A Secure Netherlands in a Secure World

The international arena is changing at an unprecedented rate, raising new issues and broadening the international security agenda. This International Security Strategy identifies the implications of this changing playing field for the Netherlands, and for its security and other interests.

The government has distinguished three strategic interests in international security policy:

- Defence of our own and our allies' territory
- An effective international legal order
- Economic security

In this connection the government has introduced the following focuses:

- More responsibility for Europe
- Unstable regions near Europe
- Prevention
- Disarmament and arms control
- Integrated approach
- Cooperation with the private sector

I. Introduction

Nothing can be taken for granted in the international security environment. The world has become less transparent and less predictable as new geopolitical and economic powers have emerged and the international balance of power has shifted. Besides new players, new issues have also come to the fore, and now increasingly dictate the international security agenda. Internal and external security can no longer be easily distinguished from each other.

Events in the world around us have a direct impact on our own security and welfare. With its open economy and international outlook, the Netherlands is highly dependent on other countries. Seventy per cent of our national income comes from beyond our borders. Insecurity and instability in the world affect our security and our welfare.

At the beginning of this century the world was shocked by the events of 9/11, which marked a watershed in our thinking on security. Since then, we have seen international interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq; the rapid emergence of the BRIC economies; the financial, economic and euro crises; the Arab Spring; alarming developments in North Korea, Iran, Syria and the Sahel; the threat of irreversible effects from climate change; a tsunami followed by a nuclear disaster in Fukushima, Japan; and the rapid rise of digital networks and attendant concerns about our cyber security.

Technological advances, digitisation and globalisation mean that we are increasingly closely linked, both economically and socioculturally, through a range of virtual networks and social media. Countries, organisations and individuals can now have an impact worldwide. This brings both new opportunities and new threats.

This international security strategy sets out policy focuses for this government's term in office based on an analysis of the key developments in the international security environment. What do these developments imply for our strategic security interests: the defence of our own and our allies' territory, an effective international legal order and economic security? What opportunities and threats do they entail for our country? What does all this mean for our foreign and security policy?

While the existing National Security Strategy (2010) examines domestic measures designed to protect Dutch security interests, this strategy focuses on what the Netherlands aims to do in and alongside other countries to safeguard its interests.[1]

Security cannot be taken for granted. It is something that we continually need to work at, together with other countries, international organisations, civic institutions, the private sector and members of the public. As a relatively small country with limited international influence, we depend on collaboration with others and robust international agreements.

Note to the reader

Foreign relations are a matter for the Kingdom of the Netherlands: the Netherlands in Europe, the Caribbean countries Aruba, Curaçao and St Maarten, and the Dutch public bodies in the Caribbean (Bonaire, St Eustatius and Saba). References in this security strategy to 'the Netherlands' or 'Dutch' therefore mean: '(of) the Kingdom of the Netherlands', except as regards matters specific to the Netherlands in Europe, such as development cooperation and membership of the EU, NATO and the OSCE.

[1] The National Security Strategy considers five security interests: besides territorial and economic security, it also examines ecological security, physical security and social and political stability.

II Contextual analysis[2]

The international security environment has become more complex. This has implications for the international security agenda. Besides familiar issues like arms control, crisis management and preventing proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), other issues like cyber security, piracy, cross-border crime and the threat of terrorism (including use of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons by terrorists) have also become very timely. New issues like water and resource scarcity, pandemics, loss of biodiversity and climate change also have disturbing implications.

But there is good news too: the number of conflicts in the world has halved over the past two decades, democracy has taken hold in various countries, and the global population is twice as prosperous as it was 20 years ago. However, the number of conflicts and unstable regions on Europe's doorstep has in fact increased.

Shifting power blocs

Less than 30 years ago, the world was a fairly clear-cut place. The United States and the Soviet Union had divided it into two camps. After the end of the Cold War, a more or less unipolar system developed, with the US as the world's leading superpower.

With the rise of the BRIC countries – Brazil, Russia, India and China – and the growing influence of other countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America, like the 'Next Eleven', a multipolar system is now emerging. New economic and geopolitical powers are demanding a role on the world's stage. This has prompted the US to focus increasingly on Asia.

A shift in the global balance can also be seen where military spending is concerned. The NATO countries still account for a large majority of global defence spending. However, Western countries have shrinking defence budgets, while defence spending in emerging economies like China and Russia is on the increase.

History teaches us that the rise of global powers is often associated with conflict. The current challenge is for new and old powers alike to avoid such a scenario.

The new actors on the international stage are ready to engage with the world. They are advancing their own interests, ensuring that they acquire and retain access to raw materials, energy, advanced technology and knowledge. They are also investing more and more in strategic infrastructure – like ports – beyond their borders and in other continents, including Europe. At the same time, however, they do not always shoulder their responsibility for global governance (which comes with power), or they do not always do so in a way the Netherlands considers appropriate.

Multilateral system

The current multilateral system is not adapting easily to the major and radical changes going on in the world. That system, and particularly the UN, faces a crisis of effectiveness and legitimacy. The membership of the UN Security Council, for example, does not yet reflect the new global balance of power. Reforms are made more difficult by a difference of opinion between countries – particularly in the West – that emphasise people's individual rights and emerging powers that set more store by collective rights and the principle of non-intervention. The increased influence of multinationals, NGOs and the media (including social media) has also yet to be reflected in the system.

Nevertheless, within the multilateral system steps have gradually been taken on security and the legal order, mediation, arms control, human rights, gender, humanitarian aid, protection of civilians in armed conflicts, good governance and security sector reform. Intervention by one country in the affairs

[2] Since the defence policy review 'A New Foundation for the Netherlands' Armed Forces' was published in 2010 the Ministries of Defence, Foreign Affairs and Security & Justice have produced a joint international security analysis each year. This 'Strategic Monitor' is based, among other things, on reports by the Netherlands Institute of International Relations 'Clingendael' and The Hague Centre for Strategic Studies. The contextual analysis with which this strategy begins was partly inspired by these reports.

of another to protect human rights – once unthinkable for many countries – is slowly gaining acceptance, even if, for some emerging powers, this is still at odds with their preferred non-interventionist stance. The 'Responsibility to Protect' principle was endorsed by heads of state and government at the UN in 2005.

Important steps have also been taken on criminal liability – the prosecution of serious international crimes – including the Yugoslavia tribunal and the International Criminal Court (ICC). The tribunals and the ICC also have a preventive effect.

Changes in the global economy

The global economy's centre of gravity is shifting from the OECD countries to emerging markets. Besides the BRIC countries, Africa is also experiencing spectacular economic development. The rise of new powers will further reduce the share of the US, Japan and the EU in the global economy in the years ahead. OECD countries used to account for 60 to 70% of Gross World Product. This proportion is expected to fall to below 50% in the next 15 years. In the past 20 years, China and India's share of the global economy has tripled. In a few years' time Asia will be the world's biggest producer and consumer of goods and services.

Economic growth in Asia, South America and Africa is creating new commercial opportunities for Dutch businesses. In recent years, global poverty has declined dramatically. More and more people are joining the ranks of the middle classes. Asia is already the most populous continent and will soon also have the largest middle class in the world. These people are buying more and more goods and services. The lives of millions of people have improved. A sense of perspective is important, however, given the major differences in the progress made by different countries. Those in conflict, in particular, lag behind the rest.

The recent financial crisis has again highlighted the importance of financial and economic stability for prosperity and security. International institutions like the IMF, the G20 and the ECB have played an essential role in stabilising the situation. Preventing this kind of costly crisis in the future remains high on the international agenda.

The EU is still suffering economically. There is disagreement between and within the eurozone countries about how fast and to what extent member states need to put their economies and budgets in order. There is also debate about how far the richer eurozone countries should go in supporting weaker member states, as well as about the transfer of sovereignty to Brussels. Some eurozone countries have high or very high unemployment, especially among the young, which is making further spending cuts and reforms more difficult. More and more countries are experiencing a decline in prosperity, leading to public protests, socioeconomic unrest and political instability.

Digitisation and cyber security

The digital revolution has made global communications faster and easier. We receive round-the-clock information about events on the other side of the world. More and more data are being stored, linked and shared online. This brings economic opportunities. Part of the growth in productivity that has occurred in Europe is thanks to ICT. In addition, the internet facilitates freedom of expression, political participation and the democratic process. Social and cultural networks have no geographical boundaries.

But there is a downside. What if all our screens were suddenly to turn black? Our society would instantly be disrupted. Digital infrastructure is becoming increasingly vulnerable. In a growing number of countries, the government has banned or restricted access to the internet. Some governments track the digital footprints of human rights activists in order to find and persecute them. The threat of cybercrime, cyber espionage and digital warfare is growing. Consider the recent examples of distributed denial-of-service (DDoS) attacks and economic espionage. Cyber-attacks are also becoming more sophisticated, increasing their potential impact. Cyber security is therefore an increasingly important security issue.

New weapons/technologisation

Space systems, robotisation, sensors and artificial intelligence are advancing rapidly. Robotisation has made drones cheaper and more accessible, including for private parties. More and more states are adding unmanned aircraft – both armed and unarmed – to their military arsenals. Non-state actors like Central American drug cartels are also deploying armed unmanned aircraft. The use of armed drones in itself is not banned. There is no ban under international law on the use of drones, as there is on the use of cluster munitions and anti-personnel landmines. However, attacks by drones must comply with international law. The legal implications of the use of drones are currently being studied at both national and international level.

Developments in the world of nano-, bio-, gene and neurotechnology, and the convergence between them, will also have major implications and present new challenges, including in terms of biosecurity. An innocent microorganism can be manipulated into a biological weapon. At the same time, these modern technologies are a vital tool in health care and in efforts to combat infectious diseases. The Netherlands, for example, is conducting research into the bird flu virus. This research is essential to the search for a vaccine that will ultimately save human lives. However, it is important that the knowledge acquired is made available only to bona fide scientists, and that it does not fall into the wrong hands. We must prevent criminals or terrorists from making use of this knowledge to develop a biological weapon.

The military and technological gap between Europe and the US is growing. With the current austerity measures, the modernisation of the armed forces will probably proceed more slowly in Europe than in the US, and research spending in Europe will decline further. At the moment, the European defence market is highly fragmented. China and Russia, however, are keeping pace with US technological progress, investing in aircraft carriers, missile technology, space travel, cyber warfare and other innovations.

Weapons of mass destruction and missile technology

The proliferation of WMD and missile technology is a growing cause for concern. In recent years tensions surrounding Iran's nuclear programme have increased. There is also a threat from Iranian ballistic missiles whose reach extends well beyond the region. Within the Middle East, there is great concern about Syria's stocks of chemical weapons. Government troops or rebels might use them, or chemical weapons belonging to the regime might fall into the hands of terrorists.

North Korea continues to work on the development of nuclear weapons and long-range missiles, and has stepped up its war rhetoric. In Pakistan, the stability of central government is increasingly at risk. There is a danger that the authorities will lose control of parts of the nuclear arsenal. The evolving nuclear arms race in South Asia also warrants attention.

Natural resources

Competition for natural resources (water, food, fertile land, energy and raw materials) is a factor of growing importance in international relations. This is the result of economic growth and the rise in global population, and the huge growth in consumption to which they have given rise. The issue is how to ensure everyone gains and retains access to these resources. Conflicts over water, food, energy and raw materials, and the exploitation of new regions like the Arctic could lead to instability, threats to secure transport routes, protectionism (e.g. with regard to rare earth metals) and market manipulation. The increase in land degradation, at a time of growing demand for more arable land for food production both now and in the future, is another potential source of conflict. Recently, the UN Secretary-General informed the Security Council of growing evidence that large-scale professional poaching in Africa and other regions is funding terrorist groups and the drugs trade, sparking or prolonging conflicts. At the same time, there are opportunities here for the Netherlands, given our expertise in agriculture and water management. Knowledge and products that help raise food production and food security in regions like Asia and Africa could also help prevent instability.

The discovery of shale gas in North America is prompting new developments in the energy market, with major implications for the international balance of power. Energy independence in the future will

give the US more room for manoeuvre in its international relations. The US will undoubtedly remain involved in developments in the Middle East and North Africa, given the impact that oil prices have on the world economy, the importance of stability on Europe's doorstep, and domestic political considerations. In the long term, however, the US will probably be less prepared to spend large amounts of money on maintaining a military presence and intervening in the region.

Shale gas finds and the discovery of new oil and gas reserves may in time lead to a lasting drop in energy prices. This would reduce the income of countries like Russia, Saudi Arabia and Venezuela, and this could have implications for their internal stability.

Fossil fuel consumption is accelerating the process of climate change. This could lead to major security problems within the foreseeable future. Experts warn that severe drought, extreme weather events and major flooding will become more frequent as weather patterns change and the ice caps melt.

This could result in damage to public and private property, disruptions to essential infrastructure and, indirectly, to more fluctuation in food prices, water shortages and the spread of infectious diseases. These effects will impact on humankind's most basic means of subsistence. Climate change and land degradation are therefore expected to lead to an increase in migration, conflicts over water and food and, as a consequence, political tensions. Faster melting of the Arctic ice cap will also bring new opportunities, however, as new gas and oil reserves become accessible and new shipping routes open up in the Arctic region. Nevertheless, this could in turn give rise to new tensions between the countries that lay claim to parts of this region.

Fragile states and regions

There is a clear relationship between scarcity (of land, water, food and raw materials) and conflict. Overdependence on raw materials and internal conflict over access to such resources can make countries vulnerable to political instability. Political instability can also arise from economic inequality, lack of economic opportunity and organised crime, which can undermine state authority. Growing youth unemployment is another potential source of instability. In many fragile states a growing group of young people are underemployed or have little prospect of finding work.

Conflict zones and weak states are a breeding ground for terrorism, extremism and cross-border organised crime: trafficking in arms, drugs and persons, for example. Violent conflicts often have disastrous consequences for the countries involved. Most conflicts occur within rather than between states. Many also last a long time: some have already dragged on more than a decade. In over 40% of post-conflict situations, hostilities resume within 10 years.

Although the number of conflicts in the world has reduced sharply over the past 20 years, the number of fragile regions close to Europe has in fact increased. The main current or potential centres of conflict near Europe are in the arc that extends from North Africa, through the Sahel, the Horn of Africa and the Middle East to the Caucasus. Until peaceful solutions have been found to the 'frozen conflicts' in Eastern Europe (Transdniestria, Abkhazia, South Ossetia and Nagorno-Karabakh), sources of tension will continue to exist close to the EU's eastern border, too.

No longstanding conflict has such a regional – even global – impact as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Despite persistent international efforts, the deadlock in the Middle East peace process has yet to be broken. The failure to reach a comprehensive peace agreement has an impact on domestic political relations in many countries.

After more than two years of popular uprisings, the Arab region is considerably more unstable than it was prior to 2011. The overthrow of powerful centralised regimes has created scope for democratisation and greater freedom. However, it is by no means clear how this will be achieved in practice. The forces that maintain public order have weakened. The new powers that be are still having great difficulty bringing their territory under full state control. In Libya, the government still does not have a full monopoly on the use of force, which has led to illegal weapons smuggling to Mali and Gaza. In Syria, what began as a peaceful protest against the Assad regime has escalated into a civil war with disastrous humanitarian consequences. There is also a real possibility that the conflict might spill over into other countries in this already fragile region.

Terrorist networks have been able to flourish in places where state power has completely or partly disappeared. New and existing conflicts fuel radicalisation (both in the Muslim world and in the West), drawing new jihadists – some from the Netherlands – to the cause. Growing numbers are now travelling to jihadist conflict zones.

There are two sides to Africa. The continent is a source of growing economic opportunity, but at the same time, major security risks persist there. Since the 1990s, the number of violent conflicts has halved in Africa, too, and the number of casualties has fallen. However, the threat of new outbreaks of violence is ever-present. Some sources of conflict are complex and deeply-rooted.

This can be seen clearly in West Africa, where strong economic growth – in Nigeria and Ghana, for example – is accompanied by terrorism, organised crime, trafficking in persons, drugs and arms, piracy in the Gulf of Guinea and rising fundamentalism. The Western Sahel, in particular, is an increasingly unstable zone, with the threat of spillover into North Africa, as illustrated by the situation in Mali.

The Horn of Africa has a long history of local, national and cross-border conflict, including in the Sudans. The new Somali government and the successful suppression of al Shabaab give reason for optimism for the first time in two decades. International efforts to combat piracy in the waters off Somalia are also beginning to bear fruit. However, with two million displaced persons and refugees, Somalia remains a fragile state. It takes many years to tackle the underlying causes of extremism and piracy, and creating economic opportunities is essential for success in the long term.

Encouragingly, regional organisations like the African Union (AU) and ECOWAS are increasingly taking the lead in tackling regional conflicts, with the support of the EU and others. As a result, African countries are now better able to ensure their own peace and security.

Latin America and the Caribbean have seen increasing democratisation, but drugs and arms trafficking continue to threaten security. The Kingdom's relationships with Venezuela and Colombia are particularly important given those countries' geographical location. Venezuela and the Caribbean parts of the Kingdom have close historical, cultural, economic and kinship ties. The Kingdom works with Venezuela in many areas, including counternarcotics, energy and regional security. Despite the efforts of the Colombian government, the country is still plagued by drug-related crime, often in combination with terrorism. The current peace talks between the government and FARC are a positive development. However, post-conflict situations in the region tend to involve a change in the character of the violence involved, rather than a lasting cessation of violence altogether.

III Strategic interests

The changing international context has a direct impact on the Netherlands' security. This section considers the implications of the developments outlined above for the security of the Netherlands, in terms of three strategic interests:

- The defence of our own and our allies' territory
- An effective international legal order
- Economic security

These strategic interests tie in closely with the vital interests set out in the National Security Strategy: territorial security, economic security, ecological security, physical security, and social and political stability.

1) Defence of our own and our allies' territory

Even though a conventional attack on Dutch soil is not a likely scenario at the moment, the defence of the territorial security of the Kingdom and of our allies remains essential, not least because of new threats that have emerged. The Netherlands is dependent on its allies for its protection. We likewise have an obligation to come to the aid of our allies should they request it.

Good defence has a deterrent effect and therefore also a preventive effect on countries, organisations and individuals intent on doing harm. Potential threats to the territory of our allies – such as the missile programmes in Iran and North Korea – must be dealt with. NATO has considered these new threats in its new Strategic Concept.

Missile stocks have risen exponentially in recent years. Countries like Iran and North Korea have missiles that can reach our allies' territory. To counter this threat, NATO is installing a missile shield. The Netherlands is contributing innovative Smart-L radar technology on frigates and Patriot weapons systems on land.

Terrorist attacks have serious consequences, in terms not only of casualties and material damage but also of the damage an actual or threatened attack could inflict on the legal order and democracy. If politicians, journalists, companies or members of the public no longer feel free to make their own choices or express their views for fear of reprisals by extremists, the very fabric of our democracy and legal order is damaged.

The terrorist threat in the Netherlands and against Dutch interests abroad emanates mainly from jihadists in North Africa and the Middle East. There are international jihadist groups that regard the Netherlands as a legitimate target because of our support for international interventions (e.g. in Afghanistan), or because of views expressed in the Netherlands that they interpret as insulting to Islam. Groups of young people have been travelling to Syria to take part in the jihad there. If they return to the Netherlands trained and radicalised, they may pose a threat to our society.

Finally, the growing influence of international organised crime threatens the security of the Netherlands and the Caribbean parts of the Kingdom. Cheap weapons from current and former conflict zones or weak states can end up on the international black market and eventually find their way to the Netherlands. Drug cartels use weak states as a base for smuggling drugs into the EU. Bribery of public officials (e.g. police and customs officers, judges, prosecutors and public administrators) by criminal gangs poses a threat to integrity in government.

2) An effective international legal order

For the Netherlands, with its open economy and limited direct international power, the best guarantees of security, stability and prosperity are a stable and effective international legal order and close international and European cooperation. The Netherlands attaches great importance to an international legal order in which states can hold each other to account on the basis of mutual agreements and settle their disputes in a peaceful manner. We are one of only a few countries that has undertaken in its constitution to strive to promote the international legal order. This is in keeping with our long tradition as a democracy based on the rule of law – with The Hague as the legal capital of the world – and trading nation. Against this background, the Netherlands also works to promote broader recognition of the jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice (ICJ), and for more countries to accede to the ICC.

Every year some 20,000 to 30,000 vessels sail along the coast of Somalia, a large proportion of them en route to Rotterdam. The Netherlands' priority in Somalia is therefore to combat piracy and help stabilize the country. The Netherlands is helping bring pirates to justice by supplying experts and funding to build capacity in the criminal justice and prison system in Somalia and neighboring countries. It is also important that these countries build their own maritime capacity, so that they can effectively police their own territorial waters and exclusive economic zones.

Peace and security are very important for the international legal order and human rights, the prevention of international crises, the protection of civilian populations and efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. In a large number of weak states and countries in conflict, the state is unwilling or unable to guarantee security and some form of international intervention or support is needed to restore security and stability. In many cases, restoring peace, security and the rule of law is not only a basic need for the people in the country concerned, it is also in the economic or security interests of the Netherlands.

The Netherlands stands to benefit if other countries respect the core values of the rule of law, such as protection from arbitrary action by the state, transparency, accountability and participation, because our interests are inextricably linked with those of other countries. Dutch foreign policy therefore focuses on bringing as many countries as possible into the international system. The world will be a safer place if more countries consider themselves part of the international order and act as responsible stakeholders. An effective international legal order is also an important prerequisite for economic growth and development. Countries that experience rapid economic growth without sufficient legal certainty risk encountering (or returning to) instability. Businesses will invest there only if there are sound laws and rules which are also enforced.

Besides providing an international legal framework, multilateral agreements also protect individuals. Only international cooperation and sound agreements will allow us to take full advantage of globalisation's positive effects and minimise its negative ones. In the development of standards and regulations for cyber security, too, the Netherlands is pressing for solid international agreements, including shared terms of reference and confidence-building measures. We are also pressing for an internet governance model that takes account of the interests of the various actors (government authorities, the private sector and civil society organisations), citing the global need for a free, open and secure internet.

3) Economic security

The key to a strong Dutch economy lies to a great extent in our relations with other countries. Our infrastructure is part of a European and global network, and our prosperity is built largely on raw materials and energy that come from elsewhere. Access to those raw materials, a level playing field for Dutch companies, unrestricted international trade based on transparent common rules and free trading routes are all essential. Safeguarding our trade, trading routes and access to raw materials are a strategic security interest. The rules of the global economic system must be strengthened, observed and enforced. Global economic chains must be protected from piracy, cyber-attacks, espionage, fraud, corruption and all forms of organised crime.

Conflicts in other countries can damage our economy. Blockades can result in more expensive alternative transport routes, or high costs for security and insurance. The territorial conflicts in the East China and the South China Seas could, for example, block Dutch shipping routes, while territorial disputes disrupt the activities of European energy companies. According to the World Bank, piracy costs the world €18 billion a year. Threats to strategic supply routes affect the Netherlands' role as a transit hub for the rest of Europe, particularly via the port of Rotterdam.

Foreign investment is crucial to the Dutch economy, and should be subject to as few restrictions as possible. Of course steps are always taken to safeguard security within the relevant framework, and the government will respond appropriately if the existing instruments prove inadequate.

The Dutch economy will be vulnerable if the security of our supply of energy and raw materials is threatened. This could jeopardise our role as a distribution hub, our industrial production capacity and our energy supply. Higher raw material prices have a negative impact on our economic growth. Our dependence on fossil fuels also increases our vulnerability.

Phosphate is a non-renewable resource that is essential for all life on Earth. Without phosphate there would be no food, and therefore no life. It is used primarily in the production of artificial fertiliser, but refined phosphate is also added to foods and used in the chemicals industry. The raw product, phosphorite, is found in only a few places on the planet. The biggest reserves are in Morocco (33%), followed by China (25%); there are much smaller reserves in Iraq, Algeria, Syria, South Africa, the US and Russia. The geographical concentration of phosphorite reserves constitutes a major risk. The US and China have imposed restrictions on exports and, since the upheavals in the Arab world, exports from the North African countries have stagnated, with the exception of Morocco. A large proportion of Morocco's reserves, however, are in the unstable Western Sahara region. Europe is almost entirely dependent on imports.

The Netherlands is an international internet hub and has one of the densest digital networks in the world. We aim to become the 'digital gateway' to Europe. This will require a secure, reliable and open digital infrastructure. Our growing dependence on cyber infrastructure also makes us vulnerable, however. Cyber criminals and cyber terrorists can completely disrupt our online financial transactions. Cyber-attacks can also cause major disruption to society. With our knowledge-based economy, open society and international orientation, the Netherlands is also vulnerable to cyber espionage. Countries, organisations and individuals are increasingly attempting to steal sensitive political, military, scientific and economic information from the Netherlands via digital channels. The private sector and public authorities, including the intelligence and security services, must invest in managing and securing our digital infrastructure.

IV. Policy implications

The Netherlands has interests all over the world, but our influence is limited and is affected by major spending cuts on defence and development cooperation, as well as by the rise of new global powers in Asia, South America and Africa. The cutbacks require that we become smarter in the way we use our limited resources. We therefore have to set priorities and consider where our presence has the most added value.

The changes in the world around us mean we need to introduce new focus areas in our foreign security policy over the coming years. Some things will however remain constant, of course.

The Netherlands will for example continue to invest in strong transatlantic ties. NATO remains a crucial pillar of Dutch security policy. For decades, the transatlantic axis has brought freedom, security and prosperity to Europe and North America. The collective self-defence clause in the NATO treaty (article 5) and its deterrent effect are vital for our security. The unique qualities of the alliance make it reasonable to assume that NATO will continue playing an essential role in conflict prevention, intervention, control and stabilisation in regions where its security interests are at stake. The Netherlands will also have to play its part, including in regard to hard power. Security comes at a price, even in times of financial austerity. The Dutch armed forces must therefore retain the capability to contribute to all forms of intervention in the future. As a good and reliable partner, the Netherlands must also come to the aid of others if they call upon us. In 2017, for example, the Netherlands will again play a role in NATO patrols over the Baltic states (Baltic Air Policing). In addition, Dutch Patriot systems are currently being deployed in Turkey to defend Turkey's territory and population against the threat of missile attacks from Syria.

Another constant in our policy is multilateralism. As a relatively small country with limited international influence we often achieve most via multilateral channels. The Netherlands therefore supports the UN agencies that work to build, enforce and promote peace and to preserve and ensure sustainable use of natural resources. We also work actively to promote the development of 'Responsibility to Protect', the protection of civilian populations and UN Security Council resolution 1325 on women in conflict situations. We will continue to fight impunity and campaign for broader recognition of the jurisdiction of the ICJ and the ICC. Cooperation with other countries and with multilateral and regional security organisations is very important to the Netherlands. For example, security-related issues are increasingly being discussed with the African Union and the Asian regional forums (ASEAN, ASEM, ARF), organisations whose importance is growing. Solidarity also remains a key focus in our efforts to promote peace, security and the rule of law, in full awareness of the fact that we all need to live together in a single global community. Our prosperity and well-being increase when that of others is improved.

Alongside these constant features of our policy, the government is introducing the following focuses:

Policy focus 1: More responsibility for Europe

In the current multipolar world the relative weight of individual EU member states has declined. To continue to exert influence, we need to deepen our collaboration with our European partners. Europe will have to take on more responsibility, if only to remain relevant for the US and the rest of the world. 'Europe' refers here to the EU and its member states, and the European members of NATO. A strong, decisive Europe that takes responsibility, including for security and defence, is important for a stable international system and a strong NATO. The Netherlands will meet its responsibilities in this area first and foremost by contributing to NATO and the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) at a level commensurate with its economic weight.

The CSDP has become a more robust instrument thanks to the Lisbon Treaty and the advent of the European External Action Service (EEAS). With several years' experience of contributing to stabilisation and crisis management efforts via civilian missions and military operations, the EU is now presenting itself more and more explicitly as a 'security provider'. The situation in the Western Balkans illustrates the development of the CSDP. The Balkan war in the early 1990s made it clear that the Union lacked the instruments to deal with crises in its own region. This prompted the development of a European

security and defence policy. Several major steps have been taken since then. In recent years, the EU has played a leading role in international efforts to bring peace, security and stability to the Balkan region through its missions and operations there.

The Netherlands would like to see the EU become an even stronger force in the area of security. With its special representatives, its missions and operations, and its development cooperation programmes in the field of security, police services and criminal justice, the EU makes an important contribution to stability and security in other countries. It is increasingly taking a leading role in such efforts. The Netherlands intends to contribute by supporting missions and by pressing for greater coherence in the activities of the different EU institutions.

The EU's growing diplomatic weight is also evidenced by the fact that it is an essential partner in discussions of regional security issues like Iran and the Middle East peace process. Nevertheless, the Union's readiness and capacity for external action need to be increased further.

Europe's role is not limited to implementing security policy, however. Increasingly, the Netherlands also uses Europe as a platform for policymaking, for example on cyber issues and raw materials. We work best together if we start by coming up with ideas together.

The Netherlands also plans to work on strengthening Europe's transatlantic ties, which extend further than NATO. No two continents share more values and interests than Europe and North America. In a changing world, where nothing can be taken for granted, these ties are essential. Transatlantic cooperation is close, and encompasses many areas. The role of the EEAS is becoming more and more important in this context. The Netherlands will therefore lobby within the EU for security to play a more prominent role in the transatlantic dialogue. This will require diplomatic coordination in Brussels and the leading European capitals.

The Netherlands would like to see Europe speak more with one voice on security issues, and ultimately at the highest level: in the UN Security Council. We will also enter into dialogue with the new major players on the world stage, both independently and through the EU, to highlight the importance of a rules-based international legal order and the responsibilities that permanent membership of the Council entails. Speaking more with a single voice is also the goal with respect to other regional organisations, including the OSCE.

The need for the EU and the countries of Europe to take greater responsibility for security to guarantee their own interests is evident from the various developments that have taken place in the security arena. Europe faces a number of challenges, owing partly to the diversity of views on, and the fragmented nature of, defence efforts. That said, the EU has a broad range of instruments for crisis management, with military, diplomatic and economic deployment capabilities.

The Netherlands will also press for more defence cooperation. This is becoming more and more important in order to maintain sufficient strike capability in a changing world. This is partly the result of cuts in defence spending, a reality affecting not only the Netherlands, but virtually every other European country too. The Netherlands would like to see more cooperation on defence so as to increase our capacity for military action. This can give us and our partners useful resources that we can't afford as individual players. Naval cooperation with Belgium and army cooperation with Germany are being stepped up. The Netherlands is also exploring the possibility of other international partnerships, particularly with countries we already have ties with.

When it comes to making choices, international coordination by NATO and the EU is essential. The Netherlands will continue to encourage this. There must be closer political cooperation, too. Shared views on security matters are, after all, the basis for military intervention (as well as for decisions *not* to intervene). The Netherlands could expedite and influence this process by holding more intensive consultations with important countries in Europe, and contributing where possible (politically and militarily), in order to have more say when specific Dutch interests are at stake. A good example of successful international military cooperation is the air transport provided by the European Air Transport Command (EATC) in Eindhoven for the French military intervention in Mali. Another example is the establishment of the Heavy Airlift Wing, with its fleet of C-17 Globemaster transport aircraft in Hungary.

Policy focus 2: Unstable regions close to Europe

Now that the US is focusing more on Asia, Europe will have to take more responsibility and invest more in stability in its own region, particularly when it comes to conflict regions in the arc to the south and east of the Union: North Africa, the Sahel, the Horn of Africa, the Middle East and the Caucasus. This is not a matter of dividing spheres of influence between the EU and the rest of the world. In practice, cooperation with the US and other countries will remain the guiding principle. We cannot manage bigger interventions without the US and NATO. Nor does it mean that we should focus exclusively on countries in the neighbourhood of Europe: just as the EU will still need to be able to call upon NATO to help safeguard our security interests in our backyard, so the US and other NATO partners will still need to be able to call upon the Netherlands and the other countries of Europe to help in conflicts further afield. Furthermore, transnational threats and efforts to tackle them cannot always be delineated in geographical terms.

Nevertheless, events on the edge of the European Union have a direct impact on our own security and prosperity. The Netherlands has decided to step up its involvement in the Arab region in the knowledge that a number of countries there are in a crucial transitional phase which will determine the stability of Europe's external borders over the next few decades. Contributing to democratisation and, therefore, stabilisation in the neighbouring region to the south will enable us to contain the risk of illegal migration and reduce the threat of terrorism. A prosperous Arab region will create economic opportunities, including for Europe. Our energy interests in the region will also benefit from stable governance. The Netherlands supports the European Neighbourhood Policy agenda for economic reform, reconstruction and higher employment. The removal of trade barriers is part of this.

NATO and EU partners can play an important role here. The Netherlands supports NATO's longstanding agenda of closer cooperation with Arab countries. The Alliance has forged ties with a number of Arab countries on NATO missions and efforts to combat common threats like terrorism, failing states and the proliferation of WMD. This led in 1994 to the establishment of the Mediterranean Dialogue and in 2004 to the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative. A number of countries (Jordan, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates) contributed to NATO's Operation Unified Protector in Libya under this arrangement.

The current crisis in the Sahel, a region close to the EU, poses physical and economic security risks to Europe, and therefore also to the Netherlands. Instability and piracy in the Horn of Africa, the threat they pose to Dutch merchant shipping and the need to tackle the causes on land are factors that justify active efforts on the part of the Netherlands. Our approach will be as integrated as possible, involving contributions in terms of both personnel and funding. We will use multilateral channels where possible and bilateral programmes where necessary, with a focus on both short-term needs (humanitarian, for example) and long-term needs (sustainable development). Local capacity-building and national ownership will also remain key principles in Dutch efforts, to ensure that players in Africa take on more responsibility themselves.

Policy focus 3: Prevention

Prevention is not only better than cure, it is also cheaper. Besides tackling insecurity and fragility, Dutch policy will also centre on pre-conflict management, making resources available via bilateral, civil society and multilateral channels. The Netherlands has a number of innovative, flexible instruments for this purpose, such as the International Security Budget and the Stability Fund, which has been supporting stability and peacebuilding efforts for years. Prevention above all requires early alignment of interests and goals on the basis of a joint assessment of the situation in the country or region. The Netherlands therefore sets great store by timely integrated analysis ('early warning') and strategy development ('early action') in current or emerging conflict zones, where possible in close collaboration with other countries and organisations.

In the interests of ensuring a representative and effective multilateral system which is able to perform its preventive role at global level to best effect, the Netherlands is calling for reform of the UN Security Council. We believe it is important that the Security Council adequately reflect changing geopolitical relations. To aid efforts to reform and strengthen the international community, the Netherlands has put itself forward as a candidate for the Security Council for the 2017-2018 period. Through our candidacy,

we hope to ensure coherence with the legal institutions in The Hague and promote Dutch priorities in areas such as the rule of law and human rights. The Netherlands' candidacy for a non-permanent seat does not conflict with its goal of reforming the Security Council in the longer term, including the introduction of a permanent seat for the EU.

Prevention is the most effective strategy in the fight against organised crime, too. Dutch priorities in this area include oversight of the integrity of public authorities in the countries concerned, a strong international anti-money laundering regime and good border controls. Weak states must be encouraged to strengthen the rule of law within their borders and enhance their resilience to corruption. Our coastguard is active in the Caribbean in the fight against drug trafficking, illegal arms dealing and certain forms of illegal migration. The Kingdom also contributes to counter-illicit-trafficking sorties under the bilateral Forward Operating Locations agreement (FOL) with the US. In addition, the Kingdom promotes closer cooperation on regional security matters in the Caribbean. In December 2012 the government of the Kingdom concluded a memorandum of understanding (MoU) on multidimensional security with the Organization of American States (OAS). This provides a basis for more exchange of information and coordination of activities to combat organised crime, trafficking in drugs, arms and persons, and terrorism in the region.

Preventive action is also important in the face of new challenges resulting from climate change, fluctuating food prices and the exhaustion of natural resources, including water shortages. These potential sources of conflict (whether armed or not) must be tackled at the earliest possible stage, multilaterally and otherwise. UNEP and other UN agencies should play an active role in early warning and early action, and could promote international agreements on natural resources. International agreements on the preservation and sustainable use of natural resources are an important element of peace talks. There are clear opportunities in this connection for the Netherlands and the Dutch private sector. Companies can, for example, help develop innovative solutions to enhance food security, access to energy and green growth. The government's top sector policy offers scope for such efforts.

The Netherlands is also investing more and more in measures to prevent cyber-crime, cyber espionage and cyber warfare. We are pressing for further ratification and globalisation of the Budapest Convention on Cybercrime. NATO's cyber defence policy considers, in part at the Netherlands' insistence, the need for closer information exchange, the development of joint threat analysis and the importance of EU-NATO cooperation. The Netherlands also believes that NATO will eventually have to develop a cyber-security doctrine. Together with a group of European pioneer countries, the Netherlands has contributed significantly to the EU's cyber strategy, which proposes an integrated approach (i.e. one involving public-private and civil-military cooperation). With this group and other countries like the US and Australia, we are working actively on standards of conduct and are also pressing the UN and OSCE to take adequate precautions.

An effective counterterrorism policy, finally, should focus not only on preventing attacks but also on removing factors that fuel terrorism. Tackling causes of insecurity and focusing more on conflict prevention elsewhere in the world are therefore important ways of curbing security threats in the Netherlands itself. The government believes that counterterrorism activities must always respect the rule of law and people's fundamental freedoms.

The key to preventing radicalisation and terrorism lies to a large extent in other countries. Capacity building abroad, in terms of legislation, investigation and prosecution, is essential. The Netherlands will therefore continue to contribute to the Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF) (e.g. by seconding experts) in order to build counterterrorism resources and knowledge in high-risk countries. We also plan to promote initiatives aimed at preventing violent radicalisation by offering a counterbalance to radical influences. Various means of communication (education, TV and radio programmes) will be used to encourage young people to broaden their views and not use violence and extremism to express their dissatisfaction with the government or with people who think differently. The Netherlands' focus in this respect will be on North Africa and the Sahel, the Horn of Africa and the Middle East.

Prevention is also the most effective means of countering nuclear terrorism. Although the likelihood of a nuclear terrorist attack is extremely small, the impact would be catastrophic. The Netherlands and many other countries are therefore working hard to ensure that fissile material that could be used to make a nuclear weapon does not fall into the wrong hands. This means that any surplus material must

be destroyed as far as possible, that nuclear material must be kept secure and that international monitoring must be tightened up. The Nuclear Security Summit is held every two years to draw attention to this issue and expedite progress in this area. The US hosted the first summit in 2010, and South Korea the second in 2012; the Netherlands will host the third summit in 2014.

Policy focus 4: Disarmament and arms control

The Netherlands is working towards the complete abolition of nuclear weapons. Nuclear disarmament is an important priority in this. We support a mutual disarmament approach, with negotiations encompassing all categories of nuclear weapons. NATO has also stated that it is in favour of creating the conditions for a world without nuclear weapons, in accordance with the objectives of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). NATO's doctrine is based partly on nuclear deterrence, and indicates that it will remain a nuclear alliance as long as nuclear weapons exist.

NATO supports the mutual efforts of the US and the Russian Federation to achieve strategic stability, greater transparency and a further reduction in their nuclear arsenals. Both within the NATO alliance and at UN level, the Netherlands will work to help create the necessary conditions for disarmament and to promote discussion of the issue. We intend to take specific, pragmatic steps towards this goal. These include measures geared to greater transparency on nuclear arsenals, which we are lobbying for in NATO and in the framework of the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative (NPDI). We also hope to help foster trust (primarily through NATO) between the negotiating parties – in practice, the US and Russia.

The Netherlands will also try to stimulate debate in the context of the NPT, NPDI and NATO on the role of nuclear weapons in military doctrines and the scope for reducing their role. We are keen to see a reduction in the number of tactical nuclear weapons throughout Europe, as part of efforts towards disarmament and greater transparency and stability. Thanks partly to the Netherlands' efforts, this subject is now firmly on the international agenda, and the NATO nuclear doctrine agreed in 2012 provides a number of potential openings.

One key element is strengthening the international legal order. Besides the universalisation of the main existing treaties and agreements on disarmament and non-proliferation, starting negotiations on a treaty curbing the production of fissile material for use in explosives (Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty) is another priority for the Netherlands. We will also work to ensure that the International Atomic Energy Agency's system for safeguarding nuclear material is made more effective. The combination of a Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement with an Additional Protocol is the leading standard for the IAEA in its monitoring activities. The Netherlands is also pressing for the entry into force of the amended Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material. This has a bearing not only on non-proliferation but also on the prevention of nuclear terrorism, and is therefore also important in the context of the Netherlands' hosting the Nuclear Security Summit in 2014.

In the area of non-proliferation, Dutch efforts are aimed not only at strengthening the legal system itself, but also at enhancing enforcement and compliance. This means strengthening the organisations concerned with non-proliferation and taking rigorous action when the rules are violated (mainly by Iran and North Korea where the NPT is concerned). This is vital for the credibility of the NPT in general. The Netherlands is promoting stricter monitoring of compliance and stricter conditions for nuclear cooperation. The support the Netherlands has expressed for the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention forms part of our efforts to achieve improved enforcement of and compliance with the international system of non-proliferation of WMD. We are home to the OPCW, the organisation that oversees the correct application and enforcement of the provisions of the CWC.

Export control regimes are a key factor in preventing proliferation. The Netherlands is keen to see these regimes continually strengthened. Dutch intelligence and security services actively investigate proliferation-related activities and gather intelligence on programmes to develop WMD (and their delivery systems) in countries of concern. They also focus on curbing activities in or via the Netherlands aimed at acquiring such weapons or systems.

Although the Dutch position on European trade policy is generally geared to the greatest possible degree of free trade in accordance with common rules and the removal of tariff and non-tariff trade barriers, systematic trade controls on the export of strategic (military and dual-use) goods are unavoidable. It is in the interests both of the international legal order and of Dutch national security to ensure that such goods and technologies do not contribute to regional or internal conflicts, human rights violations or the development and production of WMD. When it comes to conventional weapons, too, the Netherlands believes that the interests of free trade must be balanced against the possible misuse of these weapons. We would therefore like to see the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) recently agreed at the UN signed and ratified as soon as possible.

Policy focus 5: Integrated approach

In many cases, restoring peace, security and the rule of law is not only a basic need for people in fragile states and countries in conflict, but is also in the interests of the Netherlands' own economy or security. There can be no development without security, or security without development. In a large number of fragile states and conflict countries the state is unwilling or unable to guarantee security, and some form of international support or intervention is needed to restore security and stability. Bringing a crisis under control with the aid of the international community is a complex business. The deployment of military resources alone is not enough.

Recent experiences in Afghanistan, Bosnia, Iraq, Kosovo and Libya have shown that intervention is effective only if the instruments of defence, diplomacy, development cooperation, the police, the justice system and trade are deployed in a coordinated fashion. Consequently, the number of players involved has also increased. What is more, experience has taught us that effective crisis management does not happen overnight. In other words, such efforts go beyond the conflict phase itself. Specific attention must be paid to prevention, reconstruction and an effective transition from acute stabilisation activities by military means to long-term stabilisation using civilian resources. Only then can we reduce the risk of a conflict flaring up again, a risk that often proves high.

One good example involves anti-piracy activities in the Gulf of Aden, which cannot be seen in isolation from the Netherlands' efforts to combat the causes of instability. The Netherlands supports economic self-sufficiency and the development of the rule of law in Somalia and the surrounding region. After all, the solution to the problem of piracy lies not at sea but on land.

These insights have led to stronger calls for cooperation and coherence in recent years. The idea that an operation will be effective only if all the individual parts of the whole are properly utilised is now widely acknowledged both nationally and internationally. The 'integrated approach', 'comprehensive approach' and '3D approach' are frequently used terms. But they are only meaningful in practice if they are applied in specific instances. The Netherlands has gained considerable knowledge and experience of taking an integrated approach to crisis management, not least in Afghanistan (Uruzgan and Kunduz) and in our active efforts in development cooperation.

For an effective approach, it is important that the Netherlands establish the best mix of diplomatic, military and development instruments on a case-by-case basis. The government has various instruments at its disposal: diplomacy and political activities, use of the armed forces and the intelligence and security services, contributions to development cooperation activities, and efforts in other areas of governance, such as the judiciary and police.

The Netherlands' network of over 100 diplomatic missions abroad has major added value, functioning as the eyes and ears of the Dutch government. The armed forces can contribute significantly to security sector reform in certain conflict regions. Similarly, Dutch police officers are increasingly providing training to help strengthen local police forces, which are often weak. In addition, the Netherlands seconds civilian experts to improve security, the rule of law and governance before, during and after crises. Robust and independent intelligence is also vital for our international security interests, whether in preventing terrorism and espionage, providing protection from cyber-attacks, assessing the intentions of certain countries or gauging the development of capacity of 'opposing forces' and the risk of proliferation of WMD. Through development cooperation, the Netherlands helps promote security and the rule of law in developing countries. This includes strengthening capable, legitimate government authorities and promoting employment and basic services. Dutch contributions

through development cooperation channels give the Netherlands a place at the table in international organisations, allowing us to represent broader Dutch interests in those forums.

An integrated approach also allows better coordination of the activities of Dutch military personnel, police officers, lawyers, businesses, civil society organisations, civilian experts and diplomats in conflict zones. This applies not only to those in the field; collaboration begins in The Hague. Government ministries coordinate their activities among themselves and with external actors such as civil society organisations. An integrated approach to planning is also needed. Joint analysis involving all relevant ministries and organisations is an important first step in the process. Once the decision has been taken to provide a contribution, it is vital to establish the baseline situation. Any plan for transferring responsibility to the local (and, where necessary, the international) community must be based on analysis and measurement. Finally, a thorough joint evaluation allows lessons to be learned and put into practice, as happened after the missions in Uruzgan and Kunduz.

The Netherlands will not necessarily deploy all the instruments at its disposal at once. Those selected will differ from one situation to another, and might concern just a single policy area. We will make human and financial resources available only where a Dutch contribution is likely to have added value. Our civilian and military instruments must be an integral part of a broader policy focused on good governance, security and development in the longer term. This approach has also been endorsed at international level. In most cases, therefore, responsibility for the integrated approach will lie with an international organisation (UN, EU, NATO) and coordination or cooperation between them will be crucial. Apart from our contribution in terms of personnel or funding, the Netherlands will also seek to exert influence over the design and implementation of international interventions, where necessary and possible providing a financial stimulus, and drawing attention (via bilateral and multilateral diplomatic channels) to the need for a coherent approach to crisis management.

The importance of the integrated approach to international crisis management operations and peace missions is also reflected in the new International Security Budget. This will be used to foster the effective and coherent deployment of military, diplomatic and development activities to help prevent conflict (or the escalation of existing conflicts) in and between countries, and to contribute to security, stability and capacity-building in those countries.

Policy focus 6: Cooperation with the private sector

Economic diplomacy, cooperation with the private sector and exchange of knowledge and skills between companies and knowledge institutions are now more important than ever in protecting the Netherlands' economic security interests.

The knowledge and technology that the private sector has at its disposal are needed to protect our digital security, for example. Cooperation between public authorities and private companies lies at the core of Dutch cyber policy. Most of our ICT infrastructure, products and services are supplied by private companies. But a safe and reliable internet is not only important to them, it is equally vital to society at large. The Netherlands therefore protects its vital infrastructure using a strategic approach based on the National Cyber Security Strategy and the recommendations of the public-private Cyber Security Council. We are also fostering operational collaboration to enhance international detection, for example, and the sharing of best practices, instruments and data with governments and private parties, including measures to bolster the operational Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT) network.

Cooperation between the public and private sectors is also important in preventing resource scarcity. It is primarily up to the private sector itself to safeguard access to raw materials. However, the government can provide support when acute problems occur. Economic diplomacy also plays an important role in this respect, not just through trade policies but also through our political and economic relations with important countries like Russia and Norway and regions like the Gulf.

If raw materials become a political issue, the Netherlands will take measures, where possible and appropriate via the EU. We will work with the EU to improve governance, stability and the investment climate in countries with large stocks of raw materials. We will also promote international transparency, including in financial matters.

When it comes to energy, the Netherlands has opted to focus first and foremost on the sustainable and responsible extraction of gas, in accordance with OECD and IEA standards, to ensure that resources are extracted in a socially and environmentally responsible manner. By working worldwide to promote the use of gas in the transition from polluting to clean energy, the Netherlands will help curb climate change. The government will also work with the private sector to stimulate the development of sustainable new technologies.

Finally, combating piracy is also a matter that concerns both the government and the private sector. Through its deployment of Vessel Protection Detachments to accompany Dutch merchant vessels, the Netherlands will continue to provide military protection in the fight against piracy, but the maritime sector must continue to live up to its responsibilities, too. Private security firms will also take on some of the work of protecting merchant vessels.

Summary / conclusions

Security cannot be taken for granted. It requires continuous effort to make a secure world possible, and thus ensure the security of the Netherlands. Economic developments and the emergence of new powers have given Asia, Latin America and Africa more influence on the world stage. Rapid technological progress, digitisation and globalisation have strengthened the ties between us. This has brought new opportunities, but also new threats. Besides traditional issues like territorial security, arms control and conflict management, the international security agenda is now also dominated by issues like cyber security, piracy, nuclear and other forms of terrorism, and security issues associated with water, raw materials and energy.

Events in the world around us have a direct impact on our own security and welfare. To safeguard our strategic interests in the face of the changes in the international context and the austerity measures the government has been forced to take, we must focus on certain issues and use our limited resources more efficiently.

This government plans to focus on the following:

- **More responsibility for Europe:** the fact that individual European countries are losing influence means that we must deepen our collaboration with our European partners, in order, among other things, to remain relevant for the US and the rest of the world. A strong EU that adds responsibility for security and defence to its remit is important for a stable international system and a strong NATO. This means there will need to be more defence cooperation with other European countries to enhance our capacity for military action and retain sufficient strike capability.

- **Greater focus on unstable regions close to Europe:** events on the external borders of the European Union have a direct impact on our own security and economic interests. Though the number of conflicts has fallen worldwide over the past two decades, the number of unstable regions surrounding Europe has in fact increased. The situations in Syria and Mali – and, more broadly, growing instability and radicalisation in the Middle East and North Africa – give cause for concern. Europe will have to take more responsibility and invest more in stability in its own neighbourhood.

- **Prevention:** prevention is better than cure, and often considerably cheaper, and security is no exception. This is obvious when it comes to matters like terrorism and arms control, but it is also essential in crisis management, conflict prevention and stewardship of natural resources. A focus on human security and respect for human rights as essential prerequisites for peace and stability is vital for the Netherlands.

- **Disarmament and arms control:** the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and missile technology is a growing cause for concern. The Netherlands will therefore have to become even more active in its efforts to strengthen the international legal framework for non-proliferation and disarmament. Our ultimate aim is to rid the world of weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons.

- **Integrated approach:** crises often have several causes. Long-term security cannot therefore be achieved at the touch of a button. The best chance of lasting success lies in the integrated deployment of the instruments at our disposal – diplomacy, development cooperation, defence, the police, the criminal justice system and trade. This idea is gaining ground in other countries and organisations, thanks partly to the Netherlands' efforts.

- **Cooperation with the private sector:** economic security is an integral part of our security policy. The Dutch private sector has eyes and ears – and also interests – throughout the world. Arrangements we make with the private sector can enhance our security. Companies' knowledge and technology are needed in order to bring a secure digital world one step closer. Cyber security is a matter for both the government and the private sector. The same applies to the security of our energy supply.

As well as these focus areas, our policy also includes a number of constants. Transatlantic cooperation remains vital for the broader security of the Netherlands. As a relatively small country with limited international influence, we will continue to work for multilateral collaboration in many other contexts and organisations. A successful security policy can be achieved only by working with other countries, international and civil society organisations and the private sector. It is clearly in our own interest to make active efforts to achieve global stability, solidarity and security, since the threats we face today have little regard for national borders or physical barriers.