

Chapter 4

The Netherlands and the Extended Concept of Security: The Rise of Security Strategies



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4.1 Introduction

With the extension of the concept of security that has occurred over the last few decades, formulating security policy is inherently problematic. Even if one takes a narrow state-centric view of security as military security behind a territorial line of defence, threats are already enormously difficult to assess. After all, states do not readily provide information about their military capacity and gauging their intentions is a problem in itself. Moreover, those intentions are not static, but can change over time. States can also mislead one another with regard to their capabilities and intentions. The history of international relations is replete with examples of threats being underestimated, exaggerated or incorrectly interpreted and of political failure to respond to accurate estimates and pinpoint strategic analyses. Furthermore, states also have to estimate how other states will react to their own actions and omissions. History is therefore also filled with examples of unintended consequences.¹

However, the complexity and dynamic of security policy increases exponentially when national security policy has to be coordinated with the policies of allies, for example at EU and NATO level. When internal and external security are interconnected by numerous transnational relationships. When, in addition to military security, human security and flow security also have to be taken into consideration. And when security policy can only be geared to a limited extent to specific, known threats and security also has a subjective, socially constructed dimension.

Wherever one looks, strategy formulation is a tried and trusted response in attempting to get a grip on this extremely complex and dynamic security environment. This chapter opens with a general outline of the rise of national security strategies and the related approaches and instruments (Sect. 4.2).

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We then discuss the steps taken by the Netherlands in relation to formulating a strategy. Since 2007, the Dutch government has been more systematic in its endeavours to explore the internal and external security environment. On further reflection, however, it can be seen that the Netherlands does not make full use of the strategic instruments and the underlying philosophy (Sect. 4.3), which leads to a number of conclusions with regard to how policy-making in relation to security can be improved (Sect. 4.4).

4.2 Strategic Instruments: Getting a Grip in a Complex and Dynamic Security Environment

4.2.1 *The Rise of National Security Strategies*

Strategy formulation has a long history. China's Sun Tzu wrote about the art of war as early as the sixth century BC, starting a tradition in which he has been followed by writers such as De Jomini, Machiavelli and Von Clausewitz.

The US has had a national security strategy since the 1950s, when President Eisenhower established a Planning Board within the National Security Council. Elsewhere, national security strategies only really took off at the beginning of the twenty-first century, often in response to the changing security environment and the growing interconnectedness of internal and external security (Box 4.1).

Box 4.1: The Rise of National Security Strategies

Lithuania (2002).

Poland (2003).

Canada (2004) *Securing an Open Society: Canada's National Security Policy*.

Finland (2004).

Slovakia (2005).

France (2008) *Défense et Sécurité nationale. Le Livre blanc*.

Australia (2008) *National Security Statement*.

United Kingdom (2008) *The National Security Strategy of the United Kingdom*.

Spain (2011).

Hungary (2011).

Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Italy and Sweden are among the countries that have not drafted a security strategy. In Germany, there is a discussion underway at the moment about a 'White Book' for the Ministry of Defence (*Bundesministerium der Verteidigung* 2016) and whether to assume a greater role in international crisis management, in the context, among other things, of a project by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Aussenpolitik Weiter Denken*, and in response to the report of the Rühle Commission (whose full title is *Kommission zur Überprüfung und Sicherung der Parlamentsrechte bei der Mandatierung von Auslandseinsätzen der Bundeswehr*, June 2015).

There are important similarities between the various national security strategies mentioned above:

- *The connection between internal and external security is stressed.* Transnational issues and interdependencies have blurred the traditional distinction between internal and external security.
- *The object of security is not just the state.* National security concerns not only the state and its vital institutions, but also society and individual citizens.
- *Security is more broadly defined.* National security has many manifestations, including economic security, energy security, maritime security and cyber security. The threats and risks to security are equally polymorphous.
- *The need for a whole-of-government approach is acknowledged.* Some strategies (including those of the US, Australia, Slovakia, Spain and the United Kingdom) have introduced a so-called whole-of-government approach.² They serve as a blueprint for a variety of actors in the security domain, not just the armed forces. Security is therefore no longer determined entirely by military capacity, but also by social resilience (the capacity to deal as effectively as possible with threats).
- *The strategies are public documents, primarily targeted at politicians and the public, in the country itself and abroad.* The strategies analyse the security environment and address values, interests, objectives and means.

There are also important differences, some of which are connected with historical, geographic and cultural factors. There are country-specific threats and risks, such as demographic trends or economic instability; country-specific objectives, such as the protection of a country's own national minorities beyond the national borders; and country-specific priorities, such as a focus on the neighbouring region. The extent to which national security strategies set priorities, make choices and contain specific measures and guidelines also varies greatly. A national security strategy is ultimately a combination of all these factors.³

The proliferation of national security strategies was in part a reaction to the changes in the security environment, but also partly a recognition of the numerous possibilities and functions of strategy-formulation processes (see Box 4.2). Accordingly, the strategies vary as regards their form and content and cannot be seen in isolation from the specific context in which they were formulated.

Box 4.2: Functions of Strategy Formulation

- *Strategy formulation as a method of expressing the relationship between goals and resources.* If goals are carefully formulated and correctly combined with resources, there is a chance of success. As Colin Gray puts it: “Strategy is a functional necessity for every human society, since all political communities need a security that must entail endeavour to match political ends with good enough available means employed in tolerably effective ways”.⁴ Gray stresses the political context of strategy formulation. The goals set derive their significance from politics, just as the allocation of means is, by definition, a political question.

- *Strategy as a narrative.* Lawrence Freedman defines strategy as ‘the art of creating power’.⁵ Powers of persuasion are an essential aspect of strategy. Freedman therefore attaches great value to strategy as a narrative in a world in which waging war has become a choice (‘wars of choice’).⁶ Alan Stolberg further elaborates on this. National security strategies can promote the consensus within the government, make it easier to secure parliamentary approval for the allocation of resources and serve as a strategic tool for communicating with the country’s own population and with state and non-state actors beyond the national borders.⁷
- *Strategy as a formulation of realistic political goals.* The military interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq (in which the Netherlands was involved in various ways) did not proceed smoothly. Military objectives were achieved initially, but the unplanned follow-up – the creation of institutions and a state – encountered serious difficulties. Particularly in the United Kingdom and the US, the persistent problems in Afghanistan and Iraq led to calls for politicians to start taking strategic thinking seriously again. In the Netherlands, Isabelle Duyvesteyn expressed her criticism as follows: “We have forgotten how to formulate feasible political objectives, to attach realistic military plans to them and to apply the two of them in balance and proportion”.⁸ She referred to ‘strategic illiteracy’.
- *Strategy as a ‘way of coping’.* A strategy addresses a problem in a dynamic environment with opponents, but also with allies. Negotiation and compromise are therefore the rule. There is a desired end result, but in practice it is about proceeding to the next phase.⁹ A strategy is not a timetable with a guaranteed time of arrival at the desired location, but a tool to help in holding your own in a dynamic environment and to influence it. Kramer draws the same conclusion with regard to irregular warfare. Conflicts in fragile states are ‘wicked problems’. There is no consensus about the underlying causes or about the solution. Intervention provides no certainty about the outcome and has unforeseen consequences. This calls for imperfect strategies whose central objective is to be ‘good enough’.¹⁰
- *Strategy as ‘grand strategy’.* The changed security environment calls for a whole-of-government approach that allows for the use of a wide range of instruments to address a variety of threats and risks. There are similarities between national security strategies based on this principle and ‘grand strategy’ in its original sense – the deployment of the state’s entire resources for the purpose of winning a war. Colin Gray observes a revival of ‘grand strategy’.¹¹
- *Strategy as a guideline for the armed forces.* Many armed forces are confronted with major problems because of the expansion of the security agenda and the proliferation of risks. In light of the uncertainty about the future, they insist on retaining the widest possible range of capabilities (‘capability based defence planning’). This approach appears sensible, but imposes great demands on affordability. It is also problematic in strategic terms, because the balance shifts from goals to resources.¹² However, making

choices on the basis of quantified risks is also not a solution, according to Gray, simply because no method is capable of foretelling the future in detail.¹³ Furthermore, such an approach wrongly disregards the political context. An overarching strategy with clear goals and means is therefore the only basis for sound defence planning.

- *Strategy as a process.* Linking goals to resources is a continuous process in which it is not only the outcome that matters. President Eisenhower's motto 'it's not about the plan, it's all about the planning' is therefore widely endorsed in the literature and in practice. According to the participants in the process, the great added value of the drafting of the American National Security Strategy was that the various actors in the security domain worked together in formulating visions and perspectives for action.

In a reaction to the interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq, the American Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments (CSBA) concluded that the strategic capacity of the American political and military elite had been in decay for decades. The primary reason, according to the CSBA, was a misapprehension of the nature of strategy. Strategy is not the same as compiling a list of desired goals. The point of a strategy is to identify how those goals can be achieved despite limited resources, bureaucratic resistance, political considerations and uncertainty about the actions of opponents and the effect of the chosen strategy. This demands competent strategists, sufficient time and attention from the political leadership and effective structures for formulating strategy.¹⁴

In the United Kingdom, a House of Commons committee published a powerful plea for strategy formulation, but also expressed criticism of the approach that had been adopted up to then. The committee formulated ten principles of good strategy making (see Box 4.3).

Box 4.3: Principles of Good Strategy Making (United Kingdom)

1. investment of time and energy by ministers to create an 'appetite' for strategic thinking;
2. definition of long-term national interests, both domestic and international;
3. consideration of all options and possibilities, including those which challenge established thinking and settled policies;
4. consideration of the constraints and limitations which apply to such options and possibilities;
5. a comprehensive understanding of the resources available;
6. good quality staff work to develop strategy;
7. access to the widest possible expertise beyond government;
8. a structure which ensures the process happens;
9. audit, evaluation and critical challenge; and
10. parliamentary oversight to ensure scrutiny and accountability.

Source: House of Commons, Public Administration Select Committee, Who does UK National Strategy?, 2010b: 13.

Bailes¹⁵ observed that small countries in particular benefit from strategy formulation and anticipatory capacity because they find themselves, by definition, in a complex and demanding security environment and have more limited resources. The chance of formulating a successful strategy is greater if the following questions can be answered in the affirmative:

- Is there an explicit risk assessment process with high-quality information in place? Is an effort made to be objective or are priorities influenced by traditions, over-generalisation of recent experiences, social unease or excessive attention to shocking incidents? Are informed non-state actors involved? Who defines security issues and are they the correct actors?
- Is there a common view of security and defence? Are perceptions, interests and values united? After all, divisions can lead to contradictions or unstable compromises that undermine the influence of small countries. To be heard, one has to take a strong stance and be consistent.
- What are the official structures for assessment, decision-making and implementation with respect to security policy? Is there a clear decision-making hierarchy? Is there sufficient coordination between the various actors? Is there a nerve centre where decisions can be made? The assumption that formal structures are unnecessary and affairs can be managed decentrally is a typical weakness of small countries.¹⁶

4.2.2 Whole-of-Government Approaches

The rise of strategy formulation has been accompanied by the ascent of the whole-of-government approach to security. After all, there is a wide range of actors inside – and outside – the government operating in the socialised security domain.¹⁷ Accordingly, there is a need for structured cooperation between all of the relevant actors, including NGOs, the business community and knowledge institutes (hence, this is also referred to as a whole-of-society approach).

The link was quickly made between the whole-of-government approach and the integrated approach to security and development in fragile states (see Chap. 3). But efforts were also made, in Canada and Singapore for example, to strengthen coherence and cooperation in relation to national security. While those countries still explicitly place the necessity of closer interdepartmental cooperation and coordination in the context of national security, Australia took the step of adopting an integrated whole-of-government approach to national and international security in its National Security Statement at the end of 2008. A number of countries, including the US and the United Kingdom, have since followed Australia's example.

In short, the whole-of-government approach has entered the security domain in the last decade, first in addressing problems in fragile states and later in the realm of internal security. This provided a further impulse for a comprehensive approach to

internal and external security. Parliaments play an important role in promoting the whole-of-government approach, particularly during the phase when the strategic vision is being formulated (Box 4.4).¹⁸

Box 4.4: Lessons of Whole-of-Government Approaches

Five lessons were drawn from an evaluation of the approach adopted in Singapore:

1. The government should make use of guiding documents that outline the strategy and ensure coherence;
2. Leadership is crucial in choosing and fleshing out a whole-of-government approach;
3. Ownership of whole-of-government projects is crucial;
4. The capacity to work in cross-departmental teams cannot be taken for granted. It requires the selection and training of suitable individuals;
5. A whole-of-government culture cannot be taken for granted. Efforts must be made to build mutual trust and cooperation in networks.

Source: Singapore National Security Coordination Secretariat <http://www.nscs.gov.sg/public/home.aspx>

Research in a number of northern European countries, including the Netherlands, identifies the following additional requirements of a whole-of-government approach:

1. consensus on goals, resources and methods;
2. adaptation of procedures and structures;
3. an overarching, supra-departmental structure and thematic units to prevent compartmentalisation;
4. an overarching strategic vision to prevent ministries from following their own course on the basis of mandates;
5. a culture of cooperation and listening to one another.

Source: Jermalavicius, Pernik and Hurt (2014).

4.2.3 Foresight Studies and Risk Assessment: Looking Differently at Security

In addition to strategy formulation and a whole-of-government approach, foresight studies and risk assessments have also been introduced as tools for coping properly with the extended security agenda. These are (clusters of) strategic instruments designed to identify possible, but uncertain developments. Foresight and risk assessment both reflect a view of security dominated by uncertainty about the future and (potential) risks rather than traditional, known threats.

Foresight The interest in foresight in the security domain is connected with the increased uncertainty about the complex security environment, which makes it difficult to reach a consensus on the most important threats and risks and the allocation of scarce resources. Foresight is not the same as predicting the future, which is in any case impossible. Thinking in terms of prediction would imply that the future is already determined. That is not the case – the future is not fixed. The future is open, but is also not empty, because the present and the past cast their shadows over it.¹⁹ The method of exploring various possible futures (in contrast to predicting a future that is free of surprises) is generally referred to as foresight, which is defined as “... the process of developing a range of views of possible ways in which the future could develop, and understanding these sufficiently well to be able to decide what decisions can be taken today to create the best possible tomorrow”.²⁰ The approach was developed in the military domain in the US. The Rand Corporation, one of the world’s first commercial think tanks, played a decisive role in its development, devising the Delphi method among others. Most other developed countries have possessed – usually separate – civil and military foresight capacities for policy development for some time.²¹

A number of countries now publish trend reports in which a series of ‘new’ security threats and risks are assessed. In the US, the National Intelligence Council publishes a Global Trends report after every presidential election. President Trump received the sixth edition in December 2016 (*Global Trends 2035*).

The first phase in a strategic foresight study involves gathering information by means of horizon scans and/or ‘early warning’ systems. These tools enable researchers to pick up signals so that strategic surprises can be avoided and measures can be taken in time. In the second phase, the assembled information is analysed and an outline is produced of the outcomes of possible developments. In the third phase, options are fleshed out on the basis of scenarios, whereupon actions can be undertaken, some in the form of precautionary measures and some in the form of measures designed to bring about a desired scenario. Experience has shown that the added value often lies in the process itself as the participants develop new networks and ideas and share their views. Critical success factors include a whole-of-government approach to ensure that all the available information is collected, the involvement of external expertise (think tanks, universities, businesses and civil society), a thorough and reliable process with findings that are respected, and the intellectual freedom and political scope to challenge conventional ideas.²²

Assessing Risks The focus on adopting measures to contain or control risks that are regarded as unacceptable is not a product of what the sociologist Beck²³ called the modern ‘risk society’, but has a lengthy history in domains such as fire safety, water and food security, infectious diseases and hazardous substances.

However, risk management has really taken off since the 1990s,²⁴ with the business community leading the way. Governments followed, partly in response to incidents and the political and public response to them.²⁵ The growing attention to known, calculable risks (risk as a function of probability x impact) has in fact gradu-

ally resulted in an approach that addresses a steadily growing number of conceivable, but difficult to quantify, uncertainties.

The thinking from a risk assessment perspective has had a major impact on the security agendas of states and international organisations like the EU and NATO. For example, risks and their management dominated in the European Security Strategy in 2003 (*A Secure Europe in a Better World*), and they occupied a prominent position in NATO's Strategic Concept in 2010 (*Active Engagement, Modern Defence*), in addition to the classical threats for which the obligation of collective defence applies.²⁶

Partly because of this process, an 'uneasy peace' – in the words of Edmunds²⁷ – has arisen since the 1990s, in which the logic of threat has been replaced by that of risk. Although Edmunds endorses Beck's analysis of the emergence of the risk society, he makes a direct connection between the absence of major threats to Western countries and the dominance of risks in Western thinking on security. In these countries insecurity is measured mainly by what *could* happen in a context of uncertainty and complexity. It is perhaps too soon to judge whether Edmunds is right. Threats have returned after an absence, in the form of Putin's Russia and the IS jihadists. Moreover, the broad security agenda encompasses numerous and varied security risks. Perhaps two logics will co-exist in the security domain: one based on threats and the other based on risks.²⁸

4.3 The Netherlands and the Strategic Instruments

Like many other countries, the Netherlands has started using the aforementioned strategic instruments (strategy formulation, the whole-of-government approach, foresight and risk assessment) in response to the changing security environment. This section describes and assesses how the Netherlands uses the available instruments.

4.3.1 *Strategy Formulation: Separate Strategy Documents for Internal and External Security*

Up to now the Netherlands has published two separate security strategies: one for internal security (the National Security Strategy, 2007) and one for external security (the International Security Strategy, *A Secure Netherlands in a Secure World*) [Veilige Wereld, Veilig Nederland], 2013).

The National Security Strategy is based on a comprehensive definition of security²⁹ and places the Netherlands in an international context, but is *de facto* confined to the country's internal security. The themes covered in 2007 were climate change, energy security, ICT breakdowns, polarisation and extremism, criminal infiltration

of mainstream society and serious accidents. The National Security Strategy is primarily an instrument for preventing social disruption in the Netherlands.

The International Security Strategy is explicitly confined to international – external – security, with a reference to the National Security Strategy for internal security. That is noteworthy, because the existence of two separate security documents is out of tune with the government’s recognition that internal and external security are interconnected (as well as being irreconcilable with the integrated approach to security and development issues at EU, NATO and UN level) (Box 4.5).

Box 4.5

The war in Syria is a perfect illustration of the blurring of the boundaries between internal and external security. Distances in time and geography play scarcely any role in that war, and not only because of the possibility of jihadists and Da’esh fighters returning from Syria in the stream of asylum seekers. At the height of the fighting around the city of Kobani in the north of Syria, for example, there were also confrontations between Kurds, Turks and Syrians in the Schilderswijk district of The Hague. The local authorities had to respond to them with ‘crisis diplomacy’. According to Ko Colijn, the institutional approach to security is still failing to keep pace with these facts: “The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is responsible for external security, with the Ministry of Defence as the executive body; the Ministry of Justice and Security is responsible for internal security. They do what they can, but there is still no integrated security policy: everyone makes their own policy documents and risk assessments”.³⁰

To this day the government has not seen any reason to end this situation of separate worlds. The policy letter *Turbulent Times in Unstable Surroundings* (dated 14 November 2014), which could be described as a sort of updating of the International Security Strategy, mentions closer interdepartmental cooperation at the intersection of internal and external security, but leaves it at that. Not a word was devoted to the subject in the letter to the House of Representatives on the further development of the National Security Strategy (dated 12 May 2015).

The choice to maintain the status quo is probably a pragmatic one. However, the consequence is that, in contrast to many other countries, the government, politicians and the public in the Netherlands do not have an integrated security document. Conversely, there is in fact such a document for the overseas parts of the Kingdom.

It is easy to guess the consequence of the existence of separate security documents. In April 2014, the Clingendael Institute published the findings of a survey of perceptions of threats and challenges in the Netherlands conducted for the

Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).³¹ The conclusions were that:

1. there is no whole-of-government view of what constitute the medium-term and long-term threats and challenges;
2. ministries do not share whatever ideas they do have about them with other ministries; and
3. the whole-of-government view does not extend beyond its expected term of office.

The findings from this study correspond with those in a study of the central government's strategic capabilities by the Netherlands School of Public Administration (NSOB),³² which also showed that strategy formulation is practised mainly within the confines of a ministry.

The structural integration of internal and external security – which still remain separate worlds despite the repeated observations about their interconnectedness – is no easy task and is largely *terra incognita*, but remains very important.

Assessment of the International Security Strategy

A Secure Netherlands in a Secure World was not the outcome of a regular process, but the result of a one-off exercise by officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. It is unclear when this exercise might be repeated. The Strategic Monitor, the annual trend analysis by the Clingendael Institute and The Hague Centre for Strategic Studies (HCSS) (see also Sect. 4.3.3), as well as the expertise of the AIVD and MIVD, were used in drafting the International Security Strategy, which was sent to the House of Representatives after it had been approved by the Cabinet. It was unanimously adopted by the House of Representatives during a general meeting of the foreign affairs committee in October 2013.

A Secure Netherlands in a Secure World marked an important step forward. For the first time, the formulation of policy priorities had been preceded by an extensive security analysis. The International Security Strategy is also a policy document with a clear political narrative, containing typical Dutch ingredients such as multilateralism, promotion of the legal order, disarmament and arms control and the transatlantic alliance. But it also builds a bridge to the altered security environment, such as the consequences of climate change and the political and public concerns about them.

At the same time, scarcely any use is made of the possibilities of strategy formulation. The International Security Strategy refers to the need to set priorities, but does not specify what the Netherlands will no longer do, or will do less. The document sets out policy priorities, but does not formulate any specific objectives, results or deliverables. It also fails to mention the relationship with financial resources or how it will be embedded in a structured process that guarantees input from politicians, knowledge institutes and society. The strategy mentions new threats, but focuses on the traditional security agenda in setting policy priorities.³³

Assessment of the National Security Strategy

When the National Security Strategy is assessed in terms of sound strategy formulation, a number of things stand out. A positive aspect is that it formulates a clear

objective, i.e., the prevention of social disruption. Vital interests and core values are also identified. A formal process of risk assessment is also mentioned (see also Sect. 4.3.3). Another positive aspect is that it includes separate strategies specifically for cyber security and counterterrorism.

In light of the basic requirements of a strategic process (see Sect. 4.2), there are also some important shortcomings. There is no clear political role in the process of drafting the National Risk Assessments. The elaboration of scenarios, the risk assessment and the capacity analysis capacity are left mainly to experts in the National Network of Safety and Security Analysts (*Analistennetwerk Nationale Veiligheid*, ANV), with the government responding – at lengthy intervals – to the reports of their findings. The exclusive focus on internal security is a misjudgement in light of the connection between internal and external security. The National Security Strategy does refer to transnational threats such as terrorism, avian flu and the consequences of climate change, but the focus on internal security is clearly reflected in the scenarios that were produced, only a few of which address international developments. The same applies for the government's reactions to the reports of the findings, which, with just a few exceptions, devote scarcely any attention to the international situation.

4.3.2 *The Whole-of-Government Approach*

After the experiences with the 3D approach (Defence, Diplomacy & Development) in Uruzgan in Afghanistan, the Netherlands also accepted the 'integrated approach' in the International Security Strategy in 2013. It is one of the policy emphases for missions in fragile states or conflict zones:

For an effective approach, it is important that the Netherlands establish the best mix of diplomatic, military and development instruments on a case-by-case basis. The government has various instruments at its disposal: diplomacy and political activities, use of the armed forces and the intelligence and security services, contributions to development cooperation activities, and efforts in other areas of governance, such as the judiciary and police.³⁴

The Netherlands has also lobbied for the integrated approach within NATO and the EU and it now assumes an important place in NATO's Strategic Concept (2010) under the title 'comprehensive approach'. The approach is also a guiding principle for external action by the EU (see *The EU's comprehensive approach to external conflicts and crises*, 2013).

In the Netherlands itself, however, the whole-of-government approach to security has failed to keep pace with the vision of an integrated approach that is promoted internationally. Certainly, the changed security environment and the expansion of the security agenda have not been without consequences for the procedures of the Dutch government.

For example, the national crisis management structure has been radically altered, with stronger coordination by the National Coordinator for Security and

Counterterrorism (NCTV) and the National Crisis Centre (NCC) that has been established under his auspices. Formal consultation structures have been established at senior official and political level which can be mobilised in the event of a crisis (the Interdepartmental Crisis Management Committee and the Ministerial Crisis Management Committee, respectively).

Nor has the government stood still with regard to the integrated approach to international conflicts and crises. In the last decade cooperation between the relevant departments of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, including those in the domain of the Ministry for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation, and the Ministry of Defence has intensified. Other ministries, in particular the Ministry of Justice and Security, are now also involved. In contrast to the national security domain, there has been no extensive overhaul of structures or strengthening of the position of a particular ministry. The cooperation is highly operational in nature, with the focus on (possible) Dutch contributions to civil missions and military operations. There is more consultation between the ministries, with the senior civil servants in the Missions and Operations Steering Group coordinating both military operations and civil missions and liaising with the relevant cabinet members. There is no formal political body. The ministers of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation, Defence and Justice and Security are politically accountable for the specific input of their ministries and report jointly to the House of Representatives. The new budget for international security (BIV) also gives a boost to the integrated approach and interdepartmental coordination.³⁵

The security structure in the Netherlands is characterised by a gap between forums (both political and official) that focus on international security, on the one hand, and bodies concerned with national security, on the other. This is an obstacle to adequate switching between policy and politics. In addition, the international ‘compartment’ appears particularly fragmented with numerous separate ministerial sub-committees and temporary commissions (for the decision-making on security aspects in the EU, the intelligence and security services, (special) operations and missions). This does not promote alignment.

Briefly, some important steps have certainly been taken to strengthen an integrated approach to the development and implementation of security policy, but they have taken place within the separate ‘compartments’ of internal and external security. There is no permanent, structured connection between the two at senior official or political level.

The strong interconnectedness of security, energy and the economy, of national and international security, and of Dutch policy and decision-making at alliance level (EU, NATO) was reflected at the time of the Ukraine crisis in ‘a genuine balancing act between condemnation (sanctions), de-escalation and the safeguarding of the – mainly economic – interests’.³⁶

In the policy letter *Turbulent Times in Unstable Surroundings* (14 November 2014), the government acknowledged that the close interconnectedness of internal and external security called for effective coordination between the government agencies concerned with those issues. The cooperation is becoming ‘increasingly intensive’. Nevertheless, in the existing constellation placing security issues in their

context in relation to one another depends largely on individuals (ministers and civil servants) rather than on structures and procedures.

There are regular discussions in the Netherlands about whether to create a National Security Council – as a sub-committee of the Council of Ministers – to strategically manage an integrated security policy. The former member of the House of Representatives for the CDA, Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, called for the establishment of a National Security Council in September 2001 – shortly after 9/11. In 2004, a motion to the same effect was adopted by a majority in the House of Representatives, but it was not implemented.³⁷ Since March 2015, there has been a Ministerial Security Committee, chaired by the prime minister. In addition to the ministers of Foreign Affairs, Defence, the Interior and Kingdom Relations, Justice and Security and the deputy prime minister, the committee's members also include the National Coordinator for Security and Counterterrorism, the Director-General of the General Intelligence and Security Service, the Director of the Military Intelligence and Security Service, the Commissioner of the National Police and the Director-General for Political Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. They meet every week to discuss matters of national and international security, make specific agreements on how to deal with issues that have arisen at national and/or international level and discuss whether a more in-depth study is needed of particular subjects or topics. The further research and decision-making on specific issues takes place in the Council for the Intelligence and Security Services (RIV).

Is the Netherlands 'too small' to have a National Security Council? Bailes describes the idea that small countries do not need formal structures or plans because the number of stakeholders is quite manageable and matters can be arranged decentrally, according to a careful (interdepartmental) balance of power or via individual politicians, as a typical weakness of the security policy of relatively small states.³⁸ In particular small developed countries which are, by definition, confronted with an overfull internal and external security agenda have to excel in strategy formulation, according to Bailes. There are no constitutional obstacles to establishing a National Security Council, but there is opposition to creating a new institution.³⁹ However, the complex and multi-dimensional security problems call for more horizontal coordination between ministers and departments.⁴⁰ The prime minister would ideally be responsible for ensuring the coherence of the policy within such a council.

4.3.3 Foresight and Risk Assessment

Foresight for the purposes of political decision-making in relation to international security is a relatively new phenomenon in the Netherlands. In 2010, the *Verkenningen: Houvast voor de krijgsmacht van de toekomst* [Future Policy Survey: A New Foundation for the Netherlands Armed Forces] was published on the initiative of the Ministry of Defence. This interdepartmental study presented four different future scenarios with four different answers to the question of how – and with what consequences – the world might develop in the coming decades. It then out-

lined four options for the use of the Dutch armed forces in the future. Each policy option emphasised a different function of the armed forces.

The authors of the study were convinced that the future scenarios were broadly applicable, not just within the Ministry of Defence but throughout government. They concluded that the scenarios presented in the *Future Policy Survey* could contribute – for example by establishing a common vocabulary – to the development of a whole-of-government vision and strategy. However, it did not come to that. Up to now the government has not again used what in 2010 was described as ‘an inter-agency way of working that has broader possibilities for application within the government’ from which ‘valuable lessons learned ... can also be used in other policy areas’.⁴¹ Nevertheless, the approach set out in the *Future Policy Survey* remains relevant, particularly the interdepartmental approach, the use of external experts, the drafting of scenario analyses and the development of policy options.

One positive aspect is the development of the Strategic Monitor. Since 2012, the Clingendael Institute and The Hague Centre for Strategic Studies (HCSS) have produced annual trend analyses for the ministries of Foreign Affairs, Defence and Justice and Security (in particular the National Coordinator for Security and Counterterrorism).⁴² Meanwhile, at the request of these departments, the institutes also produce studies on specific subjects for the Strategic Monitor. The relevant departments are therefore able to make use of up-to-date analyses of the current situation in the policy development process.

Although the exercise of drafting an (externally oriented) *Future Policy Survey* has not been repeated, a National Risk Assessment (NRA) has been produced every year since 2007, see Fig. 4.1. The purpose of the NRA is to provide policymakers

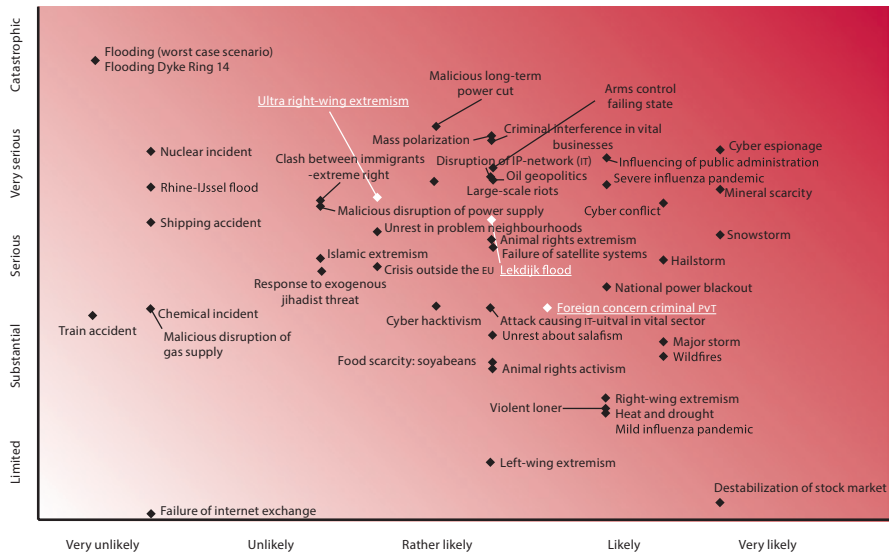


Fig. 4.1 The national risk diagram. (Source: National Risk Assessment, no. 6 (2014))

with insight into the relative likelihood and impact of different risk scenarios. This information is needed to define the capacities required and to set priorities to ensure that the Netherlands is optimally prepared for different types of disasters and threats. The NRA and accompanying scenarios are drawn up by the National Network of Safety and Security Analysts for the National Coordinator on Security and Counterterrorism.⁴³ The authors are independent, but the client has a significant voice in the choice of scenarios to be produced. The scenarios are integrated into the national risk diagram and arranged according to the likelihood of their occurring and their potential impact on society.

There are reservations to be expressed about the structure of the National Risk Assessment. In an advisory report on the so-called risk-rule reflex, the Council referred, among other things, to the complications attached to multi-dimensional risk comparisons and the technocratic nature of such an exercise.⁴⁴ There are, for example, reasonable doubts about the usefulness of the national risk diagram, which includes extremely diverse risks, ranging from black ice and snow storms to confrontations between individuals with a migration background and persons from the extreme right. How should this risk comparison be interpreted?⁴⁵

A second reservation concerns the internal orientation of the scenarios. In themselves they provide valuable insights into possible events and their potential impact, but between 2007 and 2014 only three scenarios focusing on transnational risks were formulated. The value of the NRA for increasing understanding of the consequences of the interconnectedness of internal and external security is therefore limited.

A third reservation relates to the role of the National Network of Safety and Security Analysts. Identifying and weighing up national risks is an extremely complex process and is hedged by numerous uncertainties and gaps in our knowledge. Input is therefore essential from a variety of experts (including the National Institute for Public Health and the Environment (RIVM), the Research and Documentation Centre of the Ministry of Justice and Security (WODC), the AIVD and TNO). However, the NRA is not validated and verified by independent external bodies. Like anyone else, the experts concerned can be blinded by (unconscious) preoccupations and other form of bias.

Finally, the NRA is used to conduct a capacity analysis (primarily under the auspices of the ministry with responsibility for the relevant risk). The analysis investigates whether the government, but also the private sector, possesses the necessary capacity (in terms of manpower, materiel, knowledge, skills and procedures) to cope with a threat or whether capacity needs to be strengthened. A report of the findings (with recommendations) is then written, on the basis of which the Cabinet decides what measures need to be taken. The analysis of capacity is left to the responsible ministry in each policy area, which increases the chance of a ministry making excessive demands for its own policy area. Is the NRA really helpful for the analysis of capacity and the ultimate allocation of resources⁴⁶? In any case, the government's reactions to the reports of findings suggest not. The *Voortgangsbrief Nationale Veiligheid* [Letter from the government to the House of Representatives

with a progress report on the National Security Strategy] of 12 May 2015 does not even mention the National Risk Assessment 2014.

The National Risk Assessment is now published in amended form as the National Risk Profile (NRP),⁴⁷ in which five national security interests are distinguished: territorial security (the unimpeded functioning of the Netherlands as an independent state), physical safety (the unimpeded functioning of people in the Netherlands), economic security (the unimpeded functioning of the Netherlands as an effective and efficient economy), ecological security (the unimpeded continued existence of the natural living environment) and social and political stability (the unimpeded continued existence of a social climate in which individuals can function without being disturbed and groups of people enjoy living together within the benefits of the Dutch democratic system and values shared therein).

The National Risk Profile provides a comparative survey of risks (in terms of their likelihood and potential impact) ensuing from various disasters, crises and threats drawn up by National Network of Safety and Security Analysts. The first National Risk Profile in 2016 focused on potential disasters and threats that could disrupt *our* society, but devoted greater attention to transnational (geopolitical) threats and autonomous international developments. That is a step in the right direction.

However, in contrast to the annual National Risk Assessments, the National Risk Profile is only published every 4 years. In view of the rapid pace of developments, that represents a step backwards. It is also regrettable that, as a result, the States-General are not able to hold a political debate with the responsible ministers on the basis of an 'All Hazard' overview of risks every year.

The National Risk Profile also describes the capacity available to manage the risks. With regard to geopolitical threats, for example, this would be capacity for international cooperation (diplomatic, military, economic and development cooperation) and the capacity of the intelligence services and research institutes to provide information and analysis. The next step – a coherent analysis of capacity that identifies the capabilities that need to be strengthened and what is needed to strengthen them – also has to be taken, but falls beyond the scope of the National Risk Profile.

4.4 Extended Security Implies a Comprehensive Strategy

The greater interconnectedness and unpredictability of security issues have had a major impact on the thinking and actions of governments in relation to security in the last decade. Many countries have developed new strategic instruments, such as national security strategies and whole-of-government approaches, foresight studies and risk analyses. These instruments reflect an expanded, more comprehensive concept of security.

The Dutch government has also taken steps in the direction of ‘comprehensive security’. On further reflection, however, it does not appear to have fully embraced the strategic instruments and the underlying philosophy. For example, the Netherlands has two separate strategic security documents, i.e., the National Security Strategy and the International Security Strategy. The whole-of-government approach to security issues, one of the articles of faith for international missions, is not applied consistently in this country. There is no overarching structure within which senior civil servants and ministers discuss the various aspects of security as a whole. Security issues are addressed in a fragmented fashion in various ministerial sub-committees and commissions and teams of officials that prepare policies. National and international security are compartmentalised.

Knowledge and anticipation are key words in dealing with complexity, dynamics and uncertainty, but the Dutch government possesses only modest and separate capacities for foresight and risk assessment. The attention to the preventive phase (including taking moderating measures) that precedes open armed conflict is not properly developed. The importance of mapping patterns in the ‘geopolitics of emotion’ is also not yet sufficiently recognised. The Clingendael Institute and the HCSS produce the Strategic Monitor every year and the National Network of Safety and Security Analysts produces the National Risk Profile, but there are reasonable doubts about the extent to which this knowledge actually benefits policy formulation. The long-term orientation and the match between strategic knowledge and policy are often inadequate. There is still a gap between science and policy in the area of foreign policy and defence.⁴⁸

Last but not least, the Dutch security strategy and the strategy for the national armed forces derived from it are intrinsically connected with the security strategies of the alliances of which the Netherlands is a member. There is also a need for a more integrated approach in that respect, whereby the Netherlands must devote more attention to embedding it in the transatlantic alliance and the European Union’s common security and defence policy. To put it bluntly, it is not only the Netherlands that determines its long-term choices in relation to its own defence efforts. International cooperation in the EU and NATO is inevitably at the expense of national sovereignty, but does increase these alliances’ joint capacity to act.⁴⁹ Coordination with NATO’s Strategic Concept (*Active Engagement, Modern Defence*, 2010) and the European Security Strategy is therefore absolutely essential. The EU’s strategic framework dating from 2003 (*A Secure Europe in a Better World*) was in urgent need of revision. For example, the opening sentence read: “Europe has never been so prosperous, so secure nor so free”. In June 2016, the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Frederica Mogherini, presented a new global strategy entitled *Shared Vision, Common Action: A Stronger Europe*.⁵⁰ In short, a successful Dutch security and defence strategy is part of a *multi-level* strategy.

Endnotes

- 1 Cottey, A. (2013).
- 2 Franke, V.C. & Dorff, R.H. (2012); Jermalavicius T., Pernik, P. & Hurt, M. (2014).
- 3 Stolberg, A.G. (2012: 5).
- 4 Gray, C. (2014: 30).
- 5 Freedman, L. (2013: 609).
- 6 Freedman warns that without a convincing narrative capable of mobilising politicians and the public, there will be insufficient support for the use of military means in democracies or a serious risk of the erosion of what support there is. That risk is particularly great in countries like the Netherlands, with a political elite that is very sensitive to public opinion and a political system in which coalition governments are the norm. That automatically imposes demands on a strategic narrative (B. de Graaf, G. Dimitriu (eds.). *Strategic narratives, public opinion and war* (2015)). A strategic narrative has to meet endogenous and exogenous conditions. Endogenous conditions include a clear objective, legitimacy, the promise of success, consistency and a sound strategic policy. Exogenous conditions include a military culture, history and openness and tolerance (B. de Graaf, WRR brainstorming session, 28 January 2015).
- 7 Stolberg, A.G. (2012: 3).
- 8 Duyvesteyn, I.G.B.M. (2013: 4).
- 9 Freedman, L. (2013: 612).
- 10 Kramer, F.D. (2014).
- 11 Gray, C. (2014: 30).
- 12 Edmunds, T. (2012: 269–270).
- 13 Gray, C. (2014: 54).
- 14 Krepinevich, A.F. & Watts, B.D. (2009).
- 15 Bailes, A.J. (2014).
- 16 Bailes, A.J. (2014: 40).
- 17 The OECD explicitly makes a connection between a whole-of-government approach and complexity. A whole-of-government approach corrects systems that have moved too far into sector-based compartments and suffer from poor coordination and cooperation: “Such an approach, however, requires high-level guidance (e.g., the Centre of Government operating in a stewardship role) to set expectations and to ensure overall accountability, as well as cross-sectoral management, and cultural change” (OECD 2012: 4).
- 18 Jermalavicius T., Pernik, P. & Hurt, M. (2014).
- 19 WRR. (2014: 61–62).
- 20 Horton, A. (1999: 5–9).
- 21 Dreyer, I. & Stang, G. (2013).

- 22 Habegger, B. (2009).
- 23 Beck, U. (1986).
- 24 Power, M. (2004: 58–65).
- 25 WRR. (2011).
- 26 Cf. Williams, M.J. (2009).
- 27 Edmunds, T. (2012).
- 28 Corry, O. (2010).
- 29 The National Security Strategy distinguishes five forms of security: (1) territorial security. The unimpeded functioning of the Netherlands as an independent state in the wider sense, or the territorial integrity in a narrow sense; (2) economic security. The unimpeded functioning of the Netherlands as an effective and efficient economy. Economic security can be undermined if trade with an important international partner disappears, for example; (3) ecological security. The unimpeded continued existence of the natural living environment in and around the Netherlands; (4) physical safety. The unimpeded functioning of people in the Netherlands and its surroundings; (5) social and political stability. The unimpeded continued existence of a social climate in which individuals can function without being disturbed and groups of people enjoy living together within the benefits of the Dutch democratic system and values shared therein.
- 30 Colijn, K. (2016).
- 31 Haar, B. ter & Maas, E. (2014).
- 32 Wijnbelt, M. et al. (2013).
- 33 Haar, B. ter (2014).
- 34 International Security Strategy (2013: 17).
- 35 Matthijsen, C.J. (2014).
- 36 Hazelbag, L. (2015: 193).
- 37 Parliamentary Documents II 2003–2004, 27 925 no. 124.
- 38 Bailes, A.J. (2014: 40).
- 39 Hazelbag, L. (2015).
- 40 Bogdanor, V. (2005).
- 41 *Future Policy Survey* (2010: 11).
- 42 Recent versions are the Clingendael Monitor 2015, *Een wereld zonder orde?* [A World without Order?] and The Hague Centre for Strategic Studies, StratMon 2015, *The Return of Ghosts Hoped Past? Trends in Conflict and Cooperation*.
- 43 The National Security Strategy falls under the responsibility of the Minister of Justice and Security. Within his ministry, the National Coordinator for Security and Counterterrorism (NCTV) is responsible for the National Security Strategy and chairs the National Security Steering Group, which coordinates activities relating to national (internal) security. The Ministerial Security Committee meets every week to discuss national ('internal') security.
- 44 WRR. (2011: 41–43).

- 45 Nevertheless, risk comparison cannot be avoided from a policy perspective. See WRR (2014) with guidelines for a multi-issue risk and security policy.
- 46 Vlek, C. (2013).
- 47 National Network of Safety and Security Analysts (2016). See also Letter on Progress with the National Security Strategy, House of Representatives, 2014–2015, 30 821, no. 23.
- 48 Wiers, J. (2016).
- 49 For a discussion of the tension between undivided national sovereignty and shared sovereignty in international alliances, see Advisory Council on International Affairs, *Europese defensiesamenwerking. Soevereiniteit en handelingsvermogen* [European defence cooperation: sovereignty and the capacity to act], January 2012, pp. 10–13.
- 50 http://eeas.Europe.eu/top_stories/pdf/eugs_review_web.pdf; on this issue, see Antonio Missiroli (ed.), *Towards an EU Global Strategy. Background, process, references*, European Union Institute for Security Studies, 2015.

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