developments in fragile states that we need to do more. Norway will take advantage of the scope for flexibility in its aid management. We must provide support in areas where it will have the greatest impact, and cooperate with partners who we consider to be the most effective.

The Government will increase aid to countries affected by the major conflicts we are seeing in parts of the Middle East and North Africa. Certain countries are hosting large numbers of refugees and are having problems providing basic services, such as education, and employment opportunities. Other countries are struggling to gain control of the security situation. The Government will substantially increase support to Tunisia, Jordan, Lebanon and countries in the Sahel region. This will include humanitarian aid targeted towards areas where humanitarian needs are acute.

The Government will also seek to mobilise the international donor community to help meet the enormous needs in fragile states. A concerted and intensified international effort is needed.

Local and regional knowledge are vital for ensuring that our aid and stabilisation efforts produce tangible results. It is therefore important to maintain a presence in affected regions. With this in view, the Government has decided to establish two new embassies, one in Bamako, Mali and the other in Tunis, Tunisia.

10.3 UN peacekeeping efforts

The UN plays a unique role in conflict prevention and mediation, and in leading peace operations. The number of people serving with the UN is now higher than ever before. However, in order to deal with increasingly complex crises, more specialised personnel, training and equipment are needed for UN operations. This means that there will continue to be a need to strengthen the UN's capacity, primarily in the area of conflict prevention, but also in the field of conflict management and peacebuilding. In addition, the parties to a conflict must be willing to commit themselves fully to the peace process if lasting peace is to be achieved. Support for peace and reconciliation processes is therefore crucial to the success of a peace operation.

Conflict prevention. The Government will seek to ensure that a larger proportion of the UN's resources is allocated to conflict prevention. We will support measures that can strengthen the UN's overall capacity to prevent and resolve conflicts, and will continue to encourage the UN Secretary-General to use his political authority to influence peace and reconciliation processes.

Operations. The Government will seek to mobilise resources for UN operations, and will

[5] Meld. St. 37 (2014–2015), *op.cit.*

give priority to providing highly qualified personnel from the police and the armed forces as well as experts in relevant niche areas. We will provide personnel who can support efforts to build capacity in the justice and security sector in the country concerned. Norway will also be at the forefront of efforts to promote the inclusion of women in peace operations. A broader recruitment base will make it possible to find the best candidates. Moreover, the participation of women also increases the opportunity for dialogue with both women and men, making it possible to provide security for the whole population.

UN reform. The Government will continue to support efforts to reform UN peace operations. We will provide expertise and financial assistance with a view to improving the effectiveness of peace operations. Our support will for example go towards strengthening UN intelligence capacity and its force generation procedures, and training African personnel to enable them to participate in both AU and UN operations. We will also support measures that promote cooperation between the UN and regional organisations, primarily NATO and the AU.

11 The international order

Many of the security challenges we are facing today require a global response. This applies to terrorism, international organised crime, piracy and cyber threats. It also applies to climate change and global health challenges. These last two often exacerbate underlying problems, which can in turn cause instability and conflict.

Close and effective international cooperation is dependent on respect for common rules. International law provides the legal framework for relations between states. It provides a common set of rules for dealing with international crises and conflicts. International law has played an important role in ensuring Europe's peaceful development and forms the basis of the Euro-Atlantic security architecture.

Other factors, such as trade, are also vital for promoting peaceful development. Global trade creates economic growth and binds countries together. This reduces the risk of war and conflict. The effects of increased international trade are particularly positive when combined with democratic development.

Norway considers it important to do its part to uphold and further develop international law, to create and maintain effective arenas for addressing global challenges, to promote global trade and encourage democratic development.

11.1 Rules and norms

Helping to maintain the international legal order and multilateral governance systems is one of the main aims of Norway's foreign policy. The stability and predictability provided by international rules and norms benefits Norway and the rest of the international community.

Norway has an open economy and thus benefits from the existence of a well-functioning legal regime for international trade. Under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, Norway, as a coastal state, has access to rich natural resources. The Convention has also contributed to global stability by balancing the various interests of states relating to the seas and oceans.

It is in Norway's interests that international relations, conflict resolution and efforts to address new challenges are based on international law. The alternative is for instruments of hard power and the interests of major powers to become more prominent.

Upholding and further developing international law. Respect for international law should never be taken for granted. In recent years, the international debate has revealed a growing gap in values between individual states and various groups of states. This growing polarisation is reducing the prospects of successfully negotiating major new international conventions and agreements with the content we would like to see included.

We must work to ensure that the world's states respect and apply international law and accede to important international conventions. Strengthening international law is particularly important in today's unsettled world.

International law must also be further developed as social developments create new needs for international regulation. The Government will work with other states to ensure that international law remains relevant to the regional and global challenges the international community as a whole or groups of states are facing.

Response to violations of international law. Norway expects all states to comply with international law. We will respond to serious violations of international rules together with other like-minded countries and will seek to ensure that appropriate action is taken.

It is in Norway's interest to work to ensure that emerging powers are included more effectively in international institutions to enable these countries to participate in joint responses to violations of international law.

Promoting human rights, the rule of law and democracy. The Government will continue to promote human rights, the rule of law and democracy, in line with the white paper on human rights in Norway's foreign policy and development cooperation.[1] This is a good way of safeguarding Norwegian values. It is also good secu-

rity policy and contributes to stability in fragile states.

Experience shows that democratic control of the armed forces helps prevent the use of force in violation of international law. At a time when democracy is under pressure in many places, it is important to maintain our efforts in this area.

The Government is working to strengthen the efforts of the UN, the OSCE and the Council of Europe to promote democracy, human rights and the rule of law. Recipients of Norwegian aid must show willingness to make progress in these areas. The Government also considers it important to ensure that support provided by Norway for military capacity building enhances democratic control of armed forces.

11.2 International institutions

Norway will work to promote a robust, value-based international system, based on the UN Charter, international law and the network of international institutions that has been developed since the Second World War. We will contribute to the development of effective and representative arenas for addressing global security challenges, and will often seek a leadership role.

The Government will ensure that the Foreign Service has the capacity to represent Norway in important forums. We will maintain our financial support for the UN system, the international financial institutions and other relevant networks of regional and international institutions.

Multilateral institutions working to promote democracy, human rights and the rule of law are coming under increasing pressure both politically and financially. In the light of this, the Government aims to increase Norway's contributions to these institutions. We must safeguard and strengthen the institutions we have painstakingly built up over several decades.

If international institutions are to retain their prominent role in the world, emerging powers must be included more effectively. The discussions about decision-making power in the international financial institutions illustrate the importance of this. The Government will seek to promote an inclusive multilateral system.

In a number of countries, including those that have traditionally shown strong support for international cooperation, forces that are deeply sceptical of international institutions are on the rise. This makes it all the more important to ensure that multilateral institutions are as effective as possible. The Government will therefore seek to ensure that multilateral institutions concentrate their efforts on areas that cannot be properly addressed at national or regional level and where a collective response is needed.

The UN. The UN plays a unique role in efforts to promote international peace and security, human rights and development. At a time when we are seeing significant shifts in the balance of power, it is important that the UN, and in particular the Security Council, remains strong, relevant and effective. The Security Council is the UN's primary body for promoting international peace, stability and security. The Council is the only global institution with a mandate to authorise the use of force and make decisions that are binding on all UN member states.

Norway is seeking to become an elected member of the UN Security Council for the period 2021-2022. If elected, we will work to strengthen commitment to international law and the principles set out in the UN Charter. Norway has a long tradition of acting as a bridge-builder across established blocs in the UN. The Security Council needs to be expanded to make it more representative of today's geopolitical and economic realities, and there must be greater transparency surrounding the Council's decisions. Norway and the other Nordic countries have called for the number of both permanent and non-permanent Security Council members to be increased.

The World Trade Organization. The WTO is world's best defence against protectionism. It is therefore crucial that the WTO continues to produce results in the form of new agreements and the further development of the dispute settlement system. It is also vital to ensure compliance with existing rules and obligations.

The Government will strengthen the WTO, for example by encouraging reform of the international trading system in line with developments in the global economy, and by upholding the system for dealing with trade disputes between countries. We will also continue to promote plurilateral trade agreements and bilateral free trade agreements.

Other actors and forums. The Foreign Service promotes Norwegian interests vis-à-vis established and emerging centres of power. The normalisation of Norway's relations with China is a milestone in this respect, and opens up opportunities for dialogue on a number of areas of importance to Norway. The Government will further develop Norway's cooperation with China in areas

[1] Meld. St. 10 (2014–2015), *op.cit.*

such as peace operations, the Arctic, maritime issues, as well as in conflict areas where both countries are working to promote development.

Regional organisations and informal meeting places have gained importance in several fields. The G20 is one example. It brings together some of the most important economies from each of the world's continents, and also the EU. Today, the G20 plays a leading role in global economic governance. Norway is cultivating close relations with influential G20 countries. Norway has been invited by Germany, which holds the G20 presidency in 2017, to participate in the G20 as a guest country in 2017. The Government will build on this experience and explore ways of increasing our contact with other G20 countries like China. Our participation as a guest country will also further enhance our close bilateral cooperation with Germany.

The Government will continue its efforts to strengthen contact with regional organisations such as the AU, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), and the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM).

11.3 Global security challenges

Norway's security is increasingly affected by global security challenges such as the threats posed by terrorism and international criminal networks, and cyber threats. These threats often come from non-state actors, but states too may resort to such means to achieve their aims.

Climate change and health challenges are two other global factors that are affecting our security. These are not security threats in the traditional sense, but they can exacerbate other challenges that are already having an impact on peace and security. This applies for example to the scale and frequency of extreme weather events, social and economic disparities, population pressure in urban areas, inadequate access to food and drinking water, competition for natural resources, and challenges relating to energy security and migration.

The risk of factors such as these leading to instability and conflict is particularly high in states where the capacity for crisis management and long-term adaptation is weak. In the future, Norway's stabilisation and development efforts will be targeted towards fragile states such as these.

The key to dealing with these challenges is not primarily to be found in security policy in the narrow sense. Rather, it lies in Norway's efforts in fields such as humanitarian aid, development cooperation, and environment and climate change. Effective policies in these areas are not just good for the climate, the environment and development. They also make good preventive security policy and contribute to positive development in fragile states.

Terrorism, organised crime and cyber threats. The Government will continue its efforts to combat terrorism, international organised crime including environmental crime, cyber threats and piracy, in line with the white paper on global security challenges.[2] The white paper sets out 40 action points to strengthen Norway's ability to address these global threats. The white paper makes it clear that security policy, development policy and foreign policy must be seen in conjunction with one another, and highlights the need for more knowledge, better coordination, and capacity building. The Government will launch an international strategy for cyberspace for Norway in spring 2017.

Climate change. The Government will continue its efforts to ensure that Norway fulfils its international climate commitments. Working in close cooperation with the EU and the other Nordic countries, Norway will play an active role in the development of robust rules in this area and promote the implementation of the Paris Agreement. Climate finance provided by Norway, the EEA and Norway Grants and other forms of support will be used effectively to help other countries implement measures to address climate change. The Government is also seeking to raise awareness of the security risks associated with climate change and will make sure that this information is disseminated widely. As part of this work, the Government will commission a report on the risks to Norway's security of climate change in other parts of the world. It will increasingly be necessary to take climate change into account when providing long-term support to promote stability in fragile states and conflict-affected countries, and measures to reduce vulnerability will be needed.

Global health. Global health challenges, such as pandemics and antibiotic resistance, are particularly difficult for fragile states to deal with. They can also have a direct impact on public security in Europe. Good health systems are our first line of defence against these types of challenges. The International Health Regulations provide a global legal framework for detecting, reporting and responding to cross-border health threats. The Government will seek to strengthen our defences in this area through its extensive efforts to promote education and global health.

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[2] Meld. St. 37 (2014–2015), *op.cit.*

12 Crisis management

Close coordination between relevant Norwegian authorities is essential if Norway is to be able to deal with serious security situations. Sound knowledge is needed to provide a good basis for decision-making and policy development, and the Foreign Service must continually adapt its resources to ensure that Norway is able to meet new challenges.

There is a growing need for effective crisis management and coordination at the national level. Crisis situations can arise suddenly and without warning. In some situations, it may not be clear at an early enough stage that there is a crisis. Decisions may have to be taken fast, in complex situations and on the basis of insufficient and sometimes conflicting information.

We must be prepared for the fact that disinformation activities may be used to create confusion about what is actually going on, create divisions among decision-makers and slow down decision-making processes.

The Government will therefore continue to strengthen Norway's national preparedness to respond to security crises. A great deal of work has been done in this area in terms of improving planning and carrying out crisis management exercises across sectors. Improving knowledge and expertise, carrying out exercises, and strengthening the capacity for coordination across all sectors and levels of the crisis management system will be important elements in our ongoing efforts in this area.

We must make best possible use of all Norway's resources if we are to manage threats to public and state security effectively. The Government will strengthen Norway's overall defence capabilities. In order to increase the resilience of critical societal functions, the Government will propose new legislation relating to preventive national security. This will be tailored to today's security challenges.[1]

However, Norway's resilience depends on more than just an effective public administration. Public confidence in the authorities is also vital. We must therefore work to maintain the current high level of confidence in government institutions, the political system and the media. Increasing awareness of Norway's security situation and of the role of the Norwegian Armed Forces and relevant public agencies is important.

Knowledge of strategically important areas is essential for providing a sound basis for decision-making. It is therefore important to promote research on our most important foreign and security policy priorities. Over the years, Norway has maintained strong research capacity on the Arctic and Russia regardless of changes in the security environment, and the Government will continue to support key research programmes in these areas. In addition, there is a need for more research on Europe. The Government has given the Research Council of Norway an important role in coordinating research efforts to ensure that Norway's long-term knowledge needs are met.

Strengthening Norway's security is one of the Foreign Service's key tasks. Unless our basic security is assured, we will not have the freedom to promote other interests. In order to follow developments and safeguard Norwegian interests, Norway needs an appropriate presence around the world with the necessary skills and knowledge. The Foreign Service must adapt in the face of rapid change, and continue to enhance its ability to deal with unforeseen developments. The Government will also continue to restructure the Foreign Service to ensure that Norway is as well equipped as possible to address foreign and security policy challenges.

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1 Official Norwegian Report 2016: 19 on safeguarding critical societal functions. (in Norwegian only)

13 Conclusion

The purpose of this white paper is to provide a thorough account of Norway's current security situation. A great deal has happened since the work to develop this white paper was started in autumn 2015. Increased migration to Europe, terrorist attacks in European cities, the UK's decision to leave the EU, the coup attempt in Turkey and the rise of populist movements in Europe and North America reflect the unpredictable nature of today's world.

Against this backdrop, it is important for Norway to strengthen existing security policy instruments and to exercise strategic patience. While maintaining the main contours of our policy, we must also adapt to the changing security environment by promoting closer cooperation in Europe and stabilising fragile states. This is the main message of this white paper.

We must maintain and strengthen our transatlantic ties and NATO, strengthen our own defence capabilities and manage our relations with Russia wisely. We must also develop closer security policy cooperation with European countries and institutions. And we must do more to alleviate the situation in Europe's unstable southern neighbourhood. All these efforts combined will make our security policy more robust. In this way, we will be better equipped to deal with unforeseen events.

This white paper focuses on security policy from the perspective of Norway. In other parts of the world, the security landscape looks different. And in other policy areas, the situation is more positive. Nevertheless, increased tensions and the tendency away from cooperation towards greater isolationism may pose challenges for the international community in areas far beyond the realm of security policy. We must take this seriously and take steps to counter these trends.

14 Economic and administrative consequences

All measures described in this white paper will be funded within the current budget framework.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs

r e c o m m e n d s :

that the recommendation from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs concerning the future course of Norwegian foreign and security policy dated 21 April 2017 should be submitted to the Storting.

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