

‘Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council and Developments in the CIS on Regional/Sub-regional Level’.

The end of Cold War had a dual effect on regional conflicts. First of all, it much de-internationalised local conflicts, stimulating debate on the increasing role of the regional and sub-regional security arrangements. However, local conflicts are becoming less restrained by the fear of their escalation to the level of to the global superpower competition. The civilised nations are not extremely interested in accepting the heavy burdens of conflict management in distant areas of the world and demonstrating reluctance in bearing substantial costs for conflict prevention and management, thus increasing the interest in sustainability of the regional alliances, their ability to deal with crises and tensions. On the other hand, the changes in the international law and adoption of a norm dictating a forceful global-level response to emerging conflict put a special emphasis on the proper regional arrangement that could cope with violent conflicts, achieve order and security, as well as establish proper interactions with larger regional and global institutions.

Thus, regions are substantially becoming more important venues of conflict and cooperation than in the past.

Theoretical approaches to regionalism and sub-regionalism could be found in the extant literature. It seems logical to review these approaches focusing on the elements that were considered useful in the research.

There are systemic theories or approaches to the regionalism.

Classical realism and *neo-realism* are focusing their analysis on finding the reasons of state co-operation on the regional level. The analysis of the balance of power on the regional level is the focus of this approach. From their perspective regionalism could be understood as a means for states to enhance their bargaining power, balance a bigger power, or a way to ‘entrap’ a more powerful state in a regional framework.

Another main systemic approach pays attention to the interconnectedness of states in the international system, especially economic interdependence promoted by the new information and communication technologies. Thus, the analysis is focused on the regions in light of the globalisation tendencies that creates opportunities and pressures which stimulate cooperation within new institutional frameworks that stretch beyond a state and a region.

Other theories like neo-liberal institutionalism, neo-functionalism and constructivism all approach regionalism from analysis of the internal factors that help to glue the regional

cooperation. *Neo-liberal approach* is predominately focused on the regional institutional framework, as a means in dealing with local issues that need state-to-state cooperation. Here attention to the state viability, regime types and convergence of domestic policy preferences does matter. *Neo-functionalists* have emphasised the economic links and need for economic interdependence within the region that leads to other forms of cooperation because of the necessity to solve either technical or political issues. With this 'spill-over' approach the analysis is determined to focus attention on a state and non-state actors as, multinational corporations, interest groups, etc., that are involved in the region-building activity.

Constructivist theories treat a region as socially created entities, paying much attention to the inter-subjective nature of regional cooperation, where developing a regional identity or a shared sense of belonging is seen as an essential part of institutionalising regional cooperation. In this sense this approach is rather a social and cultural identity sharing approach than economic vision of regionalism. The constructivist theories pay more attention to the 'soft' rather than 'hard' issues of regional cooperation. They are concentrating efforts on the analysis of ways the ideas, knowledge and norms contribute to the emergence of regional cooperation system.

The new approach that partly was used here is based on the '*new IPE*' (*international political economy*). This term has been given to a critical international political economy which seeks more nuanced understanding of emerging global and regional orders through the analysis of the 'soft' and 'hard security issues in complexity. Thus, four levels of analysis are used in the approach to the regionalism. They are such dimensions as politics, economy (finance and production), security and ideas (culture, knowledge, know-how). It pays attention to the historical background of a developing regional pattern of cooperation and register interests of state and non-state actors in the regional projects.

It has another important advantage. This multidimensional approach helps to understand the potential and patterns for future regional and world orders, when in the process of building the regional/subregional cooperation the boundaries are being contested and redrawn.

Regionalism and subregionalism. What is the difference?

The term 'subregionalism' has many connotations. It seems the most appropriate ones are the following:

- 1) When regionalism is viewed as a 'low level' regional co-operation in comparison to the 'higher levels of regionalism'. The latter refer to such regional projects as EU and APEC that involve activities of the great powers promoting some sort of joint actions on the regional level.

2) When regionalism is viewed as promotion of the subregionalist projects by the weaker states in the global political economy which are seeking to strengthen cooperation in a more circumscribed space than at the regional level.’

The use of proper terminology is very important here. It automatically reveals the reasoning for the subregional groupings existence and connects it with their main goals.

This research is focused on the analysis of the regional and subregional arrangements in the CIS. Presently there are several arrangements (bilateral and multilateral) in the region worth mentioning. At the same time it is vitally important to demonstrate the history of the subregional developments in the CIS. The analysis of the subregional groupings on the CIS demonstrated that the most appropriate methodology for the analysis of event in the region would be the ‘new IPE’.

CIS Developments:

Presently there are seven regional and sub-regional groupings in CIS only. There are Russian-Belarus union, Customs union (Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan), states belonging to the CIS Collective Security Treaty (there are the same five states plus Armenia), separate grouping of states but linked to the CIS CST carrying Joint Air Defence, (formally Central Asian Union), GUUAM (Georgia, Uzbekistan, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, Moldova) and the Caucasian four (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Russia).

Besides mentioned arrangements the CIS states participate actively in the institutions and sub-regional groupings that consist of members which are non-post Soviet states. Special attention in that respect should be given to ‘Shanghai Forum’ and BSEC.

All these regional arrangements carry different weight and purposes, the level of their success differs as well.

Reasons for being: security and economics

The security system of the CIS was designed to deal with traditional and non-traditional threats and provide security guarantees for its internal market. It was also supposed to create conditions under which the CIS states (above all Russia) could monitor their communications and transport networks. By efficiently exploiting the geographic position of the CIS, the member-states would enjoy the means of gaining access to European and Asian Pacific markets.

Threat factors

The former USSR has been the scene of scores of ethno-territorial conflicts. More than 200 potential disputes have been identified in the area.ⁱ With the exception of the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict over Nagorno Karabakh, the conflicts that the member states have had to deal with have not been inter-CIS. The major task for the CIS security system (from the elite’s point of view) has been to prevent internal armed conflicts within the states themselves and to defuse beds of tension in adjacent states. The conflict in Tajikistan is an example of the most feared type of conflict, where the warring parties were supported by outside forces from both CIS and non-CIS countries. Thus, one of the main tasks assigned to CIS security arrangements by the regional

To some extent neither of the proposed terminology satisfy the author. The first explains rather the imposed integration, the second excludes the influence of the outside actors as well as

elite is the preservation of the *status quo* until such a time as the states or regional groupings can do it themselves.

Dissatisfaction of the member-states with the handling of peacekeeping operations in the early post-Soviet period, as well as unresolved questions of military-technical assistance and co-operation, were also powerful motives for devising mutually beneficial security arrangements. Finally, power-balancing exercises among the CIS member-states was an important impetus for preserving some form of security arrangement for the region.

The need for very practical co-operation emerged from a number of urgent new tasks, including the rise in crime and interactions between criminal factions within the CIS; arms proliferation, with the Central Asian states becoming the main arms suppliers and drug trafficking through the CIS, with the Commonwealth becoming the world's second highest drug production and consumption market.ⁱⁱ

The territorial claims of other countries, hot beds of local wars and armed conflicts in the immediate proximity to the CIS borders, are seen as the main sources of military danger. This view reflects the commonality of military-political objectives among the participating states, which intend to ensure their security through pooling their defence efforts in the Eurasian region.

The participating states have stated that they do not view any country as their potential adversary, but regard all the members of the international community as equal partners.ⁱⁱⁱ However, documents adopted in 1995-97 have clearly defined potential threats from outside the CIS. External military threats that could lead to a military confrontation include a concentration of military forces that would undermine the existing balance of power in the regions bordering the CIS; the formation of new military units in neighboring territories, to be used against one or more member-states of the CIS security system; and the stationing of foreign troops on the territories of bordering states - in cases other than peace-keeping, peace-enforcement tasks under United Nations or Organisation of Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) mandates.^{iv}

Economic motivations

Despite the potential military threats, economic considerations will be the most important determinant of CIS security structures, at least for the foreseeable future. Russian documents demonstrate the priority given to economic matters in the CIS security debate taking place within Russia. The Russian Parliamentary election in December 1995 and Presidential elections in June 1996 clarified the roots of public concern with the CIS affairs. All major parties voiced the interests of the business community in expansion to the CIS markets. For the first time since the creation of the CIS, major new elite groups within Russia found mutual interest in developing and preserving the Commonwealth of Independent States.

The industrial and military-industrial lobbies were always supportive of the integration tendencies within the CIS as a means of preserving existing production-development cycles. However, the new and influential lobbies on Russian domestic policies, including the financial, energy and trade sectors, became supportive of CIS integration because of certain developments in both domestic and international economic arenas:

- the growing need to rely on CIS-produced raw materials, the lowest-cost option as expensive new deposits were being developed;
- the increasing profitability of domestic Russian and CIS energy markets;
- the establishment of financial oligarchies, especially marriages between financial groups and the largest industrial enterprises (many responsible for the development of the mineral and raw material base of the post-Soviet space);

- the growing importance of transcontinental communication systems, which helped secure the economic prosperity of the states controlling them in a period of increased trade flows between Europe and the Asian Pacific region.

The necessity of relying on CIS-produced raw materials is well-illustrated by Russia's case. The mineral and raw-material resources of Russia has been the main source of current revenues in the state budget. Crude minerals account for 60-65% of the financial return earned annually from exports, with approximately 43% of this consisting of energy sources. Russia's share of the world oil reserves stands at 13%; gas 35%; and coal 12%. Non-ore minerals make up 15% and metals 13%. The sustainability of Russian economic development depends on the maintenance of resource production volumes. However, owing to lack of funds and the cost of developing deposits in difficult-to-access areas, especially the North and Siberia, they are not yet able to be developed. For instance, over the past five years, the State Committee of the Russian Federation for Geology and the Use of Mineral Wealth (Roskomnedr) has surveyed, calculated and substantiated 234 oil and gas deposits, yet only 80 have been earmarked for development. The lack of financial, technical and human resources gave rise to the policy of focusing primarily on energy resources and delaying the exploitation of new mineral and raw material reserves.^v As a consequence, Russia may experience an acute deficit of raw materials, the shortage of which will be more evident when industrial production begins to rise. According to the then Minister for the Environment, Victor Orlov, the situation regarding manufacturing minerals is especially grave: at the current level of financing, Russia will become an importer of principal mineral resources in 5-7 years.^{vi}

In this context, CIS supplies are an important option. The Russian Federation (RF) has always been dependent on the CIS states for some raw materials. More than one-third of its needs in ferrous and non-ferrous metallurgy products came from the former Soviet Republics. If Russia can be confident of CIS supplies in the future, this relationship may develop in two complementary directions: towards de-nationalisation (privatisation) of the raw material base in Russia itself, and toward an increase in Russian dependence on CIS reserves, particularly as new deposits are being developed.

Financial markets in Russia have become interested in investing in export-oriented enterprises, a change which was brought about by the introduction of commercial banks linked to international financial markets. Currently, the main financial industrial groups in Russia are interested in the privatisation process in the CIS states. They represent the combined interests of the financial, energy, mineral and manufacturing elites in companies such as United Energy System, RAO Gasprom, Lukoil, Sidanko Oil Company, YUKOS Oil Company, Surgutneftegas Oil Company, AvtoVAZ, RAO Norilsk Nickel, Tyumenskaya Oil Company and Rosneft Oil Company. All of these companies have expressed interest in the privatisation process in the CIS states.^{vii}

Interest in the CIS was spurred by major institutes and political analysis centres in Russia and other CIS countries, which in 1994-96 published reports forecasting Russia's loss, within two to three years, of its priority access to Eurasian (CIS) markets, with the competition coming from Western investors. The analyses predicted that Russia would be driven to spend most of its financial resources on gaining re-admission to these markets.^{viii}

With Russia re-focusing its foreign trade policies on the CIS, records have, for the first time, registered an increase in CIS trade operations. In 1996, Russian state trade credits were re-introduced to the CIS states after three years' suspension, as a part of the new approach to the 'near abroad'. In the 1997 Russian Federal Budget, two trillion roubles were allocated for trade credits to CIS countries.^{ix}

The most radical statement linking economic considerations with the need for a CIS Security System was presented in an interview given by Col-Gen. Victor Samsonov, who briefly held the position of Head of the CIS Joint Chiefs of Staffs. He stated that 'the Cold War is not over yet, because the redistribution of the wealth of the defeated side (Former Soviet Union) has not yet been completed, and the expected competition over Russian and CIS economic potential, natural and intellectual resources should be considered as a vital threat to national security and to the interests of Russia. The perceived threat is coming from potential competitors - the US and Western countries'.x

This new Russian economic emphasis, and its link to security policy within the CIS, has already affected the position of other CIS member states, who need the hard security umbrella to protect their own interests, especially to deal with security threats and preserve their nation-states' territorial integrity and the *status-quo* in the region. Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan and Georgia, all of which are signatories to the CIS Security Charter, have distanced themselves from linking economic issues with military security. In particular, the notion of shared natural resources has always been extremely sensitive in the CIS, where there are no agreements on such sharing. However, negotiations on this are underway at a bilateral and regional level, between Russia and other CIS states in Central Asia and in the Caucasus. Several other CIS states have expressed interests in some kind of priority access to the privatisation process in other Commonwealth countries. The President of Kazakhstan, Nursultan Nazarbaev, has spoken of the need for 'open door possibilities for overlapping CIS ownership'.

Mutual economic dependence among the former Soviet republics continues, particularly in terms of guaranteed markets for their products, which are still not competitive in world markets. The CIS states expect easy terms from Russia for their energy products and raw materials supply.

Changing economic and security structures in Europe and elsewhere, superimposed on a need to secure the CIS markets for its own producers, are additional reasons for re-enforcing the CIS security structures. The concern about new security arrangements around the world grew out of a realisation that free access to communication and transport networks plays a major and growing role in the economic development of states. CIS development and integration into the world economy depend heavily on multiple options for transport and information flows with non-CIS states. The level of foreign investment, and the secure profitability of natural resource exports depends on minimising the threat of political and military tensions along the transport routes.

In general, a shift has occurred within the CIS's justification for having a working security system. From being primarily geo-political and threat-based, the rationale has moved increasingly to geo-economic considerations. This shift is most apparent in Russia. If economic motives are used to force integration in CIS security policies, then they could become a reason for potential confrontation between the CIS and other international institutions. Alternatively, such economic motives could help to establish a Commonwealth broadly open to economic and security co-operation, both inside and outside its borders.

Policy options in eurasia:

While each of the sub-regional groupings has an institutional framework that consists of legislative and executive bodies and a substantial military component, they represent different conceptual approaches to a Eurasian security system. The main paradox in the current state of CIS development is that each state views even the likely structures of CIS security differently. Russia and Belarus recognise a structure consisting of a 'two-layered core' (the Community of Russia and Belarus and the Treaty of Four), with a periphery consisting of other states co-operating in various areas (Armenia, Georgia, Azerbaijan, Moldova, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine). Other states, even members of the Treaty of Four such as Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, try to preserve an overlapping structure without a core, seeing this approach as a way of securing

their independence. They seek to balance not only with Russia, but also with other emerging regional powers, their neighbors in the CIS, and the traditional 'big players in Eurasia'.

At present, the main principles that unite the states in regional sub-groupings within the CIS, are firstly the need to secure transport and communications networks, which are seen as a key source of prosperity and economic development; and, secondly the need to neutralise potential conflicts within the sub-regions, thus limiting the involvement of outsiders. In this context, three groupings have been especially important: the 'two-layered core', which includes Belarus, Russia, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan (but especially the first three); the Central Asian Union; and a group made up of Ukraine and the Caucasian states.

Russian view of the 'selective approach'

According to the strategic analyses that are currently popular in Russia, the 21st Century will be the century of the global economy, which will bring about the geo-economic interdependence of states and create inter-state, continental, and transcontinental markets.^{xi} Russia perceives itself as being potentially excluded from these markets, with little prospect for full-fledged membership in the European Union (EU), the Central European Free Trade Area (CEFTA) or the economic structures of the Asia-Pacific region. Thus, Russia sees its possible role in the world economy as a bridge-state between those economic markets. Therefore, monitoring the transcontinental transport networks is considered to be one of the most vital conditions for the economic prosperity, indeed the survival, of Russia in the 21st century. It is also one of the main reasons for integration with the core countries which 'host' transcontinental transportation networks, especially railroads.^{xii}

Three rail transport routes from Europe to the Asian Pacific Region go through CIS states: the Trans-Siberian (Belarus-Russia); Trans-Eurasian (Belarus-Russia-Kazakhstan); and Trans-Central-Asian (Central Asian States) Railways. Russian Security Council analysts often argue that a major and increasing threat to Russia is isolation from communication and transport nets. This theme has grown in importance as the Central Asian states have commenced building projects for new routes which will leave Russia outside the main trade flows from Europe to the Asia Pacific region and back.^{xiii}

Development of transport networks within the Russian Federation and the CIS is considered a national security priority by the Russian Ministry of Defence, playing a part in defence reform through the theory that the functioning of mobile units in the Ground Forces depends on a unified railway infrastructure within the RF and CIS.^{xiv} In a November 1996 interview, ex-Deputy Minister of Defence, Andrei Kokoshin, focused on the restoration of a properly functioning rail system as a priority security objective.^{xv}

These priorities were reinforced by a sharp decline in Russia's own transport networks. The poor financing of the railways resulted in a two-fold drop in rail freight in 1995-96.^{xvi} The main transcontinental railway of the Russian Federation, the Trans-Siberian and Baikal-Amur Lines, suffered a 33% loss in efficiency through robbery and high trans-border tariffs on cargo. According to Russian reports, the Chinese were trying to shift the traffic to the Trans-Eurasian line, by setting lower prices for cargo transit.^{xvii}

The intensity of Russia's attempts to retain control of the transcontinental rail networks has led to a decision to encourage foreign investment in the Russian railways and to secure Russian involvement in obtaining partial ownership of other rail lines. It was seen as a sufficient basis, from a geo-economic and military perspective, for power-projection in the region.

This understanding of its national priorities formed the basis of the Russian approach towards special integration arrangements with Belarus and Kazakhstan. Besides the above factors, Russia's integration drift was motivated by selective economic interests (mostly energy related) and

military considerations. For example, as a result of the integration with Belarus, Russia is doing better deals on the oil transportation routes from Western Siberia to Europe. The existing pipeline 'Siyenie Severa', which is one of five major pipelines transporting oil from Tumen', Surgut, Uchty, and Urengoi to Western Europe, is to be joined by new pipeline routes to Europe through the territory of Belarus. The republic has, in effect, granted unrestricted transit through its territory to the Russian oil/energy corporations.

The military considerations in integration with Belarus had much to do with simplified access to the Kaliningrad region, which was considered a countermeasure to NATO enlargement. The geo-strategic importance to Russia of this integration was also based on the assumption that Belarus might otherwise support the Baltic-Black Sea confederation. If such a confederation came into existence, Russia would be isolated from the west.

Russian interests in Kazakhstan were more focused on establishing transport and energy unions, natural resource condominiums as well as intensified military co-operation. Russia has clearly been undergoing a dramatic change in attitude toward integration, with economic concerns becoming more important than security, cultural or social issues such as the fate of Russian nationals in the 'near abroad'.

Belarus is seen as important for Russia's link to Europe in the context of this economically-driven approach to integration. Successful relations with Kazakhstan, by contrast, would be important for an effective Russian policy in the CIS, in the Caspian, Black Sea and Asia Pacific areas. Thus, the 'two-layered core', with Belarus and Kazakhstan at its heart, was the most important integration package for Russia. According to Russian strategists the RF must at the very least hold on to this sphere of responsibility.

However, the geo-strategic and geo-economic concepts shared by Belarus and Kazakhstan differed from the one held by the Russians. According to Belarusian analysts, the best solution for the economic revival of Belarus lies in the exploitation of its geography, being located between Russia and Germany. In this way it can be orientated towards regional and global co-operation.^{xviii} The Belarus elite see the long-term benefits of deeper integration between Belarus and Russia in a wider geo-political and geo-economic context. Special relationships with Russia are seen as a necessary element in establishing a trans-Eurasian 'bridge of stability' that would anchor Belarus, Russia and Kazakhstan to Europe through ties with Poland, Germany and France. Links to the Asia Pacific region would be ensured by ties to China.^{xix} At the same time the concept presupposed Belarus 'to pursue an active multi-directional policy', aiming at balanced relations with the CIS states as well as with the United States, European Union and other Western countries.^{xx}

For Kazakhstan, the motivation was different. Special relationships with Belarus and Russia were considered vital, in view of the internal problems that the current government has to address. These problems include regional disparities in development, growing divisions between the north and south of the country and increasing competition between the elites.^{xxi} Rising social unrest in the north is connected with tensions between ethnically Russian Cossacks and Kazakhstani, and the potential unrest in the south is connected with the state of the economy in that region.^{xxii}

Joint projects to reconstruct the Trans-Eurasian and Trans-Central Asian rail networks were considered vital for dealing with regional disparities. The transport and communication networks are considered to be one of the three long-term factors in Kazakhstani prosperity, the other two being energy and natural resource.^{xxiii}

Kazakhstan also has global and regional interests. The special relationship with Russia and Belarus gave Kazakhstan additional leverage in dealing with other Central Asian States, a tool that is

specially important in relations with Uzbekistan on issues such as integration, transport and distribution of energy.

The differences in the security concepts and strategies for economic revival, as well as an urge to strengthen its position in Europe (in the period of NATO enlargement) and in negotiations with Kazakhstan influenced the Russian decision to divide its approaches towards Belarus and Kazakhstan and concentrate its efforts on the 'two-layered core' policy on CIS integration. Originally initiated in 1995 as a negotiation on transport and energy union among Russian, Belarus and Kazakhstan, the CIS integration negotiations resulted first in the Community of Russia and Belarus, an arrangement reached on 2 April 1996, which was transformed into the Union of Belarus and Russia exactly one year later. The "Treaty of Four" (Belarus, Russia, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan) was also concluded in April 1996.

Belarus-Russia Union

The goals and aims of the new Union were finalised in the Charter of the Union signed on 23 May 1997. Separate agreements established inter-state institutions including the Inter-state Integration Fund for joint ventures (in 1998 at a level of 585 million re-denominated Russian Rb). A decision adopted by the Supreme Council is considered to be obligatory for implementation by both Governments. One of the goals of the Union is to ensure security and maintain defence capacity at a high level, fighting jointly against crime; contributing to European security and developing 'mutually advantageous co-operation in Europe and the world'. According to the Union Charter, the main political goals are co-ordination of the common policy objectives, unification of the foreign policy issues of common interest and joint approaches to defence postures and arms control negotiations. Special focus is given to joint infrastructure, transport, pipelines and communications.

The document that was adopted on 2 April 1997 contained wide-ranging common principles of military construction and joint use of military infrastructure, as well as recognition of the joint defence posture and principles of the formation of the regional group of forces. For example by the co-ordination of military construction and the re-structuring of defence ministries; access of Belarusian military industries to Russian government contracts on an equal basis with Russian enterprises (as part of the bilateral agreement between Russia and Belarus on joint air defence), in 1996-1997 the Belarus military-industrial complex covered up to 15% of the Russian state's military procurement;xxiv by joint use of military-technical installations, together with the free access to military facilities by one state on the territory of the other;xxv equal access to military/technical education for the officer corps; agreements on equal opportunities for the officers of one army to serve in the army of the other, regardless of the ethnicity factor (a judicial base for unified forces), and agreements on mutual transfer of officers to the other republic's military units; joint external border protection and customs policy (under a newly-established Border Control Committee); by joint air defence patrols; and, joint operational multinational units (said to be similar to the Combined Joint Task Force (CJTF) concept in NATO terminology).xxvi

Nevertheless, several potential pitfalls stand in the way of successful integration. There are structural and technical difficulties in the implementation of the Union Treaty, as well as an imbalance between Belarusian expectations for integration and its likely achievements.

Russian economic interests in Belarus are selective. They are concentrated in specific areas of the economy, mostly export-oriented, and are limited to enterprises which Russia can either subsidise or attract private capital for reconstruction. Twenty three enterprises in Belarus have been ready for joint share holding privatisation with Russia but less than nine chemical and fertiliser production or oil refineries received the necessary request to do so.xxvii The process was based

on an approach that would guarantee Russian investment, with the majority of the shares being transferred into Russian possession.

Although Belarus has received access to energy supplies on the basis of Russian domestic prices, the economic crisis deepened in Belarus during 1996. By the end of 1996 up to 70% of industrial enterprises were bankrupt. Export-import operations dropped by 30% and losses in trade with both CIS and non-CIS States were registered.^{xxviii}

The notion that Belarus would be secured, economically and socially, through close integration with Russia, has been an abiding aspect of Belarusian public opinion. 90% of the population believe that the economic crisis in the Republic can be dealt with only in collaboration with other CIS States, primarily with Russia. Despite the overwhelming support for integration, the population of Belarus fails to appreciate the process which is taking place in Russia. For instance, 43% of Belarusians chose socialism and 12% voted for capitalism as a way forward for state development.^{xxix} Polls in Belarus show that attitudes towards Russian reforms and privatisation demonstrate the potential for increased Belarusian dissatisfaction with confederation-style arrangements and even a possible rise in anti-Russian feeling. Up to 61% of the sample polled had a critical evaluation of reform in Russia. Belarus had entered the integration process with Russia, advocating the concept of 'market socialism'. Current support on the part of the business community is mostly motivated by the hope that integration will bring about economic reforms in the Republic.

Foreign and security policy co-operation, another important area, could in the long run depend primarily on the level and intensity of economic integration between the two states. Both have agreed to co-ordinate their policies within the framework of such institutions as the EU, the UN and the Council of Baltic States. It is anticipated that there will be co-operation in the fields of international law and administrative-budgetary matters, with joint contributions to the work of the UN, the UN Economic Social and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), the OSCE and the CIS.

Russian and Belarusian views regarding the role of those institutions, their functions, and the principle of overlap in the international institutional network, currently coincide. But the dynamics of national perceptions of the role and geo-strategic position of Belarus and Russia require additional attention. Perceptions of their foreign policy objectives and individual national interests could serve, on the one hand, as a basis for developing long-term relations between the two countries; on the other hand, they could also be the basis for differences and disunity.^{xxx} For instance, in Spring 1996, Russia failed in its attempt to introduce special tariffs on Ukrainian products because Belarus refused to co-operate. Ukraine simply avoided the tariffs by shipping to Russia through Belarus. The trade flows from Ukraine to Russia through Belarus increased six-fold. Economic considerations and the influence of the Belarusian trade lobby put bilateral relations with Ukraine and the Republic's status in the Central European Free Trade Area (CEFTA) above the need to follow a political decision made in Moscow.

In 1999-2000 demonstrated even higher level of political and military integration. The integration in the economic sphere proved to be the most difficult ones. Nevertheless in military sphere the Confederation of two states established a functional regional security system.

The Treaty of Four

Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, together with Russia and Belarus signed integration agreements in Moscow on 29 March 1996. The inter-state institutions created (such as the Inter-Governmental Council of Presidents, Prime Ministers, Foreign Ministers; the Integration Committee; and the Inter-Parliamentary Committee) could be seen as an attempt to establish priority groupings within existing CIS institutions. There were no additional functions acquired, no integration budget was considered and decisions were taken as recommendations only.

The most important aspect of the new integration efforts is an attempt to downplay the negative centrifugal tendencies stemming from other 'overlapping organisations' in CIS. From the Russian perspective, the main goal of the four-country grouping might well be to neutralise the effect of regionalism in Central Asia. More precisely, the creation of the complex multi-layered arrangement (Russian-Belarus; the new group of four; the traditional CIS structures) might be aimed at counteracting regional activities such as those of the Inter-state Council of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan.

Kyrgyzstan became interested in integration after a severe bank crisis in 1995-96 which was accompanied by a complete collapse of industrial production, and problems caused by the breakdown of energy and water supplies from Russia and Uzbekistan. As a result of the four-party agreements and after the subsequent bilateral negotiations, Kyrgyzstan agreed to subsume certain enterprises into the creation of joint Financial Industrial Groups, as a part of the cost of its participation. Military aspects of co-operation with Russia were covered in several agreements including a declaration on integration and deepening military co-operation signed in March 1996. Both of the Central Asian participants in the Treaty of Four had rather different views from those of Russia on the best security arrangement for their states. Both supported the arrangement of overlapping alliances, when one sub-regional grouping of states might act as a serious player in a broader security system, even one not sited in the region. Under this principle global, regional and sub-regional security systems could function simultaneously and effectively without forming closed defensive blocs. On April 28 1998 the decision was taken to extend the Treaty to Tajikistan.^{xxxii} Thus, Central Asian region was becoming a theatre of complicated overlapping arrangements.

The Central Asian Union -

Consistent with this view, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan have declared support for the CIS security system but made attempts to balance developments in the CIS through participation in the Central Asian Union (CAU). They focused especially on co-ordination of defence policies and in co-operation on military-technical matters and in peacekeeping activities with the OSCE and NATO. The Central Asian Union is thus another potential grouping to balance Russia within the CIS. However, CAU is much more than that. It was initiated on 3 January 1993 primarily as an economic coalition, but was then transformed into a sub-regional alliance at the Central Asian summit in July 1994. The main goals of the new arrangement are to co-ordinate the economic, security and cultural policies of Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan and to implement any decisions taken. The establishment of the necessary executive bodies for the arrangement, including an Inter-state Council with subordinate commissions, the Central Asian Bank of Co-operation and Development and the Inter-parliamentary Commission, should be seen as important evidence that the member-states of the CAU are serious about formally pursuing their interests as a group.

In December 1995 a Council of Ministers of Defence was formed under the Inter-state Council umbrella. The aim of this new Council was to co-ordinate the military and security policy interests of the CAU states as a separate entity within the CIS. To illustrate how it can operate as a distinct entity, it is only necessary to consider the formation of Centralzbat - the peacekeeping battalion for Central Asia. The CAU Defence Ministers Council formed that battalion in the context of NATO's Partnership for Peace (PfP), but it is not directly linked to PfP or the CIS. The agreements signed on technical-military co-operation, on the exchange of information and on migration, are also important for understanding the purposes of the CAU.^{xxxiii}

Interestingly, Russia considered the Central Asian Union as regionalisation of the security space within the Commonwealth and therefore not threatening to overall CIS security. The Russians view the CAU as a sub-regional unit at least loosely subordinated to the CIS. In contrast, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan view the two institutions as complimentary and not with one

subordinated. For the two states, the CAU would ideally be part of a 'matreshka arrangement' with a grand Eurasian Union, including a security system established on the basis of OSCE principles in the Asia-Pacific region. Both complex web systems are seen as components of the Eurasian and global security systems under the UN Charter.

To some extent, this 'matreshka' security concept contradicted the Russian view on the best arrangement for the CIS States. However, the Russians concluded that as long as the Treaty of Four functioned effectively, the main goals of the RF foreign and defence policy would not be challenged. These included joint control of the security space, co-ordinated policies towards European institutions and the establishment of the a Eurasian bridge. At the same time, Russia recognised a need to limit, but not completely discourage, the intensity of regional economic and security co-operation within the CAU.

It is interesting that views have not even been consistent within the regional sub-groupings. For example, Uzbekistan has opposed the stance on an overlapping security network proposed by Kazakhstan. As a key player in the CAU, Uzbekistan categorically opposed the idea of even loose linkage between the Union and broader organisations. The Uzbeks consider the CAU to be on an equal footing with sub-regional organisations such as the Black Sea Economic Council (BSEC) or CEFTA. Uzbekistan seems to prefer representation in European or Asian security structures or economic institutions. It has become the most active participant among CAU states in the European forums and has established a special relationship with the US and Germany thus forming its own links among regional, European and trans-Atlantic fora. Uzbekistan, placing its faith in a 'strategic partnerships' with the US and Germany, is opposed to the development of the CAU as an open 'core and periphery' coalition which any state could join, including Commonwealth outsiders, Turkey and Iran.^{xxxiii} Another reason for their position is that the Union is directed against a possible rise of fundamentalism in the region. Strong concern has been expressed about the rise of Iranian influence in Tajikistan and Turkmenistan with Iranian-Turkmenistan co-operation involving an agreement on the sale of cotton to Iran, but also including intensified Iranian weapons supplies to the Tajik opposition.

Within the CAU, Uzbekistan is the dominant force lobbying for uniting energy and water resources within the Union. This position is similar to Russian attempts to establish the natural resource condominiums in the CIS. Uzbekistan is the only one of the CAU states to be almost self-sufficient in energy resources, Kazakhstan being dependent on the unified electricity grid controlled by Russia. Uzbekistan, however, suffers from a lack of land and water resources. The future development of that republic, as well as the success of its economic reform, depends on land reform or on the joint use of land within the CAU. The land problem could be solved potentially either by the renting of land resources through bilateral regional agreements, or by means of force.^{xxxiv} The demographics of Uzbekistan, which involve not only high birth rates, but the existing Uzbeks Diaspora's in all Central Asian States, make it a potentially explosive force in Central Asia and in the CIS. Western specialists note that by the year 2080, the majority of the population in the post-Soviet space will be Muslim with the Uzbecks having most with 75.4 million and Russia the next with 64.9 million. This forecast was based on data relating to the difference in birth rates between the Slavic and Central Asian republics (3-4 times overlap), and the fall in life expectancy, particularly among Russian men.^{xxxv}

Neighbouring states view Uzbekistan as a regional superpower and a potential violator of regional stability. The discrepancy between human and land resources raises concern that it may become a main source of conflict for Central Asia and the Russian Far East and Siberia. The military potential of Uzbekistan, includes a declared figure of 30,000 for the whole army which many suspect is less than half the true number. It is the only properly functioning army in Central Asia, which, added to the country's stable economic growth, is perceived by neighbouring states as posing a potential threat.

The decisions the CAU summit adopted at Ashgabad in December 1997 to grant full membership status to Tajikistan and to intensify economic co-ordination with Turkmenistan were motivated by the need to strengthen co-operation prior to the exploitation of the vast natural resources, and to co-ordinate efforts to counter the Taliban threat and to increase the influence of non-Uzbek members in the decision-making process.

On the other hand, Uzbekistan took some measures in order to strengthen its position in the region. On May 6, 1998, a new CIS Tripartite Political Union between Russia-Uzbekistan-Tajikistan was established^{xxxvi} The aim of this association was to focus on more profound economic and humanitarian integration and to deal primarily with ideological and political issues such as nationalism and fundamentalism. This arrangement outlined the necessity for Russia to recognise the increased role of Uzbekistan in the Central Asian region and its new functions within the CAU in 1998. According to the former Commander of the Peacekeeping units Lt-General Zavarzin there were only Russians and Uzbeks facing the dangers of the spreading local conflict on the Southern border of the Tajikistan.^{xxxvii} Uzbekistan in order to keep its status of the preferential Western partner in the Central Asian region needed to prove its ability to act as a regional player with 'formal' Russian consent. In addition Uzbekistan was facing increased number of terrorists attacks from the Islamic organisations (trained in Pakistan). The focus of this arrangement was on comprehensive 10-year economic-cooperation treaty, that was to be signed between Russia and Uzbekistan in October 1998. Special emphasis was made on the military-technical cooperation and on long-term operation, maintenance and modernisation of Il-76 and Il-78 cargo aircraft.^{xxxviii}

This arrangement once again proved the pragmatic flexibility of any arrangements with the CIS as well as the fact that the re-organisation of the CIS Security System will be done with the agreement of its important but 'loose' members.

If Uzbekistan becomes a client state of the West, it could destroy regional integration within the CA and automatically push Kazakhstan into closer co-operation with Russia. This could satisfy the tactical integration interests within the Treaty of Four. A focus on regional co-operation, combined with support for Kazakhstan's complicated network system, would essentially become an attempt to avoid potential violence in the region.

The integration within the alliance proved to be not easy, having difficulty in overcoming obstacles in creating sustainable regional development.

1) The region is energy wealthy, but due to the existing infrastructure could experience serious energy crisis.

Kazakhstan has three separate power grids. Therefore, while electrical production country-wide meets domestic demand, some regions are forced to import power due to localised shortages. The intention of Kazakhstan was to link these grids together. The implementation of this plan was slowed down by ageing transmission equipment, which accounts as much as a 40 % loss in the system wide. Additionally Kazakhstan depends on natural gas supplies for its domestic market. Up to 10% is supplied by the Russian Gasprom and by Kyrgyzstan.

For the near future, Kazakhstan will be tied to Russia's pipeline system, as this is the only available infrastructure for export and import of gas and oil. For Kazakhstan any energy shortage means additional reliance on Russian imports and increasing debt.

A new deposit of oil (of very high quality as in Tengis) in Eastern Kazakhstan, one of the largest deposits found in the world in the last 30 years. (7bln tons) t

There is potential for regional co-operation within the grouping. However, there are obstacles as well. There are several issues that create tensions in the relations among the Central Asian states.

1. Land ownership and delimitation of the border lines between Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan.

The disputable lands are 151,6 hectares of Southern Kazakhstan and Kzyl-Ordynskiyi regions. This land was rented to Uzbekistan by the Agreement by the USSR Council of Ministers in 1946. The land lease was for 10 years. It was extended in December 1955 for another 25 years. In April 1991 the Uzbek Government..... with provisions to extend for another 10 years. In December 1990 Uzbekistan appealed to Almaty again to extend the rights for leasing for another 25 years. The local Kazakh leaders of Chemkenskii region opposed the free of charge lease of the land and refused to extend the deal. In 1991 Prime Minister of Kazakhstan U.Karamanov ordered to establish a special working committee on the settling of the inter-republican land dispute. Uzbekistan set up a similar committee. A joint resolution was prepared by both committees on the transfer of the land in question back to the Kazakh side. This decision was reached in February 1992. However it was never implemented. Finally, several incidents occurred in 1999-2000, when Uzbek border guards and customs officers started unanimously demarcating its border

2) Another sensitive issue for the Central Asia region is water resources. The infrastructure of water channels are shared by four Central Asian republics. For instance, the water channel 'Dostyk' supply water to Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan. The use of extra water supplies by some states create additional interstate tensions. It becomes quite normal to sign interstate agreements on water supplies that were supported by governmental guarantees. One of the example is an agreement between Kyrgyzstan (supplier) and Kazakhstan (receiver). However, this type of agreement does not eliminate problems among the consumers. For instance, in summer 2000 Kazakhstan authorities accused Uzbekistan of using extra water supplies quotas that were supposed to reach the southern Kazakhstan. The negotiations on the water supplies quotas between Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan are typical examples of the scale and complexity of problems that the region faces.

Shanghai Forum - The Dushanbe summit openly demonstrated the redistribution of functions and policy roles in Central Asia. Russia publicly supported special status of Uzbekistan. Uzbek's suggestion to organise the international anti-terrorist Centre. Uzbekistan took part in the meeting of the 'Shanghai 5' as an observer for the first time, and confirmed its interest in participating in selective programmes and activities of the grouping.

The Caucasus

The Caucasus has been the most troubled 'hot spot' in the CIS. The majority of conflicts occurring in the post-Soviet space were rooted in this region. Four out of six conflicts within the CIS were located in the area - Nagorny Karabakh, Abkhazia, South Ossetia and Chechnia. There are several more potential conflict spots that could destabilise the region: the Georgia-Armenia dispute over the latter's support for the Armenian enclave in Georgia; Ajaria-Georgia; the Muslim autonomous republics in Russia; Ingushetia and Dagestan as examples. Due to the spread of violence in the region, Caucasus and Transcaucasus have been seen as the most obvious examples where regional security arrangements were lacking, providing the potential for Russian power-balancing.

Major Russian military bases are located in the Transcaucasus under bilateral agreements with Armenia and Georgia. Russia has a need to establish additional bases for its Black Sea Fleet after it transfers from the Crimea, which may involve the formation of an additional headquarters there. The region's importance will undoubtedly increase when supplies of Caspian and Central Asian oil and gas begin to flow to the West. Regional leaders expect that the profit which will come from the supplies of oil and gas going through the Caucasus will help to revive the region's economy. This potential has concentrated the regional powers' attention on access to

pipeline networks, as well as on finding means to impose national control over the transport and communication routes. This situation has created new geo-political alliances with growing economic, technical, political, transport, and, potentially, military co-operation between Georgia and Azerbaijan; increased interest in closer ties with Ukraine as an intermediary between the Caucasus as suppliers and European countries as energy consumers; potential Armenian interest in having access to shares in transport projects; and, intensified pressure on Russia to secure its interests in the region, either through joint property rights, shares in the pipelines deals and transport projects, or through monitoring security in the region by keeping a Russian presence in Suchumi and Batumi and establishing naval and/or ground forces bases in Poti (Georgia), thus monitoring the Georgia-Ukraine transport network.

Since early Spring 1996, Georgia led the way in supporting regional co-operation that could simultaneously be seen as a part of the CIS and broader international networks. The evident links that emerged between outbursts of violence in the region and negotiations on oil deals stimulated local players to support the establishment of the regional peace-keeping/peace-monitoring mechanism that could use both the CIS and OSCE umbrellas.

In June 1997 the leaders of the Russian Federation's autonomous republics in the Transcaucasia, as well as Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia, met at Kislovodsk and opened up a new stage in the development of regional co-operation in the Caucasus. They decided to establish the necessary institutions for regional co-operation with headquarters in Tbilisi, Georgia.

This decision was not comfortable for Russia, but it generally projected policies that were aimed at encouraging regional co-operation based on overlapping sub-regional systems as a way to share defence burdens and justify international recognition of the CIS security system. The summit of Caucasian four (July 2000) could be viewed as an important demonstration of an attempt to stimulate subregional co-operation in the Caucasus, not limiting it to the South Caucasian area.

The summit of the Caucasian four states, initiated by Russia, could be seen as a continuation of the 'Kislovodsk process'(1996). However, for the first time the decision was taken on institutionalisation of the group. The Caucasian four is to have regular meetings (no less than twice a year) that were to be scheduled prior to the CIS summits. The national Ministries of Foreign affairs are to be responsible for the overall co-ordination activities within the grouping, and for the summits' agenda. Chairmanship is to be on an annual rotation in alphabetical (Cyrillic) order. According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, the intensification of the economic ties was seen as a precondition for the political settlement of the conflict issues in the region. The changes reflect the new nuances in the national policies in the Caucasian states. Previously for instance Azerbaijan opposed to any economic integration projects prior the settlement of the dispute on Nagorny Karabakh. The admission of importance and desirability of the contacts reflects the changes that occurred in the regions. The economic ties are becoming more diversified. Some of the states of the region are becoming the potential locomotives of the regional development . For instance, the Azerbaijan economy is growing steadily with 6.6% of annual GDP growth and the highest rate of export growth within CIS. With the increasing involvement of Western companies in the country, Azerbaijan may seek to move toward a more pro-Western trade stance. However, the groupings have to deal with regional conflicts and separatist activities(Nagorny Karabakh, Abkhazia, South Ossetia, Chechnya. In that respect special attention should be given in the new Russian policies towards the region.

It was publicly admitted by Russia that the new subregional arrangement of Caucasian Four was made to counter-play various challenges in the region which Russia had to face, such as

Nezavisimaya gazeta, 5 July 2000.
Statistic on the Azerbaijan trade -

creation of the subregional groupings where Russia was not given a proper role or place. However, the Caucasus Four was not meant to be a closed institution. It presupposed introduction of new participants, but only at the later stages of group's development after the priorities of the co-operation between the four states were sorted out.

Georgia.

New approaches toward the region were demonstrated in the policy solving a long-lasting crisis in the Southern Caucasus. As it was noted, Russia is interested in two sides finding the most workable solution and the RF will act as a guarantor of stability. Georgia and Abkhazia signed agreements aimed at preventing hostilities in summer 1997, spring 1998 at the beginning of 2000 and on 11 July 2000. The last protocol outlining measures to prevent new destabilization in southern Abkhazia was signed at a meeting in Sukhum of the Co-ordinating Commission established in 1997 under the aegis of the UN. The sides agreed to reduce to no more than 600 the number of police and troops each side deployed in the conflict area and create special units to combat crime and cross-border smuggling.

The Russian base N50 in Gaudauty that was used by the CIS peacekeepers is to be closed by the end of 2000 in accordance to the Istanbul summit 1999. A battalion of paratroopers will be withdrawn as well to Russia (1500 servicemen). The most difficult issue is privatisation of the equipment to be left behind

The border protection policy. Special attention is to be given to the Pankiisskoie gorge . Georgian President E.Shevarnadze expressed an idea that Russia would join Georgian border guards there thus, opening up its own border guards post. Previously the Russian guarded only the Argun gorge.

Russia decided to withdraw from the Bishkek agreement (1992) before the June 2000 summit. In a meeting between Mr. Putin, Mr. Aliev and Mr.Shevarnadze the decision was reached not to address the issue at the summit. As a swap deal for putting on hold the issue, Russia received agreement from Shevarnadze to prolong the mandate of the Russian peacekeepers in Abkhazia.

'Loose' CIS memberships

Several states have limited and selective engagement in the CIS network. Their relationship within the Commonwealth is based mostly on bilateral agreements. Such states as Moldova, Turkmenistan and Ukraine participate selectively in the sub-regional groupings and in a limited way in selective economic and military agreements, or they only maintain observer status. Russian interest in those states is also limited, focusing exclusively on the economic sphere and certain types of military co-operation. In the case of Moldova, Russian interest could be identified as a limited 'peace-keeping' presence in the region through the Russian-Moldova accords of May and June 1997. Russian interest in Turkmenistan is focused around transport and energy infrastructure and joint border and customs protection policy.

The most vital country in this group of 'loose CIS associates' is Ukraine. From a Russian perspective, Ukraine is a key element in both its European, CIS and Mediterranean policies. Russia and Ukraine are the biggest economic partners within the CIS. There are more joint ventures formed between Russian and Ukraine than with any other state in the Commonwealth - 1,342 registered in 1995, and up to an additional 50 appeared on the record in 1996. The number of joint ventures between these two states is greater than the combined number both countries have with the US, Germany and China. Russia is Ukraine's biggest trade partner.^{xxxix} Russian policy towards Ukraine has been to pursue economic interdependence and expansion into the Ukrainian market, securing a strong presence and anchoring Ukraine to its own market. The policy towards Ukraine. Debt for shares scheme. The debt of Ukraine for Russian natural gas supply was more than \$700 mln .at the beginning of the 2000. The interstate and intergovernmental agreements will set a framework in accordance with the debts for the used Russian natural gas will be considered as state debts. The repayment will be made by swapping the debts for privatisation shares in the Ukrainian property market.

The Russians have considered the economic interdependence between Russia and Ukraine to be necessary for neutralising challenges that Ukraine has been posing to Russia. Their decision-makers have perceived that major problems in the CIS are connected with the Ukrainian policy of balancing Russia. This has been done by establishing strategic partnerships on security and economic issues with other CIS states, including Azerbaijan, Georgia and Moldova (the GUAM group) and Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan. The GUAM group, having no institutional position within the CIS, united the states in their wish to link the agreements on conditions for the presence of Russian armed forces on the territories of those states with the negotiations CFE treaty provisions. Once again, control of transport and communication networks was an important concern. Russia foresaw a real challenge to its long-term interests in the CIS in Ukraine's decision to join the Central Asian states, as well as Azerbaijan and Georgia, in regulating communications and co-ordinating rail transport along the Trans-Central-Asian continental route. Indeed, Ukrainian policy toward European institutions such as NATO was worrying to the Russians, especially in combination with its competitive position in the Black Sea and Mediterranean regions.^{xl}

Integration efforts in the sub-regions were perceived by the states as being a useful mechanism for addressing mutually conflicting interests and providing institutional channels for dealing with issues related to transport and communications networks, which are seen as a key source of prosperity and economic development for each of the states within the CIS. Presently, regional economic co-operation within the sub-regions only covers about 25% of all export-import operations within the CIS. However, the economic component of the regionalisation pattern of the CIS will inevitably increase with the development of transportation for energy resources from outside of the CIS.

The importance of regionalisation within the CIS had to be taken into consideration by policy-makers and the military in adjusting their individual state's security system to the Commonwealth realities. Gen Samsonov, currently Head of the CIS Joint Chiefs of Staffs, once pointed out that 'the developing CIS security system has to perform as a set of linked security sub-systems that are arranged under agreements reached at the regional level'

The CIS security system

The CIS security system has been in a constant process of development since its creation in May 1992. The Collective Security Treaty was signed in Tashkent on 15 May 1992 by the heads of six states - Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. Azerbaijan and Georgia joined later. Under the Bishkek Agreement, signed in October 1992, Ukraine and Moldova gained observer status. Both agreements created the legal framework for common security arrangements within the CIS. The agreements came into effect, for a five year period, on 20 April 1994 and can be prolonged.^{xli} However, the conditions for integration and the realities of the CIS have changed. Since 1994 emphasis has been put on co-ordination of the states' activities in the regions. The regionalisation pattern within the CIS was established with the adoption of a security concept on 10 February 1995. This is still considered to be the overall policy according to the Agreement on Principles of Joint Assurances of Regional Security.^{xlii}

The CIS collective security system was to be established in three stages.^{xliii} During the first stage, the creation of the armed forces of the member states would be completed and a series of documents would be drawn up to regulate the functioning of the system. This stage was completed by the end of 1995. The second stage was supposed to be marked by the creation of coalition forces, a joint air defence system (JADS) and some elements of common armed forces. This phase has not been completed. The completion of the collective security system is scheduled to be accomplished in the third stage. According to the military co-ordination programme adopted by the CIS Military Co-operation Cell (1995 and 1998), this stage should be implemented by the year 2003-2005. Its completion is planned to coincide with the implementation of military reform in the Russian Federation and the transformation processes in the CIS armies.

As mentioned above, the development of the CIS security structure is currently in its second phase, which is establishing a co-ordination mechanism; setting geo-strategic demarcation of regions of responsibility or military districts; developing joint border-protection policies; a joint air-defence system; and coalition forces either in a CIS or a series of bilateral frameworks.

1999-2000 had marked a new stage in the CIS development. It could be characterised as staged with focus on regional/ subregional developments and intensification of the integration process under the 'soft security' agenda.

The Interstate anti-terrorist Centre was to be established with HQ in Moscow in accordance to the CIS summit decision (July 2000). It would be headed by Russian General Boris Mylnikov. Initially the idea was voiced by the then PM Vladimir Putin at the meeting with ministers of Interior of Russia, Armenia, Georgia and Azerbaijan (28 September 1999).

The idea to establish the CIS Interstate anti-terrorist Centre received support from the majority of the states. However, some states expressed reservations. Ukraine signed the agreement with indicating that it would participate in its activity as long as it was not in contradiction with national legislation. Azerbaijan's participation is to be limited to an information-analytical and consulting activity. Turkmenistan did not signed the agreement at all. Despite the stated limitations, even the mentioned states would be fully de-facto engaged in the joint anti-terrorist activity. Turkmenistan's participation will be based on the intensification of the bilateral agreements (especially through Security councils' channels).

Baku links with the Moscow HQ of the Interstate Anti-terrorist Centre will be preserved through co-operation of the mentioned HQ and of either Security Council channels or a of a newly-established strategic Centre on the Caspian Sea, located in Baku.

Ukraine participation is going to be secured by many channels, including Security Council network, trilateral agreement between Ukraine, Belarus and Russia on the border protection policy, joint actions against crime and corruption and. The representative of Ukraine is to be nominated a deputy head of the main HQ of the Anti-terrorist Centre in Moscow.

Interfax, 19.7.000.

The anti-terrorist centres' network is to be established along the following lines: the main HQ under the UN Security Council (its creation is to be formalised during the Shanghai summit in September 2000, the proposal was voiced publicly by Uzbek president Karimov in Dushanbe in July 2000); the CIS Interstate Anti-terrorist Centre (Moscow) and regional HQs (presently already proposed to be located in Bishkeck and Baku).

Thus, the integration along the lines of the 'soft security agenda' proved to be even effective in the CIS security space than around the hard security issues.

The proposed alternative of the integration patterns in the region might be more successful if they are not linked to the geopolitical considerations and motivations but rather stress the necessity in joint projects of regional reconstruction, economic revival and transportation interconnectedness. For instance, the success of the Stability Pack for Caucasus - vis-a-vis - the group of four in Caucasus stresses the importance of the interstate economic projects.

Another promising example is the cooperation of the states in the regional CJTF, that would accumulate the interest of all the regional players. For instance., On 28 June 2000 a Letter of

Intent to form a Black Sea Naval Group for Operational Interactions (BlackSeaFor) was signed on behalf of Russia, Bulgaria, Georgia, Romania, Turkey and Ukraine. The agreement was to expand the cooperation between the navies. The BlackSeaFor is expected to consist of

4-6 vessels and will be set as a CJTF-type grouping for implementation of the concrete assignments into the Black Sea or conduct planned exercises. The task could cover such areas as search and rescue operations, operations to provide humanitarian assistance, mine clearing, measures to protect the environment. The CJTF is to be used in the international operations carried out exclusively under mandates of the UN and/ or the OSCE. The decision on the employment of the vessels will be taken on the basis of consensus and the participation countries will retain the sovereignty over their vessels during the period of the group's deployment. The command of the group will be rotated annually. The new initiative is to upgrade naval relations of the littoral states. Presently the work of the experts group is concentrated on the status of the CJTF.

The summit of Caucasian four (July 2000) could be viewed as an important demonstration of the new policy in the region and an attempt to stimulate sub regional cooperation in the Caucasus, not limiting it only to the South Caucasian area.

The new stage of the developments in the CIS started in the end of 1999 with a new policy towards Central Asia.

The new phase of the relationship started in December 1999 after Mr. Putin's visit to Uzbekistan, institutionalisation between CAU and GUUAM states was put on hold if not temporarily suspended. Stability Pack for SEE and Stability pack for the Caucasus. There is a direct linkage between the two projects. Both were prepared and suggested by the same Center (M.Emerson - LSE, London). The re-opening of the traditional river waterway damaged by the bombings at the Kosovo air routes and possibility to use Russian river system or put more focus on the Development of the TRANCECA.

The need for the reformulation of the Russia's policy towards the CIS states was voiced numerous times, especially after 1998 economic crisis. Different options aimed to strengthen Russian position in the Commonwealth of Independent states were formulated. They could be presented as following.

1) pragmatic and realistic policy towards CIS states with emphasis on the bilateral relations and focused attention to the subregional developments.

It was recognised within this approach that Russia is facing increasing pressures from the South as well as the relative costs of Russia's staying involved militarily and politically in the CIS were growing. As the result the policy of 'mutual benefits for the RF and the CIS was introduced'. This approach had two main characteristics. Firstly to view the CIS space as an open economic and political entity where the policy towards the states are formulated on the bases of their belonging to specific subregions, such as Baltic zone, the central-eastern European, the Black Sea-Caspian Sea Basin, and central - southern Asia. According to the supporters of this approach, such policy would benefit Russia in a long run because it was taking into account current economic and geopolitical realities and helping to tailor the foreign policy and trade in accordance with new transportation and communication projects and the realities of the emerging markets along the Russian border.

It is necessary to mention a very important an integral element of this approach.

Nezavisimaya gazeta. Gazeta. 5 July 2000.

Russian and the World: a New Deal. Policy Recommendations Based on the International Project: 'Russia's Total Security Environment'. Ed. by Alexei G. Arbatov and Dag Hartelius. EastWest Institute, N.Y., May 1999.

It was understood that new cooperation schemes, such as GUUAM, that are aimed at developing safe energy transportation routes that bypass Russia, if relished, would lead to Russia's exclusion from the regional and result in huge Russian economic losses. Russian energy policy in this respect has at least three options:

- To increase an attractiveness of the Russian transport corridors and open up domestic energy market for foreign investment
- To increase the state's influence in the international projects through Russian business shares, by stimulating Russian business to reflect national state interests fully.
- To use legal procedures and economic sanctions to safeguard implementation of the treaties and agreements concerning the use of the Russian transportation route for energy exports.

This approach presupposes:

- Introduction of the economic sanctions against the states and companies
- The use of the European Energy Charter Treaty, which offers a fair and productive framework for all.
- Introduction of the unified energy policy of the state and business (Russia) and increasing pressures on the CIS member-states to introduce the unified approach in the energy field in the negotiations on energy supplies to non- European customers.

Changing security climate in Eurasia: the role of subregional alliances and regional economic-political associations.

Presently there are several factors and tendencies that are most important in shaping the security space in Eurasia. Most dominant are the following:

- increasing role of the regions within the CIS and individual states;
- emergence of economic-political associations of the regions within individual states and cross-border regional arrangements;
- establishment of the subregional alliances, that are supposed to address all types of threats to the societies in Eurasia.

The Russian energy industry need substantial foreign investment for modernisation and increase its competitiveness. In order to attract foreign investments the limitations on production sharing agreements have to be eliminated. Presently the international capital was blocked from the Russian domestic energy trading market due the legislation adopted by the State Duma, according to which only 10 % of production sharing agreements were to concern oil and gas and 70 % of the equipment must be produced in Russia.

The European Energy Charter Treaty, was signed by 48 countries including Russia (the US is not part of it) creates an international framework of legal safeguard within which companies can invest, operate and trade in the energy sector in charter countries.

Most research projects on regionalism and sub-regionalism in the Newly Independent States (NIS), with only some exemptions, were dealing with analyses of regional politics as forms of disintegration, of traditional cross-border relations, region-to-region relations and their influence on the internal stability of the neighboring states, that also could result in re-drawing of the state boundaries of Eurasia.

This research is aimed at focusing on analysis of the new institutional formations and integrating blocks of security arrangements in Eurasia, such as sub-regional alliances

Sub-regional alliances:

Since the break-up of the Soviet Union, the Newly Independent States of Eurasia have directed their foreign policy at gaining admission to as many international institutions and regional and sub-regional groupings as possible. Their common motives are: getting access to the world markets, easing the process of applying for and receiving financial aid and finding a balance in the power struggles of the region by involving themselves in broader security institutions. (Tables 1&2).

The sub-regional groupings in Eurasia are organised not only around economic and soft security issues but are dealing with 'hard security' issues well. In such alliances the 'security component' is becoming essential element of regional politics. On the one hand, such newly formed groupings have to deal with problems/ tensions among themselves. In that respect the regional arms control agreements and CSBMs (on arms transfers) could be seen as an important way of dealing with regional tensions and curbing the arms race on the regional level (CAU and the subregional groupings in the Caucasus). On the other hand, a sub-regional grouping with an essential military component could be seen as unthreatening only in case of its inclusion into a wider institutional context, that is into the institutional network that is functional under the Helsinki Accords. Peacekeeping potential of the subregional alliances is

In this application the term 'sub-regionalism' is used as a practical coinage, with no international legal significance, to describe formally constituted intergovernmental groupings which cover a geographically coherent area smaller than any of Europe's 'region wide' organisations (OSCE, Council of Europe, NATO, EU). This interpretation was introduced by Ian Bremmer and Alyson Bailes in 'Sub-regionalism in the Newly Independent States', *International Affairs*, 74, N1, 1998, pp.131-148.

Ian Bremmer and Alyson Bailes in 'Sub-regionalism in the Newly Independent States', *International Affairs*, 74, N1, 1998, pp.131-148.; Ian Bremmer and Alyson Bailes 'Russia's total security environment' *Security Dialogue*, March 1998.

For instance: Post-Soviet Puzzles Mapping the Political Economy of the Former Soviet Union, Vol 1-IV, 1996;P. Terrence Hopmann, Stephen D. Shenfield and Dominique Arel, *Integration and Disintegration in the Former Soviet Union: Implications for Regional and Global Security*, Final Report of a Research Project Coordinated by the Program on Global Security; Thomas J. Watson Jr. Institute for International Studies, Brown university, 1997.

considered tremendously important. Thus, the questions that should be addressed are the possibilities for the sub-regional alliances to be sustainable and self-sufficient in providing the logistic support to its military/ security arrangements.

One of the main elements and goals of the military reforms in Russia and in the NIS had become the establishment of a new type of the military units - Operational Task Forces that are supposed to be able to repel any type of threat to security and stability of the states. This new approach presupposes the establishment of new pattern of space demarcation in the NIS, that would be based on transformation of the military districts into strategic directions and elimination of the duplicity between the services and force ministries in the NIS.

However, the new principle of demarcation also overlaps with the zones of influence of regional associations (Russia, Belarus, Ukraine), clans (Kazakhstan), etc. For instance, the demarcation of the security space of the Russian Federation into military-administrative units overlap the main existing economic political inter-regional groupings.

Region to region policies within the CIS are also considered to be of prime importance for the future of the Russian state as this particular interface lies on the fringe of internal/external policies and the viability of region to region relationships are becoming vital for the preservation of national integrity and functional effectiveness within the CIS. The co-ordination of bordering regions in dealing with non-authorized migration and the proliferation of crime is an interesting and important example of their ability to deal with non-traditional security problems.

There are several very specific questions that should be addressed within the framework of this project, such as:

- internal dynamics within regional groupings or sub-regional alliances;
- defining the main players among regional associations security arrangements that might effect the developments within the subregional alliances (institutional arrangements, networks, personalities);

These levels of analysis could be seen as complementary approaches to the subregional security - 'bottom-up' and 'top-down'. While the 'top-down' political impulse is essential in bringing any sub-regional grouping into existence, the activity at the grass root level is becoming important even in judging the effectiveness of the border protection policy between

the states. Cultural, historic and religious diversity of the states involved lead not only to different types of implementation of the transparency principles of the co-operative border management, but could lead to the potential anxieties and conflicts as well.

The result of the study is a clarification of the potentials and limits of the subregional alliances in the Eurasia (as Central Asian Union, GUAM, etc.) to be stable, self-sufficient and sustainable in dealing with security threats.

HISTORY.

.Attitudes towards future enlargements.

Initially the support from Russian military experts for agreements with NATO was based on the assumption that normalization of the relationship with NATO indirectly contributed to reducing the level of tensions along all Russian frontiers.

The enlargement of the first group of states kept the 'buffer zone' between the regularly stationed forces of Russia and NATO. But in case of NATO-membership of the Baltic States for the first time in the history of alliance the NATO forces would be stationed on the frontiers of mainland Russia. The time for a missile hit from the Baltic States to Moscow will shorten to 3-4 minutes, putting Russian Forces on a special alert cycle.

The situation on the South flank is even more complicated. It is believed that potential membership in the Alliance of Romania, Slovenia and Bulgaria could damage Russia's plans of using alternate communication routes through those countries by passing Ukraine, increasing its presence in the region and earning hard currency from energy exports and arms sales. It is also very important that the nominees to NATO membership in the Southern flank are territorially connecting NATO 'to be' areas of responsibility and the CIS states, participants of "enhanced" PfP. Ukraine being an important element of the Russian West-East and North-South policy is territorially becoming the 'bridge state' between GUAM states and Uzbekistan and NATO. Thus, in Russian perception it increased the potential level of Western involvement in the areas in the situation of crises. NATO policy of applying Art.5 of the Washington Treaty for the defence of the territories and troops of the member-states cause special concern in the areas of potential ethnic conflicts and territorial disputes.

Tstigitchko, V and Huber, R. Strategic stability: two approaches to its assessments. Voennaya Mysl', No 1, 1998, pp. 20-27.

GUAM group consists of Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan and Moldova

Russia considers the CIS regions as an area of vital national interests and security concerns, especially in the period of economic transition. The logic of this position is based on the following perceptions.

First, according to the analysis of the Russian Security Council, Russia's dependence on the CIS natural reserves (especially in oil, gas and ferrous and non-ferrous metals) will increase by 2002-2005. The accessibility to the CIS natural reserves and markets is perceived as a vital national security issue and important area of private interests of Russian corporations. Second, control of transcontinental transportation networks is considered one of the most vital conditions for Russia's economic prosperity in the 21st century and one of the main reasons for integration with the countries that 'host' those networks (especially railroads). According to the currently popular in Russia strategic security concepts, the 21st century is seen as the century of the global economy, of geoeconomic interdependence of states and of interstate, continental and cross-continental markets. Russia identified its chances to play a role in the world economy with a position of a 'bridge state' between economic markets of the West and East. It could be explained by the fear of potential exclusion from world markets and its poor prospects too become a full-fledged member of the European Union or economic structures of Asian Pacific region. This reasoning has been a powerful motivation for Russian interests in the CIS communication networks.

According to national security concept, the priorities of national concerns are focused on preserving the territorial integrity of the state, access to communication networks (in accordance to international law), and sustainability of market reforms. The same elite groups that had been supportive of the deal with NATO have vast economic interests in the CIS space. Thus, Russian-Western, especially Russian-US, policy controversy, on the one hand, and the vital need for Russia co-operate with the West, on the other hand, are most distinctly

Gornostayev, D. Russian Foreign Minister Formulates Russia's new strategic objectives in international arena. *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, March 17, 1998

Russia's mineral and raw material base has been its main source of current revenues. The crude oil and raw minerals base accounts for 60-65 percent of the financial resources earned annually from exports, and approximately 43 percent of these resources consist of energy exports. The sustainability of Russian economic development depends on maintaining resources production volumes. Russia has 13 percent of world oil reserves, 35 percent of gas reserves, 12 percent of coal, 15 percent of non-ore minerals, and 13 percent of metals. However, due to the cost of developing deposits in difficult-to-access areas, such as North and Siberia, and lack of funds, most of new deposits are not ready for development. The lack of financial, technical and human resources has determined a policy focused primarily on the re-utilisation of energy resources and has eliminated the possibility of preparing for potential utilisation of the country's vast mineral and raw material reserves. At the same time, Russia has always depended on the raw materials of the CIS: more than the former Soviet republics once satisfied one-third of its needs in ferrous and non-ferrous metals. Shortages in these resources will be more evident when the industrial production starts rising in Russia.

demonstrated in that region. As for Russia, important reasons for cooperation are drug trafficking, separatist movements and crime prevention and traditional military-technical cooperation.

Russian military experts considered the country to be self-sufficient. However, according to their assessment, strategic geopolitical interests of Russia go beyond its borders and are directly or indirectly connected with historic, ethnic and military strategic territories. In this sense Russian geopolitical interests are stretched towards the CIS states, Central and Eastern Europe, Black Sea and Asian Pacific regions .

Thus, the enlargement possibilities on NATO Northern and Southern flanks are equally sensitive for Russia (but for the different reasons). However, the main Russia's concern will be the 'enchanted Partnership for Peace' for the CIS states. Not being able to confront the PfP, the criticism will be concentrated on the NATO enlargement to the areas either adjacent to Russian frontiers (the Baltic) or adjacent to the vital CIS states (such as Ukraine)

Approaches to the regional cooperation.

Western policy towards the region could be characterized as blustering the division lines that might be imposed with the NATO expansion by a set of overlapping comforting measures such as P4P security-political consultations; cooperation within regional and subregional grouping and intensified reliance on the existing and possibly new arms control agreements and regimes.

Russia usually assists this policy as an extension of the 'buffer policies'. Russian approaches were concentrated in promotions of the equal security guaranties for every state in the region, disregarding on the fact of whether the country is a part of the military alliance or not. Russia is against the formal subordination of the regional institutions and creation of the hierarchy of the international institutions.

OSCE.

Russian policy in Europe is based on assumption of the OSCE as a proper functioning regional organization based on the UN principals and Paris Charter (1990). The approval of Charter on OSCE summit in November 1999 has become the prime policy focus for Russia. The RF believes that the organization has possibility to become the institution mainly responsible for the practical peacekeeping and early warning monitoring as well as post- crisis rehabilitation. Russia was hoping to shift some of the NATO functions to the OSCE. Important attention

Harlamov, S. Geopoliticheseskaya ekspansia. In: Armeiskiy sbornik. No 11, 1997, p.28.

was given to the CBM for CEE and CBM concerning the CJTFs deployment in the region, as well as CBM for the sea activities. The adoption of Vienna agreement and CFE Treaty, practical implementation of the Open Sky Treaty are considered important for promoting stability in Europe. The strong believe that the creation of ESDI would require USA pay more consideration to Russia and its interests. The believe that the European Identity is going to be contented only of there are two powerful outside European actors for them trying to balance in the community from Vladivostok to Vancouver.

However, another approach and attitudes are spreading in the Russian elite. It is a believe that with the unification of NATO-WEU-EU policies European nations are becoming politically handicapped in having little if any flexibility in deciding their own security destiny in Europe. NATO-centric security arrangements were thought to undermine the position of neutrals and dragging them into the mono-centric security network. Such policies were seen from Moscow as the attempts to push the state into marginal members of the European community at the very best or isolate from Europe and European markets. In Russian assessments the Western states rejecting the three folded security structure for Europe consisting from NATO, CIS and group of neutrals, consistent from some states from CEE and the Baltic states, are creating the situation where Russia is to experience constant unified pressures from EU-NATO. Thus, it was leaving little choice for Russia than to refocus its policy in Europe from the priority of integration to international institutional networks to traditional policy of balance of interests.

There are two major vectors in the Russian policy toward Europe. They could be named as:

- Russian -German rapprochement vis a vis increasing competition;
- focus on improvements in relationships with the NATO southern periphery states.

It was stated recently that ‘the revision of the imperial Russian policy is becoming an essential condition for national revival of the Russian states. The modification of policy has nothing to do with Kremlin ambitions; the adoption of imperial policy and expansion of Russian influence is becoming not a luxury but a matter of national survival. The monolithic and monocentric pattern of security arrangement in Europe and in the world, that have been imposed by the US and its allies, is giving Russia only the status of marginal player and exploited periphery of Europe. However, for more just and respectful attitudes and status one needs to fight, in parallel trying to deal with its internal problems.’

Nezavisimaya Gazeta. 20 March 1999.

NATO expansion was also seen from Moscow as an extension of the zone of conflict management and control area over the zone of economic activity and influence of Germany in Central and Eastern Europe. Membership of Baltic States in the northwest and Ukraine in the southeast in addition to the Vyshegrad states was seen as part of the creation of buffer zone between Germany and Russia. This buffer was supposed to not only limit German geopolitical and economic maneuvering in CEE, but also neutralize all potential attempts for 'strategic appeasement' between Germany and Russia in Europe. Thus, establishment of Belarus-Russian confederate state is becoming a legal precondition for redeployment of nuclear weapons on the territory of the republic as a counter measure to NATO enlargement. However, the support for confederation was based on other geopolitical and economic considerations. This unification was also seen as a means for creation a base for strategic partnership between Russia and Germany by as well as means of disrupting the plans for creation of the Baltic - Black sea alliance (or Riga-Vilnius-Minsk-Kiev axis).

NATO Southern Flank states.

According to Russian experts' assessments, the NATO enlargement implies additional military spending and changes the channeling of financial assistance to the infrastructure maintenance of the member states. Thus, the states that were to suffer most cuts in assistance were thought to be the states of the Southern flank. One of the strategic approaches of the Russian policies was to break the possibility of consensus in decision making process concerning the new membership to the alliance. The focus was to be on the attempts to influence the Southern NATO states whose interest in admitting the new members might be minimal. Russian approach might be characterized as an attempt to rely on the national lobbying groups whose economic interests were connected with Russian market or potentiality linked to long-term joint projects with Russia. For instance, special military-technical agreements were signed between Russia and Italy, Russia and Greece. The rise in arms sales with Turkey was reported.

This approach was not as successful as hoped for during the first wave of admission to the alliance. However, Russian policy was not short-term oriented. The existing military-technical cooperation agreements, economic joint ventures as well as political contacts and networks enables Russia to work with the alliance through its southern periphery. One should remember that the threats coming from the Southern Flank were considered seriously by Russian military experts.

Krivochizha. p.193

Central and Eastern Europe and grey area zone .

It seems there were no coherent foreign policy that actually has dealt with the area as a whole bordering to Russia region. Previously there were three not exactly connected vectors: Baltic States, the Western CIS states (with diversification of the Ukraine and/or Belarus changing priority and Moldova), the Central/ Eastern European states. Only in 1996 it seems the reorganization of foreign policy priorities occurred, the Russian policy for the region has shown the signs of unification. The Primakov's doctrine influenced the changes.

Russia could never publicly accept the NATO enlargement. However, the enlargement of the first wave was perceived as dangerous from political and strategic considerations. It was viewed as an opening of a Pandora's box of the unstoppable and uncontrolled enlargement process. Nevertheless, Russia could not allow itself to worsen the relationship with the Eastern Europe due to the geoeconomic considerations. The European Union (EU) is the main trading partner for Russia . Major oil and gas pipelines, delivering over 50% of Russian oil and 90% of Russian gas to Europe, are via East European countries. The Russians as a very valuable export market view East and Central European (ECE) countries. After several years of declining trade with the ECE states, Russia finally managed to reverse the negative trend only in 1995. Another important factor is a heavy dependence of the Kaliningrad enclave on trade and investment from European states. The major investors are Poland, and Germany, with 1/3 of shares of the trade with the region belonging to Poland. . **Baltic region**

The Western policy towards the Baltic region is aimed at creating an economically, socially and security wise unified region with strong ties across borders. This policy is implemented through several overlapping initiatives. The sets of arrangements introduced in the region were to initiate and back-up a policy of *de facto* NATO enlargement for the Baltic region. The approach could be used either as transitional to full- *de jure* NATO membership, or as a softer option of *de facto* membership. The goal of the policy to prepare the states military and economically be included in the Alliance in case of political decision. This approach and policy received the label of Baltic-Nordic Security zone. It was implemented through several channels:

- PfP plus and bilateral US- Baltic relations.

Over 40 % of trade is done with the EU states.

Murtazayev, E. Russia alarmed by potential East European integration. *Segodniya*, October 11, 1996.
Keith Craine and Mathew J Sagers. The revolution in trade between Central and Eastern Europe and Russia. Occasional Paper. The Atlantic Council of the United States. November 1995; Kokoshin, A. The New Russia: the heritage and perspectives. PRIF Papers, No 49, August 1996.

The Baltic Charter between USA and three Baltic nations (January 1998) guaranteed US support for the Baltic's admission to the European institutions as EU and NATO. US-Baltic Partnership Commission

plays the central role in the bilateral relationship. The key country for the Baltic States within the PfP framework is Denmark. This is the state to coordinate the CJTF C3I for the Baltic trio in BALTBAT (transferred in June 1996 to Baltic peacekeeping brigade) and Combined Baltic Naval Training group

- RAI and Regional Air Surveillance Coordination Center.

Since March 1995 the Baltic states are included in the framework of the Regional Airspace Initiative, that enables the states to be part of the air monitoring regime (NATO compatible).

- military cooperation between the states;

- increasing military and military-technical cooperation with two neutrals Finland and Sweden, where the last was chosen under recommendation and pressure from US to be the anchor for the Baltic states in security arrangements. This was seen as less disturbing for Russia than linking them with formal NATO member.

To some extent it proved to be successful policy. Russia understanding the policy as aimed towards 'NATO orientation of the traditional neutrals in Northern Europe' could do very little to counter play the tendency. The most interesting are the initiatives that carry combination of economic and military elements in the cooperation programs. One of the aims and task of these programs was to stretch to the Russian NorthWest. It was perceived by Russia nevertheless as the continuation and as extension of policy of 'buffer initiative', that was traced to the UK initiative.

Northern European Initiative (NEI) was officially launched in September 1997 in Bergen, Norway.

The NEI encompasses the old Hanseatic League, including Nordic nations of Norway, Sweden, Denmark and Finland, the Baltic nations of Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia; as well as Poland, northern Germany and Russian northwestern regions. The Russian regions that are involved in the campaign are Kaliningrad (Russian enclave - disputable territory), Karelia (bordering Finland and disputed territory), St. Petersburg, Novgorod, port Murmansk, mining outposts Nickel. The focus of the project is inter-regional and cross-regional economic cooperation and joint ecological campaigns. For example the local budget of Nickel mainly depends on the foreign investments. International ecological assistance to denuclearisation of

the Russian navy in Murmansk was another important element of the NEI. The program being a joint venture of European states and US is very much an American initiative. It is in the line of the US official policy aimed in promoting the process of regionalisation in Russia. It is expected with the Finnish rotating presidency for the European Union that the role of European participant will intensifies. However, there is more to NEI than economy and ecology. NEI as also used as additional channel for the integration of the Baltic nations into Western organisations, including EU of Baltic Sea States (CBSS) and the Barents Council are oriented in promotion economic cooperation and trade.

All programmes are viewed by Russian side as an opportunity to attract investment in the regions through region-to-region cooperation efforts, as well as positive example of regional cooperation in the OSCE area. These types of relations between the Russian regions and regions of EU-members states or EU associated partners states were seen by the RF as a opportunity to keep the door to the and NATO. In order to neutralize the possible negative reaction of Moscow towards elements of cross regional military cooperation, the military components of the NEI are channelled towards the Russian regions through Sweden and Finland.

The Northern Dimension, EU program, is aimed at encouraging cooperation in areas such as energy and environment in the north-eastern European region, including Russian regions. The Council Western and Central Eastern European markets open.

Moscow understands the multilevel Western-US policy towards the Baltic area. It believed that the way and means military cooperation is dealt within the region in practice means pushing the RF from cooperation in the military sphere in the region. To counter play this tendency Russia introduced the idea of the overlapping security guarantees from Russia and NATO, as well as CBM regime for the sea activity in the Baltic area. The Baltic States rejected both of the initiatives. It seems for the time being the policies that were left for the RF are:

- cooperation between the regions;
- lobbying for the CBM on the CJTFs;
- not ratification the border agreements between Russia and two Baltic states;
- playing on the differences of interests of the Nordic states (Dutch, Sweden and Finland) and support the special Russian-German relationship.

In Moscow the admission of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania to NATO's ranks would constitute a clear act of hostility against Russia, and further complicate fraught ties between Russia and the West at the start of the 21st century. One should remember that according to the Study on NATO enlargement (Chapter 1, art.6), states which have ethnic disputes or external territorial disputes, including irredentist claims, or internal jurisdictional disputes must settle those disputes by peaceful means in accordance with the OSCE principles. Resolution of such disputes would be a factor in determining whether to invite a state to join the Alliance.

This statement basically invites the opposing to expansion parties if not to stimulate the disputes than to put them on hold. This in practice explains Russian policies on the ground. Russia might be interested in slowing and staging conflict resolution of the Transdnierster issue as well as staling time with ratification of the treaties on boundary demarcations between two Baltic States.

There is another linkage that connects the Russian policy in the Region and its approaches to the arms control regimes, including the issue of ratification of the START-II.

According to Professor of the General Staff Academy L. Malyshev the US financial assistance to START-II process is conditional on the recommendation of the US Senate (1996). It depends on Russian withdrawal from the Baltic states, Moldova, as well as the renunciation of the right of the RF to stage military exercise near the borderline or sea-shore line with the Baltic states.

Gray area - CIS states.

Russia is not planning to leave Europe, despite political claims of possibility to turn to European isolationism. It keeps the foot on the ground in order to keep the markets' possibilities for the future.

However, the priority vector of the Russian policies will be the Eurasia: to keep the Central Asian raw materials and CA and Caucasian transportation route from Europe to Asian-Pacific Region.

In several report and papers dedicated to the evolution of the possible Russian response towards "unwelcome developments in the European theater" and possible approaching of the Western European Security institutions to the borders of the RF the necessity for the special countermeasures were mentioned.

Debates. START-II: the implications of the unparity and pre-ratification haste. In: *Russia and the world: political realities and perspectives*. Information-analytical journal. Special issue: illumination of the weapons under the START agreements and ecological security of the Russian Federation. - N3, 1995, p.63).

Among them were the regular staging of the military exercises that would demonstrate the RF capabilities and possibilities to act upon the potential threat. For, example, the Command-Control exercises that had taken place in the Western military district under the unified command of the Federal Border Troops. However, limited financial resources of the military and other force structures make this measure almost impossible to implement on the regular or any significant basis. As an ultimate counter measure the use of nuclear weapons were introduced if the RF were faced with direct confrontation or challenges in the regions thought to be its prime zone of influence. These modifications were presented as part of the adaptation of the new version of the nuclear doctrine.

However, in peace time Russian policy was to be oriented to securing Russian military presence in the western NIS states. Thus, keeping the possibilities for upgrading its possibilities for forward deployment.

These issues were to be addressed through attempts:

- to secure Russian military presence in the western NIS either through re-negotiating the status of the troops/ or their selected units by giving them peacekeeping status (situation in Transdnistria, where the Russian since 1993 were trying to renegotiate the agreement with Moldova-Republic of Transdnistria on the status of the Russian forces. The possibility of the Russian limited presence in the region (base-type deployment) was not over-ruled. However, the agreement on the withdrawal of the Russian troops from the region and the basic treaty on principles for the interstate relations between Moldova and Russia was signed by the two countries but not ratified by the Russia. The withdrawal from the Transdnestria is one of a few commitments Russia had to fulfill as a precondition to accession to the Council of Europe.
- to slow the process of withdrawal the Russian troops, thus creating pressures on the local government making difficult for the state authorities to participate in the military cooperation programs within regional groupings if Russia was not part of it.

The CIS states have been marked as an area of special sensitivity for Russia. It was stated by Prime-Minister Primakov (January 1999) and Minister of Foreign Affairs Ivanov (March 1999) that the former frontier of the USSR should be considered as a 'red line', once stepping over it over it any cooperation with alliance would be inconceivable.'

PfP and regional arrangements.

Nezavisimaya Gazeta. 20 March 1999.

In accordance to the NATO and WEU analysis the Caucasus and Central Asia are becoming the focus of interest of the western powers and security institutions. All Former Soviet Republics take part in the Partnership for Peace. Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Georgia, Azerbaijan have become selected CIS states in the 'enhanced Pfp'. Ukraine, Uzbekistan and most recently Georgia and Azerbaijan have chosen a kind of 'self defence support policy' for their national military strategies. Wherein NATO provides C3I and logistics and helps improve national forces for these states, the latter remain largely self-sufficient. But they retain the possibility of upgrading NATO military assistance to 'air power projection' and/or 'joint power projection', which could be implemented in CJTFs, and 'forward presence' as the last resort in chain of escalation crises. The states have chosen a kind of 'self defence support policy' for their national military strategies. Wherein NATO provides C3I and logistics and helps improve national forces for these states, the latter remain largely self-sufficient. But they retain the possibility of upgrading NATO military assistance to 'air power projection' and/or 'joint power projection', which could be implemented in CJTFs, and 'forward presence' as the last resort in chain of escalation crises. One of the goals of the Pfp programme was to assist the Former Soviet States in developing their own defence capabilities, thus allowing them options other than reliance upon Moscow in their security policy. Assistance in promoting regional and sub-regional military cooperation was one of the main political objectives of the Pfp and bilateral programmes.

The 'enhanced Pfp' participants have been viewed as 'mall anchor store' in the sub-regional groupings in the post-Soviet space. The interest in security arrangements on the sub-regional level is progressively increasing. Presently there are few regional grouping that have established or planning to establish multinational peacekeeping units that are trained and organized as CJTFs. The Western NIS states are participating in several subregional arrangements that carry military/ security/ peacekeeping components that are carried out in spirit of the Pfp. **They are the following: GUAM, Black Sea Economic Cooperation Council** and potentially the groupings of the Southeast Europe.

Adm T. Joseph Lopez, Commander -in Chief, AFSOUTH. Colloquy on The European Security and Defence Identity, Madrid, May 5, 1998.

Dianne L. Smith, Breaking away from the Bear, SSI, US.Army War College, August 3 1998, p.41

GUAM was established by Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan and Moldova as an informal alliance for coordination of foreign and economic policies in October 1997. In accordance to the protocol signed by deputy foreign ministers (November 1997) among the organization's objectives were cooperation on international level, resistance to 'separatism' and mutual support regarding the settlement of regional conflicts, a common approach to peacekeeping operations; development of transit routes and preparation of eventual accession to Western European and Atlantic institutions. In December 1997 creation of a joint battalion by Azerbaijan, Georgia and Ukraine was announced. Moldova failed to provide the military contingent due to the unsolved issues with Transdniestria and Russian stationed forces. However, with September 1998 decision of Uzbekistan to join GUAM group, the political and military coordination of the sub-regional grouping will unavoidably increase. GUAM expressed interest in promoting political and military consultations with NATO on regional security.

Some of the regional arrangements are directly linked to the 'stretching NATO' zone of responsibility to the 'in-between zone'. The NATO and US regional commands are assuming responsibility for the region. For NATO the responsibility of the AFOSUTH expands to such places as Azerbaijan, Georgia, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and the Caspian Sea Region. Among the challenges are the necessity to establish the proper formalized relationships with Russia and Ukraine. The Eurasian region (with exemption of Russia) was divided by US defence planners among US regional commands in early 1998. US European Command, which had overseen the PfP programme, assumed military responsibility for the Caucasus. US Central Command, being responsible for the Middle East, received responsibility for Central Asia. The challenges for the Southern region dictated the necessity of the proactive policy for NATO and the WEU - a policy of 'forward presence and forward engagement.' Russian military planners have not welcomed this. In that respect the following citation is most appropriate. 'Our military no longer point to a map and say, "Here it is, our main enemy." Indeed, how can it say this when its Supreme Commander said, for the whole world to hear that Russia doesn't want

Jamestown Monitor, 26 November 1997.

Glen E.Howard. NATO and the Caucasus: the Caspian Axis, In: *NATO after enlargement: New Challenges, New Missions, New Forces*, Ed. by Stephen j. Blank, CSIS & US Army War College, September 1998, p.209

Defence News, March 2-8, 1998, p.2

to fight anyone. And yet, our military knows whom they may have to fight. It is hardly a secret that NATO is the number one potential enemy for the Russian General Staff.’ NATO PfP activity and CJTF training that increased at a remarkable rate throughout 1994-1997 , created uneasy reaction in Russia. However, it did not prevent neither Russia itself to extend its relations with NATO, or NATO to stop expanding activity in the region. Since 1995 Russia recognized the necessity to acknowledge the realities of increasing regionalisation in Eurasia. Preservation of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS - 1991) and Treaty of Collective Security (1992) depended on the ability to adjust to the existing tendency of regionalisation of security space in the CIS. Regional groupings such as CAU or potential sub-regional cooperation in the Caucasus were overlapping with regional demarcation zones of the CIS Security System, such as SouthEast and South. Thus, there were not seen as threatening Russian interests in the region. The situation was different with GUAM security arrangement, because this grouping tear apart the boundary of the CIS security demarcation zones. On the other hand, military reforms in Russia, Ukraine and Uzbekistan are developing in parallel, presenting similar approaches to restructuring the military. As the result the upgrading assistance to national forces or regional multinational multi-service task forces could arrive both from Moscow and from NATO depending on the political developments in the Eurasian states and regional balance of powers.

Thus, the critical issue in relations between NATO and Russia will be on the issue of upgrading the local multinational task forces in situation of crises. It seems the issues of political decision and implementation of that decision will be at the heart of potential conflicts.

Theoretically direct confrontation is possible between Russia and the West over the CIS states.

The situation aggravates due to the following factors:

Sergei Larionov, ‘The Feeble Forces of the Russian Federation’, RIA-Novosti, Daily Review , May 12 1998. K. Watman, D. Wilkening, J. Arquilla, B. Nichiporuk *US Regional Deterrence Strategies*. 1995.

In 1994 there were no exercises in the region, in 1995 - 6 exercises, in 1996 - 11, in 1997 - 19. - In: Rachel Bronson. NATO’s Expanding Presence in the Caucasus and Central Asia, *NATO After Enlargement: New Challenges, New Missions, New Forces*, ed. by Stephen J. Blank, CSIS and US Army War College, September 1998, p.235-236.

- both Russia and US- NATO stated their interest and responsibility over the Caucasus and Central Asia.
- both Russia and US proclaimed the policy of 'intensive geopolitical presence' in the region and both countries rely on nuclear deterrence and 'forward deployment' in the region in case of crisis escalation.

At the same time the existing similarities in operational planing and common interests and shared concerns over soft security issues, proliferation of WMD and uncontrolled drug-trafficking and terrorism attacks create possibilities for cooperation.

Southeastern Europe. Defence and security units are proposed to be established within SouthEastern Cooperation Initiative (SECI), Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC). The states of Eurasia were granted membership in several overlapping sub-regional arrangements. Regional groupings are increasingly viewed as potentially joint recipient of Western assistance and US and as collective participant in the 'out-of-area' missions.

In September 1998 the CJTF was established and the mechanism for upgrading its capabilities through cooperation with NATO member states in the region.

. Double Buffer.

There are several regional groupings that were seen from Moscow as attempts to strengthen the 'buffer zone' approach towards Russia. This perception of double buffer approach was intensified by the creation of the overlapping subregional alliances that were connecting different geopolitical and geographical groupings that already have direct formal or informal ties with NATO. One of those groupings is the Baltic - Black Sea alliance (or Riga-Vilnius-Minsk-Kiev axis). The first attempts to create this alliance were made during 1991-1994. Second round could be dated to the 1998-99.

Two regional groupings are drawing its members from across the region. CEFTA and CEI. CEFTA (1992) is considered as a transitional arrangement to EU. CEI (Central European Initiative) that includes 16 states stretching from Belarus, Ukraine, and Moldova to Macedonian and Albania. The group promotes cooperation in areas - economics, transport, the environment, science and culture.

. Russian current political thinking towards its relationship with the former Soviet States.

4.3.1. Overall approach

The search for the ways to preserve Russian influence in the post- Soviet space and the existing political status quo in the Eurasia had produces versions of the policy know as 'humanitarian intervention'. The debates on necessity for the CIS states to adopt a policy of collective responsibility for preservation of status quo and neutralizing the potential roots of conflict produced some interesting versions of 'the rights for humanitarian intervention'. Some liberals have proposed that the states should take responsibility for the preservation of the rights of ethnic minorities throughout the territory of the CIS, thus widening the right for joint actions in the sake of preventing destabilization in one country/ subregion and spill over effects of crisis within the community.

- Russia is increasingly loosing the CIS market. The CIS summit (April 1999) demonstrated that 80 % of property in the Commonwealth of Independent states is privatized. There are all together 20,000 joint ventures and the majority (6 fold) is not ventures between the CIS states. Trade between Russia and other CIS states does not extend 20%, which means the shrinking of the joint market re-orientation of the former Soviet states towards other than Russian internal markets.

- Establishing of the free trade areas around CIS that involves the CIS-member states, as well as expansion of the CU towards the borders of Russia, motivated the changes in Russian position. The RF had to adopt a new approach, to move from the support of the Custom Union towards the acceptance of the free trade zone in the CIS.

- The regional centers of power appear in the CIS. The extension of the CIS Security Treaty had experienced set back in March- April 1999, when states-signatories decided to withdraw (like Uzbekistan) or consider withdrawal (Georgia, Azerbaijan) from the Treaty, or confirm the desire to say as neutral observer (Ukraine, Moldova) within this security arrangement.

Special concern was voiced in Russia over the possibility of being isolated within the CIS. The following developments were drawing special and concerned attention in Russia:

- Continuance request from Georgia to deploy NATO forces between Georgia and Abkhazia for resolving the peacekeeping stalemate, which in practice was considered as pushing Russia out of the region;

Krivoxizha V., Nikolayhik I., Few theoretical problems of preserving strategic stability at the current state of international relations systems. IN: *Problems of Russia's foreign and defence policy*, Book of Essay, Moscow, RISS, No 3, 1995, p.16.

- request of Azerbaijan to open NATO base at the facilities of the Former Soviet troop deployment;
- establishing precedent of military- security relations between GUAM states (the first military exercise by Georgian-Ukrainian -Azerbaijani force was staged in April 1999) as an alternative to Russia- oriented cooperation within the CIS and its regional structures. With Uzbekistan application to the GUAM group Russian would find itself isolated from the Southern strategic direction.

In practice this tendency of the subregional alliances within the CIS creates the attitudes of deterred state.

4.3.2. Belarus

Strategic alliance between Russia and Belarus presupposes not only economic close relations, but the joint foreign and defence policy . The variety of opinion on the Belarus-Russia Union only differs about the level of integration of the states. There is a dominant pressure coming from the Left, that insists on the establishing Constitutionally regulated Union, hoping for the binding decisions of the Union to both countries. On 25 December 1998 Russian President Boris Yeltsin and Belarusian President Alyksandr Lukashenka signed a Declaration entitled 'On the Further Unification of Russia and Belarus'. The reunification of the states has to go through the process of the ratification in the Parliaments. The importance of this development to European security is enormous. The union is to de-facto nuclear holding capability subject of the international community. The creation of the Union limits the potential of creating the unified and overlapping arrangements of the subregional alliances in Eurasia.

4.3.3. Ukraine.

Ratification of the Treaty of Friendship and

There are sensitivities and uneasiness in some areas of the bilateral relations with Ukraine that are effected by the Russian understanding of the current Ukrainian policy towards incorporation into European security structures, especially NATO. The difficulties in the negotiations on delimitation and demarcation of the Ukrainian-Russian boundary are one of the areas of Russian concern. First, the reasons for stalling time in finishing the delimitation and demarcation of the boundaries between the two states are the same as with the Baltic States. The reason is preventing Ukraine from openly joining the Alliance. Second, the main reason of

Izvestia, 3 April 1999.

concern in an agreement over the status of the Azov Sea (international or internal) is connected with the considerations that by admitting the international status of the Azov Sea Russia might witness the deployment of the NATO ships within 12 mile zone from Don estuary. Besides the debates on the status of the Kerch Strait from the Black Sea to the Azov Sea proved to Russia that these probabilities should be considered.

However, it seems the bilateral relations between the two states Russia and Ukraine are much closer than Ukraine would like ever to admit. It was reported that there is a set of agreements on military-technical cooperation between the states. In April 1999 there were Russian - Ukrainian military navy exercises staged in the

4.3.4. Moldova

Russia started to take practical steps in withdrawal military hardware from Transdnier region of Moldova in accordance to the Russian-Moldavian protocol on military property issues signed in Odessa in March 1998. The implementation of the agreement is important as a step in the process of the Russian troop withdrawal from the Transdnier region. The troop withdrawal is essential for Moldova's ability to participate in any regional/subregional security arrangement. The withdrawal is precondition for Moldova's active participation in GUAM.

Research Results.

1998-1999 demonstrated further regionalization of the security (economic and military) space within the CIS and increasing cooperation among the states bordering Russia. However, the most significant development during the mentioned period was the beginning of the institutionalisation of the relationships between the mentioned regional groupings and creation basis for their merger in the future. For instance:

Baburin S. No time to loose, *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, 3 April 1999, p.5
Will the NATO Come to the Banks of River Don?, *Argumenty and Fakty*. Russian social-political weekly on-line version, No 5, January 1998.- http://www.aif.ru/902/hearsay_e.htm
Segodnya, 31 March 1999.

- The expansion of the GUUAM: geographically - by granting Uzbekistan with full membership, and by transformation of functions - from becoming primarily economic regional alliance to political-military. However, the ultimate goal of this grouping - establishing conditions for safe guaranteed transfer of resources of the Caspian and potentially Central Asia to Europe - would not be achievable without membership of Armenia and resolution of the local ethnic, religious and territorial conflicts. Potentially GUUAM has a possibility for further expansion by including Armenia as Member State. In that respects the imposing stability in the South Caucasus means objectively reducing and directly diminishing Russian presence in the region.

- Expansion of the regional cooperation in Central Asia and transformation of the Central Asian Union to Central Asian Economic Community affected not only the membership of the grouping, but also the essence of the institution, bringing it theoretically closer to EU standards. At the same time the geography of the grouping expended with Georgia, Turkey and Ukraine being given observer status. For the record, Russia had the observer status in Central Asian Union, the prototype of the CAEC.

- Overlapping membership, even with different status of the member states and observers, had created a base for potential merger of both institutions and creation of one organization responsible for the economic and security issues of the transportation of energy resources along the Old Silk Route. As the representatives of Uzbekistan stated it, this possibility is considered desirable and most probable. Such merger would be seen as necessary measure of securing Uzbekistan's role as main regional player in case of Russian withdrawal (partial or complete) from Tajikistan. The unification would also institutionalize the existing tendency of growing trade turnovers between Central Asian and Caucasian states. Russia sees the links between Georgia and Uzbekistan as essential for the implementation of this institutional unification.

- Institutionalization of the relations between GUUAM and Baltic States would establish North- South axis. These proposal dates back as far as the 1980s and if implemented would have a long-term influence on the development in Eurasia. Regional co-operation primarily is focused around concrete economic projects. In particular, the prospects of transporting Caspian energy resources through the territories of the states around Russian territory. For instance, Ukraine-Poland route for transit energy resources presented at the

Baku Conference (1997?) was one of such proposals. The key state in that linkage is considered by Russia to be Ukraine. Especially important for the Russian policy would be its institutional status within such network after the Yalta Conference of the Baltic and Black Sea countries, planned to be held in September 1999.

Thus, on one hand, Russia is becoming encircled by newly developing, paralleled but coordinated institutions of regional co-operation. On the other hand, the simultaneous developments of the regional and subregional groupings are leaving little alternative options for the Russian policy rather than of acceptance. To some extent the results of such coordinated activities presuppose the situation that Russia could be only left to choose the options for its participation in regional cooperation but limited by the possibilities to neutralize them. If such regional groupings are not living the door open for the Russian participation in them they are unavoidably considered as second buffer zones by Russia.

Currently this tendency has only one exemption. This is the relationship development between Belarus and Russia and possibilities for establishing confederate type of state. However, the difficulties of economic reunification and primarily military-strategic interest of Russia in that type of union, create growing interest in Belarus to consider alternatives to the declared policy of orientation on Russia as strategic partner. However, the changes in Belarus foreign policy orientations could be done easier if they are done by the present government in Belarus, which means the necessity to introduce changes in the western foreign policy approaches to Belarus based on conditional (post-Lukashenko) acceptance of Belarus to the Western and European community.

II. Analysis of the Russian interests and concerns in the different regions and subregions allows to list definite ‘non-acceptable options’ for the RF, that might trigger response that would bring additional pressures on the regional players. At the same time these ‘non-acceptable’ could be considered as bargaining positions for the CIS states.

For instance,

In *Caucasus* Russia is determined to preserve its presence for two main reasons - economic and military-political. Interests of private companies and the state were and are connected with transportation and development possibilities in the Caspian basin. Preservation of the

Address by H.E. Mr. Leonid D. Kuchma The President of Ukraine, To the Heads of Diplomatic missions, 12 February, 1999.

territorial integrity of the state in the Northern Caucasus and limitation if not elimination of the separatist threat in the region become essential for Russia as precondition for economic development and as an important goal by itself. In both cases Russia is interested in stabilizing the situation but also in preserving its own presence by leaving monitoring capabilities in the region. Pronounced Russian minimal interest in the Caucasus region could also be seen as potential base for compromises. For instance:

- Securing presence of Russian firms in the deals connected with development and transportation of the Caspian energy resources to Europe;
- Preserving stability in Dagestan and containment (presently) of Chechnya;
- Limiting outside influence, especially the influence of western security institutions and their forces in the, region.

Judging by the Russian activities in the region, implementation of these tasks, depend from the RF position primarily on the following:

- Preservation Armenia within the Russian zone of influence and effective functioning of the Joint Air Defence system and joint Armenian-Russian patrolling. This view has received even more support among military and security specialists after US, German, Turkish and UK military/security related assistance programs to Georgia and especially an aid package and credit for procurement programs for the Air Defence and Air-Anti-Missile Defence Systems.
- Monitoring the route from Chechnya to Georgia that would be seen as necessary prevention of the arms trafficking to Chechnya and international support for the separatists. In that respect from the Russian perspective, joint actions and co-operation between the Ministries of Interior of the Caucasian states and Russia are seemed essential in dealing with crime and arms trafficking in the region. As the result Georgia receives strong bargaining position with Russian side in any bilateral negotiations by promises in keeping the mentioned transportation route either opened or closed to Chechnya.
- maximum postponement of the factual delimitation of the boundaries along Azov Sea and Kerch' Straits between Russia and Ukraine.
- renegotiating some provisions in the bilateral agreement on the Black Sea Fleet that would allow to consider Sevastopol as joint Russian-Ukrainian military base. This intention should

be seen in linkage to the discussions (publicly primarily in Verchovna Rada, Kyiv) on the possibilities and necessity to re-establish nuclear status for Ukraine.

In Central Asia Russia's interests are the following:

- stimulating participation of the Russian private firms in the commercial energy and communications' related deals;
- functioning Joint Air Defence System, especially with Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan;
- joint measures in crime prevention
- coordination activities in conflict settlement in Tajikistan.

Minimum requirements voiced by Russia for cooperation with the states in the region are:

- monitoring or having access to communication networks in the region, with special interest to Russian ownership of the communication infrastructure, especially railroads network. The creation of the transport corridor Europe-Caucasus-Central Asia made it essential for the Russian policy to fight for the interests of the Russian rail transports. This sensitivity especially concerns the relations with Kazakhstan, which became the main pressure point for sustained Russian interests in the Trans-continental communication routes. As it was stated by President Nazarbaev the most important element of the balancing policy towards Russia especially in the light of establishing alternative transportation routes outside the RF territory should be the determination to continue use Russian rail for the passenger and cargo to Europe. The agreement signed by Russia and Kazakhstan on the property rights concerning the national rail and agreements on passenger and cargo flights (18 March 1999) are vivid demonstration of the Russian interests in this field.
- Keeping Operational Commands' HQ in the Central Asian states as a possibilities for upgrading its forces with parallel step by step decreasing the level of its physical presence in the region. Officially Russians are not interested in withdrawal from the region, but limited capabilities (military and financial) might be a major factor in influencing the decision for reducing its presence, even in Tajikistan, especially in the events of tensions or escalating conflicts in the Caucasus or the North Caucasus.

Thus, key elements to the Russian policy in the Central Asia could be considered the following: improving its relations with Iran and keeping balanced relations with China; securing Kazakhstan's position within Russian zone of influence and preventing its

Government from making choices between Russia and CAEC, potentially CAEC-GUUAAM (with joint Armenia); division of responsibilities between Russia and Uzbekistan in the region.

III. Presently, two elements of the Russian military policy and strategy should be taken into consideration in assessments of Russia policy towards the regional and subregional cooperation. They are

The availability of resources to address threats in local conflicts and tactics and strategy towards nuclear weapons. The last is most obviously demonstrated in the position towards Nuclear Free zones.

1. Capabilities. Presently the state can only finance the armed forces with strength of 550,000 to 600,000 military personnel. These accounts do not take into consideration the payments for the troops forced back into civilian life. The cuts are also planned in other force ministries- in Ministry of Interior (by 129,000), as well as in other services. According to the analysis linked to the press from GS MoD, the Ministry would receive adequate funding only by the start 2004. Financial problems are effecting the logistic system, training and educational process of the Military, and procurement policies and limit possibilities for international activities of the Armed forces. According to the report the timetable for the carrying out planned reforms in the RF's armed forces require revision.

In accordance to the new guidelines to the military construction in the RF, the doctrine envisioned 10 infantry divisions which were fully equipped and in a high state of combat readiness. They will be 'professionally trained to fulfill any tasks of ensuring the defence and security of the country and its allies, and to effectively repel threat to national interests.' These infantry divisions are supposed to be an integral part of the OTFs. One of these 10 perfectly equipped full-fledged divisions would be a specialized on peacekeeping.

The number of divisions for the MOTFs may increase if certain conditions were implemented - such as better financing and regular supply of equipment and systematic training. According to the military specialists there are a need to increase the supply of weapons and equipment to the force structures twice fold by 2001 and 3-fold by 2005. The plans include the unification and standardization of the equipment for all services and force structures (However, these

Nezavisimoye Voennoye Obozrenie, February 10, 1999

Military reform entered practical stage. *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, July 21, 1998.

Nezavisimaya gazeta. Voennoye Obozrenie. No 29, 1998.

Nezavisimaya gazeta. Voennoye Obozrenie. September 19-25, No 35, 1997, p.3.

calculations were made before the economic and financial crisis hit Russia in August and September 1998). According to the public sources, there is limited number of OTFs formations fully equipped and manned, and 100% financed for training: 3 divisions, 4 brigades and 21 regiments. . There are problems even with the proclaimed 'fully combat-ready units'. They are 100 percent strength levels in terms of equipment, but at only 80 percent in terms of personnel. Most importantly the need of transporting units to the combat situation also demonstrated limited capabilities of the RF forces for lifting operations and availability of transport aviation. For instance, the Central Asian military-administrative unit is a main reserve base for the Northern Caucasus and Tajikistan forces. Limitation on the airlifting capabilities and trained manpower will have to be taken into consideration in case any major conflict in the Caucasus. As the result it might affect the level of Russian presence in the Central Asia, including Tajikistan. This reduction of the RF military presence in the Central Asian region would bring additional requirements for substitute 'power presence'. The proper issue to address would be whether regional groupings and their military formations or peacekeeping units would be capable in filling the vacuum. Another issue to be raised is establishing proper procedures for international/ PfP/ OSCE security assistance to the regional or subregional groupings.

. Nuclear Strategy and nuclear umbrella over the CIS states.

Presently the following proposals on NWFZs, that geographically cover the territories of the CIS member-states, were voiced:

- Negotiations are under way on establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Central Asia. It was proposed in the Almaty Declaration of the heads of state of the Central Asian States (28.02.1997); and in the UN General Assembly Resolutions (A/RES/52/38 S of 9 December 1997 and A/RES/53/77 of 4 December 1998). It is planned to be established by the year 2000.
- Debates have been started on Belarus initiative on NWF space in Central and Eastern Europe. If created it would cover Belarus, Ukraine and possibly Moldova.
- Azerbaijan proposed (on 17 September 1997) the creation of a NWFZ in the Southern Caucasus.

Current Russian position towards the NWFZ in CEE could be characterized by 3 considerations: military-political, political, and military-strategic.

Nazavisimoye Voennoe Obozrenie, May 8-14, 1998, p.3.
Moskovskiy Komsomolets, 6 May 1999.

1) Military-political considerations.

Some analytical analysis expressed concern with regard to implication of the regional NWF zones on CIS Collective Security Treaty (1992). If created, such NWF Zones would undermine one of the unifying principles of the CIS Collective Security System; according to which Russian nuclear umbrella is stretched over CIS states and provides security

2) Political considerations.

Russia officially and publicly supports the initiative of on creation of NWF space Its support is base on the following arguments:

- the proposal on NWF space is considered to be an important and essential pillar within the international nuclear nonproliferation regime. It is seen most effective within the framework of regional agreements.
- it is seen as a continuation of the Russian policy in providing security guarantees to Belarus, Kazakhsatn and Ukraine on their decision to seek NWF status and in supporting Security Council (UN) resolution (Res. 984) on the negative security assurances.

Russian position takes into account that NWFZ could not be imposed on the region. Thus, according to Russian official sources, supporting the proposal in principle as strategic goal of its foreign and security policy, Russia understands that tactically the proposal might not be timely at present.

3) Military-strategic considerations.

- According to Russian military experts the creation of NWFZ has little if any military strategic significance. Their calculations are based primarily on the analysis of NATO strategic approaches to European security and Western changing views on nuclear deterrence.

'NATO's interests in promoting nuclear-free world are based on the assumptions shared by Western experts that the Alliance has such technical and technological has superiority in Armed Forces that it is capable of wining in potential conflicts without using nuclear weapons... The nuclear deterrence has seized to be effective policy in keeping peace, in their view. The Western appeals for nuclear reductions are paralleled with attempts to reduce the effectiveness of nuclear strategic components of the opponents' defence'. It was stated by Russian military experts, that NATO is promising less reliance on nuclear deterrence that it was in previous years. Its European policy is based on modified strategy of 'flexible response',

Interfax, 18 September 1997.

Col. Nikolaev A. Voennaya doktrina NATO na sovremennom etape, *Zarubezhnoye Voennoe Obozrenie*, No 3, 1998, p.4

when policy of 'forward deployment' is only applied to NATO's Northern and Southern flanks. Central European region is covered by policy of 'reduced forward presence' and 'reduced reliance on nuclear weapons'.

However, 'Western promises of non-deployment of nuclear weapons, even if to be implemented, do not have any military-strategic significance... Technologically the use of tactical nuclear weapons in NATO strategy is based on the delivery capabilities of the Joint Air Force. With little modernization of the infrastructure of the CEE states the tactical nuclear weapons could be delivered to any area in the European theater in short period of time. Besides, (NATO) tactical fighters have dual functions to carry nuclear and nuclear weapons. They could be used in covering new areas of responsibilities (even within their nuclear tasks) without undermining non-nuclear commitments in advance. The nuclear warheads and weapons themselves can be re-deployed by air or land within days/hours to the Central European theater after the decision on their deployment is made.'

- Given Russia's geopolitical situation, its limited national resources and state of armed forces, the State is prepared to counter regional conflicts that pose the most serious threat to national interests by nuclear means.

This position was publicly revealed numerous times by representatives of the Russian Security Council, Ministry of Defence and Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia. For example, by ex-Secretary of the Security Council Ivan Rybkin and ex-Minister of Foreign Affairs Yvgenii Primakov (1997). Appearing on Russian TV (24 May 1997) Mr. Primakov confirmed that Russia reserved the right to use nuclear weapons first if it faced conventional attack, that it is failing to repel due to the reduced conventional capabilities.

This policy was formulated in Security doctrines (1993 and 1997) and in the Russian National Security Concept (1997). In both recent official documents the no-first use policy was dropped.

The security doctrine, adopted in May 1997, stated that Russia would not use a nuclear strike to secure an advantage but would do so only 'if...driven into a corner and have no other

Ibid., pp. 3-4.

Hotchenkov C. NATO-50 let. *Voennaya mysl'*. No 2, 1999, p.75

Nezavisimaya Gazeta. 29.04.97.

RFE/Liberty. - *Newsline*. 26.05.97

alternative'. However, Russia's security doctrine does not allow the possibility of launching a preemptive nuclear strike.

The Russian National Security Concept (signed on 17 December 1997) makes provision for the first use of nuclear weapons. Recent events in Kosovo and NATO air strike-policy stimulated the discussions on the possibility to introduce in Russia's security doctrine the policy of preemptive nuclear strike.

Military experts presented some calculations on the possibility of practical use of tactical nuclear weapons in regional and local conflicts. According to their assessments the existence of nuclear strategic capabilities allows the possibility to use tactical nuclear weapons in regional and local conflicts without triggering the escalation of nuclear response from adversary.

One should have in mind the possibility of Russia taking decision on forward deployment of nuclear (tactical) weapons in situation of crisis or increased tensions. The following recent public statements should be into account:

- . During crisis in Kosovo, Russian Public Television reported on 24 March 1999 the following statement. According to Defence Minister Igor Sergeev, Russia is considering deploying tactical nuclear weapons in Belarus. After creation of confederation Russia-Belarus NPT restrictions could be put aside.
- . On May 20, 1999, the State Duma, of the RF, adopted Federal Law 'On production, use, destruction and security of nuclear weapons'. According to one of the provisions/ articles of the document 'nuclear weapons, produced on the territory of the Russian Federation, but deployed beyond its national territory, is still considered to be federal property.'
- . Debates on the possibility of deploying nuclear weapons on vessels belonging to the Black Sea Fleet.

For the record: in 1982 the Soviet Union declared it would not be the first to use nuclear weapons. RFE/Liberty. - *Newsline*. 12.05.97
Izvestia, 21 December 1997
Trud, 2.06.99

Col. Kreidin V. O problemach global'nogo i regional'nogo yadernogo sderzhivaniya krupnomasshtabnoi agressii. *Voennaya mysl'*, No 5, 1998, pp.49-54; Maskovenko M. o voenno-morskoyi strategii Rossiiskoi Federatsii. *Voennaya mysl'*, No 1, 1999, pp.51-56; Barynkin V. Voenniye ugrozy Rosii i problemy razvitiya eye vooruzhennyh sil. Ibidem, pp. 2-6.
Diplomaticheskiye Novosti Rossii, 20.05.1999.

This clearly indicates that they may have plans for the deployment of the nuclear weapons beyond Russian territories. SSBMs beyond their territory, however, it could apply to the deployment of the tactical nuclear weapons on land beyond borders of Russia.

‘Russia could never defend itself only with conventional weapons against such organisational as NATO, according to the Deputy Head of the Department of Military procuring of the Security Council Gen. Victor Esin. This assessment motivated the reliance on nuclear deterrence and the right to use the nuclear weapons as the last resort in case when national security interests are threatened.

The new military doctrine gives the framework for the development of the Russian military organization till 2005.

There are increasing interests in adopting unified or mutually shared military concept from the CIS states. The new foreign policy doctrine, adopted in June 2000 sets up the task of strengthening the Russian southern borders and refocusing on proper functioning of the local, sub-regional structures and institutions, especially those that could be considered as part of the CIS Customs Union or CIS Collective Security Treaty..

Summing up on Russian Approach:

It seems that the RF position towards the regional/subregional institutions is still in the process of formulation. However, few characteristics of the attitude could be named:

- interest in any substitute for the formal NATO membership of the bordering countries;
- objection to the creation and functioning of the closed regional and subregional caucuses within the wider security institutional networks. For instance, the following statement of Yevgeniy Primakov in his former capacity as Russia’s Foreign Minister, is quite typical: ‘ We should not willingly or unwillingly set the council (EAPC) and the OSCE, which has well established practice of regional discussions, against each other. At these regional discussions Russia suggested discussing its security and confidence-building initiatives for the Baltic’.
- interest in the establishing a New Security Charter for the 21-century within the OSCE, hoping it will be signed in Istanbul in November 1999. However, it objects to the changing of the principal arrangement within the OSCE from consensus to the majority voting. The last is perceived as a condition for the creating legitimate base for the coalitions of the willing (CJTfS). This tendency was seen as formal legitimization of the new procedures for decisions on the use of force outside the UN Security Council framework but throughout simplified procedures within the OSCE.

Russia:Foreign Minister Primakov Details Aspirations for NATO, *Daily Report, FBIS-SOV-97-351*.

Russian even understanding the US/ Western policy towards the regional and subregional alliances as ‘front-posts of their political expansion and practical forward deployment’, nevertheless, shows interest to work on the subregional level.

However, it is becoming obvious that several questions are to be asked:

- Could the regional grouping as an institution remain outside the ‘PfP plus’ framework;
- Who within the regional grouping has legitimate right to address wider security institution for security guaranties within the EAPC or OSCE, or UN network or act as joint recipient security assistance in case of regional security threats;
- Under what conditions the regional grouping can act as joint recipient of security guaranties.

It seems Russian policy demonstrates dual channel approach: using the opportunities within the regional and subregional cooperation as an opening door to the EU and CEFTA markets; and opposing the NATO umbrella for subregional alliances by supporting the policy of established monitoring procedures for any CJTF developments in the CEE and Western NIS. However, if all the subregional groupings would have to receive the military component within the intensification of the cooperation in among the member-states, it would be difficult for Russia to sustain the chosen policy.

Opportunities:

1. It seems logical to mark the goal in the CIS space as not the one of creation a second buffer zone along Russia periphery but rather the transforming the CIS and establishing formal institutional ties between the CIS and the mentioned alternative to it groupings, making them as parts of its internal structure and demarcation space. The following opportunities could be used. The re-introduction of the rotation principle for the Head of the CIS. This principle was proposed in the CIS package at the very beginning, however it has never been used in practice. Till 1999 the Presidency over the CIS was always within the responsibility of the Russian President. At the CIS summit in Moscow on April 2 1999 the decision was taken to secure strict implementation of the rotation principle and introduction of the OSCE principle of the ‘troika’ chairing committee for the CIS. This arrangement in practice means that the institution is headed by one current chairman and two co-chairmen - former and newly elected for the next term. Most fruitful this mechanism of rotation could be during the period when all Chairmen could be from GUUAM countries.

Russkaya mysl, 8-14 April 1999, No 4264, p.8

2. Support for the nuclear free zones in the subregions as means to limit options for Russian military policy in and towards the regions.
3. Another important aspect to be considered is the changes in policies of the international financial institutions towards the use of repayments of debts to the intentional private investors by the states. The credits given for the countries should be available for the repayment of the debts to private investors. The inability of the state to address the issue (as for instance in Ukraine) might create difficulties in attracting foreign investments to the local market and, thus, increasing economic pressures on the state from Russia.
4. Using the acceptable for the RF alliances in the regions in order to increase the western presence in the region as the through Armenia - Greece - Iran cooperation where Russia was promised the observer status. The latest was more acceptable than any regional grouping with participation of Turkey, especially if the grouping has political military functions.
5. Establishing the procedure within the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council for granting security assistance to regional institutions.

Summing up.

It seems that the RF position towards the regional/subregional institutions is still in the process of formulation. However, few characteristics of the attitude could be named:

- interest in any substitute for the formal NATO membership of the bordering countries;
- objection to the creation and functioning of the closed regional and subregional caucuses within the wider security institutional networks. For instance, the following statement of Yevgeniy Primakov in his former capacity as Russia's Foreign Minister, is quite typical: ' We should not willingly or unwillingly set the council (EAPC) and the OSCE, which has well established practice of regional discussions, against each other. At these regional discussions Russia suggested discussing its security and confidence-building initiatives for the Baltic'.
- interest in the establishing a New Security Charter for the 21-century within the OSCE, hoping it will be signed in Istanbul in November 1999. However, it objects to the changing of the principal arrangement within the OSCE from consensus to the majority voting. The last is

perceived as a condition for the creating legitimate base for the coalitions of the willing (CJTJs). This tendency was seen as formal legitimization of the new procedures for decisions on the use of force outside the UN Security Council framework but throughout simplified procedures within the OSCE.

Potential vital sensitivities.

Russian even understanding the US/ Western policy towards the regional and subregional alliances as front-posts of their political expansion and practical forward deployment, nevertheless, shows interest to work on the subregional level. However, it is becoming obvious that several questions are to be asked:

- Could the regional grouping remain outside the 'PfP plus' framework;
- Who within the regional grouping has legitimate right to address wider security institution for security guaranties within the EAPC or OSCE, or UN network as joint recipient of security in case of regional security threats;
- Under what conditions the regional grouping can act as joint recipient of security guaranties.

It seems Russian policy demonstrates dual channel approach: using the opportunities within the regional and subregional cooperation as an opening door to the EU and CEFTA markets; and opposing the NATO umbrella for subregional alliances by supporting the policy of established monitoring procedures for any CJTF developments in the CEE and Western NIS. However, if all the subregional groupings would have to receive the military component within the intensification of the cooperation in among the member-states, it would be difficult for Russia to sustain the chosen policy.

'Functional' NATO-membership.

The goals of obtaining extended security guarantees, participation within the CJTFs and their planning operations, and procurement decisions for the NIS, could be achieved in a less costly way (financially and politically) by establishing permanent forces' presence in regions on the basis of the CJTFs, by pursuing the Baltic model and establishing 'functional' membership of NATO.

'Functional' membership might be effective as a gradual step towards or as a substitute to traditional membership in NATO *within the following time frame:*

It could be established after:

Russia:Foreign Minister Primakov Detailes Aspirations for NATO, *Daily Report, FBIS-SOV-97-351.*

- establishing a dispute resolution mechanism for dealing with possible crises between NATO members (This would help to overcome the possible blocking of decisions on cooperation with the excluded PfP partners and possible stalemate within NATO or between NATO- WEU in the case of conflicts of interests between member-states (as was the case, for example, between Greece and Turkey). Despite efforts to resolve the relationship between them, the newcomers could not overcome the traditional tensions. Besides, some new problems might arise. In the case of worsening of ethnic tensions in the Crimea: i.e. between Russians / Ukrainians and Tartars, Ukraine might be forced to ask for assistance from NATO/ WEU. However, NATO's compliance with Ukraine's request for assistance might potentially be blocked by the Turkish reaction, which could be more favorable to the Tartar side.)
- steady integration of Baltic states, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan and Russia into the European security or economic institutions;
- irreversibility of Russian dependence on the international community;
- establishing the stability zone around the 'gray-area states'.

It should be established before a decision on EU/ WEU interdependence is reached and a voting majority principle is adopted.

2. Subregional/regional groupings with limited security capabilities (mostly with soft security capabilities) and the wider security arrangements.

A compromise that would suit Russia should include the understanding that NATO will send troops into Central Europe/ gray area states or any other new member-state only in a situation where these countries are directly threatened. In practice, this should mean (in Russian version) *the establishment of a legally binding mechanism, open to RF participation (from notification-information to participation), for new member-states to apply to the NATO-members for security assistance, and a mechanism for adopting the decision on military assistance and the stages of its implementation.* This binding mechanism (escalation ladder principle) is especially vital for the RF at the stage of upgrading security guarantees to the new member states, or of upgrading the extended PfP from 'Joint Power Projection' to 'Forward deployment'. The Russian interests' lie in the possibility of being included in the decision-making process on the issue of NATO member-states granting assistance to the neighboring states, as well as on the possibility of intervening in the process

of decision-making by interrupting the step-by-step approach. The Russian analysis perceived the decision-making process on this issue as being similar to the escalation ladder (similar to the nuclear escalation ladder concept). Perceived in this way, the focus of attention could be on the following issues:

- the mechanism for applying for military assistance presupposes the existence of a *hierarchical ladder of decision-making*, either horizontal or vertical. This will allow the establishment of a time frame - time gap between the different levels of the decision ladder. It allows an external party to intervene in the decision-making process, and to influence the authority that makes the decision or the decision itself, by applying for arbitration or asking for proof of threats or suggesting a plan/ option for solving the issue before a final decision on military assistance can be taken.
- the assessments of the proper place and functions of the party applying for military assistance in the NATO rescue/ military assistance operation.
- the conditions and time frame/ schedule for granting military assistance to the party in need;
- clarification of the situation by the party giving a mandate for implementing a military assistance operation to the party applying for it, with a possible need for UN supervision / consent, or the presence of UN observers during the decision-making procedure on military assistance;
- the obligation to specify the seat of a potential threat - the name of the country/states - in the application forms for military assistance
- the decision process on granting military assistance should include a conflict-resolution mechanism (mediation, negotiations with NATO states and the third party, etc.) as one of the stages prior to actual granting of military assistance to the states applying for NATO defence.

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