

**ATA 61 General Assembly**  
**“Cooperative Security & Interconnected Threats”**  
**Palais d’Egmont, Brussels, 19 November 2015**

**The Atlantic Treaty Association - ATA** draws together political leaders, diplomats, civilian and military officers, academics, economic actors as well as young professionals and students in an effort to further the values set forth in the North Atlantic Treaty.



It believes in the values and strength of the transatlantic link as fundamental pillars for the stability of the international system. Transatlantic programs in several domains remains at the core of the ATA strategy of bridging values from both sides of the Atlantic.

Since the transformation of the global security scenario ATA is today present with cooperation programs beyond the traditional borders of the Atlantic Alliance in regions such as: North Africa and the Middle East, Central and Eastern Europe, Balkans, Caucasus and Central Asia.

ATA attach a special relevance to the programs for the new generations as an effective way to cope with long-term challenges to international peace and stability. To this end, ATA organizes a variety of activities, ranging from trainings to study visits, in close cooperation with its youth branches, the Youth Atlantic Treaty Association (YATA), Universities and High Schools.

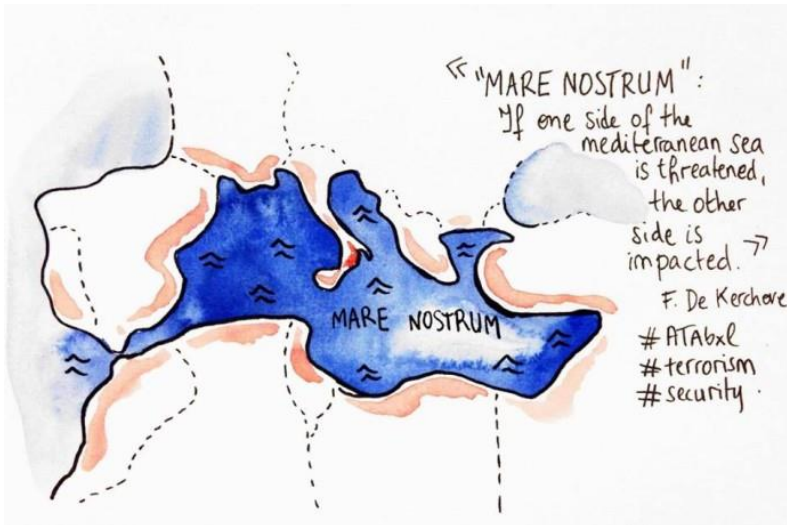
ATA is active in 37 countries across and beyond the Atlantic Alliance through its national chapters and respective youth branches, the Youth Atlantic Treaty Association (YATA). With more than 500 activities per year, ATA is able to reach out to thousands of policy and decision makers, academics, officials, militaries, economic actors, young professionals and students in the field of international relations, security, defense and foreign affairs.

The new security threats encompassing terrorism, mass migration, cyberwar and climate change, were the focus of the international conference *Cooperative Security and Interconnected Threats* organized by the Atlantic Treaty Association

(ATA) on November 19th, at Palais d'Egmont, Brussels, on the occasion of its 61st General Assembly.

The Conference featured 3 panels with several distinguished guests, Former Ministers and Members of Parliaments, Ambassadors, Representatives of NATO, Business People and Journalists.

The First Panel had to do



with the new dimensions of the fight against terrorism.

Terrorism is the main common threat to the security of the Euro-Atlantic and the Mediterranean-Gulf area. In Europe, the alert in place remains very high. Members of

terrorist networks and cells are repeatedly detained and new terror acts have been foiled. Moreover, the migrant emergency carries with it the danger of extremist militants penetrating into the European territory, compounding the thorny issue of the

“foreign fighters”. At the same time, the fight against ISIS in Syria and Iraq is at a critical juncture, although ISIS has also spread across the broader region, particularly

in Libya. The session assessed the level of the terrorist threat in the Euro-Atlantic and

Mediterranean-Gulf area. The ISIS hybrid techniques and the related countermeasures

were also examined, indicating the way forward to step up cooperation and partnership relations in the fight against terrorism.

The Second Panel had to do with enhancing capabilities and building capacities.

During the Wales Summit, NATO Heads of State and Government restated the centrality of collective defense and the relevance of the cooperative approach to security. In this framework, the security of the member countries more affected by the fallouts of the crisis in Ukraine has been strengthened, including with the set-up of the NRF “Spearhead Force” and an effective ballistic missile defense system.

New programs for partner countries have also been launched, such as the Defense Capacity Building Initiative. The exercise Trident Juncture, in Italy, Spain, and Portugal, reflects NATO's determination to successfully face the current security challenges and threats. However, the commitment of the European NATO members to meet the 2% threshold of their GDP for defense spending is essential to guarantee the interoperability in crisis management operations both among allies and with partners. Looking to the next Warsaw Summit and in a time of financial constraints and growing technology costs, to maximize synergies and bolster multinational programs and industrial cooperation are key to enhancing defense capabilities and building capacities vis-à-vis terrorism and hybrid warfare.

**Mr. Theodossis Georgiou**, the President of the Greek Association for Atlantic and European Cooperation and Former President of the Atlantic Treaty Association, attended the Atlantic Treaty Association 61 General Assembly in Brussels.



**He was invited to chair the third panel on: “Facing the non-military instability factors”.**

The panel's theme had to do with instability factors in the Mediterranean and the Middle East such as the nexus between food, water, energy and climate and the impact on socio-economic, political, and security level. The rise in energy consumption and environmental degradation, along with the world population growth, will increasingly affect the availability of resources in the upcoming future. Therefore, regional actors and international organizations are called on to increase their efforts in implementing cooperation programs and innovative solutions to prevent new food and water crisis.

Mr. Georgiou started by presenting the different sources of instability such as the food and water insecurity, the population growth and rise in energy consumption, the migrant crisis in Southern Europe, the environmental degradation as potential instability factors in the Transatlantic region and beyond and the crisis management and humanitarian relief.

He then continued on discussing the different measures in place to confront those threats and how they should be addressed such as the environment agreement (COP21) in Paris, cooperation on water security and redistribution of foods.

Discussants on the panel were: Dr. Ebtessam Al Ketbi, President, Emirates Policy Center, Mr. Fouad Makhzoumi, Executive Chairman, Future Pipe Industries, Nicola De Santis, Coordinator for Mediterranean Dialogue and Istanbul Cooperation Initiative and Mr. Thomas Eymond-Laritz, Senior Director, Head of APCO Global Solutions.

Discussants agreed that “security today is far more than a military matters. The strengthening of political consultation and economic cooperation, the development of resources, progress in education and public understanding, all these can be as important, for the protection of the security of a nation, or an alliance, as the building of a battleship or the equipping of an army”.

A renewed effort by the international organizations and their member states to enhance cooperative security in non-military fields is necessary to solve the root causes of the insecurity of the present times.



To this end, the Atlantic Treaty Association is committed to launch in 2016 a significant initiative. On the occasion of the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the “Report of the Committee of Three on Non-Military Cooperation”, ATA will promote the drafting of a new Report by a High Level Working Group, including personalities and

distinguished experts from NATO member states and partners.

The Report will bring the concepts and the recommendations crafted in 1956 by the three Foreign Ministers, Martino (IT), Lange (NW), Pearson (CA), into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The Atlantic Treaty Association will work on strengthening the “sense of community” that, according to the Report, “must bind the people as well as the institutions of the Atlantic nations”, and today it extends also to our friends of the partner countries.