



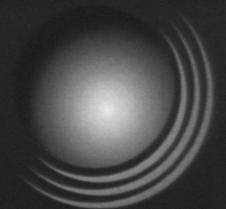
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Russia-NATO: A New Relationship

NICOLE JACKSON

ISROP
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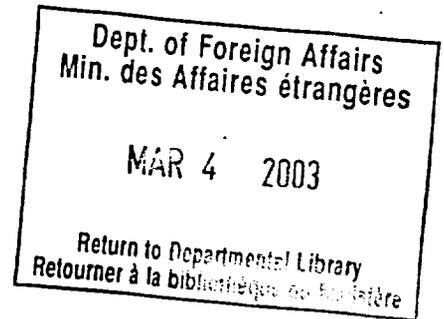


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Nicole J. Jackson



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREFACE	iii
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	iv
RÉSUMÉ	vi
INTRODUCTION	1
1. RUSSIA NATO-INSTITUTIONAL RELATIONS	2
1.1 North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC).....	3
1.2 Partnership for Peace (PFP).....	4
1.3 Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC).....	5
1.4 Russia-NATO Founding Act and the Permanent Joint Council (PJC).....	6
1.5 Russia's Foreign Policy before September 11.....	7
2. NEW THREATS AND RUSSIA-NATO RELATIONS	10
2.1 The New Security Environment.....	10
2.2 Global Terrorism.....	11
2.3 Instability in Central Asia.....	17
2.4 Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction.....	21
3. NEW THINKING AND OPTIONS FOR NATO-RUSSIA INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT	26
3.1 Option # 1: The Russia-NATO Council.....	27
3.2 Option # 2: Russia Joins NATO.....	33
3.3 Option # 3: Develop the Russia-EU Security Relationship.....	37
3.4 Option # 4: Create a New Security Institution.....	39
3.5 Option # 5: Develop NATO Relations with the rest of Eurasia.....	40
CONCLUSIONS	43

PREFACE

The views and positions stated in this paper are solely those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views and positions of the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade or of the Government of Canada.

The International Security Research and Outreach Programme (ISROP) commissioned a study to address the following issues: 1) the evolution of Russia-NATO relations in the context of the Euro-Atlantic security environment; 2) the implications of the terrorist attacks of September 11 on Russia-NATO relations and 3) the Russia and NATO's perceptions of new threats, including global terrorism, instability in Eurasia and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

The Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade wishes to thank the author of this study, Dr. Nicole Jackson. Please note that her work is presented here in an abridged version compared to the text originally submitted.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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. 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 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 term option whereby Russia joins NATO; and the extension of NATO into Central Asia and the

Transcaucasus. Proposals to create a new non-NATO security institution which would tie Russia to the rest of the world will also be briefly outlined.

The argument put forward is that, in the new international climate, there is a tremendous opportunity for Russia and NATO members to cooperate to counter the key security threats to world peace. NATO is the only institution which has both the political capacity to unite these countries, and the military means to counter the new threats.

RÉSUMÉ

Au cours de la dernière décennie, la sécurité euro-atlantique a connu une évolution tout à fait exceptionnelle. Il y a dix ans à peine, le Pacte de Varsovie existait toujours et ses membres ne pouvaient même pas entrer au siège de l'OTAN. Aujourd'hui, les anciens pays membres du Pacte de Varsovie débattent ouvertement de questions de sécurité au siège de l'OTAN, avec laquelle ils assurent la liaison dans le cadre de divers partenariats institutionnels. Le fait que l'OTAN soit devenue le centre d'un nouveau réseau de partenariats et de programmes de sécurité témoigne de sa capacité d'évoluer.

Grâce à son impressionnante capacité d'adaptation, l'OTAN a tendu la main à ses anciens ennemis dans les années 90 au moyen de l'élargissement, du partenariat pour la paix et de la conduite de nouvelles missions dans les Balkans. De nouvelles relations ont également été établies avec les forces européennes par l'entremise de l'Union de l'Europe occidentale (UEO) et, aujourd'hui, de la Politique européenne de sécurité et de défense (PESD). En outre, les attentats terroristes menés le 11 septembre 2001 contre les États-Unis ont fait ressortir que, pour contrer les nouvelles menaces à la sécurité mondiale, l'OTAN doit poursuivre ce processus d'adaptation dans le contexte de sa mission, de ses partenariats et de ses actions.

La question de savoir comment traiter avec la Fédération de Russie se situe depuis une dizaine d'années au coeur de l'évolution des nouvelles missions et partenariats de l'OTAN. Le présent rapport examine les possibilités qui s'offrent à l'OTAN et à la Russie en vue de l'élaboration d'un nouveau cadre institutionnel OTAN-Russie. Il donne un bref aperçu des relations qu'entretient la Russie avec les institutions de l'OTAN depuis 1991. La deuxième partie est consacrée aux incidences des attentats terroristes du 11 septembre sur les relations Russie-OTAN. On y analyse la façon dont la Russie perçoit les nouvelles menaces (y compris le

terrorisme mondial, l'instabilité en Eurasie et la prolifération des armes de destruction massive et de leurs vecteurs) et compte y parer.

La troisième partie du document examine les possibilités relatives au développement des relations OTAN-Russie. Parmi celles-ci figurent la création d'un nouveau Conseil Russie-Atlantique Nord, l'option, s'inscrivant dans le long terme, en vertu de laquelle la Russie adhérerait à l'OTAN, et l'expansion de l'OTAN en Asie centrale et au Transcaucase. En outre, des propositions visant à créer de nouvelles institutions de sécurité ne relevant pas de l'OTAN qui lieraient la Russie au reste du monde seront exposées brièvement.

L'argument défendu est que, dans le nouveau contexte international, il s'offre à la Russie et aux membres de l'OTAN une occasion formidable de coopérer afin de parer aux principales menaces à la paix mondiale. L'OTAN est la seule institution ayant la capacité politique d'unir ces pays et les moyens militaires de contrer les nouvelles menaces.

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

term option whereby Russia joins NATO; and the extension of NATO into Central Asia and the Transcaucasus. Proposals to create a new non-NATO security institutions which would tie Russia to the rest of the world, such as a “Global Alliance for Security” and Russia-EU security relations will also be briefly outlined.

The argument put forward is that, in the new post September 11 climate, there is a tremendous opportunity for Russia and NATO members to cooperate to counter the key security threats to world peace. NATO is the only institution which has both the political capacity to unite these countries, and the military means to counter the new threats. The creation of the new NATO-Russia Council in May 2002 is a major step on this road towards increased cooperation.

1. Russia-NATO Institutional Relations

Before we can examine the current options for NATO-Russia relations it is helpful to review the institutions linking the two which have existed thus far. Events since September 11 must be seen in the context of the fitful moves towards closer relations which took place over the past ten years. Since 1991 NATO has been actively pursuing a closer and more profitable relationship with Russia. However, thus far this evolution has been on NATO's terms with little regard to Russian interests and insecurities. The institutional approaches examined below succeeded to various degrees to extend NATO's influence. For Russia's part, from the beginning, it has acquiesced to, if not embraced, NATO's new developments. Russian leaders have been eager to join the more affluent West and its myriad of institutions and have realized that their desire to remain a great power gives them few, if any, alternative approaches. At the same time, Russia has continually objected to not being an equal partner. Reformed or future institutions should move towards bringing Russia in as an equal partner and be sensitive towards Russian concerns precisely because NATO needs Russia's full cooperation and assistance if it is to successfully adapt to counter today's new threats.

1.1 North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC)

In November 1991, NATO proposed the creation of the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC) a forum for structured dialogue with former Warsaw Pact countries but without concrete defense guarantees. On December 20 1991, the NACC held its inaugural meeting. Its membership came to include all the members of NATO and (with the break up of the Soviet Union) the former Soviet republics. The focus was on multilateral, political dialogue on security and defense-related issues such as arms control, civil-military relations, air-traffic management and conversion of defense industries.

While a member of NACC, Russia argued against NATO expansion and sought guarantees that would prevent the forward positioning of nuclear weapons or the stationing of alliance forces in any new member states. Russia also advocated an alternative “strategic partnership” with the West which would be a permanent bilateral forum for consultation between Russia and NATO. The Russian Foreign Minister at that time, Andrei Kozyrev, already at this early stage argued that the deepening of relations between NATO and Russia should become an integral part of the alliance’s transformation. The Western states for their part firmly rejected both Russia’s attempts to achieve a special relationship with NATO and its efforts to stop NATO’s eastward expansion.

a) NATO expansion

By the mid 1990s, the fact that NATO continued to exist and even planned to expand to the East, created understandably mistrustful reactions in Moscow. Russians were worried about being isolated and becoming second-class citizens in Europe. Russia’s stated preference was for a much more radical expansion which would transform the existing West European-based institutions into pan-European entities, or else strengthen wider borders such as the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE). Failing this, Russia wanted to establish new

processes of consultations with the West which would minimize the differences between the way Russia was treated and the way Central-Eastern Europe was treated.

The issue of NATO expansion elicited an almost unique consensus among Russia's political spectrum, with almost all the political leaders strongly opposed. Even some Western academics (Kennan, Mandelbaum) saw expansion as a needless challenge to a seriously weakened Russia, a move which exacerbated deep fear in Russia about Western hostility without in any way enhancing US security. Why draw a new line dividing Europe?

However, Russia's attempts to renegotiate the post-Cold war order met with little success. NATO's bombing of Serb positions in Bosnia in late August 1995 simply underlined Russia's marginalization. Today, Russians continue to argue that if NATO keeps mechanically expanding with no qualitative transformation of the alliance, that there will be no security build-up for NATO, or for Russia, or for the countries intending to join the alliance.¹

1.2 Partnership for Peace (PFP)

The Partnership for Peace program (PFP), launched on 10 January 1994, was designed to allow each Partner (including Russia) to develop its own bilateral political relations with NATO and to devise individually tailored programs of cooperation with NATO. The focus of these Partnerships is to develop military forces that would be interoperable with those of the Alliance and to cooperate on civil-emergency planning.²

Individual Partnership Programmes are drawn up between NATO and Partner countries from an extensive menu of activities – the PFP Work Programme – according to each country's specific interests and needs. The biennial programme contains more than 2,000 activities, ranging from

¹ *RIA Novosti*, April 26, 2002.

² Military representations within Partner country diplomatic missions to NATO ensure that Partner country officers are involved in the daily work of PFP. To help coordinate PFP training and exercises, a Partnership Coordination Cell was established at Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE). An International Coordination Centre has also been set up at SHAPE to provide briefing and planning facilities for all non-NATO countries contributing troops to NATO-led peace-support operations in the Balkans.

large military exercises down to small workshops. Areas covered range from the purely military to defence-related cooperation in fields such as crisis management, peacekeeping, civil emergency planning, air-traffic management and armaments cooperation. Thirty countries have signed the PFP Framework Document.³

PFP also provides the mechanism by which Partners can be involved in NATO-led operations. The Planning and Review Process (PARP) outlines the interoperability and capability requirements for participants to attain and includes an extensive review process to measure progress. The Operational Capability Concept (OCC) helps NATO commanders know what forces are available and how capable they are.

Russia signed the Partnership Framework Document on 22 June 1994. This was during a period in which Russia was reaching out the West and developing institutional ties with Europe. In 1994, Russia signed an Agreement on Partnership and Cooperation with the European Union and work also began for Russia's accession to the Council of Europe. The EU, similar to NATO, envisaged the eventual entry of most of the states to the west of Russia, excluding only Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova, but was not at the time willing to contemplate the prospect of full Russian membership.

1.3 Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC)

While PFP created the mechanisms for partners' contributions, the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC), created in 1996 to replace the NACC, deals more with the political issues. EAPC is a multilateral forum for the discussion and promotion of security issues, and encompasses all the Euro-Atlantic countries (not just former NATO adversaries which the NACC did) who wish to build a relationship with NATO.

³ Tajikistan joined PFP in February 2002. *Interfax* 20 Feb 02.

The EAPC provides a framework for involving Partners more closely in consultations for the planning, execution and political oversight of PFP operations. All EAPC members are members of the Partnership for Peace programme.

Through the EAPC, Partners are involved in consultations on developing crises which might require the deployment of troops. The North Atlantic Council, NATO's highest decision-making body, recognizes Partners who declare an intention to contribute. Once Partner contributions are accepted, discussions on the operations take place between NATO and those Partners. Meanwhile, the full EAPC is involved in general discussions about the operation. Final decisions are taken by the Alliance.

In addition to hosting the EAPC and working with Partner countries through the PFP programme, NATO has developed special bilateral relationships with and Ukraine, the two largest countries to emerge from the disintegration of the former Soviet Union. A process of political dialogue has also been opened with several countries in the Mediterranean region aimed at creating good relations and better mutual understanding, as well as promoting regional security and stability.

1.4 Russia-NATO Founding Act and the Permanent Joint Council (PJC)

For the present, Russia's say in NATO affairs remains limited to a special consultative arrangement. The basis for bilateral cooperation between NATO and Russia and the precursor to the May 2002 Russia-NATO Council was established by the NATO-Russia Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security, signed by NATO and Russia on 27 May 1997. As mentioned above, Russia earlier had joined the North Atlantic Cooperation Council in 1991 (succeeded by the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council in 1997) and the Partnership for Peace in 1994. The Founding Act created a Permanent Joint Council (PJC) as a forum for Russia and NATO allies to consult and cooperate. The PJC met for the first time on 18 July 1997 and regular meetings have taken place almost continuously at various levels, involving heads of state and

government, foreign and defence ministers, ambassadors and chiefs of defence staffs. Issues discussed at PJC have included: strategy and doctrine, arms control, proliferation, military infrastructure, nuclear weapons issues, retraining of discharged military personnel and search and rescue at sea.

However, despite some progress, the PJC has been widely criticized by both the Russian and NATO officials and even before September 11 there were repeated calls for the development of more profitable relations. Many Russian and NATO officials argue that the PJC was never adequately used for a variety of reasons including Russia's objections to NATO's use of force in Kosovo in 1999.⁴

1.5. Russia's Foreign Policy before September 11

As made evident by the above NATO institutions that had been designed to increase cooperation with Russia, the events of September 11 did not elicit the first efforts to create a close relationship between Russia and the West. During the past decade, Russia's overall foreign policy development has not been adverse to broad cooperation with the West. Russia's foreign policy today and the development of new Russia-NATO relations must be understood in this context.

Very briefly, Russia's birth in 1991 was immediately followed by a period of pro-Western idealism during which Russia neglected its geopolitical interests in the former Soviet states and pinned its hopes upon the West. However, since 1993, Russia has generally followed a realist and pragmatic foreign policy of asserting its interests where possible given the realities of its economic and military weaknesses.⁵ Thus, Russia's foreign policy has been similar to that

⁴ Russian and NATO troops cooperated in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in Kosovo in the Balkans. Russia currently contributes about 1,200 troops to SFOR, which number 20,000 in all, and 3,150 troops to the 42,500 strong KFOR force. Despite differences over the Allied air campaign, military cooperation between Russian and NATO troops continued without interruption in Bosnia and Herzegovina. When the air campaign in Kosovo ended, Russia agreed to contribute to KFOR. "Russia-NATO Relations, NATO Fact Sheets", www.nato.int/docu/facts,2000/nato-rus.htm Updated Feb 9, 2001.

⁵ See Roy Allison, Margot Light and Neil Malcolm and Alex Pravda, *Internal Factors in Russian Foreign Policy*, Oxford University Press, 1996. Also, Nicole Jackson, *Russian Foreign Policy towards the CIS States*, Routledge Press, forthcoming.

followed by most democratic states most of the time. Russia's first priority has been the development of close relations with some of the former Soviet states. However, it has also pursued close relations towards the West. The only serious deviation from this policy was when Russia opposed US policy in the Balkans and in 1999 broke ties with NATO over its military actions in Kosovo. And even these severed ties were being repaired in early 2001 – before the events of September 11.

Under Russia's President Vladimir Putin, a key security objective has been to develop for Russia a major role alongside the other great powers in the international system. Putin and his foreign minister, Igor Ivanov, have particularly advocated the development of a multipolar as opposed to unilateral (US dominated) world. However, at the same time, Russia favours developing a special relationship with the US and enhancing relations between Russia and the West.⁶ This policy has remained stable and was recently reflected during Putin's April address to the Federal Assembly where he argued for the continued pursuit of a pragmatic approach based on Russia's actual possibilities and national interest in economic, political and military spheres.⁷

When the Bush administration first came to power in 2000 there were initial indications that it might further downgrade Russia's importance as a foreign policy priority for the US.⁸ However, good personal relations between the two leaders were established early on at the Bush-Putin meeting that summer. Even on the controversial issue of an enlarged NATO, Putin suggested for the first time in July 2001 that Russia might view NATO expansion to the Baltic states as not necessarily a threat to Russian interests and that if NATO became "more political

⁶ Igor Ivanov, *New Russian Diplomacy: Ten Years of the Country's Foreign Policy*, (Moskva: OLMA PRESS, 2001).

⁷ Victor Platov, *RIA Novosti*, April 26, 2002.

⁸ In his election campaign, Bush criticized Clinton for overlooking Russia's failings and severely criticized Russia's military actions in Chechnia. A low point was reached in February 2001 when FBI agent Robert Hansen was charged with spying on the Soviet Union and tit-for-tat diplomatic expulsions followed.

than military” Russia might reconsider its opposition to enlargement.⁹ Thus, even before September 11, Russia’s foreign policy was drawn to the West.

⁹ Peter Baker, “Putin Offers West Reassurances and Ideas on NATO”, *Washington Post*, 18 July 2001; Gareth Jones, “Putin Softens Opposition to NATO Expansion”, *Reuters*, 3 October 2001.

2. New Threats and Russia-NATO Relations

2.1 The New Security Environment

Despite the fitful Russian -Western rapprochement of the past decade, the NATO-Russia institutions seen above are not sufficient to deal with the new security environment as it has evolved since the end of the Cold War. However, events since September 11, 2001 have given Russia and the West a good opportunity to accelerate the development of a closer institutional relationship based upon the need to deal with mutual threats. The terrorist attacks on the United States and the subsequent US-led war against the Taliban and al Qaeda network in Afghanistan have highlighted the interdependence and vulnerability of the world. This is a new type of war waged against a non-state actor with global reach and which is not subject to deterrence. In this context, it is ever more evident that NATO and Russia would benefit from acting in concert to counter threats which they have in common: global terrorism, instability in Eurasia and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of transportation. This chance to forge a new relationship between Russia and the West – backed by an institutional and legal framework as well as by a substantial increase in political support – is not one that should be squandered.

This is an opportune time to lay the foundations of a binding relationship precisely because it is in the security interests of both Russia and the West. September 11 made clear that a potential gain for the West in developing closer relations with Russia is Moscow's support on issues such as the war against terrorism. Russia has proved a significant ally in the war against al Qaeda. And although Russia's military is comparatively very weak, Russia retains considerable political influence (as well as economic interest) in Central Asia which may be of benefit to the US and Europe. Moreover, Russia is the greatest potential source of nuclear, chemical, (and perhaps biological) materials that may be used by terrorists. Thus, it seems that the need to prioritize relations with Russia and to be sensitive towards Russia's security concerns ought now

to play a greater role than they previously have. The West needs Russia to be responsible in world affairs and to support broad international coalitions.

As for Russia, its support of US-led actions in Afghanistan is based upon a long-standing security interest: to protect its porous southern borders from the threat of instability arising from terrorism and Islamic fundamentalism. For Russia the particular threat of Islamic terrorism existed well before September 11, and its eradication was already a policy priority. For almost a decade Russia has been dealing with the threat of Islamic fundamentalism in its southern Caucasus as well as in some of the former Soviet states (especially Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan). Of course, the most significant incentive for Russia to cooperate with the West remains its need to sustain the domestic economic reform and growth necessary for both its internal and external security. This need for foreign investment and access to foreign markets for its natural resources will continue to ensure that Russia will pursue close relations with the more prosperous West.

We will now examine in turn each of the three key threats which NATO and Russia face: global terrorism, instability in Eurasia, and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. The report does not comprehensively examine all incidents of these threats around the world but focuses on those areas where NATO and Russia may realistically be of greatest mutual assistance. It must be stressed that these three main threats are highly interrelated. For example, in order to fight global terrorism it is not enough to simply find and destroy all terrorist cells. Measures need to be taken to quell regional instability and to stop the proliferation of arms which the terrorists may use.

2.2 Global Terrorism

Global terrorism is the new major threat to the world's stability and NATO states have already played a critical role in the global war on terrorism. To quote US Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, "NATO nations have contributed air and sea and ground forces, as well as

intelligence, humanitarian assistance, ships, planes, aerial surveillances, leadership interdiction, maritime interception operations, combat air patrols, air life, basing, refuelling, over flights, mine clearing and special operations".¹⁰

Before NATO as an organization can tackle global terrorism, decisions need to be made about how NATO would act, with what weapons and what command structure. Second, NATO must be able to field forces that can move quickly to where they are needed. Therefore it needs strategic lift and modern strike capabilities and its peacekeeping operations should also be expanded. Third, NATO must develop improved intelligence-gathering and intelligence-sharing mechanisms.

It is particularly in the intelligence gathering and peacekeeping capacity that Russia could greatly contribute to NATO activities and help to transform NATO into a more relevant security structure. Russia's assistance in the US military campaign after September 11 (as well as its cooperation in the Balkans) has proved that NATO would benefit from Russia's intelligence as well as its military assistance. If this relationship is to be expanded upon, it is only fair that Russia is given a significant (if not equal) say in the decision-making process in return.

While Russia may profitably contribute intelligence information about other areas of the world, particularly in South Asia and the Middle East, Russia's contributions will be most significant in the former Soviet space or neighbouring states where its interests are greatest. Two regions where NATO and Russia may fruitfully cooperate in the war against global terrorism are Afghanistan and Georgia. Russia has played a key role in the US-led war in Afghanistan and it has not opposed US military involvement in the search for al Qaeda members in Georgia. In both cases, coordinated and expanded NATO and Russian involvement, including the sharing of information and peacekeeping operations, could be highly beneficial in countering mutual threats.

¹⁰ *AFP*, 4 June 2002

a) The War against Terrorism in Afghanistan

As noted above, even before September 11, 2001, Russia was pursuing a close relationship with the West. Nevertheless, Russia's key role in the US-led war against the al Qaeda and Taliban leadership in Afghanistan instigated the acceleration of profitable relations between Russia and the West. After the terrorist attacks on the US, Putin was the first foreign leader to reach Bush to express his condolences. He immediately told Bush that Russia had taken its forces off alert and cancelled several Russian military exercises in the area to ensure that there wasn't any confusion.¹¹ Subsequently, he was supportive of US attempts to create an anti-terrorist coalition, and made offers to help in the war against global terrorism.

Russia shared crucial intelligence about the Taliban and the al Qaeda terrorist network with the US including detailed analysis of the terrorist plans and aims. Also, Russia's air space was opened to flights carrying humanitarian aid. Putin attached high strategic priority to the war, assigning the Chief of the General Staff Victor Kvashnin to oversee Russia's military strategy in Afghanistan. He assigned Sergei Shoigu to oversee Russia's \$500 million humanitarian assistance program to northern Afghanistan.

Russia had had close military ties to the Taliban's main opposition in Afghanistan, the Northern Alliance, since the late 1990s and significantly expanded its military assistance to them after September 11. In October, Russia sent approximately 40 tanks and 12 military helicopters to the Northern Alliance forces as part of a \$70 million arms package. This package also included old Soviet T-55 tanks, military helicopters and submachine guns, as well as anti-aircraft missiles.¹² Russia maintained a high profile in the war and after the Northern Alliance reached Kabul (and against official US orders) took over the city, Russian emergency ministry staff, construction crews and diplomats became the first visible presence of foreigners in Kabul.

¹¹ John Donnelly, *Boston Globe*, October 5, 2001.

¹² Glen Howard, "Moscow's Bid for Influence in Afghanistan", *Johnson List* #5564.

Russia's key role alongside the US demonstrates that Russia is indeed a very useful ally for the West in its quest to solve today's key security dilemmas.

Russia's support of US-led actions in Afghanistan is based upon its long standing security interest of protecting its southern borders from the threat of instability arising from terrorism and Islamic fundamentalism. However, well before September 11 President Putin also called repeatedly for action against global terrorism:

"You indeed know that one of the extremist organisations, which is headed by the notorious terrorist no.1 in the world, Osama Bin Laden, is the International Islamic Front, which, in my opinion, puts as its task the creation of an Islamic haliphate, a United States of Islam, in which should enter a number of Islamic states, and some Central Asian states and part of the contemporary territory of the Russian Federation This is indeed a terrorist international. And in this sense Russia stands at the forefront of the struggle against this international terrorism. And Europe should get on its knees and show a large amount of gratitude for the fact that we struggle against it, so far, unfortunately, on our own."¹³

To this effect, in June 2000, the CIS established an anti-terrorism center in Moscow. Russia and five other CIS members belonging to a Collective Security Council also agreed to form rapid-reaction forces, in part to quell the growing unrest spilling over from Afghanistan.

It must be emphasized here that Russia's interests (and capabilities) in fighting terrorism extend only a limited extent beyond her borders and those of the southern former Soviet states. Russia's military and economic weaknesses dictate that Russia will continue to welcome help in bringing stability to her southern borders. However, although they may continue to provide crucial intelligence information, Russians are more likely to support the fight against terrorism in their own backyard than in more far-flung regions of the globe. Therefore, the following section examines Georgia – a state in which Russia and NATO may realistically cooperate with each other in the search for global terrorists.

¹³ This interview was published under the title 'We will reach agreement with the Chechens', *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, 8 July 2000.

b) The War against Terrorism in Georgia

After Afghanistan, a second region where Russia and the US may cooperate in the fight against terrorism is in Georgia. Indeed since September 11, the US has expanded its military involvement in Georgia in the search for al Qaeda members. Russia did not officially protest this move because it has long been concerned about the presence of foreign extremists in Georgia and the bordering Russian republic of Chechnya. The challenge thus is how both Russia and the US can exploit the current opportunity to successfully work together without making Russia believe that its key interests in the region are being threatened.

In early 2002 the US sent elite military forces to Georgia in the belief that al Qaeda members and even Osama Bin Laden himself may be hiding in Georgia's Pankissi Gorge (situated on Georgia's border alongside Chechnya). These US military advisers were sent to help train Georgian troops in what was forecast to become a third front against terrorism after Afghanistan and the Philippines. This was not the first time that the US was militarily involved in Georgia. Previously, the US had, for example, helped to establish an anti-terrorist unit within Georgia's Ministry of Defence, sent Georgia ten combat helicopters, and assisted with humanitarian de-mining.

As in the case of Afghanistan, Russia welcomes external aid in stopping terrorism in the Caucasus – particularly terrorists it believes to be linked with Chechnya. Russia in fact has been accused of seeking to exploit the antiterrorism war in Afghanistan for its own interest in the Caucasus. However, to quote Russian Defence Minister Sergei Ivanov "On the one hand it is, of course, sovereign Georgia's business. On the other, must we really sit and wait to see how tensions mount there and how this region turns into a min-Chechnya or mini-Afghanistan?"

The Russian government has repeatedly accused Georgia of creating a safe haven for Chechen rebels in the Pankissi Gorge. Georgia, which until recently had denied this, now agrees that there are Chechen rebels among the 7000 Chechen refugees living in the Gorge. The Russian

Secret Services (FSB) estimates that there are 2000 armed men in the Gorge – most of them probably Chechens.

One key question is how to define who is a terrorist and then to determine which of those terrorists have “global reach”. Many states view their internal separatist problems as terrorism. Russia, for example, wants Chechnia to be considered by the world community not as a legitimate uprising of “freedom fighters” but as a terrorist problem fuelled by external support. They point out that Chechen terrorist activities include Chechen warlord-led invasions into the neighbouring Russian republic of Dagestan where terror bombings killed 300 people. Russia’s FSB also claims that the 1999 bombing in Moscow was committed by the same people who plotted attacks on US – although this has not been proven.

For Russians, the Chechen situation (and hence the situation in Georgia’s Pankissi Gorge) is seen as a global terrorist problem because there are believed to be between 600 and 1,500 foreign fighters still in Chechnya, funded and armed by al Queda. Evidence has been found in Chechnia of the same textbooks and trainers found by US forces in al Queda camps in Afghanistan. Russia hopes to receive world sympathy if not external military help for their internal “terrorist problem”.¹⁴ Thus far, US involvement in Georgia has not been extended to Chechnia and is unlikely to do so because it is considered an internal problem to Russia. However, the borders of the Caucasus are highly porous and the search for terrorists in Georgia necessarily affects the situation in Chechnia.

As well as providing opportunities, US involvement in the region presents several challenges. The US must act cautiously to deal with Russian insecurities. Georgia is an area of historic and current strategic interest to Russia. Russia has played a key role in two separatist disputes in Georgia and in Georgia’s civil war. Today, Russian troops keep the peace in

¹⁴ Russia Defence Minister Igor Ivanov, “Countering International Terrorism by Military Force”, Speech at the 37th Munich Conference on Terrorism. March 2, 2002.

Georgia's separatist regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. Russia's strategic interest in Georgia has been to stop the violence and prevent the dissolution of the Georgian state.

In the case of Georgia, what is needed is not simply US military training of Georgian troops to eliminate al Qaeda cells. Georgia's internal disputes are perhaps even more complicated and divisive than in Afghanistan. Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov, reacting to possible US military deployment, declared "we think it could further aggravate the situation in the region which is difficult as it is". What is needed is elaborate diplomacy and compromise between ethnic Kists, Georgian leaders, Russians and Chechen refugees as well as help in building a sound economic infrastructure. A key (perhaps insurmountable) challenge will be to ensure that US money and training of Georgian troops are not used by Georgia against its separatist regions e.g. Abkhazia. In other words, neither US nor Russian military assistance and intelligence information is enough. A first step would be for a multinational institution such as NATO to deal with global terrorists and to coordinate US and Russian involvement. This institution would have to be able to use force against criminal and partisan activity and have a mandate to keep the peace. The second step would be to deal with the underlining threat of instability which breeds terrorism – this is examined below.

2.3 Instability in Central Asia

After global terrorism, the second key security threat which both Russia and NATO states face is instability in Central Asia. As mentioned above, global terrorism and instability are highly interrelated. As seen above in the case of Georgia, it is not simply enough to forcefully eliminate members of terrorists groups. It is perhaps even more important to bring stability to the region. Central Asia as well as the Caucasus ought to capture world attention because of the threat of the rise of Islamic fundamentalism and the potential spillover of extremism and violence from Afghanistan. Indeed, as seen above, many former Soviet states are potential harbours or breeding grounds for terrorists, and the security of their own peoples as well as those of neighbouring

states is at risk due to the ongoing cycle of authoritarianism and poverty. Moreover, cross-border threats such as illegal immigration, narcotics trafficking and other criminal businesses threaten human security throughout the region.

Until the late 1990s, Russia acted alone to prevent violence and protect its key interests in the Soviet successor states. Russia's actions were often controversial but succeeded in containing the conflicts and in preventing the major catastrophes which could have been expected with the disintegration of the Soviet Union. However, with its limited budget, troubled military and more urgent domestic issues, Russia has not been able to solve all the problems on its own.

In the late 1990s, international security institutions such as the OSCE and the UN began to play, alongside Russia, a limited conflict management role in the region. NATO too developed contacts with several of the former Soviet states through the Partnership for Peace program and the US initiated bilateral military ties. This short history of co-operation suggests that Russia and the West may profit from working together in this region and that these ties could be profitably expanded upon.

a) US Military Involvement in Central Asia and Russian Reaction

Since September 11 there has been a tremendous opportunity for Russia, the US and other NATO and regional states to quell instability in the region. This is largely because Russia has not opposed the stationing of US military troops and hardware in Central Asia and Georgia as part of the US war against terrorists. Nevertheless, without clearly articulated goals the US presence could severely test Russia's current good will and jeopardize Putin's pro-West policies. Potential misunderstandings could be avoided if US actions and troop movements in the area were made transparent, or even better, linked to an organization in which Russia is a member, reciprocally shares information with, and with whom it has some input in terms of decision-making. NATO could be this institution.

On September 22, 2001, eleven days after the terrorist attacks in the United States, Putin assured Bush that Russia would not protest if US troops were stationed in the Central Asian

states. As a result, US military presence was officially welcomed by Russia for the first time into the region – an area of key security and economic interests to Russia.¹⁵ US warplanes were stationed in Uzbekistan's Khanabad military airbase and at Kyrgyzstan's main civil airport Manas in Bishkek.¹⁶ Air bases in Tajikistan are also being used.

There is significant controversy in Russia over the extent to which US involvement in Central Asia threatens Russian interests.¹⁷ Although Russia will undoubtedly benefit from US military presence in Central Asia in terms of protection of its porous southern borders from Islamic extremism, terrorism, arms and narcotic trade etc, it also does not want a significant and long-term US or NATO military presence on in this area. A permanent US presence would jeopardize Russia's already decreasing influence in Central Asia, an area of geopolitical, strategic, economic and historical importance to Russia. To quote Russian General Konstantin Trotsky, "We are clearly not impressed with the establishment of NATO bases in Central Asian states".¹⁸ This sentiment had earlier been expressed by Duma chair, Gennady Seleznev.¹⁹ An article in the Russian newspaper *Rossiyskaya Gazeta* captured the growing unease over US military deployment and detailed of the growing presence of US bases around the world. It warned that "Russia and the entire former USSR is encircled by a ring of US and NATO military

¹⁵ The US has been developing military ties and conducting military exercise with the states of Central Asia since 1996. Most US assistance to the region has been in the form of humanitarian and reform aid, but the US has also provided security assistance in the form of training and equipment. The US has signed defence-related cooperative memorandums and agreements with Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, which provide for talks on defence doctrine, training and defence industry conversion. In its first sizeable transfer of military equipment to a Central Asian state, the US provided 16 military transport vehicles to the Uzbek military in February 2000. In addition, the US has provided coast guard vessels to Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan.

¹⁶ *Reuters*, January 17, 2002; *Reuters*, January 23, 2002.

¹⁷ See "US Military Presence in Central Asia: Pros and Cons", *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, September 25, 2001, no.175. "The US promises to lavish riches on anyone in exchange for support. Still who can say for sure that Bush Jr. will keep his word? The West had promised a lot to Gorbachev and Yeltsin in the past, nonetheless failing to keep many of its promises".

¹⁸ *AFP*, 23 January, 2002.

¹⁹ *BBC Monitoring*, January 2, 2002.

intelligence gathering bases, just like 50 years ago”.²⁰ However, although Russian leaders are wary of US military presence, they also do not want the US to simply retreat after the war and leave Russia to contend with the inevitable instability in the aftermath of the war. And although there is unhappiness among the political elite about US presence in Central Asia, it has been publicly muted because of Putin’s primary aim of being seen as an active participant in the coalition against terrorism.

Russia’s reactions to the increased presence of the US in Central Asia is complicated by the mixed signals from the US about how long it expects its military to be stationed in Central Asia. US Senator Tom Dashle on a visit to Central Asia in February 2001 stated that the US has long-term interests in Uzbekistan.²¹ However, soon after, US General Tommy Franks visited the region and was quick to counter that “We don’t intend to have permanent bases in the region”.²² The reality is that the US had an interest in Central Asia even before September 11 because of its natural resources and in particular its oil. This economic interest alone continues and ensures that the US presence will not likely suddenly disappear.

Of course, the US and Russia are not interested in simply stopping terrorism and preventing instability in the region. Both states are also engaged in a struggle over oil and gas in the former Soviet states. In US eyes, there are two ways of getting Central Asian and Azeri oil out without going through Russia (or Iran). One is from Central Asia (e.g. Turkmenistan) south through Afghanistan. The other is west through Georgia which connects oil in Baku (Azerbaijan) with the Black Sea. For the US, it is also significant that in the post September 11 geopolitics Ukraine, Georgia, and Azerbaijan form the shortest route for air transportation from NATO Europe to Uzbekistan and Afghanistan. Therefore, Russians are correct to see US military moves

²⁰ “Russian Encircled by US, NATO When Afghan Operation Over”, *Rossiyskaya Gazeta*, CDI Russia Weekly, #190, 22 January 2002. Also see “US Military Presence in Central Asia: Pros and Cons”, *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, no.175, September 25, 2001.

²¹ *Reuters*, January 18, 2002.

²² *Reuters*, January 23, 2002.

in Georgia and Central Asia as furthering their strategic and economic aims. The more “conspiratorial” view which interprets US presence in Central Asia and the Transcaucasus as a new American attempt to counteract Russia’s, but most especially China’s, growing influence in the region, is perhaps only slightly more farfetched.²³

To conclude, Russia and NATO have the opportunity tackle the threat of regional instability in Central Asia and the Caucasus. Working together on this project would minimize Russia’s insecurities in a region of traditional Russian interest. Outside involvement in the region would be less threatening if Russia too was involved in making decisions and acting alongside with a multilateral coalition of states. NATO involvement would also make US military actions more transparent and thus decrease the possibility of misperceptions.

2.4 Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction

The third key threat to world security after global terrorism and instability in Eurasia is the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery. Russia and NATO again have a tremendous opportunity to take joint actions to counter the threats of nuclear, biological and chemical weapons.

There have already been major changes in this area since September 11. Most significantly, the new security cooperation between Russia and the US has effectively abandoned Cold War-style nuclear parity. President Bush’s desire to protect the United States against future attacks from “rogue states” has led to the abandonment of the ABM treaty and the initiation of a new system of military defence. The 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) treaty, which until recently was routinely described by NATO foreign ministers as the “cornerstone of strategic stability”, expired on June 13, 2002.

Putin has taken American withdrawal from the ABM Treaty surprisingly in stride considering how strongly many members of the Russian government and political elite opposed

²³ Armen Khanbabayan, “Georgia is only the beginning”, *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, 14 March 2002.

such an action. Putin called it “a mistake” but said “we have no interest in raising anti-American hysteria”.²⁴ Russian politicians and academics, such as Alexis Arbatov, argue that withdrawal from the ABM treaty is extremely negative to world stability and believe that the situation is all the more tragic because it could have been avoided by amending, instead of scrapping, the treaty. Arbatov also suggests that Russia now has an interest in creating a limited system of defence, and that measures need to be taken so that withdrawal from the ABM treaty does not lead to a new arms race. The problem is that while September 11 highlighted the need to protect states against rogue regimes, it also showed that the logic of deterrence may prove useless against reckless and fanatic regimes that do not care about their own people or the damage that may be caused to their own industry or population.

Anticipating the imminent end of the ABM treaty, a new treaty on cuts to offensive nuclear weapons was signed at the May 2002 Russia-US Summit. This so called Treaty of Moscow surpasses the cuts provided for in the now redundant START-2 arms treaty of 1993, which would have forced Russia to scrap missiles with multiple warheads. It is a political “gentleman’s agreement” whose details have not been finalized and which has not yet been ratified.

Members of the Russian military elite argue that Russia is now free to extend the service life of some strategic missiles equipped with multiple warheads which had been due to be taken out of service. They argue that Russia’s new version of the Topol-M missile can defeat any missile system envisaged by the US, a claim that the US says demonstrates that its limited shield will prove no threat to Russia’s deterrent.²⁵ The Russian Duma for its part has voted unanimously in support of a resolution which states that the Treaty of Moscow does not impose any restrictions on the development of Russia’s strategic nuclear forces and would allow it to carry out modernization plans for its strategic defences.

²⁴ David Sands, *The Washington Times*, 28 January, 2001.

²⁵ *Reuters*, 14 June 02.

Thus Russians who had hoped to save the ABM treaty despair that:

“We’ve missed the bus. Now by accelerating the deployment of Topol-M missiles we can only make Americans resume negotiations on new restrictions on future missiles defence systems. This will not save the ABM treaty, but will lead to a new treaty that could restrict it to such an extent that we will no longer fear each other, while at the same time having the ability to create defence against pariah states”²⁶

They also hope that new treaties will follow. To quote Russian foreign Minister Igor Ivanov:

“Of course, this treaty is a compromise. The Russian negotiators were indeed striving for more; but this may be the most we can expect to achieve at present. The main point is that the negotiation process continues, in this most complicated field. And we hope this is the first step to possible future agreements.”²⁷

NATO should act on its new aim to counter “new threats” by actively encouraging the development of these future agreements between Russia and the US, and by persuading the US to make its actions transparent so as to assuage the fears of Russia and others about US intentions. A dialogue should be initiated, first between NATO and Russia and then with other states to increase mutual understanding about the subject.

A related issue of concern to NATO is the fact that Russia itself is the greatest potential source of nuclear, chemical and biological materials that may be used by terrorists. Proliferation concerns include the fate of Russian scientists who were involved in the Soviet military effort, the honesty of the guards at the weapons installations, theft of weapons and materials and their export, for example, to the civilian nuclear power plant in Iran.

There is already widespread access, information and considerable foreign funding for threat-reduction initiatives – including the \$20 billion over the next ten years recently announced at the G8 Summit in Canada in June 2002. This funding is to prevent militant groups from seizing control of arms and nuclear materials in Russia and later the other former Soviet states. Nevertheless, more needs to be done and this is key area where NATO states and Russia can

²⁶ Interview with State Duma Committee for Defense Vice Chair Alexis Arbatov on ABM Treaty, *Ekho Moskvoy Radio*, June 13, 2002, federal news service. www.fednews.ru

²⁷ Russian foreign minister Igor Ivanov, “The landmarks of Russia’s foreign policy”, *Kommersant-Vlast*, no.22, June 11, 2002.

work together. Specific actions which NATO could take to collaborate with Russia include helping to allow specialists in nuclear cities convert their military skills for civilian use, clean-up assistance, the conversion and purchase of materials, and efforts to improve physical security.

a) Iran and Iraq

Perhaps the most significant form of NATO-Russia cooperation would be to further limit if not eliminate the proliferation of weapons and nuclear materials to states such as Iran and Iraq where they may fall into the hands of terrorists. Here NATO has the challenge of trying to change Russian policy, including the sale of weapons, towards these states. This will be particularly difficult because Russian domestic interests prefer status quo in Russia's policy towards Iran and Iraq. Russian oil and gas companies and major exporters, as well as Russia nuclear power industry, want Putin to keep in Iran and Iran's favour.²⁸

Russia also has a strong domestic interest in Iraq and Russian companies have the largest share of Iraqi trade under the UN oil-for-food program. Moreover, Saddam Hussein has offered Russian companies the rights to vast future energy development projects. Partly for these reasons, Russia strongly opposes any US military action against Iraq in the war against terrorism and advocates political dialogue and negotiations. To quote Yevgeny Primakov, currently President of the Russian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, "a military operation against Iraq would become a historic mistake for the United States".²⁹

Nevertheless, since September 11, there have been very small signals that Russian policies towards both Iran and Iraq may be slowly changing. For example, after Bush's "axis of evil" speech in January, Putin cancelled a visit to Moscow by the Iranian foreign minister. More recently, he broke with Tehran on territorial control of the Caspian Sea, siding for the first time with other energy-producing states in the region. Putin also offered what Bush called "comforting assurances" about safeguards for the nuclear reactor Russia is building in Iran.

²⁸ *Novaya Gazeta*, June 4, 2002.

²⁹ *Interfax*, March 23, 2003.

In the case of Iraq, although last year Russia blocked revisions to the international sanctions imposed on Iraq, Russia has since joined with the US to put a revised sanctions program in place. And where Russia used to say Iraq needs assurances that sanctions will be lifted if Iraq met international demands, Russia now emphasizes Iraq's obligation to show that it has no weapons of mass destruction.

To conclude, in the post-ABM world, NATO needs to focus more systematically on the protection of forces and population against nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons and on the dangers of proliferation. Here Russia and NATO should follow up on the Bush and Putin May 2002 statement that they will actively cooperate on missile defence, including expanding military exercises, sharing early-warning data and exploring potential joint research and development of missile defence technologies. Moreover, if requested, NATO states along with Russia should be ready to provide assistance to national authorities in dealing with consequences of terrorist attacks and proliferation of weapons. One way to help change Russian policy towards Iran and Iraq would be to compensate Russia for any potential economic losses. Another would be for NATO and Russia jointly to be actively involved in monitoring the situations.

3. New Thinking and Options for NATO-Russia Institutional Development

Russia-US cooperation in the war against terrorists (and those that harbour them) in Afghanistan has encouraged a “new thinking” among the Russian and Western political elite about Russia-NATO relations. Since September 11, Russia’s official rhetoric protesting NATO expansion has softened, and Russia-NATO differences in the Balkans have almost been forgotten. Most significantly, in October 2001 a major public opinion poll showed that 58 percent of Russians supported strengthening Russia’s cooperation with NATO, only 18 percent opposed, and 24 percent were unsure.³⁰ Thus, even Russian public opinion is abandoning its perception of NATO as an enemy and is beginning to see it as a possible ally for the protection of Russian security. This is an historic turnaround, one that has been developing fitfully over the past ten years but was greatly accelerated by the events of September 11.

Before September 11, the prospect for Russia joining NATO was not even a long-term possibility and had never been officially debated. Since then, however, President Putin has openly discussed whether Russia may join the alliance and this idea is even receiving some cautious support by Western leaders. Richard Gephardt, for example, has argued that Russian membership would be the best way to prevent another Cold War, and US ambassador to Russia, Alexander Vershbow, has stated that there are no fundamental obstacles to discussing Russia-NATO membership and that it could be a long-term goal.³¹ Even the extreme nationalist and former anti-Westerner, Vladimir Zhirinovsky, on December 3 called for broad cooperation between the US and Russia and envisioned the day when the two states could merge into a “North Atlantic state”.³² In fact, Russia’s entry into NATO is not yet on the table for either side. However, the

³⁰ Poll for Public Opinion Foundation quoted in Vladimir Pantin, “US, Russia still need Real Alliance”, *UPI*, 27 November 2001.

³¹ Kathleen Knox, “Russia: Will War on Terrorism Boost Russia’s Chance of Joining NATO?” *RFE/RL* November 16, 2001.

³² George Gedda, “Zhirinovsky Now Sounds More Mainstream”, Dec 3, 2001, *Johnson List* 5579.

point is that the issue is now raised and debated as a future possibility by an increasing number of officials on both sides.

Taking the Russia-NATO Founding Act as a starting point, there are several main options from which to develop NATO-Russia institutional relations. The first, officially proposed by Tony Blair, involves giving Russia a greater say in NATO decisions but not a full veto in all areas. This proposal became reality when the Russia-NATO Council was adopted at the US-Russia summit in May 2002. The second option is to have as a long-term goal to bring Russia directly into NATO. The third is to develop Russia-EU security ties, either alongside NATO ties or as a substitute to NATO. The fourth option is to develop an entirely new set of institutions to tie both the US and Russia to Europe or even to the broader global community. The fifth is to significantly broaden NATO security relationships eastward beyond Russia and into the rest of Eurasia. Obviously these key options are overlapping and not mutually exclusive.

3.1 Option #1: The Russia-NATO Council

By the summer of 2001, Russia was already beginning to recreate ties with NATO. However, while Russians remained highly critical of the Permanent Joint Council (PJC), the Chairman of Russia's foreign and defence policy council, Sergei Karaganov called it a "bureaucratic disgrace of an organization. It has in fact done nothing useful." In his point of view, NATO ignores Russia and what Russia really needs is either membership in NATO which would provide it with a "real opportunity to influence the alliance's decisions" or the creation of a brand new security alliance.³³ NATO officials responded that Russia's position will be taken into account only when the Russians have normal and consistent representation at NATO and when their diplomats "begin serious daily work with us to work out common approaches."³⁴

³³"Karaganov calls for a degree of skepticism in cooperation with NATO", *BBC Monitoring*, 24 November 2001.

³⁴ Yves Brodeur, NATO Spokesperson, speaking at Atlantic Council of Canada Annual Conference, Ottawa, 25 October 2001.

Nevertheless, despite frustrations on both sides, in 1997, the PJC had initiated contacts between NATO and Russian officials that were fruitful in a number of areas: from peacekeeping in Bosnia to helping the transition of unemployed military personnel. The latter is especially important since Russia has announced that it will make large cuts in its armed forces. The former is important because on the ground military to military activities have helped to build trust. The PJC also ensured that subsequent peacekeeping operations will be more likely to include Russia.

A key Russian criticism of the PJC was that NATO members discuss an agenda and then put it to Russia. "It's very much 19 plus one. That is now outmoded". Thus, the idea for a new Russia-NATO Council was born when, taking advantage of the new spirit of cooperation since September 11, in mid November 2001 British Prime Minister Tony Blair argued in favour of bolstering Russia's participation in the political side of NATO. Blair's proposal envisaged that the new council would have a fully integrated Russia at the table as one of 20 and could meet fortnightly or even more frequently. The old NATO council would continue to meet separately. The new body would discuss issues such as security co-operation in the fight against terrorism, countering proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, peace support operations and dealing with new threats. It could lead to NATO and Russia taking joint action, as they did in the Balkans, and would foster collaboration in technical areas of defence such as transport, communications, joint exercises, civil emergency planning and modernisation of armed forces.

Significantly, under this proposal Russia would not take part in the military structure of NATO and would not have a veto over NATO's actions. NATO Secretary General Lord Robertson elaborated upon this idea, terming the new proposal the *Russia-North Atlantic Council*. Russia would act as an equal with the 19 members in setting *certain* policies e.g. terrorism, arms proliferation, drug trafficking and peacekeeping. In December 2001 this proposal seemed to have the support of US and other countries, although by January 2002 it was also being increasingly questioned as a short-term solution to the issue of Russia-NATO relations.

The proposal for a Russia-North Atlantic Council appeared to accord with Mr Putin's desire for NATO to become a more of a political organisation concerned with security policy issues. Viktor Ozerov, head of Russia's delegation to NATO (head of the Federal Council's Security and Defence committee) argued that the Russian delegation should be a full fledged member in NATO's Parliamentary Assembly.³⁵ Also, since 1991, Russian leaders have desired acknowledgement of Russia's great power status. A seat at the NATO table could provide that and might strengthen Putin's position in dealing with those of his generals who are anti-NATO. Finally, it seemed this proposal would benefit Russia in terms of foreign policy and improve its image in the West.

Russian opponents of the Russia-NATO Council countered that it would leave Russia in a no mans land as semi-partner and semi-adversary. To quote Aleksei Pushkov "NATO is seeking a form of cooperation with Russia which will bring Russia closer to the Alliance politically and enable NATO to use Russia's potential while simultaneously restricting Russia's involvement in decision-making to the spheres where the Alliance cannot do without Russia, or where it is interested for some reason in Russia's involvement".³⁶

a) Veto

The question of whether or not Russia should get a veto in NATO affairs was (and still is) a key issue in the Russia-NATO formal discussions. On the Russian side there have been many unclear and contradictory statements. For example, Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov argued that Russia does not seek a veto but at the same time implied that this *is* what Russia wants:

"Russia is not even considering this problem to acquire the right to veto in its consultations with NATO. At the same time, since Russia is arranging closer relations with the alliance "a partner's opinion must be taken into account".

He continued,

³⁵ "Russian Delegation Asks for full-fledged membership in NATO PA", *ROS Business Consulting*, 23 November, 2001.

³⁶ Aleksei Pushkov, Why Russia should not join NATO, *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, November 27, 2001.

“... we expect that if we replace the currently existing 19 plus 1 mechanism with the mechanism of 20 the options of everyone, naturally, including Russia, will be taken into account in settling different problems that affect the interests of all members of this forum”.³⁷

Thus before the creation of the Russia-NATO Council, Ivanov saw the veto as distinguishing members from non-members and therefore concluded that there are only two possibilities: either Russia is a member or it is not. This tendency to view the world in “either-or” terms, however, does not fit the realities of Russia-NATO relations which allow for (or, perhaps, demand) a more nuanced approach to cooperation.

Even before January 2002, NATO officials were clear that they would not give Russia a veto – although some news articles incorrectly suggested that NATO was considering this as a possibility.³⁸

This suggestion in the media caused considerable controversy since European diplomats agreed with the Russians that there can be no “half-way house” between taking part in NATO decision-making and not doing so. This is largely because disagreements remain between Russia and NATO members over issues such as Iran, Iraq and Chechnya. Unanimity has never been easy to reach and it was believed that it would become completely impossible with Moscow brought into play. A harsh critic of the proposal for a new council, Zbigniew Brzezinski, argued that “Russia would become a de facto participant in NATO’s political deliberations, able to play on differences among the NATO allies before a NATO consensus has even been shaped.”³⁹ Thus the new council would create more internal disruption than cooperation.

However, by January 2002 NATO officials had made it clear that their bottom line is that any combined NATO-Russia mechanism regarding joint-security actions must not become a substitute for prior NATO decisions concerning the desirability of such joint actions. In other

³⁷ *Interfax* 25 Nov; Reuters, Nov 22

³⁸ For example, Michael Wines, “Russia makes assurances on NATO Role”, *Chicago Tribune*, Nov 25 2001

³⁹ Zbigniew Brzezinski, Commentary: NATO should remain wary of Russia”, *Wall Street Journal*, November 28, 2001.

words, the partnership with Russia must not be unconditional. For example, NATO must be free to decide on the extent of enlargement⁴⁰ and NATO members in the former Soviet bloc must be assured that planned ties with Moscow would not undermine their security. Thus, the key NATO objective is to strike the right balance between giving Russia a meaningful voice and preserving NATO's freedom of action on issues like military intervention and membership expansion.

The NATO-Russia Council (NRC) was launched on May 28, 2002, at the NATO summit in Rome. The NRC is to focus particularly on matters concerning non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the fight against terrorism. This Council of "twenty" is to be a full-fledged body with Russia's full-fledged participation in the drafting and approval of decisions. There is also a provision to establish working groups which will get "feedback" from other NATO structures.

The goal is to create a mechanism of joint responsibility for maintaining peace and stability in the Euro-Atlantic region. The NATO-Russia is thus intended to provide each participant with the opportunity to interact as equal nations in certain spheres where there are common interests: countering terrorism, peacekeeping, disaster relief, etc. Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov considers the NRC a positive development because it "will allow us to draft and adopt decisions on crucial issues of security. We must make joint decisions and joint commitments and keep them." Moreover, he argues that the NRC makes NATO expansion palatable to Russia because it facilitates the transition of NATO itself in a direction which is in the interest of common European security.⁴¹ President Putin, in reaction to the creation of the new

⁴⁰ Those who are for stopping any enlargement of NATO argue that it provokes Russia, costs too much, dilutes Alliance unity, and distracts NATO from original mission. But to stop enlargement would damage NATO's credibility.

⁴¹ Russian foreign minister Igor Ivanov, "The landmarks of Russia's foreign policy" *Kommersant-Vlast*, no.22, June 11, 2002.

council, stated that Russia no longer deems the West a threat even if Russia does not intend to fully join NATO.⁴²

Many others among the Russian elite have taken a negative view of the new council and argue that although it is a step forward it will produce little. Russia will still not have real decision making power. Some opponents therefore perceive that Russia's room of manoeuvre is being reduced, and that Russia will be indirectly forced to approve all of NATO's actions. Thus, the difficulty for Russia will be to keep its autonomy, that is, "to assume responsibility only for decisions which we share and which are in line with our national interests".⁴³ However, others rightly interpret that Russia has little choice, for otherwise it would find itself outside of Europe and outside of the world.⁴⁴ This leads Grigory Yavlinsky to argue that the new council "won't be any worse, firstly because we won't play any special role there. Secondly, there is every indication that NATO itself won't play any special role in the near future".⁴⁵

The opposite Russian argument is that the new council is a significant and positive step because "The US needs a certain counterbalance to act as an opponent to it in the decision-making process. NATO could allow us within the US-Europe-Russia triangle to build a more reasonable and balanced policy, influence the US, support them on some issues and oppose them on others".⁴⁶ Indeed, it seems that the majority of the Russian view the NRC as a temporary structure which will eventually be replaced by other bodies, international organizations of broader representation.

The decisive question now is how the new council will work in practice and have its provisions actually implemented. Of particular interest is how the working groups will be

⁴² *RIA Novosti*, 17 May 2002.

⁴³ Fyodor Mikhailovich Burlatsky, vice-president of the Euro-Atlantic Cooperation Association, *Federal News Service*, May 31, 2002.

⁴⁴ Viktor Kremenyuk, deputy director of US and Canada Institute. "Russian Academic sees no visible benefits from NATO agreement". *Rossiyskaya Gazeta*, 29 May 2002.

⁴⁵ *Interfax*, June 2, 2002.

⁴⁶ Major General Pavel Semyonovich Zolotaryov at a Press conference on Russia's relations with USA, NATO and EU, *Federal New Service*, May 31, 2002.

established, what precise issues they will debate, and how decisions will be executed. One example of a potential area of cooperation is the US proposal for Russia and NATO to develop a common picture of commercial air traffic in their respective airspaces. The so-called Air Sovereignty Operation Center would help make commercial air travel safer and would be useful in emergencies such as terrorist hijackings.⁴⁷ Other suggestions have included the formation of a group of Russian experts to be based in Brussels, and NATO's opening of its long-delayed military mission in Moscow.⁴⁸

To conclude, the new NATO-Russia Council has great potential to bring together Russia with NATO states to counter the three major threats to their mutual security: global terrorism, instability in Eurasia and proliferation. Even the Baltic states have reacted optimistically that the new council will lead to closer ties between their nations and Russia. However, these are very early days. Much depends on the willingness of Russia and the US to not just talk or act unilaterally but to cooperate and take joint action. It is also important not to have too high expectations for immediate results so that if they are not forthcoming all will not be deemed lost. Instead, NATO and Russia should define limited and well-defined projects on which they can work together and develop the relationship one step at a time. To quote Russian Defence Minister Sergei Ivanov: "We should not be too hopeful, draw epochal conclusions, expect crucial decisions, breakthroughs".⁴⁹

3.2 Option #2: Russia Joins NATO

a) Russian Perspectives

The NATO-Russia Council is now a reality and the second option for Russia to join NATO as a full member simply a theoretical possibility. However, it is not only NATO that is not prepared to go so far at this time. Russians are more in favour of getting rid of NATO completely

⁴⁷ Donald Rumsfeld, Reuters, 4 June, 2002.

⁴⁸ AP, 27 May 2002.

⁴⁹ Interfax, 6 June, 2002.

than of joining it. The typical Russian perspective remains that since NATO was created as a defensive military alliance against the Soviet Union, therefore it has an enduring anti-Russian bias. This ensures Russian suspicion. NATO is seen a clear-cut alliance. "You're in or you're out". However, as mentioned above, the reality is more complex, and NATO itself has always included a variety of degrees of integration. Distinguishing between the different versions of NATO might help to make the expansion of NATO more palatable to Russians.

Other Russian concerns about fully joining NATO include the fear that Russia would be ignored when decisions on further expansion or military operations are taken and that Russia would have to support US foreign policy moves even if they contradict Russia's interests. If this were the case, Russia's hands would be tied in foreign policy beyond Europe because it would have to be loyal to the Alliance even when its own interests were different. There is also the fear that the West would be tempted to use Russia as a shield against threats emanating from its southern neighbours. The Chair of the Duma's international affairs committee, Dimitri Rogozin, argues against Russia entering NATO because, in his opinion, Russia should develop relations with NATO in terms of joint security, but not joint defence. Rogozin has called for a cessation of all talks about Russia joining NATO for fear it might be interpreted as an indication that Russia does not object to the entry of the Baltic states into NATO.⁵⁰

A more immediate Russian objection to joining NATO is that it does not want to stand in line for NATO membership along with the smaller former Communist nations. Russians would prefer to receive a special invitation from NATO before it makes a formal request to join so as not to be embarrassed by a rebuff. Russian leaders do not want to be in the position of beggar and believe that a rejection would be insulting and costly to Russia in terms of respect from other states.

⁵⁰ *Interfax*, January 15 2002.

Many members of Russia's military elite object to Russia's full entry into NATO because they believe that Russia is now in a relatively good position to decide for itself what kind of relations it wishes to develop with the rest of the world. The act of entering NATO would strip Russia of its independence and relative freedom of manoeuvre. As first Deputy Chief of Armed Forces, General Yury Baluyevsky, explains "As a military person I see without a doubt that there is no need for Russia to join NATO military structures. Russia is a self-sufficient state capable of independently settling issues of its military and national security". He goes on to say that in his opinion all previous Russia-NATO relations were a waste of time, that some decisions that were made jointly were not implemented, and that Russia should cooperate with NATO only if and when it coincides with Russia's security interests.⁵¹

This report puts forward the argument that key (not all) Russian and US interests coincide now more than at any other time in the past ten years, and thus it is a propitious time for both sides to develop relations. As Sergei Karaganov, chairman of the foreign and defence policy council clearly understands: "It is essential for Russia to have good relations with NATO because NATO is the only serious organization dealing with issues of European security."⁵² Thus, Russia's full entry into NATO should be on the table even if it is still a long-term goal.

b) Russian Reforms not up to Par?

It has been argued that Russia has shrunk from serious discussions about joining NATO because Russia is not prepared to undertake far-reaching reforms in the way the state and armed forces are run. In other words it is not prepared to make the military more open, to ensure civilian control over the army and to accelerate human rights reform. However, in fact Russia has made steps towards military reform. For example, on 21 November 2001 Putin approved plans to recruit a growing number of professional soldiers. The move represents a first step towards the

⁵¹ Russian top brass downbeat on relations with NATO, Interfax.

⁵² Karaganov calls for a degree of skepticism in cooperation with NATO. Russian Mayak rad, 23 Nov, *BBC Monitoring*.

abolition of conscription, with a final plan set to be prepared by 2004.⁵³ Of course, these plans follow previous pledges made by Boris Yeltsin to abolish conscription that have not yet been met, and may, realistically, take a further decade to fully implement. However, other positive steps have been taken. Putin has recently proposed cuts in the size of Russia's armed forces to one million, funding to launch new investment in weaponry, and a restructuring of the defence industry.⁵⁴ Putin has even agreed to accept NATO's help in restructuring Russia's armed forces.⁵⁵ Moreover, Putin recently announced plans to close military bases in Cuba and Vietnam. Thus Russia is taking actions which would allow it to eventually join NATO. And, even if Russian military reforms are not advancing as rapidly as they could be, it is precisely in order to encourage reforms in this direction that NATO should have as a goal Russia's eventual entry.

c) NATO's View

For now, Russia's full fledged entrance into NATO is not on the table, but improving the quality of the partnership is. Russia can not yet meet the entrance criteria applied to the other candidates, but there are other complications. Russia's joining in NATO would make it harder for NATO to agree on external operations. There is also the question of whether Russia could agree to its forces being under European or American command. Finally, Russia's long border with China and Central Asian states would require NATO to adopt special provisions – e.g. defence guarantees limited to Russia's Western regions – before full membership could even be considered.

On the other hand, Russia's entrance into NATO is reasonable if NATO argues that it will carry on a process of enlargement which is not necessarily driven wholeheartedly by security or strategic considerations. This is because Russia might eventually meet the criteria of democratic credentials and liberal economic management. Thus, Russia's entrance into NATO

⁵³ Andrew Jack, "Russia seeks more parity with NATO", *Financial Times*, 22 November, 2001.

⁵⁴ *Gazeta.ru*, January 8, 2002.

⁵⁵ Judy Dempsey, "Moscow asks NATO for help in restructuring", *Financial Times*, October 26, 2001.

would have a positive effect on Russia as it has had on other NATO candidates. And it could help all states get beyond Cold War mindset and work for peace across the continent.

d) Reactions of Other States

Most of the East European states are against Russia fully joining to NATO because they themselves joined largely out of a desire to be protected from Russia. If Russia joined, this would strip them of their security guarantee. However, a Russia fit to join NATO might be more palatable to them. So far the reaction towards the new NATO-Russia Council has been positive.

The fears of some West European states center on the belief that Russia's NATO membership would probably mean a shift in the alliance's power structure, reducing the influence of western European countries as interests shift in favour of US-Russian concerns.⁵⁶ To quote the German magazine *Die Welt*, "Cuddling in the Kremlin, that remains a risky matter. It is vaguely said that, on certain subjects, NATO could grant the Russians a kind of vote and veto power. That would be totally unworldly: a bit of a veto is as impossible as being a bit pregnant."⁵⁷ However, September 11 now has West Europeans more worried that NATO is becoming irrelevant. In particular, they worry that NATO was not the instrument that the US decided to use in its war against the al Qaeda and Taliban.

3.3 Option #3 Develop the Russia-EU Security Relationship

While Russia is not going to be fully joining NATO in the short-term, it does have the option to expand its institutional security ties with the European Union. Already well before September 11, Russia had turned to the EU as its would-be strategic partner partly because it saw the EU as a significant actor but also out of fear of being marginalized to eastern periphery of Europe as the EU expands. In fact, the EU was perceived as a more substantial way of influencing the West than NATO or the OSCE.

⁵⁶ *Frankfurter Allgemeine*, 19 November, 2001.

⁵⁷ Nikolaus Blome "Cuddling in the Kremlin", *Die Welt*, 25 November, 2001.

Since 1999, the EU has been committed to building a common defence policy – with some military clout to back it up. However, despite bold expressions of military ambitions, the EU has set out a series of mostly quite modest aims such as peacekeeping and delivery of humanitarian aid. Since late 2000, Russia has actively discussed cooperation in security matters with the EU, and closely followed EU moves to develop a European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP). At the seventh Russia-EU summit in May 2001 it was agreed that

“Crisis management in Europe as well as the UN and OSCE matters have been identified as importance areas of co-operation. As the European Union is improving its capacity for conflict prevention... arrangements for strengthened dialogue and co-operation with Russia should lay the necessary ground for possible participation by Russia in EU-led crisis management operations under agreed conditions”.

Russia does not regard the prospect of EU widening with the same suspicion as NATO expansion. And it has given a cautious welcome to EU moves to acquire a military capability. Russia’s 1999 Medium Term Strategy towards the EU expresses the hope that the development of an EU defence identity and military capability could counterbalance or diminish NATO’s role in Europe. In turn, the EU has an interest in having a stable, non-threatening Russia on its borders.

However, September 11 has reignited the US-NATO relationship with Russia while highlighting the fact that EU military forces are highly unlikely to replace NATO and remove the US from involvement in managing European security. While NATO’s first invocation of Article 5 in 52 years showed that the European alliance is now taking on defensive commitments for the US and not just other way around, subsequently Europe and NATO were marginalized in the war only to be called on later for “peacekeeping” duties. In Russia’s eyes, Europe’s position was demoted and Russia and not Europe proved to be a strategic partner of the US. To quote David Calleo the new key relationship is now between “the superpower and the superpower-on-vacation”.⁵⁸

⁵⁸American University NATO conference in Paris, December 2001.

In the long term, if there are divergences of interests between Europe and the USA, Russia and the EU may find each other useful partners in countering specific aspects of US foreign policy. And no matter how Russia-US and Russia-NATO relations develop, Russia will continue to develop close economic relations with the EU because the EU is currently Russia's biggest trade partner, accounting for 35 percent of Russia's trade turnover. EU widening could increase this number in the future to 51 percent. In 2000, Russia-EU trade increased by 42.5 % over 1999. To quote Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov commenting on the Russia-EU Summit in May 2002: "Overall, our interaction with the EU, NATO, the OSCE and other European structures, creates the necessary foundation for building up a common European territory of security and cooperation".⁵⁹

To conclude, despite US-Russian rapprochement since September 11, developing Russia-EU security relations remains a very positive option for Russia. NATO should encourage Russia-EU ties and work alongside the EU to counter the "new threats" that all of these states face.

3.4 Option #4: Create a new Security Institution

A typical argument among NATO opponents, especially since September 11, is that NATO is now outdated, that it is useless as far the "war on terrorism" is concerned, and therefore a new security structure is needed. Gennady Seleznyov, the Speaker of the Duma, for example, argues that NATO is "an archaic train from cold war days" and proposes a new structure which would include China and India.⁶⁰ This view, that NATO is inadequate for 21st century challenges, is increasingly supported by elites inside and outside Russia. After the terrorist attacks on the US, Graham Allison along with Karl Kaiser and Sergei Karaganov thus proposed a "Global Alliance for Security", starting with the Group of Eight which would act to prevent and fight terrorism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and the infrastructure of international criminal

⁵⁹ Igor Ivanov, *Kommersant Vlast*, no.22, June 11, 2002.

⁶⁰ *Itar Tass*, November 23, 2001.

activities and drug traffic that feed terrorist networks.⁶¹ They argue that it should be institutionalized by treaty, have a small secretariat and council, and cooperate with the UN, NATO and EU to fight terrorism. China should be included in the Alliance and then later any other states that share these objectives should be allowed to join.

Another option which has been proposed is a security alliance centered on Europe. The argument here is that Europe should play the key role in defending its own security and not the rest of the world's. Along this line Anatol Lieven advocates the creation of "European Security Council" including Russia, Turkey and America (possible because of existing asymmetries).⁶²

A third option for a new security institution is for Russia to develop its own security relations to the East. Former Russian foreign minister Primakov had earlier expressed hope that Russia could develop a strategic alliance with China and India as a counterweight to the US and NATO. However, both India and China have closer economic relations with the US than with Russia and are unlikely to jeopardise this by pursuing a strategic alliance against the US. What is new in Putin's current approach is that this alternative has been rejected and Russia is firmly embarked on the path of cooperation with the West.

3.5 Option #5: Develop NATO Relations with the rest of Eurasia

Since it is very difficult, and in the short-term highly unlikely, to build a brand new security institution, it makes more sense to attempt to reform existing institutions to make them better able to counter key threats. One way to do this and to ensure cooperation between North America, Europe and the former Soviet states is for NATO to continue to expand its relations with the rest of Eurasia. Since Partnership for Peace may well be NATO's greatest achievement it makes sense to expand this programme to the other "institutional orphans". This is all the more important because, as seen above, regional stability in Eurasia depends on US-Russian

⁶¹ Graham Allison, Karl Kaiser and Sergei Karaganov, *The World Needs a Global Alliance for Security*, *International Herald Tribune*, November 21, 2001.

⁶² Anatol Lieven, *The End of NATO*, *Prospect*, Nov 2001.

cooperation. Moreover, only NATO has the capability to help train the militaries of these states and its help is being welcomed by an increasing number of former Soviet states. NATO exercises or Cooperative Best Effort 2002 have been held in Georgia.⁶³ On the non-military front, NATO is also currently financing \$2.5 million to broaden internet access across Central Asia and the Transcaucasus.⁶⁴ And since the creation of the new Russia-NATO Council, Ukraine too has expressed its desire to develop a closer relationship with NATO.

The US is already assisting with training to enhance regional stability and to increase the interoperability among NATO and PFP nations. The goal, according to Marine Corps Brig. Gen. Martin R Berndt, Atlantic Command's Director of Exercises and Joint Training, is to prepare in advance "so that if we are ever called to do a mission like this (Afghanistan), we're not meeting people for the first time".⁶⁵ Besides bases and agreement to provide training and equipment for local forces, the US has also sponsored several economic aid packages and trade agreements.

There are also other regional institutions besides NATO which are mandated to bring military integration and stability to the region. NATO should continue to reach out to these institutions, some of which it already has close relations with, and to develop ties with the others. Briefly, the pro-Western security institutions include first, the Central Asian Battalion (Centrasbat) formed by Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan in December 1995 as a peacekeeping unit to provide peace and stability in Central Asia. Centrasbat has held multinational exercises in Central Asia to learn other nations' tactics in hopes of becoming a full-fledged participant in UN peacekeeping operations.⁶⁶ Second, GUUAM (Georgia, Uzbekistan, Ukraine, Azerbaijan and Moldova) is a bloc of former Soviet countries formed as an anti-Russian group which has been lobbying to get into NATO. Uzbekistan withdrew from the group on 13 June, 2002.

⁶³ *AFP*, January 11, 2002.

⁶⁴ *Interfax*, February 8, 2002.

⁶⁵ Linda D. Kozaryn, "Parachutes Ready: Next Stop Kazakhstan", *DefenseLink*, http://defenseLink.mil/news/Sep1997/n09031997_9709031.html

Third, the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) is Russia-dominated and has a program to fight international terrorists. In June 2002, Russian, Kazakh and Kyrgyz troops under CIS command began joint rapid deployment exercises in Central Asia. The troops are learning how to repel attacks by international terrorists and extremists.⁶⁷ Two other regional institutions of which Russia is a member are the Conference on Interactions and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA) and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). CICA aims to create a security framework for Asia along the same lines as the OSCE in Europe. In 1999 the members pledged to refrain from the threat or use of force, respect territorial integrity and practice peaceful settlement of disputes. However, while it may contribute to countering future terrorist threats, CICA's ultimate goal is to form a secure zone through the Asian continent. In comparison, the SCO is a smaller regional grouping which brings together China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. It was founded in 1996 to broker border disputes and now has a particular interest in expanding economic ties as well as opposing the United States' unilateralist policies and curbing US power – particular in Central Asia.

NATO's future actions in Eurasia must carefully take into account the interests of these regional groupings and attempt to work with them in preserving stability in the region. Most significantly, involvement in the region must not only be military and ties should be carefully constructed to take into account well-documented concerns about authoritarian governance and lack of democracy and respect for human rights across Central Asia. This is an area in which cooperation with Russia will be key to the long-term success of any actions taken.

⁶⁶ "Fact Sheet on Centrasbat 2000", www.unembassy.uz/centcom/military.html.

⁶⁷ *UPI*, June 13, 2002

Conclusions

The coincidence of interests between Russia and the US in the fight against terrorism provides a tremendous opportunity to establish a solid foundation for future mutually beneficial relations.

What is needed to deal with threats which Russia and the West have in common is an overarching strategic cooperative framework with legal arrangements. The institution in the best place to face these challenges may well be NATO. A reformed NATO is the only institution with the real potential to counter global terrorism, instability in Eurasia and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. As was recently argued by US Senator Dick Lugar: "NATO must be able to face new threats or become irrelevant".⁶⁸ This report argued that in order to meet these threats NATO needs more than an evolution of its mission and capabilities. Directly tied to its ability to counter new threats such as terrorism is its ability to create a more profitable and more equal relationship with Russia. How can the West take on counterterrorism, non-proliferation and conflict prevention without Russia? This has been the Russian perspective for some time: a new partnership is needed in which issues are not just discussed but joint decisions are taken. A reformed NATO could unite Russia with the rest of Europe and North America, help to frame a consensus and implement decisions.

The new Russia-NATO Council is a significant step in this direction. It brings Russia into NATO as a partner and promises to lead to fuller cooperation. The question now is how successful the implementation of the new council will be. NATO and Russia need to work at coordinating intelligence, research and civil defence and together create highly specialized mobile forces capable of immediate cooperation on various missions. Also, NATO and Russia now have a tremendous opportunity to act jointly in the Caucasus and Central Asia to reduce tensions and

⁶⁸ See the Washington Times editorial examining Lugar's statements. "What is NATO's Mission?", *The Washington Times*, and January 22, 2002.

instability. This is a real possibility if NATO continues to move towards becoming a collective security organization and crisis-management and conflict-prevention institution that embraces all of Europe and eventually much of Eurasia. Here it is important to stress that the first priority of Russia's foreign policy course remains the development of bilateral and multilateral cooperation with the CIS states.⁶⁹ And although as President Putin says, Russia is "not particularly allergic" to US presence in Central Asia, it has no intention of giving up its responsibility for security in the region.⁷⁰ NATO therefore needs to make its actions transparent and involve Russia as much as possible.

The prospects for the success of the new NATO-Russia Council are reasonably good particularly in the short term because, as NATO's dominant power, the US wants to maintain Russian cooperation in the war against terrorism. In the long term, Russia's role really depends on the evolution of NATO's role. If NATO's primary goal is to be peacekeeping and regional crisis management, then Russia's geography alone dictates that it should be a major player. If the goal is stability, this also would be best achieved by a Western-oriented Russia with free markets, open borders and a democratic political system.

President Putin's April 2002 state-of-the-nation address to the Russian federal assembly stressed the continued pursuit of a pragmatic approach based upon Russia's actual possibilities and national interests in economic, political and military fields. Significantly, Putin has softened his objections to issues such as NATO enlargement, US withdrawal from the ABM Treaty and US military involvement in Central Asia. This is not only because of the current coincidence in US/NATO and Russian interests in ending Afghanistan's role as a breeding ground for terrorism, but also because of Putin's realistic assessment of Russia's current weakness.

⁶⁹ Russian foreign minister Igor Ivanov, "The landmarks of Russia's foreign policy" *Kommersant-Vlast*, no.22, June 11, 2002.

⁷⁰ *Ria Novosti*, June 5, 2002.

Although weakness may be drawing Russia towards the West, asymmetry in economic and military might does not have to be an obstacle to long-term, mutually beneficial cooperation in military, economic and political spheres. The US, Europe and Russia have as a common goal to bring stability to regions of the world where there is a lack of order and violence reigns.

However, if the current opportunity to create a closer and more equal relationship is not taken advantage of, there is a serious possibility that Russians will despair that their government has once more failed to protect Russian interests. The Russian government will be blamed for giving the West too many concessions – as it is perceived to have done in 1991-92 – and Russian policy will likely as a result follow a more unilateralist path. Also, Russian willingness to cooperate over time may diminish if many among the Russian public and political elite are worried that the US is not prepared to accord Russia the equal status that they perceive it deserves. Already Russians are asking whether Russia would have been ignored if the al Qaeda leadership had been in Sudan rather than Afghanistan.

The ball is now in the US court to develop treaties, relationships and institutions to combat today's threats. And in return for Russia's cooperation, the US should be prepared to offer certain concessions such as debt relief and Russia's membership in the WTO.

To conclude, it will take more than new or reformed institutions to develop a profitable Russia-West relationship. Political will too is needed. It is time to stop just muddling along and to directly confront the issue of Russia-NATO relations because it is vital to the future global balance. If an effective working relationship can be developed with Russia, North America and the European continent will have a common security system for the first time.

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