

Russia-NATO: A New Relationship

Introduction

The evolution of Euro-Atlantic security in the past decade has been truly outstanding. Just over ten years ago the Warsaw Pact still existed and its members were not even able to enter NATO headquarters. When they delivered a message it had to be left at the front gates. Today, former Warsaw member states openly debate security issues at NATO headquarters and liaise with NATO through a variety of institutional partnerships. It is a testament to NATO's ability to evolve that it has become the center of a new web of security partnerships and programs.

This impressive ability to adapt saw NATO reaching out to former enemies in the 1990s via enlargement, Partnership for Peace, and taking on new missions in the Balkans. New relationships were also developed with the European forces via the West European Union (WEU) and now the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP). September 11 2001 and the terrorist attacks on the US have further made evident that in order to deal with new threats to the world's security NATO must continue this process of adaptation in its mission, partnerships and actions.

At the crux of the evolution of NATO's new missions and partnerships over the past decade has been the question of how to deal with the Russian Federation. This remains the key question today. Therefore, this report examines the options NATO and Russia face in developing a new NATO-Russia institutional framework. The report begins with a brief outline of Russia's relations with NATO institutions since 1991. The second section assesses the implications of the terrorist attacks of September 11 on Russia-NATO relations. Russia's perceptions of the new threats (including global terrorism, instability in Eurasia and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery) and how to counter them are analyzed.

The third section of the paper examines the options for the development of future NATO-Russia relations. These options include: to develop a new Russia-North Atlantic Council; the long