

SDA EVENING DEBATE REPORT



# THE FUTURE OF MISSILE DEFENCE IN EUROPE

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SECURITY & DEFENCE AGENDA

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# The Future of Missile Defence in Europe

## Evening Debate

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## THE FUTURE OF MISSILE DEFENCE IN EUROPE

Evening Debate – Tuesday, November 3, 2009

Bibliothèque Solvay, 18:00-19:30



Ballistic missile threats have continued to grow during 2009. North Korea and Iran have both demonstrated short as well as intermediate range missiles, highlighting a potential threat to the United States and Europe.

Following the US Administration's change of policy, what is the political outlook for the new US anti-missile system, in terms of both public opinion in the US and Europe and also in light of NATO's new Strategic Concept? Is there potential for a linked missile defence system for the US and Europe, and if so, what practical steps now need to be taken?

### Moderator

**Giles Merritt**, Director, Security & Defence Agenda

### Speakers

**Robert Bell**, Senior Vice President for Science Applications International Corporation (SAIC)

**Roberto Zadra**, Deputy Head of the WMD Centre, NATO

**Jean-Pierre Maulny**, Deputy Director of Institut des Relations Internationales et Stratégiques (IRIS)

**Mira Ricardel**, Vice President for Business Development, Missile Defence Systems, The Boeing Company

**Baker Spring**, F.M. Kirby Research Fellow in National Security Policy, The Kathryn and Shelby Cullom Davis  
Institute for International Studies, The Heritage Foundation

# The Future of Missile Defence in Europe

## Evening Debate



The Security and Defence Agenda (SDA)'s Evening Debate which took place on 3 November, presented a discussion on the technical and political steps needed to build consensus on the future of missile defence in Europe. Setting the tone of the debate, moderator Giles Merritt, Director of the Security and Defence Agenda, opened by asking the panel to explain away the confusion surrounding the issue of missile defence which, due in large part to the new US administration's more tempered and multilateral approach to foreign policy, has begun to be revamped by NATO and its allies.

### PANEL DISCUSSION

Giles Merritt asserted that contrary to the previous era of 'mutually assured destruction' when escalation on both sides of the missile defence equation was more even, we are now faced with the enormous mismatch between, on the one hand, the slow-moving technical problems inherent in NATO consensus building and, on the other, the fast-moving political situation of Islamic militancy.



Robert Bell

Zadra was supported by fellow panellist **Bob Bell**, Senior Vice President at SAIC, who asked if NATO is, by definition, too slow to keep up with the necessarily fast-moving decision making process. Bell answered himself, saying that he "sees no reason why NATO can't keep up with the Obama administration." At this stage, it is still reasonable that a call for proposals be given at the 2010 NATO Summit in Lisbon and that a decision be made based on these proposals by the winter of 2011/2012.

### The Threat

Discussions about missile defence have come a long way, said **Mira Ricardel**, Vice President for Business Development of Missile Defence Systems of The Boeing Company. "Where before, the debate was about whether or not missile defence would work – and many said it wouldn't – we now find ourselves in the situation where we know it works and must turn to finding the best solutions we can bring to the table to meet the threats that



Roberto Zadra

However, the situation is not as dire as it seems at first glance, countered **Roberto Zadra**, Deputy head of NATO's WMD Centre, who went on to tell the participants that, though the discussions at the NATO Strasbourg/Kehl Summit in April 2009 did not result in any programmatic decisions about ballistic missile defence architecture, the stage is set to present recommendations on alternatives to the North Atlantic Council for consideration at the next summit and that, thanks to the Obama administration's style

and substance, plans for "missile defence in Europe are in fact speeding up."

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## Evening Debate



Mira Ricardel

are out there.” These threats are dynamic, she continued, but are being met by likewise dynamic approaches from industry, government and multi-lateral organisations.

Contributing to the participant’s understanding of the threat of ballistic missile proliferation, **Jean-Pierre Maulny**, Deputy Director of the Institut des Relations Internationales et Stratégiques (IRIS), provided three explanations as to how and why it happens.

Firstly, there is a technological reason. The progress of technology is a process of natural acceleration; even in the face of non-proliferation agreements, any country that wants a new weapons technology will eventually get it. In fact, he concluded, the only way to limit the spread of technology is to sign a treaty banning it.

Secondly, Maulny continued, there is an operational reason for the proliferation of ballistic missile systems. Development of short and medium range ballistic missiles is a way for many countries to compensate for the weakness of their combat air fleet. It is cheaper and more effective for them since defence shields against ballistic missiles are still in the development phase.

The third explanation for the proliferation is political. In this case, proliferator countries accrue ballistic missiles and the means to develop them in order to build up political deterrence capabilities. This may be seen in practice

with the current Iranian and North Korean regimes.

He concluded that, if there is a direct link between the first causes of ballistic proliferation, the third cause, which is political, is clearly decoupled from the two others. Therefore, the response to political proliferation is a political one; it mixes initiatives for greater regional stability with the formation of deterrence measures as defined by non-proliferation treaties and disarmament initiatives. In contrast, the response to the technological and operational reasons for proliferation is a military one and requires ballistic missile defence systems prepared to defend against short and medium range ballistic missiles.

In this sense, Maulny said, one must approve the Obama administration’s decision to reshape the US ballistic missile defence plans. As many commentators have said, he continued, the new US project is well-adapted to the current threat and not to a future hypothetical one. Now that the US and NATO share a clear common idea on which threats exist and how to counter them, we can discuss the future of ballistic missile defence in Europe in a concrete way, he concluded.



Jean-Pierre Maulny

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### Where does Europe fit in?

High on the agenda at this discussion was the role of Europe in the new US administration's plans. In an intervention from the audience, Patrick Lefort of EADS Astrium asked the panel a two-part question which cut right to the heart of the debate: will missile defence be provided by the US or will it be funded by Europe? Also, will it be a US-controlled system available to Europe, or be properly under NATO control?

In response to these questions, panellist Bob Bell commented that he “believe [s] that the Obama administration has made it perfectly clear that it is willing – as NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen has said – to put the new missile defence system solidly in a NATO context.” However, stating this in such a simple manner belies the difficulties inherent in making the shift to NATO control. Underlying this shift are two important issues: the question of NATO funding and the issue of NATO Command and Control structures.



**Robert Bell**

Both of these issues are related to the nature of NATO consensus building, the participants heard. To explain this, **Baker Spring**, F.M. Kirby Research Fellow in National Security Policy at the Heritage Foundation's

Kathryn and Shelby Cullom Davis Institute for International Studies, said that “the decision making process at NATO is one where you have a large number of countries that need to come together to solve a relatively complex problem in a way that is satisfactory for all the states.”



**Baker Spring**

“NATO is a 28 member organisation that makes decisions on the basis of consensus”, confirmed Jean-Pierre Maulny. “This makes some decisions difficult and must be adjusted within the future NATO strategic concept in order to be more efficient”, he continued. However, this must be handled delicately; if we interpret the rules of consensus decisions too liberally, we will see a weakening of the shared links between members and the loss of indivisibility. “We must avoid the situation of bilateral talks on this issue – which we observed with the former US administration – in favour of the multilateral format of NATO”, he concluded.

In terms of the practicalities which must be tackled to allow NATO control over this new initiative, Bob Bell asked his European co-panellists whether or not NATO member states will collectively agree to approve and, he added, pay for, the practical steps which still need to be taken. Putting a number on the cost to the 27 European members of NATO, he explained that, according to a study undertaken by the SAIC, they would be required to pay 800 million euros over 20 years from NATO common funding programs, making a total expenditure of 40 million euros a year divided amongst 27 states. Several panellists pointed out that this is a relatively small

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expenditure, considering the scale of the work to be done.



**Roberto Zadra & Robert Bell**

Bell went on to explain that the current timeline for the Active Layered Theatre Ballistic Missile Defence system (ALTBMD) plans on having US Navy-controlled AEGIS cruisers in the Mediterranean provide unilateral ballistic missile defence for Europe against Iranian short and medium range missiles beginning in 2011 and will progress to full ground-based interception capabilities (integrating the US controlled, sea-based AEGIS) by 2017 or 2018. He wondered aloud if Europe was content to allow the control of its ballistic missile defence systems to be in the hands of a US naval captain for the 6 or 7 years prior to the AEGIS integration into the ALTBMD. The alternative to this would be a NATO decision to put the development of the ALTBMD on the fast track and subsequently to reach a decision on a common funding program to sponsor it during a time when NATO common funding programs are under great stress.

Finishing his preparatory remarks, Bell included mention of Japan, one of the prominent non-NATO partners in ballistic missile defence. Japan's role, as decided by a bilateral memorandum of understanding with the US, is

to provide ICBM-capable standard missile-3 block II for the European territorial defence system slated to be in place by 2018 or 2020. If Japan's involvement in NATO's ALTBMD system will provide the missiles to defend Europe, will Europe be content both in terms of burden sharing as well as influence at the table, to contribute no upper-tier or longer range intercept systems to the architecture? Panellist Roberto Zadra called 'classic European schizophrenia' a situation where European members of NATO would desire to obtain Command and Control ownership over the missile defence system to protect their own continent from future attacks for free: if one wants ownership one has to pay for it too.

### Politics – France, Russia and Iran

Referring to a participant who wondered if France's recent return to NATO's military command meant full involvement in ballistic missile defence planning, Zadra informed those in attendance that no decisions had been taken yet but France was fully participating in the political, defence and technical discussions on missile defence in NATO.

Another important political element to territorial missile defence in Europe is the Russian Federation.

Brooks Tigner of Jane's International Defence Review, speaking from the au-



**Mira Ricardel & Roberto Zadra**

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dience, asked if Russian involvement in NATO's missile defence plans was an absolute necessity. In other words, he wanted to know, what can Russia actually bring to the table? Several answers were presented by the panel.

Mira Ricardel suggested that it would be quite beneficial to introduce the expertise of Russian aerospace engineers to the problems of missile defence. Boeing already has industrial connections with Moscow and feels that deepening these ties, albeit within certain guidelines, could only help the cause.

Zadra concurred and added that, although true that NATO doesn't necessarily need Russia to build a missile defence architecture from a technical point of view, its shared geography and political history with the rest of Europe would suggest that inclusion in missile defence would be the preferred option and hence avoid possibly alienating Russia. At this stage in international relations, it behoves all ex-Cold War countries to work together where possible.

Speaking also about Russia, Maulny said that it would be excellent if the Federation could be included in the proposed missile defence system, something that is more likely now than it was under the Bush II administration's bilateral, and often unilateral, decision making processes with regard to European territorial missile defence. "It would be the first time that Russia would be involved in security architecture at this level", he ascertained.

"The political level of US-Russian involvement is important to the reality of missile defence", added Baker

Spring. It would be a strong symbolic and actual advance in the field of international relations, though what might be more beneficial is if NATO decision making processes could be sped up, he concluded.



**Baker Spring & Jean-Pierre Maulny**

Bob Bell, in his preparatory remarks, made reference to the Obama administration's stance which links European territorial missile defence system exclusively against nuclear and ballistic missile threats from Iran, effectively saying that if the Iranian threat goes away, plans for defence might also. This stance, however, leads to the interesting question of whether or not NATO agrees with this interpretation. If this is indeed the case, he asked, who decides if negotiations with Iran have shown enough progress to warrant an outright cancellation, a suspension, or perhaps a stretching out of NATO's missile defence plan?

In short, it was agreed, on the level of political and international relations one may find as many facets with regard to missile defence as with the varied technical issues. With so many disparate elements to consider, perhaps the complexity entailed by NATO's consensus building model is well-warranted.

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### How serious is the Obama administration?

Addressing the debate, Baker Spring said that “From the [American] conservative perspective, what we are more or less worried about is whether the Obama administration is serious about the development of this system.” He went on to explain concerns that the current US administration shows signs of subordinating its missile



**Baker Spring**

defence plans to other aspects of international relations and defence initiatives. Firstly, the administration has said that it will not subordinate missile defence to its attempts to reset relations with Russia. It is very difficult to read that way, Spring said, and explained that spheres of influence are still very much in play in today’s global arena. “The Russian reaction [to the proposed instalments in Poland and the Czech Republic] was predictable”, he continued, and Obama’s move away from these instalments does not demonstrate a subordinated attitude vis-à-vis Russia’s concerns.

Furthermore, the new US administration’s stances on arms control and space disarmament both pose a threat to the continuation of the development of the proposed missile defence system. “I find it very difficult,” he said, “when I look at the administration’s ambitious arms control agenda to not arrive at the conclusion that somewhere down the road the current missile defence program that it is touting will not become a casualty.” This could come as a result of further linkages with the State-

gic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) follow-on treaty that is being currently negotiated, for example.

The importance of space capabilities was stressed as being essential for the advent of ballistic missile technology. Mira Ricardel explains: “I don’t know if people appreciate what space launch technology means. Space launch capability is essentially what one needs to launch an ICBM. After all, the Soviets went from Sputnik to ICBM in 10 months and we see now that North Korea has the same capability for space launch.” As the US has recently signed on to a negotiating agenda at the conference on disarmament for the treaty on the prevention of an arms race in outer space, Spring added, there is a danger of losing the capabilities to create the proposed fully functioning Active Layered Theatre Ballistic Missile Defence system.



**Giles Merritt**

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# SDA Highlights 2009



## SecDef'09 EU Smart Power: civ-mil cooperation International Conference

Over 250 participants and 40 speakers gathered at this annual event and voiced almost unanimous support for increased cooperation between civilian and military actors, at home and in conflict zones.

## 'Could Europe do better on pooling intelligence?' Evening Debate

Directors from the EU Joint Situation Centre, EU Satellite Centre, Europol, Interpol, and national intelligence services looked how sharing of intelligence could be improved in Europe.



## "Raising Biopreparedness report in Europe" Roundtable

Commonalities between preparing for a pandemic outbreak and a terrorist attack were examined at this roundtable bringing together public health experts and bioterrorism actors from national and international institutions.

## 'A Full an Urgent Agenda for NATO in the 21<sup>st</sup> century" – Evening Debate

The Security & Defence Agenda was pleased to welcome **Ivo Daalder**, US Ambassador to NATO, as he presented the new US priorities for transatlantic security.



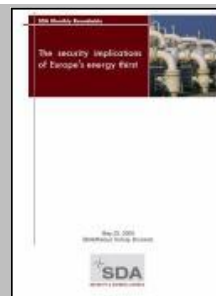
**SDA Roundtable Report**  
*Assessing the security implications of  
Balkan integration*  
March 2009



**SDA & Friends of Europe  
Strategic Dialogue Report**  
*Europe and China*  
Summer 2009



**SDA Discussion Paper**  
*Re-launching NATO, or just  
re-branding it?*  
April 2009



**SDA Roundtable Report**  
*The security implications of  
Europe's energy thirst*  
May 2009

## SDA Upcoming Events

### MEET ADMIRAL JAMES STAVRIDIS, SACEUR

December 7, 2009 – 12:30-14:00 - *Lunch Time Debate*

On Monday 7 December, the SDA will host the Supreme Allied Commander Europe, Admiral James Stavridis. He will outline his views on the enduring value of the NATO alliance, offer an update on the way the mission in Afghanistan is developing and share his thinking on the issues to be addressed from a military perspective in developing the new Strategic Concept.



### NATO, THE CREDIT CRUNCH AND THE NEW SECURITY ENVIRONMENT

December 17, 2009 – 09:00-12:30 - *International Conference*

The rise of the G20 heralds a new economic and financial architecture, even if its shape is still indistinct. If globalisation is to be reinvented, what could be the implications for international security and defence relationships? Is NATO's post-cold war transformation the right basis for its further development in the coming decade? What sort of relationship will Russia pursue towards its neighbours and NATO? Will the US and the EU split the Alliance over policy towards Russia? Can NATO and the EU reinforce each other's efforts to overhaul and strengthen global security arrangements?

### SECURITY JAM

February 4-9, 2010 - *Innovative Online Debate*

*Organised by the SDA and IBM  
With the support of the European Commission and NATO*

### The Security Jam

No one person has the solution. We all do.

The Security Jam, an innovative 5-day online event, will bring together some 10-15,000 representatives and experts from around the world in an ambitious online debate, with the aim of providing input into the strategy reviews and re-thinks being undertaken today. This is not a debate about Institutions – it is an attempt to gather for the first time concrete suggestions and input from a variety of actors (civilian, political and military) in an increasingly complex international environment.

### CULTURE AND SECURITY

March 2, 2010 – 14:00-18:30 - *International Conference*

*Organised in partnership with NATO and the British Council*

There is increasing awareness in conflict theatres that cultural understanding and the forging of new links with societal and religious leaders is crucial to the success of a mission. What should be the principal elements of cross-cultural engagement? What role for educational aid? How should the culturally sensitive issue of equal rights for women be handled by western missions? How much attention is being paid to the cultural differences and misunderstandings at the root of armed conflicts and civil unrest? Can a more sensitive approach to cultural problems be integrated into the planning and implementation of military missions, and used to cement civ-mil cooperation more effectively?



Learn more on [www.securitydefenceagenda.org](http://www.securitydefenceagenda.org)



The Security & Defence Agenda (SDA) is the only specialist Brussels-based think-tank where EU institutions, NATO, national governments, industry, specialised and international media, think tanks, academia and NGOs gather to discuss the future of European and transatlantic security and defence policies in Europe and worldwide.

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Building on the combined expertise and authority of those involved in our meetings, the SDA gives greater prominence to the complex questions of how EU and NATO policies can complement one another, and how transatlantic challenges such as terrorism and Weapons of Mass Destruction can be met.

By offering a high-level and neutral platform for debate, the SDA sets out to clarify policy positions, stimulate discussion and ensure a wider understanding of defence and security issues by the press and public opinion.

SDA Activities:

- Monthly Roundtables and Evening debates
- Press Dinners and Lunches
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