

Cooperative Engagement in the European Southeast

Russia's continuing problems in Chechnya, moreover, point to importance of Western cooperative engagement with Moscow in Southeast Europe and the Eastern Mediterranean, where CFE standards and arms control planning are today of greater relevance than in the former theater of East-West military confrontation in Central Europe. In November 1999 the CFE states signed a treaty adaptation agreement overhauling the outdated original. However, President Clinton cautioned that he would not submit that adaptation for U.S. Senate approval until Russia complied with its new weapons ceilings. Russia's new offensive in Chechnya underscored its unique security concerns and the associated problem of Moscow's perennial non-compliance with CFE flank-zone limits.²⁹ On its southwestern and southern flanks Russia is not faced with the prospect of NATO and EU expansion onto former Soviet territory, but neither are its security concerns mitigated by the stabilizing influences that Euro-Atlantic institutions bring with them to the Baltic region. After all, the CFE Treaty of itself did very little to enhance Russia's security; indeed, the transparency required by the treaty could in theory erode Russian security in the event of a conflict with another CFE signatory such as Ukraine.³⁰

Further south and east ethnic, religious and territorial disputes trouble Russia's border regions.

Moldova is an example. Russia failed to meet its commitment under the CFE Treaty to remove all of its military forces from the former SSR of Moldova by the end of 2002 and in December of that year was given an extra year to withdraw by the OSCE. Russian forces in the country are located in the Trans-Dniestra region, an enclave for ethnic Russian separatists who Moscow claims are blocking the withdrawal.³¹ Further south still, NATO's 1999 intervention in the Serb province of Kosovo was a trauma for Moscow's national security establishment. The broadening of the Alliance's mission to include military force to settle an ethnic conflict and enforce Western human rights standards posed a theoretical threat to Russia's own geo-strategic interests in light of similar instability along its borders in the Transcaucasus, the Caspian region and Central Asia. This perception calls for balance and prudence in arms control and cooperative security initiatives with Russia in the future.³²

Although the Kosovo intervention appeared to confirm many of Russia's worst fears about NATO dominance in European security, Moscow was ultimately involved in drawing up the terms for Serb withdrawal from the province and the cessation of air strikes. The continuing challenges on Russia's southern flank have meanwhile inclined Moscow toward cooperative governance of security in the Eastern Mediterranean and Transcaucasus through multilateral vehicles such as the OSCE.³³ Moscow's use of the ethnic "Kurdish" card against Turkey, the major NATO state in the region, in order to weaken Turkey's leverage with Russia over its approach to the Chechen conflict did nothing to influence Moscow's poor military performances in Chechnya. The fact that it is not in Russia's interest to excite or attempt to exploit any of the other ethnic quarrels in the region — plus the current want of a coherent Russian strategic vision — can enhance the role of the OSCE and other organizations concerned with conflict prevention and resolution.³⁴

²⁹ Wade Boese, "CFE Adapted at OSCE Summit in Istanbul," *Arms Control Today*, November 1999.

³⁰ Falkenrath, *Shaping Europe's Military Order*, p.243.

³¹ Wade Boese, "An Extra Year for Russian Withdrawal from Moldova," *Arms Control Today*, January/February, 2003; OSCE, *Annual Report 2001 on OSCE Activities, 1 November-31 October 2001*, SEC.DOC/3/01 26 November 2001, pp.49-51.

³² Celeste A. Wallander, "Wary of the West: Russian Security Policy at the Millenium," *Arms Control Today*, March 2000.

http://www.armscontrol.org/act/2000_03/cwmmr00.asp, Fleming Splidsboel-Hansen, "Past and Future Meet: Alexandr Gorchakov and Russian Foreign Policy," *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol.54, No.3, 2002, pp.377-396; David Foglesong and Gordon M. Hahn, "The Myths About Russia," *Problems of Post-Communism*, Vol.49, No.6, November/December 2002, pp.3-15; Stephen J. Blank, "Putin's Twelve-Step Program," *Washington Quarterly*, Vol.25, No.1, pp.147-160.

³³ Ivo H. Daalder and Michael E. O'Hanlon, *Winning Ugly: NATO's War to Save Kosovo*, (Washington DC: Brookings, 2000), pp.126-130, 168-173; Mark Webber, "A Tale of a Decade: European Security Governance and Russia," *European Security*, Vol.9, No.2, 2000, pp.48-54.

³⁴ Robert Olson, "Turkish and Russian Foreign Policies, 1991-1997: the Kurdish and Chechnya Questions," *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*, Vol.18, No.2, 1998, pp.209-228; Pavel Baev, "Russia's Policies in the Southern Caucasus and the Caspian Area," *European Security*, Vol.10, No.2, 2002, pp.95-110.