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**Problems and Prospects of NATO-Russia Relationship:
the Russian Debate**

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Introduction.

The last decade of the XX century witnessed a dramatic evolution of NATO-Russia relationship. After gradual and cautious rapprochement with the alliance during the Gorbachev era the new democratic Russia set a tremendous task of framing strategic partnership with its former adversary. At that time this objective seemed quite real in the atmosphere of post - Cold War euphoria and in view of Russia's radical transformation. However, traditional negative stereotypes, misperception of NATO's policies and substantial divergence of interests prevented Russia from building a stable and enduring partnership with NATO. Obviously, the problem of NATO enlargement was the main stumbling block on the way to such partnership. Since Russia realized its slim chances of joining the alliance even in the distant future it resolutely opposed NATO expansion and viewed this process as detrimental to Russian interests.

The Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security between NATO and Russia signed in Paris on May 1997 raised NATO-Russia relationship to a qualitatively new level. It stimulated the development of close cooperation between Russia and the alliance on a broad range of security issues. The Founding Act seemed to open the path for a genuine NATO-Russia partnership. Nevertheless, it proved to be unable to change Russia's negative attitude to NATO expansion and prevent a bitter crisis in their relations. NATO's bombing campaign in Yugoslavia in spring 1999 dealt a severe blow to NATO-Russia relationship. NATO's military action urged Russia to freeze its contacts with the alliance and radically revise its attitude to NATO.

The dynamics of NATO-Russia relationship can be better understood owing to the analysis of Russian views on this issue and their evolution in the 1990s. The heated domestic debate on Russia's relations with the alliance does not easily lend itself to analysis. It is not a secret that contemporary Russian views on foreign policy problems are amazingly diverse. The monochrome

foreign policy thinking of the Soviet period has been replaced by a kaleidoscope of different concepts and opinions.

Moreover, foreign policy decision-making has become more pluralistic than it was in the Soviet Union. The President and his administration, the Federation Council and the State Duma, the Security Council and the Defence Council, government ministries and secret services – all of these actors of modern Russian politics have taken part in the decision-making process and contributed to the formulation of Russia's policy towards NATO. The absence of a body coordinating the efforts of different institutions in framing Russian foreign and national security policy resulted in numerous conflicting statements by high-ranking officials, which caused some confusion both in Russia and the West about Moscow's official position.

The subject of this research is the evolution of Russian views on the problems and prospects of NATO-Russia relationship in the 1990s. The research was based on synthesis approach and comparative analysis. It sought to examine the whole gamut of Russian views ranging from extreme pro-Western opinions to radical anti-Western ones. The emphasis was made on the most typical opinions wide-spread among Russian political, military and academic elites. The research was focused on the following questions:

- 1) Were any forms of consensus regarding NATO-Russia relationship reached within the Russian foreign policy and national security community?
- 2) What were the main internal divisions within Russian policymaking elites?
- 3) What were the basic trends in the evolution of Russian views and the key underlying factors behind that process?

1. Fears and Hopes of the Gorbachev Era.

Revolutionary changes in Europe in the late 1980s stimulated the Soviet discussion about the European policy of the Soviet Union including its relations with NATO. The overwhelming majority of the discussants held an opinion that the danger of military conflict with the West had been substantially reduced but not completely removed. Many Russians strongly believed that the West still posed a threat to the Soviet Union. In their eyes, this threat was embodied by NATO, which was seen as a dangerous potential adversary. In a speech at the CSCE seminar on military doctrines in Vienna in January 1990 the Chief of the General Staff Mikhail Moiseyev stressed that “military danger has not disappeared... We see the source of military danger in the military policy, which USA and NATO pursue towards the Soviet Union and WTO, in some provisions of their military doctrines”. (1)

Soviet experts pointed out that NATO had retained its huge military potential and was slow to reduce it. (2) Besides, Soviet policy-makers were not sure of the irreversibility of positive changes in East-West relations. Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze said: “Today everything seems to be all right, we have normal civilized relations with all NATO countries, but tomorrow the situation might become different”.(3)

Although Moscow continued to regard NATO as a potential adversary, it was gradually revising its traditionally hostile attitude towards the Alliance. NATO was increasingly seen as a factor of stability in the turbulent security environment of the 1990s. Many Soviet politicians and analysts stood for the preservation of the Atlantic Alliance and the Warsaw Pact in the foreseeable future. Mikhail Gorbachev emphasized that both alliances still had an important role in maintaining security on the continent because a new pan-European security system had not emerged yet. (4) Some experts warned that the

weakening of the alliances might increase instability in Europe and slow down rapprochement between the East and the West. (5)

Soviet policy-makers deemed that NATO and the Warsaw Pact should not only continue to be guarantors of European security, but also act as mechanisms for developing dialogue and cooperation with the view of overcoming the division of Europe. In their opinion, the alliances could become co-builders of a new European order by transforming into predominantly political organizations and developing non-adversarial cooperative relationship. Gorbachev and his colleagues envisaged the conclusion of agreements between the alliances and the creation of pan-European institutions on their basis.(6)

Conservatives were reluctant to get rid of the Cold War stereotypes. At the XXVIII Congress of the Communist party in July 1990 they bitterly criticized liberal foreign policy of the Soviet Union. They claimed that Soviet leaders were overestimating positive changes in East-West relations and warned against unilateral concessions undermining national security. High-ranking military officials maintained that the West was allegedly unwilling to adapt its military policies and doctrines to the new security situation. Moreover, they continued to suspect the West of seeking to upset the balance of power and achieve military superiority.(7) The leitmotif of hard-liners' speeches was the necessity to maintain the existing military balance between the East and the West as the only reliable guarantee of Soviet security.

Many liberals also remained committed to the concept of the balance of power and viewed foreign policy issues through the prism of Realpolitik. In 1990 one of such issues on top of the agenda was the unification of Germany. Initially, Moscow bluntly rejected the very idea of a unified Germany within NATO. In March 1990 Gorbachev absolutely ruled out the possibility of Soviet consent to German membership of NATO. (8) Even pro-Western experts considered this idea "not only unrealistic, but also provocative". (9) It was repeatedly stressed that German entry into NATO would upset the balance of

power and create dangerous strategic situation for the Soviet Union. Given considerable reduction of Soviet armed forces, withdrawal of Soviet troops from Eastern Europe and gradual decline of the Warsaw Pact, the prospect of a unified Germany within NATO seemed especially terrifying to Moscow.

Obviously, the intransigent Soviet position on the issue resulted from negative perceptions of the alliance in the Soviet Union. Later Gorbachev acknowledged that the psychological aspect of the problem was the most important for the Russians.(10) Speaking at Bonn “Two Plus Four” meeting, Shevardnadze emphasized that for the Soviet Union NATO remained an adversarial military bloc.(11)

Moscow sought to link the unification of Germany with three other processes – the transformation of NATO, disarmament and the creation of pan-European security institutions. The first process was seen as the most significant in defining Soviet position on the issue. According to Shevardnadze, “if NATO actually transforms itself, renounce its old doctrine, strategy, then, apparently, the issue of Germany’s military-political status will be seen otherwise”.(12)

In view of the unacceptability of German neutrality to the West, the Kremlin proposed compromising solutions of the problem such as dual German membership of both alliances and application of French model of membership to Germany. Nevertheless, the Soviet Union finally acquiesced to a unified Germany within NATO. Soviet position was changed for several reasons.

First of all, Soviet leaders realized that they could not prevent a unified Germany from participation in NATO. Any confrontational counter-measures would be ineffective and self-defeating. They would contradict the principles of Gorbachev’s liberal foreign policy and could derail the process of East-West rapprochement. Shevardnadze told the delegates of the XXVIII Congress of the Communist party that the Soviet Union had only two alternatives. It could reach an acceptable agreement on external aspects of the establishment of German

unity or use its troops in East Germany in order to bloc the unification. The latter alternative would inevitably entail negative consequences. (13)

Second, the Kremlin was interested in friendly relations with a unified Germany as the leading European power and just could not ignore the will of the Germans.

Third, Moscow was satisfied with the West's willingness to take into account Soviet interests and concerns. James Baker's "9 points" became a suitable basis for the compromise between the Soviet Union and the West. Soviet leaders noted the decisive role of NATO's London Declaration in revising their position. (14) Apart from security guarantees they desperately needed financial aid for domestic reforms, and the West demonstrated its readiness to render such assistance.

Fourth, Soviet policy-makers expected that further positive changes in Europe would lead to the emergence of a new European order, based on mutual trust and cooperation. Seeking to placate domestic critics, Shevardnadze argued: "We will live in an absolutely different, new Europe, in different military-political environment, in which the repetition of the year 1939 will be impossible".(15)

Despite all of these arguments hard-liners continued to oppose the unification of Germany and its membership of NATO. In their opinion, Western economic aid in return for Moscow's acquiescence to a unified Germany within NATO could not guarantee Soviet security. (16) However, these critical voices were unable to change official Soviet position, which was based on pragmatic calculation of the country's security and economic interests.

The Paris summit of the CSCE seemed to confirm the arguments of reform-minded liberals and begot new inflated expectations among them. Commenting on the summit results, Gorbachev pointed out that there were no military adversaries in Europe any more and the alliances would be inexorably losing their primordial functions. (17) However, many observers were less

optimistic and abstained from euphoria. From their point of view, European states still were at the beginning of the way to a new peaceful order, and the existence of military alliances was the main obstacle on this way. (18)

The dissolution of the Warsaw Pact rekindled old fears and engendered new ones within Soviet foreign policy and national security community. Experts singled out three problems in this regard. First, the aspiration of some NATO leaders to make the alliance a linchpin of a new European security system, whereas Moscow was interested in the key role of the CSCE in Europe. Second, the aspiration of East European states to join NATO, which could result in the isolation of the Soviet Union. Third, the possibility of NATO's politico-military pressure in case of the reversal of Soviet domestic and foreign policy or the disintegration of the country. Some analysts feared that undesirable developments in the Soviet Union could lead to the creation of a new cordon sanitaire separating the country or its successor states from the West. (19)

However, many experts considered these fears unfounded and were quite optimistic about the prospects of NATO-Soviet relations. They emphasized that NATO was not viewing the Soviet Union as an adversary and was ready to cooperate with it. Besides, there existed a broad understanding that NATO was unwilling to extend its security guarantees to post-communist states because of their instability and Moscow's presumably negative reaction.(20) Nevertheless, it was acknowledged that the admission of former Soviet allies to NATO was quite possible. Some experts suggested that NATO enlargement should be prevented by all means, while others saw NATO eastward expansion as a non-threatening and even desirable development. (21)

A considerable part of analysts doubted whether NATO could play a key role in promoting security and stability in Europe. Sceptics claimed that NATO was not a pan-European institution and could only supplement the CSCE's efforts in the security realm.(22) However, some experts argued that NATO was the only reliable basis for a new European security system because the

alliance had already proved its effectiveness, and the creation of new effective security institutions would take a lot of time.(23)

Despite all of these fears and concerns, many analysts stood for the development of a close relationship between the Soviet Union and NATO with the view of promoting the alliance's transformation, controlling a unified Germany, responding to common security challenges, removing mutual suspicions and distrust. Deputy Director of the Institute of Europe Sergei Karaganov suggested the idea of Soviet-Western "strategic alliance" aimed at joint meeting external challenges to European security. (24)

After the collapse of the coup in August 1991 Russian attitude to NATO positively changed. Given Western moral support of Russian democrats, they tended to view NATO as a guarantor of Soviet security, stability and democratic reforms. Some politicians and experts put forward the idea of joining the alliance. During a meeting with NATO delegation in Moscow in October 1991 Vice-President of Russia Aleksandr Rutskoi suggested that the Soviet Union should be admitted to the alliance.(25)

Some analysts maintained that military-political integration with NATO countries had no reasonable alternative. In their view, Russia would get considerable benefit from joining the alliance. Economically, Russian membership of NATO would open access to the Western market for Russian high-tech products and stimulate foreign investments in the country's economy. Militarily, it would help Russia to modernize and professionalize its armed forces. Politically, it would make any military coups impossible and strengthen Russia's role in the international arena. (26) Thus, entry into NATO was seen as a panacea for almost all of Russian problems. However, the idea of joining the alliance seemed quite extravagant and unrealistic to the overwhelming majority of Russian policymakers and experts at that time.

2. Prospects and Pitfalls of Strategic Partnership.

The disintegration of the Soviet Union caused a radical shift in Russian foreign policy and made an unprecedented opportunity to raise East-West relations to a qualitatively new level. New Russian leadership opined that the central objective of Russian foreign policy was to create favourable external conditions for the transformation of the country. Russian reformers were convinced that this task might be fulfilled by forming a strategic partnership with the West.

Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev proceeded from the assumption that Western states were natural partners and potential allies of the new democratic Russia. In a speech at the meeting of the CSCE Council of Foreign Ministers in Prague in January 1992 Kozyrev said that Russia did not consider the West as a potential adversary and set itself a task of establishing friendly and even allied relations with the West. In his words, Russia's aim was "to join the community of democratic states with market economy".(27) Addressing the first summit meeting of the UN Security Council, Russian President Boris Yeltsin said that Russia saw the USA and the West as not just partners, but as allies.(28)

Kozyrev argued that an alliance with the West should rest on shared values and interests. Nevertheless, he emphasized that "even friendship based on common values does not mean the absence of differences".(29) Acknowledging the possibility of divergence between Russian and Western interests, Kozyrev believed that partnership with the West was the best way of safeguarding Russian national interests in the international arena.

Kozyrev's communist and nationalist opponents took a diametrically opposed approach to Russia's relations with the West. They contended that Russia was a self-sufficient great power and could overcome current difficulties alone without help from abroad. In their opinion, the West was not interested in the revival of Russia and sought to take advantage of Russia's weakness for its

own ends. (30) Communists and nationalists continued to see the West as a threat to Russia. They rejected the idea of Russian-Western partnership and pressed for developing friendly relations with Russia's traditional allies.

Apart from these extremely pro-Western and anti-Western positions there existed a very pragmatic concept of Russian foreign policy articulated by moderate liberals and centrists. This concept was given its fullest expression in a report prepared by the Council on Foreign and Defence policy in summer 1992.(31) The authors of the report acknowledged the necessity of a strategic alliance with the West including the military dimension of cooperation. However, they resolutely opposed Russia's one-sided pro-Western orientation and argued that Russian foreign policy should be diversified in view of the West's reluctance to facilitate the restoration of Russia's power and international role.

The report claimed that the military threat from the West was minimal, but there existed the threat of growing military-political pressure provided the disintegration of Russia or the seizure of power by anti-Western forces. They warned that the failure of domestic reforms would inevitably lead to almost complete isolation of Russia. Furthermore, they maintained that Russia was already facing the threat of a new semi-isolation because its instability and weakness prevented the West from close cooperation with it. From their point of view, this isolation might become much worse if Western security institutions (NATO and WEU) admitted the countries of Central and Eastern Europe except Russia. However, they stressed that Russia was interested in the preservation of NATO and developing partner relations with the alliance.

The Russian debate on NATO-Russia relations reflected the differences between basic foreign policy concepts. In early 1992 this debate was focused on the prospects of Russia joining the alliance. Pro-Western democrats argued that NATO was a natural ally of Russia and a guarantor of Russian security. Hence Russia should join the alliance as soon as possible. In their view, such a step

would require internal stabilization in the country, the complete revision of the national security concept, the compatibility of military structures and the renewal of Russia's military leadership.(32)

Pragmatic moderates were very sceptical about the prospects of Russia's participation in NATO. For example, Director of the Center for Disarmament and Strategic Stability Alexei Arbatov maintained that Russian membership of NATO was senseless and impossible. He argued that the West did not need Russia for guaranteeing Western European security or controlling a unified Germany. Besides, NATO was unable and unwilling to help Russia in solving its security problems stemming from internal instability. Arbatov stressed that Russia's instability was the main obstacle on the way to membership in the alliance. However, if Russia stabilized itself and was ready to join NATO, then the alliance would lose its *raison d'être*. In that case it would be time to create a new collective security system, and NATO could transform itself into it.(33)

Conservatives were hostile to the idea of Russia joining NATO. For them, Russian membership of NATO was tantamount to the capitulation to the West. They warned that it would draw Russia into "colonial adventures" and fratricidal wars in the former Soviet Union, oppose Russia against its neighbours and bring Russian armed forces under foreign command.(34)

Official position on this issue was articulated by the Russian President in his address to the participants of the inaugural meeting of the North Atlantic Cooperation Council in December 1991: "Today we do not raise the question of joining NATO but are ready to consider that as a long-term political objective".(35) Kozyrev emphasized that speaking about allied relations with the West he did not mean a military alliance.(36) Apparently, Russian policy-makers realized that joining NATO was not an easy task and it would take Russia a lot of time to become eligible for membership.

Despite the vague prospects of joining the alliance, Moscow was eager to cooperate with NATO on a broad range of security issues. The North Atlantic

Cooperation Council was seen as an appropriate mechanism in this regard. It was supposed that the creation of the NACC in December 1991 was a major step towards a new pan-European security system.(37)

Numerous ethnic conflicts in the CIS and the war in the former Yugoslavia highlighted the need for increased peacekeeping capabilities of European states and security institutions. In an article in *NATO Review* Kozyrev wrote: “The strategic task of our partnership is to eliminate the violent regional conflicts now breaking out and causing suffering in various parts of the continent. It is essential to achieve greater practical efficiency in the use of force to put out ‘bush fires’“(38) Russian policy-makers repeatedly stressed that the NACC should not confine itself to theoretical discussions but should foster practical cooperation of its members, especially in peacekeeping. (39)

Taking part in the NACC activities and seeking to increase the peacekeeping role of this institution, Moscow pursued two main objectives. First, it hoped to secure political and material support for Russia’s peacekeeping operations in the CIS.(40) Second, it was eager to prevent NATO enlargement and the emergence of a NATO-centric security system in Europe. According to Kozyrev, the increase of peacekeeping potential was the best response to discussion about European security and NATO enlargement. (41)

Moscow refused to accept NATO’s key role in a new European security system. In a speech at the Danish Foreign Policy Society in February 1993 Kozyrev said: “The North Atlantic Alliance can make a substantial contribution to the reinforcement of European security...At the same time no one including NATO is ready to acknowledge the monopoly of this organization in keeping peace in Europe”(42) Criticizing the idea of NATO expansion, Kozyrev pointed out that Russia did not pose a threat to the Central European states, and enlargement would just play into the hands of Russian hard-liners. In his opinion, this idea contradicted the logic of European development and the spirit of Russia’s relationship with the West.(43)

As a matter of fact, Moscow did not object to NATO enlargement in principle. However, it feared prospect of selective enlargement, which would marginalize Russia in Europe. A Foreign Ministry official argued in early 1993 that NATO enlargement should be indiscriminate: either all aspirants or none of them should be admitted to the alliance. Otherwise enlargement would result in a new division of Europe. (44) At the same time, some experts believed that NATO eastward expansion might had a stabilizing effect on European security and foster NATO-Russia relationship.(45)

The debate on NATO enlargement intensified after Yeltsin's visit to Poland in August 1993. During the visit the Russian President and his Polish counterpart discussed Poland's intention to join NATO. The joint declaration signed by two presidents read as follows: "In perspective, such a decision of sovereign Poland aimed at pan-European integration does not contradict the interests of other states including the interests of Russia".(46) Many observers interpreted these words as Russia's unconditional consent to Polish membership of NATO.

In a letter sent to Western leaders in September 1993 Yeltsin attempted to clarify his position. He opposed eastward expansion of the alliance and argued that it would provoke a negative reaction in Russia. Yeltsin pointed out that enlargement was illegal in view of the terms of German unification. He suggested offering official NATO-Russia security guarantees to the East European states as an alternative to their admission to the alliance. Yeltsin emphasized that NATO-Russia relations should be "by several degrees warmer" than those between the alliance and the countries of Eastern Europe.(47)

The intensification of the debate on NATO enlargement coincided with the culmination of the most dramatic political crisis of post-communist Russia in Autumn 1993 when the nation's future hanged in the balance. Under those conditions Russian democrats considered enlargement untimely and detrimental to Russia's nascent democracy.

Leading Russian experts argued that NATO enlargement would entail extremely negative consequences. Sergei Karaganov warned that enlargement could provoke a very negative reaction of Russian military and political elites, exacerbate traditional fears, stimulate anti-Russian sentiments within the alliance and promote Russia's isolation. At the same time he acknowledged that enlargement did not pose a military threat to Russia.(48) Deputy editor in chief of the *Moscow News* Alexei Pushkov maintained that enlargement would result in the emergence of a unified Europe without Russia. In his opinion, an enlarged alliance could be aimed at Russia and used for exerting pressure on it. He stressed that enlargement could be the last straw which would break the back of fragile Russian democracy.(49)

While liberals emphasized political consequences of NATO enlargement, conservatives and the military were worried about strategic implications of this process. The Central Executive Committee of the Communist party made a statement, which criticized Yeltsin's endorsement of Poland joining NATO. According to the statement, in this case "armed forces of the alliance would approach Russian borders, and Russia's strategic position would considerably deteriorate".(50) At a press-conference in Helsinki in October 1993 Defense Minister Pavel Grachev said that the military had some doubts and concerns about the aims of enlargement because NATO was still a military-political alliance.(51) The new Russian military doctrine adopted in November 1993 reckoned the enlargement of military alliances among "the main sources of military danger" for Russia.(52)

The Russian Foreign Intelligence Service headed by Yevgenii Primakov also raised its voice against NATO enlargement. In November 1993 it acquainted general public with the report entitled "The Prospects of NATO enlargement and the interests of Russia".(53) The report warned that enlargement was fraught with multiple negative consequences for Russia and the whole Europe.

First of all, enlargement could affect Russia's domestic politics. Enlargement would be seen as a threatening development by many Russians, strengthen anti-Western forces and revive isolationist trend in Russian politics. The authors of the report dismissed the suggestion that enlargement would serve the aim of creating a bridgehead for an attack on Russia or its allies. Nevertheless, they argued that the approach of the powerful military alliance to Russian borders would inevitably require substantial restructuring and strengthening of Russia's defence capabilities, despite the fact that NATO was not seen as an adversary. These extraordinary measures would overstrain the Russian defense budget, hamper the progress of the military reform and weaken Russia's military potential.

Intelligence Service analysts stressed that the inclusion of the new independent states into NATO's area of responsibility was seen as an alternative to the formation of the CIS collective security system. In their view, the admission of the Visegrad Group states to NATO would encourage the Baltic countries to join the alliance, whereas Russia was not interested in the third-party military presence in the Baltic region. It was argued that enlargement could lead to the emergence of cordon sanitaire between Russia and Western Europe regardless of NATO's intentions. Thus, enlargement could reduce the chances of overcoming the division of Europe and trigger the recurrence of bloc politics on the continent. Besides, enlargement would undermine international arms control agreements, in particular the CFE Treaty.

According to the report, Russia was interested in the synchronization of two processes – NATO enlargement and the transformation of the alliance. Moreover, in defining commitments and rights of new members as well as the dates of their admission NATO should take into account opinions of all interested parties including Russia.

Moscow realized that it could not veto the membership of its former allies in NATO. At the meeting of the Foreign Ministry's Council on Foreign Policy

in November 1993 Kozyrev said: “It is clear that we cannot forbid anyone to join NATO. The time of the diktat of ‘the Brezhnev doctrine’ has passed into oblivion together with our Soviet system”.(54) Nevertheless, Russia was determined to solve the problem somehow or other. Russian experts offered different suggestions in this regard. Some analysts proposed that Moscow should insist on simultaneous admission of Russia and Central European states to NATO. (55) Others considered that unreal and unnecessary. In their view, Russia and NATO should agree on the mechanisms of direct dialogue and cooperation before enlargement. Such mechanisms would enable Russia to safeguard its interests in Europe and compensate negative consequences of enlargement. (56)

The Partnership for Peace programme proposed by the Clinton Administration in Autumn 1993 was initially welcomed by Moscow as a compromise solution of the enlargement problem. At a joint press-conference of Kozyrev and his US counterpart Warren Christopher in October 1993 the former stressed that the PFP initiative corresponded to Russian approach to the problem of NATO enlargement. (57) At that time Russian leadership tended to regard the PFP as a substitute for enlargement and as the evidence of the West’s readiness to take into account Russian interests and concerns.

3. Rethinking Partnership.

Despite numerous official declarations about strategic partnership with the West, the romantic euphoria of early 1990s was gradually dissipating. In Russia policymakers and general public were increasingly dissatisfied with the results of Russian-Western partnership. It was generally believed that Russia was making too many concessions to its Western partners and was readily following the West without getting much in return. The victory of

ultranationalists and communists in parliamentary elections in December 1993 reflected wide-spread dissatisfaction with both domestic reforms and one-sided pro-Western foreign policy. Substantial shifts in public opinion and political landscape affected the Russian debate on NATO-Russia relationship and facilitated the emergence of broad consensus on some issues of this relationship.

Hard-liners in the State Duma availed themselves of every chance to criticize Kozyrev and accuse him of the betrayal of Russia's national interests. Russian policy towards the conflict in the former Yugoslavia was one of the main targets of that criticism. When the prospect of NATO's air strikes was discussed in the Duma in January 1994 the leader of the ultranationalist Liberal Democratic Party of Russia Vladimir Zhirinovskii blamed the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs for anti-Serbian and anti-Russian position in the Balkans. He promised that his faction would demand Kozyrev's resignation if the Foreign Minister did not adopt a pro-Serbian position in the Bosnian conflict.(58) Given immense pressure by domestic opposition, the Kremlin and the Foreign Ministry had to demonstrate tougher attitude to NATO and its policies in the Balkans.

When the situation around Sarajevo became critical in February 1994 Moscow vehemently opposed possible air strikes. Russian policy-makers were really angered by NATO's unwillingness to consult with Moscow. Yeltsin said: "Someone is trying to solve the Bosnian issue without Russia's participation. We will not allow that".(59) Some politicians and observers even warned of the possibility of the third world war in case of NATO's air strikes against the Bosnian Serbs. (60)

Moscow's anger intensified when the alliance carried out air strikes against Bosnian Serbs positions around Gorazde in April 1994. At a press-conference in Madrid Kozyrev argued that making such decisions without Russia was "a great miscalculation and a great risk". According to Kozyrev, air strikes might lead to the escalation of the war rather than stop the hostilities.(61)

As a result of NATO's air strikes Moscow got the impression that the West was not seriously entertaining the idea of equal partnership with Russia and tended to treat Russia as a junior partner, which was unacceptable for Russian policymakers. Kozyrev stressed that Russia was predestined to be a great power and pretended to equal partnership. He also argued that Russia and the West should abide by the rules of partnership such as mutual trust, mutual respect for each other's interests and concerns as well as the need not only to inform one another of decisions made but also to agree on approaches beforehand.(62)

With nationalism on the rise and disenchantment with the West growing, both liberals and conservatives questioned the expediency of Russia's participation in the Partnership for Peace programme. The Kremlin's intention to join the PFP met with strong opposition in the parliament, the military and academic circles. Opponents of the programme argued that Russia should not participate in the PFP for several reasons. (63)

First, the PFP did not recognize Russia's status as a great nuclear power and a special partner of the Alliance.

Second, participation in the PFP might limit Russia's sovereignty and the freedom of manoeuvre in the international arena. After joining the PFP Russia would be forced to follow NATO's policies and might be drawn in some international crises or peacekeeping operations against its will.

Third, the standardization of weapons systems within the PFP would be highly detrimental to Russian military-industrial complex. Russia would lose arms markets in Central and Eastern Europe and have to adapt its defence industries to NATO standards or buy weapons in the West.

Fourth, participation in the PFP would require considerable financial expenses because every NATO partner was supposed to finance its own PFP activities.

Fifth, the PFP might hinder military-political cooperation of the new independent states and undermine Russia's leadership in the CIS.

Sixth, the PFP was a major step towards NATO enlargement. It would undermine the CSCE's role in Europe and might prevent the emergence of a pan-European security system. By joining the programme Russia would give the green light to NATO enlargement and help the alliance to become the key security institution in Europe.

Seventh, joining the PFP might worsen Russia's relationship with Asian states, in particular with China.

Opponents of the PFP argued that Russia could develop bilateral and multilateral cooperation with NATO and its member states. They viewed such cooperation as a suitable alternative to participation in the PFP. Some of them suggested that NATO and the CIS prospective military alliance should develop a concept of partnership and conclude an agreement institutionalizing such partnership.(64) Some experts proposed that NATO should transform itself into a military arm of the CSCE and simultaneously admit all aspirants including Russia. (65)

Advocates of joining the PFP used the following arguments.(66)

First, Russia could determine its status within the PFP. Russia's role in the programme would depend on the level of Russia's participation in it.

Second, participation in the programme would not impose any commitments on Russia or restrictions on its relations with other states. Taking part in the PFP, Russia could not get involved in any actions detrimental to its national interests.

Third, the PFP did not provide for the standardization of weapons systems and could stimulate Russian arms export rather than impede it.

Fourth, Russia's expenditure on the PFP activities would not be too high and constitute a small part of the defence budget.

Fifth, the PFP would not be an obstacle for Russia's cooperation with the CIS states or for the formation of the CIS collective security system. Russia and other new independent states could agree on a common position and coordinate their policies towards the PFP.

Sixth, Russia could prevent NATO enlargement by joining the PFP. Otherwise, Central and Eastern European states might become full-fledged members of the alliance in the near future.

Seventh, participation in the PFP would provide Russia with an opportunity to enhance dialogue and cooperation with NATO. It would enable Russia to influence NATO's decisions and promote the alliance's transformation.

Eighth, the PFP should be regarded as a step towards a pan-European security system. Russia would be able to play a major role in the creation of this system by taking part in the PFP activities.

Ninth, a refusal to join PFP would result in self-isolation and the deterioration of Russia's relations with NATO and the West, which would hinder Russia in joining other international organizations.

The supporters of the PFP believed that the paramount objective of Russia joining the programme was to prevent NATO enlargement. Some experts argued that Russia should not only join the PFP but also announce its intention to become a NATO member earlier than others. Only then Moscow could prevent enlargement excluding Russia. (67) However, the bulk of analysts deemed that Russian membership of NATO was both unlikely and undesirable. In their opinion, joining the Alliance would inevitably put a curb on Russian foreign policy and worsen Russia's relations with its Asian neighbours, in particular with China. (68)

Many experts and politicians advocating Russia's participation in the PFP were not completely satisfied with the programme. They suggested that Russia should clarify some points and lay down some conditions before joining the

PFP. The most important of these conditions was Russia's special status within the programme. It was generally believed that Russia as a great nuclear power should be a special partner of the Alliance in promoting security and stability in Europe. Some analysts proposed that Russia's PFP Individual Partnership Programme should stipulate Russia's participation in the PFP decision-making process at the highest level. (69)

The heated debate on the PFP did not shake the Kremlin's resolution to join the programme. High-ranking officials repeatedly emphasized that Russia was confronted with a clear-cut alternative: participation in the PFP or self-isolation. (70) They also argued that the PFP did not contradict Russia's vision of the future European security architecture and the concept of pan-European partnership put forward by Kozyrev in early 1994. Kozyrev suggested the transformation of the CSCE and the NACC into key European security institutions coordinating the efforts of other organizations in reinforcing security and stability on the continent, the conclusion of bilateral partnership agreements between non-NATO members as well as between them and NATO, joint Russian-Western security guarantees for the Central European states. (71)

Initially, Moscow welcomed the PFP and expressed readiness to join it without reservations. However, in March 1994 the Kremlin decided to postpone joining the programme scheduled for the next month. According to Yeltsin's press secretary Vyacheslav Kostikov, the formal pretext for that decision was the lack of consensus on the issue in Russia. Kostikov stressed that the Kremlin was not completely satisfied with the programme and suggested that certain conditions of Russian participation in the PFP should be agreed upon beforehand. (72) Moscow also used NATO's air strikes in Bosnia to justify the delay in joining the PFP. Explaining a decision to postpone a visit to Brussels, Kozyrev said: "We are interested in much more serious relations with NATO than just the Framework Document in order to rule out surprises, unilateral

measures, especially military ones, in the areas where we should cooperate in the closest way”.(73)

Moscow’s *idée fixe* was to gain a special status within the PFP. In an interview with Interfax news agency Yeltsin emphasized that NATO-Russia partnership should differ from NATO’s relations with other states in scale and intensity. Yeltsin said that Russia was going to conclude a special agreement commensurate with Russia’s role in world affairs, military power and nuclear status.(74) Moscow suggested establishing a consultation mechanism which would operate on a regular basis and in emergencies. This proposal was made by Pavel Grachev during his visit to NATO Headquarters in May 1994. (75)

Although NATO refused to conclude a separate agreement with Russia, the alliance’s willingness to develop broad and enhanced dialogue and cooperation with Russia inside and outside the PFP encouraged Russia to join the programme on 22 June 1994. On the same day the Communist leader Gennadii Zyuganov broke into a tirade against the PFP in the State Duma. He drew a parallel between the programme and Hitler’s “Barbarossa Plan”. He called the PFP “an instrument of geopolitical expansion” and urged his colleagues to invalidate Kozyrev’s signature to the PFP Framework Document.(76)

Many Russian politicians and experts strongly believed that Russia should seek to reach a higher level of cooperation with NATO than it was envisaged by the PFP. Some of them argued that Russian membership of NATO was the best option in this regard. At the same time, they acknowledged that any hopes for joining NATO in the foreseeable future were unrealistic. (77) Some analysts proposed a compromise solution of the problem. In their view, Russia could become a French-style member of NATO. That could be acceptable for the West and useful for Russia, which would have a say in NATO’s decisions. (78) A noted democratic politician Boris Fyodorov claimed that Russia should submit

an application for NATO membership as soon as possible. Then Moscow would find out the West's actual attitude to Russia.(79)

Kozyrev hoped that the dynamic development of NATO-Russia partnership as well as cooperation within the CSCE and NACC framework would make less pressing the issue of NATO enlargement. (80) To Moscow's great disappointment this hope proved to be vain. In December 1994 the North Atlantic Council made a decision to initiate an enlargement study, thus paving the way for inviting new members to the alliance. This decision resulted in Kozyrev's refusal to sign the formerly agreed PFP Individual Partnership Programme. Russia's nervous and highly negative reaction was quite predictable. When Moscow finally recognized that the PFP was just a "preparatory class" for new NATO members, the programme lost its initial attractiveness for Russia.

Obviously, NATO's decision represented a severe blow to Kozyrev and his foreign policy based on the premise that partnership with the West was the best way of safeguarding Russia's national interests. Domestic critics blamed Kozyrev for the "total defeat" of Russian policy towards NATO and demanded his resignation. (81)

Many experts were convinced that NATO enlargement would inevitably undermine the very idea of NATO-Russia partnership. Alexandr Kononov, Director of the Center of military policy and system analysis at the Institute of USA and Canada, argued that simultaneous achievement of two different goals – NATO enlargement and the maintenance of partner relations with Russia – was highly unlikely, and the West would have to choose between them. He stressed that NATO enlargement would be viewed as a hostile action in Russia because of negative Russian perceptions of NATO and the lack of convincing explanation why NATO should expand when Russia did not pose any threat and was regarded as a partner. (82)

The frightening prospect of NATO enlargement and the West's reluctance to turn the CSCE into the linchpin of a new European security system prompted Yeltsin to warn of the risk of plunging the continent into "cold peace". (83) Opposing enlargement, he insisted that it should not be a rapid process, and NATO should lay down very strict conditions of membership. At the same time, Yeltsin did not rule out the possibility of a French-style membership of Russia in the alliance. (84)

4.Damage Limitation or Retaliation?

NATO's enlargement decision in December 1994 gave fresh impetus to the Russian debate on this issue. Some experts maintained that enlargement was inevitable and Russia had no capabilities to prevent this process. In their view, Russia had no choice but to give its tacit consent to enlargement and should seek full-fledged membership in the alliance. (85)

Others believed that Russia could acquiesce to enlargement on acceptable terms. According to Russian analysts, NATO could make the following concessions: the prolongation of enlargement so that Russia could adapt itself to a new situation, the commitment not to station nuclear weapons and allied troops on the territory of new member states on a permanent basis in peacetime, a ban on military exercises on the territories adjacent to the Russian border without prior consultations with Moscow, a ban on stationing offensive weapons systems in these areas, mutual notification of troop movements above a specified limit, Russia's equal participation in military procurement for former WTO member states which could become NATO members, the transfer of all European peacekeeping activities to the OSCE, NATO's guarantees of Russian borders including that of the Kaliningrad region. It was suggested that these

obligations should be legally binding and recorded in a NATO-Russia treaty.(86)

However, the bulk of experts considered that Russia should not consent to NATO enlargement but seek to delay this process and gain time so that the West would realize negative consequences of enlargement and dismiss that idea. (87)

Russia's official position on this issue was rather inconsistent. Apparently, Kozyrev and his colleagues in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs recognized the fact that Russia could not prevent NATO expansion and sought a negotiated compromise solution, which would minimize negative consequences of enlargement. In February 1995 Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Georgii Mamedov reportedly discussed the idea of a NATO-Russia treaty. He suggested that enlargement could be acceptable if the alliance promised not to station allied troops and nuclear weapons on the territory of new members. After that Yeltsin bitterly criticized Kozyrev in a speech at the Foreign Ministry in March 1995. He reportedly stated that Kozyrev's initiative ran counter to the President's declared position on enlargement. (88) Yeltsin's national security adviser Yurii Baturin emphasized that no NATO guarantees could compensate the damage, which enlargement would cause to Russia's security.(89)

Many policymakers deemed that NATO expansion could be prevented by diplomatic means. The First Deputy Minister of Defence Andrei Kokoshin said: "It is necessary to dismiss a false impression that NATO enlargement is inevitable, inescapable".(90) At the same time, some high-ranking officials maintained that Moscow would not oppose enlargement if Russia and the Central European states simultaneously became NATO members.(91)

Kozyrev was forced to change his tactics because of domestic opposition to a compromise with NATO. In a speech at the meeting of the Trilateral Commission in Copenhagen in April 1995 he urged the West to "put a 'hot' theme of NATO enlargement in the fridge for some time and concentrate on developing partnership within the NACC and on a bilateral basis".(92) Kozyrev

stood for further development of NATO-Russia partnership. According to Kozyrev, NATO and Russia should overcome mutual estrangement and jointly define the contours of a new European security system. He did not rule out the possibility of Russia's eventual membership of NATO.(93)

This approach included Russia's participation in the PFP. In May 1995 Russia's Security Council finally endorsed joining the programme and stressed that NATO enlargement was absolutely unacceptable for Russia. It was made clear that Russia would withdraw from the PFP if enlargement took place. (94) A week later Kozyrev signed the PFP Individual Partnership Programme and a special document, which outlined the areas of a broad and enhanced NATO-Russia dialogue and cooperation beyond the PFP.

In a speech at the meeting with foreign ministers of NATO member states in Noordwijk Kozyrev said that Russia was interested in a dialogue on the transformation of NATO and the establishment of special relationship between Russia and the alliance. He attempted to persuade his counterparts to transform NATO from a military alliance to a political organization with corresponding changes in NATO institutions and basic documents. Kozyrev reiterated his opposition to enlargement and stressed Russia's willingness to set up "a truly effective working mechanism of constructive and equal interaction between Russia and NATO whose principles and parameters could be recorded in corresponding agreements". (95)

In an article in *Foreign Policy* Kozyrev argued that NATO enlargement should be preceded by a transitional period of 3 or 5 years so as to transform the alliance and reach a qualitatively new level of NATO-Russia cooperation. After that Russia could withdraw its objections against NATO enlargement. Kozyrev suggested that Russia and NATO should move from the "16+1" format of exchange of information and occasional consultations to the establishment of a mechanism for regular consultations at all levels.(96)

In June 1995 the Council on Foreign and Defence Policy prepared a report entitled “Russia and NATO”. (97) This document reflected the views of pragmatic experts and politicians who opposed NATO enlargement and contemplated various non-confrontational means of preventing it.

The report emphasized the necessity to avoid “cold peace”, freezing Russian-Western cooperation and new military-political confrontation with the West. It was argued that Russia was interested in the preservation of NATO, its radical transformation and strategic alliance with it. The report claimed that “the North Atlantic Treaty Organization as a defensive military-political alliance of democratic states does not pose a military threat to democratic Russia”. Nevertheless, NATO enlargement was described as detrimental to Russia’s national interests. According to the report, enlargement was fraught with numerous negative consequences for Russian and international security.

First, enlargement could lead to Russia’s transformation into a revisionist power interested in undermining a new European order.

Second, it would shake Russia’s trust in the policies of the West, play into the hands of radical anti-Western forces, and stimulate anti-Western sentiments even within pro-Western elites.

Third, it would undermine the most of arms control agreements, thus making security situation less predictable.

Fourth, the disappearance of a neutral security zone in Central Europe would deprive Russia of a major advantage gained by sorting out of the Cold War. That could lead to the revival of old fears and play into the hands of militarists both in Russia and NATO.

Fifth, enlargement would urge Russia to seek strategic allies in the East and the South. That could result in the resumption of Russian-Western rivalry in Central Asia and the Middle East.

Sixth, Russia would be forced to intensify its efforts in creating an effective collective security system in the CIS, which could aggravate a division of Europe and entail undesirable military expenditure.

Seventh, Russia would have to increase its reliance on nuclear deterrence.

Eighth, if enlargement preceded a substantial enhancement of Russian-Western cooperation, then Russia's ability to safeguard its interests in the international arena would be limited.

Ninth, the Baltic states and Ukraine would become a zone of intense strategic rivalry.

The report maintained that Russian concerns could be alleviated if Russia became a full-fledged member of the alliance. However, it was acknowledged that Russian membership of NATO was highly unlikely. The report argued that there was no consensus on the issue of enlargement in the West. Hence, NATO enlargement could be delayed or even prevented. Moscow should not take part in any negotiations over "compensations" of enlargement because such negotiations would just pave the way for this process. Instead, Russia should interact with Western opponents of enlargement and propose a mutually acceptable alternative to rapid NATO expansion. The report suggested the following alternatives: joint NATO-Russian security guarantees for the Central European states; unilateral NATO security guarantees; unilateral security guarantees of the USA, Germany or other states; simultaneous and delayed enlargement of EU, WEU and NATO; WEU enlargement preceding NATO expansion; French-style membership of the Central European states in NATO.

The report considered developing NATO-Russian cooperation and NATO enlargement to be incompatible with each other. It was proposed that the alliance should make a commitment to refrain from enlargement for at least 4 or 5 years. Only in that case NATO-Russian cooperation could develop smoothly, and a partnership treaty could be concluded.

In the same vein another report prepared by the Institute of Europe argued that Russia should pursue a policy of damage limitation towards NATO enlargement. According to the report, “if the process of enlargement drags on for years or decades, then the North Atlantic Alliance might cease to exist by that moment or enlargement will not take place”. The report suggested using “tactics of delays” and “polite rhetoric of deterrence” in order to prevent NATO expansion.(98)

Russia’s displeasure with NATO was exacerbated as a result of the alliance’s military intervention in the Bosnian conflict. NATO’s air strikes against the Bosnian Serbs in May 1995 and its decision to deploy a Rapid Reaction Force in June 1995 were seen as another evidence of the West’s prejudice against the Serbs and NATO’s expansionism. The State Duma passed a resolution and a declaration blaming NATO for air strikes, opposing the deployment of the Rapid Reaction Force in Bosnia and criticizing Kozyrev's suggestion that Russian troops might be added to that force. Russian MPs supposed that the West intended to gradually replace the UN peacekeepers by NATO forces in the Balkans so as to expand the alliance to the South-East of Europe by means of military intervention. (99) Vladimir Zhirinovskii went further and said that NATO sought to use the former Yugoslavia as a testing ground and draw Russia into the war.(100).

NATO’s Operation Deliberate Force in September 1995 provoked a much tougher reaction in Russia. Yeltsin emphasized that NATO’s air strikes undermined the efforts aimed at political settlement of the conflict and went beyond the decisions taken by the UN Security Council. He warned that Russia would review its attitude to NATO if the strikes were continued. (101) Yeltsin blamed NATO for ignoring Russia’s position and prejudice against the Serbs. He said that NATO was demonstrating “what it is capable of” and warned that

Russia would create a new military alliance instead of the Warsaw Pact if NATO enlargement took place.(102)

A Russian government statement claimed that NATO's air strikes threatened the Bosnian Serbs with genocide.(103) According to the Foreign Ministry's statements, air strikes were aimed at inflicting a defeat on the Bosnian Serbs and asserting NATO's new role. (104) The State Duma passed a resolution condemning NATO's "barbaric actions" and urging the President to sign a law on Russia's withdrawal from the UN sanctions against Yugoslavia, suspend Russia's participation in the PFP and dismiss Kozyrev.(105)

The publication of the NATO enlargement study in September also contributed to the intensification of anti-NATO rhetoric. The study appeared to completely ignore Russia's interests and concerns. Russian observers argued that it did not answer the questions why and how NATO should grow. (106)

The publication of this document was followed by a series of information leakage from military sources and formal statements suggesting possible Russian responses to NATO enlargement. The following measures were proposed: the withdrawal from the CFE Treaty and a build-up of conventional forces, especially along Russia's Western border; the occupation of the Baltic states if they were offered NATO membership; the deployment of tactical nuclear weapons in the Western theater (Belarus, the Kaliningrad region, the Baltic Fleet), the Northern theater (the Russian-Norwegian border and the Barents Sea), and the Southern theater (Russian military bases in the Crimea, Abkhazia, Georgia and Armenia); the renunciation of the INF Treaty and the re-deployment of INF; the targeting of strategic nuclear forces at military targets on the territory of new NATO member states; non-ratification of the START II Treaty; the creation of a military alliance in the CIS; the creation of a military alliance with Belarus and the deployment of joint coalition forces on its territory; export of nuclear and missile technologies to India, Iran, Iraq, Algeria

and other Arab states as well as the creation of military alliances with some of these states.(107)

Meanwhile, pro-Western liberal analysts maintained that Russia should not take any measures, which could lead to a division of Europe and new confrontation with the West. Instead, Russia should concentrate its efforts on removing European fears of a new “Russian threat”, joining European institutions, and enhancing cooperation with NATO. (108) Liberals continued to press for a compromise solution of the enlargement problem, for example, by signing a NATO-Russia treaty, which would stipulate mutual security guarantees.(109)

However, NATO’s military intervention in the Bosnian conflict and the publication of the enlargement study against the background of forthcoming parliamentary and presidential elections in Russia made any compromises on NATO enlargement impossible. In the run-up to the elections almost all political figures and parties demonstrated their strong anti-NATO sentiments and firm opposition to enlargement.

Rejecting any compromises on NATO expansion, Moscow sought to reach mutually acceptable solutions of other problems such as the adaptation of the CFE Treaty and Russia’s participation in a peacekeeping operation in Bosnia.

Since June 1993 Moscow insisted on the review of the flank limits of the CFE Treaty, which restricted the number of Russia’s conventional weapons in strategically important areas – the Leningrad and the North Caucasian military districts. The war in Chechnya made this problem much more urgent for Russia. In September 1995 Moscow welcomed NATO’s proposal on the contraction of Russia’s flank areas.(110). Nevertheless, Russian military experts stressed that any concessions in regard to the CFE Treaty would not lead to Russia’s consent to NATO enlargement.(111) Acknowledging the progress made in solving the problem, Pavel Grachev argued that Russia was unable to implement the treaty

without Western assistance because the reshuffle of troops and weapons along with arms reduction was too costly for Russia. (112)

As far as Russia's participation in policing the Bosnian peace settlement is concerned, Moscow insisted on a clear-cut mandate of the UN Security Council for a peacekeeping operation in the Balkans. Besides, Moscow was reluctant to place its troops under NATO command.(113) As a result of US-Russian talks the compromise was finally reached. Russian contingent in Bosnia was to be under the operational control of SACEUR through his Russian deputy and under the tactical control of the multinational division commander. Furthermore, Russia was given a voice over the political control of the Bosnian operation.

Moscow seemed to be satisfied with the compromise. Pavel Grachev hailed the Russia-NATO agreement on political control of the Bosnian peace implementation force as a model for cooperation between Russia and the alliance. (114) Critical voices also were heard. For example, the Foreign Ministry's chief military adviser colonel general Boris Gromov regarded the peacekeeping operation in Bosnia as another step towards the alliance's enlargement. He criticized the achieved agreement because Russian troops were to operate under NATO command. In his opinion, Russia should oppose the NATO-led operation and could send its troops to Bosnia providing that they were not subordinate to the alliance.(115)

5. Searching for a Face-saving Solution.

The multinational peacekeeping operation in Bosnia revived the stalled NATO-Russia cooperation. It clearly demonstrated that practical cooperation between NATO and Russia was quite possible despite the existing differences.

However, the development of NATO-Russia relationship was still hampered by the issue of NATO expansion.

Pro-Western liberals argued that enlargement did not pose any external threat to Russia. In their opinion, the membership of the Visegrad Four in the alliance would be dangerous only in case of resumed confrontation between Russia and the West. (116) Some liberals claimed that NATO expansion did not run counter to Russia's interests because it would not lead to a division of the continent but result in the creation of a unified Europe.(117) The most committed advocates of Russia's integration in European institutions hoped that the entry of the Central European states into NATO would set an important precedent and facilitate Russia's eventual joining the alliance.(118)

Hard-liners took a different approach to NATO enlargement. They regarded it as a direct threat to Russia's security and did not rule out the possibility of NATO's aggression against Russia. Military experts wrote: "The USA and NATO countries remain Russia's main potential adversaries... Although today the potential of NATO's conventional forces is insufficient for carrying out a full-scale aggression against Russia... in time it may be increased and moved closer to the borders of the Russian Federation. In this light the plans of NATO enlargement look openly aggressive".(119) The military pointed out that enlargement would not only increase the military potential of the alliance and the existing imbalance of conventional forces in Europe but also heighten NATO's ability to strike Russia's strategic facilities by tactical aircraft. In this case all arms control agreements between Russia and NATO/USA would be undermined. (120)

Russian politicians, academics and the military continued to discuss possible ways out of the situation. Pro-Western politicians and experts stood for Russia's gradual integration into NATO. For example, the State Duma deputy Sergei Yushenkov argued that Russia should become at least an associate

member of NATO, thus securing itself against any surprises from the West.(121)

Other liberals considered the prospect of Russian entry into the alliance to be highly unlikely and maintained that NATO enlargement should run parallel with the development and institutionalization of NATO-Russia special relationship. They suggested the following measures for fostering enhanced dialogue and cooperation between Russia and NATO: the participation of Russian leaders in NATO summits; the creation of NATO-Russia Councils of Foreign and Defence Ministers; the establishment of a permanent Russian mission in Brussels and an analogous NATO mission in Moscow as well as liaison missions at SHAPE and Russian General Staff; the formation of joint permanent commissions dealing with various aspects of NATO-Russia cooperation; the creation of a joint peacekeeping unit; the development of joint armaments projects. They proposed that NATO should make some commitments. First of all, it should promise not to station nuclear weapons and allied troops on the territory of new member states. Liberals argued that Russia and NATO should sign a treaty or a charter stipulating mutual security guarantees as well as the mechanisms of enhanced dialogue and cooperation.(122)

Acknowledging the need for close NATO-Russia relationship, many liberals deemed that it was hardly compatible with NATO expansion. Given the damaging effect of NATO enlargement, some politicians and analysts argued that it should be at least postponed for some time. The Chairman of the State Duma Committee on International Affairs Vladimir Lukin suggested imposing a moratorium on the announcement of enlargement dates and new members, which would enable both sides to save their faces and provide time for a quiet discussion of the problem.(123) Dmitrii Trenin, a military analyst with the Carnegie Moscow Centre, proposed that the thorny issue of NATO enlargement should be put on hold, and NATO should concentrate instead on promoting

cooperation with its Eastern partners under individual programmes. For its part, Russia should refrain from any confrontational steps and expand practical cooperation with the alliance.(124)

Russian experts realized the necessity to find a mutually acceptable solution of the problem and suggested various alternatives to NATO expansion such as the enlargement of EU and WEU, joint NATO-Russian or unilateral NATO's security guarantees for Central European states. It was also proposed that Russia and other aspirants could become political members of the alliance without joining its military structures. (125)

Meanwhile, hard-liners repeatedly emphasized that Russia would be forced to take the above-mentioned response measures in case of NATO enlargement. In their view, Russia could not maintain a balance of conventional forces with the alliance. Hence, Russia had no choice but to rely on nuclear deterrence as the only guarantee against NATO's possible aggression.(126)

The military were among the most vocal and influential opponents of NATO enlargement. However, some of them took a non-confrontational approach to it. For example, the State Duma deputy retired lieutenant general Alexandr Lebed argued that NATO enlargement did not pose a threat because the alliance had no intention to attack Russia. Lebed stressed that Moscow's response measures would only stimulate the process of enlargement. According to Lebed, "Let [NATO] enlarge, if [it] can".(127)

The resignation of Kozyrev and the appointment of Yevgenii Primakov in January 1996 resulted in a gradual shift in Russia's official position on the issue. At the first press conference in the capacity of the Foreign Minister Primakov said that he opposed NATO enlargement because it would be counterproductive for European stability and create a new geopolitical situation for Russia. While Kozyrev underlined negative political consequences of the enlargement, Primakov switched the emphasis to military problems. He assumed that in case of enlargement NATO's tactical nuclear weapons could be deployed at the

Russian border and stressed that Russia's vital interest was to prevent the eastward expansion of the alliance's military infrastructure. (128)

Despite tough anti-NATO rhetoric, Moscow seemed to realize that it could not prevent NATO enlargement and sought a compromise solution of the problem. During a visit to Norway in March 1996 Yeltsin restated his opposition to NATO expansion and suggested a French-style membership of the Central European states in the alliance.(129) Since Moscow especially feared the possible deployment of nuclear weapons near its Western border, Yeltsin made another proposal. At the Moscow Summit on nuclear security he suggested that nuclear weapons should be stationed only on the territory of nuclear states. Yeltsin also proposed that Russia and NATO should sign a treaty, which would give Russia a right of veto over NATO's enlargement decisions.(130)

In April 1996 Yeltsin's national security adviser Yurii Baturin launched the idea of a nuclear-free zone in Central Europe. He claimed that such a zone had already existed de facto since the withdrawal of Russian troops and nuclear weapons from the region. Baturin suggested that nuclear states should make a formal commitment not to station nuclear weapons there, thus confirming the nuclear-free status of Central Europe de jure. (131)

At the meeting with NATO Foreign Ministers in Berlin in June 1996 Primakov reportedly stated that Russia did not oppose NATO enlargement in principle but resisted the expansion of the alliance's military infrastructure.(132) Many observers regarded that as the sign of substantial shift in Russia's official position. However, Primakov underlined that Moscow had not changed its position but had singled out the "nucleus" of the problem which was absolutely unacceptable – moving up NATO's infrastructure to Russian borders.(133) Primakov warned that if NATO and Russia failed to reach some agreement, this would affect Russia's military construction and its attitude to arms control treaties (134). He suggested the following scheme of solving the enlargement

problem: NATO's transformation – dialogue with Russia – considering the question of enlargement. (135)

Primakov emphasized that any NATO-Russia agreements should be in writing. Obviously, Moscow's distrust of NATO's verbal promises was driven by a wide-spread Russian belief that in 1990-91 Western leaders had allegedly assured Gorbachev and Shewardnadze that NATO would not expand eastwards after the unification of Germany and the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact. Primakov referred to the transcripts of those talks from Russian archives so as to prove the perfidy of the West. (136) Given these allegations, some analysts argued that Russia could refuse to acknowledge the legitimacy of NATO enlargement.(137)

Moscow welcomed the idea of a NATO-Russia Charter suggested by US Secretary of State Warren Christopher in September 1996. Russian high-ranking officials emphasized that such a document should not be declarative and should contain NATO's guarantees. Yeltsin stressed that a NATO-Russia agreement should be signed before NATO enlargement. (138)

Supporting the idea of a formal document on NATO-Russia relations, some analysts argued that Moscow should do its best to prevent NATO enlargement and refrain from any negotiations over possible compensations. In their opinion, Russia could withdraw its objections to enlargement only in case of NATO's radical transformation from a collective defence alliance into the nucleus of a Euro-Atlantic peacekeeping organization. If such transformation took place, Russia could join a new NATO.(139)

In late 1996 the idea of Russian entry into the alliance re-emerged in the Moscow corridors of power. At the end of October the Secretary of the Security Council Ivan Rybkin suggested that Russia should join NATO's political structures.(140) The Deputy Chairman of the State Duma Defence Committee Alexei Arbatov maintained that NATO should invite Russia to join the alliance in the first wave of enlargement. According to Arbatov, that was NATO's "last

chance” to solve the problem on mutually acceptable terms.(141) However, many politicians and experts were very sceptical about the prospect of Russia joining the alliance. Primakov argued that if Russia applied for membership, NATO would refuse admission and use Russia’s application for a large-scale eastward expansion.(142)

At the 16+1 NATO-Russia meeting in Brussels in December 1996 Primakov accepted NATO’s proposal to start negotiations on an enhanced relationship between Russia and the alliance. He also agreed that this could result in a formal agreement. It was no surprise that Moscow finally opted for a pragmatic approach. Since NATO committed itself to inviting new members in July 1997, Moscow had no choice but to seek a face-saving agreement. The West’s willingness to take into account Russian interests and concerns was also an important factor behind Russia’s consent to a negotiated compromise. Moscow welcomed NATO’s proposal of a new consultation mechanism and “three no’s” – no intention, no plan, and no reason to deploy nuclear weapons on the territory of new members. Besides, Moscow was satisfied with the results of the OSCE Lisbon Summit at which European leaders decided to start work on the Charter for European Security and negotiations on the adaptation of the CFE Treaty. (143)

In January 1997 Russia and NATO started negotiations on the terms of a future agreement. At the first meeting with NATO Secretary General Javier Solana in Moscow Primakov stressed that Russia still opposed the expansion of the alliance and would retain its negative attitude to this process in any case. According to Primakov, neither talks with the alliance on NATO-Russia relations nor these relations could be regarded as a “compensation” for Russia’s consent to enlargement. He also insisted on a legally binding agreement with NATO. (144)

Although Moscow denied the fact of bargaining with the West over enlargement, it sought various concessions, which would allay its concerns and

serve its security, political, and economic interests. Experts suggested that the West should provide Russia with the following “compensations” for NATO expansion: NATO’s obligation not to deploy nuclear weapons or allied troops on the territory of new members; the adaptation of the CFE Treaty to the new security environment; the conclusion of a US-Russian treaty on tactical nuclear weapons in Europe; a preliminary agreement on the START III Treaty; the creation of an effective mechanism of NATO-Russia cooperation giving Russia a voice or even a right of veto over NATO’s decisions, especially with regard to crisis management and peacekeeping operations; the admission of Russia to the G-7, the WTO, the Paris and London Clubs of lenders. (145)

According to Moscow’s official proposals, a NATO-Russia document should stipulate the principles of relations between Russia and the alliance, NATO’s further transformation, the creation of a mechanism of consultations and joint decision-making, the guarantees of non-extension of NATO’s military infrastructure.(146)

Meanwhile, hard-liners rejected the very idea of signing any NATO-Russia documents. Vladimir Zhirinovskii maintained that “any agreements about partnership, special relations with Russia, some possible participation of Russia in NATO are complete nonsense because NATO is a military aggressive bloc aimed at the destruction of Russian state”.(147)

At the US-Russian Summit in Helsinki in March 1997 Bill Clinton demonstrated the willingness of the USA and NATO to take into account Russian interests and concerns, thus opening the path for signing an agreement between Russia and the alliance.

When the document was finally agreed in May 1997, Russian experts and politicians differed about the issue of its signing. Some of them argued that Russia should sign the Founding Act, which would substantially reduce negative consequences of NATO expansion, institutionalize NATO-Russia partnership, secure Russia’s participation in solving key issues of European security and

deprive the West of a free hand in its actions. They emphasized that if Russia refused to sign the document, NATO enlargement would take place without Russian interests being taken into account. In their opinion, Russia had gained maximum concessions under existing circumstances and would not obtain anything else in case of further bargaining. (148)

Many analysts and policymakers were very sceptical about the Founding Act. They pointed out that it was not a legally binding agreement and gave Russia neither firm guarantees nor a right of veto over NATO decisions. In their view, if Russia signed the agreement, that would give the green light to NATO enlargement and pave the way for the entry of the former Soviet states into the alliance. They argued that Russia could reach a better agreement with NATO later and should not sign an unsatisfactory document.(149) However, the Kremlin realized the need for the conclusion of a face-saving agreement before the Madrid Summit and ignored these critical voices.

6. From Euphoria to Hysteria.

On 27 May 1997 the Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security between Russia and NATO was signed by Yeltsin and his NATO counterparts in Paris. Yeltsin called it a “historic document” minimizing negative consequences of enlargement, securing Europe and the world against a new confrontation and laying the foundation of an equal and stable NATO-Russia partnership. (150) In contrast with Yeltsin’s assessment his domestic critics regarded this document as “the Act on Russia’s unconditional capitulation to NATO”.(151) Communist leader Gennadii Zyuganov claimed that the Founding Act had sealed the victory of the West in the Cold War and signified the complete failure of Yeltsin’s foreign policy. (152)

After the signing of the Founding Act and the Madrid Summit Russian analysts and policymakers suggested different policy options. Some pro-Western liberals argued that Russia should embark on the policy of gradual integration into NATO. The leader of the parliamentary group “For Atlantic dialogue” Konstantin Borovoi wrote: “Today Russia is not ready for full-fledged participation in NATO. However, now we should openly announce that the entry into NATO must be the ultimate objective of our rapprochement with the West in the military-political realm”.(153)

Hard-liners maintained that Russia should continue to strive against NATO enlargement. The parliamentary group “Anti-NATO” suggested working out a national programme of counteracting this process. According to the statement of the group, this programme should provide for various political, economic, military, diplomatic, propagandist and other measures. The statement stressed that in the absence of such a programme the Founding Act “might become a screen for further NATO enlargement and simultaneously deprive Russia of political will and time for counteracting the growing external threat”.(154)

Pragmatics rejected both of these extreme approaches. They stressed that Russia could counteract NATO enlargement only by developing cooperation with the alliance. In their view, the scope and forms of the enlargement were directly dependent on the character of NATO-Russia relationship. They suggested that Moscow should seek to change the negative perceptions of Russia within the alliance, thus hampering the enlargement process.(155)

Advocates of NATO-Russia close cooperation believed that Russia should avail itself of every opportunity provided by the Founding Act. Russian experts made various proposals aimed at fostering NATO-Russia cooperation. For example, they suggested Russia’s participation in the work of NATO’s defence planning bodies, the creation of permanent joint expert groups, and joint development of a European missile defence system.(156)

Obviously, the signing of the Founding Act was a landmark in NATO-Russia relations. Nevertheless, it was unable to change Russia's largely negative attitude to the alliance. Although Moscow acquiesced to the entry of its former allies into NATO, it was still vehemently opposed to NATO expansion. Russian high-ranking officials repeatedly stressed that Moscow would review its relations with the alliance and withdraw from the Founding Act if NATO started to expand into the territory of the former Soviet Union. Moscow was especially worried about the prospect of the Baltic states joining NATO. Russian analysts did not rule out very gloomy scenarios in the Baltic region. Dmitrii Trenin argued that the process of Baltic entry into the alliance could result in a new Russian-Western confrontation, Russia's economic sanctions and other tough measures against the Baltic states, and even bloody ethnic conflicts in the region.(157)

Moscow was dissatisfied with its role in the Permanent Joint Council created by the Founding Act. Russian policymakers were annoyed with NATO's unwillingness to discuss some issues of Moscow's concern at the meetings of the PJC. Primakov noted a trend of turning the PJC into a "debating club" and stressed that this forum should be a place for settling differences between two sides.(158)

The signing of the Charter of Partnership between the USA and the Baltic states in January 1998 was seen in Moscow as another step towards the Baltic entry into the alliance. The State Duma passed a resolution urging the President and the government to devise a national programme of counteracting NATO expansion. The resolution described the enlargement as "the most serious military threat" to Russia since the end of the second world war.(159) In an annual address to the parliament in February 1998 Yeltsin expressed his deep concern about statements by Western and Baltic politicians who had spoken about the inevitability of the Baltic entry into NATO. He warned that such a

development would be viewed in Russia as a threat to its national security and lead to the revision of NATO-Russia relationship. (160)

Some analysts argued that Russia could “freeze” the process of further enlargement by means of regular consultations within the PJC framework.(161) Liberals maintained that Russia should build a stable partnership with the alliance so as to prevent any future crises in their relations. Some experts suggested working out a concept of NATO-Russia partner relationship encompassing both military and non-military aspects of cooperation.(162)

Summing up the results of NATO-Russia cooperation a year after the signing of the Founding Act, many Russian high-ranking officials and experts noted a positive role of this document in improving NATO-Russia relationship. Nevertheless, they stressed that Russia and NATO had not become a full-fledged partners yet. (163)

The military complained that NATO was unwilling to discuss key issues of their concern such as the alliance’s military exercises and troop movements, the plans of developing military infrastructure on the territory of new members, NATO’s new strategic concept and so on. They also claimed that NATO had not decreased the number and scope of its military exercises aimed at preparing for large-scale military operations and that the alliance still perceived Russia as a potential adversary. (164)

All of these problems were increasingly overshadowed by the differences between NATO and Russia in resolving the Kosovo conflict, which was gradually becoming the major irritant in NATO-Russia relations. From the very beginning Moscow opposed NATO’s military intervention and insisted that the conflict should be settled by political means. After the meetings of the North Atlantic Council and the PJC in Luxembourg in May 1998 Primakov said that Russia objected to the deployment of NATO troops on the territory of Albania and Macedonia. He stressed that NATO should not set a precedent by carrying

out military operations beyond its area of responsibility without the the UN Security Council sanction.(165)

Moscow opposed NATO's air exercises in the skies over Albania and Macedonia in June 1998. The head of Defence Ministry's Department of international military cooperation colonel general Leonid Ivashov claimed that these exercises had been directed against Yugoslavia and that Moscow had been informed untimely and incompletely about them. He emphasized that the Defence Ministry objected to the use of force in Kosovo and blamed NATO for double standards, i.e. the condemnation of one side of the conflict (the Serbs) and leniency towards the other one (the Albanians). Ivasov warned of the possibility of a new Cold War in case of NATO's military intervention without prior approval by the UN Security Council. (166)

The financial crisis of August 1998 caused a severe damage to the reputation of Russian liberal reformers and discredited their economic policy. Since they followed the recommendations of Western specialists and institutions, many Russians believed that the West was also to blame for the crisis. Obviously, NATO's policy in the Balkans substantially contributed to the growth of anti-Western sentiments in Russia at that time.

When the situation in Kosovo became critical in October 1998, Moscow vehemently opposed possible NATO's military intervention in the conflict. Yeltsin maintained that Russia should not allow NATO's air strikes. (167) A newly appointed Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov promised that Russia would veto any UN resolution authorizing NATO's bombing. (168) The State Duma urged the government to review the programme of NATO-Russia cooperation. (169)

Hard-liners in the Duma and the Defence Ministry promised tough measures in response to possible NATO's air strikes. General Ivashov warned that Russia would probably withdraw from the sanctions against Yugoslavia and start delivering modern weapons systems to Belgrade, sever all of its contacts

with the alliance and withdraw its contingent from Bosnia. However, he ruled out the possibility of the participation of Russian troops in the conflict.(170)

Russian policymakers and experts were greatly worried about NATO's readiness to intervene militarily in the conflict without the UN Security Council sanction. Some analysts argued that NATO could use analogous crises in other parts of the world as a pretext for military intervention. They feared that Russia and other CIS states could become the next victims of NATO's "peacekeeping aggression". (171)

Moscow was angered by US-British air strikes against Iraq at the end of 1998. According to Yeltsin, "the USA and Great Britain rudely violated the UN Charter and received principles of international law, the norms and rules of responsible behaviour of states in the international arena".(172) Igor Ivanov underlined that "no one has the right to act independently on behalf of the UNO or assume the role of a global judge". Ivanov also complained that Moscow had not been informed about the action in advance.(173) Defence Minister Igor Sergeyev cancelled his visit to Brussels where he was to meet his NATO counterparts. Explaining this decision, he said: "How can we talk about cooperation and partnership with the alliance now that Russia's opinion is openly ignored?".(174) The State Duma statement described US-British air strikes as an "act of international terrorism" and stressed that they had demonstrated the danger of NATO enlargement for Russia.(175)

Russian policymakers believed that Russia had to take some measures in response to air strikes. The Chairman of the State Duma Defense Committee Roman Popkovich suggested Russia's unilateral withdrawal from the CFE Treaty.(176) Vladimir Lukin said that the ratification of the START II Treaty would be at least postponed by the parliament. (177) General Ivashov warned that Russia could revise its relations with the alliance.(178) Meanwhile, liberals emphasized that Russia was not interested in the renunciation of arms control agreements and freezing contacts with NATO.(179)

NATO's bombing campaign in Yugoslavia in spring 1999 provoked much tougher reaction in Moscow. In the eyes of the Russians, NATO's operation carried out in defiance of Moscow's objections and without prior approval by the UN Security Council undermined the existing world order and marginalized Russia's role in international affairs. Moscow realized its weakness, dependence on Western economic aid, and inability to stop the bombing, which intensified Russian anger. Obviously, wide-spread pan-Slavonic sentiments also were an important factor behind Russia's negative reaction.

In Russia NATO's bombing campaign was seen as "an act of aggression against a sovereign state". Yeltsin maintained that NATO sought "to enter the XXI century in the uniform of the global gendarme" and stressed that Russia would never consent to that. According to Yeltsin, NATO had violated the UN Charter and NATO-Russia Founding Act (180) Igor Ivanov accused the alliance of committing genocide against the peoples of Yugoslavia. He said that NATO's action should be regarded as a crime and that it fell within the competence of the international tribunal in the Hague. (181) The State Duma statement argued that NATO's air strikes undermined the system of international security and posed a threat to Russian security.(182) Even the most committed democrats and liberals viewed NATO's military operation as a "great mistake". (183)

Russian policymakers and experts underlined that NATO had set a dangerous precedent of military intervention without prior approval by the UN Security Council and could carry out analogous operations against any state including Russia in the future. It was argued that the CIS states could be the next victims of NATO's military intervention.(184) The adoption of the alliance's new strategic concept exacerbated these fears.

Despite a broad consensus against NATO's bombing campaign across the political spectrum, Russian politicians, military officials and experts disagreed over appropriate response to the alliance's action. Some of them argued that Russia should not get involved in the conflict. The editor in chief of

Nezavisimaya gazeta Vitalii Tretyakov suggested that Russia should help the West and NATO to get out of the situation only if they publicly asked Moscow for it. (185) However, this wait-and-see approach was not popular in Russia.

Hard-liners insisted on tough measures in response to NATO's "aggression". They proposed Russia's withdrawal from all of the agreements with the alliance including the Founding Act; the withdrawal from international sanctions against Yugoslavia, Iraq, Iran and Libya; weapons delivery to Yugoslavia; non-ratification of the START II Treaty and the revision of other arms control agreements; the stationing of nuclear weapons on the territory of Belarus; the dispatch of volunteers to the Balkans; the creation of a strategic alliance of Slavonic states including Russia, Belarus, Ukraine and Yugoslavia.(186)

Pragmatic moderates argued that tough measures could eventually draw Russia into the war, which should be avoided by all means. Nevertheless, they acknowledged that NATO's action necessitated the revision of Russia's foreign policy and military doctrines. They proposed that Russia should devise and put forward its own peace plan as an alternative to that of Rambouillet. (187).

In an atmosphere of anti-Western nationalist hysteria the Kremlin faced a difficult dilemma. It could either ignore hard-liners calls for tough response thus increasing the chances of Yeltsin's impeachment in the parliament or start a new confrontation with the West. Since Yeltsin had promised that Russia would not allow to "touch Kosovo", he apparently regarded NATO's bombing campaign as a personal insult and humiliation. When Yeltsin's reputation and Russia's prestige were at stake, the Kremlin could not confine itself to anti-NATO rhetoric but had to take some decisive measures.

Moscow froze its contacts with NATO, recalled military representative to the alliance, suspended its participation in the PFP and the implementation of the NATO-Russia partnership programme, terminated talks about the establishment of NATO's mission in Russia, and expelled the alliance's

representatives from the country. However, Russia refrained from weapons delivery to Yugoslavia and other risky steps. According to Yeltsin, Moscow had extreme measures in store but decided not to take them.(188)

Seeking to placate hard-liners, Yeltsin endorsed Milosevic's proposal of Yugoslavia joining Russia-Belarus union and announced the retargeting of Russia's nuclear weapons at the NATO members taking part in air strikes. He stressed that Russia would not get involved in military actions unless the alliance started a ground operation in Yugoslavia. (189) The idea of the Moscow-Minsk-Belgrade axis was opposed by liberals. The statement of Grigorii Yavlinskii's Yabloko faction argued that this could result in Russia's military confrontation with the West and complete isolation in the world. (190) Obviously, the Kremlin realized that a new confrontation was suicidal for Russia. The appointment of Victor Chernomyrdin as Yeltsin's special envoy to Yugoslavia in April 1999 demonstrated Moscow's willingness to come to an accommodation with the West.

Discussing possible peacekeeping operation in Kosovo, Russian policy-makers and analysts emphasized that it would require the mandate of the UN Security Council and the consent of the Yugoslav authorities. They insisted that the operation should be under the UN aegis and command. In their view, NATO members participating in the bombing campaign should not send their contingents to Kosovo. As Igor Sergeyev put it, "aggressor states have no moral right to be peacekeepers". (191)

When Chernomyrdin agreed to NATO's terms of settling the conflict and managed to get Milosevic's consent to them, hard-liners in Moscow accused him of the betrayal of Russian and Yugoslav interests. In a statement by the leaders of three Duma factions an agreement reached by Chernomyrdin was compared with that of Munich. Hard-liners warned: "The appeasement of the aggressor will provoke it to further wars of aggression. There is no doubt that Russia will be the next target of NATO's aggression".(192)

Moscow wanted to play an important and independent role in the peacekeeping operation. High-ranking officials demanded that Russia should be given a separate sector in Kosovo and that Russian contingent should not be subordinate to NATO command. General Ivashov said that Russia would announce its own sector in Kosovo with prior approval of the Yugoslav authorities and regardless of the US position on this issue. (193)

On 25 June 1999 the Federation Council voted for sending Russian contingent to Kosovo. However, some policymakers and analysts opposed this decision. For example, the governor of the Samara oblast Konstantin Titov argued that Russia was too poor to take part in the peacekeeping operation. In his view, the participation of Russian troops in the operation could lead to serious tensions between Muslims and Christians in Russia. Titov stressed that Russia would share responsibility with NATO for undesirable developments in Yugoslavia if Russian soldiers were sent to Kosovo.(194)

Since the beginning of the peacekeeping operation Moscow repeatedly blamed NATO and KFOR for indulgence towards the Albanian separatists and inability to ensure the security of the Serbs and other ethnic minorities in Kosovo. (195) Many Russian policymakers believed that NATO sought to foster the fall of Milosevic's regime and the secession of Kosovo from Yugoslavia. General Ivashov warned that Russia could consider withdrawing its forces from Kosovo if there was no progress in ensuring security and stability in the region and if the prospect of Kosovo's secession from Yugoslavia became real. (196)

NATO-Russia cooperation in KFOR became the first step towards the resumption of full-fledged relations between Russia and the alliance. Moscow realized that NATO-Russia relationship should not be confined to joint peacekeeping in the Balkans. High-ranking officials stressed that Moscow would defreeze its relations with NATO if the alliance demonstrated its willingness to take into account Russian interests to a greater extent and strictly follow the provisions of the Founding Act. (197)

The signing of the Charter for European security and the Agreement on the Adaptation of the CFE Treaty at the OSCE Summit in Istanbul in November 1999 became an important incentive to the resumption of NATO-Russia relationship. Although Moscow was satisfied with the results of the summit, it was annoyed with the West's negative attitude to Russian campaign in Chechnya. During a visit to Yugoslavia in December 1999 Igor Sergeyev criticized NATO's position on this issue and claimed that NATO-Russia relations had entered a new phase of getting colder.(198)

However, even hard-liners realized that Russia had no choice but to resume its relations with the alliance. In a speech at the Diplomatic academy in Moscow in November 1999 the Chief of the General Staff Anatolii Kvashnin bitterly criticized NATO's policies but stressed that Moscow had no alternative to cooperation with the alliance.(199) The recognition of the need for close NATO-Russia cooperation finally prompted Moscow to defreeze its relations with NATO in February 2000.

Conclusion.

The analysis of Russian views has demonstrated that Russia's national security and foreign policy community failed to reach a consensus in answering the following cardinal question: How should NATO be regarded and dealt with in the post-Cold War era? Three basic approaches to NATO-Russia relations have been identified during the research. These approaches might be called an idealist cooperative approach, a realist cooperative approach and a hard-line confrontational approach.

The advocates of **the idealist cooperative approach** take a very favourable view of NATO and consider NATO member states to be natural partners and eventual allies of the new Russia. They are convinced that the best

policy option for Russia is to build a stable and enduring partnership with the alliance. They see such partnership as an effective mechanism for enhancing Russian and European security. In their opinion, NATO-Russia relationship should be raised to a qualitatively new level. Then Russia could eventually become a full-fledged member of the alliance. Nevertheless, they acknowledge that Russia is not ready to join NATO, and the process of Russia's integration into the alliance will take a lot of time. From their standpoint, the admission of Central European states to NATO does not pose a direct military threat to Russia but is detrimental in terms of Russian domestic politics.

The idealist cooperative approach was very popular in the early 1990s. At that time the adherents of this approach held key positions in the government and formulated Russian foreign policy. However this approach was gradually discredited in the eyes of Russian policy-makers and its followers became marginal politicians. Now it is still popular with the most committed democrats and liberals, who have no real influence over Russian foreign policy.

The supporters of **the realist cooperative approach** take a very pragmatic stand towards cooperation with NATO. They strongly believe that Russia has no choice but to cooperate with NATO. They fear that avoiding cooperation with NATO is fraught with the self-isolation of Russia in Europe. In their view, pragmatic cooperation with the alliance can enable Russia to play a major role in resolving issues of critical security concern in Europe and have a say in the development of a new European order. Seeking enhanced dialogue and cooperation with NATO, they realize that Russia can hardly become a member of the alliance in the foreseeable future. However, they do not rule out the possibility of Russia joining NATO or at least its political structures.

Realists contend that the mechanism of NATO - Russia relationship can be effectively used for safeguarding Russia's specific interests and counteracting those alliance's policies, which are detrimental and unacceptable to Russia. They oppose NATO enlargement for geopolitical and strategic reasons. They

argue that Russia should pursue a policy of damage limitation towards this process. In their opinion, Russia should counteract NATO expansion by developing cooperation with the alliance and avoiding any confrontational response measures.

The realist cooperative approach has been predominant in Russian foreign policy thinking since the short honeymoon in East-West relations was over. It has been supported by a broad coalition of tough-minded politicians, military officials and experts, who have had a decisive voice in framing Russia's policy towards NATO.

The hard-line confrontational approach rests on traditional perceptions of NATO. The proponents of this approach consider NATO to be an aggressive military bloc directed against Russia and posing a serious military threat to it. For them, any compromises with NATO, close cooperation with the alliance or joining it are tantamount to the betrayal of Russia's national interests. Hard-liners avail themselves of every chance to criticize both NATO and Russia's policy towards it. They vehemently oppose NATO enlargement and see it as a threat to Russian national security. From their viewpoint, Russia should take tough measures in response to NATO's policies, which contradict Russian interests.

The hard-line confrontational approach has been popular with communists, ultranationalists, military hawks and some conservative experts. They exerted mainly indirect influence over Russian foreign policy in the 1990s. Despite all protests against cooperation and compromises with NATO, their policy effect was quite limited. Nevertheless, Russian policy-makers had to take into consideration hard-liners' views, which had a negative impact on Russia's policy towards the alliance.

Although Russian politicians, military officials and analysts viewed NATO-Russia relations in different ways, they reached a broad consensus in opposition to NATO enlargement and its military intervention in the former

Yugoslavia. These alliance's policies were seen in Russia as litmus tests of NATO's willingness to build genuine partnership with Russia and take into account Russian interests and concerns. They caused discomfort even to the most ardent supporters of cooperation with the alliance and badly damaged NATO-Russia relations. Obviously, the lack of consensus in regard to NATO-Russia relations and largely negative attitudes to some of NATO's policies greatly hampered the establishment of a stable and enduring partnership between Russia and NATO in the 1990s.

As far as the evolution of Russian views is concerned, one can notice that many policymakers and experts did not change their opinions in the 1990s. Pro-Western liberals did not dismiss the idea of Russia joining NATO, in spite of all bitter crises in NATO-Russia relations. Analogously, hard-liners did not renounce their hostile attitude to the alliance and security partnership between Russia and NATO, despite all positive results of NATO-Russia cooperation. However, Russian views generally underwent substantial evolution, which comprised two different trends.

In early 1990s Russian attitudes to the alliance and cooperation with it were positively changing. Russian policymaking elites gradually get rid of their traditional fears and suspicions about the alliance, which was increasingly seen as a partner in overcoming the division of the continent and building a new European order based on common values and interests. After the collapse of the Soviet Union many Russian policymakers and experts strongly believed in the possibility of strategic partnership with NATO, which could eventually result in Russian entry into the alliance. This positive trend was caused by radical democratic transformation of Russia and complete revision of its foreign policy. Drastic changes in the European security environment including NATO's transformation also stimulated the evolution of Russian views in a positive direction.

To the great disappointment of Russian policymaking elites their hopes for equal strategic partnership with NATO proved to be vain. Owing to rising nationalism and growing displeasure with NATO's policies Russian attitudes to the alliance started to worsen. As a result of NATO enlargement the alliance was increasingly seen as a geopolitical rival and as a potential adversary. The Founding Act was unable to reverse this negative trend because it neither stopped enlargement nor gave Russia any decision-making powers in the alliance. NATO's bombing campaign in Yugoslavia led to further worsening of Russian attitudes to the alliance, which was perceived as an aggressor capable of military intervention in the CIS states including Russia.

It is quite difficult to prognosticate further evolution of Russian views with regard to NATO. At the same time, one thing is clear. However Russian attitudes to NATO change, Russia will continue pragmatic cooperation with the alliance. Under favourable conditions this cooperation could eventually lead to the establishment of a genuine partnership between Russia and NATO.

NOTES

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- 3 "Eduard Shevardnadze: v mire vsyo menyayetsya s golovokruzhitel'noi bystrotoi", *Izvestiya*, 19 February 1990, p.5
- 4 "Otvety M.S.Gorbacheva na voprosy korrespondenta 'Pravdy'", *Pravda*, 21 February 1990, p.1
- 5 S.A.Karaganov, "Problemy yevropeiskoi politiki SSSR", *Mezhdunarodnaya zhizn'*, 1990, No.6, p.91
- 6 See, for example, Gorbachev's statement in the Soviet parliament in: *Vestnik MID SSSR*, 1990, No.13, p.11
- 7 See, for example, general Moiseyev's speech in: *XXVIII syezd Kommunisticheskoi partii Sovetskogo Soyuz. Zasedaniye sektsii "Mezhdunarodnaya deyatel'nost' KPSS". Byulleten' dlya delegatov syezda*. Moskva, Pravda, 1990, pp.22-23
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- 9 V.G.Baranovskii, "Optimal'naya model' vzaimodeistviya blokov", *SShA: ekonomika, politika, ideologiya*, 1990, No.3, p.38
- 10 M.S.Gorbachev, *Kak eto bylo*. Moskva, Vagrius, 1999, p.131
- 11 *Vestnik MID SSSR*, 1990, No.10, p.13
- 12 See an interview with Eduard Shevardnadze in: "Yevropeiskiy metamorfozy", *Novoye vremya*, 1990, No.26, p.7
- 13 *XXVIII syezd Kommunisticheskoi partii Sovetskogo Soyuz. Stenograficheskii otchyot*. Moskva, Politizdat, 1991, Vol.2, p.20
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- 15 *XXVIII syezd Kommunisticheskoi partii Sovetskogo Soyuz. Stenograficheskii otchyot*. Moskva, Politizdat, 1991, Vol.1, p.161
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- 20 See experts' speeches at two "round tables" in: "Iz Vostochnoi Yevropy v Yevropu obyedinyonnuyu", *Mezhdunarodnaya zhizn'*, 1991, No.9, pp.146-158; "Novaya voyenno-politicheskaya situatsiya v Yevrope", *Mirovaya ekonomika i mezhdunarodnyye otnosheniya*, 1991, No.11, pp.69-78
- 21 See, for example, V.A.Aleksandrov, "Vneshnyaya politika – algoritmy perekhoda", *Mezhdunarodnaya zhizn'*, 1991, No.5, p. 32; "Iz Vostochnoi Yevropy v Yevropu obyedinyonnuyu", *Mezhdunarodnaya zhizn'*, 1991, No.9, pp.152, 156
- 22 "Novaya voyenno-politicheskaya situatsiya v Yevrope", *Mirovaya ekonomika i mezhdunarodnyye otnosheniya*, 1991, No.11, p.71

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- 28 Ibid., p.49
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- 37 See Kozyrev's speech at the extraordinary meeting of the NACC in March 1992 in: *Diplomaticheskii vestnik*, 1992, No. 7, pp. 33-34
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