

ISSUES

APRIL 2009 29

Quarterly published by the EU Institute for Security Studies
43 avenue du Président Wilson - 75775 Paris cedex 16 - France
Phone + 33 (0) 1 56 89 19 30 • Fax + 33 (0) 1 56 89 19 31

Editing / Layout : Sarah Crozier/ Hanno Ranck

EDITORIAL



Álvaro de Vasconcelos DIRECTOR

EUROPE'S NATO

France's return to NATO's military structures and the advent of the new Obama administration provide a chance too good to be missed to forge a truly European position on NATO – an opportunity to develop Europe's voice in NATO, forming a European political pillar.

NATO is one of the EU's taboos. Within the framework of the Atlantic Alliance, EU Member States take decisions that vitally affect the security of all Europeans, and yet such decisions are not concerted among the EU's members (unlike the established practice at the United Nations). Arguably, EU Member States' decisions in their capacity as NATO members are more likely to affect EU security options than what member countries decide at the UN. Take, for example, the impact of the debate on NATO enlargement to Ukraine or Georgia, which affects the entire eastern policy of the Union.

Of the 27 EU states, 21 belong to NATO. The relationship between the EU and NATO is governed by the so-called 'Berlin Plus' arrangements that 'provide the framework for the strategic partnership between the two organisations in crisis management', as stated in the European Security

Strategy. Whether in crisis management or other areas, the increasing overlap would seem to call for some form of commitment to inter-EU consultation and 'alignment'.

A European position on NATO could stem from some form of reinforced cooperation between the 21 EU NATO members. After the April summit, Turkey, a candidate country to the European Union, and Croatia, if admitted to NATO, should be closely associated to this. For such cooperation to be possible and credible, the difficulties that hamper EU-NATO cooperation over Cyprus and undermine the NATO mission's effectiveness must be overcome.

In the past, the 'NATO taboo' could partly be explained by a fear that European unity in the ever-sensitive area of security could have been seen as a form of antagonism by the US administrations. However, already in its later years, the Bush administration was coming to terms with the idea that European defence was more beneficial than detrimental to NATO. France's recent decision is likely to allay any residual American concerns about ESDP. The test, however, will be whether NATO's strategic concept can be brought in line

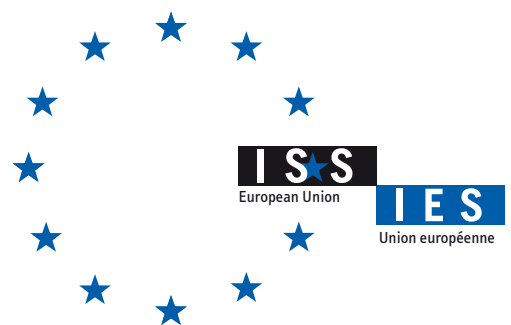
CONTENTS

EUROPE'S NATO
by Álvaro de Vasconcelos

A REVITALISED NATO IN A NEW
ATLANTIC PARTNERSHIP
by Daniel Hamilton

IRAN'S PRESIDENTIAL
ELECTIONS
by Walter Posch

www.iss.europa.eu



The European Foreign & Security Policy Institute



French Air Force base in Kandahar, Afghanistan, March 2008.

with the values and interests outlined in the European Security Strategy.

It is vital, therefore, that Europeans reach a common position on two issues: the redrafting of NATO's strategic concept; and, crucially, how to ensure that NATO will not be perceived as a coalition of the West against the Rest.

After the April summit, the NATO debate will concentrate on the changes needed to a strategic concept that dates back to 1999 and reflects the post-Balkan wars environment. There is a general sense that this is outdated, and that, as the Alliance has expanded, room has to be found in the revised strategy for not only the so-called new threats but also the concerns of newer members. There is a temptation to concentrate on soft security issues that can become a distraction from the main function of what remains (and should remain) a fundamentally military alliance. This would be harmful to the interests of European and non-European members of the Alliance alike.

In dramatically enlarging its sphere of competence and action, NATO would risk losing or weakening its primary military vocation. It is ill-adapted to dealing with, say, environmental or energy issues (except in specific tasks, such as dealing with piracy and keeping sea-lanes functional) and at times it could even be counterproductive.

Second, NATO should not prolong or promote the security-driven approach to

issues of a primarily political, economic or social nature that was dominant in the Bush years and which Obama wants to scrap. For example, already in 1999, migration or the movement of people mistakenly found its way into the risks and challenges the Alliance would seek to confront.

The securitisation of issues which are central to the global governance agenda and to the public policies of emerging powers contributes to an atmosphere of suspicion about the West's true intentions among many of the EU's most important strategic partners. The hostile international reaction to the cluster of EU security-driven measures around migration, and Brazil's sensitivity to international environmental concerns over Amazonia are but two examples of how perceptions can negatively affect cooperative relationships with the new emerging powers.

The European Union, as well the new Obama administration, should steer clear of any project of a 'league of democracies' which runs against its stated objective of forging positive strategic partnerships with major powers with the ultimate goal of shaping a world order ruled by effective multilateralism.

Both the proposal of a 'Global NATO', an idea that still has some currency in Washington, especially as a lighter form of global partnership, would be perceived as a coalition of the West against the Rest, in particular Russia and China. Any such form of 'bipolar' fracture would

not be without grave consequences for Europe and the world. This is particularly the case with respect to the EU's relations with Russia, which would find confirmation of its perceptions of NATO as a military adversary.

It is in the European interest to have a less ambitious and more restricted vision of the Alliance, one that is closer to its core issues. First of all NATO's commitment to collective security, the famous article 5 provisions, should remain credible. This is not because of the revival of a Cold War type of threat, but because it is the expression of the deep solidarity that is a factor of transatlantic – and European – unity and a powerful deterrent in the context of the uncertainties of the future.

There is no shortage of areas central to its competence and experience where NATO's specific role is crucial. A new, smart and common strategy for Afghanistan is an obvious need. NATO's role in providing the necessary military instruments must be redesigned to guarantee Afghan support. The common effort and coordination in NATO should not be jeopardised by the reinforcement of the American military effort. In turn, the EU should intensify its own efforts in the civilian area. The Alliance's continued contribution to European security in the Balkans remains vital. The wealth of accumulated experience forms a sound basis on which a renewed European and Euro-American vision for NATO's future must be built.

Many of the issues central to the world governance agenda – like energy and climate change, the protection and expansion of human rights and the spread of democracy – are equally central to the Euro-American agenda. The Euro-American *entente* should not be overshadowed by the military focus of NATO. The institutional framework of Euro-American relations including in the security arena must be wider than NATO. The Alliance should remain a fundamental but not the sole or the essential framework of relations between the EU and US, which need to find an institutional mechanism able to give continuity and substance to their relations between summits.

Ultimately, the credibility of the European voice in NATO will depend not so much on American goodwill but on the Europeans themselves, on their unity, on the coherence of their action and also on their commitment to make NATO an effective instrument for a better world.

Lessons learned & strategic thinking after the Gaza crisis

Paris, 30 March 2009

The EUISS held a meeting of its Task Force on the EU and the Middle East Peace Process, bringing together European, Israeli and Palestinian experts.

A new farewell to arms: giving purpose to disarmament in the 21st century

Paris, 23-24 March 2009

The first meeting of the Institute's Working Group on the Future of Disarmament looked at the changing security environment, and attempted to frame the emerging debate around chemical, biological and nuclear disarmament.

After the Georgia war: how to strengthen security?

Paris, 20 March 2009

The Institute's EU-Russia Task Force, a group of experts from across the EU and Russia, met to discuss the security implications of last year's Russian-Georgian war.

Indian and EU Contributions to Peace-keeping and Peace-building:

New Delhi, 24 February 2009

This roundtable, jointly organised by the EUISS and the Delhi Policy Group, looked at principles, scenarios and prospects for EU-Indian cooperation.

India and EU approaches to security

New Delhi, 23 February 2009

Organised in cooperation with the Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA), this panel discussion brought together EU representatives and Indian officials. The keynote address was given by Helga Schmid, Director of the Policy Unit of the Council of the EU.

Cyber security: what role for CFSP?

Brussels, 4 February 2009

This event was organised jointly with the General Secretariat of the Council of the EU and in cooperation with Estonia.

Cyber security was identified as a security issue in the report on the implementation of the European Security Strategy (ESS) submitted by SG/HR Javier Solana to the European Council in December 2008. The seminar's goal was to initiate a first discussion on the implications for the EU of the cyber security agenda and related threats; to raise subject awareness; and to identify a number of critical issues for the possible development of a policy under the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) that would be a part of a comprehensive approach by the EU in this area.

It was attended by more than 60 representatives from EU Member States, the EU Council Secretariat, the European Commission, the European Parliament, the EU Institute for Security Studies, research institutions and non-governmental organisations.

Barcelona 2010 Euro-Mediterranean relations - bilateral and multilateral dynamics: what synergies?

Paris, 26 January 2009

This seminar considered what relations should be established between the bilateral and multilateral dimensions of Euro-Mediterranean relations to pursue the July 2008 Paris Summit objective, and what agenda Euro-Mediterranean relations should have in the perspective of Barcelona 2010.

Eastern Chad and security

Paris, 23 January 2009

This technical workshop was organised in conjunction with the operational headquarters of EUFOR Chad/CAR. It brought together experts at a working level to exchange views on the security stakes in the region. It was attended by staff from EUFOR Chad/CAR, MINURCAT, OCHA, the European Commission, and political scientists, anthropologists, and geographers working on Eastern Chad and the Central African Republic.

Security Sector Reform in Afghanistan: the EU's contribution

Occasional Paper N°78 – 04/2009

Eva Gross

The EU engages in aspects of Security Sector Reform through EUPOL Afghanistan, the police mission launched in 2007, and through the European Commission's contributions to justice reform in the country. Based on an analysis of past efforts at police reform by the EU and other European and international actors, this paper identifies a set of internal and external coordination challenges that hamper mission success.

From Suez to Shanghai: the European Union and Eurasian maritime security

Occasional Paper N°77 – 03/2009

James Rogers

This paper examines the emerging geo-political situation in the Eurasian coastal zone, and concentrates on the geostrategic activities of China, India, Japan, Russia, South Korea and the United States. It identifies the coastal zone stretching from the Suez Canal to Shanghai - and, perhaps, as far as Seoul - as the most likely region to experience great power competition and general disorder over the coming decades. What is more, this coastal zone is of critical importance to

the European Union, not least because it is Europe's most important shipping route for manufactured goods and energy supplies.

EU support to African security architecture: funding and training components

Occasional Paper N°76 – 02/2009

Nicoletta Pirozzi

During the last few years, African countries have multiplied their efforts at consolidating regional integration and developing common mechanisms for the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts. The African Peace and Security Architecture is an emerging set of norms, structures, capacities and procedures established to help the African Union carry out peace and security tasks. This paper analyses the EU's support to this security architecture, focusing on financial and training aspects.

Les conflits soudanais à l'horizon 2011 : scénarios

Occasional Paper N°75 – 02/2009

Jean-Baptiste Bouzard

Depuis son indépendance en 1955, le Soudan a été presque continuellement le théâtre de conflits sanglants. Si les événements du Darfour ont focalisé l'attention, le sud du pays est également un lieu de tensions entre le gouvernement de Khartoum et le Mouvement populaire de Libération du Soudan (MPLS). Certaines similitudes quant à l'origine des affrontements nous ont conduits à établir une corrélation entre ces deux zones. Ce lien est inscrit dans les trois scénarios proposés concernant l'évolution possible des conflits soudanais à l'horizon 2011, date du référendum d'autodétermination prévu au Sud-Soudan.

The European Security Strategy 2003-2008: Building on common interests

Report N°5 – 02/2009

Giovanni Grevi, Damien Helly, Daniel Keohane, Álvaro de Vasconcelos, Marcin Zaborowski, foreword by Helga Schmid, edited by Álvaro de Vasconcelos

This collaborative effort of the EUISS research team highlights what it considers to be the major political event of 2009: the election of President Barack Obama and the impact that the change in the American administration will have on the world. It covers the priority areas for US-EU cooperation of global governance, climate change, disarmament and non-proliferation, Russia, Iran, Afghanistan, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and transatlantic relations.

Report launch/dialogue on the European Security Strategy

Brussels, 9 March 2009



Helga Schmid introducing the ESS report in Brussels.

The EUISS held a lunch debate to discuss its new report on the European Security Strategy. Helga Schmid of the Policy Unit of the Council of the EU, who wrote the foreword to the report, Eneko Landaburu of DG RELEX, European Commission, and EUISS Director Álvaro de Vasconcelos spoke at the event. Videos of their presentations are available on the EUISS website.

Report launch/dialogue on European perspectives on the new American foreign policy agenda

Brussels, 28 January 2009



Alan Seatter of the European Commission answers questions during the debate

MEP and Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs Jacek Saryusz-Wolski and Alan Seatter, Director at DG RELEX, European Commission spoke at the launch of the EUISS report *European Perspectives on the New American Foreign Policy Agenda*. An overview of the report was given by its co-editors Álvaro de Vasconcelos and Marcin Zaborowski.

The report was also presented at the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies in Washington DC by Marcin Zaborowski.

New Research Fellow

Walter Posch (Austria) leaves the Institute on 31 March after five years as the Research Fellow dealing with Turkey, Iran and the Gulf.

The Institute is currently in the process of recruiting a new research fellow to work on the Eastern Middle East region.

External publications

EUISS researchers have contributed to the following external publications:

Daniel Keohane, 'Fighting to find a common purpose', *E!Sharp*, March-April 2009.

Walter Posch, 'The European Union and Iran', in *Viewpoints Special Edition, The Iranian Revolution at 30* (The Middle East Institute, Washington DC, 2009), p.165.

Giovanni Grevi, 'La stratégie européenne de sécurité: un état des lieux', in Thierry Chopin, Michel Foucher (dir.), *L'état de l'Union 2009. Rapport Schuman sur l'Europe* (Editions Lignes de Repères, Paris, 2009).

Jean-Pascal Zanders, 'Research policies, biological weapon development and disarmament', in Emilio Mordini (ed.), *Ethics and Health in the Global Village: Bioethics, Globalization and Human Rights* (CIC Edizioni Internazionali: Rome, 2009), pp. 305-22.

Jean-Pascal Zanders, 'Uitdagingen voor de Chemische Wapens Conventie in het tweede decennium' [Challenges for the Chemical Weapons Convention in its Second Decennium], *VVN Wereldbeeld*, no. 1 (2009), (United Nations Association Flanders, Belgium).

Walter Posch, 'Das Erfolgsrezept der Aya-tollahs', *Die Furche*, 23 January 2009.

Álvaro de Vasconcelos, 'O fim do carácter único da Europa?', *Público*, 21 January 2009.

Álvaro de Vasconcelos, 'Bush's Dying Days in Gaza', January 2009, published in the international press through Project Syndicate.

Álvaro de Vasconcelos, 'L'Union européenne parmi les grandes puissances', in *Commentaire*, N° 124, hiver 2008-2009.

Giovanni Grevi, 'Framing the European strategic debate', *Studia Diplomatica*, Volume LXI, Issue 3, December 2008.

All EUISS publications can be downloaded from the Institute's website: www.iss.europa.eu.

Defense News

20 February 2009

Parliament Seeks Operational HQ for ESDP Missions

...Research fellow Daniel Keohane from the Paris-based [EU Institute for Security Studies](#), agreed. "It would be foolish to exclude the military option" as "the U.S. would be happy to leave the security of the EU to the EU," he said. MEPs also approved the idea of a European statute for soldiers - Synchronised Armed Forces Europe - to standardize training, equipment, medical care and social security arrangements in the event of death or injury. Keohane said this might be valuable for multinational units such as EU battlegroups or the Eurocorps, but governments would not support it for their national armed forces.

Financial Times

6 February 2009

Dutch consider staying in Afghanistan

However, the Dutch had planned to leave. Like many other Europeans, they doubt the Afghan mission will weaken global terrorism, or rid Afghanistan of corruption, drugs and Taliban violence, says Daniel Keohane, research fellow at the [European Union's Institute for Security Studies](#) in Paris.

Forbes.com

4 February 2009

Ahmadinejad's Legacy Not Worth The Fireworks

According to Walter Posch, an analyst with the [European Union Institute of Security Studies](#), Ahmadinejad will have a hard time getting re-elected when voters take to the polls in June. Although the Israeli invasion of Gaza will offer some ideological fodder to presidential candidates, it may not be enough to offset economic worries in a world of \$40 oil.

Die Presse

21 January 2009

Europa wird Obama enttäuschen

PARIS/WIEN. Kaum ein amerikanischer Präsident seit John F. Kennedy erfreut sich ähnlich hoher Beliebtheit bei den Europäern wie der aktuelle – man denke nur an die Menschenmassen während Barack Obamas Wahlkampfauftritt im Juli vor der Siegestsäule in Berlin. Doch gleich seine ersten beiden sicherheitspolitischen Wünsche an Europa dürften klar ablehnt werden, sagt Marcin Zaborowski, Experte für transatlantische Beziehungen am [EU-Institut für Sicherheitsstudien](#) in Paris, im Gespräch mit der „Presse“.



A REVITALISED NATO IN A NEW ATLANTIC PARTNERSHIP

President Obama's meetings with NATO and EU leaders in early April offer a rare opportunity to press the 'reset' button on relations between Europe and North America. They must seize the moment to recast the Atlantic partnership – in all of its dimensions – to tackle a diverse range of challenges at home and abroad.

Today's strategic environment is complex and unpredictable. North America and Europe still face the menace of terrorism and the potential for conflict between major states. Yet a host of unorthodox challenges demand our urgent attention – economic crisis; networked threats; regional conflicts with global range; environmental degradation, climate change and resource scarcities; and a Europe that is not yet whole, not yet free, and not yet at peace with itself.

These challenges require us to stretch our mutual commitment from collective defence to collective security; reposition our key institutions and mechanisms; and connect better with other partners. NATO is indispensable yet insufficient to this agenda. A revived US-EU framework is needed, anchored by a new clause of mutual assistance. New partnerships must be built through the UN and other mechanisms.

Institutions, however, cannot substitute for determination and will. Visions of a more effective partnership will be moot if allies fail to quell terrorism and turmoil in the Afghanistan-Pakistan borderlands. Threats emanating from this region present the most immediate acute danger to European and North American security. It is not a job for NATO alone. The EU is also challenged to engage on issues facing both countries.

Western coherence and effectiveness are also hampered by divisions over Russia. The West should advance a dual track strategy with Moscow that sets forth in concrete terms the potential benefits of more productive relations while making it clear that these relations cannot be based on intimidation or outdated notions of spheres of influence but rather on respect for international law, the UN Charter and the Helsinki principles.

Despite six decades of change, NATO's original three-fold purpose remains: to provide for the collective defence of its members; to institutionalise the transatlantic link; and to offer an umbrella of reassurance un-

der which European nations can focus their security concerns on common challenges rather than on each other. Yet each of these elements is being questioned today. Reaching consensus on a new long-term strategy is a high priority. Most importantly, NATO needs a new balance between missions home and away.

people, ideas, energy, money, goods and services, and the complex interdependent systems on which free societies depend. It is our complete reliance on such networks, matched with their susceptibility to catastrophic disruption, that make them such tempting targets. In the 21st century, we are called to protect our connectedness,

Copyright: CLAVIERES VIRGINIE/SIPA



US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton after informal talks at NATO Headquarters in Brussels, 5 March 2009.

At home, NATO is called to maintain deterrence and defence; support broader efforts to strengthen societal resilience against threats to the transatlantic homeland; and contribute to a Europe that truly can be whole, free and at peace.

NATO's collective defence commitment is the core of the Alliance. Yet a NATO that continues to expand without having the capabilities to defend an enlarged treaty area runs the risk of becoming a hollow alliance. Lack of confidence in NATO's fundamental commitment risks undermining a key element of NATO's purpose – preventing the kind of renationalisation of European defence and conflicting security guarantees that led Europe to disaster in the 20th century. In Strasbourg/Kehl, Alliance leaders should reaffirm their mutual defence commitment, while ensuring that it is backed up by credible solidarity and capability.

At the same time, Alliance leaders should consider the meaning of their commitment to 'ensure the security of the North Atlantic area' in light of today's challenges. What do cyber hackers, energy cartels and al-Qaeda have in common? They are networks that prey on other networks – the interconnected arteries and nodes of vulnerability that accompany the free flow of

not just our territory. Our ultimate goal should be a resilient Euro-Atlantic area of freedom, security and justice that balances mobility and civil liberties with societal security. Bilateral efforts and US-EU cooperation will be paramount. But NATO has a supporting role to play.

NATO's third home mission is to contribute to overall transatlantic efforts to consolidate democratic transformation in a Europe that is not yet whole, free and at peace. Allies should be careful not to close their door to the people of wider Europe, while at the same time working to create conditions under which the controversial and difficult question of integration can be posed more positively in the future.

Threats to allied security do not necessarily originate in the area covered by the North Atlantic Treaty. Many are non-military and asymmetric in nature. Yet they can pose a direct danger to our citizens and our societies. These threats mean that NATO also has three away missions: to engage in crisis prevention and response, including through humanitarian assistance and disaster relief; to perform stability and reconstruction operations; and to improve NATO's ability to work effectively with partners – particularly the European Union.

*This article is drawn from *Alliance Reborn: An Atlantic Compact for the 21st Century*, a February 2009 report on NATO's future by four U.S. think tanks, for which he was the lead author.



IRAN'S PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS

In June 2009 Iranians will go to the polls to elect their next president. Iran does not have stable party structures, but rather loose coalitions of individuals and interest groups. However, two main political camps can be identified, namely the so-called reformists and the non-reformists. Both justify their existence and their activities on the basis of Khomeini's Islamist ideology, their revolutionary credentials and the war record of their members.

The reformists consist of the Islamic Left, who are former radicals, and the 'technocratic' or 'modern' right, who are generally pro-free market and include the circles close to former president Rafsanjani. Their traditional opposition during the 1980s and 1990s came from the conservative bloc and its aligned clerics who block reform candidates deemed too liberal and 'western'.

Although the conservatives are still powerful, their role in politics is declining. They have not recovered from their defeat at the ballot box with Khatami's election as president in 1997 and have since turned increasingly to extremist groups to derail the reform process. In addition, they face opposition from within their own ranks in the form of a new generation of war veterans who run on a service-based and technocratic agenda, feeding on popular grievances. The elections of 2004, 2005 and 2008 demonstrate this new dynamic. In 2004, former and current Revolutionary Guards were allowed to stand for the first time, and in the following year's presidential election former Guard Ahmadinejad was elected with the support of the disaffected population. The conservative elites did not regard him as a serious politician – he was expected to win populist votes and push back reformists, but then to hand the important positions both to radical fundamentalists and conservatives.

In fact, he broadly ignored the conservatives once in power although he did have to accept some as cabinet ministers. The extent to which Ahmadinejad turned the tables can be seen in the 2008 elections where the conservatives' only choice was to block reformists and accept Ahmadinejad's lead, having no strong champion of their own.

The 2008 elections were also significant because of the crystallising of two new political currents on the right in addition to the anti-reformist conservatives and the 'modern' right reformists: the hardline United

Copyright: HASAN SARBAKHSHEAN/AP/ISIPA



Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad speaks during a ceremony to mark the 30th anniversary of the 1979 Islamic revolution.

Front of Fundamentalists (pro-Ahmadinejad) and the more moderate Broad Coalition of Fundamentalists (which attracts all anti-Ahmadinejad elements within the political right and beyond). There are thus potentially four presidential candidates from the right. Both the new movements brand themselves as 'fundamentalists' – indicating the return to the revolutionary discourse of the 1980s – and are not ideologically poles apart. The United Front seems the stronger 'party', but Ahmadinejad's personal power base is becoming increasingly centralised and strengthened.

On the reformist side, the main candidates are Mir Hossein Mussavi and Ayatollah Karrubi, now that Khatami has withdrawn from the race. Reformists have had to react to the return to ideologisation, hence the return to prominence of staunch revolutionary Mir Hossein Moussavi, who also has appeal among the disenfranchised. He underscores the reformists' revolutionary credentials, and he redefines the reform movement as a return to revolutionary values – in clear contradiction to the actual policies conducted during the two reformist Khatami presidencies.

The extremist right sees the upcoming election as a make-or-break affair, and are determined to do away with the reform movement altogether, now that they already have control of the parliament. By polarising the contest, they are also squeezing the more moderate fundamentalists. The reformists' chances of success depend solely on high voter turnout, and it is by no means certain that anti-Ahmadinejad sentiment will be enough to bring the urban liberals and Sunni minorities who supported Khatami in the past out in large numbers. Besides, Khatami knew that if he were to have won the elections, the forces that derailed the reform process in the 1990s would immediately have taken action against his presidency. The worst-case scenario would have been that violence and political pressure would have forced him to resign. Hence his stepping out of the electoral process can be interpreted as a step to improve the chances for another reformist candidate. But any reformist government would face stiff parliamentary resistance as well as possible violent resistance from shadowy groups. This would force it to enlist the help of the Higher National Security Council, which already acts as an alternative to the government, and the Supreme Leader's office, the only body with the potential to rein in Iran's radical zealots – the very two institutions whose power the reformists would like to curtail.

Yet if these problems can be managed, the reform process could resume, albeit in a watered-down version and preserving Iran's Islamist identity. On the other hand, if Ahmadinejad wins, the relatively broad scope of political participation for various ideological and political trends will be dramatically reduced as the reformists are pushed aside and, most likely, purged. This would also mean the final legitimisation of the Revolutionary Guards' control over the economy, complementing the tax-free cash cows of the 'pious' foundations and further suffocating free enterprise. Finally, it would strengthen their indirect and direct control over the executive branch. Former Guard members already control most of the parliament, are present in the government and, of course, in the Higher National Security Council. The result would be some kind of 'authoritarian normalisation'. Iran would be autocratic and unarguably post-revolutionary; the intellectual and political dynamism of Khomeini and his followers, which confounded friend and foe of the regime alike, would by then have completely vanished.