

Poland and the B61

**Theory-led Analysis of the Polish Official Position on
American Extended Nuclear Deterrence in Europe**

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Abstract

The United States continues to deploy nuclear bombs (B61) to Europe. By doing so, Washington extends its nuclear deterrence to its European NATO allies. In-between 2008-2014, NATO discussed whether it should keep or withdraw these weapons from Europe. The weapons were subject to controversy. Perceived as unnecessary remnants of the Cold War arms race by some, and as a vital part of NATO deterrence and defence strategy by others. Eventually, allies decided to leave the nuclear bombs in Europe. This work analyses the motivation behind the Polish governments' support for American extended nuclear deterrence in Europe. It aims at finding out (1) what role the B61 plays for a European NATO non-nuclear weapon state, which does not host these bombs on its territory and (2) what motivation stands behind framing it that way. I structure my argument along three main paradigms of international relations - neorealism, utilitarian liberalism and social constructivism. I examine official and expert writings as well as 25 expert interviews I have conducted with Polish diplomats, politicians, researchers, former high officials, employees at the NATO International Staff and representatives of NATO member states governments. The main finding is that the B61's role is strictly political and completely unrelated to the weapons' military potential or original purpose. From the perspective of the Polish government, the B61 serves two main roles. First, as a means to reassure continuous American engagement in Europe in response to a trust gap towards European NATO allies. Second, as a bargaining chip versus the mightier Russian arsenal of sub-strategic nuclear weapons. These findings contradict roles referred to the B61 in literature and in official documents. The central contribution to knowledge is empirical. The work provides a systematic IR theory-based qualitative exploration of extended nuclear deterrence from the perspective of a non-nuclear weapons ally. It assembles and critically assesses the literature and official statements on the B61's role. In addition, it offers an in-depth empirical exploration of the modern Polish governments' thinking on nuclear weapons policy. Finally, it contributes a comprehensive analysis of NATO decision-making process regarding its nuclear deterrence arrangement in the years 2009-2014.

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List of Abbreviations

AVDET	Aviation Detachment at Łask and Powidz
CEE	Central and Eastern Europe
CSBM	Confidence and Security Building Measures
DCA	Dual-Capable Aircraft
DDPR	Deterrence and Defence Posture Review
DOD	United States Department of Defence
ELN	European Leadership Network
EU	European Union
EPAA	United States European Phased Adaptive Approach
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HLG	NATO High Level Group
IAEA	The International Atomic Energy Agency
ICAN	International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons
INF	Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles
IP	Interview Partner
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MoD	Ministry of Defence
MP	Member of Parliament
NAC	North Atlantic Council
NATO	The North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NNWS	Non-Nuclear Weapon States
NPDI	The Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative
NPG	NATO Nuclear Planning Group
NPR	Nuclear Posture Review
NPT	Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
NRC	The NATO-Russia Council
NWS	Nuclear-Weapon States
PISM	The Polish Institute of International Affairs

PNI	Presidential Nuclear Initiatives
RUSI	The Royal United Services Institute for Defence and Security Studies
SACEUR	The Supreme Allied Commander Europe
SNOWCAT	Support of Nuclear Operations With Conventional Air Tactics
START	Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty
TCBM	Transparency and Confidence-Building Measures
TCSBM	Transparency, Confidence- and Security-Building Measures
TNW	Tactical Nuclear Weapons
UN	United Nations
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
USAF	United States Air Force
WMD	Weapons of Mass Destruction
WS3	Weapons Storage and Security System

1. Introduction and Research Outline

Two decades after the fall of the Iron Curtain, a spark of hope promised to bring us closer to a world without nuclear weapons. In the new European security environment and with new developments in international security, nuclear weapons seemed to become remnants of the past.

With his 2009 Prague speech, President Barack Obama stated: “America's commitment to seek the peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons” (White House 2009) attracting the attention of political decision-makers and the civil society worldwide. The successful ratification of the 2011 Strategic Nuclear Arms Reduction Treaty (New START) between the United States and Russia together with the attempt to reestablish relations between the West and Russia (reset), gave a new impetus to the dormant nuclear weapons debate.

With the parallel NATO discussions on its New Strategic Concept, also the long-forgotten American nuclear bombs deployed in five European NATO member states (Belgium, Germany, Italy, The Netherlands, Turkey), a holdover of the Cold War nuclear arms race, landed on the agenda.

Driven by the German call to remove all remaining American nuclear weapons from its territory, NATO members discussed the utility and role of nuclear weapons in the Alliances deterrence policy, and their relation to conventional and missile defence capabilities. However, while NATO member states widely share the vision of a world without nuclear weapons, particular governments differ in how to operationally reach this goal. Subsequently, they opposed the German pledge. Eventually, NATO decided to keep American nuclear weapons in Europe.

This work uncovers the rationality behind this decision from the perspective of one European non-nuclear weapon state in particular — Poland. In detail, it deals with the meaning attached to nuclear fusion material closed in a 3,58-m-long and 33 cm diameter metal case, officially labelled as the so-called “B61” nuclear bomb. By doing so, it focuses on the question of the weapons’ military and political utility.

It contributes to a systematic IR theory-based qualitative analysis to the vast scholarship on nuclear deterrence and the relatively less extensive scholarship on extended nuclear deterrence, which omits the perspective of non-nuclear weapons allies. This work tries to fill in this gap. It also offers an in-depth empirical exploration of the modern Polish governments' thinking on nuclear weapons and related concepts based upon interviews with political decision makers and intellectuals. The work also presents the first comprehensive report on the NATO decision-making process concerning its nuclear deterrence arrangement in the years 2008-2014.

1.1. Research puzzle

The topic is situated in the discipline of international relations and international peace and security studies as sub-disciplines of political science. It attempts to answer the central research question:

Why does the Polish government want the B61 to remain in Europe?

The research explores a protégé's core understanding of and motivation to comply with extended nuclear deterrence. In particular, it analyses the motivations for which a non-nuclear, non-host NATO member state rejects a unilateral withdrawal of the American nuclear gravity bomb (B61) from Europe. It also elaborates on the nuanced attitude towards the role of these weapons in the European security context from a protégé state's perspective.

It does so, in a narrow sense, by focusing on one case which is through one in-depth theory-guided idiographic case study analysis on Poland (Levy 2008:6). Poland serves as the case study because of its government's vocal participation in the recent NATO debate on its nuclear policy. The Polish governmental position evolved from a quiet status-quo defender, through a supporter of a bilateral Russia-United States arms control regime, to an advocate of a multilateral NATO-Russian reciprocity-based step-by-step solution aimed at the reduction of tactical nuclear weapons in Europe. For many years, however, the Kremlin has been refusing any talks on tactical nuclear weapons until the United States would withdraw its stockpiles from Europe. According to Ambassador Rolf Nickel, former German Disarmament Commissioner, the Russian condition dates back to the Cold War (Nickel 2013:2). Thus, in practice by refusing to withdraw the B61 without reciprocal steps by Russia, Poland together

with the Baltic states, Turkey, and France, hinder tangible progress towards nuclear disarmament in Europe. This is not irrelevant as all NATO member states signed and ratified the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). By doing so, they pledged to actively support nuclear disarmament. Delaying the fulfilment of this legal obligation is just another small step contributing to the erosion of the NPT regime.

Perplexingly, the Polish government aims at the retention of the B61 in Europe even though it cannot host nuclear weapons or infrastructure on its territory due to the 1997's "3xNo's" agreement. It also has no direct authority over these weapons. Even though this behaviour is not unique to the Polish government, as other states like the Baltic's have the same policy, it seems illogical. While the military utility of the B61 in plausible contingencies is perceived by some as militarily obsolete (cf. Cartwright et al. 2012:8-9; Reif/Sahay 2013), there are no "standing peacetime nuclear contingency plans or identified targets involving nuclear weapons" (GAO Report 2011:5, cf. IP 20, 27.11.2013, Kamp 2011:5), reassurance can be provided by means more relevant to the threats present at the time of writing which include terrorism, hybrid war etc. One would expect Warsaw to emphasise other instruments capable of providing reassurance, such as missile defence or conventional military forces ("boots on the ground"). The Polish government, however, defies this logic by actively resisting changes to American nuclear weapons based deterrence. At the same time, conditioning the removal of the B61 with Russian reciprocity, neither solves the problem of its relatively bigger stockpiles nor enables any practical way out of the present situation. It is also puzzling that decisions of the NATO New Strategic Concept and the Deterrence and Defence Posture Review (DDPR) did not significantly advance compliance with NPT article 6 obligation of nuclear disarmament. The recent call to leave the B61 in Europe suggests that some NATO allies envision particular roles for the B61 in the region. Unfortunately, neither the New Strategic Concept nor the DDPR indicates what role these weapons play in securing Europe or otherwise. Moreover, since tactical nuclear weapons compensate for disadvantages in conventional forces, there is no reason for NATO and the United States to keep them, as their arsenals of conventional forces are sufficient to defend the territory of the Alliance. NATO could also rely on the "United States to employ its strategic nuclear weapons to counter any use or threat of use of Russian TNWs [tactical nuclear weapons—author's note]" (Rowny 1999:29).

Moreover, it is somehow surprising that precisely the Polish government insists on a status quo rather than on nuclear disarmament in the light of its impressive historical account of denuclearisation initiatives embodied in the Cold War Rapacki Plan, Gomułka Plan and Jaruzelski Plan, all of which served as frameworks for nuclear-weapon-free zones as we know them today. Despite the change in the political regime and a clear-cut decoupling from the communist past, the motivation behind these initiatives would still be valid today, although with less urgency attached to it than during the Cold War. The material reality characterising the neighbouring environment changed in terms of the quality and quantity of tactical nuclear weapons encircling Poland but did not change the fact of their presence in its neighbourhood, with Poland trapped in-between once again. For sure the political conditions eased, gaining more predictability and cooperativeness. Nevertheless, intervals of competing interests and security competition might re-emerge in the European context. In such case, Poland could potentially again become a target and vulnerable battleground in a hypothetical intended or unintended military exchange between NATO and Russia prone to an escalation in the future. Moreover, while the Soviet Union pledged a no-first-use policy, the Russian Federation lowered the threshold for using nuclear weapons by withdrawing this commitment, successively increasing its reliance on nuclear weapons in its national security concepts, and expanding the level of training of nuclear weapons forces (Woolf 2015:19). If these arguments would not be convincing enough, the probability of using nuclear weapons is not zero (Lewis et al. 2014, cf. Schlosser 2013) and additional technical errors and human misinterpretations can even increase this probability.

Therefore, it is of vital interest to understand the logic behind the active resistance against changes to TNW-based deterrence. Working out political intentions of the Polish government in the debate over extended nuclear deterrence is thus of primary interest here. In consequence, this research is of explorative character focusing on empirical findings rather than theory testing.

In general, one can look at a nuclear bomb from two angles. First, a nuclear bomb is a weapon that causes physical, indiscriminate, irreversible damage to people, objects and the environment. It is an instrument of warfare, waiting in vaults or deployed on means of delivery for use in combat. Throughout the years, the perceived military role for American

tactical nuclear weapons spanned from deterrence by denial, deterrence by punishment, balancing superior conventional military capabilities on the battlefield and providing a potential solution to hardened targets (discussed in detail in chapter three). Second, a nuclear weapon also incorporates some political symbolism. This can range from labelling it as a means of prestige to politically tying allies together, with the second applying to the American nuclear weapons in Europe. The ambivalence of nuclear weapons interchangeably or simultaneously being a means of policy and an instrument of war, is what makes their disarmament so tricky. The work is motivated by the suspicion that the B61's primary role as a deadly military weapon is overtaken by its role to serve as a remedy for non-military concerns. In other words, that the B61 remains in Europe due to the construction of substitutional non-vital security roles for these arsenals. Using deadly weapons for non-vital purposes devalues the weapon and puts it next to other, non-deadly political bargaining chips. This, however, seems to be a risky endeavour as underestimation of a nuclear weapon's value de-actualises its original purpose and detaches it from its real potential as a militarily destructive tool the purposeful or accidental use of which would have tremendous humanitarian consequences that no state authority could handle properly (Statement 2014c).

1.2. Relevance of this work

The idea for this study is inspired by five major scientific, political and normative reasons.

First, the dissertation aims to achieve academic relevance by investigating the concept of extended nuclear deterrence from a protégé state perspective in a non-immediate-conflict situation, the combination of which has been largely neglected by the pool of scientific work. Academic literature on extended nuclear deterrence focuses on explaining the concept from the point of view of the protector and challenger, neglecting the position of the protégé state. Existing work on considerations relevant for protégé states is predominantly policy-driven. The majority of these studies was undertaken in Germany during the Cold War under constant political tension between the Eastern and Western blocs. The novelty of this study lies in the fact that it is a comprehensive, theory-guided, empirical analysis of extended nuclear deterrence from the perspective of a European protégé state.

The study focuses upon a Central and Eastern European state - Poland, that represents an under-researched variation in positions on extended nuclear deterrence. According to a Royal United Services Institute report, the Polish position is “complex and too often caricatured” (Somerville et al. 2012:2). To quote Łukasz Kulesa, a specialist at the Polish Institute of International Affairs, Central and Eastern European states’ (CEE)ⁱ “attitude towards the role of nuclear weapons and the wide issue of the NATO’s deterrence policy is varied and nuanced, and reducing them to a ‘no changes’ camp can result in the oversimplification of the picture and hampers understanding of the motive behind the organisation’s foreign and security policy” (Kulesa 2010:1). Marek Szczygieł, Deputy Director in the Security Policy Department of the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, called to “avoid oversimplification of the picture because that could hamper the proper understanding of the motives behind the positions taken by specific NATO member states” (Arms Control Association 2010c).

There are no studies on a protégé states’ longing for extended nuclear deterrence especially from an ideational perspective, as nuclear deterrence is historically a realism-based concept. It does not seem plausible to argue with prestige or “fetichism of force” (Harrington de Santana 2009:327), as these weapons do not belong to Poland. Therefore, the dissertation aims to go beyond the realism and liberalism based approaches to extended nuclear deterrence and include a non-materialist perspective.

This state partly results from the lack of literature on the Polish governments’ position on nuclear weapons-related issues. The most comprehensive publication dates back to 1980’s (Łoś-Nowak 1985). It analysed the position of the communist government and was written under the communist censorship. More recent publications present Poland in the context of other CEE’s (Kulesa 2010, 2010a, 2013). A study by the Royal United Services Institute for Defence and Security Studies is an exception (Somerville et al. 2012) but lacks a theoretical underpinning. Therefore, the dissertation aims to analyse the Polish governments’ attitude towards extended nuclear deterrence, especially the role of nuclear weapons, which often is misunderstood as homogenous in nature.

ⁱ I use here the definition of Central and Eastern European Countries (CEEs) provided by the OECD comprising Albania, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, the Slovak Republic, Slovenia, and the three Baltic States: Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.

Second, political relevance is provided by the topicality of extended nuclear deterrence. One could ask why extended nuclear deterrence still is a topical concept to discuss when the Cold War ended twenty-five years ago, and the “notion of nuclear weapons as a threat to our survival lost a good deal of force and a sense of urgency” (Delpech 2012:10).

At the time of writing, the political setting in Europe is deeply shaped by the slow dissolution of the European multilateral arms control arrangement, the lack of further nuclear disarmament negotiations, and diminishing trust in security assurances and written agreements, as well as the increase in military activity and confrontational rhetoric from beyond NATO’s Eastern border. The more Russia abstains from instruments of cooperative security – as manifested in its violation of the Memorandum on Security Assurances in connection with Ukraine's accession to the Treaty on the NPT (Budapest Memorandum) by annexing the Crimean Peninsula, its alleged violations of obligations under the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty, and its withdrawal from the Joint Consultative Group dealing with compliance with the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe – the more emphasis NATO member states will place on alliance security commitments, including an increased propensity to rely on nuclear weapons (cf. MSZ 2014a, Kamp 2015). As a result, NATO is seriously discussing options to broaden and intensify rather than to weaken cooperation within the nuclear sharing arrangement.

At the same time, the violation of the Budapest Memorandum also undermined the sole concept of security assurances. Under the memorandum, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America committed themselves to “respect the independence and sovereignty and the existing borders of Ukraine” as well as “refrain from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of Ukraine”. The security guarantees were legally unbinding, political declarations without sanctions in case of non-compliance. Despite being a very specific case, its breach damaged the credibility of negative security assurances in general and pointed the attention of security guarantee consumers to the assurances’ fragility. This, in turn, generated a debate over the need to reiterate security assurances among some NATO member states.

Moreover, an increase in threatening rhetoric, often borrowing from the nuclear vocabulary, puts the matter of nuclear weapons and deterrence back on the political agenda. As such,

nuclear weapons still, in some way, define and determine the relationship between states. Even though the immediateness of a conflict evolving into a great scale war potentially involving a nuclear exchange in Europe seems to be lower than during the Cold War, it is statistically probable. As long as nuclear weapons are still present in Europe, with deterrence as a doctrine for their application, we need to thoughtfully discuss their utility as well as risks and opportunities.

Third, a normative motivation to focus the research on protégé states is based on Scott Sagan's call to transform the nuclear disarmament efforts "from a debate among leaders in the NWS [nuclear-weapon states—author's note] to a coordinated global effort of shared responsibilities between NWS and NNWS [non-nuclear-weapons states—author's note]" (2010:2). For a long time, nuclear weapons posed an "obvious", unquestionable part of the global security equation (Wilson 2013) and an issue for the nuclear powers to deal with exclusively (Eide 2013). Along the preamble of the NPT, state parties desire

"to further the easing of international tension and the strengthening of trust between States in order to facilitate the cessation of the manufacture of nuclear weapons, the liquidation of all their existing stockpiles, and the elimination from national arsenals of nuclear weapons and the means of their delivery pursuant to a Treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control."

In its article 6 "each of the Parties of the treaty"—all NATO members included—"undertakes to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to [...] nuclear disarmament." This obligation is as much relevant to NATO protégé states without direct access to nuclear means as it is to nuclear sharing host states, protector states, and all other parties to the treaty. Although NATO states present themselves as generally pro-disarmament oriented, they show cautiousness in heading for visible changes. To strengthen protégé states' efforts in nuclear disarmament, it is inevitable to have an understanding of the way strategists and political decision-makers perceive extended nuclear deterrence, regional security risks and how they interpret the NPT norm of nuclear disarmament.

Additionally, it is inevitable to especially consider today's requirements of extended nuclear assurance in light of its future development. With decreasing nuclear arsenals and conventional involvement on the European continent together with a strengthening of the

nuclear taboo, the concept of extended nuclear deterrence and assurance may either become irrelevant or require a thorough redesigning. Taking that Washington will continue to proceed on the path to zero, it will at one point come into collision with its nuclear security guarantees and commitments (Lyon 2013:939). In search for the requirements of future conventional extended deterrence, one first needs to understand what protégé states perceive as valuable in nuclear assurance. In other words, to discuss potential alternatives to American nuclear weapons in Europe in the future, one first needs to understand the driving forces on all sides of the extended nuclear deterrence equation.

Finally, the author holds to the belief that nuclear weapons are inhumane means of power projection. As a firm believer in civilisation progress, I envision humanity that resolves conflicts without the threat of total annihilation. Nuclear weapons are unreliable due to their questioned value of changing the strategic calculus of war (Wilson 2013), contested technical and procedural reliability (Schlosser 2013) and considerations on the humanitarian consequences of their use (Statement 2014c). The author thus supports their disarmament. As the work is written in the Institute for Peace Research and Security Policy at the University of Hamburg, a strong nuclear disarmament advocate for many years, it also sticks to the beliefs presented by the disarmament community that nuclear weapons do not necessarily increase the overall security of states. More security coming from nuclear weapons is an illusory concept that has no proof in historical research (cf. Wilson 2013). On the contrary, it leads to a proliferation spiral, which diminishes the security surplus gained by acquiring nuclear weapons in the first place. Consequences of their persistent stationing on European territory also include an image downgrade for the Alliance in terms of its international credibility as a law-abiding organisation. This, in turn, weakens the credibility of NATO member states as NPT state parties demanding nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

1.3. Methodology

1.3.1. Research paradigm

This research is placed within the constructivist research paradigm. Ontologically, this means that there might be no single, objective, mind-independent reality. Epistemologically, it means that reality requires interpretation. Individuals and collective actors construct the meaning of

social reality. They fill it with significance. Consequently, the reality is experiential and context-specific. Yet it is impossible to adjudicate among these different, individual perceptions of reality. From this stance, I intend to *understand* how relevant actors in Poland construct meaning around American nuclear weapons deployed in Europe.

The constructivist research paradigm is a relevant and even necessary approach to study the utility of nuclear weapons. As means contested by some and supported by others, nuclear weapons lack an uncontroversial innate interpretation. This is strengthened by the fact that deterrence theory and a broader nuclear weapons discourse is mainly abstract in nature, what makes them even more prone to various interpretations.

By choosing the constructivist approach, I recognise that with my interpretation of that phenomena, I co-construct the meaning of nuclear weapons. Thus, to make this process as transparent and comprehensible as possible, in the following pages, I shall describe how I conducted my research in detail. I shall also discuss the choice of the constructivist research paradigm against particular methodological choices.

1.3.2. Case study approach

I use a *single, theory-guided idiographic case study*. Poland serves as the case study because of its vocal participation in the debate and the author's native comprehension of the Polish language and culture. By doing a single-case study, I aim at a detailed consideration of contextual factors and identifying unexpected aspects and left-out variables (George/Bennet 2004:19-21). The closeness of case studies to real life develops "a nuanced view of reality" and "context-dependent knowledge" as "universals cannot be found in the study of human affairs" (Flyvbjerg 2006:224-241). Constant interaction with the object of the study enables to permanently redesign and correct it from research design flaws and subjective, preconceived notions.

As a single-case researcher, I do not select a case that aspires for representativeness, sacrificing parsimony and broad applicability for the sake of greater explanatory richness. The aim of idiographic case studies is rather to understand a single case rather than using it "as a vehicle for developing broader theoretical generalisations" (Levy2008:4). I am more interested in finding the conditions under which specified outcomes occur rather than

uncovering the frequency with which those conditions and their outcomes arise (George/Bennet 2004:31). This poses a limitation of case studies as they “remain much stringer at assessing *whether* and *how* a variable mattered to the outcome than at assessing *how much* it mattered” (George/Bennet 2004:25, emphasis in original). In consequence, I do not intend to quantify the intensity of influence of different variables onto the outcome.

1.3.3. Time frame of the study

The main examination period of this study covers five years. The chosen timeframe spans from the NATO Summit in Strasbourg/Kehl in April 2009, where the Allied Heads of State and Government tasked the Secretary-General to develop a new NATO Strategic Concept. The previous document dated 1999 did not mirror the actual strategic context of the Alliance, its internal transformation after two rounds of enlargement, the comeback of France to the Alliances military structures, a new era of out-of-area military operations in Afghanistan and Iraq that shook up and divided the Alliance, controversies surrounding the US ballistic missile project forced by President Bush as well as new types of emerging threats including terrorism or activities by “rogue states”. NATO needed to redefine its purpose and its toolkit.

This opened the floor to also debate extended nuclear deterrence. Although NATO adopted the New Strategic Concept at the Lisbon Summit in November 2010, several issues of dispute among member states remained. The follow-up Deterrence and Defence Posture Review, which settled these disputes, has been officially announced in May 2012 during the NATO Summit in Chicago. Following, NATO continued intensified work in the Special Advisory and Consultation Committee on Arms Control, Disarmament, and Non-Proliferation mandated with the evaluation of possible measures that NATO might want to debate with Russia on sub-strategic nuclear weapons. The committee naturally prolonged NATO-internal discussions on extended nuclear deterrence.

The Russian annexation of Crimea in 2014, which put the existing European security structure under question, made NATO suspend its work in the committee in February 2014 and the working-level cooperation within the NATO-Russia Council in April 2014. This moment in time serves as the end of the examination period as it practically stalled any work on sub-strategic nuclear weapons for an undefined time ahead.

There is one exception to the time frame: in chapter seven devoted to extended nuclear deterrence from a constructivist perspective, I briefly date back to the Polish history and policy with nuclear weapons to explore its (dis)continuity.

1.3.4. Theoretical underpinning

This dissertation is situated in the discipline of international relations as a sub-discipline of political science. I aim to systematise the recent B61 debate along the rationality-constructivism distinction (Katzenstein et al. 1998). This is dictated by the fact that there is no benchmark on which one could work out the roles prescribed for the B61 by the Polish government.

The method applied could be classified as mirroring the method of congruence testing, as developed by Alexander L. George and Andrew Bennet (2005) and taken further by Joachim Blatter (Blatter et al. 2007). It involves testing whether empirical case data is congruent (matches) with specific predictions deduced from full-fledged theories.

As will be discussed in 1.3.5., for the purpose of this dissertation, I have conducted interviews. Taking answers as the only indication of the role of the B61, I would risk omitting important, but untold roles. Taking only roles prescribed in literature, I would risk taking those primarily mentioned by official representatives or scholars representing NWS, omitting those potentially valid for NNWS.

To control interview questions and the subsequent analysis for the possible broadest array of potential roles for the B61, I decided to arrange and/or develop them along a theoretical framework. The study combines three Western paradigms of international relations - neorealism, utilitarian liberalism and social constructivism.

The concept of extended nuclear deterrence practically invites the application of several theories. The foundations for extended nuclear deterrence can be traced back to the concept of power and military balance, which is the domain of a neorealist assessment of reality. At the same time, the practice of extended nuclear deterrence in the European context reflects its embedding within a broad context of national interests and political preferences, related to utilitarian liberalism. The recent NATO debate on its nuclear deterrence also depicts the

variety of member state positions to the B61 in Europe, inviting the application of domestic explanations. Simultaneously, extended nuclear deterrence functions as a cognitive construct. On its conceptual part, it is a very subjective and amorphous phenomenon (Perkovich et al. 2012:20). Scott Sagan summarises the complexity of issues related to nuclear weapons pointing out that,

“Nuclear weapons, like other weapons, are more than tools of national security; they are political objects of considerable importance in domestic debates and internal bureaucratic struggles and can also serve as international normative symbols of modernity and identity” (Sagan 1996-1997:55).

By doing so, I refer to a concept introduced in 2010 by Rudra Sil and Peter Katzenstein as *analytical eclecticism* (Sil/Katzenstein 2010) and further discussed as “pluralist science of IR” (Jackson 2011 chapter seven), “integrative pluralism” (Dunne et al. 2013:416-417) and “pragmatism” (Franke/Weber 2011). Analytical eclecticism is based on the belief that there is “no unique epistemological foundation to knowledge” (Gornut 2015:51). Each theoretical approach adds explanatory power, but cannot proclaim the right to the overall validity and absolute truth. Intellectual traditions based upon implacable foundations cling on preexisting epistemic convictions and certain methodological approaches, bypassing or black-boxing concepts that do not neatly fit into the model. Unfortunately, as Sil and Katzenstein argue,

“Such simplifying moves, while helpful for the purpose of generating elegant knowledge claims about particular aspects of reality, are not independently capable of generating a more comprehensive understanding of complex, multi-faceted problems that interest scholars and policymakers alike” (Sil/Katzenstein 2010a:413).

Political world problems, however, are multidimensional, which stems from the plurality of actors involved and the unremittingly changing conditions under which they interact. Reducing the search for understanding to a particular social phenomena bears the risk of omitting parameters that may be of substantive importance. Striving for a holistic approach to the analysis, I bridge different perspectives and generate a more comprehensive, “cross-epistemic” understanding of the research question. I extend my interpretation above my relevance system and strive against the tendency to confirm my preconceived notions. By choosing a “wide angle” perspective, I can work on different levels of analysis, looking at the

international system, national sub-system (the state) and even individual actor's level (the society, the government etc.).

Analytical eclecticism, while using different intellectual approaches, does not aim at adding them up into a complex unity where everything matters. Conversely, its goal is to identify the most significant factors and to find out how they interrelate with the research question (Sil/Katzenstein 2010a:414). As such, like mono-theoretical approaches, it is also based upon subjectivism in picking causal stories, but to overcome the narrow bias of unilateral approaches, it looks for multiple ways of connecting them:

“The combinatorial logic of analytic eclecticism depends not on the multiplicity of methods but on the multiplicity of connections between the different mechanisms and social processes analysed in isolation in separate research traditions” (Sil/Katzenstein 2010:11).

The broad Polish security debate is dominated by common sense realism (Czaputowicz 2012). According to Przemysław Grudziński, former Undersecretary of State in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Defence as well as ambassador in Washington (2000-2005), Polish politicians and diplomats still adhere, often unaware, to realist thinking (Grudziński 2008:8). This is why I start my analysis with neorealism, as most arguments will relate to this paradigm. Then, I progress with utilitarian liberalism and social constructivism, which emerged as responses to realism's inability to explain particular world events. Liberalism complements the neorealist perspective by opening the black box of states. Constructivism goes even further by dismissing the idea of preconceived interests and implies that the way in which states design their coexistence within anarchy is cognitively constructed and as such changeable.

The Polish leaning towards realist thinking poses an initial problem to the analysis. Mainly, because it potentially excludes a diversified discourse on the research subject from the beginning. However, a realist approach is not necessarily free of interest-driven or normative considerations (Czaputowicz 2014:29,34). At the same time, using interviews to obtain information helps in overcoming the bias as respondents will be confronted with questions not only reflecting realist thinking, but also interests and normative aspects of the research question. The bias, therefore, will mainly appear in written official documents, where it will be impossible to ask their creators of non-realist considerations underlying the documents'

development. As such, analytical eclecticism partly controls the bias, putting attention to diversification in considerations underpinning responses and their further analysis.

The theoretical underpinning might seem confusing in the light of the chosen constructivist research paradigm. Indeed, I derive arguments interpreting potential roles for nuclear weapons from ontologically and epistemologically different theories. But, how to combine a constructivist approach with, let's say, positivist realism? To solve this, I discuss material reality from the perspective of individual and collective decision-makers perceptions. The description of that physical reality serves only as the accommodation of interpretation, not as an argument in itself.

The analysis aims at understanding of how the Polish governments' rejection to unilaterally withdraw American nuclear weapons from European territory and the B61's role are determined by structural factors (distribution of power in anarchical world, power position), domestic factors (interests derived from preferences expressed by the dominant actors within the policy network) or by cognitive norms and beliefs shaping decision-making. I do not aim at adding them up into a complex unity where everything matters, but to identify the most significant factors and find out how they interrelate with the research question. I decide over which aspect is "significant" by looking whether it is a commonly expressed concern or issue, so shared by the majority of my respondents or systematically recurring in statements, documents and/or media.

Similar approaches have been undertaken by Scott Sagan and Clifton W. Sherrill in discussing nuclear weapons. The former applied a theoretical mix to undermine the mainstream conviction that nuclear proliferation results from national security considerations (Sagan 1996-1997). The latter applied a mix of theoretical paradigms to discredit the conventional assumption of Iran's motivations for a nuclear weapons program as answering "neorealist defensive concerns, but rather from offensive goals driven by domestic politics" (Sherrill 2012).

1.3.5. Empirical sample collection

I use *qualitative data* from *semi-structured interviews* with Polish diplomats, politicians, researchers and former high officials, as well as employees at the NATO International Staff

and representatives of the NATO member states governments'. Furthermore, I analyse official governmental and parliamentary documents, statistical data and WikiLeaks.

Because of lack of a public debate on extended nuclear deterrence, a discourse analysis is impossible. Due to the fact that NATO extended nuclear deterrence and the role of the American nuclear weapons in Europe is a topic surrounded by secrecy as relating to matters of national security and embedded in a lasting negotiation process within NATO during the initial phase of writing, it would be hardly possible to acquire respondents willing to undertake a standardised form of data collection, like a survey.

I use interviews, and additional written data as political decision-makers use spoken or written language to communicate the state's interests and positions to the sovereign or other parties at the international level. As extended nuclear deterrence does not embrace widespread presence in written data provided by official governmental channels or through media in Poland, interviews are the only possibility to obtain information on the political decision-makers' position, motivation and argumentation. I also use statistical data to exemplify the sovereign's collective perception of reality. WikiLeaks, which are leaked diplomatic documents verified and published online, give an additional source of information on the decision-makers position, often embracing little pathos and presenting information in a very genuine and straightforward manner.

I use expert interviews (Meuser/Nagel 1991, 2009) as it is the "individuals who act and who learn from acting; organisations are the stages where acting takes place" (Hedberg 1981:3). I also argue for the epistemological "argument from authority" (Bartelborth 1996:74) and pragmatic philosophy condition of "high probability of a true opinion" (Craig 1993:57-59). I do not search for truth in the interviews, as this is impossible to evaluate it; instead, I look rather for relevance. I am mainly communicating at the level of perceptions, and as such, I do not investigate the truthfulness of the collected information. As long as this information mirrors a common belief, a driving force for the collective entity to which the informant relates, influences the public discourse, or the decision-making process, I assume her/his words to be relevant.

To distinguish an expert, I use the definition by Bogner and Menz (2005:46). For them, an expert possesses technical, process-related or interpretative knowledge about a specific professional field. Expert knowledge reflects the character of practical know-how which integrates different and often disparate guiding principles, individual decision rules, collective orientation and social patterns of interpretation. An important attribute is an expert's ability to at least partially enforce his view by influencing or at least informing relevant decision makers.

I have prepared a list of 155 potential interviewees taking into account current and former decision-makers from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Defence, Permanent Delegation of the Republic of Poland to NATO, employees from the governmental administration; members of the Sejm and Senate who participate in the Foreign Affairs Committees, the National Defence Committees and the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, security policy experts from the National Security Bureau, the Polish Institute of International Affairs, the Euro-Atlantic Association, the Centre for International Relations, the Centre for Polish-Russian Dialogue and Understanding, the Centre for Eastern Studies, the Alexander Kwaśniewski Amicus Europae Foundation, representatives of media and academics.

Interviewees from the government could provide information on the formation of the official national position on NATO's extended nuclear deterrence. Employees within the administration could give a background picture on actors involved, politics and trade-offs of the domestic negotiation process between different instances. Former decision makers could give an assessment of the Polish governments' position on the grounds of their procedural insights and more openness to reveal information than interviewees bearing responsibility at the time of writing. Academic and think tank experts could give an insightful assessment on all these issues, as they are not bound by any information classification clause. At the same time, they may have a more objective bystander perspective. I have verified my list with Oliver Meier (SWP), Prof. Roman Kuźniar (University of Warsaw), Dr Marek Madej (University of Warsaw), Łukasz Kulesa (PISM), a former ambassador to NATO and a Member of Parliament. By doing so, I narrowed the list to 55 interviewees.

At this stage, it is of importance to signalise that the issue of extended nuclear deterrence is very narrow and specific, and as such does not attract much attention in the Polish public

debate. Quoting a former Polish high official to NATO, “extended nuclear deterrence has never been thoughtfully discussed in Poland, nobody ever dealt with its details” (IP13, 25.10.2013). At the same time, sub-strategic nuclear weapons tend to be a heavily contested issue between NATO member states. Official positions were kept secret in order not to get a disadvantage or to compromise NATO’s unity in the negotiation process. Even though I conducted my research after the New Strategic Concept and the Deterrence and Defence Posture Review were adopted, a culture of secrecy surrounding the B61 remained. Being a scholar from outside the Polish academic environment additionally could have posed an invisible barrier in acquiring information in the interview setting. Due to my native comprehension of the Polish language and culture, I exclude the possibility of any language or cultural bias.

While conducting my interviews, I constantly stayed aware of the role of the researcher in the course of qualitative research, the so-called “researcher bias”. Social characteristics of the researcher such as sex, age, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, experience (seniority), the expectations and assumptions made about him/her by the researched, the power differential are all intervening variables in the negotiation of the interview relationship (cf. Scott 1984). The gender dimension of research has been described in detail elsewhere (cf. Warren/Rasmussen 1997, Wax 1979, Golde 1986, Whitehead/Conaway 1986, Burgess 1984:90-91, Bell et al. 1993, Riessman 1987, Williams/Heikes 1993, Padfield/Procter 1996). For this dissertation, it is of importance to take into account that the field of security studies and policy in Poland is predominantly a male domain. While some interviewees seemed to treat me as an equal, academic fellow or expert, some *ex-post facto* admitted being surprised with my knowledge on the issue; others presented a more paternalistic attitude.

I encountered several difficulties not only in determining possible interview partners but also in seeking their consent to participate. From 55 interviews requested, I could win twenty-five interview partners. Even though at the time of conducting interviews, the main NATO-intern debates already passed and all political cards were played, some disagreed to participate due to the topic’s sensible nature. By way of example, despite initial informal commitments for help by a representative of the Permanent Delegation of the Republic of Poland to NATO, so the most natural interview instance, I have officially been denied an interview. I can only

assume that after conducting interviews in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Polish Delegation to NATO was advised not to talk to me.

Interviews were held between September and December 2013 in Warsaw and Brussels. All interviewees were formally invited with a letter sent by mail indicating the topic, my affiliation and curriculum vitae, motifs for my research, technical data on the interview and its content and reasons for choosing particularly that person as an interviewee. Interviews were guided along a questionnaire (*Leitfaden*) containing general and detailed questions. The questionnaire was developed throughout time and verified for consistency and comprehensiveness. Some interviewees asked a priori for the questionnaire to decide upon participation.

All but four interviews were conducted in Polish, one in German, three in English. Apart from four, all of my interview partners (IP) were Polish and male. The four remaining interviewees were seconded employees to the NATO International Staff as well as employees of the Central and Eastern European states' delegations to NATO. For a list of interview partners, please see **Appendix 1**. Seventeen interviewees allowed me to record the meeting. Except for one interview where an intern was present, all interviews were held one-to-one. The majority of interviews was held at the working place of the interviewees, two were held in a restaurant in Warsaw and the premises of the University of Warsaw. Apart from one interview, where my respondent had to take up a phone call, all lasted without external disruptions. Two allowed being openly cited. One employee of the National Security Bureau agreed to talk under full anonymity due to internal procedural inconveniences in applying for permission.

The openness with which my respondents replied varied. Representatives of the NATO International Staff were the most open discussants allowing for recording. Individual officials in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Poland and the Ministry of National Defence were very helpful as respondents. They were replying honestly and firmly while discussing my questions.

It also turned out that some interviewees dealt with the issue of extended nuclear deterrence only peripherally, but contributed to an overall evaluation of the wider security context. All interviewees but one signed a consent form in which they were again informed about the

study and could choose how I would be allowed to use the content of the interview and protect their personal data. The interviewee who did not sign the consent form asked for some minor changes in its wording, but despite repeated reminders to do so never delivered a signed copy of the changed format back. Every respondent got an additional copy of the consent form and an information flyer on the study with contact data to me and my supervisor in case of further questions, concerns or complaints related to the research. Until the text was published, no interviewee came back.

For analytical purposes, I have transcribed nine entire interviews and prepared seven written notes. I used the “f5transcript” program to transcribe these interviews, using transcription rules by Dresing and Pehl (2011) for “easy transcriptions”. This sixteen interviews will be included in the analysis. Remaining interviewees did either not provide additional information and were excluded from the analysis, or the information acquired was used primarily for background knowledge.

Apart from the interviews, I also base on official governmental, parliamentary documents, statistical data and WikiLeaks. Here, I have used an official written response of the Polish government to the interview questions. When quoted, it is labelled “Official Response.” Moreover, I mainly used statements published by the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Addresses by the Minister of Foreign Affairs on the Goals of Polish Foreign Policy, governmental documents including the Defence Strategy of the Republic of Poland, the National Security Strategy of the Republic of Poland, the Polish Foreign Policy Priority 2012-2016, working papers and statements issued at international conferences (NPT, NPDI) as well as Parliamentary Bulletins.

For statistical data, I have used the Transatlantic Trends, data from the Public Opinion Research Center (CBOS) and the Poland-Russia Social Diagnosis 2013.

I have also referred to expert literature published by the Institute for Peace Research and Security Policy at the University of Hamburg (IFSH), the Polish Institute of International Affairs (PISM), the Royal United Services Institute for Defence and Security Studies (RUSI), Federation of American Scientists (FAS), the German Institute for International and Security Affairs (SWP), the British American Security Information Council (BASIC), the Arms

Control Association (ACA), the Berlin Information Center for Transatlantic Security (BITS), the Congressional Research Service (CRS) and the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR).

This work also extensively profits from the project “Reducing the role of nuclear weapons in Europe” which was led by the Arms Control Association (ACA), the British American Security Information Council (BASIC) and the Institute for Peace Research and Security Policy at the University of Hamburg (IFSH) and supported by the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation. Within the project, valuable institutional and personal contacts have been established that enabled conducting interviews.

Moreover, participation in several expert workshops, some of which I have co-organised, provided valuable input on practical aspects of the debate. These events include the 2011 Berlin meeting on “Improving transparency on tactical nuclear weapons: Building blocks for a NATO-Russia dialogue”, the 2013 Brussels workshop on “Engaging Russia on tactical nuclear weapons: Next steps on confidence building”, the 2013 Moscow roundtable on “Prospects for Russian-US Arms Control”, the 2014 Berlin conference on “Non-Strategic Nuclear Weapons in Europe: Transparency and Confidence-Building Measures in Practice” and the 2014 Pugwash workshop in Brussels on “The Future of Nuclear Weapons in Europe”.

I presented parts of my work at several forums, including the IFSH Doctoral Colloquium, the 9th International Graduate Conference in Political Science, IR and Public Policy in 2013 in Jerusalem, during the 2013 Wege aus der Gewalt Workshop and at a 2013 DGAP Workshop.

1.3.6. Analytical method

I apply *a hermeneutic interpretation*. Hermeneutics helps to reach a nuanced understanding of meaning. I did a hermeneutic interpretation of transcribed interview data, official governmental and parliamentary documents, and WikiLeaks (US State Department diplomatic "cables"). I have structured the interpretation in a top-down approach to the theory-based hypothesis.

To find the most relevant text passages, assessing their meaning and organising them in a logical way, I used coding. Coding is the allocation of central conceptual terms to selected

text passages. Here, I applied a two-tier self-check approach. In the first step, I read the text line-by-line trying not to impose any theoretical presumptions, coding it along its content to structure the semantic meaning of the selection (“open coding”). I have tried to understand them from the position of the interviewee. In other words, I have read the text along the interpretation offered by the interviewee, so using “in vivo codes” without putting this interpretation into any theoretical corset. I believed that my interviewees, who see the reality from different perspectives, might add categories to those conceptualised by me out of theories. In the second step, I applied codes which I deduced from theory - neorealism, utilitarian liberalism and social constructivism. Here, I was looking for text selections that would fit into a theoretical concept (e.g. balancing military capability, a bargaining chip, means of alliance unity). As a validation principle, I only bring up arguments that have been present in several sources and as such appear to serve as “common beliefs”. Thoughts which did not fit into the mainstream or common belief, but are important to the debate, are distinguished as such (cf. Kruse 2011).

This insight helps in coping with the phenomenological problem of objectivity. It assumes that the researcher examines actors’ behaviour upon their perception of “objective factors”, not in terms of the objective factors shaping their behaviour (Singer 1961:86). To cope with this problem, I use analytical epistemology. While searching for an answer to my research question, I am interested in examining the actors’ behaviour upon its perception of the objective, not the objective per se.

Expert interviews aim at gaining subjective perspectives. Actors interpret the objective reality by translating it into a set of conditions they can practically act within. As such, they act according to their subjective interpretation of the objective reality. If so, their decisions are based on their “perceptions” of reality, and thus these will be the focus of my studies. Therefore, reaching the objective “truth” will be impossible. I thus aim at acquiring knowledge which is interpreted or created as the ultimate truth by my respondents. Only this truth can be logically examined. From a practical perspective, this “subjective truth” is what counts in the end in the decision making processes.

At the same time, I am fully aware of interview-related problems like my respondents’ unwillingness or inability to reflect their position, people tending to rationalise their choices

and position, unwillingness to talk about particular issues, the official discourse contradicting itself, the state discourse not always reflecting true intentions but rather constructing a kind of “social fiction” (Luhman 1990:134) through talking or even lying. The only instrument of validation is a fact-check and reality-check of information acquired. After Bartelborth, I will put my observation under a double check: how reliable the information is and how coherently this information fits into my background knowledge (1996:158).

A quantitative analysis method was excluded as it would be impossible to quantify variables like norms observation, account figures of speech or identify crucial texts. A discourse analysis was impossible due to the limited number of sources and lack of a broad discourse primarily focused on NATO extended nuclear deterrence. Process tracing was impossible as it would require having a credible insight into the political decision-making process, which would be hardly achievable for an outside researcher.

1.4. Overview of chapters

The reminder of the analysis is organised as follows. Chapter two introduces the reader to the concept of extended nuclear deterrence. It aims at visualising its complexity - the concept of extended nuclear deterrence is based upon material reality, but functioning in the psychological (immaterial, contextual) dimension. The chapter starts with allocating extended deterrence in the broad spectrum of deterrence and reassurance concepts. It outlines the conceptual development of deterrence theory (the four “waves”) and finishes with pointing to the gap of how scientific literature addresses the protégé states’ perspective on extended nuclear deterrence.

Chapter three aims to familiarise the reader with the concept of tactical nuclear weapons and informs on the actual status of their deployment in Europe, which creates the material basis for this dissertation. It introduces the problem of defining tactical nuclear weapons and clarifies variations in terminology. Furthermore, it demonstrates American and Russian arsenals of tactical nuclear weapons, so those most relevant to the recent debate.

Chapter four presents the development of the discussions on NATO nuclear deterrence between 2008-2014. It points to the complexity of this process, which results from the variation in member states positions and the art of consensus-based decision-making in

NATO. The chapter starts with a background on the origin and the broader international context in which NATO discussed American nuclear forces deployed in Europe. It describes the wave of op-eds supporting a world without nuclear weapons published by high-level officials around the world, President Barack Obama's 2009 "Prague agenda", the 2009 U.S. Nuclear Posture Review process, the tactical nuclear weapons place at the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons as well as at the New START Treaty negotiations and ratification process. I distinguish relevant state-level NATO interest groups and brief the reader on differences in members' national positions. I document the course and dynamics of the intra-alliance negotiations as well as individual NATO member states activities. Finally, I separately summarise the Polish governments' position on the Alliances extended nuclear deterrence policy.

Chapter five analyses the Polish governments' position on extended nuclear deterrence through the prism of neorealism. I start with a summary of the neorealist basic assumptions. Next, I describe how neorealism conceptualises nuclear weapons and deterrence. Following that, I frame the recent debate on American nuclear weapons in Europe into the reality of neorealism by analysing the B61 as a means of deterrence and reassurance. To do so, I look at the material power position of Poland - also as part of Central and Eastern Europe as well as NATO, compared to Russia and the United States. Because power position is a relevant factor only under a specific threat perception, I further discuss the power equation from the point of the political and social threat assessments. Finally, I point to the Polish considerations related to the "small-state dilemma" and remind of Polish experiences with military alliances.

Chapter six analyses the Polish governments' position on extended nuclear deterrence based upon American sub-strategic nuclear weapons in Europe through the prism of utilitarian liberalism. I begin by outlining the main presumptions of the utilitarian liberal view of states international behaviour. Then, I analyse how liberal literature frames the discussion on nuclear weapons to eventually put attention on the aspect of particular interests. In the next step, I describe the domestic setting of Polish policy-making to identify the main participants of the B61 discussion. Following that, I analyse the involvement and particular interests of individual actors in the NATO extended nuclear deterrence debate and nuclear sharing mission, including the government, the parliament, the president, the military, the expert

community and public opinion. From this, I deduce and discuss the Polish governments' possible motivations to keep the B61 in Europe as follows: (1) the B61 as a bargaining chip, (2) a means to maintain bureaucratic privileges, (3) a means to sustain military privileges, (4) a factor influencing NATO cohesion and unity, (5) a means of subsisting the transatlantic tie, as well as (6) the irreversibility of its withdrawal.

Chapter seven evaluates the Polish governments' stance on NATO nuclear deterrence and the B61's role through the prism of social constructivism. It starts with an introduction to the constructivists' understanding of state behaviour and its approach to nuclear weapons. In the next step, using the concept of norms, I trace the Polish governments' historical attitude towards nuclear weapons and its influence on the current debate. Finally, I look at the governments' present standing on global zero, nuclear disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation and the use of nuclear weapons, trying to relate them to the Polish official standing on the B61.

This dissertation concludes by offering general findings on the motivations of the Polish governments' preference to remain the B61 in Europe and the anticipated role of these weapons. I then discuss the findings from the perspective of extended nuclear deterrence theory. Further, I conclude on whether the B61 plays a military and/or political function, which is a fundamental issue from the point of view of nuclear disarmament. Next, I analyse these outcomes in the context of the European security environment after 2014, discuss nuclear weapons policy implications of the change in the NATO-Russian relations following the annexation of Crimea and breaking the commonly negotiated rules of mutual coexistence. I also give recommendations on actions that may change the Polish position on the B61 in the future. Subsequently, the chapter discusses the dissertation's main contribution to knowledge, assesses the methodological framework, and looks at the researches limitations and my attempts to control them. The chapter finishes with ideas for further studies.

2. Conceptualising Extended Nuclear Deterrence

This chapter aims at visualising the complexity of the concept underlining the B61 presence in Europe. Its goal is to depict the entanglement of material and immaterial elements that constitute extended nuclear deterrence. By doing so, I aim to present that extended nuclear deterrence is not merely an issue of material capabilities, but also of cognitive aspects intertwined and sometimes hard to be clearly separated from the former. It is not a obvious concept - neither easily grasped, nor measured. As extended nuclear deterrence was born out of the notion of deterrence, I first clarify variations in terminology. Next, I put my attention on the main trademark of extended deterrence - reassurance. Then, I briefly summarise literature on four waves of deterrence theory. Finally, I outline how scientific literature frames protégé states in the context of extended nuclear deterrence to show the gap which this dissertation aims to fill in.

2.1. Ambivalence of nuclear weapons

The main peculiarity of nuclear weapons is the ambivalence about the role they play. In the first instance, nuclear weapons are military instruments capable of causing indiscriminate, irreversible and long-lasting damage. The scale of harm these weapons can cause detaches them from conventional armaments. As tactical nuclear weapons have never been used in combat, their role exists exclusively on paper and in the cognitive sphere of debating possibilities for their use.

In this dissertation, the military role of nuclear weapons means its real, potential use in counter-force (against assets with military value, e.g. specific weapons and military infrastructure) or counter-value (against valuable assets not being a military threat, e.g. cities and civilian populations) operations.

Apart from being a means of warfare, they simultaneously or interchangeably embody a set of political symbolism many decision-makers believe in or, as Ward Wilson who researches into the foundations of nuclear weapons thinking would argue, they were socialised to believe in (Wilson 2008). An idea thoroughly discussed by Anne Harrington de Santana (2009:327) who concludes that the potential and value we attach to nuclear weapons does not result from their

explosive capability (the power of force), but from the fact that we “treat them as powerful” (the power of threat).

Being available to a narrow elite of rich players, they serve the perception of a distinguishing status factor, a means of prestige (Beaton/Maddox 1962, Greenwood et al. 1977, Sagan 1996-1997, Frey 2006, O’Neill 2006, Spagnuolo 2011:3, cf. Fitzpatrick 2011:60) or a “mature expression of the fetishism of force” (Harrington de Santana 2009). Yet, in an alliance context, nuclear weapons are perceived to be intertwined in a complex organism bonding the defender with its allies, creating a trust relation, establishing frameworks for intensified cooperation, risk sharing etc.

These non-military traits of nuclear weapons result out of two aspects. First, the socialised interpretation of the nuclear weapons decisive role in coercing Japan into surrender makes us believe that the weapon is a game-changer (Wilson 2008). Second, a lack of sufficient historical cases of nuclear weapons use pushes us to conceptualise them in abstract frames (Kahn 1965:134).

As such, historically, nuclear weapons were always a subject for interpretation. Consequently, also NATO allies interpret several roles into American nuclear weapons deployed in Europe. This set of believed roles formed itself throughout history and it continues to heavily shape the present debate. Two roles are prominent in scholarly literature – deterrence and reassurance.

2.2. Problematising deterrence

Nuclear deterrence has been singled out to be the “class of events” on which the study will focus. While the phenomenon of “extended nuclear deterrence” has been chosen as an aspect to be assessed in detail (Bennett/George 2005:54).

2.2.1. Deterrence

In pursuit of national security, some states choose to rely on a threat-based strategy to defend their interests. In its dictionary definition, deterrence means “the creation of military threats to prevent another actor from taking particular actions” (Buzan/Herring 1998:158). The US

Department of Defence defines it as the “prevention of action by the existence of a credible threat of unacceptable counteraction and/or belief that the cost of action outweighs the perceived benefits” (Department of Defence 2010:73). The NATO-Russia Council Glossary describes deterrence as “the convincing of a potential aggressor that the consequences of coercion or armed conflict would outweigh the potential gains because of the overt threat of retaliation” (NRC 2011:107).

We distinguish two forms of deterrence: by punishment and by denial. In both cases, nuclear weapons function as military weapons which can be used at one point.

2.2.2. Deterrence by punishment

The essence of deterrence by punishment is “dissuading someone from an action by frightening that person with the consequences of the action” (Waltz 1990:732). In its simplest form, it is “an attempt by party A to prevent party B from undertaking a course of action which A regards as undesirable, by threatening to inflict unacceptable costs upon B in the event that the action is taken” (Williams 1975:67). Deterrence by punishment can include both counterforce and counter-value targeting. The threat of punishment, however, needs to be distinguished from the notion of defence. Defence is applied after deterrence failed.

Deterrence by punishment achieved higher regard with the development of nuclear weapons, which were perceived to make the threat of the punishment credible due to their destructiveness. A tremendous conventional effort is required to hurt the enemy the way nuclear forces do (Posen 1991:219-222). After Jervis, “although deterrence does not require nuclear weapons, their existence makes it easier to grasp the basic ideas. When weapons cannot be used for defence, the mind is quicker to search for their alternatives uses” (Jervis 1979:290).

2.2.3. Deterrence by denial

In its simplest form, deterrence by denial means preventing an opponent from launching an attack by denying that the attack will be successful, so by frustrating the adversaries objective (Snyder 1959, 1961). The denial can take a form of a fortification, counter-capabilities,

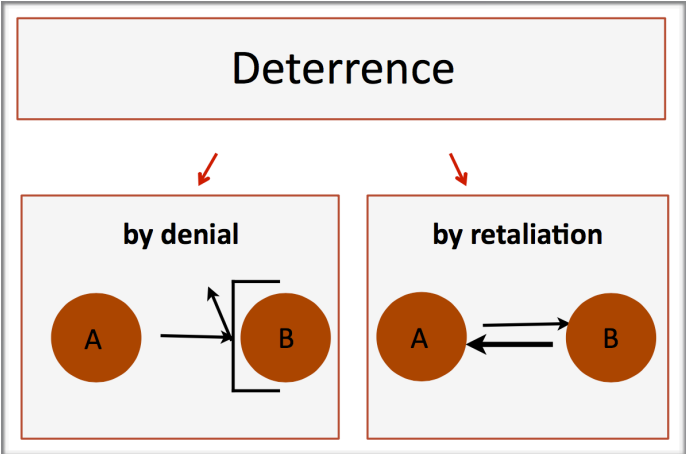
firewall, first-strike capabilities etc. Deterrence by denial requires survivability and redundancy. It mainly includes counterforce targeting and civil defence to protect populations.

It may be used as “an extra deterrent to supplement and complement the threat of nuclear punishment” (Snyder 1959:38). In some circumstances, it also might attenuate particular political or strategic credibility problems related to extended deterrence (i.e. putting Washington at risk to protect Warsaw), although it could not eliminate them (Yost 2010:14-15).

With the rebirth of ballistic missile defence (US ballistic missile defence, European Phased Adaptive Approach, NATO ballistic missile defence), “deterrence by denial” received more attention both on the academic and policy levels.

Deterrence by denial and deterrence by retaliation exemplify two ways of how nuclear planners conceptualise nuclear weapons as instruments of warfare. Figure 1. visualises the distinction between both types of deterrence.

Figure 1. Deterrence by denial versus deterrence by retaliation

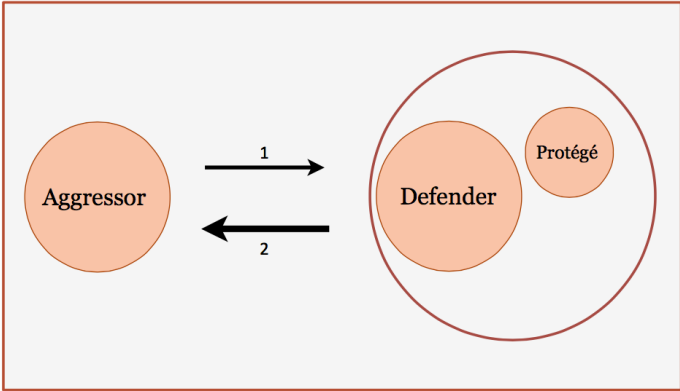


2.2.3. Extended deterrence

The deterrence paradigm distinguishes (1) general deterrence (“core”, “central”, “direct”) - the use of threats to prevent someone from seriously considering doing something to the deterrer conceptualised as a long-term strategy, (2) immediate deterrence (Morgan 1977) mainly activated after general deterrence failed to discourage an imminent attack or when the

situation requires a short-term explicit expression of intent (Lebow 2011:120), and (3) extended deterrence - the use of threats to prevent someone from doing something to a third party (Buzan/Herring 1998:158). Extended deterrence thus extends the logic of deterrence to a third party [the protégé], persuading a potential adversary [challenger] that the cost of attacking a protected country would exceed its benefits through a “security guarantee” given by the defender [protector] (Tetraais 2010:5). In other words, extended deterrence is “third-party deterrence” (Russett 1988:282). Figure 2. offers a visual conceptualisation of extended deterrence.

Figure 2. Extended deterrence by retaliation



In practice, extended deterrence relies on ambiguous statements of protection (USA vs. Taiwan), explicit unilateral statements of protection (USA vs. Japan), permanent presence of weapons and military bases on the protected country’s territory (USA vs. European NATO states) and joint military tasks (Air Policing in the Baltic States, military exercises).

The type of commitment determines the potential automaticity or immediateness of response in case an attack on the protégé would occur. For the most part, it is a complex interlinkage of different elements. The tangible ones can have a conventional and/or nuclear dimension. In general, a commitment is seen to exist when the defender sacrifices sufficiently high costs - at best of irrevocable character - to convince the protégé about the credibility of its intentions (Schelling 1985). One, however, cannot view extended deterrence from a binary perspective due to broad variations of mechanisms and contents of commitments. As exemplified by Benson,

“of 259 Alliances formed between 1816 and 2000 and designed to deter threats to allies, 74 promised to defend the ally no matter what, 139 conditioned third-party intervention on the initiation of conflict by a non-Alliance member, and 46 were ‘ambiguous’ in that signatories did not have automatic contractual obligations to intervene on behalf of fellow Alliance members in war” (2012:1-2).

It is widely accepted that extended deterrence is “intrinsicly harder to accomplish than central deterrence” (Yost 2010:15). There are at least five reasons why this is so (Yost 2010:14). First, the protector needs to make the threat credible both to the challenger and the protégé. Second, the protector needs to reassure its protégé that it will come to help in case the ally will be attacked. Third, the protector needs to convince its domestic public that extending security to other states lies in the interest of the protector. Fourth, the protector's political elite needs to be convinced on a long-term basis of the advantage and/or need to extend security in order to look credible both to the protégé and the potential challenger. To accomplish this, it needs to secure a stable and bipartisan consensus from administration to administration. At the bare minimum, it needs to keep political determination, military preparedness and appropriate capabilities to employ in case deterrence fails. As such, extended deterrence is a tricky exercise in providing capabilities and strategic communication at the same time.

In this study, I use the term protégé to describe the beneficiary of security guarantees. Other authors also use “fosterling”, “assurée” or “pawn” to describe a “protégé”. It is important to note at this place that even though the term “protégé” invokes negative correlations in other languages due to its connotation with a rigid power relation, the term used in this study does not prescribe any valuation.

2.3. Reassurance

While “deterrence is about adversaries; assurance is about allies and friends” (Lyon 2013:931). Michael Howard coined the term “reassurance” to describe the process of satisfying an ally on the credibility of its extended deterrence (Howard 1982). In other words, reassurance is the guarantee provided by the protector that it will come to an aid of the protégé if under attack.

There is no standardised use of the terms assurance and reassurance. In his classification, Knopf distinguishes deterrence-related assurance (a component of deterrence), alliance-related assurance (ensuring allies of one's commitment) and reassurance (assuring other states of no aggressive intentions) (Knopf 2012a:14-15). The 2010 Nuclear Posture Review under Barack Obama used assurance and reassurance interchangeably. One sometimes also finds the term "security guarantee" implying a strong commitment by the defender to its ally, often materialised in a legally binding form. In this study, reassurance will be used with the meaning prescribed by Howard.

To reassure, the protector needs to make clear that it takes seriously the security of its protégé and possesses appropriate confidence in its military forces. The defender has to master a tough challenge. After the Healey Theorem (Denis Healey was the British Minister of Defence in late 1960) "it takes only five percent credibility of American retaliation to deter the Russians, but ninety-five percent credibility to reassure Europeans" (Healey 1989:243).

To convince an ally of a security commitment, the defender applies tools from a wide range of "habits of cooperation" (Dunn 2007:9). These range from purely political to strictly military ones. The former ones are covered by instruments like implicit or explicit declaratory policy, multilateral cooperation and consultation mechanisms.

NATO embodies this promise in article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty which reads that in case an ally becomes a victim of an armed attack, each and every member state will assist the ally with actions it deems necessary. Additionally, allies restate their security promise in subsequent strategic concepts and communiqués. NATO repeats its commitment to territorial defence and the United States reiterates its promise to extend nuclear deterrence in NATO's strategic concepts. The United States also mentions its commitment in national documents, including its Nuclear Posture Review.

A simple promise to defend an ally, be it in a formal treaty or unilateral declaration, however, may not be sufficient as history proved its potential for failure. While rhetorics can remain constant, interests vary and may support a different policy at different points in time. The costlier and riskier the signals, the more credible they become, and the less they can be explained by situational constraints (Tang 2010:136). To make sure these interests do not vary

too much, sufficient physical capabilities deployed or ready to be deployed to effectively execute punishment or denial are widely perceived as the most stable way of signalling commitment.

Capabilities physically embody the intent, providing tangible evidence to “loosely-worded alliance obligations” (Willrich 1966:688). After Herman Kahn, “usually the most convincing way to look willing is to be willing” (Kahn 1960: 287). Like “Covenants without the Sword” threats are “but Words, and of no strength to secure a man at all” (Zagare/Kilgour 2000:81). Therefore, to strengthen the credibility of assurances, the defender may apply military deeds in the vicinity of the protégé or on its territory. Military instruments consist of joint exercise and planning, defence cooperation, the presence of foreign troops or equipment on the protégé territory (conventional or nuclear), counter-WMD capabilities etc. (cf. Tetrais 2010).

In case of NATO, allies utilise all of these measures. In the nuclear dimension, the United States deploys nuclear gravity bombs (B61) on European NATO territory and provides its strategic nuclear forces for the defence of its European allies. Upon that, several allies are granted involvement in the nuclear mission. Some member states are appointed to deliver the weapon using national means of delivery. Other states participate indirectly fulfilling non-nuclear support activities like reconnaissance or search and rescue operations (Kamp 2011:7).

2.4. Literature review

2.4.1. Classical deterrence theory

The concept of deterrence is not a particular finding of the nuclear century. The Prussian military scholar Carl von Clausewitz wrote in the 1874 “On War” that “shall our enemy be forced to comply our will through a militant act, we need to either make him factually defenceless or bring him into a condition of being highly threatened with becoming it” (Clausewitz 1991:194, translation mine).

The concept itself, however, has grown rapidly with the emergence of the Cold War and the wide acceptance of realism as the main theory of international relations (Jervis 1979). In general, it is possible to divide scientific literature on deterrence into two main periods - the classical deterrence theory and its development after the end of the Cold War.

Deterrence theory made different propositions regarding the nature and mechanisms of deterrence depending on basic assumptions and instruments used. Based on the realist concept of balance of power, the classical deterrence theory examined symmetric interstate dyads and was broadly studied by three “waves of deterrence theory scholars” (Jervis 1979:289).

The emergence of nuclear weapons inspired Bernard Brodie, Arnold Wolfers and Jacob Viner to consider the consequences of this new weapon. Brodie pioneered the field in 1945 with his article “The Atomic Bomb and American Security”, which was the first written piece considering military implications of nuclear weapons (Brodie 1945). The first wave, however, had limited impact as it did not put theory into political context, lacked systematisation and emerged at the time when national security was not an academic domain.

The second wave (1950s-1960s) built upon mathematical models and simulations, the concept of rationality, strategic uncertainty and Western ethnocentrism. It is sometimes referred to as the decision-theoretic deterrence as it considers the “micro-level implications of international structure and the high costs of nuclear conflict” (Zagare/Kilgour 2000:24). Thomas Shelling pioneered the second wave introducing game theory to study deterrence and laying the ground for rational deterrence theory. Other representatives include Bernard Brodie, Glenn Snyder, Albert Wohlstetter, Daniel Ellsberg, Robert Jervis, Glenn Snyder. Both waves relied on deduction and lacked testing and empiricism (cf. Lebow/Stein 1989), which was the focus of the third wave (1960s-1970s).

The third wave criticised the assumption of objective rationality (George/Smoke 1974). Conventional deterrence was the main topic under investigation. Case study and statistics were used as main empirical methods. Moreover, inspired by the emergence of the liberal paradigm in international relations, implications of domestic and bureaucratic politics on the deterrence calculus were studied (Lebow 1981, Allison 1971).

2.4.2. Fourth wave / post Cold War / modern deterrence theory

The changed security environment after the end of the Cold War and the emergence of new security threats from rogue states and terrorism disclosed the limitations of the classical deterrence theory. To address these limitations, the fourth wave of deterrence scholarship (cf. Knopf 2010) focuses on two issues.

First, it tries to broaden the concept to “explore deterrence relationships of almost any ilk” (Zagare/Kilgour 2000:288). Scholars attempt to escape the interstate rivalry logic by unpinning themselves from the bipolar realist thinking to develop a theory of deterrence that applies to a broader spectrum of cases.

Second, in particular attention is put on asymmetric relations with multiple potential threats (cf. Powers 2001). As a response to new or intensified threats shaping national security, scholars try to apply the deterrence concept upon terrorism (Davis/Jenkins 2002, Kenyon/Simpson 2004, Lebovic 2007, Trager/Zagorcheva 2005) and rogue states (Smith 2006).

At the same time, more emphasis is put on “tailored deterrence” as a “one size fits all” posture does not correspond to regional characteristics. In an attempt to respond to the rising notion of limiting humanitarian consequences of punishment for the civil society, scholars also widen the toolkit of deterrence instruments, considering non-nuclear and even non-military means like deterrence by delegitimisation, counter-narrative, financial sanctions (Knopf 2010:9, 25) or “weaponless deterrence” (Ford 2010, Harrington de Santana 2015).

Non-mainstream contemporary deterrence scholars attempt two goals. First, they contest the founding belief on which nuclear deterrence is built (Wilson 2013). Second, they conceptualise deterrence in the disarmament framework (Acton 2011). New developments in deterrence theory need, however, also to be systematically tested against empirical evidence. New means of leverage and the tailored approach to the application of the deterrence threat need to be proved for their effectiveness.

2.4.3. Extended deterrence literature

Due to the widespread consensus that deterrence remains a relevant concept, it still receives undivided attention. According to Franc Zagare, “deterrence survives in the academic literature because it constitutes a fundamental human relationship that pertains across time, across culture, and across space” (2006:116). At the same time, not all aspects of the deterrence equation received equal interest by the scholars. Existing research is preoccupied with general deterrence, paying modest attention to extended deterrence. Even though some elements of general deterrence theory are also applicable to extended deterrence, the latter remained in the research shadow of the former.

Existing literature on extended deterrence focuses on the relationship between the defender and challenger, widely neglecting the protégé state perspective. “Deterrence typically carried more of the weight than assurance” (Lyon 2013:935). As such, recipients of extended deterrence cover a theoretically underrepresented group of concern in the scientific debate with the concept of reassurance as the “understudied strategy” of the modern era (Knopf 2012:3).

While some scholars focused their research on assurances as a component of the deterrence equation (Schelling 1966), others did extensive work on the psychological aspects of assurance between two states with an adversarial relationship (Schelling 1966, Osgood 1962, Etzioni 1962, Lebow/Stein 1987, Stein 1991, Lebow 2001). Publications analysing the role of a protégé state in the extended deterrence equation quantitatively address its relationship with the defender in military-economic terms considering historical successes of immediate extended deterrence (cf. Huth/Russett 1984, Huth/Russett 1988, Huth 1988, Huth 1990, Huth/Russett 1990, Wu 1990, Signorino/Tarar 2006). Classical literature also makes some room for studies on foreign nuclear deployments (e.g. Wohlstetter 1961, Schelling 1966:109-116, Jervis 1984:88-92, Allison/Zelikow 1999).

Parallel to the main debate, several scholars conducted studies on the statistical correlation between the possession of or stationing of nuclear weapons and the deterrence effect. They come to diverging conclusions. Some indicate that the possession of nuclear weapons increases the likelihood of immediate extended deterrence success (e.g. Alexandroff/Rosencrance 1977, Fearon 1994, Huth 1990, Huth et al.1993, Waltz 1990, Weber 1990, Signorino/Tarar 2006:597). Others conclude that there is no measurable effect of nuclear weapons possession on the success of immediately extended deterrence (e.g. Huth 1988, Mueller 1989, Paul 1995, Signorino/Tarar 2006:597).

Since the beginning of the debate on the New NATO Strategic Concept around 2009 several studies addressed the assurance implications of extended nuclear deterrence focusing on the contemporary policy issues rather than an empirical study of the impact of assurances (Utgoff/Adesnik 2008, Yost 2009, Murdock/Yeats 2009). One recently published study involves both theoretical and empirical research on the effectiveness of assurances, however limiting its scope to contemplate assurance as a non-proliferation tool only (Knopf 2012).

However, scientific literature neither concentrates on the way in which a protégé creates its perception of and then forms its interests as well as agenda on extended nuclear deterrence, nor on the requirements of extended nuclear deterrence *per se* (Knopf 2012a:14). A recent paper by Fuhrmann and Sechser is the first to investigate motivations for foreign nuclear deployments. Because the authors base their three explanatory models on “intuition” (Fuhrmann/Sechser 2014:456), this study lacks systematics and a clear connection to the theory of IR.

Extended deterrence literature has a strong regional component. As such, we can identify scholars focusing research on four regions: the Transatlantic area, the Middle East (cf. Dunn 2007), East Asia (cf. Tow 1991, Dunn 2007, O’Neil 2013) and Australia (cf. Tanter 2011, Leah 2012). There is a considerable amount of academic, historical and policy publications on the German debate around American nuclear weapons deployed on the German territory (cf. Mahncke 1972, Deiseroth 1982). Also in the recent NATO debate on the New Strategic Concept and the DDPR several experts published policy papers explaining how Germany (Meier 2010d, 2011c, 2012, 2012a, Gormley et al. 2009), Belgium (Lammerant 2012), Spain (Portela 2014), Italy (Spagnuolo 2011, Foradori 2012), Turkey (Kibaroglu 2010, Kibaroglu 2011, Ülgen 2012, Stein 2012), Norway (Ronbeck 2012), UK (Schulte 2010) thought about NATO nuclear sharing. Amy Woolf from the Congressional Research Service followed the B61 debate as a relevant issue for the U.S. Congress (cf. Woolf 2014, 2012, 2012a, 2011).

Publications regarding the Polish governments’ stance on NATO nuclear sharing do not date back before the recent NATO debate. Most of these papers, however, embrace a policy overview of Central and Eastern Europe and do not put particular focus onto Poland (e.g. Kulesa 2010, Durkalec 2012).

An exception makes the RUSI-ELN 2012 Occasional Paper, which focuses entirely on Poland (Sommerville et al. 2012). The paper draws on the secondary source material, interviews with key policy-makers and experts and on outcomes of a policy symposium jointly organised between PISM and ELN in May 2011 in Warsaw. It, however, does not go prior 2010 and as a classical policy paper does not analyse information along with any specific method or particular theoretical approach.

3. Tactical Nuclear Weapons

This chapter offers an introduction to the problem of defining tactical nuclear weapons and clarifies variations in terminology. Next, it focuses on the actual deployment of weapons' locations in European NATO and Russia.

3.1. Clarification of definitions

The lack of a clear-cut, generally acceptable and completely satisfactory definition of tactical nuclear weapons poses an obstacle in any debate on this particular class of nuclear weapons. They are called „tactical“, „battlefield“, „sub-strategic“, “non-strategic” and/or „theatre“ nuclear weapons. There are different criteria to differentiate amongst tactical nuclear weapons.

The **range of the delivery system** is one distinction (cf. Pasti 1968:2, Biddle/Feaver 1989:1). TNW cannot be delivered on intercontinental means, including intercontinental ballistic missiles, anti-ballistic missiles, submarine-launched ballistic missiles, long-range heavy bombers or fractional-orbital spaceborne systems (Milshtein 1978:170). Historically, the spectrum of means of delivery ranged from atomic demolition munitions, nuclear artillery, surface-to-surface missiles, surface-to-air missiles, air-to-air missiles, ship-to-air missiles (Schlesinger 1975:16-19). The Warsaw Pact defined systems in-between 150-1000 km as “operative-tactical” and everything below as “tactical” (Amt für Studien und Übungen der Bundeswehr 1985:32). Today, American nuclear weapons stationed on European territory would be delivered by Belgian F-16A/B aircraft (the end of service presumably around 2025), German PA-200 Tornado (the end of service presumably around 2025), American F-16C/D, Italian PA-200 Tornado (decided to switch for the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter in 2014), Dutch F-16A/B (scheduled for replacement by F-35), Turkish F-16 A/B and F-16 C/D (stop-gap upgrade of F16C/D and new F-35) (Kristensen 2012:15-22). Kristensen, however, contests the distinction by the delivery vehicle, indicating that “some weapons can be carried by both long-range strategic and shorter-range non-strategic delivery systems” (Kristensen 2012:10, cf. Lewis and Gabbittas 1999:4). This presumably will be the case with the upgraded version of the currently stationed B61 nuclear bomb – the B61 mod 12.

The **operational purpose**, in other words, the intended use, or the intention of the conflict's parties, presents another likely distinction (cf. Newhouse 1971:46, Miettinen 1972:3-4, Heisenberg 1973:34, Hunt 1973:2, Milshtein 1978:170). The term would then "depend on the target against which it was used" (Leitenberg 1978:6). "Many tactical nuclear weapons were designed to be used against mobile targets while strategic weapons are almost exclusively intended to be delivered to predetermined geographical points" (Lewis/Gabittas 1999:2-3). This approach is strongly correlated to the synonym for tactical nuclear weapons - "theatre nuclear weapons" - to indicate their usage in particular in the theatre of hostilities. Counterforce weapons could, therefore, be called "tactical", while counter-value weapons would be "strategic" (Safranchuk 2003:50, Legge 1983:77). This distinction, however, omits the fact that a counterforce attack might be done by strategic weapons as well.

Exclusion is another prevalent criterion, including any weapon that is not covered by existing arms control, or disarmament treaties (Lewis/Gabittas 1999:3, Alexander/Millar 2003:7, Leitenberg 1978:3). "Theatre" represented all nuclear weapons which did not fit under the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) treaties to the category of strategic nuclear forces (Amt für Studien und Übungen der Bundeswehr 1985:32). Even though tactical nuclear weapons never were subject to an arms control or disarmament treaty, it is not the only class of nuclear weapons left out from legal agreements. On that point, Kristensen argues that "existing arms control treaties do not cover thousands of non-deployed strategic warheads" either (Kristensen 2012:9).

Another distinction includes the **level of command** at which the weapons are deployed (cf. Miettinen 1972:3-4). For example, Lewis and Gabittas state that "U.S. strategic weapons are operated by the U.S. Strategic Command, while the U.S. Navy and the U.S. Air Force each hold tactical weapons that would fall under the control of theatre commanders when deployed" (Lewis/Gabittas 1999:3). In 1965, Henry Kissinger wrote that "they could be called "tactical" only in the sense that they were stationed in Europe and not in the United States and that they were controlled by SACEUR rather than the commanding general of SAC" (Kissinger 1965:97).

Some scholars try to connect different criterions. Some differentiate by the intention for tactical use and dependance on the zone of employment (Department of the Army

1971:11-12, Cliffe 1972:1), others by intended use and type of designated target (Record 1974:3-7).

“Employing any of these criterion, either together or independently, to distinguish a nuclear weapons as “tactical” is subject to conceptual challenges and shortcomings, making it difficult to achieve a definition that is both precise and broad enough to apply to various conditions where control of these weapons is needed” (Alexander/Millar 2003:6).

Employing any criteria to determine what constitutes a “tactical” nuclear weapon is subject to conceptual challenges and conditional shortcomings in precision. The **geopolitical context** of nuclear weapons also determines whether they are to be termed “strategic” or “tactical” in a particular situation. “[T]he limited range of China’s nuclear forces may make them “tactical” by U.S. standards, but proximity to Russia could classify them as strategic according to Russian perceptions” (Alexander/Millar 2003:7).

The same problem pertains to the B61 in Europe. According to Professor M. Milshtein from the former Academy of Sciences of the USSR, “for the countries on whose territory these weapons may be used, they are essentially strategic weapons because their use would lead to disastrous consequences” (Milshtein 1978:173). According to Kristensen, “today, many argue that there are no non-strategic nuclear weapons at all and that using the term is inappropriate because any use of a nuclear weapon would be strategic in nature and implications” (Kristensen 2012:10). This is an argumentation often heard amongst experts these days. Hence the term “sub-strategic”.

For the purpose of this study, I will term as “tactical” interchangeably with “sub-strategic” all nuclear weapons stationed on European soil that are under American custody during peacetime, unless indicated differently by interview partners or written statements. The same definition I use for the Russian nuclear weapons defined in 3.2.2. I do so for understanding and visibility of the study, as the term “sub-strategic” is not yet widely used outside the expert community. By using the term “tactical”, however, I subscribe to the notion that their use might have strategic consequences.

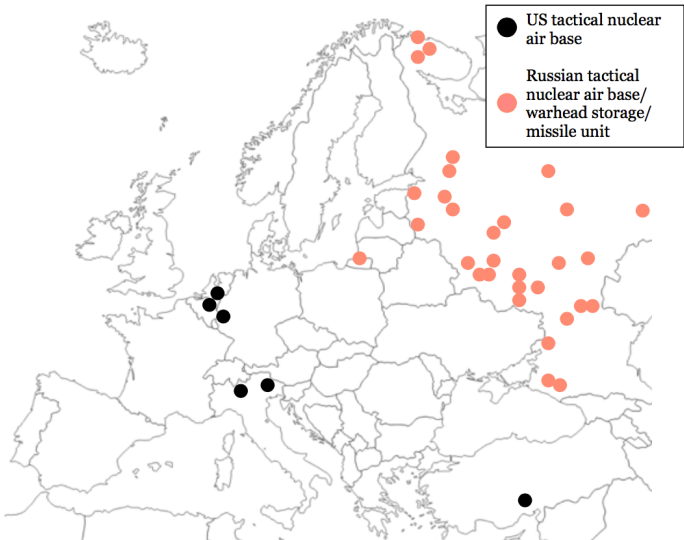
3.2. The status of tactical nuclear weapons in Europe today

There are three states to which tactical nuclear weapons in Europe belong - Russia, the United States and France. I will neither discuss the French stockpile, nor those in other regions of the World as they are irrelevant for the purpose to understand the Polish position on the B61. The following section gives a short description of the American and Russian arsenals of tactical nuclear weapons, both relevant to the case study. Data on nuclear stockpiles mostly stems from studies authored by Hans Kristensen, Director of the Nuclear Information Project at the Federation of American Scientists, perceived as an authority in the field, whose numbers are openly and widely cited by governmental officials.

3.2.1. American tactical nuclear weapons

At the time of writing, the United States is perceived to have a total inventory of 760 warheads intended for three types of gravity bombs: B61-3, B61-4 and B61-10 (Kristensen 2012:14), which mainly differ in yield. Nearly 200 B61-3, B61-4 and B-61-10 gravity bombs are still deployed in Europe (Kristensen 2012:14). They are stationed in Belgium, Italy, Germany, the Netherlands and Turkey (see Figure 3).

Figure 3. American and Russian sub-strategic nuclear weapons deployments in Europe in 2012



Source: Kristensen (2012)

Nuclear warheads are believed to be deployed in the close vicinity of the delivery vehicles - American and European dual capable aircrafts (DCA). Additionally, some 560 warheads

remain on the territory of the United States, either as non-deployed bombs stored “for possible overseas deployment in support of extended deterrence to allies and partners worldwide” (NPR 2010: xiii and 27) or awaiting retirement (Kristensen 2012: 14).

Although the B61 deployed in Europe is an American weapon under the command of the U.S. president and the control of American personnel deployed in Europe, NATO tends to refer to these weapons as “NATO nuclear weapons”. It is a rhetorical figure used to underline that these weapons are prescribed for NATO-related deterrence. By doing so, NATO member states also point to the consensus principle of the Alliance decision-making process required for the implementation of these weapons on behalf of NATO or any of its member states. I, however, will call them using the “possessor” criterion - American nuclear weapons in Europe.

As means of deterrence by denial, American nuclear weapons in Europe were intended to deter an overwhelming Soviet conventional aggression. In case deterrence failed, to deter the Soviet use of tactical nuclear weapons. As means of deterrence by punishment, the weapons were to limit a potential conflict with the Soviet Union to the conventional level. By destroying battlefield targets, they would not leave the opponent the opportunity to finish the attack and receive expected gains (Feaver/Biddle 1989:127).

They were seen as a step between conventional and strategic warfare, serving as a warning signal. They believe that they pose a lower risk of escalation than strategic nuclear forces resulted from the fact that tactical nuclear weapons in Europe did not directly threaten the Soviet homeland. As such, they were also intended to fulfil the role of an escalating instrument to show the seriousness of ones pledges on extended deterrence.

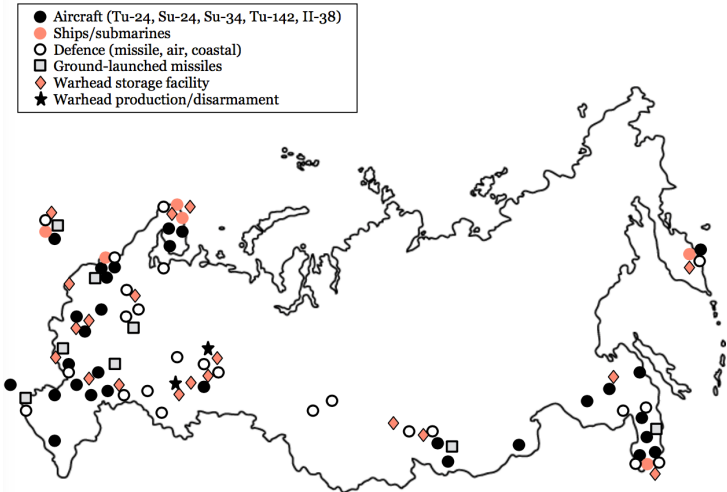
3.2.2. Russian arsenals of tactical nuclear weapons

According to various estimations, Russia holds between 1000 (Sutyagin 2012:2) and 2000 (Kristensen 2012:54) operationally assigned tactical nuclear warheads. The difference in estimations results from the methodological approach used. As the Russian government does not officially inform on its stockpiles, one cannot prove these numbers wrong. For this study, I use data provided by Kristensen. According to them, Russia assigned approximately 200 warheads to the ground forces (the short-range ballistic missile Tochka SS-21, maybe also the

Iskander SS-26), 430 warheads for air defence (the anti-ballistic and antiaircraft system S-300/S-400 and the antiballistic system A-135), 730 warheads for the tactical air force bombers and 730 warheads for the marine to be used at ships, submarines and maritime aircraft (Kristensen 2012:54). None of these warheads are installed on delivery platforms during peacetime but are thought to be stored in “national storage depots or in geographically dispersed regional supply centres” (Sutyagin 2012:9, Kristensen 2012:68).

Altogether, Russia is believed to have 80 facilities for delivery vehicles and 20-50 central storage sites for warheads, mostly far away from the delivery platforms (President of Russia 2010:8). The Russian nuclear infrastructure spreads from the North Murmansk Oblast, along with the Western Russian border and all along its Southern border to the Primorsky Krai (Figure 4).

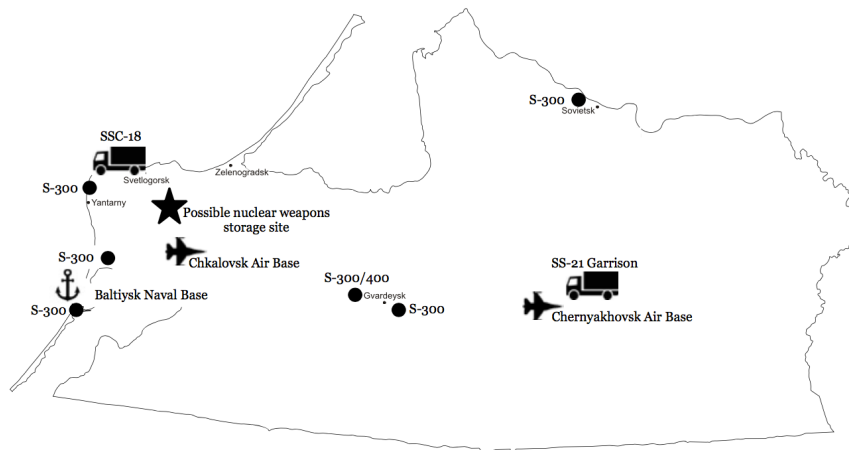
Figure 4. Russian tactical force locations in 2012



Source: Kristensen (2012:45)

Several platform deliveries are based in the Kaliningrad Oblast able to launch both nuclear and conventional weapons (Kristensen 2012:70). This region is especially important for this study, as it borders with Poland (Figure 5). At the same time, however, there is neither clarity nor evidence on the stationing of Russian nuclear warheads there. According to Sutyagin, no warhead storage facilities are placed in the Kaliningrad Oblast (2012:82). Admiral Vladimir Vysotsky, the commander of the Russian Navy, denied the speculation that Russia ever held tactical missiles there (Ria Novosti 2009, cf. Kristensen 2012:76).

Figure 5. Estimated tactical nuclear-capable forces and facilities in Kaliningrad Oblast in 2012



Source: Kristensen (2012:70)

In 2010, Radosław Sikorski, Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs and Carl Bildt, Swedish Minister of Foreign Affairs, called Russia to withdraw nuclear weapons from “the Kaliningrad region and the Kola Peninsula, where there are still substantial numbers of these weapons” (Bildt/Sikorski 2010). According to Karol Karski, Polish parliamentarian and former Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs, an arsenal of tactical nuclear weapons including nuclear warheads exists in Michailovka near Polish border (KSZ/KON 24.02.2011:8). The above was a piece of information he was presented in a diplomatic note after the 2008 meeting between Sikorski and Konstantin Kosachev, chairman of the Duma International Affairs Committee (phone call on 30.09.2014).

In the aftermath of NATO enlargement in 1999, Russia increased its doctrinal reliance on nuclear weapons. The 2010 War Doctrine states that the role of Russian nuclear arsenals is to prevent “the outbreak of nuclear military conflicts and military conflicts involving the use of conventional means of attack (a large-scale war or regional war)” (The Military Doctrine of the Russian Federation 2010:par.16, cf. The Military Doctrine of the Russian Federation 2014:par.16). Russia signals readiness to use its tactical nuclear weapons in response to the weapons of mass destruction attack against itself and its allies, or a conventional large-scale or regional war which imperils the very existence of the state (The Military Doctrine of the Russian Federation 2010:par.22). Such reliance on nuclear forces is seen as a result of the increasing weakness of Russian conventional military capabilities (cf. Woolf 2015:20).

4. The B61 Debate

In this section, I describe the international and domestic settings in which NATO member states debated the alliance's nuclear posture between 2008 and 2014. This chapter aims to contextualise the emergence and development of the debate regarding American nuclear weapons in Europe. It also gives an overview of different interest groups, especially within the Alliance. It illustrates the formation of the Polish governments' position on American extended nuclear deterrence, pointing to its contribution to the NATO debate.

4.1. Background of the 2008-2014 NATO debate on the B61

4.1.1. Stirring the nuclear pot

Since 2007, a growing interest in debating nuclear weapons emerged. This reorientation has different reasons. The failure of the 2005 NPT Review Conference, which finished as an “unprecedented disaster” (Müller 2005:3), led to a crisis regarding the treaties' legitimacy and trust between its partners. The North Korean and Iranian cases of alleged proliferation challenging the NPT regime, fear of nuclear weapons falling into hands of non-state actors after the 11 September 2001 terrorist attack in the United States and the revealing of the A.Q. Khan network were additional debate starters. The only element lacking was a trigger.

In January 2007, a newspaper op-ed stirred the world community. A bipartisan quartet of former U.S. statesmen - William J. Perry, James R. Schlesinger, Henry A. Kissinger and Sam Nunn - published an article in the *Wall Street Journal* envisioning “a bold initiative consistent with America's moral heritage” - *A World Free of Nuclear Weapons* (Shultz et al. 2007). They were convinced that while deterrence “continues to be a relevant consideration, (...) reliance on nuclear weapons for this purpose is becoming increasingly hazardous and decreasingly effective”. The authors saw the United States leading this endeavour.

The op-ed received a positive response from former U.S. officials including Madeleine Albright, Richard V. Allen, James A. Baker III, Zbigniew Brzezinski, Robert McNamara and Colin Powell (Shultz et al. 2008). Mikhail Gorbachev was the first to publicly state support. By linking the moral imperative with the imperative of assuring security, he called all nuclear-weapon states and non-nuclear weapon states to “develop a common concept for moving

toward a world free of nuclear weapons” (Gorbachev 2007). He particularly highlighted the responsibility to act on the part of Russia and European leaders.

A year later the American “Gang of Four” renewed the call to “reduce reliance on nuclear weapons” (Shultz et al. 2008). This time, however, they presented Russia side-by-side with the United States as having “special responsibility, obligation and experience to demonstrate leadership.” They also called non-nuclear weapon states to join the effort. One of the near-term steps proposed was a two-tier dialogue within NATO and with Russia “on consolidating the nuclear weapons designed for forward deployment to enhance their security, and as a first step toward careful accounting for them and their eventual elimination.” They suggested to direct deterrence at those not playing by the NPT rules and to leave the Cold War Mutually Assured Destruction doctrine thinking.

4.1.2. Raising public awareness

These op-eds started a flow of international support by former stateswomen and statesmen. The joint cause of a world free of nuclear weapons included the following countries - Australia (Fraser et al. 2009), Belgium (Claes et al. 2010), Canada (Chrétien et al. 2010), France (Juppe et al. 2009), Germany (Schmidt et al. 2009), India (Singh 2008), Italy (Calogero et al. 2008), the Netherlands (Lubbers et al. 2009), Norway (Nordli et al. 2009, Støre 2008), Poland (Kwaśniewski et al. 2009), Russia (Primakov et al. 2010), Sweden (Carlsson et al. 2010) and U.K. (Hurd et al. 2008, Bramall et al. 2009, cf. Becket 2007).

Also, United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon publicly advocated for a world without nuclear weapons (Ki-moon 2008). His involvement was insofar significant, as it was „the first speech addressing nuclear disarmament by a UN Secretary-General for a long time“ (Neuneck 2009:52).

This high-level initiatives placed the discussion over a world free of nuclear weapons on the public agenda. Grand ideas were transferred from the conference rooms of Geneva, New York and Vienna to daily newspapers. International public awareness was raised.

Simultaneously, national and international non-governmental movements emerged or reemerged facilitating a platform for public discussions. The Global Zero initiative was

launched in December 2008 aiming at the elimination of nuclear weapons. It has vast support from over 300 eminent world-leaders and 400.000 citizens worldwide. The initiative gave a globally recognisable face to thousands smaller and bigger NGOs and civil campaigns consolidated around the fight against nuclear weapons. Australia and Japan established the International Commission on Nuclear Non-Proliferation. Lord Des Brown launched the Top Level Group (TLG) of UK Parliamentarians for Multilateral Nuclear Disarmament and Non-Proliferation on 29 October 2009. He also convened the high-level European Leadership Network gathering former prime ministers, foreign ministers, defence ministers as well as senior experts from Europe and Russia “to create the conditions for a world without nuclear weapons” (ELN 2013). The wide international public was not only informed but involved in the debate.

4.1.3. Prague speech

The newly elected U.S. President Barack Obama committed to start and lead an endeavour towards a world without nuclear weapons, a plan for which he has been granted the Nobel Peace Prize a few months later. In his groundbreaking Prague speech, we read that,

“[A]s the only nuclear power to have used a nuclear weapon, the United States has a moral responsibility to act. We cannot succeed in this endeavour alone, but we can lead it, we can start it. So today I state clearly and with conviction America’s commitment to seek the peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons. I’m not naive, this goal will not be reached quickly - perhaps not in my lifetime. It will take patience and persistence. But now we too, must ignore the voices who tell us that the world cannot change. We have to insist, “Yes, we can” (White House 2009).

His plan included a broad range of actions, ranging from the ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, negotiating the Fissile Material Cutoff Treaty, fighting and preventing nuclear terrorism, strengthening the NPT inspection regime, etc. What was new, however, was a change in the overall paradigm. It was a promise to unchain U.S. policy from Cold War thinking and reducing the role of nuclear weapons.

“To put an end to Cold War thinking, we will reduce the role of nuclear weapons in our national security strategy, and urge others to do the same. Make no mistake: As long as these weapons exist, the United States will maintain safe, secure and effective arsenals to deter any adversary, and guarantee that defence to our allies” (White House 2009).

Highlighting the deterrent value of nuclear weapons for defence purposes was controversial. On the one hand, the declaration was a signal to U.S. allies that Washington is potentially willing to use its nuclear deterrent for their protection. On the other hand, the idea opposed the “grand vision” of “global zero” by attaching an abstract value to nuclear weapons. At the same time, Obama made clear that “getting to zero” is possible only in the frame of a multilateral approach. He stated that he sees Russia as an inevitable partner to progress on nuclear disarmament: “[W]e must pursue constructive relations with Russia on issues of common concern” (White House 2009). In general, Obama’s speech was interpreted as a declaration of intent rather than a guideline for its security policy.

In September 2009, the UN Security Council called all member states “to seek a safer world for all and to create the conditions for a world without nuclear weapons, in accordance with the goals of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), in a way that promotes international stability, and based on the principle of undiminished security for all” (UNSC 2009). The text did not directly mention nuclear weapons stationed on the territory of NPT non-nuclear member states. It, however, was another impetus, this time on an official level, to recap the nuclear disarmament agenda.

4.1.4. Tactical nuclear weapons on the agenda

Some of the official statements mentioned in 4.1.1. and 4.1.2. distinguished the problematics of tactical nuclear weapons and as such, brought this type of nuclear weapons to the discussion. In-between different short-term steps proposed by the American statesman quartet one was “[e]liminating short-range nuclear weapons designed to be forward-deployed” (Shultz et al. 2007).

The German “Gang of Four” suggested that “all remaining U.S. nuclear warheads should be withdrawn from German territory” and that “all short-range nuclear weapons must be destroyed” (Schmidt et al. 2009). The Norwegian “Group of Four” called to include these weapons in the negotiations on limitations and urged Russia to accept such talks (Nordli et al. 2009). The Dutch quartet demanded the Netherlands to “lead to the withdrawal of American nuclear weapons from the territories of non-nuclear weapon states” (Lubbers et al. 2009).

The Belgian statement called for a drastic reduction of all deployed and non-deployed tactical nuclear weapons as they “no longer have any military use” (Claes et al. 2010). The authors concluded that the weapons political symbolism is insufficient to justify their continuous presence. Further stationing would promote proliferation and undermine security. In light of tremendous domestic support for their withdrawal and President Obama’s “global zero” agenda, the statesman called the Belgian government to “take active steps within NATO for the rapid removal of these nuclear weapons” (Claes et al. 2010).

The Swedish Declaration as the first one reminded that nuclear weapons used in the extended deterrence framework imply that “in the global security equation a set of States under a nuclear umbrella must be identified in addition to the States possessing nuclear weapons” (Carlsson et al. 2010). It also called both the United States and Russia to “seriously engage in negotiations on limiting and ultimately eliminating non-strategic nuclear weapons, starting with transferring them from deployed status and putting them in centralised, highly protected storage” (Carlsson et al. 2010).

These op-eds made clear the need to discuss American nuclear weapons in Europe. In general, they suggested that neither the present security architecture nor the threat assessment justified their existence in Europe.

4.1.5. The NPT Review Conference

Right after the op-ed wave, the NPT Review Conference took place between 3-28 May 2010 in New York. On April 8, 2010, U.S. President Barack Obama and Russian President Dmitri Medvedev signed the New START agreement further reducing deployed strategic nuclear stockpiles. It was a promising signal for the conference. The *ambiēns* was remarkably good. Having the unsuccessful 2005 NPT Review Conference in mind, nobody wanted this conference to fail.

Therefore, it was a politically advantageous time to further address the issue of tactical nuclear weapons. In the General Debate, several NPT member states mentioned tactical nuclear weapons in their statements. The statement on behalf of the European Union (EU) called both the United States and Russia for progress in further nuclear reductions including

tactical nuclear weapons. The EU did not manage to push for inclusion of this demand into the Final Document, mainly due to huge divisions between its members.

Half of NATO allies did not touch upon the Alliance's stockpiles of tactical nuclear weapons in their statements at all. Hungary, Latvia and Luxembourg did not provide any statement to the General Debate. Albania, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, France, Greece, Iceland, Italy, Portugal, Romania, Spain, Turkey and the United States did not mention sub-strategic nuclear weapons in their NPT statements.

Nevertheless, some NATO members contributed specific proposals on that issue. Ideas spread from a NATO-wide debate and multilateral reductions (Germany, Slovakia) to bilateral downsizing between the United States and Russia (Sweden, the Netherlands). Some parties presented specific proposals aimed at a phased approach (The Netherlands, Norway, Poland). Slovenia and the Netherlands also underlined the responsibility, and a role of non-nuclear weapon states in the debate over American nuclear weapons deployed in Europe. For snippets from NATO member statements on tactical nuclear weapons, please refer to Appendix 2.

Tactical nuclear weapons also posed an issue within the wider international community. Several NPT member states and groups of states issued documents that explicitly addressed these weapons. Primarily, they mentioned nuclear weapons on the territory of non-nuclear states in a broader context, never as an issue by itself. This, however, results from the broad agenda of the three comprehensive pillars the NPT Review Conference deals with. For a short overview of how the documents and particular non-NATO members addressed tactical nuclear weapons, please see Appendix 3. In general, the majority of NPT member states signed one of six working papers or mentioned tactical nuclear weapons in their country reports.

In the Final Document, the Conference affirmed “the need for the nuclear-weapon States to reduce and eliminate all types of their nuclear weapons” (NPT 2010:sec. IBii, p. 20, Action 3), encouraging, in particular, those states with the largest nuclear arsenals to lead efforts in this regard. Participants also recommended to “[a]ddress the question of all nuclear weapons regardless of their type or their location as an integral part of the general nuclear disarmament process” (NPT 2010: Action 5 (b):21, Action 5B). Tactical nuclear weapons were not directly

mentioned in the Final Document due to the disagreement to do so by the United States and Russia (Sauer/van der Zwaan 2011:13). Comparing the results of the 2010 conference to the 2000 NPT Review Conference's Final Document, this was a step back.

4.1.6. The Nuclear Posture Review 2009

After a long period of awareness building described in the previous sections, the time was ripe to institutionalise the debate on tactical nuclear weapons in NATO. It was clear, however, that any talks on NATO nuclear policy could only start after the U.S. Nuclear Posture Review (NPR). The NPT defines U.S. nuclear policy for the next 5 to 10 years. Specifically, it aims at assessing the role of nuclear forces in the United States military doctrine, its requirements and objectives to maintain a credible nuclear deterrence posture and the relationship among United States nuclear deterrence policy, targeting strategy, and arms control objectives (Congress 2008). It serves as an opportunity to redefine the U.S. nuclear doctrine along the new presidential guidelines. And indeed, president Obama was personally involved in the Department of Defense drafting to “ensure that it reflects the commitment he made in a speech in Prague in April” (Borger 2009).

At this point, it is worth to mention the Report of the Secretary of Defence Task Force on DoD Nuclear Weapons Management, colloquially know as the Schlesinger Report. It is a product by the Task Force on Nuclear Weapons Management, which has been established in June 2008 to provide advice on nuclear matters to the Secretary of Defence in the aftermath of several incidents of mishandling nuclear weapons by the Air Force. The report pledged that a continued basing of American tactical nuclear weapons in Europe is unavoidable as a sign of visible U.S. presence. It argued that “DCA fighters and nuclear weapons are visible, capable, recallable, reusable, and flexible and are a military statement of NATO and U.S. political will” (Schlesinger 2008:59).

A 12-person bipartisan Congressional Commission led by William Perry and James R. Schlesinger assessed the strategic posture of the United States. The groups report reflects the complexity of political, normative and technical issues related to U.S. nuclear weapons stationed in Europe. The group recommended “moving in two parallel paths” by maintaining nuclear deterrence and simultaneously going for arms control and an international program to

prevent proliferation (Perry/Schlesinger 2009: xii). The second path envisioned nuclear reductions that “would require finding a way of dealing with very difficult problems, to include ‘tactical’ nuclear forces, reserve weapons and bringing in other nuclear powers” (Perry/Schlesinger 2009: xii). The principle argument on involving tactical nuclear weapons into future talks with Moscow was their numerical imbalance between the United States and Russia,

“The imbalance in non-strategic nuclear weapons, which greatly favours Russia, is of rising concern and an illustration of the new challenges of strategic stability as reductions in strategic weapons proceed” (Perry/Schlesinger 2009: xvii).

The report mentioned some numbers of tactical nuclear weapons in Russia, which may indicate quantities internally used by the government of the United States to assess the numerical disparity. It also pointed to the importance of tactical nuclear weapons in the Russian war doctrine,

“(…) Russia reportedly retains a very large number of such weapons. Senior Russian experts have reported that Russia has 3,800 operational tactical nuclear warheads with a large additional number in reserve. Some Russian military experts have written about use of very low yield nuclear ‘scalpels’ to defeat NATO forces. The combination of new warhead designs, the estimated production capability for new nuclear warheads, and precision delivery systems such as the Iskander short-range tactical ballistic missile (known as the SS-26 in the West), open up new possibilities for Russian efforts to threaten to use nuclear weapons to influence regional conflicts” (Perry/Schlesinger 2009:13).

Another motivation to involve Russia in discussing the future of tactical nuclear weapons were some U.S. allies bordering Russia fear of their big neighbour and its tactical nuclear arsenals,

“The focus on Russia is not because the United States and Russia are enemies; they are not. No one seriously contemplates a direct Russian attack on the United States. Some U.S. allies located closer to Russia, however, are fearful of Russia and its tactical nuclear forces” (Perry/Schlesinger 2009:xvii).

The report also recommended investing additional financial resources for maintaining the delivery systems. Most of the delivery vehicles prescribed for the non-strategic mission within NATO await a replacement and/or modernisation in the nearest future (Kristensen 2012:27). The United States employs or plans to employ four different aircraft types assigned for delivery of the B61: the strategic B-52H (for the B61-7) and the Stealth-Bomber B-2A

„Spirit“ (for the B-61-7, B-61-11 and the future version B61-12) as well as the tactical F-15E „Strike Eagle“ (also for B61-12), F-16C/D, the F-16MLU (Mid Life Upgrade) „Fighting Falcon“ and the F-35 Lightning II, which at the moment is still under development (Nassauer/Piper 2012:33-34).

“The triad of strategic nuclear delivery systems should be maintained for the immediate future and this will require some difficult investment choices. The same is true for delivery systems of non-strategic nuclear weapons” (Perry/Schlesinger 2009:xvii).

The commission highlighted the importance of reassurance as being at a historically high level. It, however, did not justify this statement, leaving it to a plain “indeed, the assurance function of the force is as important as ever” (Perry/Schlesinger 2009:xvii).

At the same time, the report revealed deep differences in U.S. allies perceptions of extended deterrence and the role nuclear weapons play within the concept. Therefore, the commission concluded with the need for close consultations with NATO members,

“[T]heir assurance remains a top U.S. priority in the current security environment and there are some important new challenges to extended deterrence associated with Russia, China, and proliferation. Some U.S. allies believe that extended deterrence requires little more than stability in the central balances of nuclear power among the major powers. But other allies believe that their needs can only be met with very specific U.S. nuclear capabilities. This point was brought home vividly in our work as a Commission. Some allies located near Russia believe that U.S. non-strategic forces in Europe are essential to prevent nuclear coercion by Moscow and indeed that modernised U.S./NATO forces are essential for restoring a sense of balance in the face of Russia’s nuclear renewal. One particularly important ally has argued to the Commission privately that the credibility of the U.S. extended deterrent depends on its specific capabilities to hold a wide variety of targets at risk, and to deploy forces in a way that is either visible or stealthy, as circumstances may demand. Clearly, the U.S. nuclear force posture should not be redesigned without substantive and high-level consultations with U.S. allies in both Europe and Asia and we cannot prejudge the conclusions of such consultations here. The Commission’s own consultations on this topic have brought home to us that U.S. allies and friends in Europe and Asia are not all of a single mind concerning the requirements for extended deterrence and assurance“ (Perry/Schlesinger 2009:20-21).

Moreover, it highlighted the requirement of keeping tactical nuclear stockpiles for political purposes,

“[T]he requirement to extend assurance and deterrence to others may well impose on the United States an obligation to retain numbers and types of nuclear weapons that it might not otherwise deem essential to its own defence” (Perry/Schlesinger 2009:21).

Final recommendations mention the need to further handle tactical nuclear stockpiles. All this had in mind two primary objectives: intra-Alliance consultations and keeping the extended nuclear deterrence credible,

“The United States will need to consider additional initiatives on those NSNF not constrained by the INF treaty—i.e., tactical nuclear weapons. U.S. policy should be guided by two principles. First, the United States should seek substantial reductions in the large force of Russian NSNF. Second, no changes to the U.S. force posture should be made without comprehensive consultations with all U.S. allies (and within NATO as such). All allies depending on the U.S. nuclear umbrella should be assured that any changes in its forces do not imply a weakening of the U.S. extended nuclear deterrence guarantees. They could perceive a weakening if the United States (and NATO) does not maintain other features of the extended nuclear deterrence arrangement than the day-to-day presence of U.S. nuclear bombs. Some allies have made it clear to the Commission that such consultations would play a positive role in renewing confidence in U.S. security assurances” (Perry/Schlesinger 2009:68).

The report was a starting point for discussing the Nuclear Posture Review. It gave a perspective on issues and positions but made rather moderate and restrained recommendations. That the debate on the NPR would take a pragmatic direction was clear after yet another article by the already famous “Gang of Four” (Schultz et al. 2010). They called for a “safe, secure and reliable nuclear arsenal” as a precondition for future reductions. This kind of “double track decision” created a contradiction between the nuclear weapons stockpile modernisation plans (Life Extension Programs) and the disarmament commitment. Moreover, the article signalled resistance to a change in the nuclear commitment to U.S. allies in Europe, either due to political considerations on Capitol Hill or due to NATO members request.

The terms of content for the NPR have been defined as “reducing the nuclear risk to the US and its allies” (NPR 2010:i) asking how the United States wants to reduce the role and numbers of nuclear weapons. It was a tremendous challenge to combine objectives as diversified as reducing the role and numbers of U.S. nuclear weapons, strengthening deterrence of adversaries, reassuring allies and partners, and moving demonstrably toward the ultimate goal of the elimination of nuclear weapons.

The NPR highlights past reductions of tactical nuclear weapons reflecting the Presidential Nuclear Initiatives (NPR 2010:27) and states the present numerical disparity in arsenals between the past cold war adversaries (NPR 2010:27).

The NPR prescribes that tactical nuclear weapons shall be included in a future reduction arrangement between the United States and Russia (NPR 2010:27). Any nuclear reductions were conditioned upon sufficient assurance to allies and partners (NPR 2010:29). In general, assurance was written in bold in the NPR and highlighted wherever possible, e.g.:

“We will continue to assure our allies and partners of our commitment to their security and to demonstrate this commitment not only through words, but also through deeds. This includes the continued forward deployment of U.S. forces in key regions, strengthening of U.S. and allied non-nuclear capabilities, and the continued provision of extended deterrence” (NPR 2010:31).

The NPR called for an updated assessment of deterrence requirements, equal burden sharing, further improvements of NATO non-nuclear capabilities. Everything in close consultations with allies and partners (NPR 2010:27, 30, 32, 33, 46). On 16 April 2009, a senior U.S. official reportedly said that the Obama administration wanted “to wait and see how allies respond to the new nuclear doctrine” as outlined in the NPR “before we see whether we can align NATO policies with U.S. nuclear policies” (Meier 2010).

Parallel to the proclaimed openness to possible reductions of the B61; the decision has been taken to retain the dual-capable fighter and extend the bomb’s service life for another 30 years (NPR 2010:27, 39).

4.1.7. The German Coalition Agreement

Meanwhile, the October 2009 German Coalition Agreement between Guido Westerwelle’s liberal Free Democrats and Chancellor Angela Merkel’s conservative Christian Democrats backed the withdrawal of tactical nuclear weapons from Germany.

The document involved three important statements that have accelerated the debate over American nuclear weapons in Europe. First, it mentioned NATO as a forum for negotiating nuclear disarmament. According to an official of the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs who gave a speech at a conference dinner attended by the author, it was due to this statement that

arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation today figure as one of NATO mix of policy tools.

“Sie [die Allianz—author’s note] dient der Erreichung politischer Ziele und umfasst das Angebot zu sicherheitspolitischer Zusammenarbeit, Abrüstung, Vertrauensbildung und friedlicher Konfliktlösung” (Koalitionsvertrag 2009:119).

Second, it contextualises the German governments support for nuclear disarmament with President Obamas initiative,

“Wir unterstützen mit Nachdruck die von US-Präsident Obama unterbreiteten Vorschläge für weitgehende neue Abrüstungsinitiativen – einschließlich des Zieles einer nuklearwaffenfreien Welt” (Koalitionsvertrag 2009:119).

Third, and probably most distinctive, the German governments wishes to withdraw the remaining nuclear weapons from German soil,

“In diesem Zusammenhang sowie im Zuge der Ausarbeitung eines strategischen Konzeptes der NATO werden wir uns im Bündnis sowie gegenüber den amerikanischen Verbündeten dafür einsetzen, dass die in Deutschland verbliebenen Atomwaffen abgezogen werden” (Koalitionsvertrag 2009:120).

With the German coalition agreement, the issue of withdrawing American tactical nuclear weapons has been institutionalised and made official German policy. There were two solutions - a unilateral step by Germany to cancel the agreement founding the German-U.S. nuclear sharing arrangement or making it a multilateral issue within NATO. Guido Westerwelle was most probably pressed by the United States to go for the second option in a November 2009 discussion with U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, as days later he assured Anders Fogh Rasmussen that “Germany would consult its allies on the removal of the estimated 20 nuclear weapons left on its soil” (Borger 2009).

4.1.8. NATO setting

A new strategic context – the transformation of NATO itself, growing differences in threat perception and a widening political distance between member states as well as loud criticism of the Alliances functioning – persuaded heads of governments in the mid-2000’s to raise a debate over a new shape for NATO. This prepared good ground for intensified discussions over its nuclear policy, including the validity and role of tactical nuclear weapons in Europe.

Since the 1999 Alliance's Strategic Concept, NATO only randomly dealt with tactical nuclear weapons. In a December 2000 Report on Options for Confidence and Security Building Measures (CSBMs), Verification, Non-Proliferation, Arms Control and Disarmament, NATO member states called for specific proposals to promote transparency on nuclear weapons safety issues, their readiness status and exchange of information (NATO NAC 2000). After that, NATO and Russia exchanged ideas on nuclear-related confidence and security-building measures under the auspices of the NATO-Russia Permanent Joint Council (NATO FC 2001a:par.10). These initiatives concluded in a row of specific actions within the NATO-Russia Council (NRC) as well as on bilateral level between Russia and the U.S. (cf. Kubiak 2014), but none of them has led to the reconsideration of tactical nuclear weapons within NATO's nuclear strategy (Kelleher/Warren 2009).

Even the United States, unilaterally withdrawing its stockpiles of nuclear weapons from Europe, went without publicity or any debate on nuclear sharing within NATO (cf. Meier 2006). Washington removed its weapons from the Greek Araxos airbase in 2001 (Kristensen 2012:22), from its biggest air force base in the German Ramstein in 2005 (Meier 2007, Kristensen 2012:26), and from the British RAF Lakenheath base in either 2006 (Kristensen 2012:26) or 2008 (Gottemoeller 2008:152). Despite this withdrawals, Lt. Commander Rick Haupt, serving as spokesperson for the U.S. European Command, said on 17 May 2005 that “[n]uclear weapons deployed in Europe are an essential political and military link between the United States and Europe” (Meier 2005), a view mirrored in NATO official statements (cf. NATO FC 2007: par.6).

At the 60th anniversary of NATO at the Strasbourg/Kehl Summit between 3-4 April 2009, NATO Heads of State and Government mandated the design of a new Strategic Concept for the Alliance, a normative document defining aims and tasks for the Alliance for the next decade. Hence, a lengthy and laborious process of positioning and negotiating started. NATO positions are collectively agreed by all 28 sovereign member states. The requirement for consensus is at the same time a strength and weakness of NATO decisions. On one side, it ensures wide adherence to decisions taken. On the other side, a clash of national strategies with different concerns, interests, goals and means to achieve them loom on the path to a collective NATO position. Within the process, national positions become a matter of

bargaining. Eventually, some national positions change, some are put into a waiting drawer for other times. According to Simon Lunn, former Head of Plans and Policy in NATO's International Staff and Secretary General of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, "understanding the process is often essential to understanding the final decision" (Lunn 2013:109). At the same time, confidentiality and lack of transparency, prevent to easily "follow the twists and turns of the deliberations and to observe which concessions have been made and where" (Lunn 2013:109). In the following, I will try to describe the recent NATO decision-making process that leads to the final decision to keep tactical nuclear weapons in Europe.

Together with Germany and Belgium, the Netherlands supported the withdrawal of American tactical nuclear weapons from Europe. The Norwegian government called to debate sub-strategic weapons in preparation for the new strategic concept (Borger 2009). On 21 April 2010 Dutch Foreign Minister Maxime Verhagen stated in a parliamentary debate that he did not "see the need for having U.S. nuclear weapons on Dutch territory as a security guarantee" (Meier 2010).

In February 2010, the Swedish and Polish foreign ministers published an op-ed in the New York Times calling for "early progress on steep reductions in sub-strategic nuclear weapons (...) and their eventual elimination" (Bildt/Sikorski 2010). As for the military utility question, their message was clear: "We still face security challenges in the Europe of today and tomorrow, but from whichever angle you look, there is no role for the use of nuclear weapons in resolving these challenges" (Bildt/Sikorski 2010). Both foreign ministers saw American nuclear weapons in Europe as "dangerous remnants of a dangerous past" that "should not be allowed to endanger our common future". They saw further reductions of tactical nuclear weapons necessary for a "better order of security in Europe". According to them, such cuts should be negotiated and end in an arms control regime with Russia. At the same time, both leaders saw "room for substantial unilateral confidence building efforts". As one of the first steps, they urged Moscow to withdraw nuclear weapons "from areas adjacent to European Union member states" (the Kaliningrad region and the Kola Peninsula), stationing them in mainland Russia and destructing relevant storage facilities.

The Sikorski-Bildt article was groundbreaking because the Polish government, playing rather a cautious position in the debate till date, now manifested a “more forwards-looking approach to nuclear issues” (Arms Control Association 2010b:7). It also was the first opinion published by governmental officials from NATO allies that focused primarily on tactical nuclear weapons. According to Marek Szczygiel, Deputy Director of the Security Policy Department in the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the German call triggered the Polish government to adopt a more flexible position. It also made it declaring “its openness to discuss necessary modifications of NATO nuclear posture in the framework of new NATO strategic concept” (Arms Control Association 2010b:7). Another reason for this move was the wish of the Polish authorities to “reduce the risk that this debate would be dominated by two opposing options (withdrawal and remaining), creating some unnecessary tensions or divisions within the Alliance while at the same time ignoring some specific regional security concerns of countries like Poland” (Arms Control Association 2010b:7).

The United States did neither want to take unilateral steps itself nor accept other NATO allies doing so. U.S. Secretary of States Hillary Clinton expressed U.S. disapproval of one-sided moves on nuclear sharing by NATO allies in a keynote speech on NATO in February 2010. She warned NATO allies from questioning the concept of nuclear deterrence providing for its legitimisation: “[t]his dangerous world still requires deterrence and we know there's a debate going on in Europe and even among some of our leading member nations about, well, what does that mean” she said (Clinton 2010), without mentioning Germany by name. "We would hope that there is no precipitous move made that would undermine the deterrence capability“ (Clinton 2010). U.S. Ambassador to NATO Ivo Daalder repeated this position in a press briefing in Washington on 23 February 2010 stating that “[t]his is a discussion we want to have with allies.... it is not something that we want to do unilaterally, and we don't want any other ally to move in a direction unilaterally to try to change the NATO nuclear discussion” (Taber/Kimball 2010).

The reason for this position is probably manifold. On the one hand, some U.S. decision-makers feared that unilateral withdrawal of nuclear weapons from Europe might prompt some allies to obtain its nuclear deterrent. This is because the United States understands itself to be primarily responsible for preventing NATO member states from acquiring national nuclear

forces - an argument systematically repeated by U.S. decision-makers (Hearing 1997, Statement 2007, Carnegie 2008, Congressional Commission 2009:8, NPR 2010:4, Roberts 2012:396, Hearing 2013). On the other hand, Washington might have wanted to continue discussions on tactical nuclear weapons bilaterally with Russia in the future, for which its nuclear weapons deployed in Europe could be used as a kind of leverage. Another reason for the United States to oppose changing the nuclear status quo in NATO is that it provides the United States with a special status and control over European affairs.

As an informal meeting of NATO Foreign Ministers in Tallinn was scheduled for the second half of April 2010, the only question remaining was how to include tactical nuclear weapons on the Tallinn agenda? An open letter signed by foreign ministers from Belgium, Germany, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and Norway on 26 February 2010 asked NATO Secretary-General to include “comprehensive discussions” on NATO’s nuclear policy in the evolving security environment in the Tallinn meeting agenda (Letter 2010). It was the Dutch government who raised this initiative, fearing that differences among NATO member states on nuclear issues would be “papered over in the new Strategic Concept” (Meier 2010). The foreign ministers felt that NATO non-nuclear weapon states should be involved in the discussion of “reducing the role of nuclear weapons and seek[ing] peace and security in a world without nuclear weapons” (Letter 2010).

On 9 April 2010, before the Tallinn meeting Radosław Sikorski, Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs and his Norwegian counterpart Jonas Gahr Støre issued a joint statement (Støre/Sikorski 2010). They signalled “flexible and realistic” expectations towards the reduction and elimination of sub-strategic nuclear arsenals from Europe. They mentioned NATO as the appropriate forum to address the inclusion of tactical nuclear arsenals in the arms control framework. “NATO’s deterrence policy and military posture have always been, and should continue to be, the subject of thorough consultations between all Allies”. They thus wanted to prevent that tactical nuclear weapons will be dealt exclusively on a bilateral basis between Russia and the United States. They also warned from unilateral moves on the part of the Alliance: “We are convinced that the Alliance will not benefit from unilateral actions in the field of sub-strategic nuclear weapons. Reciprocity and mutually agreed measures were called for”. They did not define what reciprocity meant specifically, apart from emphasising a step-

by-step approach and the need to include “transparency and confidence-building measures as well as balanced and mutual arms reductions”.

Commenting on the statement, Marek Szczyciel explained that the Polish diplomacy tried to “refocus and reshape the debate in order to place more emphasis on the issue of tactical nuclear weapons as a general problem, instead of looking at it as an internal NATO issue” (Arms Control Association 2010b:8). Warsaw intended “to highlight the risk and potential consequences of some unilateral actions motivated by domestic political issues, potential negative consequences for the security of entire NATO” (Arms Control Association 2010b:8). In October 2010, Jacek Najder, then Undersecretary of State in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, commenting on the Sikorski-Støre op-ed, said that “as long as tactical nuclear weapons are part of the Alliance deterrence strategy, this kind of weapons should stay in the NATO tool kit” (KSZ/KON 27.10.2010:5, translation mine), clearly stating the status-quo position of the Polish government. Therefore, despite calling for nuclear disarmament as a general goal, Warsaw was mainly interested in easing tensions and distrust regarding Russian stockpiles of tactical nuclear weapons (Rotfeld 2012:121).

The Tallinn meeting took place between 21-22 April 2010 and set the foundation for future discussions on tactical nuclear weapons in NATO. It started with a press conference by NATO Secretary General which led to an upheaval among participating states, and once again highlighted the divisions between Allies on American nuclear weapons in Europe. Anders Fogh Rasmussen called for “a credible, effective, and safely managed deterrent” to help sustain NATO’s *raison d’être*. He also restated the necessity to keep a parallel path of remaining nuclear deterrent while pursuing “active engagement in arms control and disarmament” (Rasmussen 2010). Answering a journalists question, Rasmussen said in a personal capacity “I do believe that the presence of American nuclear weapons in Europe is an essential part of a credible deterrent.” Even though diplomatic sources assured that the statement did not represent a consensus within the Alliance, some delegates to the Tallinn meeting “were surprised by the urgency with which Rasmussen emphasised the importance of not changing NATO nuclear policy” (Meier 2010). According to officials, several NATO members subsequently made clear to Rasmussen that they disagree with his statements on the necessity of a continued deployment of U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe (Meier 2010).

In a dinner speech at the Tallinn meeting, U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton outlined “five principles” that the U.S. government thought should guide NATO’s future nuclear policy, four of which are of primary importance here. They will be quoted after Meier (2010),

- (1) “As long as nuclear weapons exist, NATO will remain a nuclear Alliance.”
- (2) “As a nuclear Alliance, sharing nuclear risks and responsibilities widely is fundamental.”
- (3) A “broad aim is to continue to reduce the role and a number of nuclear weapons” while “recogniz[ing] that in the years since the Cold War ended, NATO has already dramatically reduced its reliance on nuclear weapons.”
- (4) “In any future reductions, our aim should be to seek Russian agreement to increase transparency on nonstrategic nuclear weapons in Europe, relocate these weapons away from the territory of NATO members, and include non-strategic nuclear weapons in the next round of U.S.-Russian arms control discussions alongside strategic and non-deployed nuclear weapons.”

The first point assured allies of the continuous American commitment to nuclear deterrence but did not indicate that it had to be served by further deployed nuclear weapons. The second point, however, made clear that the United States did not want to be the only member taking responsibility for providing nuclear guarantees. Washington wanted European allies to participate in the risks involved in preparing and executing a nuclear mission as well as the responsibility for its consequences. This was only possible with American nuclear weapons and presumably also existing rules governing their use remaining in place. In her last two points, Secretary Clinton leaned towards the request coming from the Central and East European states, tying NATO decisions on reducing the quantity of its tactical nuclear weapons deployed in Europe to Russian reciprocity.

Disappointed experts criticised the principles ambiguity as “a recipe for delay and inaction” (Arshad/Brunnstrom 2010). A senior U.S. official is quoted to reject this interpretation. This “deliberate ambiguity” was because “[t]he last thing we wanted to do was give a timeline for any changes,” he is supposed to have said (Meier 2010).

On the other side, some states backed the continued presence of American nuclear weapons in Europe. As an example, Foreign Minister of Estonia Urmat Paet said that “Nuclear deterrence is one of the pillars of NATO and the role of nuclear weapons in it is unique—it is not possible to replace it or compensate for it with conventional weapons” (NATO Tallinn Statement 2010). Paet also added that the nuclear deterrence wording should be restated in the new Strategic Concept. He also pointed to the political function of these stockpiles saying that “The placement of American nuclear weapons in Europe preserves close transatlantic ties and allows for greater flexibility in deterrence” (NATO Tallinn Statement 2010a).

At the Tallinn meeting, ministers eventually agreed that NATO has to remain committed to maintaining the security of every member at the “lowest possible level of nuclear weapons” (NATO News 2010a). Moreover, they highlighted that nuclear burden sharing remains essential and that the decision on NATO nuclear policy shall be reached upon consensus. They also stressed that the Alliance needs to remain a balance between credible deterrence, arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation.

The informal conclusion of the Tallinn meeting was straightforward: there still was a huge division among NATO member states regarding their position towards U.S. extended nuclear deterrence to NATO. A senior U.S. official reportedly said on 27 April 2010 that “The only thing we could agree at Tallinn was to disagree” (Meier 2010). In view of how grave the differences were, a “disagreement” seemed like a mild outcome.

A NATO defence ministers meeting followed in June 2010 in Brussels and again highlighted the divisions among NATO members. Due to heavy disagreements, the ministers decided to refrain from any “references to NATO’s nuclear policies from the final communiqué” (Arms Control Association 2010, Kamp 2010:2, Meier 2010c).

4.1.9. The Albright Expert Group

Apart from mandating work on a new Strategic Concept, the 2009 NATO Summit in Strasbourg/Kehl mandated a broadly based group of diplomats and former officials to prepare the ground for the new document. The process had to be speedy, as the text was expected at the end of 2010. Professor Adam Rotfeld, who was a member of that group, explained the hasty approach and outsourcing consultancy to external experts with “criticism of the

Alliance's poor effectiveness", "incoherence of its actions" and "conflicting expectations of NATO's functioning" (Rotfeld 2010:8, translation mine). Because the group was external, though coordinating its work closely with NATO, it was free of bureaucratic and procedural constraints and more effective than the NATO Council where 28 ambassadors would negotiate upon instructions from governments.

The Group of Experts started work in August 2009 with former U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright as chairwoman. It consisted of twelve experts from different NATO states - Jeroen van der Veer (The Netherlands), Ambassador Giancarlo Aragona (Italy), Ambassador Marie Gervais-Vidricaire (Canada), The Rt Hon Geoff Hoon MP (United Kingdom), Ambassador Ümit Pamir (Turkey), Ambassador Fernando Perpiñá-Robert Peyra (Spain), Ambassador Dr Hans-Friedrich von Ploetz (Germany), Bruno Racine (France), Professor Adam Rotfeld (Poland), Ambassador Aivis Ronis (Latvia) and Ambassador Yannis-Alexis Zepos (Greece). In theory, all experts were chosen according to their qualifications and did not represent official positions of particular states (Rotfeld 2012:175). In praxis, however, members represented particular interests of their governments and stood in close coordination with their respective capitals (Rotfeld 2012:252). The group benefited from consultations with nine civilian advisors, three experts from NATO International Staff Policy Planning Unit as well as NATO Military Authorities.

The "Group of Experts" presented its final analysis and recommendations on 17 May 2010. In her testimony before the U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, Madeleine K. Albright admitted that the Expert Group was as diverse as NATO, which led to "spirited internal debates", but that the report was consensual (Statement 2010:1). The drafters gave only some general guidance on tactical nuclear weapons, even though according to Madeleine Albright, the group "spent quite a lot of time" on nuclear issues and had "some of our livelier discussions" on NATO's nuclear posture (Hearing 2010).

The report acknowledged the political utility and continuing need for tactical nuclear weapons in Europe. Following the NPR wording, it restated that the Alliance shall stay of nuclear character "as long as nuclear weapons remain a reality in international relations" (Group of Experts 2010:43). The experts saw American tactical nuclear weapons as strengthening NATO deterrence: "Under current security conditions, the retention of some U.S. forward-

deployed systems on European soil reinforces the principle of extended nuclear deterrence and collective defence” (Group of Experts 2010:43). They agreed that a “broad” participation of non-nuclear Allies in nuclear sharing was an “essential sign of transatlantic solidarity and risk sharing” (Group of Experts 2010:43). As quoted by Meier, “officials, speaking privately, speculated that the measures could include participation in NATO’s Nuclear Planning Group, acceptance of the temporary deployment of dual-capable aircraft by NATO members that currently do not host nuclear weapons, and the refuelling of such aircraft” (Meier 2010a).

At the same time, the group acknowledged the necessity to set the stage for future reductions and elimination of all sub-strategic nuclear arsenals. To make it happen, it recommended a dialogue with Russia on “nuclear perceptions, concepts, doctrines, and transparency” (Group of Experts 2010:43), at best within the NATO-Russia Council (Group of Experts 2010:26). “These talks should help set the stage for the further reduction and possible eventual elimination of the entire class of sub-strategic nuclear weapons” (Group of Experts 2010:43). Even though experts differed in their attitude towards Russia as a partner in such talks, “there was no disagreement about what NATO’s policy should be. It is clearly in NATO’s best interest to work with Moscow to build a cooperative Euro-Atlantic security order” (Statement 2010:4).

Moreover, to facilitate an internal dialogue about “the whole range of issues related to nuclear doctrine, new arms control initiatives, and proliferation” as well as possibilities to engage with Russia on tactical nuclear weapons, the Group of Experts recommended to reestablish a Special Consultative Group on Arms Control (Group of Experts 2010:43). During the Senate hearing, Albright suggested that the group “did believe that it was very important to have discussions with the Russians over this,” and that such a group could serve as a forum “to have this kind of a dialogue” (Meier 2010a).

The report of the Group of Experts evoked a heated debate in NATO member states capital cities, further reflecting divisions among Allies. It became clear that finding a common position on extended nuclear deterrence till the Lisbon Summit in November 2010, when the New Strategic Concept was scheduled for publishing, would pose a challenge. Some officials recommended to leave out the specific wording on extended nuclear deterrence from the text altogether to “avoid potentially divisive discussions on this issue” (Meier 2010a). To mitigate

an internal conflict, NATO Secretary General chose a step-by-step approach. The Strategic Concept was to provide a ground for further detailed guidelines on NATO extended nuclear deterrence to be worked out in a follow-up process. Anders Fogh Rasmussen is reported to say in a briefing on 7 September 2010 that NATO would “adopt a new strategic concept which, in broad terms, will give direction (...) And then, of course, it is for follow-up negotiations to produce more concrete facts and figures” (Meier 2010c).

NATO Secretary General Rasmussen released the first draft of the New Strategic Concept on 27 September 2010 (KON/KSZ 27.10.2010:3). According to the schedule, member states governments’ could outline official responses to the draft by 14 October 2010 for the “jumbo ministerial meeting” (Kamp 2010:11) of NATO foreign and defence ministers. The second draft of the new Strategic Concept was released “around October 26 to capitals” (Arms Control Association 2010b:3), leaving them with almost no time for reaction. This posed a serious problem since main divisions on key issues remained. At this time, member states still did not agree on the future role of nuclear weapons in NATO’s defence posture (Meier 2010c).

4.1.10. Lisbon Summit and New Strategic Concept

At the Lisbon Summit, which took place 19-20 November 2010, NATO published its New Strategic Concept. NATO member states kept the reliance on nuclear deterrence (NATO 2010:par.18) but committed themselves to the goal of creating the conditions for further nuclear reductions (NATO 2010:par.26). For the first time, NATO member states officially included arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation as means to facilitate security (NATO 2010a:par.2). At the same time, the document mentioned that “[a]s long as nuclear weapons exist, NATO will remain a nuclear Alliance” (NATO 2010:par.17, cf. NATO 2010: preface), reflecting one of the principles Hillary Clinton outlined in Tallinn. By doing so, the Alliance a priori relativized the need to commit on details for a future nuclear disarmament agenda.

The New Strategic Concept did neither specify the composition of NATO nuclear deterrence nor mentioned any particular roles for nuclear weapons. It also did not bring the terms of use of nuclear weapons closer to the NPR which expanded negative security assurances to NPT

non-nuclear weapon states in compliance with their non-proliferation obligations. The document left these and other key nuclear issues ambiguous and open, failing to give specific directions. As Adam Rotfeld writes, however, “problems which are not easy to solve or not to be solved at all in the nearest foreseeable future will stay open, and it would be naive to expect, that the new strategy will be an instrument to their solving” (Rotfeld 2012:190, translation mine).

One of such issues omitted by the document was arms control on tactical nuclear weapons. The Alliance needed more time to clarify a common position on extended nuclear deterrence and subsequently, on how arms control could strengthen its nuclear doctrine (NATO 2010a:par.2). Therefore, the North Atlantic Council has been tasked to undertake a comprehensive review of:

“NATO’s overall posture in deterring and defending against the full range of threats to the Alliance, taking into account changes in the evolving international security environment. This comprehensive review should be undertaken by all Allies on the basis of deterrence and defence posture principles agreed in the Strategic Concept, taking into account WMD and ballistic missile proliferation. Essential elements of the review would include the range of NATO’s strategic capabilities required, including NATO’s nuclear posture, and missile defence and other means of strategic deterrence and defence” (NATO 2010a:par.30).

To create a venue for the forthcoming review of NATO’s nuclear doctrine, including arms control and disarmament, the North Atlantic Council was tasked to establish a new consultative body, as recommended by the Group of Experts (NATO 2010a: paragraph 31). Any initiative on reducing the reliance on nuclear weapons was, however, conditioned upon Russian reciprocity, a demand previously posed among other things by Radosław Sikorski,

“In any future reductions, our aim should be to seek Russian agreement to increase transparency on its nuclear weapons in Europe and relocate these weapons away from the territory of NATO members. Any further steps must take into account the disparity with the greater Russian stockpiles of short-range nuclear weapons” (NATO 2010: paragraph 26).

Reciprocity became a very contested issue. Experts would name it a “formula for inaction” (Arms Control Association 2010a). It was not clear where NATO puts the threshold for Russian reciprocity, taking into account the quantitative disparity in stockpiles. Did NATO want to put pressure or all the blame on Russia for its inability to conclude a common

position? In what way would reciprocity help to “enhance the political consultations and practical cooperation with Russia in areas of shared interests” (NATO 2010:paragraph 34), when already for years Russia refused to discuss its tactical nuclear weapons unless America withdrew its stockpiles from Europe? It seemed that the condition for Russian reciprocity was a “Pandora box”, successfully blocking unilateral moves by NATO. At the time of publishing the New Strategic Concept, nobody in NATO had an idea on how to frame the reciprocity condition.

Eventually, NATO faced two tasks. First, it had to create a special committee to provide advice on WMD control and disarmament. Second, it had to prepare a comprehensive review of its deterrence and defence capabilities. This stand-alone process had to provide more time for discussion and increase the possibility to find a language that would satisfy all member states. In the words of the then Polish MoD, the new NATO Strategic Concept,

“(…) serves as a kind of broader guide to elaborate more specific NATO policies in certain areas including NATO nuclear posture and we hope that in the follow-on process we’ll be able to tackle NATO deterrence strategy in broader sense, including its declaratory policy (…) So we hope that it will be conducted without artificial deadlines or any-will not preclude any conclusions” (Arms Control Association 2010b:8).

The Strategic Concept did not receive positive comments in the expert community disappointed with the lost opportunity to reexamine the role of nuclear weapons. Paul Ingram, serving as the Executive Director of the British American Security Information Council in London summarised it as “an astonishing demonstration of weakness” that “NATO Heads of State have failed to tackle the Cold War legacy of the deployment of U.S. nuclear gravity bombs in Europe, threatening the credibility of NATO members' claims to be interested in non-proliferation and global disarmament” (Arms Control Association 2010a). Daryl Kimball, serving as Director of the Arms Control Association in Washington assessed that the New Strategic Concept failed to “acknowledge that tactical nuclear bombs are not 'credible' weapons and are irrelevant for the defence of the Alliance” (Arms Control Association 2010a). Oliver Meier, from the Berlin branch of the Arms Control Association, reminded that the new NATO document would be assessed through the prism of the global zero vision (Arms Control Association 2010b:2). He warned of a shift within the Alliance taking into account existing differences in the approach towards nuclear sharing (Arms Control

Association 2010a). The international NGO Pax Christi International warned that NATO, while framing itself as a nuclear Alliance, “sends a signal to would-be proliferators that nuclear weapons are desirable as a component of anyone’s security strategy” (PAX 2010). Hans Kristensen from the Federation of American Scientists summarised the document as representing “one step forward and a half step backward for the Alliance’s nuclear weapons policy”, mainly due to the failure to present practical directions on reducing the number or reliance on nuclear weapons (Kristensen 2010).

4.1.11. The New START Ratification

Even though the Lisbon Summit obliged the North Atlantic Council to reassess NATO’s nuclear posture, it was clear that until the end of 2010 no big changes would occur on that matter. This was due to the United States being internally occupied with the ratification process of the New START treaty. The New START agreement has been negotiated between the United States and Russia to reduce the numbers of their strategic nuclear arsenals. Obama had to conduct a tough domestic fight with a Republican Congress and make huge concessions to the Republican party to get the Senates advice and consent to the ratification. With diplomatic gymnastics, Obama managed to get a “yes” to the treaty on 22 December 2010. Russia completed its domestic ratification process and approved the treaty on 26 January 2011. On 5 February 2011 the New START treaty entered into force, paving the way for further disarmament talks.

The Resolution of Ratification on New START required Barack Obama to seek to initiate “negotiations with the Russian Federation on an agreement to address the disparity between the non-strategic (tactical) nuclear weapons stockpiles of the Russian Federation and of the United States and to secure and reduce tactical nuclear weapons in a verifiable manner” (US Department of State 2010:12Ai). Tom Donilon, serving as National Security Advisor to the president, pointed that addressing tactical nuclear weapons would be the next issue for the Obama administration,

“We will work with our NATO allies to shape an approach to reduce the role and number of U.S. tactical nuclear weapons, as Russia takes reciprocal measures to reduce its nonstrategic forces and relocates its nonstrategic forces away from NATO’s borders. In advance of a new treaty limiting tactical nuclear weapons, we also plan to consult with our allies on reciprocal actions that could be

taken on the basis of parallel steps by each side. As a first step, we would like to increase transparency on a reciprocal basis concerning the numbers, locations, and types of nonstrategic forces in Europe. We will consult with our European allies and invite Russia to join with us to develop this initiative” (Donilon 2011).

One year after tasking the U.S. president to establish negotiations on tactical nuclear weapons in Europe, president Obama had nothing to show off. Some experts blamed Russia as it did not want to talk about tactical nuclear stockpiles separately from conventional forces, missile defence, space weapons, etc. As the ratification declaration of the Russian State Duma indicates,

“questions concerning potential reductions and limitations of non-strategic nuclear arms must be considered in a complex of other problems of arms control, including deployment of a ballistic missile defence system, plans for creation and deployment of strategic delivery vehicles armed with non-nuclear weapons, [and] a risk of space militarisation, as well as existing quantitative and qualitative disparity in conventional arms, on the basis of necessity to maintain strategic stability and strict observance of a principle of equal and indivisible security for all” (Diakov et al. 2011).

4.1.12. Preparing the DDPR

In the meantime, discussions within NATO on the mandate of a future deterrence and defence posture review developed very slowly (Meier 2011). The first meeting of NATO’s Deterrence and Defence Posture Review Committee that was tasked to find a consensus on the role of nuclear weapons in NATO took place on 25 January 2011 (Kamp 2011:1). In an informal meeting in March 2011, NATO defence ministers set up the WMD Control and Disarmament Committee (WCDC) as mandated in Lisbon. Due to diverging views on its format, participants failed to define its scope, the period of its work or its relation to the final deliverable - the Deterrence and Defence Posture Review (DDPR) report. While France opted for the new body to have limited time and scope tied to the posture review, the United States and Germany favoured a broad, ongoing stand-alone review (Meier 2011, 2011a).

The NATO High-Level Group (HLG), a senior advisory body to the Nuclear Planning Group (NPG) on nuclear policy and planning matters, reviewed the DDPR’s nuclear element. The WCDC was only mandated to elaborate the Alliance’s role in arms control, including “possible reciprocal measures aiming to reinforce and increase transparency, mutual trust and confidence with Russia” (Meier 2011b).

At the Berlin NATO foreign ministers meeting in April 2011, Poland, Norway, Germany and the Netherlands, supported by Belgium, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Iceland, Luxembourg and Slovenia submitted a non-paper on increasing transparency and confidence about tactical nuclear weapons in Europe. The text suggested seven measures, which in brief aimed at:

- (1) using the NATO-Russia Council to engage Russia
- (2) exchange information on tactical nuclear weapons
- (3) agree on a standard reporting formula for tactical nuclear weapons
- (4) agree on notifications within the NRC of any plans to move tactical nuclear weapons
- (5) exchange of visits by military officials
- (6) exchange of expectations for further reductions
- (7) holding an NRC seminar on nuclear doctrines in Poland

Rose Gottemoeller, serving as Assistant Secretary of State for Arms Control, Verification, and Compliance also indicated American willingness “to increase transparency on a reciprocal basis with Russia” by starting with a common definition for nonstrategic nuclear weapons (Global Security Newswire 2011). However, when in 2011, the NATO-Russia Council published the Consolidated Glossary of Cooperation covering around 200 terms in the nuclear field, it did not include a definition of tactical nuclear weapons.

On 12 July 2011, several key European experts on nuclear policy urged NATO Secretary General to limit the role of nuclear weapons to speed up further reductions (Letter 2011). Experts aimed at five key issues to be taken into account in the posture review process:

- (1) clarify that the fundamental purpose of nuclear weapons for the Alliance is to deter a nuclear attack;
- (2) the U.S. non-strategic nuclear forces deployed in Europe and assigned to NATO do not serve a deterrence or retaliatory function that cannot be provided by the strategic nuclear forces or conventional military assets of Alliance members;
- (3) endorse further, verifiable reductions of all types of U.S. and Russian nuclear forces—strategic and nonstrategic, deployed and non-deployed—as well as nuclear weapons delivery systems;

- (4) to abandon the modernisation of the B61 nuclear warheads stationed in Europe and the dual-capable aircraft designated to carry them;
- (5) reiterate NATO's assurance that its current and future missile defence capabilities are not "targeted" at Russia's strategic forces.

On 18 April 2012, the Visegrad Group published a declaration entitled "Responsibility for a Strong NATO". Here, Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Defence of the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia declared that,

"A continued and adequate presence of U.S. capabilities in Europe is an integral part of this posture. The Deterrence and Defence Posture Review should also reconfirm NATO's readiness and willingness to engage Russia on the basis of reciprocity on all topics, including transparency of tactical nuclear weapons. NATO should also discuss the consequences of increased defence spending and acquisition of advanced capabilities by some traditional and emerging powers" (Visegrad Declaration 2012).

Just before the posture review presentation at the May 2012 NATO Chicago Summit, Radosław Sikorski and Jonas Gahr Støre published another op-ed in which they highlighted the demand for Russian reciprocity in reductions. The main idea, however, was to create restraint by demanding greater transparency and enhanced mutual trust as preconditions of further actions on tactical nuclear weapons (Støre/Sikorski 2012).

4.1.13. The DDPR

The NATO Deterrence and Defence Posture Review (DDPR) translates the NATO Strategic Concept into requirements for military forces and determines the appropriate mix of capabilities. It has been based upon two assumptions laid out by NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen: "first, that no Ally will take unilateral decisions; second, that as long as there are nuclear weapons in the world, NATO will need a nuclear deterrent" (NATO PC 2010). Since positions within the Alliance did not change significantly during the year and a half from publishing the New Security Strategy, nobody expected a dramatic shift in language.

Three different groups of countries could still be identified in the debate on the DDPR,

- countries that saw the DDPR as an opportunity for NATO to clarify its doctrine and its priorities, by the Lisbon Summit Declaration,
- countries (e.g. Germany and Norway) which saw the DDPR as an opportunity for changing NATO's policy regarding nuclear weapons and disarmament,
- countries (e.g. France, Poland) preferring a status quo and trying to prevent NATO from changing (Synthesis 2012:5).

The review text sets deterrence in the centre of NATO's military strategy (DDPR 2012:paragraph 2). It acknowledges the quantitative status quo of nuclear weapons as satisfactory (DDPR 2012: paragraph 8). At the same time, the report requires the United States and NATO host states to maintain the nuclear stockpile, infrastructure and deployment vehicles in good condition, ensuring that they "remain safe, secure, and effective" (DDPR 2012:paragraph 11).

This, however, indicates an official, indirect consent for a qualitative upgrade of the Alliances nuclear capabilities and serves as a confirmation for the B61 Life Extension Program and the modernisation of the respective delivery vehicles (dual capable aircraft). According to a report by the United States Government Accountability Office, already in September 2008 the Department of Defence (DOD) and the National Nuclear Security Administration began a "study on military requirements and design options for extending the B61 bomb's service life" (GAO 2011:ii). NATO member states were briefed by the U.S. European Command on its plans in early 2010, while in April 2010 the "DOD and the NATO allies reached agreement on key military characteristics of the bomb" (GAO 2011:13).

Furthermore, the DDPR repeats the language from the new Strategic Concept on the necessity for NATO to remain a nuclear Alliance and by indicating nuclear forces intended for deterrence:

"As long as nuclear weapons exist, NATO will remain a nuclear Alliance. The supreme guarantee of the security of the Allies is provided by the strategic nuclear forces of the Alliance, particularly those of the United States; the independent strategic nuclear forces of the United Kingdom and France, which have a deterrent role of their own, contribute to the overall deterrence and security of the Allies" (DDPR 2012: paragraph 9).

It reminds of “equitable and sustainable distribution of roles, responsibilities, and burdens” within the Alliance, associating them with the transatlantic link and alliance cohesion (DDPR 2012:1).

Along with keeping the deterrence paradigm alive, NATO member states also refer to their responsibility “to create the conditions for a world without nuclear weapons in accordance with the goals of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty” (DDPR 2012: paragraph 24). They task the North Atlantic Council to find alternative nuclear burden-sharing arrangements with broadest possible participation that enable to reduce their reliance on non-strategic nuclear weapons based in Europe (DDPR 2012:paragraph 12). Moreover, the NAC was obliged to task appropriate committees to consider “what NATO would expect to see in the way of reciprocal Russian actions to allow for significant reductions in forward-based non-strategic nuclear weapons assigned to NATO” (DDPR 2012:paragraph 27). As such, Russian reciprocity became a key condition for any NATO move to reduce its tactical nuclear weapons. At the same time, NATO members set out that they expect Russia to exchange information on its stockpiles of tactical nuclear weapons by pointing to the NATO-Russia Council as a forum to discuss proposals on transparency and confidence-building measures,

“Allies look forward to continuing to develop and exchange transparency and confidence-building ideas with the Russian Federation in the NATO-Russia Council, with the goal of developing detailed proposals on and increasing mutual understanding of NATO’s and Russia’s non-strategic nuclear force postures in Europe” (DDPR 2012:25).

In this way, they also effectively restrained further reductions as Russia did not indicate any interest to tackle the issue of tactical nuclear weapons,

“(…) NATO is prepared to consider further reducing its requirement for non-strategic nuclear weapons assigned to the Alliance in the context of reciprocal steps by Russia, taking into account the greater Russian stockpiles of non-strategic nuclear weapons stationed in the Euro-Atlantic area” (DDPR 2012: paragraph 26).

Eventually, the Alliance went through the revision process but did not come up with anything progressive, substantive or innovative. It kept the status quo, at least until a new formula on confidence building with Russia emerged, and Moscow decided to discuss tactical nuclear weapons. The DDPR restricted room for manoeuvre by making withdrawal contingent on

Russia's reciprocating. As a consequence, NATO put itself at the mercy of Moscow. The controversy of this step may additionally be illustrated by the fact that the historical connection between tactical nuclear postures of NATO and Russia no longer existed. To sum up, as Andras Simonyi, Managing Director of the Centre for Transatlantic Relations at the School for Advanced International Studies reflected, "some summits just kick the ball further" (Feffer 2012).

4.1.14. The way from Chicago

The post-Prague debate on nuclear deterrence in NATO has been very centripetal and "appeared detached from global military developments" (Rühle 2013:146). Neither NATO's New Strategic Concept, nor the DDPR did redefine extended nuclear deterrence or dealt boldly with the question of reducing the number of tactical nuclear weapons in Europe. A common feature of both documents is a lack of a grounded justification for the further stationing of American tactical nuclear weapons on European territory.

Because engaging Russia on tactical nuclear weapons failed after the 2000 HLG Report, not much change was believed to happen after the Chicago Summit. To counteract, on 20 April 2012 the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative involving Australia, Canada, Chile, Germany, Japan, Mexico, the Netherlands, Poland, Turkey and the United Arab Emirates submitted a working paper on transparency of nuclear weapons to the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. By doing so, they focused the attention of the international community on the problem underlying any progress on tactical nuclear weapons - lack of transparency on existing stockpiles (NPT Working Paper 2012) - in hope for the international community to exert pressure on Russia.

In the aftermath of the DDPR, NATO agreed on a new arms control body - the Special Advisory and Consultative Arms Control, Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Committee "to prepare a dialogue on confidence-building and transparency measures on tactical weapons with Russia" (Meier 2013). Since February 2013, the new committee worked on a catalogue of specific transparency and confidence-building measures (TCBM). According to diplomatic sources, the committee prepared a list of five measures, including "joint seminars, joint

declarations on nuclear policy, information exchanges, joint visits at former deployment sites of tactical nuclear weapons, and cooperation to deal with the consequences of nuclear accidents and incidents” (Meier/Lunn 2014). Unfortunately, NATO did not adopt the list as planned during the NATO ministerial meeting in December 2013. Before the event, the Russian delegation informed NATO that Moscow was not willing to discuss tactical nuclear weapons (Meier/Lunn 2014). With the Ukraine crisis escalating and NATO suspending all practical civilian and military cooperation with Russia on 1 April 2014 (NATO 2014), the Special Advisory and Consultative Arms Control, Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Committee did not meet since February 2014. Although their topicality is actual as ever, tactical nuclear weapons again became a dead matter.

4.2. Summary

NATO nuclear policy comes as a result of long and complex negotiations in which 28 parties have to find a common denominator that corresponds to their capabilities, interests and addresses their threat assessments. Simultaneously, the international community observes NATO’s decisions creating pressure, issuing ideas and providing criticism. Thus the official Polish position has not been formed in a political vacuum.

This chapter demonstrates how international developments and individual NATO allies pressure to withdraw American nuclear weapons from Europe forced the Polish government to take a position. Warsaw was pushed into a debate it did not want to start in the first place. It grasped the challenge and became one of the most vocal and productive allies in the debate.

The Polish governments’ position evolved from a quiet status-quo defender (Kulesa 2010), through a supporter of a bilateral Russia-U.S. arms control regime (Bildt/Sikorski 2010), to an advocate of a multilateral NATO-Russian reciprocity-based step-by-step solution aimed at the reduction of tactical nuclear weapons in Europe (Støre/Sikorski 2010 and 2012).

However, tabling several proposals which found themselves in the 2010 New Strategic Concept and the 2012 DDPR, Warsaw inevitably added to creating what proponents of nuclear disarmament see as an intended deadlock. Conditioning nuclear disarmament on Russian reciprocity was doomed to failure due to Moscow's unchanged disinterest to discuss tactical nuclear weapons.

5. Neorealist Analysis of the Polish Attitude on Extended Nuclear Deterrence

This chapter analyses the Polish governments' attitude towards extended nuclear deterrence through the prism of neorealism. The section starts with an overview of the paradigm. It proceeds with discussing the neorealist stance on the role of nuclear weapons. Using this perspective, I formulate a hypothesis on the role of the B61. The empirical analysis starts with discussing the material and perceived power position of Poland, which create the departure point for the Polish understanding of the B61 as a means of deterrence and assurance.

5.1. Realist foreign policy theory

For realists, the lack of an institution regulating the activities among states leaves them on their own to deal with each other (Waltz 1979:88). The realist actor model reflects a rationalist approach. Main actors are goal-oriented, self-interested states, making their decisions on cost-benefit calculations. The anarchical system implies an ever-present threat to and uncertainty over a states' security. States, thus, constantly worry about their survival. Kenneth Waltz even exaggerates this statement arguing that the state of nature is a state of war among states (Waltz 1979:102). However, as he explains "this is meant not in the sense that war constantly occurs but in the sense that, with each state deciding for itself whether or not to use force, war may at any time break out" (Ibid.). Unfortunately, from here on, realism diffuses into various strands reflecting distinct assumptions on instruments states can use to deal with systemic threats and constant insecurity. We distinguish classical realism, neorealism, offensive realism, defensive realism and neoclassical realism. For the purpose of this study, I focus on neorealism, on the principles of which nuclear deterrence was initially conceptualised.

A neorealist Waltz sees 'survival' as the primary "prerequisite to achieving any goals that states may have" (Waltz 1979:91). From this perspective, states aim to preserve the *status quo* by maintaining an existing balance of power. In case of changes to their power position, states try to balance them out. As the possibility of conflict is always present, states are rather short-term oriented (Brooks 1997:450). They do so to be constantly prepared to face an armed enemy threatening their security.

Waltz also acknowledges that “[b]eyond the survival motive, the aims of states may be endlessly varied” (Waltz 1979:91). Nevertheless, these goals shall not interfere in aiming at fulfilling the superior task - survival. Without the first goal, none others are possible to achieve.

Neorealism recognises material (objective) reality as a constituent of foreign policy. The characteristics of the system *per se* (e.g. polarity) and a states’ power (e.g. capabilities, resources) determine the states’ locus in the system and its subsequent flexibility to act (Baumann et al. 1998:10-13).

To make the paradigm useful, one needs to set a political problem into the material framework, looking at the aggregation of power potential and its territorial dispersion. All units are distinguished primarily by their material capabilities - economic and military power (Waltz 1979:97). Power translates into resources and serves as an instrument to protect or expand national interests. It is “the ability to assert one’s interests in the international system” (Baumann et al. 1998:6).

For Waltz, it is the balancing of capabilities between states that constantly takes place in order to reestablish equilibrium. Bajema gives a more precise account of the balancing mechanism. She observed that in the short term states compete with each other by balancing against changes in relative capabilities, while in the long term they emulate the successful practices of other states (Bajema 2010:69).

Waltz identified “external” and “internal” means of self-help (Waltz 1979:118). The former type comprises activities and assets to strengthen and enlarge one’s Alliance or to weaken and shrink an opposing one, while the latter includes means to increase economic capability, increase military strength and to develop appropriate strategies. If they can, states prefer internal balancing as an independent and durable means of self-help.

However, Waltz does not ignore cooperation as meaningless. His defensive approach towards nuclear weapons makes him conclude that strategic arms agreements “can benefit countries economically and help to improve their relations” (Waltz 1990:741). He just does not expect cooperation patterns to be of long durability. “In international politics, friendliness and hostility are transient qualities” (Waltz 1981:9).

Neorealism does not claim that domestic politics is indifferent to international relations (Rathbun 2008:296). While making a priori assumptions about the interests and motives of states it, however, does not distinguish states according to their internal characteristics, portraying them as “black boxes”. Thus neorealism explains international outcomes as phenomena of two or more entities interacting without digging into their domestic features (Taliaferro 2000-2001:133). In other words, it explains “the constraints that confine all states” (Waltz 1979:122). This is because Waltz’ intended to figure out recurring patterns of international relations. Even he acknowledges that state reactions “depend not only on the international constraints but also on the characteristics of states” (Waltz 1979:22). Entities that make non-optimal responses or take domestically driven decisions disobedient to the laws of the international structure “will be selected out” (Waltz 1979:76-77). Thus, although neorealism “cannot make predictions about foreign policy behaviour of individual states” (Taliaferro 2000-2001:133), it sets their existence and actions into a particular context that defines their choices.

5.2. Neorealism and nuclear weapons

Neorealist's dealing with nuclear weapons focus primarily on strategic stockpiles contextualising them within the balance of power and deterrence theory. In his seminal work *The Spread of Nuclear Weapons: More May be Better*, Kenneth Waltz explains potential desirability of slow and selective nuclear proliferation as having a peace-inducing effect (Waltz 1981:29). Nuclear weapons neither change the systemic order principle, nor the system itself. Therefore, great powers should not worry about a change in their systemic position. However, “for the first time in the history of the modern state system, a great power’s use of force against its nuclear-armed adversary would ensure a redistribution of capabilities that is unfavourable to both” (Weber 1990:63).

For Waltz, reducing imbalances in military power, new nuclear states produce more regional and international stability, not less (Waltz 2012). The stabilising effect of nuclear weapons stems from their deterrence effect. In his earlier article *Nuclear Myths and Political Realities*, Waltz claims that nuclear weapons make strategy obsolete, reasoning after Bernard Brodie that their effect stems “simply from their presence” (Waltz 1990:738). They deter wars due to

their unspoken destructiveness and leaders “rationality” in estimating consequences of their use (Waltz 1981:17, cf. Waltz/Sagan 1995:113).

Explaining the deterrence effect of nuclear weapons, Waltz takes a defensive position. He claims that nuclear security results from mutually beneficial restraint. “A deterrent strategy makes it unnecessary for a country to fight for the sake of increasing its security, and this removes a major cause of war” (Waltz 1981:6). As he goes further, “the fighting of offensive wars designed to increase national security - also became pointless” (Waltz 1981:23). Victory is “no longer a prerequisite for hurting the enemy” (Waltz 1981:24). The most effective deterrence threat stems from possessing a second strike capability, which is not sensitive to a first strike attack. Those forces are the best available option to induce cautiousness in potentially aggressive and/or misjudged behaviour. Adversaries aware of the consequences of a nuclear response, will be afraid of escalation. Thus, according to Waltz, “uncertainty deters” (Waltz 1981:15).

At the same time, deterrence is not a failure-proof concept. For Waltz, deterrence has a loop-effect. In case deterrence fails, states are presumed to be trying to keep forces under control as they will be deterred by the possibility of further, even more disastrous, escalation. “The presence of nuclear weapons forces them to figure out how to de-escalate, not how to escalate” (Waltz 1990:740). If nevertheless, escalation happens, Waltz sees particularly tactical nuclear weapons as a de-escalation instrument. Moreover, the mere possibility of war growing into a nuclear exchange or attack discourages states from fighting conventional wars in case one party possesses nuclear forces. Waltz thus argues that nuclear weapons discourage states from increasing their military spending on conventional capabilities (Waltz 1981:21). In *Waltz Responds to Sagan* (Waltz/Sagan 1995), he rules out any possibility for organisational failure on the development of usage axis. Survival is the ultimate test of the learning ability (Waltz/Sagan 1995:93). He thus argues that past years, in which the World enjoyed peace, is a sufficient factor for positive predictions of the future. “With more nuclear states the world will have a promising future” (Waltz 1981:30).

5.3. Framing the B61 from the realist perspective

From a realist perspective, states safeguard their security and handle anarchy using two strategies - the balance of power and if self-help is not possible - bandwagoning. Under each strategy, the B61 fulfils another role.

(1) The B61 as a means of deterrence.

From the perspective of the balance of power, the B61 deters potentially enemies from attacking European NATO member states. Their role includes but is not limited to filling in a capability gap (real or perceived) and signalling intent.

In their origin, U.S. tactical nuclear weapons were conceptualised as a tool to balance Soviet conventional superiority. They have been introduced to NATO as a “cheap”, but effective means of defence for all Alliance members against predicted Soviet expansionist aspirations and due to the conventional indefensibility of some NATO outposts, particularly Berlin (Schulte 2012:16-20).

This historical account presents an interesting implication not accounted by realist scholars. We cannot use Waltz's' logic that “strategic nuclear weapons deter strategic nuclear weapons” (Waltz 1979:185) for a parallel on tactical nuclear weapons. American tactical nuclear weapons were intended as a war-field weapon, aimed as a potential response to conventional forces. They were conceptualised as part of a nuclear-conventional equation. Their primary function was considered defence, while the deterrence dimension did not crystallise before 1957 and was basically due to security deliberations of hosting countries, not balancing.

The turning point for acknowledging the deterrence rather than defence role of tactical nuclear weapons were conclusions from the NATO military exercises Carte Blanche (1955) and Lion Noire (1957) which leaked to the public demonstrating that the employment of tactical nuclear weapons will have tremendously devastating effects upon Alliance members (Leitenberg 1978:33-34). With the 1967 doctrine of flexible response tactical nuclear weapons have been declared as tools for war termination, rather than instruments for war fighting, again implying their deterrence effect (conditioned by the acknowledgement that nuclear

deescalation is a convincing concept). However, it was only in 1986 when the NATO Nuclear Planning Group decided that the initial employment of tactical nuclear weapons would be mainly directed at the territory of the aggressor, aiming as a signal to escalate the conflict to a strategic level, but without necessarily inducing military effects on the opponent (Schulte 2012:55-56). While Soviets saw tactical nuclear weapons as supplementary to the conventional stockpiles, NATO saw them as complementary tools. However, since the end of the Cold War, the deterrent role of tactical nuclear weapons diminished considerably.

(2) The B61 serves as means of reassurance.

As states do not always have the position to defend themselves against another power, they often bandwagon on military capabilities of another ally. Small or weak states that are not able (or they decided not) to build their own nuclear arsenals can “join a balancing Alliance with a nuclear power, utilising a promise of nuclear retaliation [or denial—author’s note] by that ally as a means of extended deterrence” (Sagan 1996-1997:57).

As discussed in sub-chapter 2.3., to make sure that allies receive appropriate defence and/or deterrence, they ask for several means of reassurance, including physical presence of military capabilities as well as verbal or written statements of support. According to the neorealist perspective, however, what matters is only what one can see. As such, verbal or written statements have much less credibility unless they are strengthened with tangible means on the ground. Therefore, the B61 fulfils the role of a firm means of reassurance, guaranteeing that the United States is serious about securing its NATO allies.

In the following, I will analyse whether the material and perceptual conditions allow interpreting the B61 in these two roles and whether these roles apply for the official Polish understanding.

5.4. Polish threat assessment

In the first step, I will identify whom in their closer and/or wider neighbourhood Polish decision-makers perceive as a threat. As neorealism is a positivistic paradigm based upon the ontological principle of objective material reality, it focuses on actual capabilities and threats resulting out of force balancing. Looking for the Polish interpretation of the B61’s role in

Europe, I work in a constructivist manner. Thus, in order to assess the existing military balance of power from a constructivist perspective, I analyse the relation between data and its perception.

From the neorealist perspective, threats are observable military actions (increase in force levels, demonstration of military capability both conventional and nuclear) and/or official statements indicating the willingness to use military means to enforce particular national interests (military doctrines, unobservable but channeled private threats, public ones) (Black 2010:4-6). However, whether particular capabilities, signals, force changes, moves and statements constitute a threat is not the question of their mere existence, but rather of their interpretation as such. Only if the objective reality is perceived to be a threat, material capabilities are relevant to this study. In other words, irrelevant the objective force projection in the Polish neighbourhood, its interpretation by the Polish government in terms of a threat is what matters.

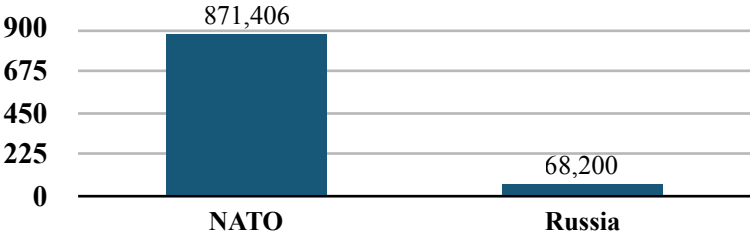
Poland is a member of NATO, which guarantees stability in terms of power balancing with most states in its neighbourhood. Only Russia, Belarus and Ukraine, which are not part of NATO might be perceived in terms of power balancing. As Ukraine is considered a friendly state, and Belarus a satellite state dependent on Moscow, Russia is the relevant state to be considered from the power balance perspective. Warsaw finds itself in an “asymmetrically distant great power” relation, so a situation with only one great power in the closest neighbourhood of a state, and that is Russia. As the Polish government chose to acquire military security through NATO, I put the Polish-Russian power equation into the context of NATO, especially reflecting on the position of member states representing CEE.

5.4.1. State of conventional forces

There are several indicators to measure the strength of military power, among other things military expenditure in real terms and as a percentage of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), a number of particular military equipment (e.g. tanks, combat aircraft) or soldiers on active duty and in reserve.

A comparison of military expenditures in 2013 published by The International Institute of Strategic Studies estimates an extensive advantage on the side of NATO with a total of 871,41 bn USD over the Russian military budget with 68,2 bn USD (see Figure 6).

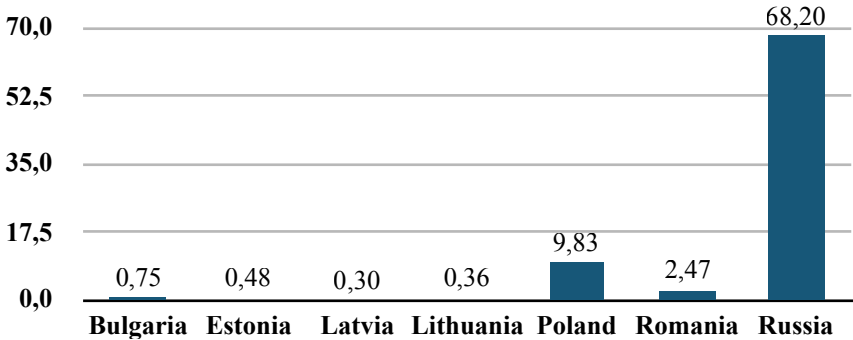
Figure 6. NATO and Russia defence spending in 2013 (USD bn)



Source: IISS The Military Balance (2014)

NATO superiority in military expenditures, however, does not tell us anything about specific capabilities behind these numbers, leaving detailed characteristics and locations out of the picture. When comparing the geographical dispersion of military expenditures in CEE and Russia, it does not look as favourable as in the NATO-Russia comparison. Here, CEE states heavily lag behind Russia (see Figure 7).

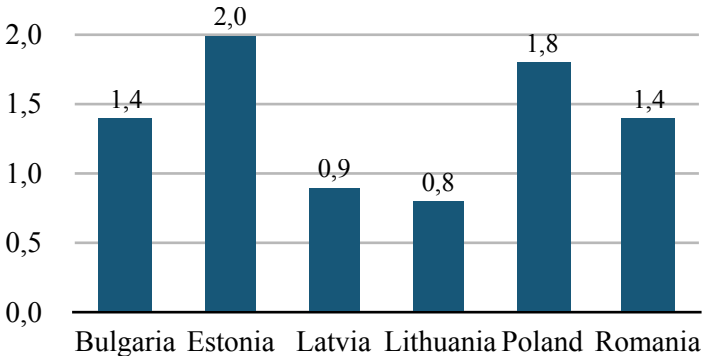
Figure 7. Defence spending among selected CEE states and Russia in 2013 (USD bn)



Source: IISS The Military Balance (2014)

This is because most CEE states are small economies additionally underspending on defence and thus heavily relying on the potential of other allies. Most of them do not reach the commitment agreed in 2006 by NATO to allot a minimum of 2% of GDP on defence (see Figure 8).

Figure 8. Defence spending among selected CEE states in 2013 (% of GDP)

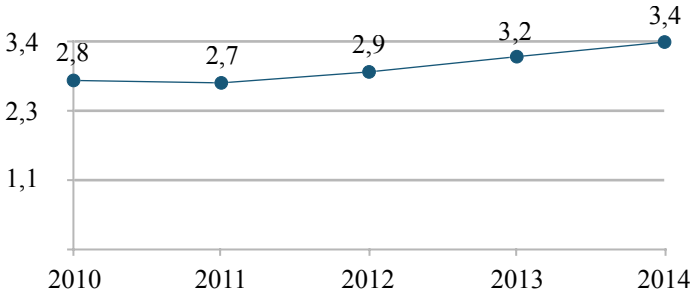


Source: IISS The Military Balance 2014 and NATO (2014)

The only exception in the region is Estonia (2% GDP) with Poland slightly lagging behind (1,8% GDP). However, these quotas are based on the NATO definition of defence expenditure and differ from figures quoted by national authorities. As such, according to data provided by the Polish Ministry of Defence, its military budget reaches 1.95% of GDP (MON 2013) which is mandated by the Polish law (Ustawa 2009 art. 7 ust. 1). In light of Russian annexation of Crimea and the war in Ukraine, the Polish government plans to increase its military budget to meet 2% of GDP (Prezydent 2014). Already this brief comparison reveals clearly that the Polish military power is much weaker than that of Russia.

In contrast, the Russian military expenditures oscillate around 3% of GDP (see Figure 9), according to SIPRI data even around 4% (SIPRI 2014). In 2008, Defence Minister Anatoly Serdyukov launched a force modernisation and military reform process. Subsequently, the Russian military spending started to rise. This enables Russia to reform its army to be capable of classical large-scale movements of troops and more unconventional operations, smaller in character and utilising special forces, intelligence, cyber- and information warfare. Increase in defence budget enables maintenance, professionalisation, training and large-scale exercises which became a military routine. On the top of this reforms, Moscow launched a ten-year weapons modernisation program worth around 720 bn USD in 2010. Modernisation efforts replace retired Soviet-era strategic equipment with modern and cheaper to maintain capabilities. Conventional re-equipment continues. To put these expenditures in relation, they are about a U.S. annual defence budget. As such, they do not pose a direct threat to the strategic stability between Russia and the U.S., but change the power equation with Russian European and Asian neighbouring countries.

Figure 9. Russian military expenditure between 2010-2014 (% of GDP)



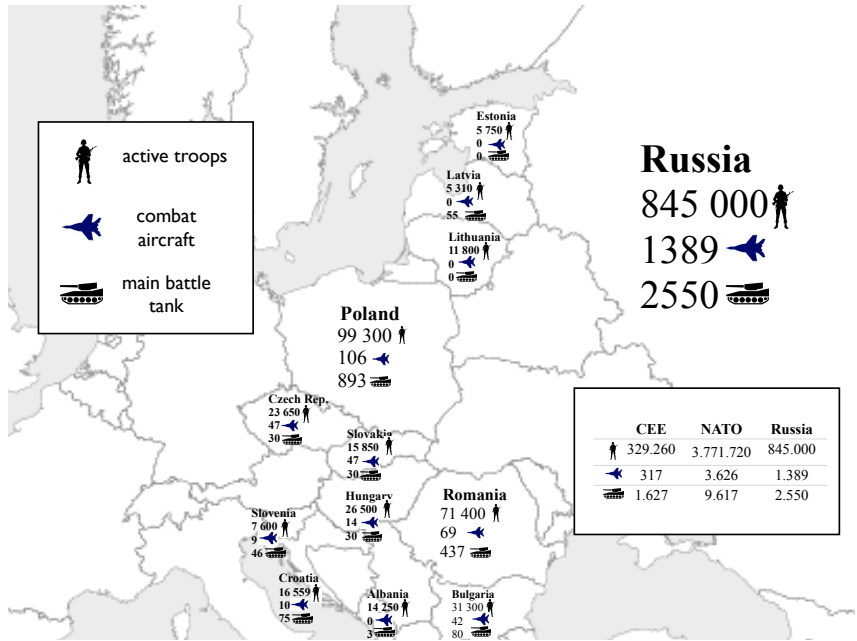
Source: IISS The Military Balance (2014)

Figure 10 presents a comparison of active troops, main battle tanks and combat aircraft in NATO, CEE and Russia. Of a combined strength of around 3,8 mn soldiers in NATO, 99 300 are based in Poland and 329 260 in CEE altogether, less than nine percent of the NATO overall (IISS 2014). At the same time, active Russian troops consisting of 845 000 soldiers are almost two and a half as large as active troops of all CEE states taken together.

While NATO has almost three times as much combat aircraft as Russia has (3 636 and 1 389 respectively), CEE states have one-fourth of Russian capability (317). The biggest numerical match accounts for main battle tanks with a NATO overall of 9 617, Russia possessing 2 550 and CEE possessing 1 627 of these type of equipment. While active troops, main battle tanks and combat aircraft are only a fragment of the wide palette of equipment available to a modern army, it should visualise the challenge in balancing military capabilities of different types between states of different power capabilities.

An additional factor shaping the Polish governments’ threat assessment in respect to Russia is lack of transparency in terms of military capabilities stationed in the Kaliningrad Oblast, an issue frequently mentioned in parliamentary discussions (cf. KSZ/KON 27.10.2010, KSZ/KON 24.02.2011:8). In official discussions, the Kaliningrad Oblast is referred to as an “unsinkable cruiser” (KSZ/KON 24.02.2011:8) or “the most heavily militarised area in Europe” (White Book 2013:113-114). It serves an important role in the Russian security policy. This results from its geographical location on edge with the EU and NATO, the stationing of heavy military assets and the Kaliningrad port - the only one non-freezing port on the Baltic Sea.

Figure 10. Comparison of selected military capabilities in CEE countries and Russia in 2013



Source: IISS The Military Balance (2014)

Around 15 000 soldiers station in the Kaliningrad Oblast. Most worrisome from the Polish/ CEE perspective, however, are Russian anti-access/area-denial (A2/AD) capabilities (e.g. S-300, S-400 anti-aircraft systems) paired with offensive missile systems (e.g. Iskander nuclear-capable missiles), which might deprive NATO’s freedom of movement in the Baltic region.

In fact, individual defence against Russia remains an illusory concept for most CEE states, including Poland. Thus, in case of a conflict with Russia, Warsaw would heavily rely on the defence support from its NATO allies. The deployment of allied military capabilities in crisis is a function of political decision-making and time needed to relocate forces. Polish experts estimate this time to be three months conditioning NATO unity on sending such support to defend Poland (Trójka 2015). The Polish military forces allow withstanding a major attack for no longer than three days (Ibid.). At the same time, allied capabilities that exist “on the spot” are perceived most valuable as potentially ready to be used at any given moment. This reflects the “boots on the ground” concept which lies at the heart of extended assurance credibility.

In terms of military equipment and infrastructure, of all 28 NATO installations, only five are in CEE states, while 23 are located in Western Europe (Lukas/Mitchell 2014:3). Also, the

dispersion of military troops and equipment in NATO is a relict of the Cold War and depicts strategic planning between NATO and the Warsaw Pact.

The biggest provider of military forces in Europe is the United States. However, Poland and other CEE states do not profit extensively from these deployments. Of all 81 244 U.S. forces in Europe, 239 are permanently located in CEE member states with 65 deployed in Poland as of March 2014 (DMDC 2014). This makes 0.06% of U.S. military soldiers deployed abroad. In contrast, the United States deploys significant military forces counting up to 79 651 soldiers to Western European countries, which makes 98% of its total foreign deployments (see Table 1).

Table 1. U.S. military staff deployments in selected NATO states as of March 2014

Country	Total	Total Military	Army	Navy	Marine Corps	Air Force	Total Military Dependents
WESTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES							
Belgium	1 359	1 203	640	114	9	440	156
France	145	64	20	16	4	24	81
Germany	47 429	40 328	24 975	472	898	13 983	7 101
Italy	11 862	11 080	3 616	3 571	17	3 876	782
Portugal	1 165	708	2	52	6	648	457
Spain	2 095	1 797	24	1 389	22	362	298
Turkey	1 972	1 518	119	7	2	1 390	454
United Kingdom	13 624	9 485	236	307	18	8 924	4 139
EASTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES							
Albania	4	3	1	1	0	1	1
Bulgaria	20	9	3	3	0	3	11
Croatia	9	4	4	0	0	0	5
Czech Republic	11	7	4	0	0	3	7
Estonia	11	4	2	2	0	0	7
Hungary	77	55	5	0	0	50	22
Latvia	10	1	0	0	1	0	9
Lithuania	4	4	2	2	0	0	0
Poland	65 (0,08%)	44 (0,06%)	18	4	1	21	21
Romania	13	11	4	1	0	6	2
Slovakia	10	4	1	0	0	3	6
Slovenia	5	3	0	0	0	3	2
CEE	239						
Europe	81 244	67 383	29 865	6 343	988	30 187	13 861

Source: DMDC (2014)

Poland hosts the Joint Force Training Centre (JFTC), the 3rd NATO Signal Battalion in Bydgoszcz, and the Multinational Corps Northeast in Szczecin. The JFTC supports training

for NATO and partner forces to improve joint and combined tactical interoperability. The staff of the JFTC consists of officers, noncommissioned officers and NATO civilians from eighteen allied nations and counts 84 personnel (Plaaten 2010). The Multinational Corps Northeast prepares NATO land forces from 12 member countries for missions to be held within 91 to 180 days. Its personnel strength in peacetime is 105 employees (JFTC 2014). Both locations do not make for a significant deployment of military personnel, also because they lack permanent military equipment. Additionally, next to the few permanent NATO installations, 6000 soldiers from 28 NATO member nations, Sweden, Finland and Ukraine took part in the Steadfast Jazz Exercise in November 2013, for the first time to be held in CEE.

Next to NATO facilities, American engagement in Poland began under George W. Bush. It was implemented only in 2010 as part of the deal for the future deployment of ballistic missile defence interceptors in Poland. In nine rotational rounds, 120 American and 20 Polish soldiers were training with U.S. Patriot batteries in Ustka, Toruń and Morąg.

Since November 2013, Poland also hosts the American Aviation Detachment at Łask and Powidz (AVDET). With 10 USAF permanent support personnel, the AVDET aims regular joint training exercises to strengthen interoperability and rotational deployment of U.S. military aircraft (Lockheed Martin F-16 fighters and C-130 Hercules transport aircraft) with a total number of personnel surging up to 250 uniformed military personnel and civilian contractors in training periods. Monthly exercises take part four times a year.

According to Gareth Jennings, the IHS Jane's Aviation Desk Editor, the location of the AVDET is a pragmatic decision “because the USAF's AVDET was set up with the F-16 (for joint training with the Polish Air Force, which also operates the type), rather than a desire by the United States to deploy ground-attack-capable aircraft near NATO's eastern borders” (Jennings 2014). According to Andrew A. Michta, former Director of the German Marshall Fund's Warsaw office, “Łask is not yet a full-blown U.S. base, but the symbolism of the U.S. Air Force's presence in Poland is unmistakable” (Michta 2012). After Tomasz Siemioniak, Minister of Defence (2011-2015), the F-16 aviation detachment “allows for a rapid reception of American support” (Weisgerber 2014).

Additionally, Phase 3 of the European Phased Adaptive Approach (EPAA), a U.S. national contribution to the NATO missile defence architecture, foresees a deployment of an Aegis-Ashore site in Poland with a SPY-1 radar and 24 SM-3 missiles in 2018. The system will be operated by 200-500 (some sources mention app. 300) soldiers of the United States Navy (Bierndgarski 2013).

In contrast to the exercises and military deployments that Poland perceived as reassuring, the American announcement of its “pivot to Asia” in 2011 caused uncertainty whether the United States will limit its military presence in Europe. In a Foreign Policy Article, Hillary Clinton named Asia the “key driver of global politics,” calling for “substantially increased investment - diplomatic, economic, strategic, and otherwise - in the Asia-Pacific region” (Clinton 2011). The Russian military campaign on the Crimean peninsula and in Ukraine starting in 2013/2014 made U.S. to subsequently review and strengthen their force presence on the European continent, in particular in CEE (cf. White House 2014). The announcement of the strategic turn, however, introduced uncertainty into the Polish strategic thinking about how long and under which conditions the U.S. will still be willing for the defence of its European allies.

As a response to this uncertainty, applying the realist self-help principle, the Polish government set up military forces technical modernisation plan and the development of anti-aircraft and missile defence, known as the “Komorowski doctrine” (Koziej 2013), and scheduled for the period between 2013 and 2022 (MON 2013). The plan reflects rising confidence and affluence of a country that is increasingly able to rely on its strength for its security. Besides the unspoken necessity of modernisation program, the vehemence of its introduction suggests that the Polish government is putting more emphasis on territorial defence over expeditionary capabilities and relying entirely on NATO.

Summing up, the structure of the conventional forces between Poland and Russia does not look advantageous to the former. The situation improves when comparing NATO capabilities with those of Russia. However, the share of NATO capabilities falling onto Central and Eastern Europe is, again, disadvantageous. Even though the Polish government changed its defence policy from relying solely on NATO and starting a more independent course, it still cannot match the conventional forces of Russia. As such, Poland heavily relies on the

capabilities and the willingness of NATO partners to come with help in case of a conventional attack on Poland. Due to lack of substantial permanent deployments of NATO military assets in Poland, paired with the sometimes lengthy NATO decision-making process and time required for the deployment itself, providing military help to Poland remains a weak point of NATO reassurance.

5.4.2. Political elite threat perception

The geographical location between the West and the East heavily shapes Polish threat perception, supporting realist type of thinking. The 2007 Republic of Poland's National Security Strategy, published by the Polish Ministry of Defence, contains that the security of Poland is primarily affected by regional processes and developments "in the region, in Europe and in the Euro-Atlantic community" (MON 2007:6 point 18).

The 2013 White Book on National Security of the Republic of Poland – the end-product of the National Security Strategic Review carried out by the presidential National Security Bureau in consultation with over 200 experts representing independent think tanks, academia and governmental agencies – diagnosed that "Poland's position is unfavourable, as it is located in the vicinity of the most important European centres of potential and actual conflicts" (White Book 2013:127).

In general, the Polish government sees the main source of threat in Russia. In May 2009, during meetings between the U.S. congressional delegate Sander Levin and representatives of the government of Poland on missile defence and the rotational stationing of American Patriot batteries in Poland, the Polish Prime Minister's chief of staff, the president's Deputy National Security Advisor, and the speaker of the Polish parliament suggested that "Russia, not Iran, poses the greater threat to Poland" (CableWiki 2009a).

Warsaw sees Russia attempting to regain its lost power position (CableWiki 2009, Rotfeld 2012:211), especially to resurge its standing on a supra-regional level (MON 2007:6). According to the White Book, "The basic ambition of Russia is to play the role of one of the main and crucial global centres, including the European continent, as the U.S. presence declines" (White Book 2013:126). Adam Rotfeld, former MFA and an influential thinker in the Polish security community, knowledgeable on Russia, points that Moscow strives

multipolarity and aims to portion the world into spheres of influence (Rotfeld 2012:208). In this context, so the White Book, Russia considers “Eastern Europe a territory in which a zero-sum game is played” exerting quasi-monopolistic power (White Book 2013:163).

Indeed, Russia’s National Security Strategy confirms that it is a long-term Russian national interest to transform itself into a world power (Russia’s National Security Strategy to 2020, 2009: point 21).

In that context, Polish authorities point to regional and local threats resulting primarily from “conflict-prone developments in the post-Soviet region” (MON 2007: 4). In the National Security Strategy we read that “the probability of a local conflict occurring close to Poland’s border cannot be excluded” (MON 2007:5). Russian activities in Georgia, which the Polish government uses to demonstrate as traditional military threats to its security (Sikorski 2009:5), were indicative of the increasing Russian influence in the Polish neighbourhood. In 2008, using the internal Georgian conflict with its regions of South Ossetia and Abkhazia, Russia supported both provinces militarily, occupying them eventually and supporting their accession to the Russian Federation. The 2007 cyberattacks on Estonia and the more recent 2014 military intervention in Ukraine exemplify potential non-traditional threats, so the narrative in Warsaw.

Another example of Russian military ambitions that the Polish government sees as symptomatic were the 2009 Zapad and Ladoga drills. Involving some 12 500 service personnel, up to 200 items of military equipment and simulating a nuclear attack against Poland, Zapad was the largest post-Cold War military exercise held by Russia in the Kaliningrad Oblast since a decade. According to Stanisław Komorowski, Undersecretary of State in the Ministry of Defence, the drills did not pose a direct threat to Poland but visualised a potential threat being exercised (KON/KSZ 23.10.2009). The Polish government interpreted it as another attempt to intimidate Poland and to push it to cancel the planned deployment of a U.S. land-based missile-defence interceptor site in Redzikowo.

As an *Open Letter to the Obama Administration* signed by former President Aleksander Kwaśniewski, former MoD Janusz Onyszkiewicz, former MFA Adam Rotfeld and former

President Lech Wałęsa indicates, Russia's activities are perceived as deliberately confrontational:

“Our hopes that relations with Russia would improve and that Moscow would finally fully accept our complete sovereignty and independence after joining NATO and the EU have not been fulfilled. Instead, Russia is back as a revisionist power pursuing a 19th-century agenda with 21st-century tactics and methods. At a global level, Russia has become, on most issues, a status-quo power. But at a regional level and vis-à-vis our nations, it increasingly acts as a revisionist one. It challenges our claims to our own historical experiences. It asserts a privileged position in determining our security choices. It uses overt and covert means of economic warfare, ranging from energy blockades and politically motivated investments to bribery and media manipulation in order to advance its interests and to challenge the transatlantic orientation of Central and Eastern Europe” (Letter 2009).

On a systematic basis, Russia directs threatening rhetorics against Poland, mainly in response to plans to deploy EPAA elements in Redzikowo. In particular, Russia intimidates Poland with the threat to deploy nuclear-capable short-range Iskander missiles (Durkalec 2012, CableWiki 2009). In July 2007, Russian deputy prime minister Sergei Ivanov warned of stationing missile forces in the European part of Russia to “parry the threats that will arise from the [NATO—author’s note] missile defence system” (Harding 2007). In August 2008, after the governments of Poland and the United States signed a deal on the rotational presence of a Patriot missile defence battery to Poland, Gen. Anatoly Nogovitsyn, Russian deputy chief of staff, said that “by hosting these, Poland is making itself a target. This is 100 percent certain. It becomes a target for attack. Such targets are destroyed as a first priority” (Quetteville/Pierce 2008).

In November 2008, President Dmitry Medvedev addressing the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation in his state of the nation speech warned to deploy “Iskander missile systems in the Kaliningrad Region to be able, if necessary, to neutralise the [NATO—author’s note] missile defence system” (President of Russia 2008, cf. Medvedev 2008). He restated his threat in a November 2011 statement on military responses to EPAA (President of Russia 2011). Since then, Moscow moved Iskander launchers to Kaliningrad periodically for routine training exercise (Reuters 2016, Lewis 2016, Reuters 2017).

In May 2012, the Chief of the Russian defence staff Gen. Nikolai Makarov indicated Russia considers to “use destructive force pre-emptively” against the American ballistic missile defence elements in Central Europe (BBC 2012).

Another example is Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, leader of the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia and a deputy speaker of the parliament's lower house, who threatened the Baltic states and Poland to be “wiped out” in the event of a Third World War (Rossija24 2014). According to Radosław Sikorski, “sometimes declarations by Zhirinovskiy mirror the point of view of some groupings in Russia” (EFE 2014).

The Polish government closely monitored the development of Russian rhetorics and activities. According to Polish MFA Sikorski, “the experience from the last 300 years thought us to take seriously any threats announced by Russia” (ExoMoskvy 2011:24’17”).

At the same time, the government led by Prime Minister Donald Tusk was “not reflexively Russophobic” (CableWiki 2009a) and avoided building its political credo on enmity towards Russia. In the election program of the liberal-conservative Civic Platform, which together with the agrarian Polish People’s Party governed Poland between 2007 and 2015 we read that,

“Politics on Russia requires offish calculation, overcoming superfluous emotions and hollow gestures. They cannot impede reaching our political aims. Recognising unfriendly accents and insurmountable complexes in the Russian politics towards Poland, we need to try to lead a ‘long-march’ politics based upon patient political dialogue with Moscow, solving discrepancies and eliminating tensions. It is in the interest of both our nations, heavily experienced by history, to be on friendly terms with each other and cultivate broad economic, social, cultural and council relations. We refuse historical fatalism and believe that building such relations is possible” (PO 2007: 78-79, translation mine).

5.4.3. Societal threat perception

The threat perception of the political elite mirrors that of the broader society. The majority of public opinion in Poland systematically ascribes hegemonists intentions to Russia (see Table 2).

Table 2. Perception of Russian hegemonic ambitions in CEE among the Polish society

Does Russia want to regain its influence in our part of Europe in the nearest future?															
in %	VI 93	VI 94	V 95	V 96	VI 97	VI 98	II 99	II 00	V 01	II 02	I 04	IV 05	XII 05	VI 08	VI 09
yes	39	53	72	69	63	59	53	60	68	55	48	51	60	54	60
no	39	26	14	13	19	20	23	22	18	23	26	25	21	20	23

Source: CBOS (2009b)

Throughout years, although with different intensity, Polish respondents point to Russia as the biggest source of threat, compared to a broad list of states in the closer neighbourhood and aspiring regional powers (see Table 3).

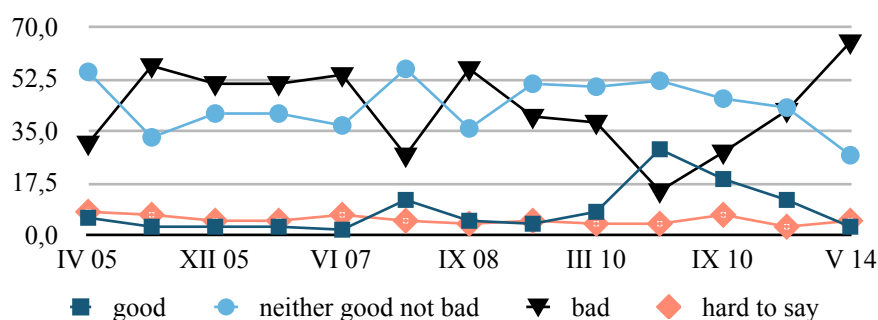
Table 3. Perception of threat related to particular states among the Polish society

Which states should the Polish state fear the most?	II 90	V 92	IX 04	XI 05	V 06	I 10	V 10	IV 14
Russia	25	45	44	67	59	50	49	80
Germany	88	58	35	21	23	14	17	7
China	-	-	-	-	3	2	4	2
Arab countries, Muslim Islamic	0	1	18	8	7	6	7	1
None, there is no such state	2	2	5	5	3	5	7	2
Hard to say	3	5	6	5	7	20	20	6

Source: CBOS (2014b)

Opinion polls between May 2005 and May 2014 visualise that Poles predominantly perceive Polish-Russian relations as negative or neutral (see Figure 11).

Figure 11. Perception of Polish-Russian relations among Polish society (%)



Source: CBOS (2014:3)

In the Report on Public Opinion Research in Poland and Russia published in 2013 by the Centre for Polish-Russian Dialogue and Understanding, we read that

“the image of Russia among Poles – with Russia understood as a state – is highly negative. It is perceived as unfriendly towards Poland, not eliciting trust, governed in an authoritarian manner, and at the same time, poorly organised, ineffective, full of contrast and pathology” (Centre for Polish-Russian Dialogue and Understanding 2013:7).

Perception problems are partly constructed on an ideational level. 89% of Poles have never been to Russia and only 30% “declare knowing or having known a Russian citizen personally” (Centre for Polish-Russian Dialogue and Understanding 2013:10-11). As such, the space of association about Russia is

“filled with either symbolism and the past (Katyń, war, Soviet domination) or fairly generalised descriptions of political and social developments (authoritarianism, lack of freedom, corruption, oligarchy), plus possibly the names of Russian leaders” (Centre for Polish-Russian Dialogue and Understanding 2013:7).

In consequence, the Polish approach towards Russia is mainly based on historically established concepts and does not necessarily mirror present conditions. The report, however, dismisses anti-Russian sentimentalism in the Polish mindset,

“Despite the domination of negative feature in the perception of Russia, it would be wrong to conclude about dislikes or Russophobia among Poles. Rather, this seems to be a case of political realism in the description of international relations. In statements obtained from Poles, a strong conviction can be detected to the effect that the present stability of Poland’s geopolitical situation is a value so important that its preservation warrants refraining from hasty, overly emotional decisions and gestures. Thus, all Polish moves towards Russia should be marked by prudence, restraint and far-reaching pragmatism. Such are also the expectations from Polish government and institutions in charge of foreign policy” (Centre for Polish-Russian Dialogue and Understanding 2013:7).

The Polish society seems to support the government’s political pragmatism. In the report by the Centre for Polish-Russian Dialogue and Understanding, we read that:

“In statements obtained from Poles, a strong conviction can be detected to the effect that the present stability of Poland’s geopolitical situation is a value so important that its preservation warrants refraining from hasty, overly emotional decisions and gestures. Thus, all Polish moves towards Russia should be marked by prudence, restraint and far-reaching pragmatism” (Centre for Polish-Russian Dialogue and Understanding 2013:7).

Summing up, the Polish geographical location, its conventional military disadvantage, continuous threats on behalf of Moscow, Russian military build-up and activity at the vicinity of Poland and Polish historical overtly negative experiences with Russia, result in an socially overarching perception of Russia as a clear, main and undeniable threat to Polish security and its further interests. Thus, unsurprisingly, the B61 discussion also oscillates around the threat posed by Russia.

5.5. The B61 as an instrument of deterrence

5.5.1. Framing the B61 as an instrument of deterrence

The Polish government frames U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe as a deterrent. According to the Polish governments' written response to the author's questions on the role of the U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe, prepared in consultation between the MFA and MoD, we read that,

“Poland is undoubtedly a beneficiary of NATO's nuclear deterrence and the presence of American nuclear weapons in Europe. Nuclear deterrence is an important factor in providing security to Poland and the Alliance. (...) An essential element of deterrence is nuclear deterrence. The basic instrument in this area is the potential of American tactical nuclear weapons based on the territory of particular European allies. (...) The deterrence capability should remain a credible element of the Alliance politics, strong to the extent as to effectively discourage all potential enemies to undertake hostile actions against NATO allies” (Official Response:1 translation mine).

Two points shall be taken out of this response. First, the Polish government highlights nuclear weapons as an essential element of deterrence. This indicates the importance which it attaches to the concept of extended nuclear deterrence. It is essential and as such indisputable.

Second, it sees the B61 in Europe as the basic instrument of NATO nuclear deterrence. This is surprising as it does not fit the official NATO narrative. In the 2010 Strategic Concept and the 2012 DDPR we read that “the supreme guarantee of the security of the Allies is provided by the strategic nuclear forces of the Alliance, particularly those of the United States” (NATO 2010: point 18, DDPR 2012: point 8). Narrowing extended nuclear deterrence to the American nuclear forces deployed in Europe indicates that the Polish government either denies or knowingly neglects U.S. strategic nuclear forces as relevant and/or credible. By

doing so, Warsaw denies the possibility for NATO nuclear deterrence to rely exclusively on the U.S. strategic nuclear forces.

In interviews, experts paint a more differentiated picture, reflecting the B61 as “one element of NATO’s means used to deter” (IP14, 25.10.2013, translation mine). The B61 is “foremost connected with effective deterrence” (IP14, 25.10.2013, translation mine) or seen as a “fairly reliable factor of deterrence” (IP3, 7.10.2013).

The Polish decision-makers frame the B61 in relation to Russian capabilities, including but not exclusively its tactical nuclear weapons. They conceive the B61 as balancing Russian military capabilities which are perceived “disproportionately bigger relative to NATO’s” (Official Response:5, IP3 on 7.10.2013 and IP5 on 17.10.2013).

That geography and Russian military capabilities matter for the Polish government was visible in an opinion stated by Minister of Foreign Affairs Radosław Sikorski and his Swedish counterpart Carl Bildt. Here, both officials “urge Moscow to commit to the withdrawal of nuclear weapons from areas adjacent to European Union member states. We are thinking of areas like the Kaliningrad region and the Kola Peninsula, where there are still substantial numbers of these weapons.” (Sikorski/Bildt 2010).

In that context, according to a former ambassador to NATO, the deployment of the American nuclear weapons in Europe was not an anti-Russian element, but a policy assurance “just in case” (IP13, 25.10.2013, translation mine). The debate on the B61 “definitely” has been used to sensibilities other allies on the Polish governments’ threat perception related to Russia with one reservation - not to allow others to perceive the Polish government as Russophobic - he added (Ibid.). In contrast, according to another respondent, who asked for anonymity, Poland should use its alleged anti-Russian sentiment to further its strategic objective within NATO. As the West perceives Poland as “Russophobic by default”, this “even more underlines our interest in putting Russian tactical nuclear weapons as far as possible from the Polish border” (IP4, 10.10.2013).

In 2013, Undersecretary of State in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Bogusław Winid indicated that the Russian tactical nuclear weapons are the main focus of the Polish governments’ consideration (KSZ 12.06.2013). According to a former high ranking diplomat,

“the presence of [American—author’s note] nuclear elements here is solely an element of balancing Russian power, including those tactical nuclear weapons which keep Poland in their reach and can threaten Polish strategic interests” (IP13, 25.10.2013, translation mine). According to another respondent, “somewhere in the background, Russia stationing its capabilities at the Polish border creates nervousness, but it is only a part of its larger military capabilities, and in case of conflict, it is not the tactical weapons we would need to worry about” (IP9, 21.10.2013). As claimed by a former Polish ambassador to NATO, Russian capabilities of tactical nuclear weapons “may endanger Polish vital strategic interests” as “they have the potential to reach Poland” (IP13, 25.10.2013). In the opinion of a respondent from the Ministry of Defence, the B61 “serves the U.S. to balance quantitative imbalances between the arsenals of NATO and other states” (21.10.2013).

Russian active intimidation strengthens the threat-fear equation. Sporadic “Russian threats justify the B61 purposefulness as a counterbalance”, assesses one of the former negotiators of Polish accession to NATO (IP17, 15.11.2013). Commenting on the US 201 alleged violation of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty by producing and testing (and since 2017 also deploying) ground-launched cruise missiles (US Department of State 2017), PISM analyst Jacek Durkalec wrote that it “shows the important role of NATO’s nuclear deterrence policy, including the presence of U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe, which provides an option of a visible, joint response against hypothetical nuclear blackmail,” a position also officially taken by the MFA (Durkalec 2014:2, cf. MSZ 2014a).

Summing up, the Polish government frames U.S. tactical nuclear weapons as a deterrent. However, there is no unitary perspective on what the B61 is balancing. Some see the B61 specifically balancing Russian tactical nuclear capabilities, some focus on balancing threats in general (not capabilities), others see only a distant connection between the B61 and balancing military capabilities or do not mention balancing at all.

5.5.2. Credibility of framing the B61 as a deterrent

Disregarding whether the Polish decision-makers rhetorically frame the B61 as a suitable means of deterrence, its role as one is mainly dependent on whether it is subjectively perceived as credible and objectively fulfils this condition.

Credibility relates to the question whether the target of deterrence (Russia) or ‘object’ of assurance (Poland) “believes that the deterrer/assurer [the United States - author’s note] has the capability and will to act on behalf of its expressed commitments” (CSIS 2009:11). Thus the sole presence of the B61 in Europe is not necessarily a sufficient condition for the B61’s credibility. Rather, its credibility depends on its military utility or the perception of thereof. In other words, there needs to be at least a distant, even though unwanted, probability of its use.

There is no unity among the Polish political elite whether the B61 could/would be used in the European theatre, but the majority of my interviewees leaned towards the statement that there is no credible military scenario for the B61’s use.

According to the Polish government, “the use of American nuclear weapons does not seem probable” (Official Response:2, translation mine). A top-level official from the MoD said that “[f]rom the point of view of NATO solidarity, visibility and security guarantees, deploying tactical nuclear weapons is essential. From the point of military strategy, we can ask whether deployment is advisable, as it only is of secondary importance” (IP15, 19.12.2013, translation mine). A former top-level official from the MoD mentioned that “of course first-use is nothing one could think about, for sure not. Although formally, there is no such declaration, and we think there could be one” (IP8, 21.10.2013, translation mine). These statements underline the role of the B61 as an instrument of alliance policy, but downgrade its role as a means of military strategy or even war fighting.

Several interviewees denied the possibility for the B61 to be used in combat. When asked on the military role of the bomb, my interview partners responded: “nobody would dare to use it militarily” (IP17, 15.11.2013, translation mine), “there is no possibility to imagine any situation the Alliance would use TNW. Let’s agree, it has no military function” (IP3, 7.10.2013, translation mine), “we do not see any special military role” (IP13, 25.10.2013, translation mine), “any escalation probably never reaches the nuclear threshold” (IP1, 27.09.2013, translation mine).

A long lasting employee in the MFA said in the interview that “nonstrategic, or tactical nuclear weapons are rather a relict of the Cold War. It does not have a bigger military purpose, but continued to carry a fair political weight” (IP6, 17.10.2013 translation mine). A former

Polish high ranking NATO diplomat also clearly denied a military role for these weapons (IP13, 25.10.2013). Another expert consulting the Polish president cannot imagine any situation in which NATO could use tactical nuclear weapons. “Let’s face it; it has no military function” (IP3, 7.10.2013, translation mine).

Another interviewee, who participated in the National Security Strategic Review, wonders why sub-strategic nuclear weapons found so much place in the White Book when “from an operational perspective, these weapons do not really have a chance to be used and are not debated as a means of war” (IP4, 10.10.2013, translation mine). Another expert who also participated in these events mentioned that “it does not seem to me as if it would be a kind of conviction that the weapons present a sort of capabilities which directly could be implemented in a crisis situation” (IP9, 21.10.2013, translation mine). This interviewee also did not see an explicit escalation potential for tactical nuclear weapons in the NATO-Russia context.

The then PISM expert, Łukasz Kulesa argues a dead-end conflict scenario in which only tactical nuclear weapons could help as improbable,

“Granted, in some highly scripted ‘battlefield’ scenarios of defending NATO countries (for example, that of an emergency strike on a buried and hardened site in enemy territory, as a WMD storage), military planners might recommend the use of nuclear weapons as the most efficient means of destroying a target. However, it is unlikely that such a situation would develop where there were no other options available. The political, social and environmental costs of any such nuclear strike, which might be conducted not only in the vicinity of NATO territory but also close to some of the most important partners of the Alliance, would also probably outweigh its usefulness. In short, every use of nuclear weapons would have a strategic effect, regardless of the type of weapon used, its means of delivery, or the target” (Kulesa 2009: 2).

At the 2010 NPT Review Conference, ambassador Witold Sobków mentioned that “large arsenals of sub-strategic nuclear weapons seem anachronistic in the post-Cold War world and increase the risk of proliferation by non-state actors. Instead of enhancing our security they make it more volatile” (NPT Statement 2010). By using “anachronistic”, he points to the non-existent military usability of these weapons in the post-Cold War context.

Another expert was also critical about the B61's credibility by saying that a "hard stance on the B61 presence in Europe as a symbol of deterrence credibility, particularly nuclear, is an unsuitable way of using quotas and political capital, as we receive a toy that does not serve any purposes" (IP1, 27.09.2013, translation mine).

Addressing the annual conference of Polish ambassadors in 2014, MFA Radosław Sikorski expressed the belief that considering the "balance of power as the best model of interstate relations is a myth" (PAP 2014). Sikorski discarded the notion that "states are in a position to calculate their own power", so that "tensions can be controlled and that they can be de-escalated when it suits our interests." By this, he implicitly denies escalating or de-escalating capabilities of tactical nuclear weapons. He does so not out of the weapons feat, but out of the possibility of human miscalculation.

Next, to the clear majority of interviewees who deny the B61's combat role, few respondents pointed to its signalling or warfighting role. According to a long-standing expert from the MoD, the B61's military and political roles are interrelated with strategic communication. He referred to the fact that in times of crisis, the B61 provides a "mechanism to communicate intentions and our purposes" (IP5, 17.10.2013, translation mine). It is a political means of political deterrence, "one level of crisis, which is not directly related to automatism, as this is incorporated in art. 5" (IP7, 17.10.2013). Preparations for the B61 use may be sighted by the potential aggressor and taken as a sign, which may deter further inflammation of the conflict. This is why "the B61 is unique and can hardly be substituted by other means of deterrence" (17.10.2013, translation mine).

In contrast, another think tank expert believes tactical nuclear weapons could be used militarily. According to him,

"as far as I know, these weapons can be used at the beginning, even if the other side did not use the weapons, but when such a use would lie in the interest of collective defence. So, in case NATO is not able to withhold a huge conventional attack, it would be ready to use these weapons. The fact that the decision process is long does not pose a particular problem. The decision on their use would not be made overnight, like a conventional attack does not develop within 24 hours. It would be an issue of weeks, or a dozen days or so. In case of necessity, the decision process will be undertaken. And this is what it is about, that all existing mechanisms, including places of deployment, means of delivery and

the decision process will be operational and integrated to enable the use in case of a developing threat“ (IP16, 13.11.2013, translation mine).

Asked about his assessment of the B61 role in tackling a potential threat, another respondent depicted a detailed situation, without explaining how the B61 could be used there:

“There is a predictable threat of a conflict in the East as of today, even a conflict on the border. I can imagine a situation when on a border crossing, e.g. with Kaliningrad or Belarus an endless traffic jam emerges with trucks waiting for 3,4,5 days. This happens, sometimes. For example, due to some very punctilious customs officers on the other side. These truck drivers - hungry, tired, without a toilet - start discussing with the officers, debate, pick a quarrel. The officers call the border guards for help, which comes armed. The border guards do not manage the situation. They call the nearest compound, on the Russian side, all right? The military unit gets on cars or a few tanks and within half an hour arrives in Braniewo [a town 55 km southwest of Kaliningrad - author’s note]. This could happen. And then what?” (IP26, 27.09.2013, translation mine).

A former top-level official from the MoD commenting on the B61’s military role mentioned that these weapons “function as a means of deterrence and balancing” (IP8, 21.10.2013, translation mine). The idea that American nuclear weapons stationed in Europe balance Russian TNW capabilities is a relatively recent creation. Until the debate on NATO’s Strategic Concept, Polish official documents and statements did not mention such a role for the B61 at all.

This statement seems flawed for at least two reasons. First, there seems to be no logic in balancing an unbalanced number of warheads. It is hardly justifiable to balance approximately 760 American warheads (200 deployed in Europe, 300 non-deployed stored in the US for “possible overseas deployment in support of extended deterrence to allies and partners worldwide” and 260 retired warheads) against 2000 Russian non-strategic nuclear warheads assigned to delivery by tactical vehicles (Kristensen 2012:14 and 52). At the same time, the Polish government never officially called to deploy more of these weapons in Europe to balance the unofficially bigger stockpile of Russian nuclear weapons.

Second, American sub-strategic nuclear weapons were historically intended as a war-fighting weapon to balance conventional forces or as an instrument of escalation. For this reason, a quantitative or qualitative advantage or disadvantage in nuclear stockpiles does not matter,

unless the conflict ripples to the level of a full nuclear war in which nuclear weapons will be used for retaliation.

Next to subjective factors based upon the belief of decision-makers and experts, there are a variety of objective aspects that determine the B61's credibility. For example, there are many variables that would determine the decision of employing American nuclear weapons in Europe. In consequences, whether a nuclear mission would have a chance to "succeed" at all, is highly problematic to predict. There are several political and operational (incl. legal) factors to consider.

First, the political dimension. A collective NATO consent is necessary to use American nuclear weapons in a NATO nuclear mission. There is no openly accessible information whether the NPG agrees on the use of tactical nuclear weapons. As the NPG does not seem to have a special planning the role in time of peace, there probably is neither a decision whether nor how tactical nuclear weapons could be employed. Such a decision would be made only in times of crisis. This would require the NATO political and military decision-makers conviction that the use of nuclear weapons would be less damaging than no use at all. A nuclear weapons use would probably be considered only when all diplomatic and conventional responses would show no results. A case hard to imagine for the military to accept. Additionally, it is hardly imaginable that all 28 NATO member states would give an "ok" response for nuclear weapons use in Europe. Moreover, also the American president would need to give a "go" for the B61. The propensity to make a positive decision highly depends on personal traits of the person in the presidential post, the inclination for nuclear weapons use among his/her consultants and their influence on the president. All being variables which are hard to determine upfront.

Second, operational deliberations. The B61's deployment locations and the art of its delivery do not allow for their use far deep in Russian mainland. In a potential NATO nuclear mission scenario, the dual-capable aircraft loaded with a B61 would need to be first redeployed closer to the border with Russia (which poses legal questions - cf. Nassauer 2001) and successfully overcome Russian anti-access and area denial systems. In case both conditions are met, the aircraft can at best hit some locations on Russian territory but probably only close to the borderline. The yield of these weapons would then determine the extent of the damage. As the

Russian army does not have significant military posts in the mainland area along the Russian border, Kaliningrad or the Baltic Sea are two locations where the use of a B61 would theoretically make military sense. However, as the NATO doctrine points to nuclear weapons as weapons of last resort, using the B61 to achieve tactical military aims does not seem convincing. In such a scenario it seems more credible that NATO would resort to its diplomatic and conventional means first in order to achieve tactical goals.

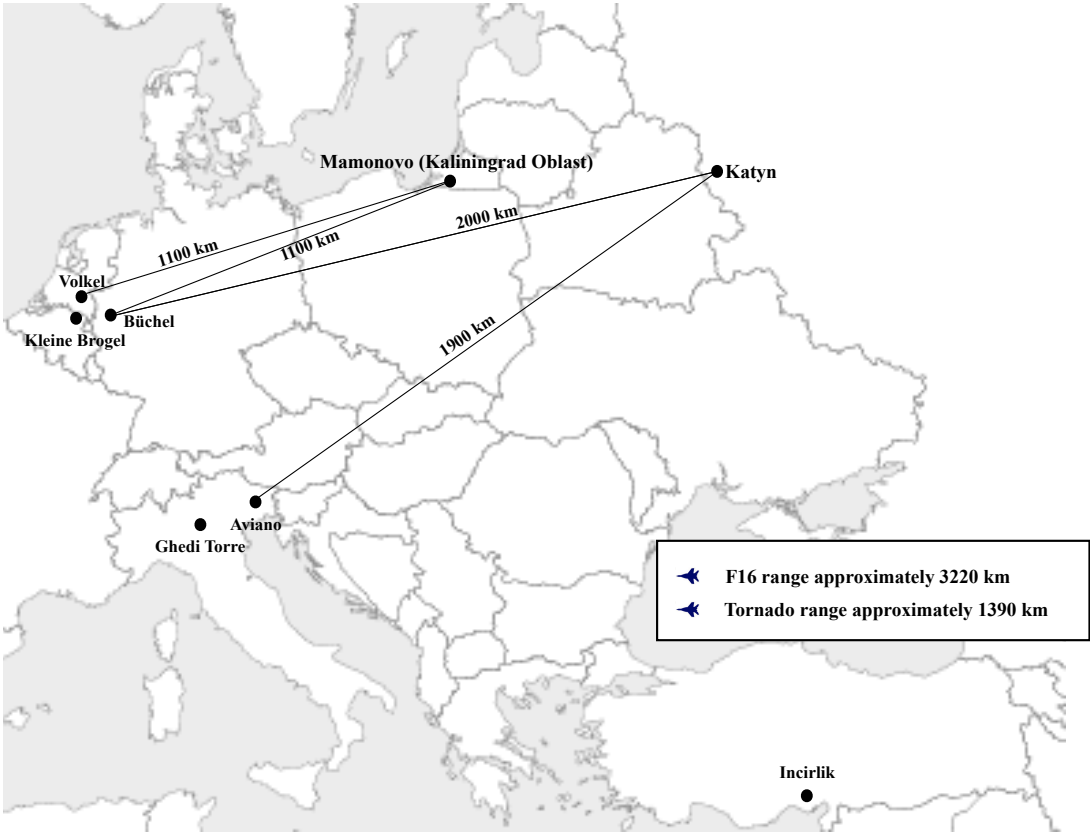
Also, despite the intensified tension between NATO and Russia, the July 2016 NATO Warsaw Summit Communique still mentions that “the circumstances in which NATO might have to use nuclear weapons are extremely remote.” However, assuming that NATO lessens the “ultimate weapon” principle and considers using the B61 in a classical combat scenario against Russian offensive forces, it might be forced to potentially do so at the territory of one of its allies. Especially on territories which are hard to defend with conventional forces in case of a surprise attack, mainly due to lack of appropriate capabilities and a long time required for their deployment (e.g. Estonia). It is highly questionable that any NATO country would accept a nuclear weapons use on its territory.

An academic expert said that looking at the deployment localisation of the B61, no military purpose is distinguishable (IP1, 27.09.2013). What he means is the combat range of the delivery aircraft, the geographical location of the B61 storage vaults and the distance to potential target locations which do not allow much room for combat planning (see Figure 12).

While according to Kamp, states participating in SNOWCAT provide air-refuelling (Kamp 2011:7); a distinguished Berlin-based nuclear weapons expert pointed in a private talk that American documentation prohibits air-refuelling in nuclear missions. However, without air-tanking, the Tornado and the F-16 deployed at current locations have only a very limited combat range, which again would diminish the deterrents credibility. As stated by an American nuclear weapon expert, that information is not true and American nuclear weapons delivery platforms are allowed for air-refuelling. But even in the case that NATO member states dual-capable aircraft would be able to fly many combat ranges due to air-refuelling or departing from an airfield closer to the target point, Russian sophisticated anti-access/area denial systems limit NATO’s freedom of manoeuvring at the Russian Western Military

District. It is not sure whether individual dual use capable aircrafts would manage to get through this “invisible” defence line at all.

Figure 12. NATO DCA combat range and the B61 WS3 underground storage vaults distance to selected arbitrary locations in Russia



Additionally, tactical nuclear weapons are not the only response as alternative diplomatic and conventional means exist to avoid and/or solve a military crisis in Europe. As such, from the credibility issue, the B61 does neither seem to be a weapon of choice, nor a weapon of a decision and certain consensus. It is framed as such but does not have the potential to succeed in fulfilling its military role in case its deterrent role fails.

Summing up, the Polish government and expert community frame the B61 as a deterrence instrument. Most experts and policy makers do not prescribe a strict battleground role for the B61. Although the conventional military balance with Russia is disadvantageous to Poland, none of the interviewees framed the B61 as a deterrent against Russian conventional weapons. While individual voices in the Polish government point to the B61's role as a tool to balance

Russian stockpiles of TNW, this does not seem feasible on the ground of the misbalance in arsenals, the weapons' historical purpose and the fact of Poland never officially calling to equal Russian weapons. The Polish expert community draws a line between the B61's military use and its role as a means of deterrence. However, by omitting to frame it as a militarily effective means of warfare, its deterrence credibility remains at least questionable. Also, there are reasonable grounds reflecting political and operational factors that inhibit the credibility of the B61 as a military instrument.

5.6. B61 as a means of reassurance

According to a few respondents, the B61 serves as a security guarantee of American commitment. One respondent from the MoD supported the assurance role of the B61 by saying that “today, we still need to be a credible Alliance. We cannot resign from nuclear weapons” (IP14, 25.10.2013, translation mine). By this, he implied the connection which nuclear weapons are perceived to create between the United States and its European NATO allies. Interestingly, however, the same respondent when asked if physical presence of the B61 is a necessary condition for the credibility of security guarantees, answered “probably not” (IP14, 25.10.2013).

Also, according to an MFA representative, “Poland is interested in keeping the existing credibility of security guarantees of the Alliance. In politics, it rests on the physical presence of TNW. From the Polish perspective, there is a need to keep this policy. Its fundamental element is TNW in Europe” (IP7, 17.10.2013, translation mine). Another respondent, however, mentioned this reassurance to be solely of a political character (IP3, 7.10.2013).

A former high-level Ministry of Foreign Affairs official affirmed the B61 to be necessary “even though this is not written anywhere due to our relationship with Russia” (IP13, 25.10.2013, translation mine). He said that the B61 would be

“a condition for credibility until we finally have clarity on the direction of the internal evolution in the Russian Federation. Until Russia changes its attitude to the North Atlantic Alliance until it changes its politics regarding Central European states, it still treats as a kind of special sphere of influence, until then it is better if it stays here” (IP13, 25.10.2013, translation mine).

In the following sub-chapter, I will assess whether and how the physical presence of American nuclear gravity bombs in Europe serves at reassuring Poland over American security commitments.

5.6.1. Poland and military alliances

“Alliances are not friendships of international politics - unless, as Aristotle observed, we apply the word friendship to relationships based on utility” (Wight 1978:122). The neorealist alliance is based upon coordinated political and military power-aggregation principle in the contingency of an external threat (Snyder 1997:1), “the arising of which is uncertain” (Bergsmann 2001:36). For the neorealists, “being the weak part in an asymmetric relationship” (Criekemans/Duran 2010:32) makes small states “accept what they have to accept” (Thucydides: 5.89-[1]) and rely upon the help offered by the big. Eventually, what small states expect from an alliance through building common infrastructure, exercising and stationing troops is to achieve a kind of “automatism of procedures”. Thus in case of an attack on any NATO member state, appropriate procedures and capabilities should be in place for a fast and clear response along article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty.

The Polish government sees membership in NATO as the fundamental guarantee of its security. As we read in the 2007 National Security Strategy, “for Poland, the North Atlantic Alliance is the most important form of multilateral cooperation in the political and military dimension of security and a pillar of stability on the European continent” (MON 2007:7).

Approval rates for NATO also remain high among the society. After 15 years of membership, in 2014, 62% supported Polish membership, 26% were neutral, and only 4% were against (CBOS 2014a). Also, NATO membership does not divide the political scene - it is consistently supported from far left to far right (CBOS 2009:2).

NATO membership, however, revealed at least three challenges over time. The *first* challenge was the uncertainty about the effectiveness of article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty. While knowing that it can not alone face a potential conventional attack from the East, Poland entered NATO hoping to receive help from allies when needed. As Stanisław Koziej recalls, “very fast we convinced ourselves that the Alliances defence function neither was the only and most important nor as sure as we have assumed it to be” (Koziej 2010:20-21,

translation mine). According to the treaty, if an enemy attacks a NATO member, each state party undertakes “such action as it deems necessary, including the use of armed force, to restore and maintain the security of the North Atlantic area.” This phrasing preconditions a similar interpretation of the threat, political will and adequate military capabilities ready to support the ally. Article 5 can be successfully applied only when at least some member states have a converging interpretation of the threat. Thus, a shared threat perception is a key variable determining the credibility of security assurance. While in the case of Poland, both national authorities and the society perceive Russia as the main threat to its security, this opinion is not evenly distributed among other NATO member states. As we read in the White Book,

“[t]hough the North Atlantic Alliance remains the most powerful political and military organisation, in recent years certain weaknesses have become apparent in its coping with contemporary challenges and threats. Differences in opinions within the Alliance appeared, especially in the area of risk assessment, necessary military capabilities, involvement in out-of-area operations and the pace and scale of developing relations with the former adversary – Russia” (White Book 2013:123).

An issue often cited by Polish experts to visualise consequences arising from a variation in the threat perception among NATO member states was the Turkish request in 2003 to invoke article 4 consultation in response to the forthcoming intervention in Iraq. Secretary of State, Gen. Stanisław Koziej recalls that “some states preferred their interests and political ambitions in rivalry with others over strategic solidarity with an ally that felt threatened” (Koziej 2010:21-22 translation mine). Although through a procedural manoeuvre the strengthening of the Turkish defence was approved,

“it was a signal that NATO does not guarantee collective action in crisis situations, which are politically difficult to interpret unambiguously; which touch upon interests of particular Alliance members, and thereby are hard to conclude with a consensus decision. Of course, this signal had to particularly evoke serious strategic reflections in the so-called boarding states, like Poland” (Koziej 2010:21-22, translation mine).

On the same note, Adam Rotfeld reflecting the participation in the work of the NATO Group of Experts, recalls:

“I just came back from Brussels, where I finished work in a group, the task of which was to develop a new strategic concept for NATO. The members of the group represented the interests of their states,

there were disputes, but we came to a common denominator. And suddenly, on the last meeting, to my astonishment, I figured out that what I have been striving for - and to what I thought was a broad approval by all - evaporated from the text. Carefully and calmly I noticed: 'We agreed differently. The postulate I was talking about should be in the text of the concept'. In response one of the members of the Group of Experts noticed with some nonchalance, that nobody from Central-Eastern Europe would define the threats to his/her country or the Alliance as a whole" (Rotfeld 2012:341, translation mine).

In a 2009 article, Henryk Szlajfer (Director of the Department of Strategy and Foreign Policy Planning at the Polish MFA) and prof. Antoni Z. Kamiński (Polish Academy of Science) mention uncertainty over the real value of NATO security guarantees next to the unpredictability of Russian politics, lack of predictability of the new America administration and EU political-military weakness as main challenges to Polish security (Kamiński/Szlajfer 2009:41-42).

According to Andrzej Gałazewski, a Civic Platform parliamentarian, it is not only military capabilities that matter, but political unity among allies that is critical (KSZ 17.09.2008). Thus, the 2007 National Security Strategy of the Republic of Poland called Poland to act towards harmonising "member states' interests on the international arena and the narrowing of the technological gaps between Allies" (MON 2007).

Polish officials and experts also state their disbelief in security guarantees addressing particular allies. In his 2011 Annual Address on the Goals of Foreign Policy, Minister of Foreign Affairs Radosław Sikorski questioned the U.S. commitment to Polish security by saying that "we are aware that U.S. priorities lie elsewhere: in the Middle East and – increasingly – in Asia. Whether the United States will be able to come to our aid in every situation is uncertain" (MSZ 2011). Another example is prof. Roman Kuźniar, advisor to President Komorowski on security matters and a vocal commentator on international relations, who blatantly entitled an article in the daily Rzeczpospolita newspaper *We Can Not Trust on the Germans*, reproaching the western European allies "strategic blindness" and "political cowardice" in reacting to Russia's activities in Ukraine (Kuźniar 2014).

The *second* challenge to Polish membership in NATO is that the alliance, which Poland entered in 1999, has changed over time and so did its handling of allied security needs. NATO did not face any immediate military threat from the East (New Strategic Concept 2012), and

allies attempted relations with Russia based on partnership (e.g. the NATO-Russia Council). Faced with new challenges, NATO drifted away from its core defence task into activities outside of its territory. This change of focus poses a problem to newer states at the Alliance's Eastern border which still perceived Russia as threatening. As a formerly high-rank governmental official mentioned, "we wanted to enter the old NATO". What he meant was a NATO based on an unequivocal interpretation of article 5 coupled with U.S. nuclear weapons deployed in Europe. At the NATO Parliamentary Assembly 2010 Annual Session, reportedly NATO officials told that "NATO's Eastern most members in particular were very adamant that U.S. nuclear weapons should remain in Europe pointing out that the nuclear umbrella was one reason they joined the Alliance" (Knops 2010:37).

Third, Poland entered NATO in order to acquire certain security guarantees. However, Warsaw felt that not enough was done for the purpose of ensuring an appropriate level of defence preparedness (KSZ/KON 06.05.2009). The post-Cold War environment, assessed by the majority of allies as being low-threat, changed the approach in which NATO wanted to defend Central and Eastern European member states.

Polish authorities and experts felt that NATO engagement in this part of Europe did not correspond to the Russian potential at the Alliance's borders, most notably the Kaliningrad Oblast "packed with weapons" and Belarus which "becomes a Russian base in Eastern Europe" (KSZ 17.09.2008). At the same time, it also did not correspond to capabilities deployed in other NATO member states. Therefore, throughout all years of its membership in NATO, Polish officials solicited for an equilibrium in the dispersion of military infrastructure in NATO, making NATO defence capabilities "realistic" (Senat KON/KSZ 20.04.2000) and balancing territorial defence with expeditionary missions (cf. MSZ 2008, KSZ 12.02.2009).

In the first place, the Polish government persistently tried to locate additional U.S. and/or NATO bases and troops to Poland - a consensus issue across all political parties (KON/KSZ 6.05.2009, KON/KSZ 23.10.2009). This wish was not entirely a baseless whim. Ronald D. Asmus, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State in the Clinton administration and a committed supporter of CEE states membership in NATO, remembered when he "sat at the table in the mid-1990s as Washington promised Polish leaders that NATO would have a corps-size

reinforcement capability to provide for their security. But that NATO corps-size reinforcement capability never materialised” (Asmus 2009).

In April 2009, Secretary of State in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Jan Borkowski mentioned in a Senate committee hearing that the Polish government was “dissatisfied with the asymmetry of deploying Alliance infrastructure on the territory of new and old member states, including Poland” (KON/KSZ 02.04.2009, translation mine). The same year, Undersecretary of State in the MoD, Stanisław Komorowski reflected at a parliamentary committee hearing that the Polish government looks forward to the deployment of more NATO infrastructure on the Polish territory (KON/KSZ 23.10.2009). He also mentioned that with Alliance infrastructure on Polish territory, there would be a higher chance that in case of a threat, Poland would be defended.

According to WikiLeaks, in a May 2009 meeting between U.S. congressional delegate Levin, the Polish Minister’s chief of staff, the president’s Deputy National Security Advisor, and the speaker of the Polish parliament, the Polish representatives “expressed unanimous support for a large U.S. military footprint in Poland to bolster Article 5 guarantees” (CableWiki 2009). At the same meeting, Deputy Chief of President Kaczynski’s National Security Bureau, Witold Waszczykowski added that the Polish government “wants U.S. boots on the ground - not necessarily as a tripwire, but as a deterrent” (Ibid.). The demand for more “boots on the ground” was also voiced several times by Radosław Sikorski in his Minister of Foreign Affairs Annual Address on the Goals of Foreign Policy (cf. MSZ 2008, 2010, 2011). According to WikiLeaks, in a February 2010 meeting between the U.S. Ambassador to Poland and the Polish MoD Bogdan Klich, the latter

”called on talks on other forms of an enhanced U.S. security presence in Poland. (...) Klich highlighted Polish interest in all of the options presented by DOD A/S Vershbow at the October High Level Defence Group discussion: F-16s, C-130’s, as well as “stable not temporary” special operations forces” (Cable Wiki 2010a).

Several times, Bogdan Klich pointed to “the need to deploy NATO defence infrastructure in Central and Eastern Europe” (MSZ 2011:12, cf. KON 2013:6). Also, the White Book states that “it is important to strive for the effectiveness of allied mechanisms designed for the

purposes of collective defence, such as: (...) an even territorial distribution of the allied infrastructure” (White Book 2013:157).

In a 2014 parliamentary committee hearing discussing 15 years of Polish experience in NATO, Bogdan Klich, then Senator, mentioned that “the more America in Poland, the more secure our country. The more NATO in Poland, the more secure our country” (KON 2014:11-12). Klich called for a permanent rotational presence of American soldiers in Poland, the need for biannual exercises on defending NATO territory and for additional NATO institutions in Poland.

In contrast to Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, at its entry to the Alliance, Poland disposed of the Eagle Guardian contingency plan - a plan for allied support in case of a threatening situation (KSZ/KON 27.10.2010:13, Cable Wiki 2010a). Nevertheless, its continuous updating became a permanent concern raised in NATO and preoccupying the Polish government. In 2010, MoD Bogdan Klich stated at a parliamentary committee meeting that “from the point of view of visible assurances exercises in the military training area are most important due to their high visibility (cf. KSZ/KON 27.10.2010:8, Bosacki 2014). As Stanisław Komorowski, Undersecretary of State at the MoD observed, “if NATO does not want to be the famous “paper tiger”, it needs to exercise and verify its plans” (Koziej 2011).

All these statements aimed at securing a kind of automatism in triggering article 5 security guarantees for Poland. Adam Rotfeld recalls that during the Cold War, the unambiguous interpretation of article 5 coupled with the physical presence of American nuclear weapons in Europe created a “shield for NATO member states” (Rotfeld 2012:182). For him, an immediate, automatic implementation of article 5 should involve incontestable help for the victim state (be it due to attack or threat of an attack), the adequacy and preparedness of NATO capabilities to respond and the victim state’s priority in accessing them.

Also for Bogdan Klich, article 5 needs to be applied automatically (KON/KSZ 02.04.2009, KSZ/KON 27.10.2010:8). This can be achieved by continuously upgrading contingency plans, precise definition of the size and type of forces to be applied, by systematic investments in a geographically equal NATO infrastructure and by providing national response forces that are capable of a wide spectrum of missions (KON/KSZ 02.04.2009).

However, not all politicians defend the notion of automatism. Tadeusz Iwański, a parliamentarian from the Democratic Left Alliance, is concerned that automatism may be dangerous and that the art of politics relies on not letting others to provoke you (KSZ/KON 27.10.2010:6).

The Polish government believes that military deployments determine the willingness of NATO partners to assist Poland in case of attack and simultaneously, increase the Polish power position in collective NATO decision-making. According to Stanisław Komorowski, Undersecretary of State in the MoD, “if there is Alliance infrastructure on our territory; then we have bigger chances to be defended in case of a threat and simultaneously have more to say being an active participant of collective defence (KON/KSZ 02.04.2009:15).

While the Polish government systematically defends stationing of forces in Poland, the society is divided on that issue (see Table 4).

Table 4. Perception of deploying foreign NATO forces in Poland among the Polish society between 1999-2005

Do you think that foreign NATO forces should be stationed on Polish territory?					
(in%)	II-III 99	II 00	I 04	IX 04	XII 05
yes	32	35	40	40	33
no	56	55	42	49	49

Source: CBOS (2006)

In polls conducted in 2004 and 2005 on support in setting up particular American military bases in Poland, respondents preferred special radars that enable control of airspace for ballistic missile and air defence, military bases with a small number of soldiers and arsenals which would enable fast redeployment of bigger troops in case of need and anti-air and missile defence rather than airports with American aircraft and pilots or big military bases with full personnel, armament and troops (see Table 5).

Table 5. Polish societies' acceptance for selected American military bases in Poland between 2004-2005

Would you support setting up the following American military bases in Poland? (in%)	IX 2004		XII 2005	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Special radars that enable to control airspace for ballistic missile and air defence	60	28	51	34
Military bases with a small number of soldiers and arsenals which would enable fast redeployment of bigger troops in case of need	52	36	42	43
Antiair and missile defence	47	40	39	45
Airports with American aircraft and pilots	39	50	31	53
Big military bases with full personnel, armament and troops	35	54	29	55

Source: CBOS (2006)

This trend, however, seems to change. In April 2014, 64% thought that NATO membership is not enough a security guarantee and would prefer some tangible evidence of support in the form of intensified NATO military presence in Poland (CBOS 2014b). 43% believe in temporary presence, while 21% would like to see a permanent NATO military contingent. At the same time, 25% were against increasing the number of NATO soldiers in Poland.

Summing up, in case of an attack, Poland being a mid-size NATO ally would rely on the military support of other NATO member states. Their support is governed by the Washington Treaty as a tool of preventive diplomacy. The treaty does not necessarily guarantee automatism in reaction. However, despite the willingness to support an ally, a reaction can undoubtedly be accelerated when appropriate military means are present and skills to use them exercised on a systematic basis. They also increase the probability that an ally would decide to come with help as the financial burden, and logistical effort of an immediate help would already be reduced. Polish authorities continuous attempts to acquire allied infrastructure onto its territory and more allied drills to take place ended mostly unsuccessful. Simultaneously, the most trusted ally - the United States - announced to refocus its security interests to another region of the world, with a potential consequence being the removal of financial and material resources from the Old Continent. As a result, the Polish government

clutches to whatever means of American presence there still are in Europe. In that case, among other things, the B61.

5.7. Summary

Taking into account power capabilities, the midsize CEE NATO member state Poland has a clear disadvantage versus its biggest neighbour Russia. It is exposed to coercive military tactics, an aggressive policy, military threats and retaliatory economic warfare from Kremlin. Even though a NATO-Russia equation seems much more favourable in terms of military capabilities, from the Polish governments' perspective it lacks credibility due to hidden doubts regarding the Alliances mobility, preparedness and decisiveness to defend a hypothetical attack. Lack of substantial military infrastructure on the territory of Poland, fewer military exercises on the territory of newer member states than expected and the allies disinterest or hesitation in participating in these exercises, create a gap in capabilities perceived as inevitably required to immediately respond to attack. As such, the B61 is framed to serve as a deterrent to discourage Russia from starting any attack. It does neither clearly play a role in denying territorial gains to the adversary (deterrence by denial), nor does it threaten to inflict unacceptable punishment on the enemy (deterrence by punishment). It, therefore, serves as a kind of "just in case" deterrence, not designed to fulfil a special deterrence role. However, whatever kind of NATO nuclear deterrence based upon the B61 in Europe does not convince on the merits of its military usability. First, due to the long and involving many actors decision-making procedures to implement the B61. Second, due to the combat range of the delivery aircraft, the geographical location of the B61 storage vaults and the distance to potential target locations which limit the geographical spectrum of using the B61. Third, due to the lack of unanimity over the weapons potential for use among Polish decision makers. As such, the military usability of the B61 is neither given nor perceived as given in the European context. This puts the efficacy of the B61's deterrence value under question.

The B61 does not balance out Russian capabilities of sub-strategic nuclear weapons due to its qualitative and quantitative inferiority. Moreover, the Polish government never officially called for the deployment of the B61 on its soil or more B61 in Europe, which strengthens this assumption.

At the same time, the B61 can also be seen as a means of reassuring Poland of the American engagement in its security. Because the American presence is rather neglectful in Poland and a real threat of its further decrease in Europe exists, the Polish government focuses its fullest attention to whatever American infrastructure is left on the European territory. In that case, on the B61. As such, the B61 does not serve as a deterrent for military purposes, but rather for political ones.

6. Liberal Analysis of the Polish Attitude on Extended Nuclear Deterrence

This chapter analyses the Polish government's attitude towards extended nuclear deterrence through the prism of utilitarian liberalism. The section starts with an overview of the liberal paradigm and its stance on the role of nuclear weapons. I then discuss different Polish domestic actors to find out which domestic forces influence the debate and what potential stakes in the debate they might have. Finally, I discuss and evaluate roles which might connect these actors to the B61.

6.1. Liberal foreign policy theory

Liberalism is a highly heterogeneous theory tradition. There are various strands of liberal theory distinguishing between individual-centric liberalism (e.g. classical liberalism, new liberalism and functionalism) and state-centric liberalism (e.g. English School rationalism, institutionalism).

Liberalism sees international relations based upon the anarchical ordering principle governed by uncertainty and the security dilemma. However, in contrast to neorealism, it relaxes the assumption of the deterministic structure and the unitary state (Moravcsik 1997:547). By opening the black box of states, liberalism searches for domestic sources of international political choices (cf. Allison 1971, Putnam 1988, Moravcsik 1993, Allison/Zelikow 1999).

The main drive of foreign policy behaviour is not the distribution of power in the system, but state preferences understood as consensual preferences determined by different societal actors. Preferences inform which “realist or institutionalist factors are important and how they relate to state behaviour” (Moravcsik 1997:544).

Liberalism aims at explaining the variation in the substantive content of foreign policy (Moravcsik 1997:534), “not shifts in the strategic circumstances under which states pursue them” (Moravcsik 1997:519). This approach is an important theoretical advance from neorealism as it acknowledges that states have multiple goals linking foreign and domestic policies. It also presupposes that the neorealist balance of power may be one of several elements in a states' preference portfolio. As such, liberalism relaxes the notion that absolute state security is necessarily in the first place in a state's hierarchy of goals.

In this work, I borrow conceptually from utilitarian liberalism (Rittberger 2001). By doing so, I explicitly refer to a states domestic interests that shape foreign policy. I thus overcome the realist black-boxing of states and elevate the assumption of a states' systemic power position being the key factor shaping international relations.

Graham Allison revolutionised the field of international relations by developing the governmental politics model which explains state action as a consequence of bargaining between rational, but egoistic domestic state actors (Allison 1971). Foreign policy preferences of states reflect the interest of actors "who are in a position to impose their goals on the agents representing the state in the international arena" (Rittberger 2004:18).

The life-cycle of preferences starts with the existence of social demands. At this level of preference creation, main actors are individuals and societal groups. The latter are defined as a "heterogenous class of decision-making and decision-influencing 'units', encompassing both actors belonging to the 'private sector' and actors in the 'political-administrative system'" (Rittberger 2004:15). Societal actors consist of the electorate, political parties, interest groups, business, bureaucrats etc.

In general, the liberal actor is a self-interested, utilitarian, goal-oriented entity "whose behaviour results from rational calculations concerning costs and benefits" (Rittberger 2004:8). His predominant goals are "power and plenty" (Rittberger 2004:9). Rittberger explains "plenty" as "steps to safeguard or increase income and assets", while "power" can be understood as "steps to protect or expand competencies" (Rittberger 2004:16). In other words, the "domestic actor's basic interest is aimed at increasing their financial means (i.e. income, asset) and at extending their policy-making power" (Rittberger 2001:80). Eventually, state preferences are exposed on the table of world politics, where they again become a subject of bargaining.

6.2. Liberalism and nuclear weapons

Regarding the nuclear weapons problematics, liberalism took up research where realism did not look for answers or where it could not provide any. For example, scholars were struck by the fact that not all states possessing sufficient technological capability to build nuclear weapons, in fact, did it.

Liberal scholars search for domestic factors affecting nuclear postures (cf. Meyer 1984, Sherill 2012) and explaining nuclear proliferation (cf. Meyer 1984, Reiss 1988, Sagan 1996-1997). These factors include financial budgets, opportunity costs, domestic and international pressures, parochial bureaucratic or political interests, international disincentives influencing a states' operations, threats to the environment. Liberal institutionalists also look at international conditions influencing decisions on nuclear weapons. These include sharing democratic norms and values (Chafetz 1993), economic interdependence (Solingen 1994), the influence of epistemic communities (Adler 1992), international nuclear assistance and cooperation (cf. Kroenig 2009, Brown/Kaplow 2014).

So far, liberal theoretical literature, however, did neither deal with extended nuclear deterrence nor motivations for nuclear sharing within alliances. Paul Huth and Bruce M. Russett make a welcome exception by investigating the quality of the protégé-defender interdependence as a requirement for immediate extended deterrence success (1984).

Domestic interests were an important element of policy papers analysing domestic positions on the recent nuclear sharing debate in NATO (cf. Thränert 2010, Andreasen et al. 2010, Sauer 2010, Chalmers/Somerville 2011), in Germany (Borger 2009, Lamond/Ingram 2009, Meier 2010d, Fitzpatrick 2011, Franceschini/Müller 2013), the Netherlands (Koster 2013), Belgium (Fitzpatrick 2011, Sauer 2013), Italy (Spagnuolo 2011, cf. Lamond/Ingram 2009, Fitzpatrick 2011), Poland (Somerville et al. 2012), Turkey (Kibaroglu 2011 and 2013, Fitzpatrick 2011), in the United States (Pomper 2013) and in CEE (Kulesa 2010 and 2010a, Horovitz 2013). Here, different domestic forces shaped the debate over future NATO nuclear deployments. Political positions resulted from an interplay between domestic actors. They emerged as a response to social demands or originated despite the lack of thereof. These papers, however, fail to put the arguments into a specific theoretical corset.

Nevertheless, research presented in these policy papers and liberal academic studies on nuclear proliferation serve as a promising ground supporting the claim that domestic interests are insightful to a state's stance on extended nuclear deterrence.

6.3. Framing the B61 from the liberal perspective

From the utilitarian liberal perspective, political decisions do not necessarily follow the realist balance of power calculation. They might also result out of utilitarianistic considerations of particular political players, who push for their own goals and may even instrumentalise politics to achieve them. Actors use their subjective interpretation of security threats to serve their own needs while possessing a wide public absorbing ones'. According to Scott Sagan, "security threats are windows of opportunity through which parochial interests can jump" (Sagan 1996-1997:65). This encourages us to view American nuclear weapons in Europe as a subject potentially uncorrelated with its basic military function and symbolising hard power.

That particular actors-related interests are at stake in the Polish debate over the B61 in Europe. This claim is supported by the fact that the B61 is not considered as a military weapon. If it is not mainly for the military potential of the fissile material hidden in the metal cover, it has something to do with other considerations. This notion is additionally strengthened by the fact that NATO member states do not push the United States to officially clarify how it would use its tactical nuclear weapons to secure Europe while agreeing with undifferentiated declaratory statements. There are no clarifications of its potential use in the recent American or NATO documents. Moreover, for over a NATO membership decade, neither the government of Poland nor any other NATO member state ever publicly raised the problem of balancing Russian tactical nuclear weapons. If these weapons did not pose a threat during the last two decades but appeared as such with the possibility of the B61 being withdrawn entirely, it appears that these weapons value might not result purely out of balancing the Russian military capabilities either.

If this is the case, the official Polish policy on NATO extended nuclear deterrence serves gain-seeking, domestic actors. There are several key domestic actors that could have a stake in participating and influencing the Polish governments' stance on the B61 in Europe. These actors include but are not limited to the government (including administrative actors), the parliament, the president, the media and the public opinion (including political advocacy groups). In the following text, I shall analyse these different actors in order to determine which might have a particular interest in the continuous B61 presence in Europe.

6.3.1. Domestic social context

Utilitarian liberalism argues that the plurality and characteristics of domestic influences shape a states official position on foreign and security policy, including nuclear weapons and related concepts. The individual and various collectives of individuals are the theoretical points of departure. Whether or not the B61 in Europe serves national interests, utilitarian liberalism presupposes that it may serve parochial interests of the bureaucratic, political and military apparatus. At the same time, other relevant social actors may engage and try to influence the final foreign policy outcome. Individual and collective domestic actors create conditions favouring particular perceptions of threat and potential solutions. They also influence how and whether an issue is broadly debated in the society. They even sometimes control the decision-making process. As states are embedded in a network of influential individuals and groups, the central liberal question is: who governs (Moravcsik 2012). To assess domestic factors influencing Polish official standing on American tactical nuclear weapons stationed on European territory from a utilitarian liberal perspective, I will outline the structure of relevant domestic interest groups. Which social actors might have a stake in the debate? Are there any individual or collective actors that may take advantage of exaggerating security threats and making a “*myth of nuclear security* more compelling”? (Lavoy 1993:192, emphasis in original).

From a methodological point of view, state preferences can be “inferred either by observing consistent patterns of state behaviour or by systematically analysing stable elements internal to states, as revealed in decision-making documents, trustworthy oral histories and memoirs, patterns of coalition support, and the structure of domestic institutions” (Moravcsik 1997:544). In general, Polish membership in NATO and the problem of the U.S. tactical nuclear weapons in particular, are not controversial in the society and are the subject of political consensus (Zuba 2011). According to the government,

“the nuclear problematics does not invoke public controversies which limits the debate. There is full consensus among major political forces regarding the importance of NATO nuclear deterrence for the Polish security and as a means to assure the Alliances cohesion. The role of nuclear weapons as defined in the NATO Strategic Concept is fully accepted” (Official Response:9, translation mine).

According to a former Polish ambassador to NATO, “since 1989, nobody especially dealt with non-political aspects of nuclear deterrence. Nobody dealt with it in detail” (IP13, 25.10.2013, translation mine). A well-established expert in the field mentioned that,

“the number of people interested in this issues is small. Essentially, it centres around the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Defence, Permanent Delegation of the Republic of Poland to NATO and to a certain extent to the National Security Bureau. Therefore, when the Polish government vocalised interest on that issue through statements of MFA Radosław Sikorski and through participating in the preparation of several non-papers, in principle, there were no partners among think-tanks or journalists who knew what was going on” (IP9, 21.10.2013, translation mine).

To make a systematic assessment of actors, in the following, I analyse the involvement of the government, the parliament, the president, the military, the expert community and the public opinion in the recent debate on NATO nuclear sharing. Utilitarian liberalist analysis often includes companies and economic pressure groups. However, this does not seem valid for Poland because the B61 does not station on its territory and Polish companies are not involved in the nuclear weapons business with the United States (ICAN 2014).

6.3.2. The Government

The Council of Ministers, led by the Prime Minister, holds the main responsibility for Polish foreign policy. The MFA, the head of diplomacy, leads and coordinates foreign policy, maintains relations with other states, pursues the interests of the Polish state and its citizens, and is responsible for the Polish image globally. Foreign policy is implemented by civil servants and diplomats from the Foreign Service. The Permanent Representation of the Republic of Poland in NATO serves as a liaison between national and NATO authorities and participates directly in the decision-making process of NATO. It, however, is fully dependent on instructions from the MFA.

In the course of negotiations over the New Strategic Concept and the DDPR, Poland was governed by the centre-right Civic Platform in coalition with the agrarian and Christian democratic Polish People’s Party. Theoretically, this secured a consistent political line during the whole process. In fact, however, there is a strong consensus among all influential parties on the political scene over the necessity of NATO and the need to strengthen visible NATO

reassurance. As such, domestic changes in allocating political positions would most probably not heavily influence the official Polish stance during NATO debates.

Coordination of the official Polish position on NATO nuclear deterrence was undertaken in cooperation between the MFA, MoD, the Permanent Delegation of the Republic of Poland to the NATO and Adam Rotfeld, member of the NATO Group of Experts. The MFA was leading the task. Apart from participation in the debate on the New Strategic Concept, the MoD has a particular stake in NATO nuclear matters. Once a year, he meets at the level of MoD at the NATO NPG. Radosław Sikorski served as MFA for the whole time of the negotiation process (November 2007 - September 2014), while the MoD has been lead by two ministers—Bogdan Klich (November 2007-June 2011) and Tomasz Siemioniak (from August 2011).

Nuclear weapons policy does not pose a special priority to the Polish government, but it would be unfair to say that Warsaw did not pay attention to the issue. To the contrary, the Polish government was one of the most active member states in the debate over the B61 within and beyond the Alliance. Radosław Sikorski's personal interest in this issue has been an important factor shaping particularities of the Polish governments' position. His op-eds reflect the evolution of the Polish governments' position from a rather quiet status-quo defender to a more cooperative player supporting multilateral arms control.

After the CDU/CSU-FDP government announced its goal to withdraw American nuclear weapons from the territory of Germany, the Polish government preferred consultations in closed NATO rooms in Brussels from public interference in German domestic policy (IP13, 25.10.2013). Warsaw temporised in defining a clear position, waiting for the distribution of postures among other NATO member states, in particular, other host states and the United States. As such, no official position of the Polish government from the first months of the debate is publicly available. According to a former high-level official from the MFA, in bilateral talks representatives of the American administration wondered what interest European NATO allies have in removing these weapons from the Old Continent and assured Poles that they would not consider the German claim (IP13, 25.10.2013).

For the first time, Radosław Sikorski revealed the official position in an op-ed he co-authored with Carl Bildt. They called for an arms control regime on tactical nuclear weapons bilaterally

negotiated between the United States and Russia. They demanded Moscow to withdraw its weapons from the Kaliningrad region and Kola Peninsula and to destroy remaining storage facilities (Bildt/Sikorski 2010). They acknowledged that tactical nuclear weapons had no role in resolving existing security challenges, calling them “dangerous remnants of a dangerous past.” After it was clear that the NATO Foreign Ministers meeting in Tallinn in April 2010 would include discussions on the Alliance’s nuclear policy, a statement by Jonas Gahr Støre and Radosław Sikorski accepted NATO’s role in putting tactical nuclear weapons in an arms control framework (Støre/Sikorski 2010). Both ministers, however, suggested addressing TNW in a multilateral context. They proposed a negotiated step-by-step reduction process based on transparency and confidence-building measures and Russian reciprocity.

In a comment by the former MoD and the head of the National Security Bureau, Marek Szczygło, the Polish diplomacy tried to “refocus and reshape the debate in order to place more emphasis on the issue of tactical nuclear weapons as a general problem, instead of looking at it as an internal NATO issue” (Arms Control Association 2010b:8). According to Adam Rotfeld, the Polish government attempted to propose an additional instrument of cooperation which could ease tensions and distrust vis-à-vis Russia (Rotfeld 2012:121). Ambassador Witold Sobków reiterated this position in May 2010 in his Non-proliferation Treaty Review Conference statement (NPT Statement 2010). Eventually, the Polish diplomacy ended in victory with the New Strategic Concept mentioning that NATO will seek to create the conditions for their further reductions in the future (NATO 2010).

Afterwards, Polish authorities actively participated in the work of the WMD Control and Disarmament Committee. Warsaw co-sponsored a non-paper on increasing transparency and confidence with regard to tactical nuclear weapons in Europe (Non-Paper 2011). Striving a practical approach to the effort to increase transparency and confidence with regard to tactical nuclear weapons in Europe, the paper made specific proposals. It specified the scope of transparency, including “numbers, types, locations, command arrangements, operational status, and level of storage security” and made seven suggestions on further measures. The government of Poland suggested conducting an NRC seminar on nuclear doctrines with a special focus on tactical nuclear weapons in Europe. An event routinely held since 2005 at the NRC Nuclear Experts Working Group (NUCL) and its successor, the NRC Defence

Transparency, Strategy and Reform Working Group (DTSR). On a side note, according to publicly available information, such a seminar did not take place (cf. Kubiak 2014:12).

In the words of a senior Polish official, cited by Oliver Meier, the Polish government anticipated the final product to be a “list of joint projects to be developed together with Russia within [the] framework of NATO-Russia Council” (Meier 2011c). Before the Chicago Summit, Sikorski together with Støre, reiterated the will to engage Russia to enhance transparency and increase mutual trust (Sikorski/Støre 2012). Under Sikorski, Poland also joined the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative (NPDI) and participated in the Kaliningrad Triangle, a regional security governance initiative between the governments of Germany, Poland and Russia, which also put tactical nuclear weapons on its agenda. In the framework of the NPDI, Polish authorities co-sponsored several working papers for the NPT Review Conference 2015. In April 2012, the group submitted a working paper on the transparency of nuclear weapons, calling non-strategic nuclear weapons as a particular field where additional information could “facilitate further progress on nuclear disarmament” (NPT Working Paper 2012). The group suggested a standard nuclear disarmament reporting form. It included the following information on numbers, types and status of nuclear warheads; numbers and types of delivery vehicles; numbers and types of weapons and delivery systems dismantled and reduced as part of nuclear disarmament efforts; amounts of fissile material produced for military purposes and measures taken to diminish the role and significance of nuclear weapons in military and security concepts, doctrines and policies. They also called states to continue discussions on definitions and terminology. Their problematic substance often used to paralyse debates on TNW (for further details see 3.2.). In March 2013, in preparation for the second session of the NPT Preparatory Committee, the group issued a working paper on non-strategic nuclear weapons calling to place disarmament of these weapons higher on the international agenda, for accountability and verification of the PNIs, developing detailed proposals on transparency and confidence building ideas (NPT Working Paper 2013). Even though the government of Poland was active within the NPDI in tabling proposals aimed at tactical nuclear weapons, the government has no particular idea on how to practically implement the reciprocity condition. However, without the personal involvement, contacts and interest of MFA Radosław Sikorski, it is hard to imagine whether the Polish government would actively participate in the discussion on tactical nuclear weapons.

As mentioned before, Adam Rotfeld participated in the work of the NATO Group of Experts. Reflecting this experience, he wrote that “the members of the Group were selected on merits, and they did not represent the official positions of their respective countries” (Rotfeld 2010:7). In fact, however, the practical cooperation was very much interest-driven. So much, that - according to a former high-ranking official close to the former minister, Rotfeld almost vetoed to leave the group if some older member states do not lean towards the threat perceptions of CEE states (IP13, 25.10.2013). In his book *Thoughts on Russia*, Rotfeld suggested having put national interest above personal preferences, contradicting his previous statement.

“My emotions were meaningless. I represented the interests of states and nations of the whole region. And states do not have emotions. They have interests and those representing these states and nations should take care that their interests are expressed understandably and clear. Personal convictions and attitudes of members of the Group of Experts are not deciding. If other NATO experts convinced me to their position, this would not mean that Poland changed its mind and would define its security interests anew” (Rotfeld 2012:252).

As such, already in the conceptual pre-phase of NATO’s New Strategic Concept, national interests played a major role in discussions.

Summing up, my respondents made it very clear that in deciding over the B61, the main question for the Polish government was “what is in for us in removing the B61 from Europe?” The Polish governments’ interests were very precise - involving Russia in the reciprocal and verifiable transparency of its sub-strategic weapons stockpiles in order to gain more information on its arsenals and simultaneously increase trust between parties. Knowledge gained through official channels directly from Russia would release the Polish secret services from obtaining data over the Russian capabilities in Kaliningrad from NATO allied secret services that have better means to observe the situation in the small Russian enclave, and as such weaken its dependence from foreign information providers. In contrast to discussing reductions, where the participation of the Polish authorities would be rather impossible, the government could participate in negotiations over TCBMs, which would strengthen the Polish position internationally.

6.3.3. The Parliament

The Polish Sejm, the lower chamber of the Polish parliament, is responsible for scrutiny. It can independently acquire information on the present state of affairs in matters regarding the Council of Ministers - also in respect of security policy. Records of parliamentary briefings between 1993-1999 lack any debate over the strategic utility and/or implications of American nuclear weapons or extended nuclear deterrence for the security of the country. During the NATO nuclear sharing debates 2008-2012, two standing committees were briefed - the Foreign Affairs Committee and the National Security Committee. Tactical nuclear weapons were very randomly mentioned, and not even thoroughly discussed at these committee meetings. The issue is best described as peripheral and negligible. The following vestigial snippets, although taken out of the context, exemplify the way in which tactical nuclear weapons were handled in the Polish parliamentary discussions.

On 27 May 2010, the Foreign Affairs Committee held a meeting with representatives of the International Affairs Committee of the Russian State Duma. Adam Rotfeld, Head of the Polish-Russian Group for Difficult Issues, referring to the groups' working progress mentioned tactical nuclear weapons as a "destabilising element" (KSZ 27.05.2010). He then continued encouraging Russia to accept confidence building measures which "would trigger a positive response in Europe in the sense of a withdrawal of all tactical nuclear warheads from Europe" (Ibid.). He also mentioned that both NATO and Russia need to think about this together. However, none of the members of parliament took this issue forward.

On 27 October 2010, both committees held a session in which the MFA and MoD briefed parliamentarians on the Polish governments' stance on the planned NATO New Strategic Concept. Jacek Najder, Undersecretary of State in the MFA reminded MPs on the Polish-Norway initiative, underlining the importance of reciprocity as a precondition for any reductions in tactical nuclear weapons. He also stressed that "as long as tactical nuclear weapons are part of NATO's deterrence strategy, NATO should be equipped with this type of weapons" (KON/KSZ 27.10.2010, translation mine). Karol Karski, then parliamentarian from the opposition party Law and Justice, mentioned that "in the Kaliningrad Oblast there are storage facilities of tactical nuclear weapons", but the topic was not further elaborated.

On 16 December 2010, both committees met in a closed session for a briefing on the governmental position on the NATO New Strategic Concept, its realisation and NATO contingency planning (KSZ 16.12.2010, translation mine). No minutes have been openly published. Another session between both committees took place on 24 February 2011, and again TNW were mentioned on the margins only. Tadeusz Iwański from the oppositional Democratic Left Alliance said that “nobody really knows what kind of weaponry is deployed in Kaliningrad or what weapons could be there” and that apart from signing and ratifying New START, all other issues have secondary importance to Washington and Moscow (KON/KSZ 24.2.2011, translation mine). At the same time, Karol Karski reminded that Russia holds a storage facilities with tactical nuclear weapons close to the Polish border in Kaliningrad. In the 86th session of the Sejm, during discussions on the ratification of the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Poland and the Government of the United States on deployment of anti-ballistic missile interceptors in Polish territory, (20 August 2008) and on a protocol amending the agreement (3 July 2010), Karol Karski asked the government,

“In the Kaliningrad region, a few kilometres north of the town of Goldap, near Gusev, in warehouses in Mikhaylovo, Russia stores tactical nuclear weapons. None of the NATO member states bordering with Russia holds tactical nuclear weapons on its territory - neither strategic nor tactical. Therefore, my question is: How does the Polish government assesses the fact that a few kilometres from the Polish border tactical nuclear weapons are present? The weapon that will be fired not far away, a few thousand kilometres away, but several, possibly tens of kilometres from there” (Sejm 2011:100, translation mine).

This was the only time during the NATO debate when the issue of tactical nuclear weapons has been brought outside of the committees hearing into the parliamentary general debate. The answer to this question was very general, and its citation here would not provide any value for the analysis.

Neither of the Sejm parliamentarians was a member of the non-partisan forum Parliamentarians for Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament (PNND), nor followed their colleagues from other NATO member states signing letters calling for the removal of tactical nuclear weapons from Europe (PNND 2013, 2013a).

At the same time, however, it was Jarosław L. Wałęsa and Janusz W. Zemke, members of the European Parliament and Wałęsa also the only Polish member of PNND, who on January 2013 submitted the Written Declaration on support for the Global Zero Action Plan that has been signed by 389 members of the European Parliament (EP 2012). The declaration among other things called for the removal of all tactical nuclear weapons from the European continent.

Summing up, the Polish parliament did not serve as a forum to express differentiated positions on the B61 in Europe, or on the Polish governments' way to handle the issue. There is a widely shared consensus on how to approach NATO nuclear sharing within all political parties, which complements the governmental position. Moreover, Polish MPs who even might have a different opinion would be in the minority. At the same time, striving to win the next election, they probably did not see any advantage in engaging in a discussion, which is not widely followed by the public opinion and on which they have only very limited influence. As such, the parliament did not pose an important element of the debate on NATO nuclear sharing, neither reflecting the governmental approach nor offering any alternative solutions.

6.3.4. The President

The Polish constitution grants the president a direct mandate to serve as the supreme representative of the Republic of Poland. He is also the guarantor of the fundamental state values, including security. Within the research period of this dissertation, it was Lech Kaczyński (2005 - 10. April 2010) and Bronisław Komorowski (since August 2010) who served as presidents. None of them was very active in the NATO nuclear weapons discussion.

However, there were significant differences between the government and the presidential chancellery under Lech Kaczyński (Wroński 2010). Paweł Wypych, Secretary of State in the Chancellery of the President of Poland, who was asked whether President Lech Kaczyński thought that there was a need to terminate nuclear weapons in Europe, responded,

“No, the president is against this. The president thinks that throughout decades nuclear weapons deployed in Europe served to secure freedom in Europe. I think, that what Radosław Sikorski signed together with the Swedish Prime Minister is not a solution that would be advantageous to Poland. We

think that in talks between Russia and the United States, one needs to remember that Poland lies in Europe and is Russia's neighbour. I think that every state, including Poland, should have guaranteed security in Europe. Let us not deceive ourselves, our biggest partner, biggest ally in NATO is the United States" (Prezydent.pl 2010, translation mine).

Thus, Lech Kaczyński was neither a proponent of a unilateral withdrawal of the B61 from Europe nor even of reductions conditioned upon Russian reciprocity. For him, the B61 was a "security guarantee". Even though the argument was not deeply elaborated, the statement indicates using the B61 as a "transatlantic link" which connects Poland with its "biggest ally". In a 2007 speech at the end of the U.S. President George W. Bush visit in the Residence on Hel, President Kaczyński said,

"As far as relations with our Russian partner are concerned, we both have naturally recognised that Russia is an important country in this world, that the status of the Russian state – the world's largest in terms of territory, also large as regards population, in possession of nuclear weapons – this is still backlogged from past times; at any rate all this gives it the right, the grounds to be a major country globally. And this not only the U.S. but also Poland do not question" (Prezydent.pl 2007, translation mine).

By framing the Russian nuclear arsenal in that way, President Kaczyński officially acknowledged the weapons status as a symbol of prestige. In contrast, Bronisław Komorowski was more in line with Radosław Sikorski's activities on tactical nuclear weapons. This is not a surprise. Aligning foreign and defence policy positions along the spectrum of political factions was one of the main trademark features of his presidency (Prezydent.pl 2010a, 2010b). President Komorowski's main interest on the way to the Lisbon Summit was to obtain material security guarantees making the common security principle embraced in article 5 of the Washington Treaty more reliable. He also carried the government's message along to Washington. There, in a meeting with President Barack Obama on 8 December 2010, he made clear that the official Polish stance, reflected in the 2010 (op-ed by Radosław Sikorski and Carl Bildt (Bildt/Sikorski 2010)), is a result of a thousand year long lack of trust to Russia. Komorowski reiterated that while the Polish government is open to assist in resetting relations between the Western world and Russia, and intends to invest in good relations with Moscow, it also holds the belief that confidence needs to be verified (White House 2010). At the same time, however, in contrast to Lech Kaczyński,

Bronisław Komorowski did not frame nuclear weapons as a guarantee for freedom and security in Europe. In a 2014 interview, he mentioned,

“I think that since many years, including the presidency of Lech Wałęsa, we never pretended to possess nuclear weapons, because this is not where the security of Poland is located. Our security is basically based on a modern army, on a strengthened defence system (...) but the main source of our security is not nuclear weapons in the hands of Poland, but the might of the North-Atlantic Alliance which is sufficient to deter aggression on our territory” (TVN24 2014:10’-11’45”, translation mine).

The Polish president has the National Security Bureau, a think-tank alike body providing aid and support in executing security and defence tasks to his disposition. Here, especially the strong personality of its director - Gen. Stanisław Koziej (2010-2015), a military, a scholar and strategist, who co-authored several Polish official and semi-official writings, has a special influence. Unfortunately, he did not grant an interview for this dissertation. Stanisław Koziej is regarded in the security elite as a supporter of nuclear weapons in Europe. According to my interviewees, Stanisław Koziej is one of the very few in Poland who has been dealing with the issue of NATO nuclear sharing even before the Polish accession to the Alliance (IP17, 15.11.2013). He was also personally responsible for the final editing of the White Book on National Security of the Republic of Poland, including the passages related to American nuclear weapons in Europe (IP13, 25.10.2013). “The Head of the National Security Bureau leaned rather towards maintaining the role and presence of tactical nuclear weapons in Europe”, one interviewee said (IP9, 21.10.2013, translation mine).

Summing up, these few statements by the Polish presidents on nuclear weapons is almost everything they officially mentioned on that issue. As such, while President Komorowski created a forum that enabled unification of positions of the Polish political elites including on NATO nuclear sharing, neither of the presidents seemed to have a specific influence on the final political position.

6.3.5. The Military

Another actor with some stake in NATO nuclear sharing is the military. NATO nuclear participation is not reduced to the host states and the nuclear weapons provider, but also to some allies that grant non-nuclear support to the NATO nuclear mission (Kamp 2010:5). In the SNOWCAT missions, around 15 non-nuclear NATO member states are responsible for

air-refuelling or search and rescue operations. According to Karl Heinz Kamp, former Research Director at the NATO Defence College and a member of the NATO Group of Experts, SNOWCAT missions are regularly exercised (Kamp 2011:7). These states, however, normally do not participate in the Steadfast Noon exercise series which train loading, unloading and employing of the B61 tactical nuclear weapons. An exception to this rule was when two Polish F-16 from the 10th Tactical Squadron (ELT) of the 32nd Wing (BL) at Łask Air Base in Western Poland participated in the Steadfast Noon exercise at the Ghedi Torre Air base in northern Italy in October 2014 (Kristensen 2014a). The Polish participation may reflect the 2013 Nuclear Employment Strategy direction to integrate non-nuclear strike options - in this case, the Joint Air-to-Surface Standoff Missiles recently approved for sale to Poland - in order to reduce the role of nuclear weapons (Department of Defence 2013:5).

Moreover, each member state seconds one senior military official (the Military Representative to NATO) to the NATO Military Committee that provides consensus-based authorisation for military action and strategic policy for the Alliance. According to David S. Yost, Professor at the Naval Postgraduate School, a distinguished expert on NATO nuclear policy, participation in the operational aspects of the NATO nuclear mission strengthened their voice in the NPG, where they “gained and exercised considerable influence in the formation of NATO’s nuclear policy and its associated decision-making process” (Yost 2010:16).

Summing up, the Polish military is indirectly involved in the nuclear mission through SNOWCAT with its role increasing with its recent participation in the Steadfast Noon exercise. It also delegates representatives to NATO nuclear planning and strategy and by this gains information of individual allies nuclear doctrine.

6.3.6. Expert community

NATO nuclear sharing is an issue discussed in a small circle of interested experts in Poland. Throughout the years, several persons filling the governmental administration, academia and working as freelance pundits, gained relevant expertise. In the world of think-tanks and academic institutions that deal with nuclear weapons in Poland, only one institution comes to mind – The Polish Institute of International Affairs (PISM) leading its Non-Proliferation and Arms Control Project, possible due to financial support provided by the Nuclear Threat

Initiative. As PISM is a government-funded institution, it serves as a governmental policy consulting body. Unfortunately, not all of its consulting papers are available to the public. However, looking at the events PISM co-organised during the NATO nuclear sharing debate, held in February 2013 on *Prospects for Information Sharing and Confidence Building on Non-Strategic Nuclear Weapons in Europe*, and one in February 2014 on *Options of TCBMs related to Non-strategic Nuclear Weapons in Europe: Cost Benefit Matrix*, the institute was involved in furthering the debate on potential transparency and confidence-building measures. According to one interviewee from PISM,

“When the Polish government expressed interest on the issue of tactical nuclear weapons and took part in working out several non-papers, it basically had no partners among think tanks or journalists who knew what was going on. Therefore, we were among the few people who were interested in the subject and very quickly found a direct contact with people in the administration. We were able to publicise and explain the motivation of the Polish position outside (...) Therefore, I believe that our contribution to the discussion, in Poland, in Europe and the United States was to explain why Poland engaged in this discussion, what were its aims, how should we approach the issue of confidence and transparency measures, the issue of reciprocity and how one should interpret this. And as such, Poland took an important place in this discussion on the level of think tanks as a state that is interested in tactical weapons, and also as a state the views of which are a little more complex than the position of the Baltic states. (...) To some extent, during the debate, I tried to introduce the topic of disarmament and point to the relationship between this part of the strategy of deterrence and other parts, rather suggesting that an excessive focus on nuclear capabilities is not the best solution for Poland. I also had the opportunity to portray such views during my work with the National Security Bureau. However, it was rather a minority position there” (IP9, 21.10.2013, translation mine).

However, some information from an expert participating in the review process leading towards the White Book on National Security of the Republic of Poland strengthens the perception that the interest among experts on that particular issue is fairly small. According to the expert, who on this particular issue asked for anonymity, only three discussants (out of 200) took interest in the tactical nuclear weapons issue. They approved a pre-formulated statement without any discussion. The final version of the report has been then written by the head of the National Security Bureau.

Summing up, this points to the fact that if interested, the Polish government did not have a vast array of partners at the level of think tanks to discuss the issue. PISM found itself in the

position to become part of the debate, however, rather agitating as a mouthpiece of the government.

6.3.7. Public opinion

As state interests form collectively, “policy is biased in favour of the governing coalition or powerful domestic groups” (Moravcsik 1997:530). Therefore, it is necessary to look at the compatibility of the official position with the distribution of positions in the sovereign. Liberalism is sensible towards differences between social demands and governmental decisions, due to its appreciation of individual rights on the one hand and the potentially destabilising consequences caused by such a disparity, on the other. Moreover, the epistemic communities become “full partners with politicians, administration, and military officers in the formulation of policy” (Gilpin 1962:299).

There is almost no public discussion on nuclear policy in Poland. No public information campaign or open discussion on NATO extended nuclear deterrence arrangements did the author notice in Poland. Single articles referring to TNW are rare works of individual, passionate journalists (Smoczyński 2011, Węglarczyk 2011, Ostrowski 2012 and 2013, Woźnicki 2014). Societal awareness of problematics regarding nuclear weapons and the intensity of the debate over the presence of American nuclear weapons in Europe is negligible in Poland. Social polls by the Centre for Public Opinion Research conducted in June 1997 and March 1999, preceding the Polish accession to NATO, suggested that respectively 83% and 81% of respondents found the idea to station nuclear weapons on Polish territory wrong (CBOS 1999). The poll was never repeated. According to Polish citizens, however, at the time of writing the probability of a military attack on the Polish territory and a nuclear attack in particular was very low - on a scale from 0 to 10 (where 0 was the lowest and 10 the highest probability), it is 2,02 and 1,67 respectively (White Book 2013:73).

At the same time, only 38% of Poles approve the governments’ handling of international policy (GMF 2013:14). “Asked whether NATO is still essential to their security, only 45% responded that it is — the lowest number in Europe” (GMF 2012: 33). As such, the sovereign does not perceive structurally induced threats as anticipated by the government in its estimation of the security environment. Moreover, it does not wholeheartedly approve NATO

as a solution to its security-related issues. From this perspective, a conflict of interests between the sovereign and the government could be assumed.

At the same time, there are only eight Polish city mayors who signed the Mayors for Peace pledge (Mayors for Peace 2014:16). There are neither Polish non-governmental organisations focused on nuclear weapons issues, nor is Poland of interest to internationally agitating NGOs, like Global Zero, ICAN etc. No national or local initiatives are known to the author. Even though in 1995 it was the Polish-rooted prof. Joseph Rotblat, founder of Pugwash who together with prof. Maciej Nałęcz, the chair of the Council of the Pugwash Conferences for a quarter of a century, collected the Nobel Peace Prize - the former for his work, the latter representing Pugwash - the Pugwash movement almost does not exist in Poland anymore. Although between 1966-1996, the Polish Pugwash organised ten meetings and conferences focusing on security issues including nuclear weapons (Pugwash 2014), the Polish branch of the organisation was inactive at the time of writing. The historical capital has not been utilised.

Summing up, as the topic of the B61 is not widely discussed in Poland, the government does not anticipate grave consequences from its position. Domestic political struggles or lobbyist groups trying to influence the debate can be excluded from the analysis, because of the political consensus and a homogenous social attitude.

6.4. The B61 role from the liberal perspective

Following the analysis above, the B61 can fulfil one of several roles.

(1) The B61 is a bargaining chip for more transparency in Russian stockpiles of TNW.

As it was mentioned in Chapter Three, the Polish government does not possess credible official information on the Russian stockpiles of its arsenals of sub-strategic nuclear weapons in the vicinity of NATO. As I pointed out in Chapter Five, the Polish government also does not possess information on the Russian military capabilities in the Kaliningrad Oblast, despite the continuous threats of the stationing nuclear-capable Iskander weapon systems there. The Polish government, therefore, does not want to give American nuclear weapons away without simultaneously improving its security. The government conditions its approval for the B61

withdrawal upon improving transparency on Russian stockpiles of TNW in order to fill its intelligence gap. It might potentially also eye a tit-for-tat deal with Russia as a precondition to approving the withdrawal of nuclear weapons from Europe.

(2) The B61 is a means to sustain bureaucratic privileges.

Historically, along with the B61 presence in Europe, NATO allies were concerned over the weapons usability and the disastrous consequences for allies in case of their use. They urged America to establish a framework for consulting and participating in the decision-making and implementing a decision for use. The establishment of the Nuclear Planning Group (NPG) in December 1966 finally increased the involvement of European NATO allies in nuclear affairs (NATO 1966: par.15). Having an insight into the American nuclear policy is a privilege of its NATO allies only. For example, no multilateral alliance structures for regular consultations analogous to NATO exist in Asia. For extended deterrence in the Asian context, the United States provides offshore nuclear capabilities. In other words, the weapons for use in the Asian context are stationed in the United States territory and would be transferred to the region if needed. However, neither the “Extended Deterrence Dialogue” with Japan, nor the “Extended Deterrence Policy Committee” with South Korea involves the Asian allies in the American decision on the use of nuclear weapons. At the same time, there is a wide-spread popular belief that the NATO-intern consultation is a result of the B61 presence in Europe. For that reason, I investigate whether for the Polish government, leaving the B61 in Europe is a measure to sustain the privileged U.S. nuclear briefings.

(3) The B61 is a means to sustain military missions (SNOWCAT).

Should a NATO fighter be sent on a nuclear attack mission, it would be supported by the so-called SNOWCAT mission (Support of Nuclear Operations with Conventional Air Tactics). This nonnuclear support mission would involve refuelling, reconnaissance, as well as search and rescue operations undertaken by member states not directly involved in the alliances nuclear mission. Poland, together with several other member states participate in this mission. The SNOWCAT mission member states can train with other NATO militaries on a regular basis. By doing so, they display they willingness for burden sharing, acceptance for the nuclear mission and strengthening NATO’s cohesion.

(4) The B61 is a means of alliance cohesion and unity

An important variable underlying extended assurance is a shared perception of threat, both on the protégé-protector and the protégé-allies levels. From a “consumer” of extended deterrence, the belief that the provider of extended deterrence shares its threat perception and understands its sensitiveness is as important as the existence of the adequate military means to fulfil the defence pledge (Kulesa 2010a:123).

Due to the concept of burden sharing, NATO extended nuclear deterrence is provided by the political decision of the United States, backed by a political approval by all NATO member states and a subsequent execution of a nuclear attack order by selected European NATO member states or the United States. For such a division of tasks, the threat perception needs to be equally shared by the consumer, the protector and all NATO allies, particularly those involved in the Alliances nuclear missions.

As such, I investigate whether unanimous support for the B61 reflecting NATO cohesion is a feature of high importance to the Polish authorities.

(5) The B61 is a means to sustain the transatlantic link

Recent literature and official papers very often relate the B61 to maintaining American interest in the security of Europe (e.g. Larsen 2006, Carnegie 2009, Kulesa 2009, Kulesa 2010, Non-Paper 2011, Kibaroglu 2011, Chalmers & Sommerville 2011, Durkalec 2012, Horovitz 2013). Also, the DDPF reads that “A robust deterrence and defence posture strengthens Alliance cohesion, including the transatlantic link, through an equitable and sustainable distribution of roles, responsibilities, and burdens“ (2012:paragraph 7).

The governments of most NATO members believe that the United States has a leading role in providing security in Europe. Securing American interest for Europe happens on the level of intension as well as on the level of military presence. As long as the decision-makers perceive Europe as a source of global stability that requires “American hand-holding” (Goldberg 2016) Washington will pour financial, human and military resources to stabilise it. In times when this perception might not be present or might be weaker among key American decision-makers, European states secure the presence of American military infrastructure, equipment

and personnel to make a withdrawal decision harder. The B61 might be one such means to permanently tie the United States to Europe and secure Washington's interest in the security of the Old Continent.

6.5. The B61 as a bargain for Russia to increase transparency on its TNW

Official documents available to the author suggest that even though from the beginning of its membership in NATO-Warsaw constantly supported unchanged nuclear policies of the Alliance, it also saw a potential for transparency and trust-building measures. It was not a surprising position for a new, relatively poor member state. Transparency, confidence and security building measures (TCBM) bear only minor costs and at the same time serve as a signal of engagement.

As the government of Poland was looking for potential niches it could fill out as a new NATO member, TCBMs seemed to be a good issue to work on. This interest remained a stable preference of the Polish diplomacy for years. According to a high-level decision-maker at the MFA, "Poland is a champion on TCBMs within NATO and outside" (IP7, 17.10.2013, translation mine). When at the 1999 Washington Summit NATO decided to "consider options for CSBMs" (NATO NAC 2000:2) and to prepare a list of TCSBM (Hrynkiewicz-Żabicki 2004:25), "Poland made a substantial input into the catalogue, which Warsaw introduced together with Germany", an officer at the MoD reported (IP5, 17.10.2013). What he meant was the 2000 *Report on Options for Confidence and Security Building Measures (CSBMs), Verification, Non-Proliferation, Arms Control and Disarmament* (NATO NAC 2000). The report suggested a range of CSBM options on mutual information and data exchange and provided a background for safety and security exercises conducted on the territories of the NRC nuclear weapon states between 2002-2011. Also, in a Working Paper submitted together with Belgium, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain and Turkey for the 2005 NPT Review Conference, the Polish government called nuclear-weapon states to commit to measures aimed at increasing accountability and transparency about non-strategic nuclear arms as well as verifiability and irreversibility of PNIs.

As such, recent discussions regarding TNW were not a new issue for the Polish government. It was a perfect occasion for Warsaw to utilise its record of experience with arms control.

Using a capability-based approach, Poland tabled or co-sponsored several detailed proposals conditioning future reductions in American and Russian tactical nuclear weapons on establishing transparency and confidence-building measures.

In February 2010, the Swedish and Polish foreign affairs ministers called for “early progress on steep reductions in sub-strategic nuclear weapons (...) and their eventual elimination” with “room for substantial unilateral confidence-building efforts” (Bildt/Sikorski 2010). As one of the first steps, they urged Moscow “to make a commitment to the withdrawal of nuclear weapons from areas adjacent to European Union member states”, so the Kaliningrad Oblast and the Kola Peninsula, which “had to be accompanied by the destruction of relevant storage facilities” (Ibid.).

In April 2010, MFA Radosław Sikorski and his Norwegian counterpart Jonas Gahr Støre discouraged NATO from unilateral moves on the B61 calling for mutually agreed measures and reciprocity (Støre/Sikorski 2010).

A non-paper submitted at the Berlin NATO foreign ministers’ meeting in April 2011, which served as a contribution to the DDPR process and the work of the WMD Control and Disarmament Committee, called for a more systematic dialogue between NATO and Russia to establish CSBMs (Non-Paper 2011). The proposal was a first attempt to detail the reciprocity condition and mirrored several ideas from the 2000 NAC report.

Just before the May 2012 NATO Chicago Summit, both the Polish and Norwegian foreign ministers published another op-ed, again highlighting the demand for reciprocity. The main idea was withheld - greater transparency and enhanced mutual trust as preconditions for reductions and elimination of tactical nuclear weapons in Europe (Støre/Sikorski 2012).

In a statement at the 2012 Preparatory Committee to the 2015 NPT Review Conference, ambassador Grudziński mentioned,

“We hope that nuclear weapons states will build on the positive experience of the New Start Treaty and include the category of tactical nuclear weapons in their future reduction talks. Before we reach this state, it is important to lay the foundations for any future reductions by enhancing the transparency of existing nuclear arsenals and increasing mutual confidence“ (Statement 2012:3).

Interview respondents most often stressed bargaining for Russia to increase transparency and/or reduce its stockpiles of TNW as the main motivation for the official Polish position. As for Jan Borkowski, former Secretary of State in the MFA, explained: “our intention is a versatile development of practical cooperation between NATO and Russia based upon mutual security interests, but not against values and rules combining our Euro-Atlantic community” (KON/KSZ 02.04.2009:2, translation mine).

The NPDI explained in a statement that the reason to pursue confidence-building measures such as enhanced transparency is an attempt “to further reduce levels of hostility and tension between States - particularly between those possessing nuclear weapons” (UNGA Statement 2014).

According to a former high ranking diplomat, the B61 materialises a bargaining role. It is seen important for negotiations, as it enables bilateral movement and in consequence cooperation (IP13, 25.10.2013). The government of Poland does not envision a full withdrawal of the B61 unless Russia completely withdraws its tactical nuclear potential in a controlled manner (IP13, 25.10.2013). “If we talk about TCBMs, the B61 needs to stay to offer anything to the Russians regarding transparency means” (IP8, 21.10.2013, translation mine). The withdrawal of the B61 is seen as a “doping element for Russia to take analogical steps” (IP5, 17.10.2013, translation mine). My respondents openly used phrases like “negotiation element” (IP5 and IP6 17.10.2013), “bidding argument” (IP8, 21.10.2013), “negotiation role” (IP13, 25.10.2013) to describe what they see as a relevant role for the B61 staying in place.

This approach fits a broader Polish attitude towards building a working relationship with Russia, as explained by MFA Radosław Sikorski, “we do not have naive delusions that it is possible to cooperate with Russia based on common values, so we choose a minimum program - an attempt to set up the rules of the game” (KSZ 12.02.2009:5).

Only one respondent representing academia negated the bargaining argument. He reasoned that “even if there was an occasion to use this weapon in this regard, after the whole debate in NATO on the B61, Russia knows well that it is not an argument anymore” (27.9.2013, translation mine). What he meant was the highly questionable credibility of the B61. The

B61-related discussions, taking place in the framework of developing the NATO Strategic Concept as well as within the DDRP process, displayed grave differences among NATO member states. After this differences got public, Russia might have known that instead of strengthening NATO coherence, these weapons created a stumbling block. Also, through intelligence information reinforced by open source information, Russia probably possesses quite a good knowledge about the state of the B61 deployment in Europe. As such, Moscow might not have any interest in trading its secretive information for data it already possesses.

At the same time, a comprehensive vision of how to operationalise reciprocity remains missing from the Polish proposals. According to the long time employee at the MoD, reciprocity still is a “political slogan” (IP5, 17.10.2013, translation mine) that needs to be filled with input, processed into specific ideas. Taking into account the quantitative and qualitative imbalance in TNW stockpiles in Europe between Russia and the United States, it is not clear whether this *quid pro quo* shall lead to more symmetry, or foremost to more information. Should it affect all weapons, a percentage of stockpiles, some or all types of weapons? Shall it affect both sides with the same intensity, or be disproportionate? What would constitute the final stage and pave the way to discuss reductions?

According to a high-level decision-maker at the MFA, “We need to expect a gradual security and trust building process starting from light to hard measures” (IP7, 17.10.2013, translation mine). The particular aim of the NATO TCBMs is to understand the political doctrine for the use of TNW in Russia, information exchange on the size of stockpiles, operational status, localisation, command structures and processes as well as consultations on their use policy. According to governmental respondents and experts close to the government, TCBMs are aimed at “achieving predictability and mutual trust” (IP5, 17.10.2013, translation mine), “gaining transparency” (IP14, 25.10.2013), gaining “information on the numbers, locations and role in the doctrine” (IP9, 21.10.2013, translation mine), “to get more on Kaliningrad and the Western military district” (IP9, 21.10.2013, translation mine). “The process enables withdrawal of Russian nuclear tactical arsenals from its European part behind Ural, receiving guarantees that these weapons will not be stationed in Kaliningrad and Belarus” (IP13, 25.10.2013, translation mine), “reductions in numbers” (IP7, 17.10.2013, translation mine), “reductions of infrastructure” (IP9, 21.10.2013, translation mine). “For us, transparency is a

value in itself” (IP3, 7.10.2013, translation mine). Another official at the MoD said that it is all about “move versus move, it is not about numbers. It all is about the will to go into the same direction” (IP5, 17.10.2013).

In the first quarter of 2013, NATO International Staff presented a potential catalogue of TCBMs. The Polish MFA included some measures developed during the *Warsaw Workshop: Prospects for information sharing and confidence building on Non-Strategic Weapons in Europe* which was held at PISM in February 2013. Eventually, NATO narrowed its list to five instruments. The details of which were developed by the United States or the Netherlands (Meier/Lunn 2014). One respondent from the MoD assessed that “the new catalogue will not much differ from the one presented in 2000” (IP14, 25.10.2013, translation mine). In the end, the palette of available TCBMs to choose from is a definite one, while reaching for agreements depends primarily on the political will. Meier and Lunn list measures such as joint seminars, joint declarations on nuclear policy, information exchanges, joint visits at former deployment sites of TNW, and cooperation to deal with the consequences of nuclear accidents and incidents (Meier/Lunn 2014).

The catalogue of TCBM proposals was to be approved at the ministerial meeting on 3 December 2013 and be presented at the NRC meeting on 4 December 2013. However, this did not happen. There is no official information on that matter as the ministerial meetings agenda and reporting are not publicly available. As a matter of fact, however, at a NRC meeting which took place several days earlier, Russian representatives informed that Russia is not interested to talk about tactical nuclear weapons with NATO anymore (Meier/Lunn 2014).

Next, to utilising the NRC, the German-Polish-Russian dialogue, also known as the Kaliningrad Triangle was another forum to create confidence in relations with Russia. Since May 2011, foreign ministers of these countries focused on joint projects, including issues of arms control and disarmament. Simultaneously, meetings at the level of department directors and the German Federal Commissioner for Disarmament and Arms Control took place. Eventually, however, despite some successes in other fields, the Kaliningrad Triangle did not lead to any particular outcome on TNW.

There was also another important reason potentially driving the Polish government towards transparency - a consistent lack of reliable data on Russian tactical nuclear weapons stockpiles, partly a rebound of the unverified Presidential Nuclear Initiatives, which adds to uncertainty and it sensitises Polish decision-makers to strive for more transparency.

At that time of NATO discussions, Warsaw probably did not possess reliable information on Russian tactical nuclear weapons. According to WikiLeaks, in a 8 February 2010 meeting between Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security Ellen Tauscher, Ambassador Lee Feinstein, Foreign Minister Sikorski and Defence Minister Klich, Sikorski is reported to propose “an intelligence exchange regarding whether Russia has tactical nuclear weapons in the Kaliningrad oblast” (CableWiki 2010). At a Hearing in the Foreign Affairs Committee in June 2013, Bogusław Winid, then Undersecretary of State in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, indicated that the Polish government does not have specified information on the stationing of Russian tactical nuclear weapons at the border with Poland. He mentioned that,

“Russian tactical weapons in Europe are in the focus of our considerations. We hope it is not stationed in the vicinity of our border. We strive for transparency, predictability, exchange of information as a starter for an American-Russian dialogue on this issue” (KSZ 12.06.2013, translation mine).

The Polish government’s response to my questions strengthens this assumption:

“Since the 90’s America reduced over 90% of its TNW in Europe. Problematic is that these weapons were not included in any arms control mechanisms. We do not know whether or how Russia took adequate steps on its part. We do not possess credible information on the Russian numbers of TNW” (Official Response:2, translation mine).

Summing up, the Polish government coined itself a special position as an expert on TCBMs within NATO. Therefore, using another opportunity to include TNW in Europe under an agreement on transparency and a confidence-building measure was a perfect occasion to proliferate itself as a decent disarmer committed to the classical step-by-step approach to disarmament. However, the most prominent goal pursued by the Polish government was to gain more insight into the Russian stockpiles of nuclear weapons at the NATO border, about which Polish authorities had no official information.

6.6. The B61 as a means to sustain bureaucratic privileges

The presence of the B61 in Europe and the wider NATO deterrence doctrine is widely perceived as granting governmental bureaucracies particular privileges. The Alliances' nuclear sharing mechanism involves nuclear information sharing, nuclear consultations that allow European NATO allies to authorise or voice objections on detonating nuclear weapons in NATO related contingencies (NATO 1962), nuclear planning regarding targeting and common execution of nuclear operations. In this sub-section, I focus on nuclear information sharing, consultations and planning, as executed within the NPG.

As described before, the MoD has its stake in the HLG and the NPG. Two respondents at the time of writing employed at the Polish MoD, whom I did not perceive as speaking openly, suggested that NATO needs to keep the B61, relevant means of delivery and infrastructure in Europe to preserve nuclear planning consultations (IP5 on 17.10.2013, IP14 on 25.10.2013).

According to the governmental written response, “the presence of American nuclear weapons in Europe allows us and other European allies for a substantial, broad and differentiated participation in deciding over NATO nuclear strategy and policy, including the American TNW potential in Europe. (...) We influence on fundamental decisions on this category of weapons and carry co-responsibility” (Official Response:1, translation mine). It goes further, “in case of TNW being removed from Europe; there would be no subject for nuclear consultations anymore” (Official Response:4, translation mine).

In contrast, a high-level official at the MoD talking under the condition of anonymity, whom I perceived of being very honest, called the NPG meetings a “Laocoön Group” statue, which in the Western art is seen as “the prototypical icon of human agony” (Spivey 2001:25). According to my respondent, these are “lifeless meetings in which the voice is taken by the three most important states” with the last NPG meeting the official attended in October 2013 lasting for 30 minutes.

Another respondent formerly employed at the MoD and having NATO Cosmic clearance, the highest NATO security classification, also voiced scepticism over the usability of the NPG naming it an “empty egg”, kind of “5 o'clock tea party” gatherings serving more social purposes than real nuclear planning (IP17, 15.11.2013, translation mine).

As such, despite selective scepticism over the value added of the NPG, individual actors in the MoD fear that they may lose procedural insight. For them, NATO and the NPG in particular serves as an indispensable source of information on how nuclear weapon states plan and execute nuclear missions. Whether these fears are justified is hard to evaluate.

However, although CEEs take part in the HLG and the NPG meetings, their capacity to actively make decisions is very bound. First, by the need for consensus. Second, by the fact that they do not participate directly in the nuclear strike mission. As a high-level official at the MoD talking under a condition of anonymity mentioned, in the NPG “the role of member states without a nuclear mission prescribed is marginal in the sense of shaping strategy and regarding real knowledge. It is politically important, but not regarding content” (translation mine).

Could it happen that NNWS loose access to information as well as their consultation and planning status in consequence of the B61 removal from Europe? In other words, are intra-Alliance information sharing, consultations and nuclear planning driven by the presence of American nuclear weapons in Europe or are they connected with the broader concept of nuclear deterrence, at least in contingencies involving NATO?

In fact, the flow of information regarding nuclear planning depends solely on the agreement between NATO member states and the United States which define the scope of nuclear planning consultations. Kamp assumes that nuclear information sharing results from political will in Washington, not from the presence of a forum to do this (Kamp 2011:5).

Also, a removal of the B61 from Europe would not definitely detach NATO from nuclear deterrence provided by the U.S. As NATO intends to remain a “nuclear Alliance” as long as there are nuclear weapons in the world, it would continue to rely upon U.S. nuclear deterrence in the form of its strategic nuclear capabilities based in the United States. Remaining nuclear consultations would be a logical consequence.

While it is unclear which form nuclear information sharing, consultation and planning would take in the future; it is hard to imagine that it would disappear entirely. How much and in which form they would survive the B61 withdrawal is, however, dependent on what European NATO allies could negotiate with the United States. As such, the fear of loss of procedural

insight seems to be overblown, taking into consideration the real scope of exchange taking place within the NPG today.

Indeed, the Polish government when asked about requirements for an alternative to American nuclear weapons in Europe, responded:

“Theoretically, different variants can be taken into account. Then assurance of NATO nuclear deterrence credibility which maintains the Alliances unity and solidarity would be necessary, including the fulfilment of such conditions as: maintaining allied co-responsibility for decisions dealing with NATO's nuclear strategy, policy and its nuclear potential; allies participation in the North Atlantic Council and Nuclear Planning Group” (Official Response:4, translation mine).

Summing up, it does not seem convincing that the Polish government connects the presence of the B61 with allied bureaucratic privileges that could not be sustained after the B61 is withdrawn from Europe.

6.7. The B61 as a means to sustain military missions (SNOWCAT)

Next to the bureaucracy, also the military enjoys particular operational privileges. As CEE states have no active involvement in a nuclear strike mission, their influence on the plain operation would not change. However, together with other 15 non-nuclear member states, Poland participates in the Support of Nuclear Operations with Conventional Air Tactics mission which encompasses non-nuclear support to NATO's nuclear mission, including search and rescue operations (Kamp/Remkes 2011:94).

None of my respondents mentioned active engagement in SNOWCAT as an argument in favour for the B61 to remain in Europe. This may result from the fact that when asked about the SNOWCAT mission several interviewees pretended not to know anything about that mission or even having heard of it. Theoretically, the mission can be maintained even after the withdrawal of the B61 from Europe with SNOWCAT operations assisting missions undertaken by U.S. strategic bombers (Kamp/Remkes 2011:94).

6.8. The B61 as a means of alliance cohesion and unity

It was a former high-level official in the Polish MFA, who asked for anonymity, that suggested the B61 as a means to pursue alliance cohesion on the side of an informal chat at a

conference in 2014. While it was not mentioned directly in other interviews, there is some evidence in official documents and statements that a consolidated and conscientious position within NATO is of high importance to the Polish government (cf. MON 2007:10, Non-Paper 2011, MON 2014:20).

The governments' official position is that "the organisation of nuclear forces in NATO, which widely uses the burden sharing mechanism, contributes to solidarity and unity of the Alliance (...)" (Official Response:1, translation mine). This directly translates into the Polish call to make B61-related decisions multilaterally by all NATO member states, and not unilaterally (cf. Støre/Sikorski 2010).

It seems plausible that Warsaw uses every possible forum to raise the unity issue. Polish historical experience of alliance membership coupled with its geopolitical location makes it a cautious ally. The failure of the British and French security guarantees to Poland in 1939 are what the White Book calls the "source of the betrayal syndrome in the consciousness of the Poles" (White Book 2013:31). Political marginalisation and state partitions induced a "buffer state" consciousness. Describing CEE, Łukasz Kulesa mentions that their security cultures "are still characterised by the fear of abandonment and a high degree of caution regarding political declarations not backed by actions" (Kulesa 2010:119). According to Hofstede's Model on National Culture, an index of six so-called dimensions of culture that every society needs to come to terms with in order to organise itself, Poland has one of the highest preferences for uncertainty avoidance worldwide (Hofstede 2001). This indicates that, in general, Poles feel uncomfortable with ambiguity and uncertainty, and value maintaining strong principles. In consequence, the government of Poland strives for cohesion and unity of interests and threat perceptions in organisations it is a member of. As Polish authorities perceive NATO as a key multilateral instrument of its security policy, they are particularly sensitive to its internal dynamics.

According to Łukasz Kulesa, "[i]n practice, the credibility of NATO's commitments depended mostly on the perception of the strength and unity of the Alliance itself" (Kulesa 2010:119). However, exactly this unity is questioned in Poland. The difficulty in achieving NATO unity stems from its structure and the nature of relations between allies. As an alliance consisting of several sovereign states that act upon their discretion and interest, the "*tous pour un, un pour*

tous" motto does not apply automatically. It requires allies to share a particular threat perception.

A NATO that speaks with one voice is a long-term goal of the Polish government. We read in the National Security Strategy of the Republic of Poland (2007:14) that "Poland builds its defence policy in relation to the principle of solidarity and loyalty towards its allies. Readiness to assist any member of the North Atlantic Alliance increases the deterrence potential, ensuring security to member states and NATO as a whole." Thus, the Polish government strives to "make the Alliance more cohesive, including the harmonisation of member states' interests on the international arena and the narrowing of the technological gaps between Allies" (MON 2007:11). As Łukasz Kulesa explains,

"From the point of view of the Central European 'consumers' of extended deterrence, as important as the existence of the adequate military means to fulfil the defence pledge is the psychological component - the belief that the providers of extended deterrence share their threat perception and understand their sensitivities" (Kulesa 2010:123).

Bartosz Węglarczyk, a long-time head of the Foreign Section of the biggest daily *Gazeta Wyborcza*, wrote in 2011 in one of the few newspaper articles dealing with the B61, "Undoubtedly opponents of American nuclear presence in Europe have good arguments. However, even if they do not believe in Russian threat, remaining NATO unity should be aiming number one for them" (Węglarczyk 2011).

According to Sikorski and Støre, "deterrence policy and military solutions always were and still should be a topic of thoughtful consultations among all allies" (Støre/Sikorski 2010). As one of my expert interviewees mentioned,

"[u]nilateral NATO action, unilateral U.S. action would be against the Polish security interests, not because it would weaken our military potential, but because it would set up a kind of rule of unilateral activity without looking at Russia. (...) And the Polish position demonstrated that unilateral activities which are not connected with Russian activities would be against our vision of the future of NATO (IP9, 21.10.2013, translation mine).

According to a former ambassador to NATO, the Polish government "definitely" used the debate on the B61 to sensibilise other allies on its Russia-related threat perception (IP13, 25.10.2013, translation mine). Warsaw wanted equal waging of individual NATO member

state's threat assessment regardless of their absolute power status in the organisation. According to ambassador Nowak, the Polish-Norwegian initiative showed that the “toddlers are also capable to do something between the elephants” (IP13, 25.10.2013).

This results out of the Polish decision-makers' concern with the highly differentiated perception of Russia as a threat among allies. Adam Rotfeld summarised this variation in approaching Russia:

“Three approaches shape relations between the West and Russia. From the American point of view, cooperation with Russia should be based on issues like proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, arms control, combating international terrorism, organised crime and piracy. Western European countries - Germany, France, Spain, Italy, Greece and to some extent the United Kingdom perceive Russia as an important economic partner. For them this is the decisive perspective - other issues are of secondary importance. These states conduct friendly relations with Moscow being oriented towards cooperation - assuming that Russia plays a key role in keeping peace and security in Europe. Central European states demonstrate the third approach - often caused by fear that it wants to constrain their sovereignty” (Rotfeld 2012:169, translation mine).

This is a widely spread perception. In a 2008 parliamentary committee hearing, Andrzej Gałazewski representing the ruling Civic Platform stated that “[h]aving military capabilities, one needs to dispose of political unity, because this is where the right reaction lies. I am afraid, that currently, NATO member states do not present a unified position, not only on NATO-Russian relations” (KSZ 17.09.2008, translation mine). In a 2009 Parliamentary Committee hearing, former Head of the National Security Bureau Aleksander Marek Szczygło mentioned that NATO is unable to develop an unequivocal and coherent position towards Russia in the aftermath of its conflict with Georgia (KON/KSZ 6.05.2009). According to WikiLeaks, in a May 2009 meeting with congressional delegate S. Levin, Witold Waszczykowski, then Deputy Chief of President Kaczynski's National Security Bureau, when asked whether Warsaw felt assured that NATO would honour its Washington Treaty article 5 commitment to Poland, responded that “we still have our doubts” (CableWiki 2009). He added that “some European members - particularly France - prefer to talk to action” and that this was the reason “why we bought F-16s and not French Mirages, and why we went through with the missile defence deal.” A weekly news feed with commentary published by the National Security Bureau reads:

“The discussion around engaging Russia into the NATO ballistic missile defence points to the fact that the assessment of what role Moscow should play in European security (challenge, threat, chance) still divides allies. The tendency of the biggest European NATO states to coming into agreement with Russia without looking at other allies demands to cautiously approach the perspective of making collective defence real and equalising the security status between old and new members” (BBN 2010:2/6, translation mine).

Before the post-Cold War enlargement, the Alliance decided to extend its nuclear deterrence onto new members without inviting them to participate in nuclear sharing (NATO 1995:58). Known as the “3xNo’s” formula, it was officially coined in December 1996 by the North Atlantic Council (NATO 1996:par.5) and affirmed in the May 1997 Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security between NATO and the Russian Federation. There, we read that NATO does not have any intention, plan or reason to deploy nuclear weapons on the territory of new members (NATO 1997:7). The “3xNo’s” aimed at calming down Russian fears and removing any reason to claim NATO enlargement was a confrontational and ‘conflict-genic’ move (Koziej 2008:20). The declaration is a political self-limitation of NATO in its nuclear policy. The clause, however, divides NATO member states in old member states into which territory nuclear weapons can be deployed and new member states where the deployment can not take place. Some experts and political decision-makers in Poland interpret this division as a double class standard.

At the same time, the Polish elite questions the determination of the Alliance’s members to fight for its security. As we read in the 2009 Open Letter to the Obama Administration from Central and Eastern Europe signed among others by former Presidents Alexander Kwaśniewski and Lech Wałęsa, former foreign minister of defence Janusz Onyszkiewicz and former foreign minister of foreign affairs Adam Rotfeld:

“Despite the efforts and significant contribution of the new members, NATO today seems weaker than when we joined. In many of our countries it is perceived as less and less relevant - and we feel it. Although we are full members, people question whether NATO would be willing and able to come to our defence in some future crises” (Letter 2009).

Eventually, a recent public opinion study of the Pew Research Centre entitled *NATO Publics Blame Russia for Ukrainian Crisis, but Reluctant to Provide Military Aid* confirms such fears. While the study goes beyond the research period of this dissertation, I mention it to strengthen

the point of the intuitive reasonability of the Polish governments' assessment. According to the Pew Research Centre, societies in many NATO member states "are reluctant to uphold Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty" with Americans and Canadians being "the only publics where more than half think their country should use military action if Russia attacks a fellow NATO member (56% and 53%, respectively)". At the same time 58% of Germans, 53% of French and 51% of Italian respondents are against using military action if Russia attacks a fellow NATO member state (Pew Research Centre 2015).

Also one of my interviewees (IP3, 7.10.2013) named Germany a "questionable security ally sensitive to Russia's opinion". Amid the EU debate on sanctions for Russia in consequence of its annexation of Crimea and alleged support of rebels in the Ukrainian war, Prof. Roman Kuźniar, Foreign Affairs Adviser to President of Poland Bronisław Komorowski, wrote an article in the daily conservative *Rzeczpospolita* entitled *We cannot rely on the Germans*. Here, he wrote that "the politics of Germany, Italy, Hungary or the Netherlands got dependent on Moscow's' diplomacy and Gazprom's threats. This is mainly a mental dependency. Putin paralyses their freedom of thought like a snake on a desert paralyses the rabbit with his eyesight" (Kuźniar 2014).

Summing up, there is clear mistrust towards European allies willingness to defend Poland in case of an attack. This, coupled with lack of NATO military infrastructure on the territory of newer member states creates a discomfort and pushes the Polish government to use every possible door to underline the need for a unified threat perception and adequate preparation to act. As such, the B61 debate might have been instrumentalised to pass this message to other allies.

6.9. The B61 as a means to sustain the transatlantic link

A former high-level official said in an interview, the Polish governments' position on the B61 is an element of a broader policy aimed at keeping the presence of the United States in Europe (IP14, 25.10.2013). To quote Janusz Reiter, Polish ambassador to the United States between 2005 and 2008: "Europe is not a space in which our interests are sufficiently guaranteed" (Reiter 2013:16'15"-16'55"). This view is widely shared in official circles in Poland. The presence of the United States is seen as essential.

In consequence, the National Security Strategy of the Republic of Poland 2007 reads that “Poland, a close ally of the United States, wants to see its involvement in Europe grow as a force that guarantees security and stabilises political and military relations on the European continent” (MON 2007:7).

The new, 2014 National Security Strategy reiterates this claim by stating that “the United States are the most important non-European partner” (MON 2014:9). The White Book on National Security of the Republic of Poland mentions that “Poland should advocate a decreased scale of withdrawal of the US military potential and help define the new foundations of American presence by linking it closely with the readiness to respond to threats to Euro-Atlantic security” (White Book 2013:162). In his annual address, Radosław Sikorski reminded that “Poland advocates that the U.S. remains a ‘European power’” (MSZ 2009:7). Moreover, in the words of Radosław Sikorski, the government of Poland sees that the “United States plays a stabilising role” in Europe (KSZ 2011). The Polish government attaches “high value to the military presence of the U.S. in Europe as a guarantor of our and its European allies’ security. The presence of American nuclear weapons in Europe is, therefore, a key element to maintain the transatlantic tie” (Official Response:1, translation mine).

Some voices in Poland worry that lack of physical presence of the B61 diminishes the interest United States is believed to put into the region. The new, 2014 National Security Strategy elaborates on the American pivot to Asia. We read that “it is essential to keep a significant and permanent U.S. engagement in European security affairs” (MON 2014:21, translation mine). Asked for the role of the B61 in Europe, interviewees in governmental positions answered: “to underline the transatlantic tie” (IP5 and IP7 on 17.10.2013), “in my private opinion, it is an evidence of keeping transatlantic relations” (IP14, 25.10.2013), “to remain the transatlantic link in form of conventional and unconventional U.S. military engagement in Europe” (IP7, 17.10.2013). One non-governmental expert mentioned that “the symbolics of the American tie with Europe sealed with the U.S. risking its security for another ally surely appeals to us” (IP9, 21.10.2013). A long time employee at the MoD added, “the more U.S. in Europe, the better” (IP5, 17.10.2013). Interestingly, according to a former high ranking diplomat, the will to keep Americans in also results from the intention to internally balance NATO power -

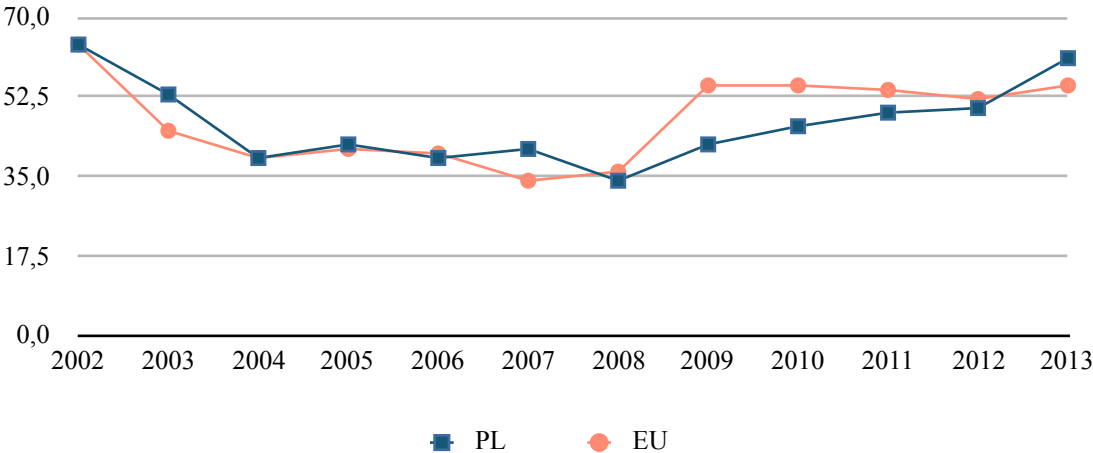
Germany, Great Britain and France (IP13, 25.10.2013). This view reflects a forecast made by Lawrence Friedman after the end of the Cold War. He then suggested that

“residual nuclear arsenals will continue to provide a potent reminder of the risk of total war. This awareness has been an important factor in helping to manage the processes of political transformation in Europe” and “ensure that political leaders are not allowed to forget this risk or believe that it has evaporated” (Freedman 1991:25).

Even though only one respondent mentioned this argument, it shows that disregarding the institutional framework in Europe, still today some Polish thinkers put trust into the balancing effect of the American presence in Europe. The Polish governmental Atlanticism is a reaction to the long marginalisation of Poland in the European politics by Western European countries and a lack of trust in European NATO allies.

At the same time, although Poland is often presented as a strong Atlanticist (Asmus/Vondra 2010), the Transatlantic Trends, an opinion poll on transatlantic issues regularly conducted by the German Marshall Fund, defies this logic by showing that, in general, Poles are “less Atlanticist than others” in Europe (GMF 2010:27). Opinion polls suggest that Poland systematically lags behind the European average in support of U.S. leadership, in particular at the time discussed in this dissertation (see Figure 13). In a 2008 opinion poll conducted by the Public Opinion Research Centre, 74% respondents felt that the United States misuses its power to subordinate Poland (CBOS 2008).

Figure 13. Polish and European support of U.S. leadership between 2002-2013 (%)



Source: GMF (2008, 2010, 2012, 2013, 2014)

The recent Pew Research Centre only supports these numbers. While 72% of Canadians, 70% Spaniards, 68% Italians and Germans, 66% Brits and 65% French respondents believe the U.S. would come to the defence of allies, in Poland it is only 49% (Pew Research Centre 2015).

The Polish Atlanticism lessens as geopolitical and historical considerations lose significance, due to Poland's tighter integration with the European Union, predictable relations with Germany and until recently also quite stable relations with Russia. Marcin Zaborowski widens this explanation adding the "expected gains" argument,

"The 'instinctive' Atlanticism inherent in Polish strategic culture has meant that Poland's foreign policies have been in close proximity to those of the United States over the past decade. Developments since 11 September initially enhanced this closeness between Warsaw and Washington. In a much divided Europe, Poland has showed itself to be a hawk. Furthermore, in the context of Iraq, a close fit emerged between American and Polish standpoints. However, subsequent disappointment with American leadership in Iraq as well as the lack of tangible benefits for Poland from its role as a loyal ally, have weakened the Government's rationale for its Atlanticist choice" (Zaborowski 2004:27).

Additionally, delaying elements of the U.S. policy concerning CEE "created a strong impression of neglecting the interest of the region and downgrading the relationship" (Kulesa 2010:122). There were at least two reasons for worrying. First, the disappointment related to the cancellation of the deployment of ground-based ballistic missile defence interceptors on the territory of Poland. Second, the announcement of the American pivot to Asia generated an outcry in the Polish security community exacerbating fears of America abandoning Europe. In the letter by intellectuals and former policymakers from CEE, we read that,

"Twenty years after the end of the Cold War, however, we see that Central and Eastern European countries are no longer at the heart of American foreign policy. As the new Obama Administration sets its foreign-policy priorities, our region is one part of the world that Americans have largely stopped worrying about. Indeed, at times we have the impression that U.S. policy was so successful that many American officials have now concluded that our region is fixed once and for all and that they could "check the box" and move on to other more pressing strategic issues. Relations have been so close that many on both sides assume that the region's transatlantic orientation, as well as its stability and prosperity, would last forever. That view is premature. All is not well either in our region or in the transatlantic relationship. Central and Eastern Europe is at a political crossroads and today there is a growing sense of nervousness in the region. (...) [W]e are convinced that America needs Europe and that Europe needs the United States as much today as in the past. The United States should reaffirm its

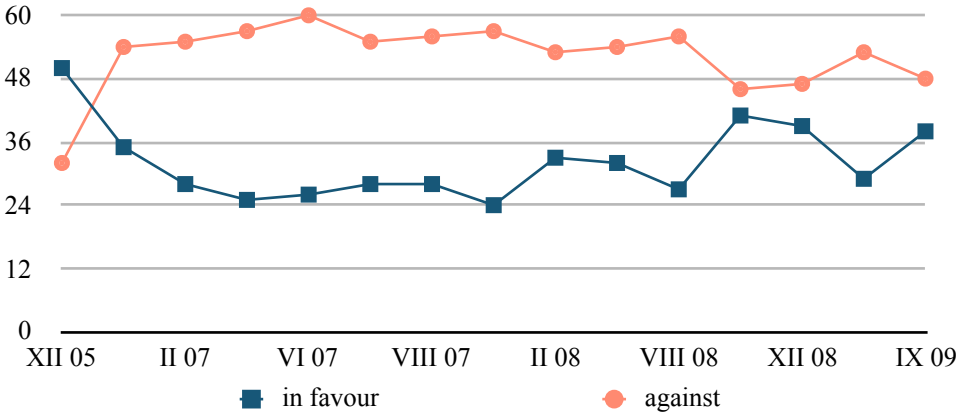
vocation as a European power and make clear that it plans to stay fully engaged on the continent even while it faces the pressing challenges in Afghanistan and Pakistan, the wider Middle East, and Asia“ (Letter 2009).

A day after its publishing, President Lech Kaczyński supported the letter. In his answer, we can read that,

“As President of the Republic of Poland, I share the concerns expressed in the letter to the U.S. President Barack Obama by the group of eminent politicians from our region. I wish to support the appeal that America should not forget its policy of proven allies from Central and Eastern Europe, as this could undermine achievements of the last 20 years” (Kaczyński 2009, translation mine).

However, while for the government the deployment of bases for the Ground-Based Interceptors on the Polish territory signalled American commitment to Polish security, the majority of Poles did not want the system to be stationed in Poland at all (see Figure 14). From 2006 to 2009, a majority of interviewees spoke against the deployment.

Figure 14. Support and disapproval for the deployment of American interceptors in Poland between 2005-2009 (%)



Source: CBOS (2006, 2007a, 2007b, 2009a)

As such, Polish Atlanticism is rather a governmental phenomenon than a concept widely supported by the society. The government eagerly uses the argument of a “special relation with the United States” to even Western European activities and interests that do not correlate with the Polish strategic interest but are in line with interests in Washington.

This special relation also partly explains why the government of Poland did not respond to the Westerwelle plan in a more aggressive manner. As a former high ranking employee at the

MFA reminded, the American side assured the Polish government that they would not consider the German pledge for withdrawal (IP13, 25.10.2013). The U.S. backed the stance of the Polish authorities. Because the United States fulfils the role of a back-up for the Polish government in enforcing its security claims in the European area, Warsaw may be very cautious in agitating against the American will in issues that might have a strategic consequence for Poland. As the cost of maintaining the B61 in Europe is nil for Poland, it might also have been the other way round - the government of Poland supported the USA in maintaining the B61 in Europe due to America's interests. This assumption, however, is impossible to prove or disprove with materials gathered in interviews.

One could wonder why the B61, in particular, has to play the mediator or connector for transatlantic relations. This seems even more intriguing taking into consideration the B61 uneven distribution among allies. Historically, the stationing of TNW on European territory, which implied huge coordination efforts, served as a tool of trust between allies in the ideologically driven political realities of the Cold War period. States like Italy, which represented the strongest communists resentments, could take part in the nuclear burden and thus confirm its ideological orientation and bounding with the Western world (Foradori 2012:9). There, however, does not seem to be any need to confirm a pro-Western orientation in Europe anymore. Membership in NATO and the European Union compel high levels of interdependence based upon shared norms and interests.

It is partly understandable that due to negative experiences with American promises regarding anti-ballistic missile systems in the past, the government of Poland does not consider the Obama administration EPAA plans as a potential mediator for the transatlantic bond, at least unless the installation will be completed and ready for operation. As mentioned in 2.2.2., the presence of soldiers and conventional equipment is perceived to best fulfil the reassurance function. Thus, the physical presence of American infrastructure, weapons and soldiers would translate into intensified cooperation between Polish and American military forces and fulfil this bonding role. For CEE countries these elements may have an even stronger reassuring power as they will be stationed directly on their territory (in Poland and Romania).

Summing up, the Polish government attaches great value to the American presence in Europe, presumably mainly to offset lack of trust towards its European NATO allies, which

was discussed in the previous chapter. While the B61 serves as one element of the transatlantic link, it is presented by the Polish government to be a decisive one (Official Response:1 translation mine), which does not seem entirely plausible.

6.9.1. Once out, hard to get back - presumed irreversibility of the B61 withdrawal

“There is an argument which is hard to dismiss, namely that NATO would have tremendously bigger difficulties in getting these weapons back on the European territory than Russia in its internal relocation” (IP9, 21.10.2013). Several respondents suggested that once the B61 is physically removed from Europe, there will be no way back (cf. IP8, IP9, 21.10.2013). “A return will be almost impossible, while Russia can easily move its tactical nuclear arsenals with an administrative decision only” (7.10.2013).

The interviewees refer to the fact that Russia possesses several types of mobile systems for nuclear weapons, including the SS-21 Sepal (Tochka) and SS-26 Stone (Iskander). In practice, their high mobility translates into days or hours required to move them where needed. As such, one responder commented that “it would be better not to touch it, so it cannot break down” (7.10.2013). This assumption contains three aspects - operational, political and legal.

From the operational perspective, right after the B61 withdrawal, before its dismantlement, the European nuclear weapons infrastructure would still be ready to receive American nuclear weapons. The relocation of the B61 alone would not pose any obstacle to reverse a decision on withdrawal as the United States on a continuous basis flies individual B61's for maintenance purposes back and forth between Europe and the United States.

Political hurdles connected to a reversal of the decision to withdraw American nuclear weapons out of Europe are based upon the South Korean experience. The United States stationed TNW in South Korea for several years before removing them in 1991 as result of the PNI's. Despite the North Korean threat and U.S. pledges to support South Korea, the U.S. does not plan to place its TNW back on the South Korean soil. At the same time, extended nuclear deterrence provided by the United States was never designed for lower levels of escalation including dissuading nuclear weapons testing or preventing sinking ships. In consequence, South Korea continuously calls for additional assurances to prove the United States preparedness and willingness to execute its security pledge.

The legal aspect reflects NPT principles to which Poland is a party. In its article 1 and 2, the NPT forbids to transfer or receive nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. The exception taking place in Europe is due to a - widely disputed - legal explanation the United States used during the treaties ratification process. It is based upon the U.S. interpretation of both articles included in the 1967 *Questions on the Draft Non-Proliferation Treaty*. According to this document, the United States' interpretation of the NPT is that (1) it does not prohibit the transfer of nuclear delivery vehicles or delivery systems, or the control over them, (2) it does not deal with nuclear consultations and planning among allies as long as no transfer of nuclear weapons or control over them results and (3) it does not deal with arrangements for deployment of nuclear weapons within allied territory. Moreover, NATO nuclear sharing is interpreted as complying with articles 1 and 2 of the NPT on the basis that the NPT applies during peace, but not during the war, when the control over the B61 would be released to NATO allies. In short, in peace time all nuclear weapons remain under the custody and control of the United States unless the American president hands control over these weapons to allies. Hence, some experts suggest nuclear sharing to be a “clear form of nuclear proliferation, if under very special circumstances” (Butcher et al. 1997). Today, with a labile NPT regime and growing risk of nuclear proliferation, it is hard to imagine for any nuclear weapon state to transfer its nuclear weapons to another state. This applies both to South Korea as it would to additional European states.

6.9. Summary

The B61 debate in Poland is very elite-driven with the main actors being the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Defence. The parliament did not have a particular take on the issue, PISM served as a governmental PR messenger, while the public opinion was not involved in the debate at all. As such, Polish authorities were free to design the Polish official stance on the B61 according to their interpretation of the Polish *raison d'être* and particular interests of ministries involved.

Interviews framed the B61's main role to be a bargaining chip to involve Russia to discuss TCBMs and in the future also reciprocal reductions of sub-strategic nuclear weapons. Arguments of the B61 for the purpose to maintain military and bureaucratic privileges found some evidence in the interviews, but do not seem convincing. For the purpose of participating

in SNOWCAT-alike missions, which for the Polish military narrows to reconnaissance and rescue activities, a requirement of the B61 seems overrated. Such operations can be undertaken in other contexts of NATO's military engagement.

When it comes to nuclear planning (or at least exercise planning), it is not clear what influence the Polish military has. The coupling between American nuclear consultations with its NATO allies and the B61 presence in Europe which evolved in a historical chain of reactions needs to be perceived through an organisational-administrative prism - one that can take different forms depending on the allies agreement to do so. The B61's presence together with U.S.-European NATO nuclear consultations fuses the U.S. with the security of Europe, which Polish decision-makers and experts perceive as a key argument for the B61 remaining in Europe. The fear of the B61 withdrawal's irreversibility is not a convincing argument, but it strengthens the Polish position for the B61 in Europe. Thus, the B61 mainly plays a non-military role.

7. Constructivist Analysis of Polish Attitude on Extended Nuclear Deterrence

This chapter analyses the Polish governments' attitude towards extended nuclear deterrence through the prism of social constructivism. The section starts with an overview of the paradigm and the way scholars representing it discuss nuclear weapons. Next, I discuss the historical attitude towards nuclear weapons in Poland and its influence on the current debate. Finally, I discuss the normative underpinning the government builds its position upon.

7.1. Constructivist foreign policy theory

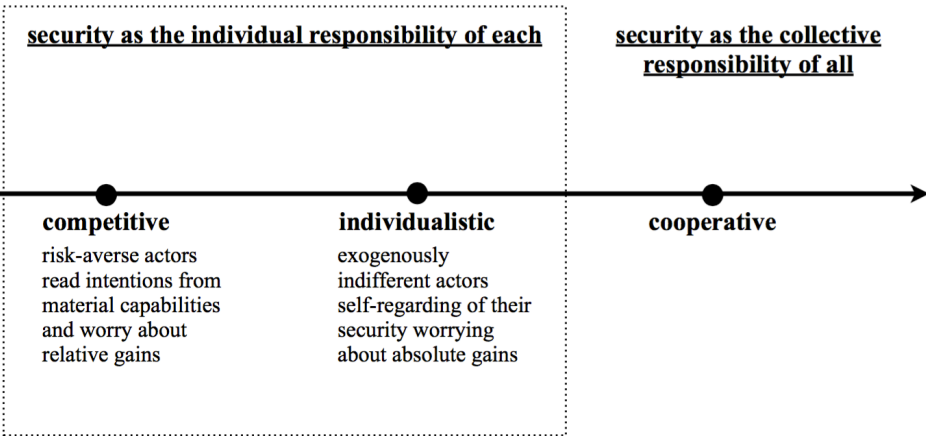
Constructivist theory of international relations challenges the realist and neoliberal materialist claim arguing that they pass over the role of the non-material context as a determinant of the state policies. Though it does not deny the material reality, self-interest and rationality, it is the “socially constructed” interpretation that constitutes a shaping factor (Wendt 1999:24). The physical reality is only a mirror of intellectual structures created by humans. Therefore only humans provide the reality with a purpose. Reality is a consequence of the “distribution of knowledge” rather than material capabilities (Wendt 1999:20). Alexander Wendt portrays this by claiming that “500 British nuclear weapons are less threatening to the United States than 5 North Korean nuclear weapons” (Wendt 1995:73). Thus for constructivists, “danger is not an objective condition” but rather “an interpretation” (Campbell 1998:2). Indeed, interests and identities are not formed *a priori*, but they emerge as a consequence of interaction. As such, “anarchy has no logic apart from process” (Wendt 1999:21, 249). Actors invent social purposes for different social facts, and by doing so they create the reality. Therefore, the immanent feature of reality is its inconstancy. The international structure of today does not necessarily have to be the one we will live in tomorrow. The fall of the Soviet Union exemplifies this.

Constructivism as a social theory tries to uncover the links between structure and agent by making claims about the nature of social relations between them (Finnemore 1996:27). According to Wendt, social structures consist of three elements: shared knowledge, material resources, and practices (Wendt 1995:73). “Structure and agents are both effects of what

people *do*” (Wendt 1999:313, emphasis in original). This creates a vicious circle, a continuous process of social construction which takes place between the agent and the structure.

In his groundbreaking article, Wendt argues that “self-help and power politics do not follow either logically or causally from anarchy and that if today we find ourselves in a self-help world, this is due to process, not structure” (Wendt 1992:394). This idea is envisioned within the “continuum of security systems” (Wendt 1992:400), where the institution of self-help presents only one of the various structures that may exist under anarchy (see Figure 15).

Figure 15. Alexander Wendt's' continuum of security system



Which security model is applied depends on the specific interests that actors pursue and ideas they hold. Eventually, the structure depends on collectively shared, cognitive presumptions about how reality shall look like at a particular time. The world in which we live is the “World of Our Making”, as Nicholas Onuf, who coined the term constructivism for international relations, would say (Onuf 2002). The system in which states operate depends not only upon choices regarding the way in which the material reality is formed but also on norms and institutions that pose its ideational framework - “anarchy is what states make of it” (Wendt 1992, cf. Boekle et al. 1999).

“The” constructivism does not exist. There are several taxonomies of constructivism - along with individual authors (cf. Alexander Wendt, David Dessler, Nicholas Onuf, Friedrich Kratochwil, Ernst Haas, Peter Katzenstein) their epistemological approach (conventional/critical, systemic/cultural, soft/hard) or schools (state-centric, institutionalist, neo-gramscian, feminist). Constructivist scholars apply several concepts to assess if and how they determine

actor's behaviour. They study beliefs, norms, ideas, culture, identity, *Leitbilder* etc. as independent variables.

In this study, I adapt the “social”, “conventional” or “modern” constructivism as represented by Alexander Wendt. However, responding to the criticism on Wendt's “non-verbalism” (Zehfuss 1998, Onuf 2001), I introduce verbal samples and reflect on the argumentation processes.

7.2. Constructivism and nuclear weapons

For some research questions, neither realism nor liberalism provided convincing answers. For example, scholars were struck by the fact that not all states possessing sufficient capability to build a nuclear weapon, in fact, did it (Hymans 2006).

Constructivism inspired several academic studies on nuclear weapons, yet only a few apply a constructivist lens to study deterrence. They underpin different theoretical concepts like beliefs (Long/Grillot 2000), culture (Jervis 1979:322-323, Garfinkle 1995), strategic culture (Gray 1986, Snyder 1977, Johnson et al. 2009, Davis/Jasper 2013), identity (Hymans 2007, Wyk et al. 2007), national prestige and norms (Ruble 2009).

However, these concepts are nothing unique for constructivism only. For example, Kenneth Waltz perceived prestige as a potential reason to develop nuclear weapons. Still, he refused its causative role arguing that “the nuclear military business is a serious one, and we may expect that deeper motives than desire for prestige lie behind the decision to enter it” (Waltz 1981). Rationalist approaches discuss these concepts as a function of power and/or interests, not as an independent analytical variable. Constructivism investigates them in a more systematic and thorough way.

The predominant subject of constructivist study is NWS or nuclear proliferator states, while the main issues of consideration are the proliferation and restraint aspects of nuclear weapons development. An exception is work by Nina Tannenwald, who studies the non-use of nuclear weapons (the “nuclear taboo”) as a socially constructed norm leading to the notion of deterrence (Price/Tannenwald 1996, Tannenwald 1999 and 2005).

Unfortunately, constructivists, neither study extended nuclear deterrence in general, nor protégé states under extended nuclear deterrence in particular. At the same time, it is highly interesting whether and how beliefs, norms, ideas, culture, identity, *Leitbilder* etc. influence policies of states which are ‘nuclearly embedded’ under extended deterrence.

7.3. Framing the role of the B61 in Europe from the constructivist perspective

I use constructivism to analyse the role of non-material factors in the political decision-making. A states foreign policy behaviour is determined by norms and shared beliefs about what actions are legitimate and appropriate in international relations (Boekle et al. 1999). Norms embody a legitimate behavioural claim intersubjectively shared within a group of entities. Constructivism studies norms as factors “shaping identities and preferences, defining collective goals and prescribing or proscribing behaviour” (Boekle et al. 1999).

Through a “patterned norm life cycle” (Finnemore/Sikkink 1998:888), “states are *socialised* to want certain things by the international society in which they and the people in them live” (Finnemore 1996:2). Internalisation of norms is closely related to the way in which states interpret them. Interpretation, in turn, influences action. Thus, whether and how states internalise particular norms shapes their international behaviour. Here, I use the view presented by Price and Tannenwald which states that instead of determining outcomes, “norms structure realms of possibilities” (Price/Tannenwald1996:148).

In particular, I analyse **how the Polish attitude towards nuclear weapons norms reflects its position on the B61**. By using the norm-perspective, I explore whether the Polish government’s stance on tactical nuclear weapons is a case-specific issue or fits into a more general way of framing security policy towards nuclear weapons.

For constructivists, the historical process and the prevailing social discourse shape a societies’ beliefs and interests (Walt 1998:40-41). To understand a specific foreign policy decision, one thus needs to look at the state’s historical experience with and the broader discourse on the norms driving the issue of concerns.

To analyse the Polish governments normative underpinning of its B61 stance, I start with an investigation of the Polish historical experiences with nuclear weapons. Second, I focus on

the recent political normative discourse relevant to nuclear weapons, mainly on the debates on “global zero”, disarmament, non-proliferation as well as the use of nuclear weapons.

7.4. Polish historical experience with nuclear weapons

For constructivists, political choices do not emerge spontaneously but have a historical and/or social underpinning (Walt 1998:40-41). To understand a specific foreign policy decision of a state, one thus needs to look at the state’s historical experience. As such, I first draw upon Poland’s historical experience with nuclear weapons. By doing so, I want to find out whether the stance on sub-strategic nuclear weapons is a special case or a continuation of a specific policy.

7.4.1. Polish nuclear mission during the Cold War

Poland held a nuclear mission while being a member of the Warsaw Pact. Starting in the 1960’s, the Soviet Union build nuclear storage facilities intended for the Polish People's Army under the code-named project “Vistula” (in Podborsk near Białograd, Brzeźnica-Kolonia near Jastrowo, Templewo near Trzemeszno Lubuskie) and for the Northern Group of Forces (in Szprotawa, Chojno, Bagicz, Kluczewa). The Polish Front would have been responsible for a defence attack on the Norther Flank, including Denmark (Copenhagen), North Germany (Bremen, Cuxhaven, Brementhaven, Emden, Wilhelmshaven) and the Netherlands (Apeldoorn, Zwolle). Polish pilots were trained to fly Soviet nuclear-capable aircrafts (OTVP 2006). In 1961, the first nuclear-capable Su-7B were brought to Poland, in the mid-1970’s the Su-20, in 1979 the MiG-i-23, in 1980 the MiG-i-21bis and 1984 the Su-22 (Szulc/Nicpoń 2007:75). Russia never disclosed the number of nuclear warheads it kept in Poland. The amount probably varied depending on the political climate. Polish forces were given 177 tactical nuclear rockets (R30, R70, R170, R300) and 17 air nuclear bombs (Koreś 2012:32). Due to highest secrecy, nuclear sharing was neither disclosed nor publicly debated in Poland during the Cold War. Information about the Polish nuclear sharing mission has been revealed publicly on 7 April 1991 (OTVP 2006). The next day, the Russian army started withdrawing its forces from Poland, including dismounting nuclear installations. Most probably, however, Russia started reducing nuclear warheads already at the end of the 1980’s by air transport.

After the end of the Cold War, Polish participation in nuclear sharing of the Warsaw Pact was never fully disclosed nor discussed publicly. It was not until 2006 when Radosław Sikorski, then Minister of Defence, revealed the majority of the Warsaw Pact documentation from the Ministry of Defence's archives. The step was of symbolic character. The reasoning behind it was to unveil the place and role Poland had to play in operational plans of the Warsaw Pact and the need to officially break with the communist past, in which Poles did not have the chance to learn the truth. According to Sikorski, it marked the end of Post-Communism in Poland, "a time when the Polish society did not know the whole truth about its past" (BBC Poland 2005). "We did not know that our lives were subject of this kind of war games", he added, reminding that the Polish society was unaware of these plans.

According to these plans, Poland was supposed to be one of the main battlegrounds and bear heavy consequences of war activities. 43 Polish cities were nuclear weapons targets, and the main part of Polish territory would end under radiological and/or chemical contamination. While 51% of Poles supported revealing this information (CBOS 2006), the step was widely criticised in the Polish media as putting Polish standing as a reliable ally at risk and potentially damaging its relations with Russia. When the Warsaw Pact dissolved, allies agreed to keep all documents regarding its functioning confidential. They were not to be revealed to third states. The interested parties signed an appropriate agreement on 25 February 1991 in Budapest (*Protokół o uchyleniu porozumień wojskowych zawartych w ramach Układu Warszawskiego oraz o rozwiązaniu jego organów i struktur wojskowych*). Although Poland did not ratify this confidentiality pact, critics pointed to diplomatic customs and the requirement to, at least, inform former allies of such decisions in advance. As such, the contents of the disclosure were pushed aside by discussions over the legal and moral grounds of the disclosure itself.

Neither Polish participation in the Cold War nuclear sharing nor the wider problematics of nuclear weapons has been the elements of Polish historical or social education. As a consequence, the Polish society neither deals with issues related to nuclear weapons nor reflects the Polish role in the nuclear sharing mission of the Warsaw Treaty Organisation. That, in turn, generates a silent consent for governmental elites to deal with issues related to

nuclear weapons at their discretion without taking into consideration the preferences or opinion of the society.

7.4.2. Polish nuclear diplomacy during the Cold War

During the Cold War, Poland's main security interests were easing tensions between the Cold War blocks, diminishing military threats and searching for a margin of political discretion on the international level. From the beginning, the Polish People's Republic consistently promoted disarmament, general elimination and a ban on nuclear weapons. The state found the above issues not fitting into the ethical frame of modern civilisation. They were seen as a potential instrument of international politics and blackmail (Łoś-Nowak 1985). The Polish communist government assumed that considerable disarmament would improve collective security, increase the stability of international relations and improve the development of states.

It proposed several ideas aimed at curbing nuclear weapons on a global level, seeing disarmament as a complex endeavour requiring contemporaneity and entirety in approaching it. Lack of progress on the international level, however, motivated Warsaw to narrow down the demand and look for regional solutions. The re-militarisation of the Federal Republic of Germany, including plans for a NATO Multilateral Force and horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons, triggered several initiatives aimed at the establishment of a nuclear weapons-free zone in CEE - the Rapacki Plan (1957), Gomułka Plan (1963) and Jaruzelski Plan (1987).

After the idea of a European nuclear weapons-free zone was dismissed due to the Central European key position in the Cold War conflict, the government of the Polish People's Republic switched to supporting partial solutions, like a ban of nuclear weapons testing. "We need to start at something", the Polish MFA Adam Rapacki argued (Łoś-Nowak 1985).

Moreover, the Polish authorities tried to address nuclear weapons by referring to democratic and humanistic principles. Władysław Gomułka, The First Secretary of the Polish United Workers' Party, called for a worldwide referendum aimed at an "average citizen" to decide whether his or her country should possess nuclear weapons (Łoś-Nowak 1985). Reflecting on

the UN Charter, Edward Gierek, succeeding Gomułka, proposed a plan aimed at educating societies in the spirit of peace (Łoś-Nowak 1985).

Along with disarmament, the government of the Polish People's Republic strongly defended nonproliferation. Warsaw signed the NPT on the first possible day (1 July 1986) and ratified it on 12 June 1969.

Being part of the communist bloc, however, the government of the Polish People's Republic was accused of spreading Soviet propaganda, supporting Soviet expansionist politics or striving for unilateral strategic advantage. Opinions on whether the Polish governments' disarmament initiatives were authored by the Polish MFA or were a Soviet policy instrument diverge. According to Piotr Madejczyk, a historian and professor at the Institute of Political Studies of the Polish Academy of Sciences,

“Taking into account the international context of that time, the plans did not have a chance to be realised. Their aim was mainly propaganda, oriented at presenting the Soviet bloc as a defender of peace. Despite being part of the Soviet global policy, they had to correspond with Polish interests. This was practically impossible, as being part of the Soviet bloc implied a negative attitude of Western countries to Polish proposals” (Madajczyk 2009:12).

As such, the Polish communist government's room to manoeuvre was limited. The awareness of the risky and insecure situation governed the foreign policy and engagement in international efforts to curb the proliferation of nuclear weapons and prevent nuclear war in the European continent. The Polish governments' position reflected socialist and humanitarian principles and the desire of peaceful coexistence. At the same time, it showed a highly creative spirit that existed in the Polish bureaucracy, which actively pursued curbing nuclear weapons.

7.4.3. Polish secret plans to acquire nuclear weapons capabilities

Starting in the early 1970's, allegedly a few individuals representing government and academia romanticised about the idea to develop nuclear weapons capabilities using laser enrichment technology at the Military University of Technology (OTVP 2006). Initiated under Władysław Gomułka, it was continued by Edward Gierek. Due to the lack of access to appropriate technology, the attempt did not materialise in the envisioned outcome. As there is

only very little information on this incident, I refrain from drawing conclusions. I add this point here to show the desperation of the Polish communist government that was stuck in-between unsuccessful attempts to eliminate nuclear weapons from Europe and the threat of a conflict between NATO and the Warsaw Pact which could escalate to the nuclear level with Poland caught in-between.

7.4.4. Poland and NATO nuclear policy

Despite initial internal political controversies over the direction of the Polish security policy after the end of the Cold War, since 1992, NATO membership was officially a strategic aim for the Polish government. Dr hab. Prof. Marian Kowalewski, then director of the newly created Security Policy Department at the MFA, recalls that for the Polish bureaucracy it was a time for an autodidactic reinterpretation of NATO documents and building up strategic awareness of Western security concepts (Kowalewski 2009:13).

On its way to NATO membership, Warsaw actively participated in developing the 1999 Strategic Concept. The new guiding document would be approved at the same summit during which Poland would receive its membership. Warsaw would be bound by its provisions. Therefore, the Polish governments' participation in developing the document seemed a natural consequence. Right after work on the new concept was initiated in NATO, on 28 November 1997, the MFA together with the MoD set up a working group aimed at the adaptation of the NATO Strategic Concept. The group was led by Henryk Szlajfer, Director of the Strategy and Planning Department and Marian Kowalewski, Director of the International Security Department of the MFA. Discussions were held in tight consultations between the MFA, MoD, General Staff of the Polish Armed Forces and the Polish Mission at NATO. The group was tasked to track and analyse the debate and prepare the Polish position on detailed issues discussed in the framework of the planned NATO strategic concept. According to a former Director of the International Security Department in the Ministry of Defence, half a year before the official membership, Poland received an 'invited' status to the NPG and was free to participate in its discussions (IP17, 15.11.2013). For the first time, the Polish government had the opportunity to dig into the Alliances nuclear policy. A RAND Corporation study was financed by the government of the United States to help the Polish administration in socialising nuclear-weapons related policies and doctrines.

The Polish government did not assess a re-evaluation of the Alliances nuclear strategy to be necessary. According to Marian Kowalewski, Warsaw saw nuclear forces of the Alliance to fulfil a political role, especially to “prevent war, prevent the aggressor to calculate the costs of an attack and provide an ultimate security guarantee to allies” (Kowalewski 2009:23, translation mine). A governmental working document entitled *Synthesis of Discussions on the Adaptation of the Alliances Strategic Concept (1997-1999)* reads that the wording on deterrence and defence “reflects assumptions of the Polish position” (Kowalewski 2009:28).

In a questionnaire sent by fax on 21 October 1999 to the Polish MFA in advance of the NATO HLG meeting on 28 October 1999, which is available to the author, a set of eight questions concerning NATO nuclear policy was raised. Handwritten notes sketched in brackets by one member of the Polish delegation indicate how members of the Polish government positioned themselves on these issues:

1. What is your country’s position on NATO’s nuclear policies? (+)
2. What is your country’s position on a possible review of those policies?(-)
3. What is your country’s position on a possible adoption of ‘no-first-use’ policy? (-)
4. Do you think that the parameters for a review of NATO’s nuclear policies will be agreed at the December Ministerial meeting? (-)
5. Do you expect a nuclear policy review to change the Strategic Concept? (-)
6. Are there any other confidence and security-building measures that NATO could introduce alongside its current stated nuclear policies? (+)
7. How does your country think NATO should best respond to threats from the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction? -(+?)
8. What effect does your country think NATO’s nuclear policies will have on the Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference in 2000? (“poznawcza” - cognitive, translation mine)

According to these notes, Polish governmental representatives positively evaluated NATO’s nuclear policies in its 1999 format and were not keen to review it. Warsaw refused a “no-first-use” policy. The diplomats, however, saw some room for manoeuvring in terms of confidence and security-building measures. A paper entitled *Thesis* accompanied the questionnaire *NATO Nuclear Policy vs. Proliferation of WMD*, which is available to the author. Here, we read that

“inclusion in and appropriate input into the work of NATO nuclear structures and those dealing with the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction is one of the most important elements of our membership in the Alliance in the nearest future” (translation mine).

In the NATO’s 1999 Strategic Concept, allies committed themselves to contribute to the “development of arms control, disarmament, and non-proliferation agreements as well as to confidence and security-building measures” (NATO 1999). As a new member, militarily and economically relatively weak, but eager to contribute to the Alliance, Warsaw found its niche in the issue of transparency, confidence and security-building measures. The “niche” was also driven by lack of information on the status of nuclear warheads and their delivery systems in the Kaliningrad Oblast (Prezydent.pl 2001).

Such measures were intended to contribute to stability by minimising the danger of armed conflict, avoiding misunderstanding and miscalculation of military activities. Together with Berlin, Warsaw was one of the leading parties to develop the NATO *NAC 2000 Report on Options for Confidence and Security Building Measures (CSBMs), Verification, Non-Proliferation, Arms Control and Disarmament*, which included a range of CSBMs proposals on TNW. The unclassified version of the report, which was published in December 2000, suggests four CSBM-options NATO intended to pursue with Russia: (1) enhance and deepen dialogue on matters related to nuclear forces, (2) exchange information regarding the readiness status of nuclear forces, (3) exchange information on safety provisions and safety features of nuclear weapons and (4) exchange data on U.S. and Russian sub-strategic nuclear forces (NATO NAC 2000:23-25). Means discussed concern information sharing like an in-depth exchange of views, assessments, and information on nuclear forces, in particular, their alert status, safety provisions for their storage and transport. Two things strike out in the report. First, Russian reciprocity was expected if not required for establishing CSBMs. Second, transparency was defined in relation to the broader public. It regarded explaining the rationale for political decisions. As such, it differed from the way in which transparency was used in the discourse at the time of writing, where it regarded the insight into stockpile characteristics.

The Polish government never officially commented on America withdrawing its sub-strategic nuclear weapons from the UK, Greece and Germany.

Summing up, the Polish historical experience with nuclear weapons, during the Cold War, Poland was compelled to participate in nuclear sharing. Its main security interests were easing tensions between the Cold War blocs, diminishing military threats, and searching for a margin of political discretion on the international level. The communist government framed its policy on nuclear weapons exposing the specific situation of Central Europe. Therefore, the authenticity and genuineness of its attempts for nuclear disarmament in Europe in the name of humanist values might be questioned. This, however, does not dismiss the tremendous input and engagement of the Polish communist government in the nuclear disarmament debates. After the end of the Cold War, the democratic governments of the III Rzeczpospolita distanced themselves from the non-democratic communist past. For this reason, the Polish Cold War nuclear sharing participation has never been reflected publicly, and subsequently, there was no space in the political sphere for anti-nuclear weapons attitudes to emerge. All post-communist governments perceived American stockpiles in Europe as favourable. From the beginning of the Polish NATO membership, however, the government engaged in debating and developing transparency and confidence-building measures, a concept Warsaw remains loyal to. Therefore, although the government of Poland did not officially comment on former American withdrawals of its European stockpiles of sub-strategic nuclear weapons (these comments could give rise to an actual stance on the B61case specific issue) its long engagement in TCBMs on sub-strategic nuclear weapons in Europe lead to the conclusion that the government of the Republic of Poland continues this policy.

7.5. Polish discourse on nuclear weapons norms

In that section, I investigate the normative underpinning of the Polish governments' decision on the B61. I am particularly interested in how the Polish government internalises nuclear weapons-related norms, how Warsaw interprets particular aspects and which elements it emphasises. I discuss the official Polish discourse on the prospect of a world free of nuclear weapons, nuclear disarmament, the usability of nuclear weapons and nuclear non-proliferation. How the government of Poland positions itself towards the problem of global zero and nuclear disarmament and emphasises the intensity and determination with which it would follow these aims. Is the Polish government's position on TNW in line with its general approach to nuclear weapons? If yes, the Polish government's position fits within a coherent

line. In case it does not, the stance of the Polish authorities on TNW might be a special case motivated by less normative factors. That this part is mainly based upon elite perceptions results from the fact that there are almost no relevant public discussions or opinion surveys known to the author on that matter. A relevant public discussion would exist if either the government would make controversial decisions, which it does not, or when non-governmental organisations or activistic experts would raise them, which is not the case, either. Surveys on nuclear weapons are often requested by non-governmental organisations for purposes of advancing their cause, which is not the case in Poland due to lack of organisations dealing with nuclear weapons.

7.5.1. Poland and the idea of global zero

Global zero is a widely used term for complete nuclear disarmament and dismantlement of all nuclear weapons and providing security for all nuclear materials worldwide. It is the ultimate goal of most other nuclear weapons-related norms as it practically prevents a nuclear war and/or nuclear weapons induced accident (cf. NPDI 2013). The notion of a complete nuclear disarmament is embodied in the NPT preamble where member states declare,

“their intention to achieve at the earliest possible date the cessation of the nuclear arms race and to undertake effective measures in the direction of nuclear disarmament” and desire “to further the easing of international tension and the strengthening of trust between States in order to facilitate the cessation of the manufacture of nuclear weapons, the liquidation of all their existing stockpiles, and the elimination from national arsenals of nuclear weapons and the means of their delivery pursuant to a Treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control.”

A governments interpretation of the global zero idea is crucial to understanding its commitment or lack of thereof to nuclear disarmament as well as its conceptualisation of the role nuclear weapons play in providing for their security as well as in generating power relations.

President Obama’s Prague speech in April 2009, where he declared “America's commitment to seek the peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons” (White House 2009) was the latest most visible and responded call for nuclear disarmament. The Polish government reacted with limited enthusiasm to and presented a pragmatic position on Presidents Obama vision of a world free of nuclear weapons. In general, Polish authorities support this vision

(cf. UNGA Statement 2014). In practical terms, however, the government of Poland sees it as a far-reaching goal that requires step-by-step realisation.

Adam Rotfeld reflecting on the work of the NATO Group of Experts summarised the official Polish position by saying that as long as nuclear weapons existed, the politics of Western states needed to “take into account realities and not wishful thinking” (Rotfeld 2012:142, translation mine). For Łukasz Kulesa, “as long as NATO is serious about remaining a military Alliance and not a kind of global crisis managements organisation, and as long as it counts three nuclear member states, the nuclear component should be integral part of the Article V package” (Carnegie 2009). To a reporter’s question whether he believes that global zero can be real and that one day, for example, Russia and North Korea resign from their arsenals, Deputy Director in the Security Policy Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Michał Polakow answered,

“This is not a question of faith. This is a matter of obligations, already initiated processes, which etap-wise can lead to disarmament. We share Presidents Obama vision, but this is a lasting process. (...) It will also last because neither of the sides resigns from nuclear weapons until it remains in the hands of the other side. A status quo is much more probable. Poland is a NATO member that bases its security strategy on nuclear deterrence too. We are committed to our obligations towards the Alliance. Reductions should have a reciprocal character” (Woźnicki 2014, translation mine).

In the above statement, Michał Polakow admitted that the Polish government is committed to the obligations resulting from the NPT article 6. However, nuclear disarmament and the vision of the world free of nuclear weapons are a legal commitment, not a moral or ethical question. Mentioning an “etap-wise” and “lasting process”, he indicates the preference for a step-by-step approach to nuclear disarmament. While mentioning “reciprocal” disarmament, he points to the refusal of unilateral disarmament attempts. Polakow also indirectly points to the practical dilemma the government of Poland faces supporting nuclear disarmament while simultaneously relying on NATO nuclear deterrence. With the phrase “we are committed to our obligations towards the Alliance” he suggests prioritisation of NATO nuclear deterrence. Polakow also frames nuclear disarmament as an exclusive obligation of NWS. He, however, avoids mentioning directly the Polish role as a NATO member state. As discussed before, member states have some power to voice their position in internal NATO debates and indirectly influence the American decision on the European stockpiles.

In an October 2010 parliamentary hearing, one month before the NATO New Strategic Concepts were adopted, then the Undersecretary of State in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Jacek Najder said that “as long as tactical nuclear weapons are part of the Alliance deterrence strategy, this kind of weapons should stay in the NATO toolkit” (KSZ/KON 27.10.2010:5, translation mine). In a written response, the government mentioned that “we fully agree with the NATO Strategic Concept paragraph that as long as nuclear weapons exist, the Alliance should remain necessary capabilities in this sphere to provide safety for its members” (Official Response:1, translation mine). In an interview for the Japanese "Kyodo News" agency during the ministerial NPDI meeting in April 2014, Deputy Minister Artur Nowak-Far pointed to “the need of a balanced approach to non-proliferation and disarmament, especially in the context of the Polish Alliance obligation resulting from membership in NATO” (MSZ 2014, translation mine). According to Łukasz Kulesa, in the Polish strategic thinking “there is little space for idealistic support for the quick abolition of nuclear weapons, but also no appetite for nuclear adventurism or muscle-flexing” (Kulesa 2009).

In a New York Times op-ed co-authored together with his Norwegian counterpart, the Minister of Foreign Affairs Radosław Sikorski also indicates the problem of accommodating Alliance and NPT obligations. There, he reminds that “the uncontrolled continued existence of these weapons [American nuclear weapons in Europe—author's note] undermines the credibility of our commitment to a nuclear-weapons-free world” (Støre/Sikorski 2012). Sikorski, however, leaves out the fact that Poland is a “consumer” of extended nuclear deterrence. He connects the lack of a legal agreement on these weapons (by using the phrase “uncontrolled continued existence”) with the aim of nuclear disarmament. An official at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs told in the interview,

“We execute NPT article 6, consider it the goal of the NPT, but regard our security as an imperative. (...) Our security is based on the NATO nuclear umbrella. It is one of the highest values we have here. As such, as the Chicago Summit declaration says, as long as nuclear weapons exist, the Alliance will remain unclear. Possessing nuclear weapons. And it is nuclear weapons, nuclear deterrence, which play a role in our security policy and due to this reason Poland has to accommodate its position in the NPT process accordingly” (IP6, 17.10.2013, translation mine).

This statement visualises awareness of the NPT-NATO conundrum within the Polish government with a clear preference for NATO nuclear sharing. In consequence, the Polish government prioritises self-interest epitomised in the Alliances nuclear deterrence over the broader collective good of nuclear disarmament.

This position was reiterated in the official Polish statement to the 2014 Vienna Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, where we read that “[a]ny discussion on nuclear disarmament has to be inclusive and respect security objectives and commitments of all states” (Statement 2014). This suggests that the government of Poland looks at nuclear disarmament through the prism of national security interests, exposing the specific situation of Central Europe. According to a long-term official at the MFA,

“As the mere name suggests, the NPT is a non-proliferation treaty, not a treaty on disarmament. Disarmament was added as a price for the treaty to come into being. Non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction was the more important task. And also for us it is most important, for the continued existence of the high class and for the current state to be reduced. In a very proportional manner by everybody, so as a matter of fact between the two biggest powers. Although I am not sure how to classify Russia today, whether it is a super power, or not. In the sense of atomic power, doubtless, even though it does not have the same hinterland/supply base as the Soviet Union had. As such, article 6 - yes, before every NPT Review Conference we even submit a national report on the implementation of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. But for us, all NPT articles are important, and we do not see article 6 supreme to the others. We see it as a whole, without exception, including article 10 on the withdrawal from the treaty” (IP6, 17.10.2013, translation mine).

Here, the official pointed out that the Polish government interprets NPT art. 6 as one of several parallel aims of the treaty. In consequence, it does not necessarily value the goal of global zero higher than that of non-proliferation or providing for the security of ‘weaponisable’ nuclear materials.

In a RUSI-ELN report by Somerville et al. (2012:10) who conducted interviews with key ministers, politicians, policy-makers and analysts in Warsaw, we read that nuclear disarmament is considered a “project of left-leaning apologists for communism, rather than a goal around which the entire mainstream of the Polish political class has already coalesced.”

Yet a different opinion was expressed in 2009 by Aleksander Kwaśniewski, Tadeusz Mazowiecki and Lech Wałęsa, prominent statesman formerly governing Poland and

representing different spectra on the political scale, according to whom “[a] noble dream just several years ago, the elimination of nuclear arms is no longer the idea of populists and pacifists; it is now a call of professional-politicians known for their sense of realism and academics for their sense of responsibility” (Kwaśniewski et al. 2009). That op-ed, however, has been addressed to the world community and in response to op-eds by governmental leaders from abroad.

Despite disastrous consequences of using nuclear weapons, proponents of the nuclear disarmament point at various dangers of keeping nuclear weapons in peacetime, including human or technological failure leading to an intended or unintended accidental explosion, material leakage, nuclear terrorism, negative impact on image etc. The Polish government does not see any disadvantages of keeping American nuclear weapons in Europe, apart from the continuous necessity to explain their rightfulness and purposefulness to the public opinion (Official Response:2).

TNW take a prominent place in discussing global zero for the Polish government. In the Polish statement at the 2010 NPT Review Conference, we read that “the goal of a world without nuclear weapons, which we all share”, cannot be met “without making non-strategic weapons an integral part of the general nuclear disarmament process” (NPT Statement 2010). Such statements serve as an indication for the specific focus the Polish government puts on the path to complete nuclear disarmament.

7.5.2. Poland and nuclear disarmament

The goal of global zero is an abstract idea the achievement of which is hardly predictable. Thus, in order to focus on more tangible, more pragmatic, attainable and practicably achievable concepts, one needs to look at nuclear disarmament and a state’s understanding of the way in which such disarmament could and should be pursued.

One interviewee, involved in the development of the White Book, dealing with passages on tactical nuclear weapons confirmed, that his working group did not consider NPT article 6 in their deliberations at all (IP13, 25.10.2013).

In a statement to the Preparatory Committee for the 2010 NPT Review Conference, we read that the Polish government “is vitally interested in the global debate on nuclear disarmament” (NPT Statement 2009). It is important to notice the will to “debate” nuclear disarmament, not nuclear disarmament in itself. This pledge is consistent with the NPT article 6 codification “to pursue negotiations in good faith”. As such, the Polish government’s position is consistent with article 6, but does not move beyond to officially affirm the NPT preamble pledge “to undertake effective measures in the direction of nuclear disarmament.”

In official statements, Warsaw supports multilateral endeavours and step-by-step approaches to nuclear disarmament (NPT Statement 2009, cf. NPT Statement 2010). The Polish government prefers formal, collective efforts leading to legally binding, internationally recognised agreements. It opposes normative stigmatisation of nuclear weapons aimed at creating political pressure and leading nuclear weapon owners to disarm. This may explain the Polish government’s preference to “finalise what is feasible” (NPT Statement 2009, cf. UNGA Statement 2014). It focuses on the universalisation of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and a conclusion of the Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty, rather than starting new initiatives (e.g. a legal ban on nuclear weapons).

The government of Poland delegates the main responsibility for nuclear disarmament to NWS, calling on the U.S. and Russians to take on the leadership. In statements we read that “eliminating nuclear weapons is only possible through substantive and constructive engagement with those states which possess nuclear weapons” or that “[w]e hope that nuclear weapon states will build on the positive experience of the new START Treaty and include the category of tactical nuclear weapons in their future reduction talks” (NPT Statement 2012, UNGA Statement 2014), or that “the heaviest responsibility is shouldered by the powers that hold the largest arsenals” (Kwaśniewski et al. 2009). This position also finds itself reiterated several times in the statements of the NPDI which Warsaw is a member of (NPDI 2012, NPDI 2013).

According to the Deputy Head of the International Security Policy Department in the MoD, “disarmament - by all means, someday. We still need to be a credible Alliance. We cannot give up nuclear weapons. Disarmament is an evolutionary process, distanced future and upon

this assumption, our position was built” (IP14, 25.10.2013 translation mine). In the written response by the Polish government, we read that,

“Poland supports the nuclear disarmament process, but simultaneously wants to sustain nuclear deterrence’s credibility. It is inevitable to maintain the balance between nuclear deterrence capability and the process of nuclear disarmament. Nuclear disarmament cannot be an unconditional process realised in isolation from the broad strategic context and the state of the international security environment (...) [W]e oppose such an interpretation of postulates regarding nuclear disarmament which would weaken NATO nuclear deterrence in the light of the current international security environment” (Official Response:3, translation mine).

The Polish government favours a step-by-step or a building-block-approach (reduce, eliminate and prohibit, as opposed to outlaw and eliminate). This becomes clear in the context of the initiative on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons (the so-called Humanitarian Initiative). The initiative gave a perfect venue for political expressionism centred around the humanitarian dimension of and the risks associated with nuclear weapons. It evolved for a longer time starting setting up with milestones at the 2010 NPT Review Conference. These included statements on humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons in the Final Document Action Plan, a series of state-sponsored conferences (in March 2013 in Oslo, in February 2014 in Nayarit and in December 2014 in Vienna) and several UNGA statements. Eventually, the initiative aimed to “fill the legal gap for the prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons” (Austrian Pledge 2014). Warsaw treated the initiative with caution questioning its effectivity without nuclear weapon states on board, a long-lasting MFA official told me in an interview (IP6, 17.10.2013, translation mine). At the conference in Vienna, the government of Poland finally voiced its opposition to the initiative. In its statement, we read that,

“We observe that the debate on humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons is sometimes interpreted as a one that could lead us ‘to reach new international standards and norms, though a legally binding instrument’ on nuclear disarmament. We do not believe this forum is a right one for that kind of deliberations and we don’t believe this could be optimal way to achieve any sustainable progress. For us it is *the NPT that is the cornerstone for progress towards total nuclear disarmament*” (Statement 2014, emphases in original).

Eventually, in December 2016, the Polish government voted against negotiations of a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons (UNGA 2016). Consequently, Warsaw did not

participate in the March and June/July 2017 negotiations which led to the adoption of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

For a long time, official Polish statements solely mentioned the NPT as the “cornerstone of the international non-proliferation regime” (NPT Statement 2009), but recently the NPT regime also received its position as a forum to strive “for progress towards total nuclear disarmament” (cf. UNGA Statement 2014). In the above statement, the Polish government expresses its preference for the NPT to act as a key forum for nuclear disarmament. A long-lasting MFA official reported that Warsaw, in general, opposes multiplying disarmament initiatives (IP6, 17.10.2013, translation mine, cf. Statement 2014). Despite the years-long stalemate in the work of the Conference on Disarmament (CD) in Geneva, the government of Poland still sees the CD as a vital and irreplaceable forum in the multilateral disarmament machinery (CD Statement 2007, 2009, UNGA Statement 2014) and an important confidence-building measure on its own (cf. CD Statement 2004).

The Polish government perceives to live up to its nuclear disarmament obligation supporting several initiatives, e.g. by delegating representatives to chair or host conferences and participate in advisory bodies. At the 1995 Review and Extension Conference, Tadeusz Strulak was Chairman of the Drafting Committee; and the 1998 Preparatory Committee was chaired by Ambassador Eugeniusz Wyzner, the 2000 Review Conferences Main Committee II was chaired by Adam Kobieracki while Ambassador Andrzej Towpik chaired the Drafting Committee at the 2010 Review Conference. Similar examples can be found in the Conference on Disarmament (2006 presidency), and the UN Disarmament Commission (2006 vice-chairmanship). Apart from engaging in official fora, the government of Poland contributed to the discussion by establishing the Warsaw Reflection Group in 2008. Its *Arms Control Revisited: Non-Proliferation and Denuclearisation* report contributed to the global nuclear disarmament debate.

7.5.3. Poland and nuclear (non-)proliferation

Nuclear proliferation is the spread of nuclear weapons. It manifests itself either in new states acquiring nuclear capabilities (horizontal proliferation) or in the quantitative or qualitative sophistication of nuclear weapons by states which already possess them (vertical

proliferation). Against Kenneth Waltz's call for more nuclear weapon states as a stabilising factor, the international community decided almost unanimously to curb proliferation. To incentivise non-proliferation, nuclear weapon states committed themselves to nuclear disarmament.

There, however, is a controversial academic debate whether nuclear non-proliferation supports disarmament or not. Anne Harrington de Santana argues that "the practice of non-proliferation does not lead to disarmament" and even diminishes inducements for NWS to do so (Harrington de Santana 2011:3). This is because the "desire to eliminate nuclear weapons has a lot to do with the perception of nuclear danger" (Harrington de Santana 2011:13). Thus a definite nuclear weapons oligopoly may decrease the danger of nuclear weapons use in the perceptions of NWS and diminish their interest in disarming their arsenals. One could expand this logic and argue from a deterrence-perspective that lack of potential nuclear newcomers also diminishes the ambition of NNWS covered with a nuclear security pledge to actively search for alternatives to nuclear deterrence. Paradoxically, a threat of nuclear newcomers may simultaneously increase the value of extended nuclear deterrence and even serve as an incentive to stay in an extended nuclear deterrence relation.

While NNWS lack institutional and technical backing to force and control disarmament by NWS, some experts prescribe their commitment to non-proliferation an important role in convincing NWS to disarm. In particular, Sverre Lodgaard suggests that "the more convincingly non-nuclear they [NNWS—author's note] become, the easier it will be for the NWS to go to zero" (Lodgaard 2010:168). This also relates to the controversial argument that nuclear deterrence curbs nuclear proliferation as allies do not see the need to pursue their nuclear weapons. As Lodgaard suggests, NNWS may use carrots and sticks to reduce NWS proliferation concerns and increase pressure for disarmament, among other things by "deepening their own commitments to stay non-nuclear." By strengthening nuclear non-proliferation internationally, they also make a stronger case (or prepare the conditions) for NWS to disarm.

Nuclear (non-)proliferation is the best-covered issue from all nuclear-weapons related problems in Polish official documents. Poland, which was heavily experienced with the Chernobyl nuclear reactor catastrophe and functioned as a transit country within the so-called

central route in illicit trafficking in nuclear and other radioactive materials (IAEA 2007:44), has an interest in strengthening an international non-proliferation regime and controlling the spread of sensitive technologies. The Polish 2009 Defence Strategy sees a proliferation of WMD and means of transporting them as one of the “most serious threats” (MON 2009). In the 2010 NPT Review Conference statement, we read that “the proliferation of nuclear weapons is still one of the greatest challenges not only to the NPT regime but also to the international security as a whole” (NPT Statement 2010). The Priorities of the Polish Foreign Policy 2012-2016 refer to the proliferation of WMD as a “new threat” and an element destabilising the world order, which can give rise to several “black scenarios” most possibly in the Middle East or East Asia (MSZ 2012). The 2014 National Security Strategy sees the credibility of non-proliferation agreements undermined by the threat of uncontrolled development of weapons of mass destruction, the occurrence of a new arms race and the possibility for terrorist groups to access this type of weaponry (MON 2014:18).

Warsaw prefers keeping continued symmetry and a balanced approach to both nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation (NPT Statement 2005, NPT Statement 2009), perceiving them “mutually reinforcing” (NPT Statement 2012, UNGA Statement 2014). At the same time, Warsaw sees disarmament efforts as an instrument of making nuclear weapons less attractive to potential nuclear proliferators (NPT Statement 2010), not the other way round.

In a statement at the First Session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 NPT Review Conference, the official Polish position was that “[t]he irreversible nuclear disarmament and the diminishing role of the nuclear weapons in NWS, can be used as an argument to discourage potential proliferations from acquiring these destructive weapons” (NPT Statement 2012). Former Polish leaders Aleksander Kwaśniewski, Tadeusz Mazowiecki and Lech Wałęsa also subscribe to the notion that the non-proliferation regime gains strength from credible attempts leading to nuclear disarmament. They expressed this conviction in their op-ed mentioning that “[w]e share the view that an effective non-proliferation regime will not be possible unless the major nuclear powers, especially the USA and Russia, take urgent steps towards nuclear disarmament” (Kwaśniewski et al. 2009).

Warsaw sees the United Nations and the European Union as key actors to respond to potential proliferation threats. At the same time, the government of Poland is an active participant in all relevant institutions aimed at curbing WMD proliferation. Since 2007, Poland leads the Eastern European Group, one of the five unofficial regional groups in the United Nations and coordinates its position on nuclear weapons issues. Warsaw also unequivocally condemns cases of states failing to meet their obligation in the area of non-proliferation. It also is “[a] little-known success story” of the Nuclear Security Summit with a high profile of achievements (cf. Kubiak 2014a). The mere participation in the Nuclear Security Summit, among 58 other states, shows that Poland is an important partner in fighting nuclear proliferation.

The government of Poland, however, labels the non-proliferation system as “porous“ (MSZ 2012). The White Book elaborates on that allegation and sees the erosion of international efforts to curb proliferation as a result of the fact that “more and more often, the problems connected with proliferation and armaments are discussed at informal meetings and produce informal arrangements, which is beneficial in the short run, but does not eliminate the impermanence and uncertainty related with these areas” (White Book 2013). In this line, Adam Rotfeld puts out the question why arrangements outside the UN system, such as the Wassenaar Arrangement, the Proliferation Security Initiative, the Missile Technology Control Regime or the Zangger Committee are more efficient than elements of the UN system like the UN Conference on Disarmament or the UN Disarmament Commission (Rotfeld 2008).

The shock of Chernobyl in 1986 did not cause any long-lasting “anti-nuclear” sentiments within the society, in comparison to those present in Denmark and Spain after nuclear accidents (cf. Vestergaard 2012, Portela 2012). In its path to modernity and search for energy independence from Russia, the Polish government decided in January 2009 to develop a nuclear power programme. Based on transparency, it aims to serve as a “positive example on how to combine the expansion of nuclear facilities with the need to observe international non-proliferation norms” (NPT Statement 2010).

At the same time, Poland does not intend to become a nuclear weapon state. When former President Lech Wałęsa commented on the recent conflict in Ukraine, probably in a burst of emotions, he told a radio journalist that the government of Poland should lease nuclear

weapons to deter Russia (RadioZet 2014), there are no similar voices coming from governmental officials. In response to this call, the residing President Bronisław Komorowski mentioned in a TV interview that:

“I think that since many years, including the presidency of Lech Wałęsa, we never pretended to possess nuclear weapons, because this is not where the security of Poland is located. Our security is basically based on a modern army, on a strengthened defence system (...) but the main source of our security is not nuclear weapons in the hands of Poland, but the might of the North-Atlantic Alliance which is sufficient to deter aggression on our territory” (TVN24 2014:10’-11’45”, translation mine).

Prof. Jerzy Niewodniczański, former president of the National Atomic Energy Agency, admits that Poland potentially is a “nuclear country” and “possesses the technology to develop a bomb” (Lorenz/Zuchowicz 2010, translation mine). However, he adds “the international community appreciates us that we contribute to peace, fighting with nuclear proliferation.” Since conversion in 2012, its Maria nuclear research reactor uses low-enriched uranium (LEU) fuel only. Poland also decommissioned its uranium ore plants in Kowary. Since 2007, it accessed the IAEA safeguards agreements and additional protocols which grant the IAEA expanded rights of access to information and sites and assure both declared and possible undeclared activities. At the same time, the Polish government actively participates in all major non-proliferation initiatives (the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative, Nuclear Security Summit, Zangger Committee, Nuclear Suppliers Group) and never officially voiced nor has been alleged of trying to acquire or produce its nuclear weapons. Moreover, Polish officials never threatened to build or procure nuclear weapons in case the United States would remove its stockpiles from Europe.

Maciej Miłosz, a journalist affiliated with *dziennik.pl*, a Polish internet news portal, researched the governments’ attitude on nuclear weapons’ development. Col. Jacek Sońta, the spokesperson in the MoD, was cited saying that “the Ministry of Defence does not lead any activities aimed at the possession of nuclear weapons. We do not foresee to undertake such activities in the future” (Miłosz 2014, translation mine).

Nevertheless, it is reasonable to ask whether there are any voices calling for the development or possession of nuclear weapons in Poland. More prominent defenders of the idea that Poland should have or start developing nuclear weapons are Janusz Korwin-Mikke, leader of

the Congress of the New Right, since 2014 Member of the European Parliament and candidate for president in the 2015 elections (RadioWnet.pl 2013:19'24"), and Tomasz Szatkowski - president of the National Centre for Strategic Studies (Gazeta Polska Vd 2012). Jacek Bartosiak, an analyst at the National Centre for Strategic Studies tried to convince in the daily newspaper Rzeczpospolita that the Polish F-16 military aircraft should substitute German Tornados in transporting the B61 (Bartosiak 2014). Henryk Kmiecik (MP who changed from the liberal, anti-clerical, left-wing Palikot's Movement party to the agrarian and Christian democratic Polish People's Party) commented on the Russian Col. Vladimir Zhirinovskiy (leader of the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia) who was threatening with "total annihilation" of Baltic area and Poland in a parliamentary statement:

"I see no impediments for these weapons [B61—author's note] to be deployed on our territory, especially as for decades they were stationed here. How is it possible that our former ally, the Soviet Union, believed that such weaponry could be placed on the territory of our country and our present ally, NATO, has a different opinion. I will go even further, he believes that we do not deserve deployment of military bases subordinate to NATO structures on the territory of Poland, which can be a guarantee for the inviolability of our borders by states that are hostile to us (...) Therefore, I think that it is the right time that we ourselves take care of the security of our country and start work on equipping our army with the deterring tactical nuclear weapons" (Sejm 2014:117-118).

These, however, are individual positions of particular people. There are no governmental officials or intellectuals in Poland defending the idea to develop a Polish nuclear weapon.

According to one of my respondents, the withdrawal of the "3xNo's" pledge is subject to continuous internal discussions at the MFA (IP13, 25.10.2013). And while the Polish government never officially called for the stationing of nuclear weapons on its territory, individuals representing the Polish elite favour flexibility on this pledge. At a conference organised by the National Centre for Strategic Studies in 2013, Radosław Sikorski mentioned that the pledge "was only a declaration of will in a particular moment and [...] it is not binding" (NCSS 2013, translation mine). Stanisław Koziej does not rule out the possibility of a practical inclusion of Poland in NATO nuclear mission, depending on the circumstances (Koziej 2008:20, translation mine). The head of the National Security Beauru argues that the changed international situation "lays ground to its [the "3xNo's" pledges' - authors' note] interpretation according to our *raison d'État*" (Koziej 2008:20, translation mine). In the event

of an unfavourable change of security conditions suspension of the “3xNo” would be thus permissible.

7.5.4. Poland and the use of nuclear weapons

The notion of using nuclear weapons is another indicator for the state’s perception of the role nuclear weapons play in its security strategy. In case state’s representatives seriously discuss, acknowledge or even accept the possibility to use nuclear weapons in battle, incentives for disarmament are very low. This is because they ascribe the military weapon usability. In case they do not interpret the weapon through its military capability, other roles it plays could potentially be substituted otherwise, which in turn allows disarmament.

The Polish government ratified the Additional Protocol (I) to the Geneva Conventions (1977) on victims of armed conflicts on 23.10.1991 considering itself bound with the text in its entirety and by every provision in particular. Its article 51 deals with the protection of the civilian population, clearly prohibiting indiscriminate attacks on civilians and civilian objects. The article makes the use of weapons of mass destruction against cities illegal for Poland. Article 55 prohibits using methods of warfare that may be expected to cause widespread, long-term and severe damage to the natural environment. In practice, this article prohibits any use of nuclear weapons, disregarding the characteristic of its target. Whether a consensus NATO decision on the use of a B61 would be considered a breach of law should be interpreted by lawyers. What counts for the purpose of this dissertation is the fact that Poland juristically delegitimises the possibility to use nuclear weapons, which again speaks against the Polish government potentially considering the B61 a military usable tool.

In fact, Polish officials underline lack of practical usability for tactical nuclear weapons. In his 2010 op-ed together with Carl Bildt, Radosław Sikorski mentioned that,

“With some exceptions, tactical nuclear weapons were designed for outdated, large-scale war on the European continent. (...) We still face security challenges in the Europe of today and tomorrow, but from whichever angle you look, there is no role for the use of nuclear weapons in resolving these challenges” (Bildt/Sikorski 2010).

The Polish government stated a similar understanding of the TNW’s utility at the 2010 NPT Review Conference,

“Large arsenals of sub-strategic nuclear weapons seem anachronistic in the post-Cold War world and increase the risk of proliferation by non-state actors. Instead of enhancing our security they make it more volatile” (NPT Statement 2010).

One of my interviewees, who as an expert participated in the National Security Strategic Review and discussions of the White Book, wondered why TNW found so much place in the White Book when “from an operational perspective, these weapons do not really have a chance to be used and are not debated as a means of war” (IP4, 10.10.2013). Another expert who also participated in these events, summarised that “it does not seem to me as if it would be a kind of conviction that the weapons present a sort of capabilities which directly could be implemented in crisis situation” (IP9, 21.10.2013).

The notion of nuclear weapon’s use is not widely discussed, neither in the expert community nor within the broader public. This is because the detailed planning of nuclear weapons use is highly classified. Nothing indicates that the Polish governmental and expert community perceive that nuclear weapons, and the B61 in particular, could be used.

Summing up, the Polish government does not envision global zero as a goal achievable in the nearest future. When it comes to nuclear disarmament, Warsaw supports a step-by-step approach pointing to the NWS as primarily responsible for future reductions. Even though Warsaw believes that disarmament discourages nuclear proliferation, it does not perceive itself (as a member of a nuclear alliance) directly responsible for disarmament. Rather, it actively strengthens its non-proliferation profile. At the same time, Poland does not perceive nuclear weapons a viable military option. In the discourse on nuclear weapons norms, Poland takes an observer/follower role. The Polish government’s stance on the B61 is thus in line with its general position towards nuclear weapons and does not seem to be case-specific.

7.7. Summary

In this chapter, I explored the Polish governments’ stance on extended nuclear deterrence and the B61 from the constructivist perspective. Because existing constructivist research does not deal with extended nuclear deterrence, there was no *modus operandi* that could be directly applied in this study. Therefore, I established a two-tier framework utilising the social constructivist concepts of “norm” and “discourse”. I investigated how the government in

Poland internalised nuclear weapons-related norms. A historical exploration aimed at tracing back key characteristics of the Polish authorities stance on nuclear weapons to prove whether Warsaw's' position on the B61 represents a *continuum* or a *novum*. The investigation regarding 'norms internalisation' aspired to map the Polish governments' normative mindset on nuclear weapons-related concepts with which Polish representatives travel to Brussels, Geneva, New York and Vienna.

I found out that the comparison of the communist and post-communist policy regarding nuclear weapons problematics show discontinuation. This can be explained by the changed strategic geopolitics for Poland and a clear-cut from its communist past. As a member of the Warsaw Pact, Poland was a nuclear weapon host state involved in the Alliances nuclear mission. As a member of NATO, Polish military forces do not participate in its nuclear mission. Under the "3xNo's" pledge Poland is politically bound not to host any NATO nuclear weapons on its territory. While in the former Alliance, Warsaw did not have any say in the nuclear doctrine of the Soviet Union, it has some limited options to nowadays influence it in the Alliance. At the same time, with the end of the Cold War and the appearance of new security threats, the conceptual importance of nuclear deterrence decreased. As a consequence of these changes and despite much better access to information on nuclear weapons doctrine and a stronger voice in the debate, the Polish government disconnects from the clearly pro disarmament and pro nuclear-ban politics of its communist past and leans towards a status quo solution. However, calls for transparency and confidence-building measures, and unwillingness for drastic changes in NATO nuclear policy provide a continuation of the Polish governments' nuclear-weapons policy since its accession to NATO. This, in turn, suggests that the official Polish policy regarding the B61 does not result out of political whim or a transient trend, but comes out as result of more protracted factors.

The Polish authorities policy on the B61 seems to fit a broader normative mindset. The government of Poland accepts the norm of a world free of nuclear weapons. It is keen on debating nuclear disarmament and vocally advocates nuclear non-proliferation. Simultaneously, it presents a rather pragmatic and restrained attitude to broad changes in nuclear weapons policy. Moreover, being aware of norm-based obligations, the Polish diplomacy does not automatically calculate them in formulating its official positions.

Normative deliberations come second after the security concerns are fulfilled. As a consequence, Warsaw sets NATO nuclear deterrence above NPT disarmament obligations expecting more security out of the presence of nuclear weapons than from their unilateral elimination. At the same time, however, as long as Russia possesses its tactical nuclear weapons, the Polish government perceives them as threatening to the security. It perceives nuclear disarmament as a long process requiring an establishment of formal, collective, legally-binding solutions within existing international fora. It abstains from multiplying initiatives to solve existing and future problems. Warsaw takes nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation seriously and invests in international collaboration by taking on administrative responsibilities. Perplexingly, despite its turbulent history with the Soviet nuclear mission, its potential role and disastrous consequences the state would suffer in a nuclear war in Europe. Not to mention the troubles caused by the Chernobyl accident and potential threats associated with its territory being used for transit of nuclear and radiological materials, no anti-nuclear sentiment has developed as of yet. This results from the lack of education and broad discussion. The state is still abreacting its communism-based economic underdevelopment and is preoccupied with wealth accumulation rather than discussions over normative problems.

8. Summary, Conclusions, Recommendations

This work analyses the Polish governments' position on and understanding of extended nuclear deterrence in Europe between 2009 and 2014. The analysis aimed at finding out (1) what role the B61 plays for a European NATO non-host non-nuclear weapon state and (2) what motivation stands behind framing it that way. Analytical eclecticism allowed to structure analysis along three main paradigms of international relations - neorealism, utilitarian liberalism and social constructivism (see Table 6). I examined official and expert writings as well as 25 expert interviews conducted with Polish diplomats, politicians, researchers, former high officials, employees at the NATO International Staff and representatives of NATO member states governments.

Table 6. Key international relations theory concepts used in the dissertation

Realism	Liberalism	Constructivism
the balance of power bandwagoning	particular interests	norms perception and enforcement

In the analysis based upon neorealism, I have focused on discussing the B61's role under the material power position, small state and alliance factors. Here, I have focused on two possible ways for a state to cope with the anarchical reality and threats to its security - the balance of power and bandwagoning. Within these strategies, the B61 was discussed as an instrument of deterrence and a means of reassurance. Using utilitarian liberalism, I framed the analysis within the concept of particular interests. To do this, I first distinguished actors who might have a stake in the B61 debate either by the possibility of gaining or losing particular privileges or just due to democratic participation. In case of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the B61 was debated as a bargaining chip to gain insight into the superior Russian arsenal of TNW and establish transparency and confidence-building measures as a precondition for future reductions. In case of the Ministry of Defence, the B61 was discussed as a means enabling the sustainment of bureaucratic privileges within internal NATO organs (the Nuclear Planning Group, the High Level Group) and as a means enabling to participate in the military SNOWCAT mission. I also discussed the B61 as a means of alliance cohesion and unity, as

well as a means to sustain the transatlantic link. In the social constructivist-driven investigation, I used norms and the security discourse to reflect on non-material elements and understandings of reality which determine the anticipated B61's role. Here, I first interpret the Polish historical account with nuclear weapons and the elites normative orientation on issues related to nuclear weapons.

8.1. Responding to the research question

The work discusses several potential roles for the B61. They developed as a result of interviews or by deduction from theoretical underpinnings (see Table 7).

Table . The B61's role

The B61's Roles	Finding
Instrument of deterrence	framed as such, but questionable
Means of reassurance	yes
Bargain chip for Russia to reduce its stockpiles of TNW	yes
Means to sustain bureaucratic privileges	framed as such, but questionable
Means to sustain military missions (SNOWCAT)	no
Means for NATO cohesion and unity	not framed as such, but potentially yes
Means to sustain transatlantic ties	framed as such, but not entirely plausible
A normative historical continuity	no

The central finding of the dissertation is that the government of Poland favours the remaining of the American nuclear weapons in Europe strictly for political reasons, which do not directly correlate with the B61's military capability. Thus, the B61 does **not** seem to **play a military role**. The B61 plays **two main political roles** as anticipated by the Polish government. It serves as an **instrument of reassurance** and as a **bargaining chip**. Several other potential roles, including serving the purpose of deterrence, sustaining bureaucratic privileges, generating NATO cohesion as well as maintaining the transatlantic link have been used as legitimisation, but do not entirely seem to be plausible. There are either rational arguments which weaken such legitimisation (e.g. the deterrence purpose is heavily weakened by the fact that nobody believes or even discusses the possibility of using the B61 in combat) or ones that prove such arguments complimentary character at best (e.g. NATO cohesion can

be manifested in other ways while serving the same purpose, including providing adequate conventional capabilities to show the organisations' resolve).

8.1.1. Discussing the B61 as a military weapon

As mentioned in Table 9, the B61 is framed by Polish officials as a deterrent against Russia. Chapter 2.1. thoroughly discusses two main types of deterrence present in academic literature - deterrence by punishment and deterrence by denial. Where do the American nuclear weapons in Europe fit in from the perspective of the Polish decision-makers?

The representatives of the Polish government and the Polish policy community either omit or disagree in mentioning any specifics on the potential application of the B61 in combat. They also lack unanimity over which Russian capabilities or particular threatening activities the B61 has to deter. In general, they frame it a means to discourage Russia from undertaking any distant, unwanted military action. For them, the weapon has an ultimate role in discouraging Russia from starting any attack - be it conventional or nuclear.

However, by declining battle-use strategies for the B61, the Polish decision-makers deny the possibility that nuclear deterrence might simply be ineffective at one point in the conflict. This, in turn, encourages to think that Warsaw denies the B61 as a means of deterrence by denial. In the European context, the operationally deployed B61 was always perceived as a battleground, counter-force weapon aimed to deny the adversary military territorial gains (cf. Snyder 1961:14). It aimed at keeping any conflict conventional in nature and supported the theatre of war (Tulak 1995:25).

At the same time, a nuclear counter-attack against Russian conventional forces does not seem feasible due to NATO overall conventional superiority over Russian military forces. There are several arguments why NATO would most probably first try to utilise all its conventional capabilities before it reaches for nuclear weapons. First of all, there is no proven strategy for using nuclear weapons in a battlefield. Secondly, the military, in general, prefers conventional warfare. Thirdly, the use of B61 in combat might escalate the conflict to an unknown dimension. Fourthly, the NATO-related decision-making process over the use of B61 is relatively long due to its complexity. Finally, it is hardly imaginable that any NATO member

would agree for an explosion on its territory or close to it - for fear of human and ecological consequences as well as potential conflict escalation.

Framing the B61 as a means to discourage Russia from inflicting any attack on NATO could indicate that the Polish decision makers and experts interpret the B61 as a means of deterrence by punishment, which might seem a universal function than deterrence by denial. By doing so, they might want to dissuade the enemy from an action by frightening that party with unacceptable consequences of that action. In the classical sense, deterrence by retaliation meant counterforce and counter-value targeting. Because the question over a battleground mission was already rejected on the ground that the Polish government did not perceive any specific battlefield use for the weapon as well as other arguments mentioned above. It could be perceived to deter by putting counter-value targets (e.g. cities) at risk. This seems highly questionable. First, from the technical specification of American extended nuclear deterrence in Europe. NATO dual-capable aircraft can merely reach potential targets in Russia without refuelling (Figure 13) and is additionally restricted by Russian A2/AD capabilities. So its potential to inflict inland damage particularly to Russia is very limited. Second, taking into consideration the Polish commitment to the Additional Protocol (I) to the Geneva Agreement, which codifies battleground rules of war, the Polish government accepted counter-value targeting as unacceptable on a normative-legal ground. As such, Warsaw should deny any attempt within NATO to use nuclear weapons in counter-value targeting. Thus, the probability to use the B61 for punishment on behalf of Poland seems rather low as well.

Summing up, neither official statements, interview data, nor further considerations make it plausible that the Polish government perceives the B61 either as a means of deterrence by denial or by punishment. It is a weapon perceived to fulfil an “overall” and rather “abstract” deterrence task, so to scare the Russian decision-makers not to do any harm to Poland or other NATO ally in any circumstances. However, without a clear doctrinal perspective on how the B61 can be used, it shall be hard to effectively breed fear among the Russian military and political decision-makers. A lack of a clear-cut military purpose for the B61 as perceived by the Polish government strengthens the argument of it being a strictly political tool.

8.1.2. Discussing the B61 as a political weapon

First, for the Polish government, the B61 serves as a guarantee for American engagement in Europe. As the B61 credibility as a deterrent instrument is undermined by the fact that it does not contain any military function or at least this military function is not being widely acknowledged (rather the opposite is fact), it is the mere presence of the weapon that counts for the Polish policy-makers. As the B61 is an American weapon, one can deduce that it is the American presence in Europe that matters. Why is American engagement important for the Polish authorities? The Polish governments' position in favour of the B61 results from the states' response to its geopolitical location as a NATO member state with a belligerent Russia at and in the vicinity of its borders. Although in terms of conventional military power, Russia has a disadvantage versus NATO, this equation changes when comparing it with Central and Eastern European NATO member states military capabilities or NATO capabilities stationed on their territory. A conventional power imbalance between Russia and Central and Eastern European NATO member states would not necessarily mean a disadvantage to Poland unless Russian repeating bellicose rhetoric and military activities were aimed specifically at Poland. This, in turn, would not necessarily turn into fear, conditioning that NATO allies would promise to defend Poland by providing adequate military support in a timely manner. However, the government of Poland perceives three obstacles that would either unnecessarily prolong the intra-organisational bureaucratic decision-making process leading to alliance support or result in no support at all. First, lack of a shared threat perception among allies (e.g. exemplified during the 2008 Russia-Georgia conflict, Turkey invoking Washington Treaty article 4. in 2003, serious disagreements within the Group of Experts, Russia being embraced a close partner by individual NATO allies) as discussed in 6.8. Second, the decreasing or tenuous explicit willingness to defend NATO allies (e.g. due to an unwillingness to risk own prosperity or the governments fear to lose domestic support), also discussed in 5.6.1. and 6.8. Third, lack of appropriate infrastructure and military capabilities for a timely defence reaction (the decline in NATO allies conventional forces) as discussed in 5.6.1. These factors create lack of trust in NATO as a unity. This is rarely mentioned explicitly but framed positively as a goal to be achieved. Therefore, the stay of the B61 in Europe - a highly controversial issue - was partly also an attempt by the Polish government to seek and test NATO integrity. Simultaneously, the B61 reflects permanent American presence in

Europe. American presence, which already is perceived as endangered to diminish due to American reorientation towards Asia, and more recently with the U.S. government lead by President Donald Trump. At the same time, the Polish government - in contrast to the society - entrusts the U.S. the most out of all its NATO allies. In case none European ally comes to help, America is seen as most possible to defend Poland and mobilise other NATO member states to do the same. Therefore, the Polish government insists on every element of American presence to remain in Europe. Also by eagerly accepting U.S. missile defence interceptors on Polish soil, the political establishment in Poland underlined to perceive a connection between American presence in Europe and the believe that it provides an additional assurance on the top of the already existing Washington Treaty article 5. This role might, however, change with elements of the EPAA being physically located in Poland. Eventually, their presence on the Polish soil will provide a much closer connection between both allies than it is the case with the B61.

Second, the B61 plays a key role as a bargaining chip to engage Russia in transparency and confidence-building measures. The position to keep the bomb developed from the will to improve the predictability and trust in mutual relations with Russia, mainly regarding its superior stockpile of tactical nuclear weapons. This desire results from an enduring lack of transparency on nuclear weapons in Europe, especially lack of disclosure on the quantity and quality of Russian tactical nuclear capabilities, particularly in its European part. The aim of potential negotiations is not necessarily their reduction, at least not in the first place. A reason for the Polish government to keep the B61 is to encourage Russia to disclose more information on its tactical nuclear stockpiles. This, in turn, would result in an improved predictability and increase in trust between both states in regard to these weapons and mutual relations in general. This is reflected in the condition of Russian reciprocity which the Polish government pushed in NATO discussions. As there is no clear idea of what “reciprocity” means in practical terms among the Polish decision-makers (see 6.5. for further details), one deduces that the main reason was establishing transparency and predictability with Russia rather than aiming for particular reductions. At the same time, the official Polish debate is very “hard-security” oriented and lacks elements of soft-security (like security via disarmament rather than armament). Therefore, the disarmament element, even in the form of a long-term goal, is almost non-present in the official and expert discussions.

8.1.3. The B61 - military or political weapon?

Nuclear weapons are military instruments able to inflict physical damage on people, objects and the environment. However, what makes them fundamentally different from conventional weapons is an inherent political meaning decision-makers prescribe to them (for details see 2.1.). Perplexingly, NATO did not term the key purpose of American nuclear weapons in Europe to be political in its New Strategic Concept, as it was the case in 1999. Rather, it resigned from commenting on the B61's purpose in detail and chose the strategy of ambiguity.

The suspicion motivating this work – that the B61's primary role as a deadly military weapon is put aside and exchanged to serve an appropriate remedy for non-military concerns – does not seem to have been too far fetched. In detail, the main concern was that the B61 remains in Europe due to the construction of substitutional non-vital and potentially transferable roles for these arsenals - bargaining with Russia and keeping the transatlantic link alive.

The B61 does not seem to have any anticipated military role. Polish officials and experts almost equivocally reject any military potential for the B61. However, using deadly weapons for bargaining purposes devalues the weapon and puts it next to other, non-deadly political bargaining chips. Its real meaning is reduced to the extent that it becomes its negation. It becomes an a-dadaistic hostage of national interests which it may even have no chances to serve.

What about the political credibility of a weapon which is not perceived as militarily usable? One could argue that Polish decision-makers presumably still perceive at least a very distant, even unwanted possibility for the B61's usage in order to maintain the weapons credibility. While such a claim seems rational, it did not find strong evidence among my respondents. The majority of my interview partners rejected any possibility to use the B61 in the European security context (as of 2013). Neither its physical presence was found essential, nor perceived to play a role for military responses' automatism. The Polish authorities' reliance on American nuclear weapons also never included publicly encouraging the U.S. to make explicit its willingness to use the B61 in its defence or explain how it would apply the weapon. The only statement presuming such a possibility reads that,

“Since the end of the Cold War, the function of nuclear weapons at NATO has steadily evolved from their use as a military tool into that of a strictly political one, from an element in any conceivable war-fighting scenario into a kind of ‘dormant deterrence’, to be used essentially as an insurance policy against the dangers of the future” (Kulesa 2009).

The hidden assumption of its distant potential military usability could be interpreted as the “dangers of the future”, which might include a situation in which no other conventional option would seem viable. However, even Kulesa further admits that while very distant potential usages for the B61 are thinkable, it seems unlikely that no alternative options (conventional, diplomatic) would be available.

Thus, one could wonder, whether it is possible to presume a political role for the B61 without presuming at least a very distant possibility for its usage? How can it persuade external actors of its political value as a bargaining chip? Even more interesting, how can it convince domestic actors of its political value as a means of reassurance? According to George F. Treverton, then lecturer in Public Policy at the Kennedy School of Government, “[o]ne lesson stands out sharply in NATO's nuclear history: military measures designed to serve political purposes will fail to do *so* if they do not make sense on technical grounds to the ostensible military experts” (Treverton 1983:95, emphasis in original). This also seems to potentially happen to the B61 in Europe.

In consequence, we may wonder if it is credible that a weapon which does not have any military value serves as a means of diplomatic relations, like bargaining for transparency and confidence-building measures or future reductions of Russian sub-strategic nuclear weapons? If the Polish decision-makers do not perceive any military role for the B61, why should Russia engage in potential negotiations for transparency and confidence-building measures or future reductions of tactical nuclear weapons unless it perceives a real threat stemming from the American nuclear weapons stockpiles in Europe? Why should it bother, when it is the Russian stockpiles of sub-strategic nuclear weapons which individual NATO allies fear more? How can the Kremlin take the B61 stationed in Europe into serious considerations, when even particular NATO states governments do not presume its damaging capabilities? Why should it bother, when particular NATO host-states are struck in internal conundrums over extending their dual-use aircraft capabilities (cf. Kubiak 2013)?

At the same time, the B61's role as a transatlantic link is potentially transferable onto other, partly even more tangible and practical assets of the American presence (conventional armament, soldiers, exercises) or those in which Poland would have a direct link to (elements of the EPAA).

It is exactly the ambivalence of nuclear weapons serving as an instrument of war and substitutionally or complimentary a means of policy that makes their disarmament so difficult. At the same time, however, keeping them for a very distant “just in case” purpose seems to be a risky endeavour as underestimation of a nuclear weapons value de-actualises its original purpose and detaches it from its real potential as a militarily destructive tool the purposeful or accidental use of which would have tremendous humanitarian consequences that no state authority could handle properly. This behaviour also transforms the way actors behave on the international level in regard to surplus weapons, using them for bargaining which far exceeds their primary purpose. In consequence, it may discourage unilateral disarmament attempts and even provoke arms race alike behaviour just for the sake of bargaining.

Interestingly, the weapon seems to be also politically instrumentalised by governments that publicly call for unilateral nuclear disarmament. As mentioned in chapter four, it is not only the non- disarmaments that utilise American nuclear weapons for particular interests. Mark Fitzpatrick explains that the former German Foreign Minister Guido Westerwelle (Free Democratic Party, FDP) conditioned the withdrawal of nuclear weapons as a part of the coalition agreement to distinguish the new government from the previous one, run in coalition between the Christian Democratic Union of Germany (CDU), the Christian Social Union of Bavaria (CSU) and the Social Democratic Party (Fitzpatrick 2011:58). Oliver Meier describes that the German CDU/CSU-FDP coalition had “a tough struggle” on the goal of a nuclear-weapon-free Germany and that the final wording had to be agreed at the highest political level between the Chancellor Angela Merkel and the incoming Foreign Affairs Minister Westerwelle, pointing to the latter’s personal interests influencing national policy (Meier 2010d). Giorgio Franceschini and Harald Müller refer to the fact that there was an intra-coalition disagreement on the conditions under which such withdrawal could take place (Franceschini/Müller 2013). At the same time, it was under pressure from Hillary Clinton that Foreign Minister Guido Westerwelle changed his course from a unilateral attempt to withdraw

the B61 from Germany to a collective NATO decision on the future of nuclear sharing (Borger 2009). Thus in the German case, the B61 was instrumentalised to win the hearts of the German electorate and afterwards, to win the mind of the U.S. ally for the German sovereign decision to impose changes in the collective NATO nuclear sharing.

The political role, however, is not a concept of more recent times. Another example is Italy. Here, tactical nuclear weapons historically served as a political instrument to achieve several domestic and international objectives. American nuclear weapons deployed in Italy served “international prestige and status, participation in the ‘circle of power’ and strengthening Italy’s relationship with the United States”, while domestically they served as a deterrent against the Italian Communist Party to regain power (Spagnuolo 2011:3, cf. Fitzpatrick 2011:60).

8.2. Placing the findings within the literature

Apart from the B61’s role as a means of deterrence and reassurance, discussed above from the perspective of an extended nuclear deterrence consumer state, American official statements and expert literature suggest that the B61 fulfils additional roles, including (1) being a means of nonproliferation, (2) being the constituting element of the Alliance, (3) being a participatory element, and (4) serving as a European pacifier. None of them was found present or convincingly strong in the Polish debate. First, despite technical capabilities, the Polish nuclear weapons discourse does not indicate any plans for an indigenous nuclear weapons program. Poland has never been alleged by the IAEA for proliferation attempts or working against the spirit of its obligations resulting from the NPT. Although Poland has a constant record of being a non-proliferator, it is impossible to prove that this is due to the B61’s presence in Europe. Second, there is no evidence that the Polish decision-makers frame the B61 as a constituting element of the Alliance upon which the *raison d’état* of NATO is built. Third, the B61 is not framed as a participatory element either. Finally, neither are arguments over the weapons pacifying effect in the European context to be found in the Polish security discourse.

Next to the literature on the role of the B61, some authors published on how the weapon is perceived by countries from Central and Eastern Europe, including Poland. In the following, I briefly discuss the findings of this dissertation against those publications.

Findings of the RUSI-ELN report (Somerville et al. 2012) support this dissertation. The report lists Russia as the major Polish security concern, followed by concerns over NATO neglecting commitments to its security, dissatisfaction with the Alliances development and a subsequent call for wider security reassurances. The report concludes that Poland “occupies a position that is almost a microcosm of the entire NATO NSNW debate: supportive of disarmament but wary of undermining NATO, its security, and of creating instability by taking precipitate and irreversible steps without adequate reciprocation by Russia.” (Somerville et al. 2012:13).

In a 2009 paper, Łukasz Kulesa concluded that the “usefulness of nuclear weapons is perceived by Poland within the wider context of assuring the viability of the transatlantic link and the credibility of NATO’s Article 5” (Kulesa 2009:1). For Poland, he argues, strengthening article 5 of the Washington Treaty, including safeguarding NATO’s political cohesion and strengthening its conventional military capabilities, played a bigger role than its nuclear factor (Kulesa 2009, cf. Carnegie 2009). This study supports this view. If NATO’s nuclear dimension would be of key importance to the Polish government, it would presumably receive at least equal or more presence than the issue of collective security. This, however, was not the case.

In a 2010 paper, Kulesa points out three reasons for the Polish position: (1) preventing NATO member states from taking unilateral actions, (2) framing the reduction of sub-strategic nuclear weapons as a broader international rather than an internal NATO problem and (3) highlighting the potential of using sub-strategic nuclear weapons to establish a dialogue with Russia for the purpose of confidence-building measures (Kulesa 2010). According to Jacek Durkalec, Poland “put the greatest emphasis on the role of U.S. NSNW as bargaining chips in potential negotiations between the U.S. and Russia” (Durkalec 2012:11). For Horowitz, the B61 was a symptom of CEE states “insecurity in relation to Washington’s commitment to remaining engaged in Europe” (Horowitz 2013). Again, while these assumptions coincide with those of this dissertation, they strengthen the fact that the B61 has been used as a purely political weapon.

8.3. Does the B61 live up to the Polish motivations for its remaining?

The Polish governments fear Russian hegemonic aspirations. They also seem disillusioned with NATO's preparation and certainty of response to a potential attack. These factors inevitably influence the Polish governments' calculation of extended nuclear deterrence in Europe. Warsaw's engagement in the debate over the B61 also results from considerations of the Russian military potential. The B61 is not discussed in terms of the Russian arsenal of its sub-strategic nuclear weapons, but rather the overall Russian capabilities in the vicinity of the Polish boarder and its accompanying threatening rhetorics on the part of Russia.

However, the B61 by itself does not answer structurally induced threats. It cannot pose a remedy for structural imbalances taking into account existing quantitative and qualitative differences in stockpiles of sub-strategic nuclear weapons between NATO and Russia. According to neorealism, if the government of Poland is concerned with Russian military capabilities and behaviour in its entirety, it would primarily seek for an increase in military capabilities on its territory, which it does on a continuous basis.

If it wants to balance Russian sub-strategic nuclear weapons arsenals, it would call for an increase in the B61's stockpiles on the European territory, which in the political and fiscal situation at the time of writing does not seem feasible. Such a move would inevitably mean escalation and re-entering into another arms race between NATO and Russia, not to mention a setback to the nuclear non-proliferation regime. The governments of Poland, however, neither officially called for more B61's in Europe nor for relocating the B61 to the Polish territory. At the same time, keeping the B61 in Europe does not effectively increase the security of Polish citizens on a daily basis, nor does it ease the structural sources of Polish insecurity in relation to Russia.

The decision to mutually reduce sub-strategic nuclear weapons would not elevate Polish fears as it still leaves Poland with a hostile nuclear-armed non-NATO neighbour. Russia remains its strategic nuclear arsenals in the vicinity of Poland and as such the problem of military balancing will remain, even though it changes the scope. Simultaneously, Russian threatening rhetorics does not result from the presence of the B61, but as a response to the Alliances

missile defence plans and the Alliance's territorial expansion, and as such the B61 hardly solves the Russian allegations as well.

From the constructivist view, it is impossible to argue that a power solution could solve the problem between the government of Poland and Russia, as the imminent mutual dislike results primarily from mutual unawareness. While anti-Russian sentiments still make a visible and influential sub-variable in the Polish foreign policy, it is hardly imaginable how the B61 could help in bridging a gap in trust and understanding cultivated throughout many years. For constructivists, contact and knowledge deficits disable solving problems and developing mutual trust. How the B61 could solve idea-driven issues between both states resulting from mutual unawareness and ignorance is questionable. At the same time, a lack of contact that breeds unawareness and ignorance makes it a perfect nutrient for instrumentalisation.

Disregarding the real value of nuclear consultations within NATO, the existence of the Nuclear Planning Group does not necessarily rely upon the physical presence of the B61 in Europe. It was historically developed upon the presence of American nuclear weapons on the European continent. However, consultations under the Nuclear Planning Group take place due to the will of the nuclear powers to share information and consult its partners. As it is the strategic nuclear arsenal of the United States which plays the key role in NATO's nuclear deterrence, the presence or non-presence of the B61 should not change the mere fact of the consultation arrangement, even though it might change its content. Additionally, because it is an agreed upon arrangement, its content is subject to negotiations. As such, arguing for the B61 in Europe with the Nuclear Planning Group does not seem persuasive.

Another argument points to the fear that once tactical nuclear weapons would be withdrawn, their reintroduction in Europe would be impossible for political-normative, NPT-related reasons (Tulak 1995:58, Kamp 2010:7). While this is a valid argument, there is no bypass option if NATO wants to eventually eliminate its reliance upon nuclear weapons. However, a withdrawal of TNW does not directly mean a complete denuclearisation of NATO (NATO 2010:par.17, DDP 2012:11).

That a potential future 're-re-location' of the B61 back to Europe is problematic due to normative concerns does not hold to the fact of keeping in Europe militarily doubtful and

costly weapons. It does not seem viable to use the B61 against pressing threats like cyber, terrorism, hybrid wars, intrastate nor climate change induced conflicts.

From this, a question arises on alternative means that could replace the B61 in signalling U.S. resolve while having more military usability and as such increase the security of Poles in real, not only psychological terms. While Polish officials strongly deny that the planned EPAA elements, to be stationed in Poland starting in 2018, could play the same role as the B61, this is debatable upon the findings of this work. While the deployment of EPAA elements will rather complicate negotiating TCBMs on sub-strategic nuclear weapons with Russia, it will have a much stronger influence as a reassurance instrument to Poland. The reason is that the Aegis Ashore site equipped with the new SM-3 Block IIA interceptor will be stationed in Poland and as such provide a direct connection between Poland and Washington. It will establish new paths of communication. It will be costly for the United States, thus provide a solid commitment. It will also include the permanent stationing of American military on the Polish territory. This, however, is not to say that the author is convinced of deploying Aegis Ashore in Redzikowo as a response to real security problems of Poland. This is rather to show that Poland should be interested in giving up its attachment to the B61 for a form of U.S. commitment that provides a real increase in its security.

Simultaneously, in case the government of Poland comes out of the enduring Ukraine-crisis and Russian “sabre-rattling” convinced of its NATO allies resolve and capability related preparedness to answer real threats towards its security, it may be easier to convince it to change its attitude towards the B61. The 2014 NATO Wales Summit already approved new initiatives to bolster the security of NATO allies in Europe. Exercising intensified, military forces are being relocated to CEE on a rotational basis. At the time of writing NATO implements its Readiness Action Plan (RAP) preparing operational capabilities for the Very High Readiness Joint Task Force (VJTF) - a fast response element of the multinational NATO Response Force (NRF), set up NATO Force Integration Units (NFIU) to facilitate VJTF deployments in Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Romania and plans to raise the readiness of the Headquarters Multinational Corps North East in Szczecin responsible for collective defence of CEE. These changes also imply a shorter response time. The 5,000-strong VJTF will be ready for deployment within days, followed by a 30,000-strong NRF

within a month and 45,000-strong defensive corps within three months (Lorenz 2015). Additionally, on 28 May 2015, the Polish Sejm adopted a resolution to increase defence related spendings to 2% of GDP, hoping for more NATO states to follow. If such activities continue, the B61's role as an instrument of reassurance will be fulfilled by other measures and arrangements.

If NATO does not plan to militarily use the B61 against any specific enemy, keeping the weapon for non-vital purposes is a risky business. The bomb becomes underestimated for what it realistically can do. Its value is being de-actualised and its original purpose detached from what it offers as a militarily destructive tool. The weapon has to serve as a remedy for particular ideational “aches and pains” resulting from lack of cooperation, communication and mutual socialisation in the relation with Russia.

The author does not suggest that the utterly bad relation between Poland and Russia stems from Polish activities or lack of initiatives to enhance it. Russian non-responsiveness to Western ideas is also to be found in the lack of engaging in President Barack Obama's 2013 Brandenburger Gate speech offering further cuts in nuclear arsenals (White House 2013), NATO's proposals to engage in transparency and confidence-building measures etc. Until the end of 2013, NATO worked to engage Russia in discussing sub-strategic nuclear weapons by putting that point onto the NATO-Russia Council agenda. Unfortunately, Russia blocked any discussions on sub-strategic nuclear weapons. In the aftermath of the Russian annexation of Crimea and the on-going war in Ukraine, the political setting in Europe is deeply shaped by diminishing trust between NATO and Russia, an increase in military activity and confrontational rhetoric. The more Russia abstains from instruments of cooperative security – as manifested in its violation of the Budapest Memorandum on Security Assurances by annexing the Crimean Peninsula, its alleged violations of obligations under the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty, and its withdrawal from the Joint Consultative Group dealing with compliance with the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe – the more emphasis NATO member states place on Alliance security commitments, including an increased propensity to rely on nuclear weapons. In response, the expert community already produces papers supporting more sub-strategic nuclear weapons in Europe (cf. Murdock et al.

2015). The problem, however, is that the B61 does neither solve these problems, nor it measurably increases the Polish security.

8.4. Contribution to research

The central contribution of this study to knowledge is empirical. Despite the four waves of deterrence theory, the main bulk of academic and policy literature discusses general nuclear deterrence and strategic nuclear balancing, leaving extended nuclear deterrence clearly in their shadow. A small amount of scholarship on extended nuclear deterrence has predominantly been of a descriptive nature, focusing mainly on the relation between enemies and omitting the position represented by allied states to whom nuclear deterrence has been extended. By contrast, this dissertation originally adds a systematic, theory-guided, qualitative and empirical analysis of extended nuclear deterrence from the perspective of a non-nuclear weapon allied state. It thus provides a case for a non-host, non-nuclear weapons ally and the making of its nuclear weapons policy.

The second area of significance lies in the fact that it does so with Poland, a relatively new NATO member state without a long experience with the Alliances nuclear sharing but playing an active role in the Alliances nuclear-weapons discussions. This presents a kind of *novum* as the main part of NATO extended nuclear deterrence literature focuses on the position of host-states, so actors with a relatively long history with and tradition of debating nuclear weapons policy. Moreover, according to Jacek Durkalec, “Polish officials have avoided any direct references to the value of U.S. weapons based in Europe and have focused on highlighting opportunities and paths for change rather than the benefits of the status quo” (Durkalec 2012:11). By contrast, the dissertation offers an in-depth empirical exploration of the modern Polish governmental thinking on nuclear weapons and related concepts based upon interviews with political decision makers and intellectuals. One of its greatest added-value is a 12-page response from the Polish government to questions related solely to the U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe and NATO extended nuclear deterrence (Official Response). As there is almost no academic literature on the official Polish stance towards nuclear weapons policy, policy-related literature puts the Polish position in the context of other states from CEE, a significant contribution of this dissertation is filling in this gap.

Third, the dissertation adds to the existing scholarship discussing the ambivalence of the nuclear weapons serving as an instrument of war and substitutionally or complimentary a means of policy. This ambiguity makes it so hard for anybody defending nuclear disarmament, as these weapons do not merely serve war purposes. However, in order to think about alternatives to extended nuclear deterrence, one needs to understand the role which American nuclear weapons play for its allies in Europe and Asia-Pacific. What is it that they most value in the concept of ground-based or offshore-based extended nuclear deterrence? Answering this question is only the first step in finding out whether the role of extended nuclear deterrence can be fulfilled by conventional forces, which will be the most important element in a future stability equation, providing nuclear weapons states live to their obligations under the NPT.

Next, the dissertation systematises and comprehensively describes the proceedings of NATO internal discussions on the future of its nuclear deterrence arrangements and nuclear disarmament policy in the years 2008-2014. By doing so, it provides the first in-depth factographical and historical accounting of this debate.

The last important dimension of this work is framing it from the perspective of nuclear disarmament. By disclosing possible purposes for keeping the B61 in Europe, I hope to give an impulse for discussions on alternative, possibly conventional means of fulfilling its perceived roles. Because it is not the military potential of the B61 that matters to the government of Poland, searching for substitutes that would serve as a measure of reassurance while subsequently providing practical military value added might be a path of rethinking its presence in Europe.

8.5. Assessment of methodology used

At this point, I wish to assess the analytical framework used and point to the weaknesses and limits inherent in the research design. The biggest problem of the dissertation was acquiring the right information and addressing the issue of secrecy. As a result of limited availability of primary sources on the official Polish stance on nuclear weapons policy and a wide-spread secrecy regarding nuclear weapons in general, writing about the position of the government was tremendously challenging. There is no culture to openly discuss security issues in Poland,

even less with a “no-name” researcher from outside the Polish security circle. As a consequence, I was not able to acquire enough material to make the content analysis based entirely on interviews with official representatives. As such, I had to use factual data regarding the material reality and extend the scope of the work into the broader security discourse to assess the conditions under which the Polish government took its policy decisions regarding American nuclear weapons in Europe. This, in turn, makes it more a foreign policy study than one primarily focused on nuclear weapons policy.

Existing literature omits to frame extended nuclear deterrence in a theoretical perspective. The dissertation adds to the scholarship using analytical eclecticism by combining three theoretical paradigms of international relations, albeit exploring extended nuclear deterrence and not proliferation, as it is used in literature. The work exemplifies the value added of reflecting a research question from the perspective of several theories as they complement each other’s findings and enable a deeper analysis of motivations. Using a single theory of international relations would pose a challenge to the research question and produce findings that only partially reflect over the reality. Realism seems to have the strongest record in helping to understand the research questions. This does not act as a surprise taking into account the fact that the Polish official and expert discussions are predominantly soaked with realism-based thinking. Realism suggests that the B61 plays a role as a means of cooperative assurance, but fails to explain why this is so. For realism, the motivation would be lack of balance in military capabilities, which is not the case. The answer to this question comes along with constructivism and the broader security debate, which points to specific perceptions of Russia, the United States and NATO allies. Liberal concepts suggest to look at particular interests and lead to the conclusion that the B61 plays a role in intensifying relations with Russia, but fail to explain why this is the case. The answer comes along with the material-based realist description of the Polish power position and the constructivist notion of threat perception. Moreover, the liberal and constructivist analyses also depict the way in which nuclear weapons are framed and debated in Poland. The liberal actor-specific investigation pointed out that there is no overwhelming interest in the issue among none of the potential actors. The constructivist analysis pointed to the fact that the Polish governmental community does not have a long history of a strongly developed normative background for nuclear disarmament, from the beginning.

An undeniable flaw of this study is, however, that the constructivist paradigm could not follow the same conceptual pattern as the realist and the liberal ones. This influences the coherence of the argument and the aesthetics of the study. Building the thread in an eclectic style, with each theoretical explanation adding on top of the others without claiming explanatory superiority, this does not diminish its explanatory power.

At the same time, the analysis is prone to a build-in bias resulting from the fact that the Polish security debate is inherently realism-driven (cf. Grudziński 2008:8, Czaputowicz 2012). This also found proof in the findings, which support the hypothesis based upon neorealist assumptions. This means that liberal and constructivist arguments could be inherently weaker because they receive lesser consideration by those leading the debate and subsequently those making decisions. I control for this bias by leading my interview questions, so they refer to all of the theoretical traditions used, but cannot equally even out data from written sources. As such, while several statements or concepts responding to the realist perspective have been included as they were openly discussed, particular interests or normative aspects of the debate, which potentially have even been present in internal debates, but which have never been brought into the public light, might have been omitted.

Additionally, considerable obstacles in acquiring interview partners and the fact of only few of them being truly knowledgeable on the topic might seem to have weakened the empirical evidence of this study. Although scholarship strives to acquire widest possible spectra of positions, lack of thereof does not necessarily mean omission. This is because the views represented in the study came from those who shape the political debate in Poland. Rather, it indicates the sensitivity of the topic and points to the necessity of broadening the discussion.

As it is the case with a single case analysis, no generalising is possible. As such, one cannot directly assess whether findings of this study could be applied to other NATO member states that opposed the withdrawal of American nuclear weapons, like the Baltic states, but especially France or Turkey. The latter distinguish themselves from the Polish case with the first being a nuclear weapon state itself and the second a NATO nuclear host-state. Analysis by other authors support the claim that there is no connection between the Polish argumentation and that of Paris, or Ankara. In case of France, its approximate 50 short-range cruise missiles, that fall into the non-strategic category, are linked to the French doctrine

rather than technical characteristics and considered by the government to be of strategic character (Kristensen 2012:9). France fears that in case nuclear disarmament would involve American and Russian tactical nuclear weapons, Paris would be forced “to justify the existence of its airborne nuclear component” (Collin 2013:6). The case is completely different with Turkey. According to Mustafa Kibaroglu, professor at the Okan University in Istanbul, the political establishment in Turkey holds to an “unexpressed fear” that a potential withdrawal of the B61 from its territory may weaken its position within the Alliance “and hence undermine to an extent the attraction of NATO membership in the minds of many” (Kibaroglu 2011:3). The Turkish governmental elites prefer long-established state policy which “should not fluctuate based on short-term political goals or hasty decisions” (Kibaroglu 2013:98). At the same time, Turkey lacked a serious public debate on NATO nuclear sharing (Fitzpatrick 2011:61). Thus for Turkey the B61 deployed on its territory secures Ankara an important place in the Alliance and, by doing so, justifies the countries membership in the organisation. It is a valid question, whether with the domestic conflict in Syria and ISIS terrorising Turkey's neighbourhood, its role in the Alliance did not receive another dimension, completely unrelated to the B61, but probably more relevant for NATO. One, however, cannot conclude the Polish case being least-likely. There is some evidence, that the motivation underlining the Polish position on American extended nuclear deterrence in Europe may also apply to the Baltic states. Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, which differ in size, their demographical composition, and slightly in their geographical location than Poland, share several traits which may indicate a convergence in perceptions and thus also motivations. First of all, the balance of power equation is even less favourable to them than to Poland, which graphics in that study visualise (Figure 9, 10, 12). Second, there is no public debate in those countries on nuclear weapons (Shetty et al. 2012:16) and decision making on NATO nuclear doctrine are taken by a very small elite, which often comprises people simultaneously serving as government representatives and academics. Estonia and Latvia share their border directly with Russian mainland, while Lithuania bordering the Kaliningrad Oblast is closer to the Polish case. The Baltic states systematically voice concern over Russia deploying tactical nuclear weapons to Kaliningrad (cf. Bleed 2001, The Lithuania Tribune 2011, Shetty et al. 2012:17, Waterfield 2013), question whether all Russian tactical nuclear weapons have been withdrawn from active service and removed to central storages

(Rettman 2010) and complain on Russian rhetorical intimidation (Ingram 2011:4). Their level of trust towards Russia is significantly shaped by historical experiences (Ingram 2011:3), their demographic minority composition and legacy of the energy relationship (Shetty et al. 2012:5-7). Moreover, their political elites often voice discontent over NATO preparedness and willingness to support them in case of an attack (Pifer et al. 2010:26, Shetty et al. 2012:18-19). For the Baltic States, American nuclear weapons from Europe serve as a means to preserve transatlantic ties (MFA 2010), a means of reassurance and deterrence with relation to Russia, as a means of “detering potential threats to NATO, with a reference to the possible acquisition of nuclear weapons by Iran” (PISM 2015) and “a measure that strengthens Allied cohesion (PISM 2015a). The Baltic States thus share some traits of the Polish policy towards American nuclear weapons.

8.6. Recommendations for future studies

The following recommendation for future research can be made. First, historical studies are needed to explore the Polish communist governments’ knowledge of, and attitude on the Polish nuclear mission and military role in the Soviet nuclear planning with a special focus on the way in which the Polish decision-makers discussed Soviet nuclear deterrence.

Further studies are necessary to explore in-depth the Polish societies and governments’ perception on a wider catalogue of nuclear weapons policy-related issues, putting them less in the East-West context, but looking from a normative perspective. This would allow for understanding the moral stance on which Polish decision-makers base their nuclear weapons policy.

Moreover, in order to be able to suggest meaningful alternatives to extended nuclear deterrence in the European context, detailed studies should be conducted on other NATO allied states. Mapping a collective preference motivation combining all European states embedded into the American extended nuclear deterrence could be a starting point to discuss what configuration of conventional arms could provide sufficient reassurance, crisis and arms control stability that all European allies would agree to drop the reliance upon U.S. tactical and in the long run also on its strategic arsenals.

Additionally, there is no contemporary public discussion on potential scenarios for the B61 use. Under which political, legal and military conditions would it be possible and feasible to use tactical nuclear weapons in a European context? Are existing capabilities sufficient to “successfully” deliver tactical nuclear weapons under different scenarios? Under which conditions all NATO states would allow for a nuclear weapon use in Europe? Where and when would it be legal to use tactical nuclear weapons in Europe?

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Appendix 1. List of Interview Partners

1. Assistant Professor in the Section of Strategic Studies at the Institute of International Relations at the Warsaw University, Warsaw, 27.09.2013
2. Former Deputy Foreign Minister of Poland, Warsaw, 27.09.2013
3. International security expert in the National Security Bureau of Poland, Warsaw, 7.10.2013
4. Professor Ordinarius in the Section of Strategic Studies at the Institute of International Relations at the University of Warsaw, Warsaw, 10.10.2013
5. Senior official in the International Defence Capabilities Division in the International Security Policy Department of the Polish Ministry of National Defence, Warsaw, 17.10.2013
6. Official at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Warsaw, 17.10.2013
7. Deputy Director of the Security Policy Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland, Warsaw, 17.10.2013
8. Former Minister of National Defence of the Republic of Poland, Warsaw, 21.10.2013
9. Senior analyst at the Polish Institute of International Affairs, Warsaw, 21.10.2013
10. Research Fellow at the Non-Proliferation and Arms Control Project at the Polish Institute of International Affairs, Warsaw, 22.10.2013
11. Academic from the National Security Faculty at the National Defence University, Warsaw, 24.10.2013
12. Professor Ordinarius in the Section of Strategic Studies at the Institute of International Relations at the University of Warsaw, Warsaw, 24.10.2013
13. Former ambassador to NATO, the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), IAEA, Analyst from the National Security Bureau, Warsaw, 25.10.2013
14. Deputy Head of the International Security Policy Department, Ministry of National Defence of the Republic of Poland, Warsaw, 25.10.2013
15. Senior expert from the Warsaw German Marshall Fund Office, Warsaw, 12.11.2013
16. Senior official at the Chancellery of the President of the Republic of Poland, Warsaw, 13.11.2013
17. Former Director of the International Security Department in the Ministry of Defence, Warsaw, 15.11.2013
18. Expert from the National Center for Strategic Studies in Warsaw, Warsaw, 22.11.2013
19. Special Envoy for Non-proliferation and Disarmament, European External Action Service (statements provided in a strictly personal capacity, do not reflect the official position of the European External Action Service), Brussels, 26.11.2013
20. Senior official in the Nuclear Policy Directorate Emerging Security Challenges Division of NATO International Staff, Brussels, 27.11.2013

21. Deputy Director Nuclear Policy Directorate in the Political Affairs and Security Policy Division in the NATO International Staff, Brussels, 27.11.2013
22. Representative from the Permanent Delegation of the Slovak Republic to NATO in Brussels, Brussels, 28.11.2013
23. Representative from the Permanent Delegation of the Czech Republic to NATO in Brussels, Brussels, 28.11.2013
24. Polish senior international security expert, Warsaw, 19.12.2013
25. Senior official at the Ministry of National Defence of the Republic of Poland, Warsaw, 19.12.2013
26. Member of the Sejm, Warsaw, 27.09.2013

Appendix 2. NATO states official statements to the 2010 NPT Review

Conference reflecting their position on TNW in Europe

Country	Statement on American tactical nuclear weapons stationed in Europe
Luxembourg, Hungary, Latvia	Did not deliver any statement to the NPT Review Conference 2010
Albania, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, France, Greece, Iceland, Italy, Portugal, Romania, Spain, Turkey, US	None
Germany	<p>“The sub-strategic nuclear weapons, which up to now have not been subject to any kind of arms control mechanism, must also be included in the ongoing disarmament process. The NPT states already agreed to this in principle in 2000 and now is the time to act accordingly. Confidence-building measures and efforts to create transparency can help reduce and finally eliminate these weapons, which are left-overs from the Cold War. They no longer serve a military purpose and do not create security. The German Government's intention to bring about, in agreement with our allies, the withdrawal of the tactical nuclear weapons still stationed in Germany can also be seen in this light. In addition, Germany calls for the role of nuclear weapons to be further scaled down in NATO's Strategic Concept. I am pleased that the USA has already embraced this view in its nuclear posture. We already launched an intensive discussion on these issues within the Alliance at the Informal Meeting of NATO Foreign Ministers in Tallinn ten days ago” (NPT Statement Germany 2010: 3)</p>
Lithuania	<p>“We increasingly regard the issue of non-strategic nuclear weapons as a priority, which needs to be addressed through the final fulfillment of the 1991 and 1992 Presidential Nuclear Initiatives known as PNIs. Verifiable reductions and ultimate elimination of these weapons, including through reciprocal, gradual, transparent and timely codification of PNIs, must be an integral part of the nuclear arms control and disarmament process” (NPT Statement Lithuania 2010:2)</p>
Belgium	<p>“We recognize that this objective will require a gradual and realistic approach, if it wants to fulfill, as it should, the requirements of transparency, accountability, verifiability and irreversibility. Belgium also hopes that the United States and Russia will hold more talks, as soon as possible, with a view to further reducing their nuclear arsenals, including non strategic nuclear weapons. Within NATO, Belgium has actively helped to launch the debate on the future role of nuclear weapons and the importance of disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation in the new strategic concept” (NPT Statement Belgium 2010:3-4)</p>
Norway	<p>“We should be able to agree on the following: The new START accord should be considered as a first step in a more intensified process of nuclear arms reduction, covering all categories of weapons, and not least involving all nuclear weapons states. They must refrain from developing new types of weapons and pursue disarmament on the principles of transparency, verification and irreversibility” (NPT Statement Norway 2010:3)</p> <p>“Within NATO, Norway has been at the forefront of the efforts to raise the disarmament profile of the Alliance. Recently, Norway and Poland submitted a working paper on a step-wise and balanced approach to eliminating tactical nuclear weapons in Europe” (NPT Statement Norway 2010:4)</p>

Country	Statement on American tactical nuclear weapons stationed in Europe
Poland	<p>“These positive developments have already launched the debate on the future arms reduction treaty, which should set new ceilings not only on strategic weapons but also other types of nuclear weaponry, especially those designated as tactical or sub-strategic. The challenge of their reduction and elimination has not yet been the subject of any legally binding international agreement. The goal of a world without nuclear weapons, which we all share, cannot be met without addressing that issue head on. Large arsenals of sub-strategic nuclear weapons seem anachronistic in the post-Cold War world and increase the risk of proliferation by non-state actors. Instead of enhancing our security they make it more volatile. Therefore Foreign Ministers of Poland and Norway undertook a joint initiative of including sub-strategic nuclear arsenals in the arms control framework” (NPT Statement Poland 2010:1)</p> <p>“We suggest a step-by-step approach, not limited by any deadlines and thus flexible and realistic. This process embraces the accomplishment of three stages. The first two aim at enhancing transparency and introducing confidence-building measures. Today we should give them the highest priority. The last stage proposes reduction and elimination of sub-strategic nuclear weapons in conjunction with general disarmament process. We hope that our initiative could serve as "food for thought" and constitute our significant contribution to the debate on nuclear disarmament” (NPT Statement Poland 2010:2)</p>
Slovakia	<p>“Slovakia traditionally places the principle of multilateralism in the center of the international community's endeavor for nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Nevertheless, we appreciate any initiatives, including unilateral and bilateral ones, which result in further reduction of existing nuclear arsenals” (NPT Statement Slovakia 2010:2)</p>
Slovenia	<p>“We are convinced that these developments, including addressing non-strategic weapons, pave the way forward and will encourage others, including non-States Parties to the NPT, to take further concrete steps in the field of non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament” (NPT Statement Slovenia 2010:2)</p>
Sweden	<p>“But there is still scope for further substantial reductions. In particular we urge the United States and Russia to engage in talks on reductions of their sub-strategic nuclear arsenals, leading to their eventual elimination” (NPT Statement Sweden 2010: 2)</p>
Netherlands	<p>“While the nuclear weapon states take the lead, we, the non-nuclear-weapon states, must also do our share. I advocate a phased approach, aimed at the reduction of the role and the numbers of nuclear weapons in Europe. We have already started that discussion in NATO. The Netherlands suggests therefore that American sub strategic nuclear arms in Europe are going to be subject of arms reductions talks between the United States and Russia. Nonproliferation and disarmament are mutually reinforcing” (NPT Statement The Netherlands 2010: 3)</p>
EU	<p>“We encourage both States [the United States and the Russian Federation] concerned to work towards agreements for further, comprehensive reductions of their nuclear arsenals, including non-strategic weapons“ (NPT Statement EU 2010:2)</p>

Appendix 3. Documents and statements issued during the 2010 NPT Review

Conference addressing TNW in Europe

State	Position (Working Papers/ Statements)
Australia and New Zealand	Call on the nuclear-weapon States to systematize their reporting for strategic and tactical reductions (Working Paper Australia and New Zealand 2010:549).
Belgium, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Spain and Turkey	Belgium, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Spain and Turkey called “upon the United States of America and the Russian Federation to hold further disarmament negotiations, as soon as possible, aimed at further reducing their nuclear arsenals, including non-strategic nuclear weapons, as a concrete step towards their elimination” (Working Paper BLNNPST 2010:684). The idea was bilateral talks between the United States and Russia.
Brazil	Brazil was disturbed by plans for tactical use of nuclear weapons. It suggested that this kind of behavior undermines the credibility of the NPT and strokes “the flames of proliferation by suggesting that nuclear weapons are and will remain indispensable to the security needs of some States” (Report Brazil 2010:258)
Conference on NWFZ (115 states)	Chile presented the Outcome Document of the Second Conference of States Parties and Signatories of Treaties that Establish Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones and Mongolia, which calls for further deep cuts in nuclear arsenals, including non-strategic nuclear weapons (Outcome Document 2010:322)
France	<p>“On the basis of the proposals made by the President of France in his 21 March 2008 address in Cherbourg, France, together with its European partners, presented a disarmament plan of action which was endorsed by the European Union’s 27 Heads of State and Government in December 2008, covering (...) Inclusion of tactical nuclear weapons, by those States that have them, in general arms control and disarmament processes, with a view to their reduction and elimination” (Working Paper France 2010: 529).</p> <p>“Even though some states would define Frances stockpiles as tactical, Paris responds that it does not have non-strategic nuclear weapons. Instead it calls upon the States concerned to include their tactical weapons in the global arms control and disarmament processes, with a view to their reduction and elimination“ (Working Paper France 2010a:581)</p>
Iran	Iran accused nuclear-weapon States of neglecting their 2000 NPT Review Conference and Resolution 64/31 adopted at the General Assembly sixty-fourth sessions’ commitment on further reductions of non-strategic nuclear weapons, based on unilateral initiatives and as an integral part of the arms control reduction and disarmament process (Working Paper Iran 2010:612, 617). Not entirely correct, when taking into account US unilateral withdrawals from UK, Germany and Greece. Iran called to reduce sub-strategic nuclear weapons in a transparent, verifiable and irreversible manner (Working Paper Iran 2010:613, Working Paper Iran 2010a:667). It proposed for an establishment of a standing committee for monitoring and verifying the implementation of the commitments of nuclear-weapons States under article VI of the treaty (Report Iran 2010:292). “As reiterated and as a first step, a real change was expected to the aggressive Nuclear Posture Review and removal of the emphasis on the old doctrine of nuclear deterrence but the new United States Nuclear Posture Review failed to do so and, while placing emphasis on maintaining nuclear weapons, repeated the obsolete doctrine of deterrence” (Report Iran 2010:292). Iran called for “further reduction of non-strategic nuclear weapons, based on unilateral initiatives and as an integral part of the nuclear arms reduction and disarmament process (Report Iran 2010: 292)

State	Position (Working Papers/ Statements)
Ireland	Ireland presses for progress on further reductions of non-strategic nuclear weapons based on unilateral initiatives, as an integral part of the nuclear arms reduction and disarmament process. Highlighting the need for transparency Ireland calls for unified publishing of aggregated data on numbers and operational status of the weapons (Report Ireland 2010:371-372)
New Agenda Coalition	The New Agenda Coalition (Brazil, Egypt, Ireland, Mexico, New Zealand, South Africa, Sweden) made clear its expectations for reducing the role of nuclear weapons in security policies, reducing non-strategic arsenals and declaring moratorium on upgrading existing stockpiles (Working Paper New Agenda Coalition 2010:426)
Norway	Norway reminded that together with NATO allies, it “has advocated the removal and subsequent elimination of all tactical nuclear weapons on European soil as part of future arms control negotiations between the Russian Federation and the United States” (Report Norway 2010:382-383). However, it recommended developing and “gradually implementing various measures for increased transparency, confidence-building and verification should be initiated.”
Poland	Poland highlighted its support to include tactical nuclear weapons in general arms control and disarmament process “with a view to their gradual reduction and elimination” (Report Poland 2010:114).
Republic of Korea	Republic of Korea requires nuclear-weapons States to diminish the role of nuclear weapons in their doctrines and facilitate nuclear reductions, specifically in the non-strategic dimension (Report Republic of Korea 2010:197). It also calls for full transparency in the entire process of disarmament and arms control efforts.
Sweden	Sweden called New START to be followed by an agreement on reductions in sub-strategic weapons. “Pending the eventual elimination of the sub-strategic weapons, it would make sense for the remaining weapons to be withdrawn to central storage facilities. Strategic postures and military doctrines should make clear that the sole purpose of the remaining nuclear weapons should be strategic deterrence, and that under no circumstances would nuclear armed States contemplate their first use. The United States of America and the Russian Federation should be prepared to take the lead in issuing such declarations.” (Report Sweden 2010:96, 98-99). Sweden saw reductions of sub-strategic nuclear weapons as a common responsibility of all states, disregarding of their nuclear status: “Non-strategic weapons are a global concern” (Report Sweden 2010:99). Recommended unilateral initiatives that fit as an integral part of the nuclear disarmament process.
UE (27)	The Council of the European Union issued a common position, stating inter alia that with regard to non-strategic nuclear weapons it calls states possessing tactical nuclear weapons “to include them in general arms control and disarmament process, with a view to their verifiable and irreversible reduction and elimination; agreeing to the importance of further transparency and confidence-building measures in order to advance this nuclear disarmament process; encouraging the United States and the Russian Federation to further develop the unilateral 1991/92 Presidential initiatives and to include non-strategic nuclear weapons in the next round of their bilateral nuclear arms reductions, leading to lower ceilings for the numbers of both strategic and nonstrategic nuclear weapons in their arsenals (Working Paper EU 2010: 516)
USA	The United States reminded that in proportional terms, the most reductions regard stockpiles of non-strategic nuclear weapons - and account nearly 90 percent of non-strategic nuclear weapons in NATO. “The types of non-strategic nuclear weapons in Europe have been reduced from five to one, and storage sites in Europe have been reduced by 80 percent” (United States Information 2010: 363). Moreover, it informed of the planned New START follow-on negotiations covering all nuclear weapons: deployed and non-deployed, strategic and non-strategic.