

# Alliances, Coalitions and Collaborations: New Challenges and New Competencies for Intelligence in the 21st Century

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It's a great honour to be here.

President Bush is one of the great statesmen of our time. He might have made some contributions to Texas. And to the United States. But to me, his contribution to my part of the world was far more significant.

I was born and brought up in the shadow of the evil Empire.

The westernmost position of Soviet forces on the southern shores of the Baltic Sea was well to the West of all of my country.

We were neighbors to a nervous, decaying but enormously over armed empire basing its geostrategic policies on the outright occupation of other nations.

History taught us that empires seldom disappear in a gentle way. The one way or the other, every single previous Empire with which we can compare has come down in flames.

But here, we suddenly lived through a historical miracle. Never before in human history has such a powerful empire collapsed with so little loss of human life and so little conflict.

It was certainly dangerous at times. An explosion of violence was often just below the surface.

But statesmanship in key capitals – Washington with President Bush and Bonn with Helmut Kohl first and foremost; Moscow is a somewhat different story – made it possible to manoeuvre the peaceful collapse of the decaying giant.

That statesmanship is an important part of the explanation for the historical miracle in Europe in the years immediately after 1989.

We will – Mr President – always be grateful.

The sudden peaceful collapse of the evil empire had hardly been predicted by intelligence agencies. Neither could it be derived from the historical lessons that otherwise are often so useful. Nor was it a product of a conscious policy pursued by anyone.

But if you went to the private markets in the outskirts of Moscow, the discotheques of Prague, the bars of Gdansk or the Bierstuben in Dresden you might still have gotten a feeling that something was on its way.

These were miraculous years. The peaceful reunification of Germany – grudgingly accepted in Moscow, London and Paris. The withdrawal of huge military arsenals from the outer Empire. And – perhaps particularly close to me – the reestablishment of the three Baltic nations and the withdrawal of Russian power from them, in spite of the presence of very substantial Russian populations.

But soon there were new surprises. Hardly had we celebrated a new peace in Europe when we saw the new evil of aggressive nationalism throwing the Balkans into war. Once again. Much like the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in Europe, the last decade of it was dominated by the series of wars in the ethnic, religious and cultural mosaic of this part of the post-Ottoman world.

I personally went from Prime Minister of Sweden – having brought my own country into the European Union as well as having tried to assist in all the complex issues of the transition in the Baltic region – to working for the first European Union, then the vaguely defined international community and then the Secretary General of the United Nations in this region during a number of years.

It was demanding years. I lived for more than two years next to a small mosque and its graveyard in Sarajevo.

Sometimes, I sat down and tried to discuss why we didn't know, why we did not prevent and why we did not understand. Yugoslavia was not an unknown place. Belgrade had swarmed with diplomats, spies and businessmen for decades.

But as the age of the politics of ideology had gradually been replaced by the age of the politics of identity, our old mental models of looking at the world did not apply.

Yes, people had wanted freedom from oppression by ideology. But people also wanted freedom for their identity. And as the political uncertainties mounted, they increasingly tended to define their identities in contrast to each other. Soon, history took us on a conveyor-belt to war, massive ethnic cleansing and mass murder.

Again, we had failed to listen to the gossip at the bar down by the river in Visegrad, to read the obscure émigré publications in Stockholm or follow the details of the seemingly irrelevant political trials during the waning years of the Tito regime. We might have read their history books – but we hadn't listen to how history was told by mother to daughter and father to son. And at the end, that's what really counts.

We had come to believe that history had come to an end – when in fact it was about to make a ferocious comeback.

And we struggled to deal with the consequences. We still do.

But this is not only the age of the politics of identity. It is also the age of the revolution of science and technology. And I went directly from working for the United Nations in the Balkans to trying to help with the issues of the governance of the global Internet within a body called ICANN.

It was certainly a leap from standing at the open mass graves of Srebrenica - to dealing with the security and governance of the thirteen root servers that make the global Internet function. Disconnect them, and it's the end of more things than we can even think of...

A world of both ancient hatreds and modern technology. And a world in which the greatest of dangers – as we saw on September 11 – lies in the marriage of the two.

There is no doubt that we are living in a period in which the international system is going through massive changes. Increasingly, we talk about the end of the Westphalian system of an international order of orderly states that has been more or less dominant during the last centuries.

The stability of the half-century of the Cold War wasn't always that stable – but in relation to the world of today is certainly was.

In that world, the Atlantic Alliance was the corner of deterrence and stability. We were united by the common threat.

But in this new world, that threat is gone, and the dominating agendas on the different sides of the Atlantic differ.

In Europe, the dominating agenda for a long time to come will remain the one set in 1989. Step by step, we are trying to secure the peace and increase the prosperity of a larger and larger part of our continent through the sharing of sovereignty in an evolving federation of nation states.

It is by no means an easy or straightforward process. We build not by conquering and coercing, but by convincing and co-opting. We build on proud nations with proud histories. The politics of integration has to go hand in hand with the politics of identity.

But there is no alternative.

During the last century, Europe gave the world two totalitarian ideologies and two wars that swept across the globe.

Can we prevent that for the future, and in addition perhaps give an inspiration to other efforts to bridge the gaps of identity with the structures of integration, thus promoting both peace and prosperity, it might not be that insignificant an achievement.

It might not be reported on FOX News, but I'm confident it will be recorded in the history books.

Here, on this side of the Atlantic, it's only natural that the dominating agenda is and will remain the one that was set by the attacks in 2001.

When we seek to build peace by the sharing of sovereignty, you seek to create security by asserting your sovereign rights, also on a global scale.

I genuinely believe that there is a basic understanding of this agenda of yours not only in Europe but also in many other parts of the world – but on the critically

important condition that it is not perceived as aimed at undermining the agendas that could be important for other regions, other peoples and other cultures.

And here, obviously, there is room for improvement.

The task of statesmanship is to bring the different dominating agendas of the different regions, peoples and cultures of the world together. To recognize that they are different, but to make them supportive of each other, rather than putting them in destructive contradiction.

It is obvious that the European agenda of 1989 and the US agenda of 2001 the one way or the other will have to come together in the region I prefer to refer to as the post-Ottoman region – between Bihac in Bosnia in the northwest and Basra by the Gulf in the southeast -, others like to call the Greater Middle East and Zbigniew Brzezinski recently started to call the Grand Balkans.

Your agenda of fighting immediate terrorist threats and control the spread of the technologies of mass destruction. Our agenda of structures of good governance and representative institutions that can bridge the different identities that otherwise are almost certain to tear everything apart.

What will be happening in the area my schoolbook used to call the Fertile Crescent will dictate much of the future.

In Palestine and Iraq, we have committed ourselves to two state-building projects of immense complexity and importance. And they go together. The liberation of Iraq from its past will not succeed without the liberation of Palestine from its present. If we don't succeed with both, a tactical victory in Mesopotamia will soon be transformed into a strategic defeat throughout the Muslim world. The signs so far are not only encouraging.

There are numerous lessons to be learnt from the past year in that region. I will not deal with those of intelligence itself – everyone else probably will during the coming year or so. Obviously, there are important lessons to be learnt.

But the most important of all the lessons to be learnt is probably the importance of building as broad coalitions, and establishing as fruitful cooperation, as possible. Each day that passes, that lesson becomes more obvious. A coalition to build a peace always needs to be much broader than a coalition to win a war.

I know well all the deficiencies of the machinery of the United Nations, although I blame them far more on the member states than on the dedicated individuals to be found within its ranks.

But the United Nations commands one asset that might be more powerful in the years ahead than many others.

We have seen a succession of so called Bremer plans for political transition in Iraq, ultimately resting on the powers of the United States. But at the urging of the United States, we are now all awaiting the Brahimi plan, based on a combination of the legitimacy of the United Nations and the power of the United States and its coalition partners.

Power alone is very seldom enough. Power needs to be combined with legitimacy. And building bridges of friendship and thrust and common goals across the divides of geography, cultures and political affiliations can only create legitimacy. The United Nations isn't the only way, but so far it is one of the best we have invented. It was, after all, a product of primarily US diplomacy.

But it is not only because of legitimacy that coalitions for peace always need to be much broader than coalitions for war.

I have seen in the small patches of land in the Balkans how efforts at true state-building requires resources in the form of both men and money that require the pooling of resources. And it is obvious that if the men and the money is not forthcoming, and the patience to stay the course isn't there, we are not building functioning states, but rather fragile such that are almost bound to fail the second we choose to leave. The danger – look at Kosovo! – must not be ignored. .

As we look across the globe, we see the creative destruction of economic globalisation becoming stronger and stronger, the marriage of ancient hatreds and modern technology becoming more dangerous, the rise of the politics of identity also inside our own societies becoming more challenging and the rapid growth of the urban jungles with their unemployed and despairing millions becoming more and more prominent.

And this, of course, goes hand in hand with the enormous advance of science and technology.

It is not a world that invites easy predictions about the future. Linear development there will certainly be, but the tremors we feel under our feet point more to the need to watch out for the unexpected, to widen the scope of our observations and to develop the structures of cooperation that can cope with the unexpected.

We did not see the peaceful collapse of the Soviet Union coming, and we did not anticipate the ferocity of the Balkan wars – just to mention two examples close to me.

And it does not seem likely that we will be sensationally more successful in the years to come.

Will we see the small fissures in the financial system and emerging strains in the political structures of China before there is a financial meltdown, a political fragmentation and a social upheaval of truly massive proportions – or are we certain that this will not happen?

Are we better at predicting the evolution of the tension between reform and reaction within Islam in the decades to come than we were half a millennium ago in predicting the devastating effects of the successive waves of the religious reformation on the political structures and the peace of Europe?

Do we think we can predict the strategic patience of our own democratic electorates when it comes to sustaining not over months, not even years, but more likely

decades and sometimes generations the also international efforts that are needed to make state building truly succeed? And can we predict the consequences if that patience is not there?

Can we predict the destructive powers of the creative young teenager that sits in a cellar in Nanjing, Novosibirsk or Nablus and unleashes a new Trojan War that sweeps not only the computers, but also phones and embedded chips in our increasingly inter-connected on-line world into its arch of destruction – or are we certain this will never happen?

The answer to all these questions is most probably no. No eavesdropping satellites will ever be able to give us more than fragments of facts, the evolving fractals of which will, in a way difficult to predict, make up history in the years to come.

We can see the tensions rising, the logic of the linear developments, the demands that are likely to come, but seldom very much more than that.

Once upon a time, the politics of intelligence was a much simpler affair.

In my country, we had clearly defined intelligence objectives, firmly geared to the threat that at the time was the only one, and clear structures also for international cooperation so that we got what we needed but couldn't get ourselves in exchange for what we could get but no one else really could.

It was all very secret. It was often useful in giving us a degree of reassurance we otherwise would not have had. Whether it would have stood the ultimate test we will never know – thanks God.

But now, the challenges we face are to a very large extent very different.

In Bosnia and the Balkans, it was certainly of importance to keep track of the tanks. But ethnic murder can just as well be done with an axe, houses can be blow up with old mines and families can be forces to flee just by having the media installing fear in them.

As we grapple with the challenges of fragile, failing or failed states – Yugoslavia and Afghanistan of yesterday, Haiti of today, perhaps Bolivia or Pakistan or Indonesia tomorrow - intelligence is far more about what is open than about what is secret.

To have a view of whether a state is about to descend into chaos and anarchy, or whether extremism and fundamentalism is brewing in the student dormitories of also our own countries, is not primarily a question of prying hard secrets, but about trying to analyse numerous soft developments.

The bars in Gdansk. The gossip by the bridge in Visegrad. The émigré publications. The chat rooms on the Internet. The subtle shifts in the financial markets. The graffiti on the walls. Sometimes even the songs that are sung in the bars.

And this requires collaboration beyond boundaries that many intelligence agencies have been reluctant to cross in the past.

Increasingly, the world of intelligence must be the world of truly intelligent analysis of the information that is there in our increasingly open and diverse world.

And to be that, it must reach out to society as a whole far more than has been the tradition in most countries in the past, engage with all the networks that make up our increasingly interconnected world, understand that the evolution of culture and the disputes of religions can be just as important as military doctrine and tactics and be seen as a friend of both academia and NGO's.

Only then can it provide policymakers with the analysis of options, trends, dangers and possibilities that will lead them to the shaping of the policies of global cooperation that will decrease the dangers of the bad and threatening scenarios, and hopefully increase the possibilities for the good and benevolent ones.

In this way the intelligence world can make its contribution to a better world for each and everyone.