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Security in an Interconnected World

A Strategic Vision for Defence Policy

Summary

About the Netherlands Scientific Council

The Netherlands Scientific Council for Government Policy (WRR) is an independent strategic advisory body for government policy in the Netherlands. It advises the Dutch government and Parliament on long-term strategic issues that are of great importance to society. The WRR provides science-based advice aimed at opening up new perspectives and directions, changing problem definitions, setting new policy goals, investigating new resources for problemsolving, and enriching the public debate.

The studies of the WRR do not focus on one particular policy area, but on crosscutting issues that affect future policy-making in multiple domains. A long-term perspective complements day-to-day policy-making, which often concentrates on the issues that dominate today's policy agenda.

The WRR consists of a Council and an academic staff who work together closely in multidisciplinary project teams. Council members are appointed by the Crown, and hold academic chairs at universities, currently in fields as diverse as economics, sociology, law, public administration and governance, health, and water management. The WRR determines its own work programme, as well as the content of its publications. All its work is externally reviewed before publication.

The security environment in the Netherlands and the world around it has deteriorated. The shooting down of Flight MH17 over Ukraine, the influx of refugees fleeing from civil wars in the Near East and Africa, the conflict with DA'ESH in Syria and Iraq and the threat of terrorist attacks highlight the direct or indirect impact that events in numerous flashpoints around the world are having on the Netherlands.

Conflicts in other parts of the world spill over to this country, for example in the form of threats in cyberspace (hacking, disinformation). The risks associated with the return of jihadists from Syria and the tensions following the failed putsch in Turkey on 15 July 2016 and in relation to Turkey's constitutional referendum also transcend national borders. Security is no longer to be found in creating bulwarks against external aggression, but demands policies based on an understanding of the many connections between 'national' and 'international'. It is a fact of life in the world we live in.

Coherent National And International Security Policy

National and international policies, including security policy, must be coherent and complementary. The forces impacting on international relations call for a strategic analysis of the security environment on the basis of which national and international security policy and defence policy, and in particular the role of the armed forces, can be formulated. In this book, the Netherlands Scientific Council for Government Policy (WRR) outlines such a course of action and recommends that it be followed in the political decision-making process.

An effective Dutch security policy must reflect the interconnectedness of the international security environment. In the first place, this has to be boldened by the international legal order, which aims at creating a mutually respected framework of peaceful dispute resolution. The engagement of the Netherlands in multilateral organizations and treaties was and is the result of the country's commitment to strengthening the international legal order, enshrined in its Constitution (Article 90). The participation of the Netherlands in international security cooperation, both through its ongoing contribution to the implementation of Security Council resolutions and through its participation in NATO and the European Union are an essential part of this commitment.

Dutch security policy must therefore be part of North Atlantic and European security policy and of the security policy for the Caribbean region implemented in collaboration with other states – in a manner that is appropriate to this country and compatible with its strengths and capabilities. The Netherlands should pursue

that course more than ever, especially in light of the United Kingdom's announced exit from the EU and the emphatic calls by the United States for greater efforts and investments in defence.

It is of great importance for the Netherlands to continue investing in strengthening the international legal order and creating the conditions and circumstances under which countries can develop in socio-economic, constitutional and political terms. At the same time, the further development of the international legal order has to be based on robust, realistic foundations in which the security of citizens, companies and institutions takes precedence. To that end, the Netherlands must have a coherent international security policy, which includes a future-proof defence force.

Invest more in the armed forces

There have been growing calls to invest more in the armed forces in recent years. In 2014, the government announced that it would adjust the level of ambition of the armed forces and, where necessary and possible, allocate additional funds to the defence budget. At the NATO summit in Wales in September 2014, the Netherlands gave a commitment to raise defence spending closer to the NATO standard of 2% of gross domestic product (GDP) within ten years. These undertakings were confirmed at the NATO summit in Warsaw on 8 and 9 July 2016, when the Dutch government indicated that it envisaged taking further steps on the basis of a multi-year perspective, having regard to the international security environment and the budgetary.

Although the need for additional budgetary room is repeatedly stressed, a problem is that up to now the commitments have been mainly statements of intent. It is not certain that the results will prove sufficient. Nor is it clear what vision lies behind these investments. There is ground to be made up, but that has to be done with a focus, the need for which has become even more urgent in light of the deterioration in the security environment around Europe, the agreements made in Wales (2014) and Warsaw (2016) to strengthen the alliance's defence and to increase defence spending and the growing vulnerability of the Netherlands, its inhabitants and the companies and institutions established here.

In recent Dutch security policy, attention has shifted from the dynamics of the Cold War to crisis management in fragile states, human rights and development. The Ministry of Defence and the armed forces translate this orientation into a sharp focus on 'expeditionarity', with missions carried out far beyond the country's own territory being linked to the agenda for development cooperation. The experiences with these missions have not been universally positive, however, and the new threats posed by fragile states have not yet been adequately embedded in defence policy.
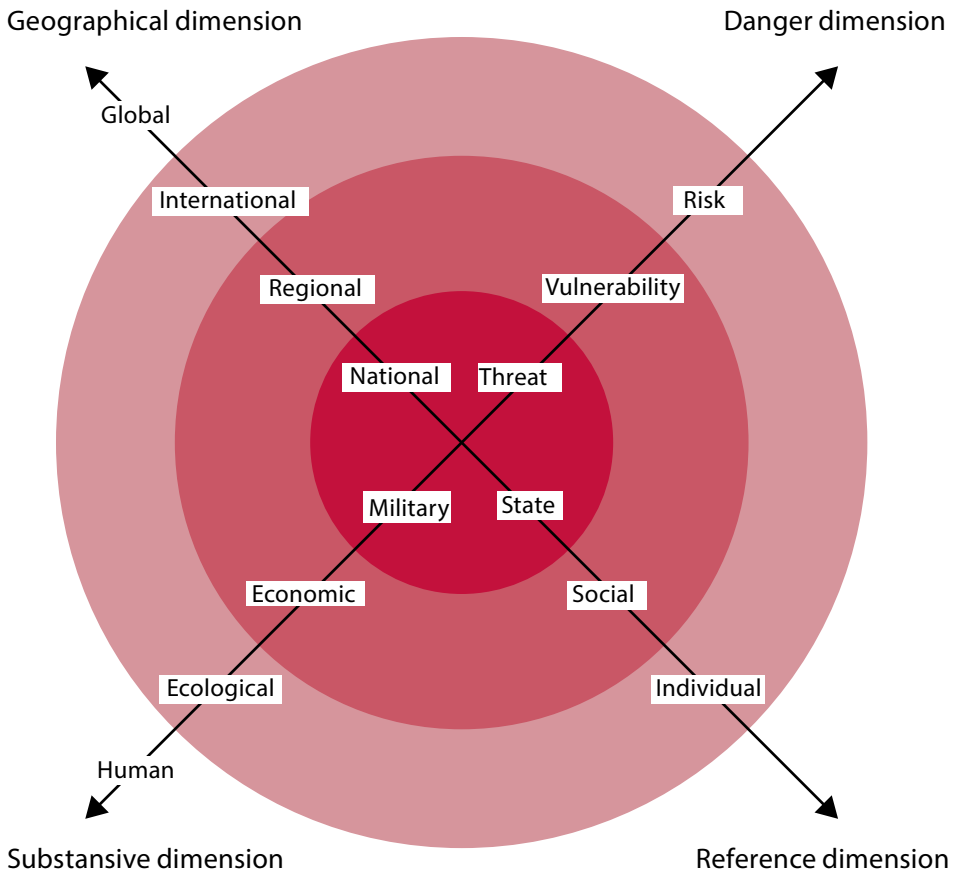
Integrated security strategy

The WRR recommends that the future development of the armed forces should
be based on an integrated security strategy that embraces internal and external
security. The strategy should be set out in a new document that builds in a coherent
fashion on the existing strategies for national and international security. Institutional
strengthening of security policy is required. A Netherlands Security Council
[Algemene Raad voor de Veiligheid] and a Security Planning and Research Agency
[Planbureau voor de Veiligheid] could further enhance the necessary strategic
planning. The Netherlands Security Council would guarantee the coherence of
security policy and at the same time reconcile the various aspects of the policy. The
Security Planning and Research Agency would support the council with its own
strategic analysis, in association with the ministries and the existing knowledge
institutes in the field of security. Like the Netherlands Environmental Assessment
Agency [Planbureau voor de Leefomgeving], a Security Planning and Research
Agency would carry out interdisciplinary research designed to modernise and
invigorate thinking about security.

A tricky concept

The classical view of security as relating to nation states and the protection of their territory still lies at the heart of thinking about national and international security. Defence in the sense of national defence is a key task of the nation state and for centuries the sovereignty of states has formed the basis of the international legal order. Today, however, security encompasses more than protecting the state's territory against military aggression by another state, as is illustrated in this figure.

Dimensions of security[1]

Geographical dimension

Danger dimension

Global

International

Regional

Risk

Vulnerability

National   Threat

Military   State

Economic

Social

Ecological

Individual

Human

Substansive dimension

Reference dimension

Source: Daase 2013: 13

[1] *Source: Daase, C. (2013) 'Von nationalen zur menschlichen Sicherheit: politische und rechtliche Konsequenzen des erweiteren Sicherheitsbegriff', pp. 11-42 in A. Fischer-Lescano and P. Mayer (eds.) Recht und politik globaler Sicherheit. Bestandaufnahme und Erklarungsansatze, Frankfurt/New-York: Campus Verlag.*

With globalisation and the emergence of new economic powers, for example, the relationship between economic and military security has become a far more prominent issue. In an interconnected world, flow security – safeguarding global flows of goods and services, infrastructural hubs and systems – is of the utmost importance. In a world of transnational connections, protecting national territory against hostile armies is not enough.

Moreover, since the 1980s, and to an even greater extent since the end of the Cold War, there has been a significant increase in concern for human rights and for economic and social development (human security). After all, physical violence is partially explained by the structural violence as a result of disadvantaged social circumstances. National and international security are therefore linked to the security of the society and the individual. The security of the nation state is not a goal in itself, but is for the benefit of the society.

Particularly since 11 September 2001, the blurring of the boundaries between internal and external security has also entered the debate about security policy with the realisation that non-state actors such as Al Qaida and Da'esh have come to form part of the landscape of security and insecurity. The sovereignty of states over their own territory only offers limited protection against transnational networks of this type. An adequate geographic concept of security encompasses both the territories defined by individual states and the networks that transcend the borders between states. It therefore is possible to place international relations in a spatial perspective, provided that, in addition to national territories (protected by the internationally recognised right of self-determination), this perspective embraces transnational connections in which non-state actors also play a major role. Transnational issues such as migration, terrorism and climate change also mean that security is increasingly a matter for regional and international communities of states, such as the EU and NATO. Dutch security policy is part of European and North Atlantic security policy, although that does not mean that the Netherlands cannot set its own priorities within the security strategies of these alliances.

How the notion of threat is interpreted has also expanded. Security policy is no longer geared solely to the specific, known threat of armed aggression by another state. Nowadays, it also encompasses anticipation of diffuse, potential threats. The rise of risk governance is part of a trend towards 'securitisation', by which we mean the enormous increase in recent years in concern for security, both in the sense of a desired situation and in the sense of policy or other activities aimed at achieving it. Diffuse vulnerabilities and risks – and the associated emotions and feelings of insecurity – can in fact give rise to conduct that in itself becomes a factor in creating insecurity.

In other words, the meaning of national and international security has changed radically. In 2017, security refers to multiple substantive domains, reference objects, levels of geographic scale and interpretations of danger. Every dimension of the concept of security has expanded 'beyond' the classical view of security as it relates

to nation states and the military protection of their territory. But that expansion is not a linear process proceeding step-by-step in a fixed sequence, but also has a non-linear dynamic. For example, the bipolar Cold War was followed by a unipolar world order, in which issues such as human security and the importance of multilateral institutions gained wider recognition, at least in many Western countries. But with the relative decline in the power of the West and the emergence of the BRICS countries – accelerated by recent developments in the belt of instability around Europe and the election of Donald Trump as president of the United States – a multipolar order now seems to be emerging in which the (collective) military defence of territorial integrity is once more growing in importance. Traditional power politics or geopolitics seem to have returned (if indeed they ever went away).

Security policy will also have to extend beyond defence policy and encompass foreign policy and development cooperation. This will inevitably also require additional investment: they go hand in hand. To establish the new focus in defence policy, and in particular the policy towards the armed forces, security policy should be built around three key concepts.

National security, flow security and human security

The first is national security. National security is sometimes a synonym for state security (the security of the principal institutions of state; in other words, the domain of the intelligence and security services), but more often the security of the nation state as a whole. External and internal threats to that security include not only disruption of the conditions under which people wish to live their lives and companies and institutions wish to carry on their activities, but also of the infrastructure and other connections on which they depend. National security is therefore explicitly not just a narrowly defined concept extending only to the country's own territory, but has to be seen in the context of an intertwined international community.

The second is flow security. It must be possible to import and export food, raw materials and other goods, as well as services, along connecting routes without disruption. The same applies for essential data traffic, which can be disrupted physically (for example, by the destruction of maritime cables) and electronically (by online manipulation, otherwise known as cyber warfare). Safeguarding those routes is what is meant by flow security.

The third concept is human security. Human security has acquired a broad definition in the thinking about development issues. The term not only embraces an individual's personal situation, but also the extent to which people can rely on vital government services and social conditions. Human security is a subject that has to be seen from an interdisciplinary perspective: anthropology, geography, psychology and law are all relevant, in addition to the theory of international relations, as well as the point of view of socio-economic conditions.

For a proper understanding of the issues facing contemporary security policy, it is useful to adopt these three concepts – national security, flow security and human security – as a prismatic lens through which to assess developments. In that way, one avoids formulating strategies that focus solely on the current well-being of a country's own population, economy and society, which might at first glance seem best served by lower government spending on defence and development cooperation, for example, even as the prerequisites for that well-being are possibly being threatened by international conflicts. Conflicts which in fact demand international action, including measures to ensure that the states belonging to the North Atlantic alliance and the EU are better equipped to protect their territorial integrity. These facets are a further indication that security policy is not confined to defence policy, but also affects foreign policy in general, and in this case development cooperation in particular.

Conclusions and recommendations

The analysis in this book leads the WRR to three main conclusions and a number of associated recommendations:

1. **The security environment in the Netherlands has deteriorated. Organise security policy accordingly.**

    *   *Recommendation 1*. Strengthen the connection between internal (national) and external (international) security policy.
    *   *Recommendation 2*. Merge the two security strategies (the National Security Strategy and the International Security Strategy).
    *   *Recommendation 3*. Establish a Netherlands Security Council, with the task of formulating the security strategy.
    *   *Recommendation 4*. Establish a Security Planning and Research Agency, with the task of assisting the Netherlands Security Council in the process of formulating the strategy.
    *   *Recommendation 5*. Invest more in knowledge creation and strategic thinking within the armed forces and elsewhere.
    *   *Recommendation 6*. Strengthen diplomacy and the network of missions abroad in order to enhance the capacity to anticipate events.

2. **Dutch defence policy should be guided by the obligations arising from the constitution and membership of alliances (NATO, EU).**

    *   *Recommendation 7*. Invest primarily in the NATO alliance.
    *   *Recommendation 8*. Invest in collaboration within Europe on the basis of the existing relationships.

3. **The decline in the capacity of the armed forces to sustain operations and the need to actively anticipate security risks demand a sharper focus and additional investment.**

    *   *Recommendation 9*. Raise spending on defence in predetermined increments to 2% of GDP, adhere to the NATO guidelines on investment and draw up a long-term plan that also covers development and preventive diplomacy.
    *   *Recommendation 10*. Improve the coherence of policy towards the new (hybrid) challenges in relation to border security, cyber security, flow security and human security.
    *   *Recommendation 11*. Continue the existing process of specialisation and supplement it with capacity for cyber warfare.
    *   *Recommendation 12*. Continue the process of 'socialisation' of the armed forces and enhance the support for civil authorities and the civil-military cooperation within a balanced and transparent security culture.

Security in an Interconnected World. A Strategic Vision for Defence Policy **follows the idea that security policy must be based on strategic analysis. Defence policy and the role of the armed forces can subsequently be determined on the grounds of said analysis. More than ever, internal and external security, and developments both in the Netherlands and abroad are interconnected.**

The world order is shifting, the cooperation within NATO and the EU is under pressure and the Dutch armed forces are gasping for breath. What is the task of Dutch security and the Defence policy? There have been growing calls in the last few years to end the devastating cuts in the defence budgets and to invest more in security.

How do we ensure that any additional funds are not divided amongst the armed forces without any sense of strategic direction? What should a future-proof security policy that plots the course of defence policy entail? What strategic analyses should lie behind the political choices that are made? This book answers these questions and offers a comprehensive framework addressing among other things human security, national security and flow security.

The publication *Security in an Interconnected World* is available via www.springer.com. For further information send an email to dijstelbloem@wrr.nl.

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