

NATO and EU Enlargement

Among the arguments against NATO expansion in the mid-1990s was the claim that the CFE Treaty had already answered the problem which expansion was in theory designed to solve, the emergence of a power vacuum between Germany and Russia in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE). In this argument the CFE was regarded as a principal feature of a "new, different, and supremely valuable security order," extending from the Atlantic to the Urals and based on the mutual confidence-building aspects of the CFE and other arms control agreement negotiated in the last years of the Cold War and early post-Cold War years.⁹ This position was unsustainable against the array of national and Alliance rationales for extending NATO eastward. In its 1995 *Study on NATO Enlargement* the Alliance cited seven goals to be pursued in adding to its membership:

- supporting democratic reform, including civilian control of the military.
- fostering among new members the habits of cooperation which characterize relations among the current members.
- promoting neighborly relations among all states of the Euro-Atlantic area, both members and non-members of NATO.
- emphasizing and extending the benefits of common defence while increasing transparency in defence planning and military budgets.
- reinforcing the trend in Europe toward integration based on shared democratic values, thereby curbing the danger of political disintegration on ethnic and territorial lines.
- enhancing NATO's capacity to contribute to European and international security and peacekeeping operations through vehicles such as the OSCE and the United Nations.
- strengthening and broadening the trans-Atlantic partnership.

While the United States is rightly regarded as the initiator of an enlargement agenda which called for the Visegrad¹⁰ states of Czech Republic, Poland and Hungary to begin talks leading to the signing of accession protocols in December 1997, Germany too was a key supporter of eastern enlargement. Geography dictated that its government had a sharp sense of exposure to crises and threats on the former Soviet sphere, and the commitment to enlargement was additionally influenced by economic and cultural ties in the CEE states as well a sense of moral obligation in light of the Germany's historic transgressions there.¹¹

Equally, Germany's political leadership was aware that enlargement created a new set of problems between Berlin and Moscow, the most important bilateral relationship in Europe.¹² By virtue of the strong Franco-German partnership in West European integration Germany occupies a pivotal strategic position not only within NATO but also within the EU. The conduct of *Ostpolitik* during the Cold War was designed to open up human contact and commerce with East Germany, Poland and the Soviet Union in particular; after national reunification democratic Germany was free to pursue through Atlantic and European multilateral vehicles the sphere of influence it sought through intimidation and conquest in the first half of the twentieth

⁹ Michael Mandelbaum, *The Dawn of Peace in Europe*, (New York: Twentieth Century Fund), pp.62-65, 90-109. Idem., *NATO Expansion, A Bridge to the Nineteenth Century*, (Chevy Chase: Center for Political and Strategic Studies, 1997). See also Michael E. Brown, "The Flawed Logic of NATO Expansion," *Survival*, Vol.37, No. 1, 1995, pp.43-51 and Coral Bell, "Why an Expanded NATO Must Include Russia," *Journal of Strategic Studies*, Vol.17, No.4, 1994, pp.27-41.

¹⁰ Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Poland initially held talks in the Hungarian town of Visegrad and agreed to coordinate their efforts to join NATO. After the division of Czechoslovakia the group was commonly referred to as the "Visegrad Four," although Slovakia was included in the second rather than the first round of NATO enlargement.

¹¹ David S. Yost, *NATO Transformed: The Alliance's New Roles in International Security*, (Washington DC: USIP, 1998), pp.103-112.

¹² *Ibid.*, pp.178-179; Lawrence S. Kaplan, *The Long Entanglement: NATO's First Fifty Years*, (Westport: Praeger, 1999), pp.194-199; Frederick P.A. Hammersen, "The Disquieting Voice of Russian Resentment," *Parameters*, Vol. 28, no.2,1998, pp. 39-55.