



# **Russia** **and** **NATO's Enlargement**

Final Report  
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## Introduction

*« It (Europe) is a single entity – though it is culturally, ethnically and economically immensely diverse. For the first time in its history, this entity has an opportunity to establish an internal order on the principle of co-operation and equality among the large and the small, the strong and the weak, on shared democratic values. This is also an opportunity to put an end, once and for all, to the export of coercion and wars. Should Europe fail to grasp this opportunity, we could be heading for a new global catastrophe, a catastrophe far graver than previous ones. This time the forces of freedom would not face a single totalitarian enemy. They could well be drawn into a strange era of all against all, a war with no clear front...».*

Vaclav Havel, 1998<sup>1</sup>

One of the most precious developments since the end of the Cold War has been the return of the nations of Central and Eastern Europe “as equal partner and friends”. The countries of these regions of Europe are back on the political map, with their own distinctive voices. But unlike the states of Western Europe, which had effectively grappled with the critical strategic problems that had produced the century’s two great wars, countries in Central Europe pressed for guarantees against becoming once again the victims of strategic uncertainty, great-power rivalry, or hegemonic ambition. For them, an essential condition for creating modern, democratic, and prosperous societies was to achieve as much certainty as possible about their future security and place within the larger new European order. In this “other Europe”, security considerations were not abstractions in the post-Cold War world but realities derived from historic experience. And “leaving communism means re-entering history”, said the French philosopher A. Glucksman in the Autumn of 1989.

Then, since the early 1990s, many of the former Warsaw Pact member states, emerging from more than four decades as satellites of a totalitarian USSR, viewed membership in NATO as well as the European Union as essential to securing their reintegration to the “West”. For most Eastern European nations, therefore, joining the West, and more particularly NATO, was not just a means of bringing to an end the recurring uncertainties that had produced so much suffering and tragedy in the twentieth century, was not just about a community of values, but also of gaining assurances

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<sup>1</sup> Vaclav Havel, “The Charms of NATO”, address in Washington after receiving the Fulbright Prize on 3 October 1997, printed in New York Review of Books, 15 January 1998, p. 24.

against the vagaries of the Russian future and guarantees against a possible re-emergence of Russian imperialism.

At the same time, the Alliance took the fundamental decision that co-operation and outreach to former rivals should be the main tools for achieving security and stability in the new Europe: « *an open Europe cannot be based on closed institutions. There can be no durable order if the Continent remains divided between a prosperous, self-confident West and a stagnant, frustrated East* »<sup>2</sup>.

It was also apparent that building a new European architecture could not be achieved without Russia, a country of particular weight and importance for stability in Europe. Even if it became apparent that no country in Europe was able, much less willing, to pose a serious strategic threat to any European state, Russia remained a looming presence, a geopolitical reality, and the perceived “successor state” to the Soviet Union, in terms of size, position, and potential ambition as much as in international legal form. In the new strategic environment the Western Allies faced a “Russian dilemma”.

NATO adopted as its guiding vision President Bush’s historical insight that the West should treat Russia not like the Germany of 1919, to be reviled, stigmatised, isolated, and punished (that had helped to produce the Nazi regime a decade and a half later), but like the Germany of 1946, to be brought rapidly back into the community of nations. The Allies accepted that they should help Russia become a “normal” country, one reforming at home and with the potential to play a constructive role as a legitimate European power. Consequently, the Russians expected too much from the West, but they are now overly disappointed by the response.

The Alliance’s leaders insist that the diplomatic overtures made by the United States and NATO – such as the NACC, the PFP, the Russian participation in the IFOR and the KFOR, and particularly the Founding Act and the PJC – have pacified the Russian leadership. However, the NATO’s enlargement process to include the countries of Central and Eastern Europe has become a dominant concern in the evolution of Russian foreign policy.

For Moscow it is of particular importance to be reassured that the security environment in Eastern Europe would not be changed to its detriment as a result of new members joining NATO. The Allies make it clear that enlargement is not a threat to the national security interests of Russia, nor is NATO moving a military machine eastward.

But the Russian leaders became critical and wary, talking of the dangers of “Cold Peace”. At heart, there exists fundamental conflicts of interest between Russia and the West over NATO, which reflect significant divergences in perceptions over the status of post-Soviet Russia and its rightful position in global politics.

Especially because old habits persist, many continue to see today’s affairs with yesterday’s eyes. However, the current discussion on enlargement is taking place in very different circumstances than those that prevailed during the Cold War. Decades of Communism accustomed us to think of the Russian threat in terms of excessive strength and missionary zeal. Following the collapse of USSR our concerns centred around the internal weakness and instability of Russia. Although the fate of Russian reformers will depend mainly on developments in Russia itself, developments in Europe – such as NATO enlargement – will undoubtedly have influence on Russian domestic and foreign policy.

The strong Russian objections to NATO’s enlargement have created some nervousness in the West. Some observers believe that they have detected the rebirth of imperial trends in Russia policy towards Central and Eastern Europe. Yet, the Russian reaction to NATO’s eastward expansion must be put into perspective to be properly understood and assessed. It is conditioned by a number of factors, including Russia’s recent history and the development of its relations with the West following the collapse of the Soviet Union. Discuss and understand these elements’ is the aim of my research.

According to this, the first part of this paper presents the Alliance’s transformations and the evolution of NATO’s enlargement to Central and Eastern Europe. Subsequent parts discuss the Russian perceptions and attitudes towards NATO; the evolution of NATO-Russia relations; and the impact of NATO’s eastward process on Russia’s foreign and security policy. All this to a better understands of Russian objections to NATO’s extension. The concluding part focuses upon the interactions between the Russian feelings and threats with Nato’s efforts to address security problems throughout Europe to show the impact of NATO’s expansion eastward on European security and international affairs and, on the other hand, capture the reasons of the so problematic second round’s enlargement. In the end, some recommendations are made trying to reconcile Western’s interests and Russian sensitivities, in order to maintain the peace, the security and the stability through all the pan-European space.

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<sup>2</sup> Javier Solana, “Open Doors”, *Time*, special issue, Winter 1998/99, p. 55.

This study will be based on two levels: description and explanation. The first, will disclose and order the facts; the second, without the slightest intention of formulating laws or judgements, will attempt to integrate and put facts in context, relating and placing them before the geopolitical and geostrategic parameters that conducted the analysis.

## NATO New Beginnings

For 40 years, NATO concentrated primarily, and with admirable success, on collective defence, holding firm against outside (Soviet/Communism) threats. Since World War II the “Iron Curtain” divided Europe into two halves – into East and West, into Communist and Capitalist, into NATO and Warsaw Pact. In 1989, however, events began to change rapidly the political and the international structure of Europe and the security environment in which NATO seeks to achieve its objectives. The Berlin wall, symbol of the division of Europe, abruptly fell: «*The long decades of European division are over*»<sup>3</sup>.

### *New Threats, New Mission*

Unfortunately, in the new Europe and its fundamentally changed security environment (especially because the military threat is no longer dominant), concerns about security and stability need to be addressed. With the end of the “Cold War”, the nature of potential threats to peace and stability in Europe was significantly altered, and the risks and challenges have taken on new dimensions. These include historically based mistrust and friction between ethnic, religious or national groupings, aggressive nationalism, social disruption and uncertainty in light of fundamental economic reforms, illegal migration and the uncontrolled flows of refugees, drug trafficking and organised crime, and environmental and ecological threats evolving from years of exploitation of natural resources and uncontrolled industrialisation<sup>4</sup>. Also

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<sup>3</sup> “Partnership with the Countries of Central and Eastern Europe”, Statement issued by the North Atlantic Council Meeting in Ministerial session in Copenhagen, 6-7 June 1991, 1<sup>st</sup> line.

<sup>4</sup> Niels Helveg Petersen, “Towards a European Security model for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century”, *NATO Review*, Vol. 45, N° 6, Nov.-Dec. 1997, Web Edition, p. 1.

of major concern is the risk posed by the proliferation of Weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery, the terrorism and sabotage.

These new risks and challenges have one thing in common: their transboundary nature, particularly in a time of "globalisation". Thus, greater interdependence means that we are more vulnerable to developments that occur in different parts of the world. That's why we cannot stand indifferent and pretend that our economies, our societies and our security can somehow be totally insulated from what happens elsewhere. Security is now more than ever indivisible because the consequences of risks to security in stability cannot be isolated to one country or region. Consequently, the stability provided by the cold war was replaced by the threat of confusion, disintegration and chaos, after a short-lived period of euphoria.

However, along with new kinds of threats, this dramatic change has brought with it one great benefit: all the countries of Europe can now act together to promote stability and security. They can turn their attention from confrontation to co-operation, from preparing to defend themselves to preserving peace.

In this fundamentally changed context, a decade ago not many would have bet that NATO would survive – much less that it would have found a new sense of purpose. It is ironic that one of the most commonly heard predictions at that time was that NATO would soon follow the "Wall" into the history books. Pundits and cynics joked that the acronym "NATO" stood for "No Alternative To Obsolescence".

Consequently, an intense debate developed over the roles Europe's security institutions should play in the new era. Some, led by Moscow, favoured abolishing both the Warsaw Pact and NATO and giving primacy to a pan-European collective security organisation, perhaps in the form of strengthened CSCE. Other, led by Paris, believed that NATO was still needed, but the primacy should be given to European institutions such as the WEU and the EC. Still others, led by Washington and London, believed that direct American engagement in European security affairs was still indispensable and that NATO, which provided the organisational framework for American engagement in Europe, was indispensable as well. According to this line of thinking, NATO needed to be preserved, reformulated, and made the centrepiece of Europe's new security architecture<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>5</sup> Michael E. Brown, "Minimalist NATO – A wise Alliance knows when to retrench", *Foreign Affairs*, May/June 1999, Vol. 78, N° 3, p. 204.

It was this last vision that had become an article of faith in Euro-Atlantic policy-making circles. As a result, NATO came out on top in the debate over the relative merits of Europe's security organisations. In 1991, the Alliance's New Strategic Concept stated that « *two conclusions can be drawn from this analysis of the strategic context. The first is that the new environment does not change the purpose of the security functions of the Alliance, but rather underlines their enduring validity. The second, on the other hand, is that the changed environment offers new opportunities for the Alliance to frame its strategy within a broad approach to security*»<sup>6</sup>.

Then, NATO made deep cuts in its conventional forces, and the US also made deep cuts in its nuclear arsenal in Europe. It was natural and inevitable that the Alliance would change its force when Soviet power collapsed, but its leaders also changed its mission. At their July 1990 London Summit they announced that Alliance would develop a new military strategy that would de-emphasise forward defence and enable NATO to play a more "political" role in European affairs. This strategic review culminated in the Alliance's "New Strategic Concept", which was unveiled at the NATO Summit in Rome in November 1991. This document stated that NATO would henceforth have «*the following fundamental security tasks*:

- 1) *To provide one of the indispensable foundations for a stable security environment in Europe, based on the growth of democratic institutions and commitment to the peaceful resolution of disputes, in which no country would be able to intimidate or coerce any European nation or to impose hegemony through the threat or use of force;*
- 2) *To serve, as provided for in Article 4 of the North Atlantic Treaty, as a transatlantic forum for Allied consultations on any issues that affect their vital interests, including possible developments posing risks for members' security, and for appropriate co-ordination of their efforts in fields of common concern;*
- 3) *To deter and defend against any threat of aggression against the territory of any NATO member state;*
- 4) *To preserve the strategic balance within Europe.*»<sup>7</sup>

This NATO's "new thinking" constituted a dramatic break with the past. What is significant about this process of transformation is that, first, NATO would

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<sup>6</sup> The Alliance's New Strategic Concept, 1991, paragraph 14.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., paragraph 20.



henceforth be worried about the continent as a whole, not the Alliance area, which means that the Allies expanded the NATO's area of geographical concern<sup>8</sup>; second, NATO now views security as a broad concept embracing political and economic, as well as defence, components: « It is now possible to draw all the consequences from the fact that security and stability have political, economic, social, and environmental elements as well as the indispensable defence dimension. Managing the diversity of challenges facing the Alliance requires a broad approach to security.»<sup>9</sup>. Consequently, the traditional concerns of NATO – collective defence and preserving the balance of power in Europe – are competing now with the new “agenda” over the top of priority list.

The rationale behind this “expansionist agenda” was that, with the end of the Cold War and the diminishing importance of the collective defence mission, the Alliance would have to address security problems throughout Europe if its was to survive: NATO must go “out of area or out of business”.

Thus, NATO undertook new responsibilities in Central and Eastern Europe, reforming and working with military organisations and even trying to eliminate old concepts of European security – buffer states, grey areas, spheres of influence, possibly even the balance of power. In league with the EU, NATO sought to push the European Civil Space eastward, on the untested theory that what had worked in Western Europe could also be applied to the “other Europe”<sup>10</sup>.

To fulfil the Alliance's new purposes, the Allies developed a series of interlocking programs, each related to the others and all needed to form a strategic and political whole. They had to reconcile a range of competing objectives and either revise old institutions or create new ones, recognising that there could be lasting security across the Continent only if every country gained some benefits from NATO's actions.

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<sup>8</sup> In fact, the operative section of Article 6 of the NATO Treaty – the geographical delimitation clause – establishes the Alliance's borders as comprising the sovereign territories of the NATO Allies in Western Europe and North America.

<sup>9</sup> The Alliance's New Strategic Concept, 1991, paragraph 24.

<sup>10</sup> Robert E. Hunter, Maximizing NATO – A relevant Alliance knows how to reach”, Foreign Affairs, Vol. 78, N° 3, May/June 1999, p. 192.

The most important change that NATO has undergone since the collapse of the Berlin Wall is its outreach to the nations of the former Warsaw Pact. In an editorial published in 1990, the American historian John Lewis Gaddis recommended that both NATO and the Warsaw Pact should be preserved in post-cold war Europe, and that the two alliances should be merged into a pan-European security organisation<sup>11</sup>. While this may be a flawed idea, it nonetheless reflected a very valid concern about the dangers that the international community would face if the nations of the former Soviet bloc were left without any institutionalised forums for security co-operation and mutual reassurance.

NATO was quick to respond to this problem, reaching out to those who had previously opposed it. At its Summit meeting in London in July 1990, the Alliance extended the hand of friendship to all the former members of the Warsaw Pact and invited their governments – and any other willing to join – to establish regular contact and consultation with NATO, and to work toward a new relationship based on co-operation and mutual understanding. The following November, the Alliance's members and their new partners signed a Joint Declaration in Paris stating that they no longer regarded each other as adversaries and would refrain henceforth from the threat or use of force against each other. Future crisis would be resolved through consultation and open discussion.

As this relationship have developed, the Alliance made it clear that *«Our own security is inseparably linked to that of all other states in Europe... We do not wish to isolate any country, nor to see a new division of the Continent. Our objectives is to help create a Europe whole an free»*<sup>12</sup>. Then, the inaugural meeting of the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC) on 20th December 1991 marked the beginning of a new, enhanced relationship and a genuine partnership between NATO and its liaison partners. Russia becomes a founding member of NACC.

However, since the first meeting of NACC, numerous eastern Europeans leaders emphasised that the NACC was not and end in itself but indeed another step in continuing process to make NATO's relationship with Central and Eastern Europe into

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<sup>11</sup> John Lewis Gaddis, "One Germany – in both Alliances", *The New York Times*, March 21, 1990, p. 27.

<sup>12</sup> "Partnership with the Countries of Central and Eastern Europe", *op. cit.*, paragraph 3.

an important element of a more cooperative European security order. On the other hand, it was repeatedly stressed that this new initiative was not an alternative to a strengthened CSCE process but rather a complement to it.

At the same time, the Atlantic Alliance, along with other major institutions of the “free world”, played its role in helping with the countries’ specific needs. However, for many in Central and Eastern Europe, all this was not enough. They call for a new qualitative step in liaison with NATO.

NATO’s principal answer to this question was provided by the most consequential development in European security: the Partnership for Peace (PfP), a venture proposed by US President Bill Clinton in October 1993. Formally launched at the January 1994 NATO Summit in Brussels, the PfP had some big advantages over proposals to offer full, immediate NATO membership to Eastern European countries, as recognised Les Aspin, former US Secretary Of Defense<sup>13</sup>: it would avoid drawing new security lines across the map of Europe that are liable to be destabilising, since it was not possible to ignore the “Russian veto”; it would sets up the right incentives, rewarding in the future those nations that were moving in the right direction; it would provided equality of opportunity for all eligible countries and would measure progress entirely on the behaviour of individual states (it’s the “self-selecting”); and it puts the question of NATO membership where it belongs, at the end of the process rather than at the beginning.

Consequently, PfP was conceived as a bridge, not a barrier, helping to underpin the security of more nations, without thereby excluding any nation or implicitly drawing a new line of division across the centre of Europe.

This was followed by the “Study on NATO Enlargement” in 1995, mandated by the NAC in ministerial session on 1 December 1994, which set out the Alliance’s approach in more detail. Its 6 chapters have three major, declared purposes. One is “How to ensure that enlargement strengthen the effectiveness of the Alliance” (chapter 4). The second is to show prospective members what they can expect as allies (principles, rights and obligations). The other major purpose is “How to ensure that enlargement contributes to the stability and security of the entire Euro-Atlantic area” (chapter 2).

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<sup>13</sup> Les Aspin, “New Europe, New NATO, NATO Review, Vol. 42, N° 1, February 1994, web edition, pp. 2-3.

Yet, this study was inevitably limited because it didn't answer to the main questions of the "how and why" and especially of "who and when". At the same time, Moscow's anti-NATO enlargement policies had been most apparent. These were host of complex issues which needed to be addressed before enlargement could take place.

## Russian attitudes towards NATO

*"Yes, We are friends"*

The collapse of the USSR and the post-bipolar euphoria in Russian-Western relations changed drastically Moscow's perceptions of Western institutions and in the first place those of NATO. President Yeltsin, who had to compete with the "New Political Thinking" of Gorbachev-Shevardnadze rapprochement with the Western countries, never lost an opportunity to show that he was much more attached to the Western democratic values than the former Soviet leadership and that the new Russia was more reliable partner for the West than the USSR.

The Russians tried to show by all means the difference between the newly born democratic Russia and the old Soviet empire which was concentrated on the idea of maintaining its own integrity and that of the "Socialist camp": *«Russia contributed more than other countries to the removal of the Soviet threat – the USSR would have never collapsed so quickly without Russia's efforts. In relation to the USSR Russia was secessionist; in relation to Europe Russia was integrationist. And if the USSR occupied the Baltic Republics, it was Russia who liberated them!»*<sup>14</sup>.

The end of bipolarity and Russia's strategy directed at building a functioning democracy and implementing a market economy removed political and ideological division in Europe, even if the Western concerns centred now around the internal weakness and instability of Russia. That's why in the early 90's, Moscow formed a curious set of post-war expectations which still affect Russian conduct. Politically, the "West" should treat Russia as an ally that had brought about the end of communism. Economically, however, Russia deserves the kind of massive aid extended to those defeated and/or destroyed in the Second World War.

The qualified nature of newly co-operation between Russia and the West has been most evident over security issues, and notably those surrounding the future of NATO and European security. After all, as Andrei Kozyrev said, *«It was the Russian democratic transformation – which some might call the Russian democratic revolution – which made possible to speak of a new Europe and a new political and security agenda in Europe.»*<sup>15</sup>.

In this romantic pro-Western climate President of Russia Boris Yeltsin, addressing participants of the constituent session of the NACC in December 1991, stressed that Russia's relations with the rest of the world *«can be based now on recognition of shared values and on a common vision of ways of enhancing international security. We regard from this viewpoint perspectives of our relations with NATO... and we would like to actively promote the dialogue and contacts with the North Atlantic Alliance both at the political and military level»*.

Moscow was, of course, interested in the further development of co-operation with the Western countries, waiting from them stable financial, technical and organisational support for the economic reforms in Russia. At this time, as in the future, Russian government uses the nationalist card as a leverage in negotiating with the West, trying to show that Russian pro-Western orientation needed to be encouraged. The choice, Russian leaders tell to their Western partners, was between the democrats and the reactionaries, between the government representing the forces of peace and the Red-Brown nationalist opposition, the party of war, as Kozyrev said in the first article by a Russian Foreign Minister published by NATO Review in February 1993: *« If we began to be seen in Western capitals as something “unnecessary” or “dangerous”, this would only encourage our “national patriots” to increase their attacks on current Russian policy and would sustain their chauvinist desires to close off Russia in pseudo-superpower isolation»*<sup>16</sup>.

However, to create favourable conditions for the transformation of Russia was not the only concern stressed by Moscow in its relations with the West. At the same symbolic article, Russian Foreign Minister summarise Russian position concerning

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<sup>14</sup> Nadia Alexandrova Arbatova, “Russia and European Security after the Madrid Decisions”, International Seminar on NATO enlargement and the future of Europe, IDN, Lisboa, October 9-10, 1997.

<sup>15</sup> Andrei Kozyrev, “Russia and the World’s New Security Agenda”, International Relations, Vol. XIV, N° 1, April 1998 – text of the 1997 Annual Memorial Lecture of the David Davies Institute for International Studies, given on 9th October 1997 at the Royal Over-Seas League in London.

<sup>16</sup> Andrei Kozyrev, “The New Russia and the Atlantic Alliance”, NATO Review, Vol. 41, N° 1, February 1993, Web Edition, p. 3.

European security: «CSCE will have to transform itself from a forum for political dialogue into an organisation guaranteeing security, stability and the development of cooperation in the European space »<sup>17</sup>. He also made a very important warning: « we are opposed to closed groupings, to doctrines such as Pax Americana, Pax Germanica or Pax Eurasiatica »<sup>18</sup>. NATO enlargement process, which was discussed all over the Europe and the US, was not directly mentioned, which could mean, apparently, that it was not a major concern for Russian political elite.

### *Saying "No" to NATO Enlargement*

Russian position on this matter was until 1993 ambiguous. In fact, NATO enlargement first emerged as a key political issue in Russia in the aftermath of Yeltsin's August 1993 visit to Warsaw. During his visit, President Yeltsin stated that he sympathised with Poland's desire to join NATO. A formula in the Joint Polish-Russian Declaration of 25 August 1993 reflected this: « *Such a move would not be counter to Russian interests nor to the pan-European integration process* »<sup>19</sup>.

However, in the subsequent uproar in Moscow, Yeltsin revised his position and retracted his earlier statement. On 15 September 1993 he wrote a letter to US President Clinton and other Western leaders in which he opposed the possible admission of the Central and Eastern countries to NATO. He pointed out that such a decision would provoke a negative response on the part of Russian society: « *It is important to take into account how our public opinion may react to such a step. Not only the opposition, but the moderates, too, would no doubt see this as a sort of neo-isolation of the country as opposed to its natural introduction into the Euro-Atlantic space* »<sup>20</sup>. He drew attention to the fact that the enlargement would be illegal because «*the treaty on the Final Settlement with respect to Germany signed in September 1990, particularly those of its provision that prohibit stationing of foreign troops within the FRG's eastern*

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid., p. 6.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., p. 5.

<sup>19</sup> "ITAR-Tass Carries Russian-Polish Joint Declaration", Foreign Broadcast Information Service, Daily Report – Central Eurasia (FBIS – SOV), FBIS – SOV – 93-164, 26 August 1993, pp. 13-15, see International Herald Tribune, 26 August 1993.

<sup>20</sup> Letter of Russian President Boris Yeltsin to US President Bill Clinton, 15 September 1993, reproduced in SIPRI Yearbook 1994, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1994, Appendix 7 A, pp. 249-250.

lands, excludes, by its meaning, the possibility of expansion of the NATO zone to the East»<sup>21</sup>.

This belief that the incorporation of a united Germany into NATO preclude further enlargement has become an entrenched conviction among the Russian elite<sup>22</sup>, as set out by the analyst Sergei Karaganov: «In 1990 we were told quite clearly by the West that the unification of Germany would not lead to NATO expansion. We did not demand written guarantees because in the euphoric atmosphere of the time it would have seemed indecent – like two girlfriends giving written promises not to seduce each other’s husband»<sup>23</sup>. But if Russian President was convinced of his reason in the letter to Clinton, why did he a different version in Warsaw few days before?

In the same letter, Russia, asserted Yeltsin, favoured a situation in which its relations with NATO would be «*by several degrees warmer than those between The Alliance and Eastern Europe. NATO-Russia rapprochement...should proceed on a faster track*»<sup>24</sup>. In other words, Russia did not see or treat NATO as an enemy – on the contrary, it wished to move closer to the Alliance – but it did not wish Central and Eastern countries to become NATO members, since that would mean that they could not be seen either as a Russian security zone or as a zone of Russian special interest and rights. At the end of his letter, President Yeltsin expressed Russia’s readiness, «*together with NATO, to offer official security guarantees to the East European states with a focus on ensuring sovereignty, territorial integrity, inviolability of frontiers, and maintenance of peace in the region. Such guarantees could be stipulated in a political statement or co-operation agreement between the Russian Federation and NATO*»<sup>25</sup>. In this way Russia signalled that it seeks a “droit de regard” over the decision on expanding the Alliance, on the one hand, and pretends to determine the ways and forms of ensuring the security of its close neighbours, on the other. The will and positions of Eastern European states were simply ignored in the letter.

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid., p. 250.

<sup>22</sup> The issue of whether such promises were made has been a source of considerable controversy. In its favour, the contention does perhaps capture the “spirit” or “atmospherics” of the time, when Western leaders were anxious to reassure the Soviet leadership that the incorporation of a unified Germany into NATO should not be considered an anti-Soviet act. But it should also be remembered that in 1990 the Warsaw Pact still existed, the focus of negotiations was purely on the German question, and there is no concrete evidence that either Western or Soviet leaders were exercised by the then very hypothetical issue of further NATO enlargement into Eastern Europe. See Roland Dannreuther, “Escaping the Enlargement Trap in NATO-Russian Relations”, *Survival*, 41 – 4, Winter 1999-2000, The IISS, p. 151.

<sup>23</sup> Quoted in Anatol Lieven, “Russian opposition to NATO expansion, *World Today*, October 1995, p. 198.

<sup>24</sup> Letter Yeltsin to Clinton, op. cit., p. 250.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

In fact, the issue of NATO eastward expansion is considered by Moscow from a totally different angle to that of Western Europe and the US. Like a person suffering from a serious disease, Russia is concentrating on the devastating economic and geopolitical crises it is going through, and is deeply suspicious of any plans that may lead to a new coalitions that it may have to face in the future. Seen against this background, the prospect of NATO's enlargement would only serve to generate frustration, suspicion and even anger in Russian society. As Westerns, and particularly US officials, have talked more in terms of partnership as a staging post to Central European membership, so Russian politicians have taken a more negative stand.

Russian objections to Partnership for Peace as a path to expansion reflect deeper concerns about wider security relations with Europe. The polemics in the Russian press concerning Russia joining the PfP programme essentially amount to a discussion of NATO's evolution and the consequences for Russia of the various scenarios. Of course there were many shades of opinion between those for and against close partnership with NATO, but the Russian press expresses growing disillusionment as the euphoria resulting from expectations of quick "rapprochement" between Western Europe and Russia fades away. Yuriy Stroevev, for example, claims that «NATO does not need Russia» in an article entitled "Will NATO's frontier reach Pskov?". The author concludes by asking «What is the point in the loudly proclaimed "Partnership for Peace" initiative? It is not a means for NATO's gradual expansion to take in the countries of Eastern Europe? To advance even further East and create a new line of division?»<sup>26</sup>.

However, the Yeltsin government seems to have interpreted the PfP programme as confirmation that NATO had been dissuaded from «*extending eastwards... and the programme is in effect an alternative to enlarging the Alliance through early admission of members*»<sup>27</sup>. This led to a resolution of the first NATO-Russia crisis and to Russia's agreement to sign up to the PfP Framework Document in 22 June 1994, signalling its intention to join the programme. In addition, Andrei Kozyrev expressed Moscow's new expectations: «*One should pay tribute to leaders of the NATO nations. They have echoed our appeal, displaying a readiness to promote relations with Russia, and taking concrete steps aimed at adapting the Alliance to the*

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<sup>26</sup> Quoted in Alexander Velichkin, "NATO as seen through the eyes of the Russian Press", *NATO Review*, Vol. 43, N° 2, Mars 1995, web edition, p. 4.

<sup>27</sup> Boris Kazantsev, "First Steps Towards Russia's Partnership with NATO", *International Affairs*, Vol. 41, N° 3, 1994, p. 17.



*realities of the new Europe. Russia and NATO have achieved a lot by the joint effort to radically transform their relations... we have reached a common position that it will be a programme corresponding to Russia's size, importance and capabilities»<sup>28</sup>. Yet, in the very same article Russian Foreign Minister also made a warning: «It should, however, be clear that a genuine partnership is an equal partnership. Our relations should be deprived of even the slightest hints of paternalism. There can be no vetoes on others' actions nor surprises undermining mutual trust»<sup>29</sup>.*

In sum, the PfP concept, establishing a programme of co-operation between NATO and Eastern Countries, Russia included, and leaving the issue of admission open until things in Russia became clear, best suits both West's and Russia's interests. As Alexei Pushkov, Deputy Editor in Chief of the Moscow News wrote in February 1994, Pfp «would avoid provoking a dangerous reaction against NATO in Russia, while still allowing the Alliance to incorporate those countries into NATO virtually overnight, in the event of a resurgence of a real, not mythical, Russian threat, The NATO Summit's decision has certainly helped Boris Yeltsin to pursue his policy of partnership with the West ... Yeltsin can now argue that Russia's positions on critical international issues are being taken into account»<sup>30</sup>.

### *The end of a love affair?*

The shift in NATO and US policy in late 1994 towards a much more firmer commitment to enlargement was a considerable shock to the Russia leadership. In true, it shouldn't be a completely surprise since there was a strong consensus in the American foreign-policy establishment and, to a lesser extent, in Western Europe that at least one or two Central European states should become full members of NATO in the near future. US President Clinton stated that «the question is no longer whether NATO will take on new members, but when and how»<sup>31</sup>, and reaffirmed his commitment to NATO

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<sup>28</sup> Andrei Kozyrev, "Russia and NATO: a Partnership for United and Peaceful Europe", NATO Review, Vol. 42, n° 4, August 1994, web edition, pp. 1-2.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., p. 2.

<sup>30</sup> Alexei Pushkov, "Russia and the West: an endangered relationship?", NATO Review, Vol. 42, n° 1, February 1994, web edition, pp.6-7.

<sup>31</sup> Quoted in "Clinton hints NATO would defend East from attack", International Herald Tribune, 13 January 1994.

enlargement during his trip to Europe in July 1994<sup>32</sup>. Prominent former US policy-makers – including Henry Kissinger, Zbigniew Brzezinski, Harold Brown and James Baker – support NATO enlargement, and many experts on both sides of the Atlantic also supported this broad vision.

The communiqué issued at the end of ministerial meeting of the NAC in December 1994 stated that NATO enlargement was expected and that it would be welcomed. Thus, when Foreign Minister Kozyrev refused to endorse formally Russian co-operation with NATO at his meeting with the NAC in Brussels in December 1994, in response to NATO express decision in principle to expand the Alliance by admitting East European countries, the Russian headlines declared: “*Kozyrev doubts sincerity of his Western partners*”; “*Russia’s not happy with double standards*”; “*Dismay in Brussels*”; “*Russia and NATO: engagement broken off*”; and “*NATO’s expansion plans threaten “cold peace” for Europe*”<sup>33</sup>.

Russian leaders have hardly been reticent in articulating their opposition to NATO renewed vigour and the associated process of NATO enlargement. During periods of crisis in relations – such as during the NATO enlargement debate and the 1999 Kosovo conflict and NATO’s New Strategic Concept – ominous warnings of a new “cold peace” or the prospect a “third world war” were ritually pronounced by Moscow. Even President Boris Yeltsin was not averse to making such statements. For example, at the CSCE Summit in December 1994, he warned: «*Europe, which has not had time to rid itself of the legacy of the Cold War, runs the risk of plunging into a “Cold Peace”*»<sup>34</sup>. A further warning against NATO expansion is contained in an article by Sergei Karaganov entitled “*The threat of another defeat*”, published in the early February 1995: «NATO’s plans for expansion mean a potential new Yalta, a potential new split of Europe, even if less severe than before. By accepting the rules of the game, which are being forced on her, ... Russia will lose. And Europe will lose, too.». The author concludes that «Consequently, we must do our best to hinder the approval of the decision on NATO expansion. We should make sure that it is postponed, refuse to formalise it “de jure” – by not accepting it – or “de facto” – by increasing confrontation and attempting to establish our own alliance. We should search for a third way out. It

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<sup>32</sup> See The White House, “A National Security Strategy of Engagement and Enlargement”, US Government Printing Office, Washington DC, July 1994, p. 22.

<sup>33</sup> Cit. in Alexander Velichkin, NATO as seen through the eyes of the Russian press”, op. cit., p. 3-4.

<sup>34</sup> Cit. in Roland Dannreuther, “Escaping the enlargement Trap in NATO-Russian relations”, Survival, 41-4, Winter 1999-2000, note 1, p. 162.

exists, somewhere, but it calls for a brand new level of diplomacy that differs from that which Moscow has been demonstrating in the past few years»<sup>35</sup>.

This “Russian shock” was exacerbated further by the publication of the “Study on NATO Enlargement” in September 1995. For Moscow, the study appeared to be deliberately provocative in offering almost no concessions to Russian interests. Enlargement was confirmed as an open-ended process; nothing but full membership was countenanced for applicant countries; and these applicants were also expected not to “foreclose the option” of foreign troops and nuclear weapons being stationed on their territory.

In the early 1995, Russia was still disinclined to sign the documents to implement the PfP accord. This impasse was resolved during summit talks in Moscow in May 1995, when Yeltsin promised President Clinton that Russia would agree to implementation. On 31 May Russia signed a military co-operation treaty with NATO (16+1) and formally accepts the Individual Partnership Programme (IPP) which finally committed Russia to PfP membership. It also signed a memorandum stipulating “*Areas on pursuance of broad, enhanced NATO-Russia dialogue and Cooperation*” that extended beyond the PfP initiative in Noordwijk at a special meeting of NATO Foreign Ministers with Foreign Minister Kozyrev following the regular NATO ministerial meeting. It was also reaffirmed at the NATO Foreign Ministers Conference in May 1995 that Russia’s active participation was indispensable for the security of Europe, and on 27 September 1995 NATO informed Russia that it was firming up concrete plans to strengthen its political dialogue with Russia.

The Alliance was working to bring central and Eastern nations into NATO, while trying at the same time to expand its relationship with Russia.

Yet, as parliamentary elections loomed towards the year’s end, the outlook for the reformist and centrist parties failed to improve. The communist Party and the Liberal Democratic Party reacted strongly to steps to expand NATO, while retired Gen. Alexandr Lebed, leader of the Congress of Russian Communities, stated that the creation of a CIS military block was essential<sup>36</sup>. In an 18 October interview, President Yeltsin also stated that he could not endorse a NATO expansion that left open the possibility of nuclear weapons deployment in Eastern Europe. Then, in his address to

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<sup>35</sup> Cit. in Alexander Velichkin, op. cit., p. 6.

<sup>36</sup> Quoted in Asian Security 1996-97, RIPS, Brassey’s, London and New York, English Edition, 1997, p. 57.

the special 50th general session of the UN on 28 October, Yeltsin stressed his opposition to NATO expansion and called for the construction of a new security framework that would embrace all of Europe, including Russia<sup>37</sup>.

Russia has also displayed its independence from the West in its position on the Bosnian conflict. In fact, the increasing activism of NATO during the Bosnia crisis also represented a worrying development for Moscow. At the same time as the publication of the NATO study, NATO initiated the first large-scale offensive in its history with the extensive bombardment of Serb installations in Bosnia. Examples of Russia's divergent policies include criticism of Western actions, independent peacemaking initiatives, support for Serb forces, and efforts to increase Russian influence. Russia strongly criticised NATO's air strikes against Serb forces in August 1995, and Moscow warned that if the air strikes continued Russia would have to reconsider its relationship with NATO.

Although Russian concerns were alleviated by the Dayton Accords and the subsequent Russian agreement to participate in the ensuring Implementation Force (IFOR)<sup>38</sup>, NATO's actions in the former Yugoslavia did serious damage to Russian perceptions of the Alliance. NATO's failure to consult with the Russians over its actions, despite the recently established consultative mechanism, was taken as another instance of Western betrayal and duplicity. In addition, the large-scale NATO attacks were taken as conclusive evidence that the Alliance had ceased in practice to subscribe to its proclaimed purely defensive functions. As Alexei Arbatov, a senior liberal figure in the Duma, noted: «*The massive air attacks on the Bosnian Serbs on the Summer of 1995 demonstrated that force, not patient negotiations, remained the principal instrument of diplomacy and that Moscow's position was only taken into account so long as it did not contradict the line taken by the United States. In the eyes of the*

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> The NATO-Russian agreement, however, was reached not with top Russian diplomatic officials but with Defence Minister Mikhail Grachev, in face of evident Foreign Ministry misgivings. It was also crafted in a way that permitted Russia to assert that its forces were not, in fact, serving under NATO Command, but were still controlled from Moscow, even though they reported, for operational purposes, to an American General – who just happened also to be Supreme Allied Commander Europe! From Grachev's perspective and that of President Yeltsin, there were clear benefits: following the debacle of the Chechen campaign, the Russian Military would be able to undertake other, successful tasks; Russia was engaging itself in the outside world and was being taken seriously; and it could play a non-trivial role in the most significant corporate European military effort of the day. Indeed, it has done so with 1400 first-class troops who have conducted themselves throughout with high professionalism.

*majority of Russians, the myth of the exclusively defensive nature of NATO was exploded»<sup>39</sup>.*

There has been a similar lack of inhibition in setting out what countervailing measures Moscow might take in response to NATO's actions. These have included specific warnings about how enlargement might necessitate changes in Russia's military strategy and doctrines, resulting in a more antagonistic posture towards the West. For example, Defence Minister Igor Rodionov argued that «*We might objectively face the task of increasing tactical nuclear weapons in the Western regions*»<sup>40</sup>. Enlargement has also been presented as a threat to existing and projected arms-control agreements, such as START II and the Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE) Treaty. On the more political level, there have been frequent warnings that if Russia is to be excluded from Europe, it would seek stronger alliances both with its existing partners in the CIS and with other countries in the East. Russian intentions in this regard were set out in the decree on CIS strategy signed by President Yeltsin in September 1995, which stated that Russia would push harder for the transformation of the CIS into a collective security alliance<sup>41</sup>.

Some of these threats have had practical if limited consequences. However, as Roland Dannreuther notes, this does not detract from the more general pattern that these threats have rarely been pursued with vigour. Once the various crises with NATO have subsided, Russia has consistently sought to patch up relations with the West<sup>42</sup>. Thus, the signing of the 1997 NATO-Russia Founding Act effectively dissipated anti-NATO hysteria during 1995 and 1996.

## Drawing Russia into the NATO Net

In trying to convince Russia both to accept NATO's role in Central and Eastern Europe and to participate in the broad framework of European security that was being crafted, the Allies, led by the principal powers, undertook several initiatives. One was the West's willingness to promote the OSCE. Indeed, throughout the decade after the Cold War, Russia has asserted that the CSCE/OSCE should be the main umbrella

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<sup>39</sup> *Nezavisimaia Gazeta*, 14 March 1997.

<sup>40</sup> Reported in *Komsomolskaia Pravda*, 29 September 1995.

<sup>41</sup> Roland Dannreuther, "Escaping the Enlargement trap in NATO-Russian relations", op. cit., p. 146.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 147.

organisation for all European security efforts, given that virtually all European states belong to it and that each has an equal status. But as NATO gained in importance and success in adapting itself, Russian's view of OSCE new importance on European security cooperation never seemed to materialise. In fact, the OSCE continues to be accorded at least formal importance, mostly for Russian consumption, and short on substance.

Two years after Russia became a founding member of NACC, the NATO allies also tried to convince Moscow to join its PfP initiative and to do so on the same basis as every other member. This was finally achieved in the spring 1995, but only after the Russians could see that NATO was not proceeding, pell-mell, to take in a wide variety of Central European states and, at least not initially, any country that had once been apart of the Soviet Union. By then, as well, there was widespread support within the Alliance for creating a truly special relationship between NATO and Russia, conferring formalistic benefits on Moscow that its inherent power and position justified, in part because of Russian sense of being more important than other European members.

At the practical level, more significant was Russia's agreement in the end 1995 to participate in the newly forming NATO-led Implementation Force (IFOR) for Bosnia, which was willing to recognise a legitimate role for NATO beyond the latter's old boundaries.

Most important was the NATO-Russia Founding Act, signed at the May 1997 Summit in Paris, and the creation of the Permanent Joint Council (PJC). Yet, at the same time, NATO took another step through eastward expansion.

### *Embracing Old Adversaries – part II*

On 10th December 1996 the NAC convened in Brussels. The time to discuss the way forward had now arrived, and a more specific outreach strategy for NATO enlargement, enhanced PfP, and special NATO relationship with Russia was adopted.

First, the allies accepted President Clinton's proposal for a summit in 1997, setting a firm date of July 8-9 in Madrid (Spain having become the most recent NATO ally), at which enlargement would at long last be launched: «*We are now in a position to recommend to our Heads of State and Government to invite at next years Summit meeting one or more countries... to start accession negotiations with the*

*Alliance. Our goal is to welcome the new member(s) by the time of NATO's 50th anniversary in 1999. We pledge that the Alliance will remain open to the accession of further members...»<sup>43</sup>.*

No countries were mentioned, but in the US Senate on February 5, 1997, the new NAA President, Senator William V. Roth Jr., submitted a concurrent resolution calling upon the Alliance to extend invitations to nations “including” the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovenia. Seeking to incorporate a major Southern European nation in the first Wave, France, Greece, Italy, Spain and Turkey sponsored Romania. Given mounting transatlantic concerns about the course of democracy under Prime Minister Vladimir Meciar, Slovakia was regrettably no longer regarded as an early candidate.

As explicit reassurance to Russia, the NATO Foreign Ministers also adopted the so-called three noes: *«NATO countries have no intention, no plan and no reason to deploy nuclear weapons on the territory of new members nor any need to change any aspect of NATO's nuclear posture or nuclear policy – and we do not foresee any future need to do so»*. Another unilateral NATO statement of March 14, 1997, declared that in the foreseeable security environment NATO would carry out its collective defence and other missions by ensuring interoperability, integration and capability for reinforcement rather than by “additional permanent stationing of substantial combat forces”. Both statements built on the language of the 1995 “Study on NATO Enlargement”.

In arms control negotiations, these pledges were enhanced. On February 20, 1997, in CFE, NATO proposed eliminating the anachronistic “group of states” structure of the 1990 NATO-Warsaw Pact Treaty in favour of national and territorial ceilings, and lower force levels including steps by alliance nations to reduce ground equipment “significantly” below the “current” group ceiling. NATO also proposed a stabilisation measure whereby territorial ceilings for total ground equipment would be set no higher than current national levels in the area of Belarus, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia, parts of Ukraine, and the Russian “oblast” Kaliningrad, so that when NATO enlarged it would not pose a new concentration of higher force levels. Exceptions for exercises, peacekeeping, and temporary deployments would be allowed.

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<sup>43</sup> Final Communiqué, Ministerial Meeting of the North Atlantic Council, Brussels, December 10, 1996, in NATO Review, January 1997, pp. 31-35.

These undertakings and proposals fell short of Russian calls for a complete ban on the permanent stationing of all ground and air CFE-limited equipment outside the territory of present NATO members, collective limits on alliances, and binding “guarantees” against infrastructure upgrading and the deployment of nuclear weapons. Nevertheless, NATO was endeavouring to reassure Russia that enlargement would not pose an objective military threat or concern. At the same time, the Alliance was signalling that new members would not be forced to accept “second class” security status in NATO. As Adam Kobieracki, Deputy Head of the Polish OSCE delegation, insisted on March 11 that “under no circumstances” could CFE Treaty adaptation preclude the right of any state to join NATO and to station NATO troops “permanently or provisionally”. Then, NATO explained its approach on April 28: *«Russian perceptions do matter and they must be taken seriously. Continuing Russian anxieties are based on a profound misunderstanding of NATO’s character and intentions. All the more reason, therefore, to make a special effort to allay those fears and remove the misunderstandings. But this cannot be done – and will be not be done – at the expense of other European countries and their interests»*<sup>44</sup>.

NATO was also keenly interested in ensuring that partners who would not be invited early, or those who did not wish to join, would remain interested in the PfP and in rationalising the NACC and PfP to combine the best of both programmes. In this context, the Alliance had recognised that NACC could not endure forever, particularly as nearly all partners were far more interested in the nuts and bolts of the PfP and in more focused political discussion than the NACC offered. As a NATO report of December 3, 1996, “Review of NACC at Five years”, concluded: *«The situation in the NACC area is now radically different from that of the time that NACC was created»*<sup>45</sup>. Then, after the US Secretary of State Christopher in September 1996 having proposed an “Atlantic Partnership Council” to provide for “greater coherence in our cooperation”, the name had become, by April 1997, owing to Russian initiative, the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC). As the successor to NACC, the EAPC would provide the overarching framework for consultations on a broad range of political and security-

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<sup>44</sup> Gebhardt Von Moltke, Assistant NATO Secretary General for Political Affairs, “Political Implications of NATO Enlargement”, Presentation to the NATO Defense College/NAA Symposium on the adaptation of the Alliance, Rome, April 28, 1997.

<sup>45</sup> Bruce George, “Complementary Pillars of European Security: the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the Atlantic Partnership Council», Draft Interim Report of the Subcommittee on Transatlantic and European Organisations, North Atlantic Assembly, March 20, 1997, p. 7.



related issues, with the enhanced PfP an element within the framework, and, in short, would develop and consolidate NATO outreach.

It was unclear how partners would play a greater role in decision-making process, but these measures did not escape controversy. General Klaus Nauman, the Chairman of the NATO Military Committee, informed the NAA on February 16, 1997, that *«we need to protect NATO's right to decide at 16. To embark on solutions which would necessitate consultation with partners before NATO decides whether it wishes to act on its own would give all of us some difficulties to conduct efficient crisis management»*<sup>46</sup>.

On the other hand, while "neutral" countries did not wish to be perceived as participating in a new forum viewed as only a waiting room for NATO membership, nor did they wish to be assigned some indirect responsibility for the security of countries seeking to join the Alliance, there was also concern that the enhanced PfP/EAPC might become a "consolation prize" for partners not invited in the first wave. Certainly, the three Baltic states were expressing increasing anxiety.

On June 20, 1996, President Yeltsin wrote to President Clinton that Russia was willing to provide security guarantees to the Baltic states, or to do so jointly with NATO "if needed" (just as he had proposed cross guarantees enshrined in a NATO-Russia agreement in September 1993). He also stated that *«It is out of the question even a hypothetical possibility of extending NATO's sphere of operation into the Baltic states. This perspective is absolutely unacceptable for Russia, and we would consider any steps in this direction as a direct challenge to our national security interests...»* and *«...destructive of fundamental structures of European Security»*<sup>47</sup>.

Five days later, President Clinton declared, at a meeting in Washington with the Baltic Presidents, that *«the first new members should not be the last»*<sup>48</sup>. The US Ambassador to Sweden declared on November 1996 that for the USA the question was not "if" but "when" for "Baltic membership in NATO"<sup>49</sup>. On their side, the three Baltic nations urged the Alliance to launch an enlargement process in Madrid by recognising prospective NATO members at the summit and providing them with a time table for full membership.

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<sup>46</sup> "Military Dimensions of NATO Enlargement", address by General Klaus Naumann to the North Atlantic Assembly in Brussels, February 16, 1997.

<sup>47</sup> Cit. in NAC, "Baltic Watch: Seminar on Baltic Security Perspectives", Riga, Latvia, December 8-10, 1996, pp. 1-2.

<sup>48</sup> USIS WF, June 25, 1996.

NATO naturally could not admit all states seeking membership all at once or raise expectations without careful regard for meeting membership criteria. Yet, although there is some friction between NATO allies on questions such as “who” and “when”, and to share the cost of expansion, the main obstacle to NATO enlargement was, in fact, the Russian opposition to it.

### *Giving Russia a voice, but not a veto*

In 1996 and 1997, NATO expansion was the leading issue in Russia’s relations with the West. Opposition began to intensify within Russia in response to US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright’s strong support for NATO’s eastward expansion, pushing Russia towards a decision on the issue. In March 1997 President Yeltsin summarised Russia’s position as follows<sup>50</sup>:

- Russia remains negative to plans for NATO enlargement and «especially to the possible eastward advance of the Alliance», and a decision to advance «could lead towards a slide into a new confrontation»;
- the NATO-Russia relationship was not “payment” for enlargement but a separate issue;
- the NATO-Russia document must be a legally binding treaty containing «clearly worded guarantees» of Russia’s security regarding non-expansion of NATO military infrastructure eastward and the non-deployment of foreign forces outside the territories where they are presently deployed. In addition, NATO’s unilateral statement on non-deployment of nuclear weapons should be written into the NATO-Russia document as a permanent pledge;
- Reassurance should also be provided by CFE Treaty adaptation, including limits on alliances, which should be entered into the NATO-Russia document;
- Joint discussions should be initiated on «issues concerning NATO’s transformation, especially since this process is developing slowly, and the aims of NATO’s adaptation to the new conditions, declared in Berlin last year<sup>51</sup>, are far from being implemented». Such discussions should also be initiated for «developing

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<sup>49</sup> USIS WF, November 26, 1996.

<sup>50</sup> Gerald B. Solomon, “NATO Enlargement Debate, 1990-1997, op. cit., pp. 112-113.

coordinated approaches to all issues of European security as well for taking decisions on issues involving Russian interests on a basis of consensus»<sup>52</sup>.

While maintaining its fundamental opposition to an expanded NATO, Russia recognised that enlargement was inevitable and sought a compromise position. Moscow proposed the conclusion of a formal accord that would articulate the cooperative relationship between NATO and Russia, an “act” throughout Moscow sought to preserve some influence on NATO decisions related to Russian interests. Russian leadership sought to make the relationship contractual, with the force (and limitations on NATO’s independence) of a treaty. NATO, however, was supportive of creating a “charter” - the Allies wanted commitments to be political, not legally binding.

At the Russia-US summit held on March 20-21, 1997, in Helsinki, both Presidents Yeltsin and Clinton agreed to disagree on NATO enlargement. Nevertheless, it was also decided «*to minimize the potential consequences of this disagreement*». A NATO-Russia document would

- be signed by heads of state and constitute na «enduring commitment», as NATO did not favor a formal treaty; Yeltsin stated that the document would nevertheless be sent to the Duma for ratification;
- provide for «consultation, coordination, and to the maximum extent possible where appropriate, joint decisionmaking and action on security issues of common concern»;
- reflect and contribute to «the profound transformation of NATO, including its political and peacekeeping dimension»; and
- refer to NATO’s unilateral statement regarding nuclear weapons.<sup>53</sup>

Russia reversed its position on the issue “treaty/charter”, with Yeltsin agree on a non-binding document outlining the Russian-NATO relationship to be signed by each

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<sup>51</sup> In Berlin NATO actually reaffirmed its core function of collective defense, and although progress was made on CJTFs for both collective defense and collective security missions, NATO had never adopted Russia’s proposal that the Alliance become a purely and peacekeeping organisation.

<sup>52</sup> BBC SWB Former USSR, March 17, 1997.

<sup>53</sup> “Joint US-Russian Statement on European Security”, USIS WF, March 21, 1997.

NATO member state. Of course, Communist Party leader Gennadi Zyuganov called the Helsinki arrangements a “Versailles” for Russia<sup>54</sup>.

On January 24 an “anti-NATO association” was formed in the Duma comprising in a few weeks a majority of the deputies, who on April 24 described NATO enlargement as “Drand Nach Osten” (“March to the East”). This raised the obvious concern that whatever was agreed, despite two and a half years of intermittent efforts, could be exploited by nationalist forces as a “capitulation”, thus complicating political life in the same way the Russian government argued that unconditional NATO enlargement could.

Consequently, the Russian administration adopted a policy of consolidating the political system while demanding “economic benefits” as compensation for its approval of NATO’s eastward expansion. This position reflected the perception that “economic chaos and social unrest within the country is a greater danger than foreign military threats”, as was stated in the “National Security Concept” approved by the Security Council in early May 1997<sup>55</sup>.

The product of lengthy negotiations between NATO and Russia was at last came to closure on 14 May 1997 under the anomalous term “Founding Act”. The result, according to President Clinton this date, was that *«Russia will work closely with NATO, but not work within NATO, giving Russia a voice in, but not a veto over NATO’s business»*. Yet, it was also, as Yeltsin’s spokesman declared, *«only the beginning of the struggle in interpreting this agreement»*<sup>56</sup>. On May 19 Yeltsin informed Russian parliamentarians – to whom the act would be submitted for approval – that should the former Soviet republics be invited to join NATO, Russia would have to “reconsider” its relationship with the Alliance. Not surprisingly, Zyuganov immediately described the “Act” as a *«treaty on complete capitulation»*<sup>57</sup>.

Finally, on 27 May 1997, the “Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security between the Russian Federation and NATO” was signed by the Secretary General of NATO and Heads of State and Government of NATO and the Russian President at the Elysée Palace in Paris. The Founding Act aims at strengthening relations between NATO and Russia, and the Russia-NATO Permanent

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<sup>54</sup> BBC SWB Former USSR, March 24, 1997.

<sup>55</sup> Asian Security 1997-1998, op. cit., p. 62.

<sup>56</sup> Atlantic News, May 23, 1997.

<sup>57</sup> BBC SWB Former USSR, May 19, 1997.

Joint Council (PJC) it establishes would serve as regular forum for a close exchange of opinions. Moscow hoped to achieve four objectives:

- To minimise the military consequences of NATO enlargement. Russia needed some reassurance that it could limit the impact of NATO's military advance towards Russia's borders in three areas: stationing nuclear forces; incorporating Soviet-built infrastructure into NATO's capabilities; and stationing foreign troops on the territory of new members.
- To obtain some guarantees against future enlargement, particularly in relation to the Baltic states.
- To enhance Russia's influence on NATO's future transformation, particularly on the development of its "New Strategic Concept".
- To obtain written confirmation of NATO's support for the development of a new European security system with a strengthened OSCE and a commitment not to use force without a UN or OSCE mandate.

The Founding Act was written more from the NATO than the Russian perspective. The fact it was reached was a major concession. It came less than two months before NATO's Madrid summit, at which NATO decided to take in three new members from Central Europe and also declared an "open door" for other countries.

But the Allies also made several concessions in response to Russia's concerns. For Moscow it was of particular importance to be reassured that the security environment in Central and Eastern Europe would not be changed to its detriment as a result of new members joining NATO. None of the new NATO members was located beyond Moscow "red line", although NATO did make a favourable mention of the Baltic states. NATO Allies did concede two major points regarding its military forces: they formally agreed and signed a memorandum to hold talks on revising the CFE Treaty which had become an issue with the conflicts in Chechnya and elsewhere; and they emphasised that they have no intention, no plan and no reason to deploy nuclear weapons on the territory of new members, nor any need to change any aspects of NATO's nuclear posture or nuclear policy<sup>58</sup>. Yet, the Allies gaining Russia acceptance that NATO could upgrade "logistics" in new allied states, thus making possible the reception of NATO forces in a crisis. And in both cases of concession, the allies merely

restated, without negotiation, policies already in effect. The fact that these were “unilateral” statements was important to many allies, which was anxious not to appear to public opinion to be giving up something to Russia that NATO might later need.

For its part, Russia did gain some access to NATO deliberations through the PJC – through without any role in deciding NATO policy outside of the specific subjects to be agreed by the Council: consultation, co-operation, and even potential common action in areas to be agreed. NATO also offered several economic and political incentives in order to secure Russian support for expansion<sup>59</sup>.

The symbolism of the Founding Act – Russia’s acquiescence in NATO’s engagement in Central Europe in exchange for some Russian role in discussing security issues at NATO – was more important than the substance. And in all of the elaboration of process and procedure, much was made of the principle of “transparency”, in particular to assure Central European states that NATO and Russia would not, in any of their deliberations, somehow be brewing up another “Yalta” behind closed doors. This was the immediate benefit for European security and stability. However, there remains the question whether there can be a “strategic partnership” and, if so, whether it can be achieved on the basis of the Founding Act and the PJC.

The signing of the accord between NATO and Russia opened the way for the first expansion of NATO. At the Madrid summit in July 1997, the Atlantic Alliance leaders ceremoniously invited Poland, Hungary and Czech Republic to start accession talks with the Alliance, to step across the old Yalta division and become the NATO’s first independent new recruits from what was once Soviet-dominated Eastern Europe, in time for its 50th birthday party in 1999. To explain why NATO should take in newcomers, President Clinton invoked memories of Eastern Europe’s struggles for freedom – Budapest in 1956, Prague in 1968, and Gdansk in 1981 – and stated that NATO has *«erased an artificial line drawn across Europe by Stalin after the Second World War»*<sup>60</sup>. Also at Madrid, NATO leaders reaffirmed the openness of the Alliance to other new members in a position to further the principles of the NATO and to contribute to security in the North Atlantic area.

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<sup>58</sup> Ulrich Brandenburg, “NATO and Russia: a natural partnership”, NATO Review, vol. 45, n° 4, July-August 1997, web edition, p. 3.

<sup>59</sup> Expanding the Group of Seven industrial leaders to include Russia as a formal member was one example of this. Increased economic assistance from the IMF and World Bank was another. Russia had been asking to be admitted to the Paris Club of major creditor nations, and its request for admission will now be supported.

<sup>60</sup> Cit. in *The Economist*, July 12th, 1997, p. 17.

Yet, Russian concerns were not entirely alleviated by the accord. President Yeltsin has repeatedly stated that Moscow remains opposed to NATO expansion and kept away from Madrid summit.

## The Balance at Risk

With the Founding Act and the Madrid summit in 1997 the Alliance believed it had effectively balanced two contending poles of policy: satisfying Central European demands for inclusion while respecting Russian desires to be accorded a role as a serious European power. The Alliance saw a workable and effective balance in terms of its engagement with Russia – retaining its freedom of action while opening a structured dialogue with Moscow’s representatives. However, all of the language used in the Founding Act was the product of intentional – and fateful – ambiguity. Since both sides were under pressure to reach an agreement before formal invitations went out to Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic to begin membership negotiations, some major differences were left unresolved. Even the status of the document was not resolved.

The different interpretations soon became apparent. Russians soon started criticising the PJC as a “talking shop” with no real decision-making power. NATO has proved reluctant to discuss issues such as the drafting of a New Strategic Concept or the upgrading of NATO candidate states’ armed forces, until they were agreed among all Alliance members. By January 1999, an exasperated Russian Foreign Minister, Igor Ivanov, was warning that *«NATO’s strategic Concept which was worked out without taking into account Russia’s positions and interests, without any consultations with us may inevitably become a source of mutual mistrust»*<sup>61</sup>. On 10 March 1999, the PJC finally took up a discussion of the New Strategic Concept. However, the meeting was dominated by the Kosovo crisis.

The precise meaning of the NATO refrain – that the Founding Act would give Russia a voice but not a veto over NATO’s policies’ – was even more illustrated when NATO decided to bomb Serbia despite Russia’s explicit and vehement opposition and without any attempt to accommodate Russia’s legitimate concerns. On March 12, 1999,

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<sup>61</sup> ITAR-TASS 22 January 1999; BBC Summary of World Broadcasts SWB SU / 3440 B/10, 23 January 1999.

the head of the Russian delegation, Chief of General Staff Anatoly Kvashnin, repeated Russian warnings against the use of force without a UN or OSCE mandate<sup>62</sup>. Two Weeks later, NATO launched its air-strikes against Yugoslavia, thereby transforming Russia-NATO relationship.

### *The Kosovo Crisis*

NATO strikes against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia at the end of March 1999 came as a shock to many in Russia. The use of force without the express sanction of a United Nation's Security Council resolution dramatically devalued not only the Russian veto right but also the former superpower's actual international weight. Moscow was shown to be impotent to prevent a major international military operation in an area that it traditionally regards as crucial to its entire position in Europe.

Yet, Moscow could not properly claim to have been a simple bystander at the development of the Kosovo crises. It was a member of the so-called Contact Group that had a major share of responsibility for diplomacy between Albanian Kosovars and the Belgrade government, and it was represented at both the Rambouillet and Paris negotiations in the Spring of 1999. However, in Russia's interpretation the hopes hinging on more than five years of "partnership approach" did not prevent the Alliance from risking everything for the sake of a military adventure in the Balkans. It was hardly reassuring that NATO's actions came just a few weeks after the first wave of enlargement, a circumstance that only reinforced the view of those in Russia who from the beginning expected enlargement to be a stage in the creation of a more aggressive Alliance.

Immediately after air-strikes began, Russia suspended its participation in the Founding Act and PfP, withdrew its military mission from Brussels, terminated talks on the establishment of NATO's military mission in Moscow, and ordered the NATO information representative in Moscow to leave the country. In an official statement, the Ministry of Defence declared that he saw «no opportunity today to continue cooperation with NATO – the organisation which committed an aggression, the organisation which

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<sup>62</sup> "Kvashnin discusses Kosovo at NATO HQ", BBC SWB SU/3481 B/13, 12 March 1999.



has destroyed the agreements reached in a persistent joint search, as well as ruined those constructive foundations on which this cooperation was beginning to form»<sup>63</sup>.

Many in Russia saw the Kosovo war as NATO's attempt to establish – by means of superior military force – a “new world order” which no longer recognises a UN mandate as a necessary precondition for the use of force, which violates the Helsinki Final Act by interfering in a sovereign state's internal affairs and which undermines the international arms control-regime. All this was seen as part of strategy to establish NATO as the central European collective security institution – which Russia, by promoting the central role of OSCE, had fought so hard to prevent ever since the beginning of the NATO enlargement debate.

The adoption of NATO's New Strategic Concept at the Washington Summit a month later (April 1999), and the Alliance's stated willingness to intervene anywhere in Europe to uphold stability and human rights raised dark suspicions about where NATO might strike next, perhaps even closer to Russia's borders. Such suspicions were only strengthened when, while Russia declined the invitation to attend the Washington Summit, the leaders of Georgia, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan, and Moldova (GUUAM) chose to attend and decided to use the US capital as the venue for a meeting among themselves.

## Old Threats, New Lessons

Despite all its good intentions and the evident need to stop the atrocities in Kosovo region, both for humanity's sake and in order to validate NATO's role as a major security institution, the Alliance's actions did give added credence in Russia to the misperception that NATO was shifting from its purely defensive character and was also prepared to take advantage of Russia's Weakness. Equally significant, the balance that had been carefully struck between Central Europe and Russia in NATO's political perspective was put at risk. NATO's air campaign against Yugoslavia precipitated the most dangerous turn in Russia-Western relations since the early 1980s, and some Russian analysts, convinced that NATO and Russia came close to a direct military confrontation, have compared the situation to the Berlin and Cuban crises of the early 1960s.

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<sup>63</sup> “Russia suspends relations with NATO», BBC SWB SU/3496 B/\$, 30 March 1999.

NATO now carries not only the baggage of Russia's Cold War perceptions, but also the new conviction that *«NATO is not an institution or instrument of security but one of war, murder and aggression»*<sup>64</sup>. At the beginning of the NATO campaign, the overwhelming mood in Moscow was summed up by one Defence Ministry official: *«NATO, as an organisation that has committed an act of aggression and a crime, has no right today to be part of European security system»*<sup>65</sup>.

In this context, Kosovo was a worrying watershed, the first time since the end of the Cold War that Russia and NATO found themselves on opposite sides of an armed conflict. The majority of Russian analysts and politicians have concluded that NATO's action has transformed a local Balkans conflict into a new source of East-West tensions, with a prospect of escalating beyond the Balkans and potentially outside of Europe. This time it is likely that Russian political and military élites will prepare to counter what they see as threats: increasingly instability in Russia and around its borders, and that Kosovo might be the model for NATO intervention in conflicts within former Soviet territory or even Russia itself.

The strong Russian objections and its reaction to NATO's campaign against Yugoslavia is conditioned by a number of factors, including Russia's political weakness, the Caucasus complex, its perception of NATO's recent transformation and expansion, and the bitter Russian sense of loss of superpower status – the feeling of being humiliated and marginalised. Viktor Gobarev gives us another explanation: *«Every country's absolute national interest is to secure protection against any form of aggression. For the first time since 1941, the year of Hitler's invasion, Russians have felt what they see as a direct threat to their national sovereignty. The fact that the war on the Yugoslav Federation has not been formally declared makes it even more threatening: Hitler attacked Russia in 1945 with no declaration of war. Both the Russian elite and ordinary people believe that Serbia is being beaten to humiliate Russia and teach it a lesson»*<sup>66</sup>. Moreover, just as Chechnya has been the prism through which Russians have viewed Kosovo, this conflict has also influenced Russian views of their renewed Chechen war of September 1999.

On the other hand, as difficult as it may be for many of us in the West to understand, Russia genuinely feared that Kosovo was a precedent: *«Who can*

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<sup>64</sup> BBC SWB SU/3497 B/8, 31 March 1999.

<sup>65</sup> Statement by General Ivashov at a press conference on 31 March 1999, BBC SWB SU/3497 B/8, 31 March 1999.

<sup>66</sup> Viktor Gabarev, "Russia and Kosovo – Feeling Threatened", *The World Today*, June 1999, p. 17.

*guarantee that, if not Russia, then somebody else close to Russia will not be punished in the same way?»*, asked one Russian deputy of the Duma<sup>67</sup>. Gobarev plays for the same idea: *«The Russians were convinced that the Alliance was not going to stop after bombing Belgrade. The most likely candidates for the next NATO attacks, they felt, were former Soviet Union Republics where separatist movements were on the rise. Such situation always provides an opportunity to launch interventions on humanitarian grounds. After that, many fear bombing will turn to Russian itself in an effort to end separatist movements, most likely in the Northern Caucasus»*<sup>68</sup>.

These fears were fanned by renewed appeals from Georgia and Azerbaijan for NATO to intervene in their own internal conflicts<sup>69</sup>. Russia's nevralgic sensitivity to CIS military cooperation with NATO comes from a perception that the West, particularly the US and Turkey, seeks to push Russia out of Transcaucasus and confine Moscow's influence to within Russia's borders. In true, with the exception of Belarus and Tajikistan, CIS states either openly supported the NATO air strikes or did not actively oppose them. Again, the second Chechen war that started in September 1999 embodied all of these fears. Unlike the first war in 1994-1996, Russia now ruled out any outside mediation, or even the direct involvement of Western humanitarian organisations in helping refugees. Any Western involvement is now viewed as a NATO foot in the door.

It is hard to recognise, but the fact is that the much-touted institutions for confidence-building and cooperation between NATO and Russia – including the Founding Act and the PJC – failed when tested by their first real crisis. Facing a stark conflict of interests – interests that are important but not vital to each side's security – the former adversaries sacrificed the years of hard work spent establishing good relations, and now chose to ignore each other's positions. And it was not the NATO-Russia Council, but Russia's relations with, and membership of non-NATO

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<sup>67</sup> Transcript of the Plenary Session of the Russian State Duma, 3 February 1999.

<sup>68</sup> Viktor Gobarev, op. cit.

<sup>69</sup> Georgian President Eduard Shevardnadze suggested that events in Kosovo could set a good example for a speedy and fair settlement of the conflict in the Abkhazia and sought military intervention from the west to guarantee the return of Georgian refugees. Azerbaijan sought to exploit the Kosovo crisis to establish closer military cooperation with NATO and Turkey, as the Azeri foreign policy adviser Vafa Guluzade stated: «I really think that in the current situation Azerbaijan should bolster military cooperation with the West to ensure its security. To start with, it could not be so bad to move the US military base in Turkey to the Apsheron Peninsula in Azerbaijan. I think that US strategic interests in the Caucasus require a US military base on this region» (BBC SWB SU 3442 F/1, 26 January 1999). Azerbaijan was also the first CIS state to volunteer for peacekeeping duty, as a part of a Turkish battalion with NATO forces in Kosovo.

institutions – such as the UN, the OSCE, the EU, the Contact Group and G-8 – which provided the framework for Russia’s constructive engagement in resolving the Kosovo crisis.

In spite of all mistrust, Moscow recognised that cannot avoid dealing with the Alliance on individual issues where interests coincide, and accepted participate in the peacekeeping operation. Thus, for Russian politicians and military commanders, the costly participation in KFOR was justified on three grounds: to prevent NATO from unilaterally setting up a permanent military presence in the region; to reaffirm Russia’s own interests in the region; and to protect the minority Serb population against Albanian “terrorists” while monitoring implementation of the UN Resolution on KLA disarmament and the preservation of Yugoslavia’s territorial integrity<sup>70</sup>. In fact, the unexpected and in many ways irrational dash of 200 Russian troops to Pristina airport on 11 June guaranteed Russia’s place in the NATO-led force of peacekeeping even before the actual rules of participation were worked out, but also showed how Moscow was desperate for a say in the final settlement for Kosovo and ultimately exposed the Russian political and military’s weakness. The Russian initial jubilation following the June 1999 deployment to Pristina Airport was quickly subdued by NATO’s success in obtaining Romanian and Bulgarian refusal to permit their airspace to be used by Russian aircraft to provide logistical support and reinforcements.

Although tensions have eased somewhat with the end of the Kosovo war, the anger and suspicions engendered on the Russian side will not easily dissipate. Moscow renewed its pressure to limit NATO enlargement, and it has already started to update its military doctrine to address NATO’s New Strategic Concept.

### *Russian Military Doctrine and Reform*

The Soviet armed forces were built up and deployed according to the strategic missions of fighting and limiting damage in a global nuclear war, winning wars in Europe and in the East Asia in a large-scale multi-theatre war, and conducting subregional operations in support of its third world clients.

With the end of Cold War, the implosion of the USSR, and the loss of its empire, changing military requirements and resource limitations have provided a double

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<sup>70</sup> Oksana Antonenko, op. Cit., p. 137.

incentive for radical military reform in Russia since the early 1990s. Although opinions differ on infinite details, some consensus has appeared in Russia on the basic principles of the military reform:

- First was the need to sacrifice quantity for much better quality.
- Second, resulting from the changes in Russia's security environment was the need to redirect the armed forces from preparing for global or large-scale protracted nuclear and conventional wars to local and regional conflicts of much shorter duration.
- Third was the need to redirect the main effort in strategic contingency planning from the traditional global or West European theatres to the Southern (meaning the Transcaucasus and Central Asia) and later the East Asian theatres.
- Finally, a point of almost universal agreement was that the nuclear forces should have highest priority in the Russian defence posture. This was considered as a compensation for the absolute and relative weakening of the country's conventional capabilities and the new vulnerability of its geopolitical situation. It is also seen as an "umbrella" for implementing military reform and the only remaining heritage of the Soviet superpower status and role in world affairs<sup>71</sup>.

At this time, Moscow had emphasised that the main threats derived from internal economic crisis and local conflicts along Russia's borders, and had assessed the likelihood of large-scale war as low.

However, NATO expansion eastward, the Alliance's New Strategic Concept (which apparently allows it to supplant the UN Security Council and embrace the whole planet as its zone of responsibility), and the Kosovo campaign triggered a revision of Russia's military doctrine and further adjustment to its defence policies. In fact, for the first time since the end of the Cold War, these events allowed Russians to imagine a projection of NATO military force into their own territory, a nightmare scenario particularly for a former superpower.

Following repeated threats to revise the doctrine in response to the Kosovo war, the Ministry of Defence on 9 October 1999 finally published its new draft, reflecting key lessons that the Russian military took from previous years. The document reflects

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<sup>71</sup> Alexei Arbatov, "Russia: Military Reform", SIPRI Yearbook 1999, p. 201.

significant changes in the assessment of threats to Russian security, shifting the balance from internal to external concerns. The new draft doctrine, by contrast with previous, emphasises the threat of direct military aggression against Russia and its allies, a threat that can only be deterred by conducting active foreign policy and maintaining high readiness of conventional and nuclear forces. Cited threats include:

- intervention into internal affairs of the Russian Federation;
- attempts to ignore and infringe upon Russia's interests in addressing international security problems, and to prevent Russia from becoming of the influential power centre in a multipolar world;
- the intentional weakening of the UN and the OSCE;
- conducting military campaigns without a UN mandate and in violation of international law;
- undermining international arms-control agreements;
- outside support for extremist nationalist-ethnic and religious separatist movements;
- increased concentration of armed forces near the borders of Russia and her allies, thus undermining the balance of forces;
- establishment and provision of logistical and training support of various paramilitary groups on the territory of foreign states, for the purpose of activity on the territory of Russia and its allies;
- enlargement of military alliances at the expense of the security of Russia and its allies;
- disinformation and propaganda campaigns , through press, mass media and new information technologies, against the interests of Russia and its allies;
- international terrorism<sup>72</sup>.

Although the doctrine refrains from explicitly stating that such threats come from the West – and does not mention NATO – the language makes abundantly clear to whom and to what it refers.

In addition to Russia's growing economic inferiority, the growing gap in military capabilities is making Russia extremely uncomfortable. Only 10 years ago the Warsaw Pact had three times as many conventional forces as NATO, twice as many theatre and tactical nuclear weapons, and the same numbers of strategic nuclear forces. In Europe alone the USSR was twice as strong in conventional forces as all the

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<sup>72</sup> Oksana Antonenko, op. cit., p. 134.

European NATO states together<sup>73</sup>. Now, in addition to superiority in conventional arms in Europe, NATO has substantial superiority over Russia in both tactical and strategic nuclear forces. This imbalance is recognised by Russian experts and politicians: in August 1999, Russian Prime Minister Sergei Stepashin stated «*we cannot say that our military is as capable as in other countries*»<sup>74</sup>. Together with economic constraints on purchases of new equipment, this imbalance has encouraged the Russian military to increase its reliance on nuclear weapons. Russia had already renounced its nuclear non-first-use policy in 1993; at the ending 1999, the military leadership once again emphasised its determination to use nuclear weapons if it cannot mount an adequate conventional response to aggression.

Moscow reaffirms the general reorientation of Russia's threat perceptions over the past few years, from West to South, and recognises that conventional or nuclear war with NATO is unthinkable. However, this might be changed by NATO enlargement and/or NATO's use of force outside its area of responsibility. After all, after the addition of the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland, the next wave of NATO enlargement will probably bring NATO much more closer to Russia's borders. If its relations with an enlarging Alliance are not settled politically, Russia will have to rely on the doctrine of "extended nuclear deterrence", much as NATO did in the 1950s and 1960s.

Table 1. Russian "National Defence" as a share of GNP and of the Federal Budget, 1994-1999

	"National Defence" Budget Current Roubles	"National Defence" as share of GNP (%)	"National Defence" as share of Federal Budget (%)
1994	40 626.0 tr.	<i>5.60</i>	<i>20.89</i>
1995	59 378.8 tr.	<i>3.76</i>	<i>20.85</i>
1996	82 462.3 tr.	<i>3.59</i>	<i>18.92</i>
1997	104 317.5 tr.	<i>3.82</i>	<i>19.76</i>
1998	81 765 b. <sup>a</sup>	<i>2.97</i>	<i>17.32</i>
1999	93 703 b. <sup>a</sup>	<i>2.34</i>	<i>16.29</i>

Notes: <sup>a</sup> The Rouble was redenominated on 1 Jan. 1998, at the rate of 1 new rouble = 1000 old.

Figures in italics are percentages.

Source: Alexei Arbatov, "Russia: Military Reform", SIPRI Yearbook 1999, p. 200.

<sup>73</sup> A. Konovalov, "Towards a new division of Europe? Russia and the North Atlantic Alliance", *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, 7 December 1994.

<sup>74</sup> ITARR-TASS, 7 August 1999.

## Russia's Feeling Threatened

The new Russia, as an Eurasian country with a multinational population and the "heiress" of a former superpower, faces security problems of a very different character than the US or its allies in Europe. Moreover, Russia confronts domestic challenges on a scale unseen in most post-communist countries. A chaotic economic performance, the fragility of the building political system of a country whose territorial integrity is threatened, a growing criminalisation of the country and a progressive "oligarchisation" of the regime – taken together these undermine internal security and make Russia's interaction with the outside world volatile and dependent on large scale on domestic developments.

Russia is still experiencing considerable difficulties in adapting itself to the country's radically changed geopolitical situation. The loss of superpower status and the sudden emergence of new states on Russia's periphery are sources of considerable unease and confusion, which are often exploited by all the forces that believe that Russia is in an "imperial predicament". The post-imperial frustration is exacerbated by the fact that Russia's position with respect to a number of traditional security parameters, such access to the high seas and availability of critical resources, etc., has significantly deteriorated with the disintegration of the former USSR a decade ago. Furthermore, new problems of the utmost sensitivity have emerged, above all the plight of tens of millions of ethnic Russians who have suddenly found themselves living outside "their" country. All this exacerbated by the Russia feeling of being marginalised and outcast, both from Europe and Asia. The former superpower is now facing the fear of its exclusion from international affairs.

### *Non-European Security Problems*

As Russia extends far beyond Europe, so its security agenda respect also of non-European security problems which, however, affect Russia's posture as an actor on the European scene. Operating in Europe is not the Russia's only role, even if Moscow considers such a role as the top priority.



Suffice it to mention the place in the agenda for Russia's immediate neighbour – the Chinese giant. In fact, China is a major uncertainty in Russia's security environment and requirements. Its current military build-up, geo-strategic situation and long history of territorial disputes with Russia and the USSR make it impossible for Moscow to exclude any threat scenarios, despite the present cooperation, border agreements, mutual troop reduction agreements and the “strategic partnership” with Beijing<sup>75</sup>.

Also in East Asia, Japan may present a threat to Russia in future decades. Japan's offensive conventional capabilities which could be used against Russia are limited, and will be so at least for the next decade, although for the first time since 1945 its forces are numerically comparable to Russian deployments in the Russian Far East and much better in quality. On the other hand, Japan disputes Russia's Southern Kurile Islands, and he is also an ally of the USA. So, its remilitarization and a revival of its expansionist strategies cannot be ruled out in the future<sup>76</sup>.

The problems related to Korean Peninsula and the Taiwan issue also represents a major concern for Moscow's security interests in East Asia.

In Central Asia, Turkey in particular, but also Afghanistan, Pakistan, and less likely Iran, may present a security problem individually or in some combination. A threat might materialise through their support of regimes, movements or policies in the Transcaucasus and Central Asia which are directed against Russia or, still worse, might take the form of encouraging ethnic and religious separatism in the Russian Northern Caucasus and Volga regions. The political shifts of national forces in the region should not be underestimate as the background to possible paramilitary activities and clashes.

Russia has a specific agenda with respect to the CIS area, which is settled by Moscow as its traditional “sphere of influence”. In the CIS area Moscow has better chances to contain instabilities than anyone else, at least in Russia's view, but its efforts on promoting “integration” with the former Soviet Republics cause apprehension in those nations where Russia is suspected of designing to turn the CIS into its “velvet empire”. Such a suspicion exists even more so in the light of Russia's obvious inclination to treat the CIS as its exclusive zone of influence to which other

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<sup>75</sup> For a better understanding of the Russia's interests in Northeast Asia, as well its security problems in this region see, for example, Luis J. R. Leitão Tomé, “A Segurança e a Estabilidade no Noroeste da Bacia do Pacífico” (“Security and Stability in Northeast Asia”), Universidade Técnica de Lisboa – ISCSP, Tese de Mestrado em Estratégia (Master Degree Thesis), Lisboa 1999, 342 pag.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

international actors should be denied or enjoy significantly limited access. The CIS is on the top priority for Moscow, but the reconstruction of a collective defence system, by Russian parameters, in this area risks to complicate Russian relations with former Soviet Republics and other international actors. At the same time, it could also risks Russian territorial integrity, already threatened by separatist movements in Northern Caucasus.

Despite Russia's sensitivity towards all these non-European security problems, its main problem consists in developing and implementing a broader strategy of promoting the country's role and re-establishing its international status. That's why its relations with the West are so important to Moscow, and that's why Russia's problems with European security are of a different character.

### *Why Russia doesn't trusts NATO*

The main source of Russian disillusionment with NATO is the perception that the member states of the Alliance have consistently made promises and offered concessions, particularly over the issue of enlargement, which they have subsequently reneged upon. This perception has resulted in a widespread consensus in Moscow that NATO's stated intention of developing a genuinely cooperative relationship with Russia cannot be trusted, and that the Alliance seeks to marginalise and exclude Russia from European and international affairs.

From early 1990s, Russian Foreign Minister Kozyrev and President Yeltsin tried to continue the broad lines of Gorbachev's foreign policies, as expressed in the optimistic concept of a "common European home". For Russia it meant rapid and full integration into European institutions and the creation of pan-European security architecture. Moscow understood that a process of integration would require certain sacrifices from Russia – like supporting Western policies in the Middle East or the Balkans, or withdrawal of troops from Central and Eastern Europe, despite Moscow's financial difficulties – based on the assumption that Russia would be fully integrated into a European security system, with NATO as an important element. In 1993, Kozyrev and Yeltsin even accepted the idea of NATO enlargement, albeit briefly.

However, Moscow started to realise that NATO enlargement would be neither accompanied by Russia's integration into the Alliance, nor by a most profound NATO-Russian dialogue, nor even by NATO's transformations into a political institution. NATO's 1994 Brussels Summit, with its commitment to enlargement,

against clearly expressed Russian opposition, became a watershed for relations. Russian disillusionment included the bitter realisation that “sacrifices” were in vain and had contributed only to Russia’s weakness. Many in Russia concluded that the Alliance sought to draw new dividing lines in Europe, posing new military challenges as NATO’s military forces approached Russia’s borders at a time of profound political-economic crisis and military decline. Russian President has warning about the danger of a “Cold Peace”.

Alarmed by Russia’s growing opposition to enlargement, NATO sought to repair relations. The idea was to convince Moscow that it could build a partnership with NATO despite disagreements over enlargement. NATO also gave itself some time to address Russian opposition by announcing the PfP programme, which was open to all non-NATO members. Once again, each side had very different expectations about the “partnership”. “New NATO” enthusiasts were trying to persuade Russia that NATO Enlargement is not a threat to national security interests of Russia, and that it even should be in Russia’s interests by achieving stability on its western borders. Yet, the prevailing Russian view was that NATO sought to contain Russia’s political influence and prevent it from re-emerging as a strong regional power. On the other hand, Moscow still hoped that NATO enlargement could be prevented if the Alliance understood that Russia no longer presented a threat. Moscow finally accepted to join the PfP in June 1994, hoping to transform it into a substitute for NATO membership for Central and East European states, rather than a mechanism to prepare them for membership. In the meantime, Russian political and military elite became increasingly concerned about the active involvement of states of the CIS in the PfP, seen as a challenge to Russian interests throughout the former Soviet space. And, of course, Russia was particularly concerned about the threat of Baltic state’s membership of NATO.

Once NATO had reaffirmed its commitment to enlargement, backlash against the partnership idea intensified. However, Russia now sought cooperation with NATO on a new basis: not the exploitation of common interests, but the containment of enlargement’s negative consequences. Throughout 1995-1997 period, the two sides negotiated the draft of what was later called the “Founding Act” (May 1997), which was interpreted, by Russia as an indication that NATO was ready to grant Moscow a new mechanism to influence alliance policies. In fact, Russia was offered the opportunity to join NATO in establishing a special body, the Permanent Joint Council, to consult about

and – when appropriate – join in decision-making and joint action. For Moscow, this meant an equal voice in discussion with NATO, rather than the role of junior partner, unlike PfP. For NATO, however, the Founding Act and the PJC was evidence that Russia had acquiesced in the first wave of NATO enlargement, by not making good on its threat of disengagement and encouraging its own military reform. Moreover, it was a mechanism to “give Russia a voice, but not a veto”. Once again, the different interpretations soon became apparent, and Russians started criticising the new mechanism as merely a “talking shop”.

When NATO decided to intervene in Kosovo in March 1999, despite Moscow’s explicit and vehement opposition, Russian concerns were only accentuate. Russia’s suspension of cooperation with NATO as a consequence of NATO attacks on Serbia not only indicated Russian disillusionment with the new consultative arrangements. There was a tendency to view NATO’s perceived anti-Russia orientation as, in Soviet terminology, “not accidental but part of a broader and deliberate strategy. This strategy is perceived to be a continuation of the Cold War policies of Containment and marginalisation. Thus, the projection of NATO as the predominant force for the resolution of regional and international conflicts, as stated in the Alliance’s “New Strategic Concept”, is viewed as an attempt by the West, and NATO in particular, to assert its supremacy and to marginalise critical voices such as Russia’s. In fact, the fora where Russia has both a voice and a veto, such as the UN and the OSCE, have been marginalised. As Kosovo showed, Russian positions, opinions and suggestions were completely disregarded by NATO.

### *Why Russia opposes to NATO’s Enlargement*

After the sense that NATO could not be trusted, the second driving force behind Russia’s fierce opposition to the NATO enlargement is the bitter Russian sense of loss its superpower status – the feeling of being humiliated, marginalised, driven out of Europe and outcast. Anything that is perceived as denying Russia a respectable place in an evolving European security space, or which relegates it to the sidelines of European developments and undermines attempts by Moscow to reassert its warning influence on the Continent provokes a painful reaction in Russian’s minds.

Yet, Russian concerns over its exclusion from broader international relations are of less immediate concern than the perception that NATO's strategy includes a deliberate policy to weaken or even supplant Russian influence in its immediate neighbouring region, particularly among the former Soviet states. This is the third factor that explains Russia's opposition to NATO enlargement. It is this that has always been the most explosive dimension of the Russian-NATO dispute.

That's why Russian concerns over NATO's eastward enlargement also extend further South to the Caucasus and Central Asia. In these regions, Russia views one NATO member, Turkey, as pursuing an explicit policy of extending its influence at the expense of Russia. The "West", and especially the US, is seen to be supporting Turkish ambitions, in particular by utilising the PfP programme to wean the countries of the Caucasus and Central Asia away from their close relations with Russia and their commitments to the CIS.

From the Russian perspective, NATO enlargement represents a fundamental shift in Western perceptions of Russia: away from perceiving Russia as a "partner" in European and international affairs to viewing Russia as a proto-imperial power which has consistently failed to overcome its Soviet and imperial legacy. Even if Russia no longer represents a traditional military threat, the West appears to be punishing Russia, most notably through the process of NATO enlargement, for its failure to conform to the norms and values of the democratic and anti-imperialist standards. For Russia, the strongly anti-imperialist orientation of Western policy, with its most concrete expression in NATO enlargement, appears not only to be unjustified but also potentially dangerous.

Related to this is another factor: the ambiguity of NATO's nature. The predominant opinion in Russia is that regardless of all fig leaves, NATO extends as a defensive alliance designed to defend against (deter, threaten or isolate) nobody else but Russia – that's why NATO goes closer to Russian borders.

One basic problem that flows from this conventional Russian interpretation is that it becomes very difficult for Russian leaders, even of a liberal or reformist orientation, to promote a positive image of NATO to the general population. One of the reasons, therefore, why liberal and reformists in Russia are fearing and opposing to NATO enlargement is because it weakens their own position domestically, and strengthens anti-Western and anti-reform sentiments, which undermines a more pro-Western orientation. But the damage is potentially more insidious, particularly as

enlargement feeds the perception that NATO treats post-Soviet Russia not as the historic partner in the destruction of the Soviet Union, but as the potential incubator for the emergence of new “Soviet challenge”. This difficulty was captured well by Nadia Arbatova in a Conference in Lisbon in 1997: *«Russian democrats do not understand what Russia did after the dissolution of the USSR to be punished in such a way and what the reason is for the rush with NATO’s extension... One of the lessons drawn by Russian political elite... is that any attempts to be better and to become part of the civilised international community won’t be appreciated and paid off politically if you are weak and if you are not inducing fear: nobody liked the USSR, but its position could not be ignored at least because it was military strong. So Russia may be tempted to come back to more self-assertive if not nationalist course in order to revive its prestige and power. In sum, what Russian nationalists failed to do – to destroy New Political Thinking – was done by NATO’s extension»<sup>77</sup>.*

All these factors accentuate Russian’s feeling of being threatened and punished by NATO enlargement. However, I think we could say that the main source of Russian opposition to this process is the fear of the precedent it set for the future NATO membership of the Baltic states, Ukraine, or even some of the Caucasus countries. Likewise, the NATO acting both out-of-area and without the explicit authorisation of the UN, as demonstrate in Kosovo and in the “New Strategic Concept”, is viewed principally in terms of the precedent it set for potential western intervention in support of secessionist claims closer to, or within, Russian borders.

## Russia, NATO Enlargement, and European Security

*Dangerous implications for European security that could emanate from Russian opposition to NATO’s extension*

NATO enlargement could be counterproductive because it could trigger a backlash in Russia, which would have a negative impact in European security affairs and dangerous implications for all European space. First, Russian nationalists and

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<sup>77</sup> Nadia Alexandrova Arbatova, “Russia and the European Security after the Madrid Decisions”, op. cit.,

political opportunist have another weapon to use against pro-Western factions in Russia's political arena. At a minimum, this would push those who would like to engage the West constructively to adopt tougher policies toward neighbouring states and on arms control. Russia may be tempted to come back to more self-assertive or nationalist course in order to revive its prestige and power. The emergence of a kinder, gentler Russia is far from certain, but it is not in the interests of the NATO's members that opportunists come to power in Russia and adopt much more aggressive policies toward Europe or that would make Russia authoritarianism and belligerence more likely. A new East-West confrontation could develop.

Second, NATO expansion could oblige Russia to search for other allies of its own in South and East. The breath of opposition to NATO and the "West", which brought China into a common posture with Russia, is disquieting: they already announced a "strategic partnership"! On the other hand, the "virtual partnership" with Iran against Turkey and the West on Caucasus issues is also a new and dangerous development.

Third, this process may result in Moscow's higher reliance on nuclear weapons, since Russia conventional forces are too weak as a consequence of disintegration of the USSR, economic crisis, failures of the military reform, and since Russian leaders are becoming more worried by NATO's actions and by NATO's new proximity to Russian borders.

Fourth, the arms control treaties and negotiations could also be affected by Russian negative impression of NATO's enlargement. For example, it could undercut Western efforts to deal with the dangers posed by nuclear leakage from the former Soviet Union – the possibility that nuclear weapons and fissile material could find their way to North Korea, Iran, Iraq, Libya, or terrorist organisations is really a nightmare scenario that threaten every countries. Preventing nuclear leakage is crucial for European and international security, but progress will be more difficult if NATO enlargement changes Russian calculations about the value of cooperating with the West.

Fifth, enlargement could leave Moscow to force rapidly the "integration" within the CIS area, designing it into its own empire. This could be absolutely disastrous for the European security because, on the one hand, it may destabilise all CIS region, possibly with military confrontations that could affect us, at least indirectly, and, on the other hand, it may reverse the major positive trend resulted from the end of

bipolarity in World affairs: the end of the division of the European Continent into two halves.

Finally, the new NATO mission of promoting stability throughout Europe could be also at risk. Likewise, the unanimous post-Cold War dream to promote new security architecture covering the whole Europe may be impossible to accomplish. It would be also much more problematic to intervene in ethnic/religious conflicts or other kinds of disturbances in Europe. In fact, there can be no pan-European security system without Russia or if NATO and Russia are opposing each other. Even if the allies are inclined to act, they will have trouble defining clear political objectives and effective military strategy, just because the unexpected Russian posture or threat. In the worst-case scenario, it's the alliance between NATO members themselves that could be also at risk.

This very significant danger for the future resulting from the NATO expansion process does not mean, however, that NATO enlargement so far has been a mistake. Despite apocalyptic predictions, Russia seems accommodate itself, if without grace, to the accession of Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic, which is a clear signal that the geopolitical games of the past, where Central Europeans were the pawn of the great powers, are no longer acceptable. More unexpectedly, enlargement prompted the Russian leadership to engage more constructively with its neighbours in the CIS and also with the Western European countries and organisations - just look at the first foreign visits of President Putin, as well his statements looking for a new relationship between Russia and Western Europe. In addition, the relative speed with which NATO has enlarged towards the East can be seen as serving a valuable purpose in ensuring the EU to fulfil its own promises of enlargement.

Thus, the more problematic question is where NATO goes from here.

#### *Where NATO goes from here*

Even excluding Russian concerns, the potential new applicants for membership are not particularly attractive. Romania and Bulgaria have weak economies and, along with Slovakia, have yet to consolidate their internal democratic systems. Slovenia might be a more suitable candidate, but it's difficult to see how its



incorporation could contribute anything directly to NATO capabilities – it would thus be primarily symbolic because it means an Alliance foot into the Balkans.

Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania pose particular difficulties with regard to NATO's open door policy and with respect to an early second enlargement round. Like the Central Europeans, these countries have experienced a tumultuous history in a region where Russia and key European powers have competed for strategic and ideological influence. But the three Baltic states have more substantial reasons to be concerned about their national security. The recent decades of Soviet occupation and integration have left a heavy legacy: Russian minorities, border disputes, military equipment, and the Russian enclave of Kaliningrad are only four of the problems that could prove to be obstacles to their integration in NATO. In fact, there is a strong psychological component involved as regards the territory of the former USSR, not its "outer empire". On the other hand, there also exist concerns about the ramifications for Russian security in view of these countries' aspiration to join NATO, concerns such as access to the Baltic Sea and the maintenance of ties with the strategically important Russian minorities.

Complicating the issue further, Russia has defined the Baltic region as a part of the so-called "near-abroad", and has therefore drawn a "red line" with respect to further steps towards NATO enlargement. The nightmare of a NATO moving gradually but continuously closer to Russian borders will disturb even those moderate voices in Russia which appears to have accepted NATO's first enlargement as an inevitable evil.

The three Baltic states strongly assert their legitimate right to join NATO, and have shown great interest in close cooperation with existing Euro-Atlantic security structures. But the true is that in this regard there emerges a classic "security dilemma": from the standpoint of security, the Baltic States have many more reasons to aspire to be under NATO's umbrella than Central Europeans; yet, this very intention has the potential of provoking a much more severe crisis than that related to the first round of NATO expansion. Consequently, extending such security guarantees without the military capability to defend these states or without a strong and profound political compromise with Russia would be both irresponsible and a potential threat to the integrity of the alliance and to the peace in Europe.

## Conclusions and Recommendations

*«Zooropa... don't worry baby. It's gonna be alright.  
Zooropa.... uncertainty .... can be a guiding light»*  
U2, "Zooropa"

*« There is no problem on the [European] Continent that is not made more manageable through Russian cooperation, and none that does not become more intractable if Moscow defines its interests in ways that oppose Western interests. »*  
Robert D. Blackwill<sup>78</sup>

The NATO alliance proved its value in the first decade after the Cold War and its pre-eminence as Europe's principal security actor seemed assured. Success carries dangers, however. Despite the evidence of Russian quiescence, it would be a mistake to believe that Russia is impotent to act in an obstructionist manner, or that there might not be other costs for the West in pursuing policies that are consistently opposed by Moscow. **Despite its chronic economic and political chaos, Russia remains an influential actor in European security affairs.** Thus, the main external challenge to the Alliance remains Russia, which continues to assert its forceful opposition to the general evolution of NATO strategy and activism in European Security affairs. **How Russia positions itself within the new Europe is perhaps the most important single factor that will determine European security in the decades to come.**

As we demonstrate, there are several elements that help to provide an explanation about Russian opposition to NATO's eastward expansion:

- the fear of the precedent it set for future rounds of NATO's adherence, particularly of the Baltic States, Ukraine or even some of the Caucasus countries;
- the perception that NATO's stated intention of developing a genuinely co-operative relationship with Russia cannot be trusted;
- the sense that the Alliance seeks to marginalise and exclude Russia from European and international affairs, and also to supplant Russia's influence in its immediate neighbouring region, the CIS, especially in the Caucasus area;

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<sup>78</sup> Robert D. Blackwill et al., "Engaging Russia: a Report of the Trilateral Commission", The Trilateral Commission, New York, 1995, p. 25.

- the ambiguity of NATO's present nature: in Russian view, NATO extends as a defensive alliance designed to defend or threaten nobody else but Russia;
- the fear that NATO's enlargement process may weaken democrats and liberals internal position by strengthens anti-NATO and anti-Western feelings among the Russian people.

Further enlargement decisions could be postponed until Russia had advanced down the path to democracy and economic prosperity. Then, subsequent enlargement steps would probably cause much less concern in Russia and may not be perceived as opposed to Moscow's vital interests.

However, the Alliance cannot wait upon Russia to sort out its internal problems before fully engaging other countries anxious to be part of the "West". Indeed, it may be some time before the West has a true interlocutor in Russia able to judge its best, long-term strategic interests; to act coherently and effectively on the basis of that judgement; and to make and keep commitments to NATO and others. On the other hand, the Alliance cannot afford simply to write off Russia – we know well that the broadest of Western goals for security throughout the Continent cannot be achieved with Russia isolated, neglected or marginalised.

These dilemmas may be irreconcilable in the short term, but they could have been alleviated in the longer run. The answer is a shared perception, both by Russia and NATO allies, that avoiding a new "great game" over European security issues is a shared responsibility. Here, some balance in perspective and policy is needed in order to prevent any destabilising consequences from occurring – by giving Russia a voice in European security to be heard and respected; by offering Russia full-scale involvement in European affairs; and by engaging Russia in the post-Soviet area in full respect towards its sensitivities, operating there with Russia and not against it.

On this last point, while NATO should continue to bolster the military reform and development of democratic institutions in PfP countries of the Eastern Europe, Transcaucasus and Central Asia, neither the Alliance nor any of its members individually should seize upon Russia's weakness to develop challenges in these regions that could become sources of long-term instabilities or even conflicts. Russians must not be given to believe in a new "containment" of their country, based upon any reality of Western policy directed against it. At the same time, Moscow cannot expect blanket tolerance for its own actions, even within its own territory, when it goes to

the extend of brutal campaigns such as in Chechnya, including substantial civilian casualties. Russian actions that violate reasonable norms require the appropriate criticism and condemnation by the rest of the international community.

The inherent tension on this can only be contained if NATO-Russian relations are seen on both sides to be of limited scope and liability, with a shared judgement that developing that relationship in its European dimension is more important than pressing for advantage farther East.

It is in the West's direct self-interest to promote a more constructive Russian posture in European security affairs. A cooperative Russia in Europe could also have a positive impact on Russian behaviour in others parts of the world, such as the Central Asia, the Middle East or the East Asia, where there exist potential conflicts of interests between Russia and the West, and where a constructive Russian stance would be a valuable asset for regional conflict management. In the final analysis, it is better to have a cooperative Russia with you, than an obstructionist Russia against you.

During the 1990s, the key focus on relations between Russia and the West has been on the role of NATO – directly with Russia, indirectly in Central Europe, and especially in regard to the former Yugoslavia. However, the potential roles of the UN and the OSCE should also not be ignored. Russian diplomacy invested considerable political capital in trying to streamline the decision-making structures of the OSCE and to promote the organisation as a more prominent actor in Europe. The Western rejection of these “démarches” was perhaps to hasty. Both the OSCE and UN can play in encouraging Russian cooperation in European affairs and are also instruments for exerting Western influence on Russia. These are the only external security organisations that Russia permits into its own territory or on the territory of those neighbouring countries where Russian forces are engaged in peacekeeping operations. These organisations have not inherited the legacy of distrust that mars Russian-NATO relations, and although the UN and the OSCE missions have been small, they do have offer the West some leverage over Russian behaviour while they also “give Russia a voice and a veto”.

That NATO enlargement might appear to be at an impasse does not mean that the West's opening to the East has to stop. In fact, if the West is to define a more harmonious relationship with Russia, the EU in particular needs to position itself to take a more strategic role. Above all, the EU needs to take the initiative from NATO in driving the process of eastward enlargement, and to take a more authoritative role in

the transformation of Central and Eastern Europe. The EU can thus start to heal some of the divisions between “insiders” and “outsiders” that NATO’s enlargement has necessarily provoked. It has the principal task of healing the divisions between Eastern and Western Europe, and ensuring that an enlarging Union continues to secure the support of as many countries as possible, including Russia.

All this is no mean task, either for Russia or for the West. However, it seems important not to underestimate the considerable advantages that Europe enjoys today – in comparison, for instance, to most of its history from the 16th through 20th Centuries. Assuming that Russia really wants to be a positive participant in European politics and security, we all cannot lose this opportunity of historic proportions. Only with Russia and not without it – and this in all key dimensions of politics, economics, and military affairs – can Europe achieve lasting security for the future. If Europe fail to grasp this opportunity we could be heading for a new global catastrophe, as Vaclav Havel predicts<sup>79</sup>.

But as the future is a long way, it seems that both NATO and Russia will continue to act accordingly with Decimus Laberius (First Century B.C.) slogan: *«Treat your friend as if he will one day be your enemy, and your enemy as if he will one day be your friend»*.

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<sup>79</sup> See Vaclav Havel phrase’s in the Introduction, as well note 1.

## *List of Abbreviations*

ACE	Allied Command Europe
APC	Atlantic Partnership Council
CFE	Treaty on Conventional armed Forces in Europe
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
CSCE	Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (1975-1994)
EAPC	Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council
EC	European Communities
EU	European Union
FRG	Federal Republic of Germany
G-7	Group of Seven industrialised countries
G-8	Group of Seven + Russia
GUUAM	Georgia, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan and Moldova
IFOR	Implementation Force (Bosnia-Herzegovina)
IPP	Individual Partnership Program
KFOR	Kosovo implementation Force
KLA	Kosovo Liberation Army
NAA	North Atlantic Assembly
NAC	North Atlantic Council
NACC	North Atlantic Cooperation Council
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PJC	Permanent Joint Council (NATO-Russia)
PfP	Partnership for Peace
SALT	Strategic Arms Limitations Talks
SFOR	Stabilization Force (Bosnia-Herzegovina)
START	Strategic Arms Reductions Talks
UN	United Nations
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
US	United States (of America)
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

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