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*This work is dedicated to the memory of Mr. Panayotis Lambrias for his invaluable support.*

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## INTRODUCTION

The demise of the Soviet Union marked the end of the Cold War and brought the world face to face with an uncertain future. For a good part of the last century, the Cold War provided the framework for the conduct of international affairs. Humanity was divided into two opposing blocs, each headed by one of the two dominant superpowers. The United States provided leadership to the western world, whereas the Soviet Union led the club of nations under communist rule. The competition was fierce but, excluding some instances of serious crises, there was some kind of balance. Both parties started constructing and amassing nuclear weapons to defend themselves against a possible attack by the opponent. Both parties established with their respective partners military organizations, NATO and the Warsaw Pact, to demonstrate their allied solidarity and deter potential aggressors. Neither party could seriously consider openly challenging the other, without running the risk of being dragged into a nuclear war. A balance of terror it was indeed. But after the collapse of communism all that was gone. And now what?

Russia suffered a major national humiliation when the Soviet state disintegrated. The loss of her international prestige and of a significant part of her territory confronted her with the question of her national identity and her place in Europe and the world. On the other hand the United States faced the dilemma of either adopting a more isolationist approach to international relations now that the Soviet threat was gone, or continuing to be engaged in the world as before, adapting its Strategic Concept accordingly. The first years of the nineties were a period of trial and error tactics, while the world was waiting for the new world order to emerge.

The purpose of this report is to outline the relationship between Russia, the successor state of the Soviet Union, and NATO, the military organization set up by the United States and its allies to deal with the Soviet threat. Russia, feeling discredited and isolated, fears that the continuing existence of NATO, with the Cold War having ended, could only be interpreted as a threat to her national interests. NATO's relevance in the post cold-war era will therefore be discussed and conclusions will be made as to why the Alliance considers its presence in the new security environment more necessary than ever.

NATO and Russia have developed a very fruitful cooperation with the signing of documents and the establishment of consultation mechanisms on matters of common concern with particular emphasis on security. The most prominent issue however in the relationship between NATO and Russia appears to be that of expansion of the Alliance eastwards to include Central and East European countries and even some of the former Republics of the Soviet Union. NATO, as it is natural, desires to extend the community of democratic, law abiding nations by incorporating as many of those as possible, thus further enhancing security in the continent. Russia has time and again expressed her fierce opposition to such an eventuality for a number of reasons that will be explained.

Despite rallying against NATO policies, it will be argued that Russia doesn't really consider the Alliance to be a threat. On the contrary, the facts are indicating that Russia has irrevocably chosen a path to solid cooperation with the West in accordance with her national interests. Under cold-war terms, it might seem that the two parties had no coinciding interests, but, in light of the new security environment, evidence to the contrary will be provided. It will be adequately demonstrated that common goals exists and that the two former adversaries need each other in order to attain them.

It must be borne in mind that the two leaders that assumed the task of handling the post cold-war situation, former Presidents Clinton and Yeltsin, are no longer in power. In the United States, the Administration that took over is Republican, and by definition more conservative, which raises doubts about American policymakers' preparedness to remain as engaged in Europe and to indulge Russia to the extent their predecessors did. In Russia, a definitely more assertive President with a brilliant KGB past has ascended to power, which might call into question his country's commitment to harmoniously collaborate with NATO. The U.S. and Russian foreign policy objectives will be analysed.

As mentioned above, Russia and NATO have managed, in the last ten years, to build a solid partnership. This process has not always run smoothly. All the problems notwithstanding, the Partnership for Peace Program, initiated by the Alliance in 1994 to reach out to the former satellites of the Soviet Union as well as Russia, and the Founding Act, signed between NATO and Russia in 1997, must be

regarded as two pivotal points in Russia-NATO relations. The circumstances surrounding them will be presented and some criticism as to the practical utility of those undertakings will be offered. Finally, the conclusions will sum up the report.

## CHAPTER I:
## NATO'S RELEVANCE IN THE NEW SECURITY ENVIRONMENT

The argument put forward is simple: If NATO was created in order to act as a deterrent to Soviet imperialism and to counter communism and the perceived nuclear threat, then what is its relevance today? The Warsaw Pact has long been dismantled, as has the Soviet Union. The Cold War is over and the former enemies are partners. Surely, there may be problems along the way, but it is a common belief that Russia, especially after the election of Vladimir Putin as President, is on the path to democratisation and the free market system. Russia no longer poses a threat to the West, whereas she is heavily dependent on western institutions and governments for grants and credits in order to keep the economy from crumbling. Even if the Russians wished to adopt a policy of confrontation, they would lose the necessary support of the West. The question naturally arises: Should NATO be dissolved? If Russia is not to be feared anymore, then what is the relevance of NATO today?

The answer to this question is very crucial for NATO-Russian relations. NATO's intention of continuing to exist and its plans of taking in new members is an irrefutable reality, that Russia has come to accept. The Alliance however, needs to make clear to the Russians how it perceives the new security agenda and why it is so keen on enlargement. As long as the Russians fail to comprehend NATO's rationale for its actions, they will never cease to view the Alliance as a hostile military organization, having as its sole purpose to undermine Russian positions.

The end of the Cold War, and subsequently, the absence of the Soviet threat, did not render NATO obsolete. On the contrary, it brought the Alliance face to face with the uncertainties of the new world order. The communist menace had kept the Western nations united under the umbrella of several political and/or military organizations (EEC, NATO). Europe, with the invaluable assistance of the United

States, managed to abolish war, and a historic reconciliation between two archrivals, France and Germany, was achieved. What was unsettling for the Alliance after the demise of communism was the eventuality of the Europeans reverting to their past conflicts. Some may say that the event of a war among Western European nations is unimaginable in the 21st century, and that may well be true, but one ought to bear in mind that European nations have traditionally conducted their policies based upon the balance of power system, according to which, in an organized community of nations, no single nation is strong enough, politically or militarily, to threaten the combined forces of the remaining ones, which results in all nations coexisting harmoniously in an environment of mutual restraint. This has been the story in Europe until the end of World War II.

The United States, inherently abhorring the balance of power system, has changed the scenery of European politics, through the creation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. The United States has provided Europe with security from internal and external threats. American leaders are not about to allow any of the past European discords to resurface[1]. Quite frankly, neither the Europeans are inclined to have it any other way[2]. The current attempt at creating a "European Army" is envisaged strictly in the framework of NATO, so it shouldn't be assumed that Europe wants to break away from the Alliance. In a nutshell, Europe is quite happy with American leadership and the security guarantees that go with it, even though it might not always want to own up to it.

As some analysts have very eloquently put it[3], NATO is much more than a military organization. It has a political and cultural value embedded in it, the foundations of which lie in the Treaty of Washington itself[4]. Because of the existence of the Soviet threat, NATO naturally assumed the role of a military structure, aiming at deterring the Soviets from attacking America and its allies. Once the threat vanished, it is convincingly argued that NATO's scope didn't disappear. On the contrary, "NATO was now able to return to itself, and to move purposefully into the new situation by building upon its real historic foundations"[5]. Russia should perceive the Alliance as a cultural entity whose identity is to be understood less in terms of Cold War military balancing and more as the result of a deep, enduring, and profound cultural commonality[6].

This logic is put forward by Western leaders in their talks with Russian officials to dismiss the latter's allegations that any admission of new members to the Alliance, whereas others, including Russia, remain outside, is conducive to setting new dividing lines in Europe. The West's argument goes that expansion should be seen as an enlargement of the community that shares the same political and cultural values, without of course putting aside the security dimension of the organization. NATO is not aiming at encircling Russia through absorbing her former satellites but rather at enlarging the community of democratic nations that have respect for human rights and the rule of law. One would be justified in asking why then isn't Russia invited to join the Alliance, if its character is not anti-Russian? In 1997 the then Russian prime Minister Victor Chernomyrdin stated in Davos that he wanted Russia to adhere to the political structures of the Atlantic Alliance[7], whereas the former United States Administration had expressed the view that, in time, Russia could be considered for NATO membership[8]. However, such an eventuality would have serious implications, which the Alliance is not ready, or willing, to deal with at the moment. The most apparent one is NATO security guarantees, engraved in Article 5 of the founding treaty. Russia is a vast country, extending far into the east and up to the Pacific Ocean. The Alliance is unable to extend the collective defence guarantees to that country, a Chinese possible threat in the future being the main reason, without compromising the core substance of its mission. Such a compromise would in reality erode its character and degenerate the Alliance into a mere consultative body, destroy its credibility and, in fact, abolish it[9]. On top of that, Russian history and long tradition as a great power makes it even harder for her to be incorporated and "denationalised" into an organization led by the United States[10].

NATO's relevance today is best crystallized in the Alliance's Strategic Concept approved by the Heads of State and Government in Washington DC in April 1999[11]. In paragraph 3, it is recognised that the last ten years have seen the appearance of complex new risks to Euro-Atlantic peace and stability, including oppression, ethnic conflict, economic distress, the collapse of political order and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. These risks need to be addressed by NATO, in order to minimize the possibility of endangering NATO security.

The Alliance admits that a large-scale conventional aggression against it is highly unlikely[12]. However, it expresses serious concerns over a number of issues that have the potential to affect negatively Euro-Atlantic security. The recent war in the Balkans and the present turmoil in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (the latter wasn't envisaged at the time of the elaboration of the Concept but it clearly represents such a threat) serve as an example of the regional instabilities, such as ethnic and religious rivalries, territorial disputes and the dissolution of states, that are mentioned in paragraph 20. The fear of those instabilities spilling over to neighbouring countries, including NATO countries, needs to be allayed.

Furthermore, the powerful nuclear forces outside the Alliance and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction pose a very serious threat that must be countered[13]. It needs to be clear that the United States is not referring to Russia, when it talks about external nuclear threat, because both parties have signed legally binding treaties regulating the denuclearisation regime. What NATO leaders have in mind is rogue states like Iran and North Korea. It is this concern that is urging the Bush Administration to promote the Missile Defence program, as it is confessed by U.S. Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld and U.S. National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice[14]. Russia strongly opposes U.S. plans, as they constitute a violation of the 1972 ABM Treaty, but the Russian president has stated that his country is committed to using diplomatic means and consultation with The United States for a mutually acceptable solution[15].

Lastly, a few other concerns that the Strategic Concept mentions include the global spread of technology that might become available to state and no-state entities, as well as international terrorism, sabotage and organized crime[16]. All these acts represent new problems for stability. The Alliance makes clear to friends and foes that its mission is far from complete and that it seeks cooperation with other nations so as to eradicate the threats and advance peace and security. NATO recognizes that Russia plays a unique role in Euro-Atlantic security[17]. It is committed to a "strong, stable and enduring partnership between NATO and Russia (…) to achieve lasting stability in the Euro-Atlantic area".

It is evident that NATO's existence has not been rendered obsolete with the dissolution of the Soviet Union. NATO has successfully transformed, adapting to the

new strategic environment, preserving however its principal role as the core security organization in the Euro-Atlantic region. This development may not assuage Russian apprehension over the future of her relationship with the Alliance, but it is a decisive step toward establishing a safer world in which all parties can effectively collaborate for the promotion of peace. Russia is not an adversary but a partner. NATO and Russia need each other for the furtherance of their goals.

## CHAPTER II:
## THE REASONS FOR RUSSIA'S OBJECTIONS TO NATO EXPANSION

Despite the fact that Russia seems to favor a cooperative stance toward NATO, there are several reasons why she will vehemently oppose further NATO enlargement or will only grudgingly acquiesce to such an eventuality.

The first reason has to do with the bitter disillusionment of the Russians when the West breached the informal contract it had made with them over German reunification back in 1990[18]. During consultations between the USSR (back then) and the West at the time of the reunification of Germany, the two parties had reached a reciprocal understanding according to which unification would preclude further enlargement of the Alliance to the east. The USSR would allow a unified Germany into NATO and would proceed with the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact, if and only if the West on the one hand recognized that the Soviet Union had interests in the Central European countries and on the other hand committed to not extending its military presence into those countries. The understanding was not codified in any way, but Russia clearly considered both parties legally bound by it[19]. The fact that from 1993 onwards, only a few years after this major Russian concession was made, the dominant issue on the Alliance's agenda appeared to be its expansion eastwards represents for the Russians a blatant reneging of the West's promises.

Furthermore, Russia's faith in the Alliance's good intentions was dealt another serious blow when the Partnership for Peace Program (PfP) proved to have been interpreted by Russia in a way contrary to NATO's perspective. Namely, Russia had thought that the PfP program was a means that the American leadership had

devised in order to accommodate pressing demands of former Warsaw Pact countries to be admitted into NATO, by offering them collaboration whilst denying, or, at best, postponing for a distant future any decision about admission. As a consequence, the Russian Minister of Foreign affairs at the time, Andrei Kozyev, welcomed this initiative[20] and expressed his country's willingness to join the program. However, the shift in NATO policy towards a more engaging commitment to enlargement caused disappointment and confusion among the ranks of Russian officials. In September 1995 NATO's "Study on Enlargement" was published[21], a paper arguing that the Alliance's basic goal of enhancing security and stability throughout the Euro-Atlantic area would have to extend to new members the benefits of common defense and integration into the European security organizations. So the question was no longer whether NATO would expand, but rather on what conditions and at which point in time. It is no surprise that the Duma, in a non-binding resolution in September 1995, decided to suspend Russian participation in the PfP and to hold up the START-II ratification process[22].

The Bosnian crisis provided Russia with another reason for being skeptical about NATO expansion. NATO launched a series of air strikes on the Bosnian Serbs, without ever consulting with Russia. This course of action frustrated Russia[23] primarily because she considered there was no U.N. mandate for such action, which rendered it illegitimate. The United States dismissed this argument, evoking a Resolution of the Security Council that Russia had naturally consented to. Russia retorted that the Resolution permitted to ask NATO for military support solely for the security of the evacuation of the UN peacekeeping forces in case where such a necessity would arise or in order to observe the no-fly zone regime in the region of Sarajevo. The Russian view was, and still remains, that the NATO-led operation against Bosnian Serbs provided conclusive evidence that the Alliance was moving from its purely defensive character to a more aggressive one.

NATO's intervention in Kosovo[24] in March 1999 exacerbated Russian suspicions about the nature of the new NATO. This came almost two years after the Founding Act between NATO and Russia had been signed. The Founding Act had established what seemed to be an effective mechanism for consultations between the two parties, the Permanent Joint Council. Again, when it came to handling a crisis,

such as the one in Kosovo, the consultative body was brushed aside, and unilateral action was taken by NATO. This time around the UN had not been consulted at all beforehand and, as a consequence, the operation lacked any explicit support from the international community. Russia took this to be a direct intervention into the internal affairs of a sovereign country. The shock was great, since this precedent might serve as an excuse for a possible future intervention of the Alliance within the border of the Soviet Union, or even Russia herself, should it be deemed appropriate under the circumstances.

The abovementioned series of events led the Russian leaders to the conclusion that NATO was not a trustworthy partner. It also made them very suspicious of NATO's intentions regarding Russia and its interests. It was only natural for Russia to assume that NATO expansion was nothing more than an attempt on the part of the Alliance to consolidate its victory in the Cold War, assert its supremacy and pursue a cold-war policy of containment and marginalization of Russia. The West's vehement opposition to Russia obtaining a veto over NATO decision-making processes in the framework of the Founding Act left the Russians with a bitter feeling that their cooperation and consent were welcome as long as they went along with American plans and decisions but were simply neglected when they were challenging American initiatives, all the more so when the fora where Russia has a veto, such as the UN and the OSCE were being progressively disregarded by the American leadership.

Russia's main concern nowadays over NATO's strategy has to do with a perceived deliberate policy of the Alliance to undermine Russian influence in its immediate neighboring region. What Russia fears the most about the expansion process is that someday, in the not so distant future, the borders of the Alliance will have been pushed eastward, encircling Russia and alienating from the rest of Europe. The admission of Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic to NATO represents a worrying precedent for Russia, because it paves the way for future admission of the Baltic States and possibly Ukraine. Should such an occasion arise, Russia will most definitely react aggressively.

Another disturbing precedent for Russia is NATO's Kosovo operation. As discussed above, the United States (in the NATO framework) decided to take

unilateral action, without seeking to obtain consensus from the international community. What is more troubling for Russia though is that for the first time NATO appears to consider it to be its responsibility to embark upon out-of-area operations in order to restore peace and stability as it sees fit. It is clear that Russia shudders at the thought of NATO deciding to conduct a similar operation in support of secessionist claims closer to, or even within Russian borders.

Russia has more reasons for suspecting NATO expansion for undermining Russian interests. Turkey, a NATO member, is pursuing a strategy of expanding its influence on the countries south to the Caucasus and Central Asia. Turkey has elaborated an image of a model Muslim country, which has successfully contained religious fundamentalism and is trying to develop into a regional power. The United States regards Turkey as a very important strategic partner in the region and seems to be supporting its endeavors, in particular by utilizing the PfP program to maximize its influence on the countries of the Caucasus and Central Asia, thus diminishing the Russian role in the region. Russia fears this is part of the strategy proposed by prominent US political analysts[25], a plan consisting in promoting "geopolitical pluralism" among the newly independent states. This means that the former Soviet republics will be encouraged to promote their national identity while at the same time deal with their security concerns, thus breaking away from Russian influence and falling into the arms of the West.

Russia resents NATO expansion because it gives away the true NATO perception of Russia. Far from being regarded as a "strategic partner" with whom the West is willing and ready to cooperate in the new world order, Russia is seen as a "proto-imperial power which has consistently failed to overcome its Soviet and imperial legacy"[26]. There is a lot of rhetoric by prominent US statesmen in the United States to indicate that the image of an imperialistic Russia, which ought to be restrained at any cost, is very real. This creates a very negative image of NATO in Russia and not unjustifiably so. First of all, it undermines the position of the Russian democrats, who give themselves credit for the demise of the communist system and make efforts to demonstrate to the world that the post-Soviet Russia disavows her past. When the West follows such anti-imperialistic policy toward Russia (through expansion), it fails to take into consideration that the dissolution of the Soviet Union

was a voluntary process and that Russia has accommodated herself to the post-Soviet order relatively peacefully. This mistrust of the West in Russia becomes a powerful weapon in the hands of the communists and the nationalists who feed the population's anger and disenchantment by vociferously campaigning against Russia's rapprochement with the West.

## CHAPTER III:
## COMMON INTERESTS OF NATO AND RUSSIA

The relationship between NATO and the Soviet Union during the Cold War rested on the premise that the two adversaries were enemies and thus had conflicting interests on practically every issue. If one party scored any winning points in the international field, the other one would most certainly stand to lose. It would be naïve to assume that, the Cold War being over, the old enemies would somehow delete their past experiences and agree on every topic on the international agenda. This however, does not necessarily mean that their relationship is by definition a "zero-sum game". Both parties have a lot to gain if they join forces to fend off common threats and promote common interests.

After the new Administration took office early this year in the United States, the Sino-American relationship got off to a rocky start with the affair of the U.S. spy-plane. China's assertiveness in international relations has become apparent. The country's inclination to challenge the United States on the issue of the plane as well as the renewed aggressive stance toward Taiwan serve as an example of China's feeling of self-confidence. This feeling stems from the belief that China, with an economy progressively growing, is on the way to becoming a great power in the 21st century. It also stems from the collapse of Russian power in the Far East[27]. This represents a worrying development for the United States (and NATO), which doesn't want to see one sole country elevated to superpower status in the region. Let it be noted that China has always deeply resented the "unequal treaties" imposed on her in the nineteenth century, by virtue of which great portions of her land were annexed to Russia. China might some day, in the near future, wish to retrieve what is considered to be historically hers. NATO interests would therefore call for a reinstatement of Russia's position in the Far East to countervail possible Chinese expansionism.

Moreover, a weak, isolated and non-cooperative Russia would contribute to more problems in the region of the North Pacific[28]. China is not the only state that is claiming for itself a primary geopolitical role in the region. Japan is not expected to stand by while China grows into a dominant player in the region, whereas North Korea, and the possibility of unification with the South, would also be a force to be reckoned with. NATO's concern is that no nation rises into such a position that the others would see themselves threatened. In order to achieve this goal, NATO must make sure that Russia can live up to the challenges of the geopolitical game in the North Pacific and forge a cooperative relationship with her. Russia should also comprehend that it is far more important for her to concentrate on economic and law reform to attract investment from the West and to consolidate a true partnership with NATO for the advancement of the abovementioned goals than to mistrustfully engage in non-constructive dialogue.

NATO sees a menace in Islamic terrorism. In connection therewith, it is also very concerned about the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction in the Southern part of Russia's border. It should be said that this, as well as organized crime and drug trafficking, represent some of the principal risks that the Alliance sees itself facing in the new security environment. Russia shares these worries. The West has every interest in supporting Russian attempts to reduce the role of organized crime in the region, block narcotics trafficking out of Afghanistan and Central Asia, and contain the rise of an aggressive politicized Islam[29, 30]. A mutual understanding between the two parties over these issues would help set up a common strategy for the eradication of the problems and provide the global community with invaluable services.

The arms control agenda provides perhaps for the most compelling argument in favor of a close relationship between the Alliance and Russia. The United States, the leading NATO member, and Russia have signed bilateral agreements that regulate the arms control regime. At the moment there is considerable friction in the relationship, because Russia is objecting to the United States initiative of promoting a large-scale missile defense program and to the relative declaration of the American leadership that the 1972 ABM Treaty is out of date, being a product of the Cold War agreed to by two parties one of which has ceased to exist[31]. These tensions

notwithstanding, the dialogue must go forward, and there is a very good chance that it will bear fruit.

Apart from the above, NATO needs a strong Russia for the sake of European security. In both the Bosnian and the Kosovo crises it was evident that Russian diplomacy played a crucial role for the quicker resolution of the conflict. Particularly in Kosovo, when Milosevic realized that he could not depend on Russia to find a way out of the war, he finally agreed to meet NATO's conditions and the war was over[32]. As a consequence, it becomes apparent that Russian involvement is conducive to stability in Eastern Europe and the Balkans.

In their first meeting near Ljubljana, Slovenia, in June 2001, U.S. President George W. Bush and Russian President Vladimir Putin confirmed to the world their resolve to working closely together to achieve peace and prosperity. President Bush explicitly acknowledged Russia's status as a great power. The day before, in a speech he gave in Warsaw, Poland, he had declared that Europe must be open to Russia and that there is no need for a buffer zone because simply NATO and the United States are no enemies of Russia. He pointed out that the logic that should prevail must go beyond Cold War doctrines and he emphasized on the necessity to seek a constructive relationship with Russia in order to pursue the common goals. On the following day, in the post-summit news conference in Slovenia, the two leaders attached great importance to economic ties between the two nations. The American President supported Russian membership to the World Trade Organization and underlined the significance of scientific cooperation, whereas the Russian President committed himself to passing law reforms that will make his country an investor-friendly environment.

Russia and NATO however, are not likely to have coinciding views on the policy to be followed regarding the Baltic States and Ukraine. Russia is strongly opposed to the any of the Baltic States acceding to the Alliance. Much of the Russian anti-expansion rhetoric during the last decade must be attributed to an effort made by Russia to cross a "red line" beyond which enlargement would be unacceptable. The former Soviet Republics, and the Baltic three ones in particular, lie inside that red line. Russia may have acquiesced to Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic admission into NATO, but it is almost certain that in the event of, say, Estonia being

invited to become a member, Russia will be fiercely opposed, as such a move would amount to entering into the back yard of Russia.

The Baltic countries are of utmost strategic importance to Russia. Russia considers that, should those countries become NATO members, her access to the Baltic Sea would be closed off, or, at best, controlled by NATO. Additionally, the strategically important enclave of Kaliningrad, which already shares borders with NATO member Poland would become a part of Russian territory surrounded exclusively by NATO countries. In the Founding Act signed between Russia and NATO, the latter explicitly stated that it has no intention or reason to deploy nuclear weapons on the territory of new members, nor does it foresee any future need to do so. From the wording of the Act and from its political, rather than legally binding nature, it can be concluded that there is no guarantee that NATO will stick to this policy indefinitely, should it feel in the future that the security situation has altered. Russia has bitter memories from the early days of the "honeymoon period" with the West, when the commitment made about non-expansion of the Alliance to the East was subsequently reneged upon.

On top of that, there is the issue of hundreds of thousands of Russian nationals living in the Baltic States (in Latvia they represent one third of the population), which Russia feels are discriminated against. Baltic leaders hostility towards Russia and their anxiety to join NATO exacerbate Russian concerns about the situation.

The Founding Act recognizes every country's right to choose freely for itself the security arrangements it pleases. The Act also gives Russia a voice but not a veto in NATO decision-making. These are the arguments put forward by NATO in favor of the incorporation of the Baltic States in the year 2002. Russia had proposed alternative security guarantees[33] such as confidence and stability enhancing measures, arms control and limits on exercises conducted in the region, but they were not received very enthusiastically. A very heated discussion is expected to take place when the issue of Baltic membership in NATO is put on the table.

Ukraine is another thorny issue in the relations between Russian and NATO. Of the former Soviet Republics Ukraine is by far the most strategically significant[34] mainly because of its nuclear arsenal. It is said that a Russia that manages to control

Ukraine, is automatically a great European power. Without Ukraine, Russia remains isolated in the corner of Europe. Apart from its nuclear arsenal and its geographical proximity to the heart of Central Europe, Ukraine's position gives it the possibility to control the Crimean littoral and the Black Sea Fleet, vitally important for Russia. It is therefore apparent that Ukraine's status and its prospect of being introduced into the Euro-Atlantic family gravely concerns Russia.

Russia only grudgingly accepted Ukrainian independence. There are those who believe that Ukraine should be reunited with motherland Russia. This is enforced by the fact that the country is totally dependent on Russia economically, particularly for fuel[35] and for the operation and maintenance of its nuclear plants. On the other hand, politics is ridden with corruption, while the nationalistic movement is quite fervent. This is a reason for concern, since there are a lot of ethnic Russians living in Ukraine, whose fate depends heavily on the fate of the Ukrainian state and its relation with neighboring Russia. Russia wishes to have a firm hand on Ukraine, keeping it under her influence for all the abovementioned reasons.

NATO's policy on this issue might clash with Russian interests at first sight, but if one takes a more attentive look, one could come to the conclusion that some common ground may be found. NATO has supported Ukrainian independence and will continue to do so. It is in its interest to have a strong Ukraine[36], to prevent Russia from getting imperialistic ideas that would detract her form the path towards cooperation with the West. For independence to be sustainable, however, the state must become economically viable, and the West recognizes that this can only be achieved through economic interaction with Russia. Severing the ties with Russia would result in total economic chaos for Ukraine. Apart from that, the West favors Russian control over the Ukrainian nuclear arsenal, since Ukraine itself is incapable of ensuring its safe management and guaranteeing that there will be no leakage of nuclear technology to other states. Ukraine's non-nuclear status is critical for both Russia and NATO.

Surely differences over NATO expansion and the U.S. missile defense program still remain. There is however indication that on certain issues NATO and Russia will be inclined to see things eye to eye. Both parties are interested in regulating arms trade. Russia is unequivocal in its determination to go through with

economic reform and transition to the global trading system. Both parties worry about radical Islam and international terrorism. There is every good reason why Russia and the Alliance should now, more than ever, strive to construct a solid, mutually beneficial, partnership.

## CHAPTER IV:
## AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY OBJECTIVES WITH RESPECT TO RUSSIA

It should be very interesting to see how the new Bush Administration will influence the course of U.S. foreign policy towards Europe and Russia, and, as a consequence, what the future of NATO – Russian relations is likely to be.

In his Opening Statement before the House International Relations Committee on 7 March, Secretary of State Colin Powell confirmed United States commitment to remain engaged in international politics[37]. He expressed certainty of the fact that the United States possesses the "system that works", an unmatched ideology that has defeated the Soviet Union and is slowly transforming China as well. This statement dispels the fears of those who thought that the new Administration might opt for a more isolationist approach that would lead to progressive disengagement of the United States from the international arena.

The U.S. Secretary of State has furthermore declared before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that the Bush Administration believes that the Alliance is still vital, and that the United States will remain engaged in NATO as well as the European Union. The United States leadership, departing from domestic pressures towards diminishing U.S. expenditure on European defense through NATO, has supported the European Security and Defense Identity (ESDI), provided however that the project remains strictly part of the NATO effort. Hence, no surprises are expected from the Bush Administration as to the Alliance's standing in Euro-Atlantic security.

As regards Russia, Secretary Powell seems to be somewhat alarmed with new cases of espionage that are being uncovered, creating a situation reminiscent of the cold-war days. In spite of this fact, the United States wants to be good friends with Russia. The Secretary of State is convinced that all the problems can be

overcome, because "the world needs a good relationship between Russia and the United States[38]".

U.S. Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld places special emphasis on the need to enhance America's ability to defend itself and its allies against the new emerging threats, such as proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. He is therefore strongly supporting the missile defense system promoted by the U.S. president. He believes that the 1972 ABM Treaty has become obsolete, as having been fashioned in cold-war terms, devoid of relevance in the new security environment, and champions NATO enlargement, because he says, membership in the Alliance represents a commitment that the member nations assume to common defense, and as a consequence they must be capable of acting on that commitment. He urges all NATO nations, bound together by the same values of freedom, democracy, respect for human rights and the rule of law to share the responsibility of making Europe a more secure continent by tightening their Alliance bonds and observing an open-door policy vis-à-vis aspirant members.

U.S. National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice endorses the U.S. missile defense plan on account of the risks connected with the possibility of rogue states like Iran and North Korea obtaining weapons of mass destruction and threatening the West. Mrs Rice has expressed concerns over Russia's proliferation behavior. In a White House Briefing[39], in February 2001, she stated that "…If, in fact, Russia is engaged in activities that are helping countries to acquire weapons of mass destruction or missile technology (…), this is not going to be a very cooperative relationship".

Only a few weeks later, in early March, there was a meeting between Russian and Iranian leaders. An agreement for the sale of arms from Russia to Iran was concluded, with President Putin stating that "Iran has the right to defend itself". At the same time, closer ties between the two countries were established, with discussions for collaboration on exploitation of Caspian oil, much to the disgruntlement of the United States. This move has a symbolic character: It serves as a reminder to the West that Russia is willing, when this is deemed appropriate, to form alliances capable of making independent decisions.

This is causing a little discomfort to the United States. It should be borne in mind, however, that Russia, as will be explained further ahead, doesn't have the

luxury to openly challenge the West, because she is relying on it for financial assistance. Russian overtures to states like Iran, China or India will most certainly occur, as the repost argues further on, in an effort undertaken by Russia to countervail American dominance by creating a multi-polar world, but they will be limited in scope and below the threshold of U.S. tolerance, as long as Russia, and some of the rest of the mentioned states for that matter, seek to gain something from the West.

These problems notwithstanding, Mrs Rice recognizes the importance of conducting dialogue with Russia about security issues, especially on nuclear policy. She acknowledges the country's great power status and points out that America's security calls for a strong and coherent Russia.

There are more than a few conservative voices in U.S. politics that are suggesting the United States should not try and accommodate so generously Russia's interests. Senator (R) Jesse Helms, until recently chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, talks about the challenge America faces "to right the wrongs perpetrated in the last century at Yalta, when the West abandoned the nations of Central and Eastern Europe to Stalin and a life of servitude behind the Iron Curtain[40]." Senator Helms is a staunch supporter of NATO expansion to include the so-called "Captive Nations", i.e. the Baltic States. According to him, Russia still looms menacingly over these countries. Senator Helms wants good relations with Russia, but on his own terms. "We must show Russia's leaders an open path to good relations, while at the same time closing off their avenues to destructive behavior", says Mr Helms.

When George W. Bush came to power, many in America and abroad thought that U.S. – Russian relations would go through a cooling-off period. Republicans had on more than one occasions criticized former President Clinton on his Russian policy, blaming him for trusting Russians too much and for not asserting convincingly enough American interests. It was logically assumed that the new Administration would follow a more rigid policy with respect to Russia. Indeed, from the statements made by top U.S. officials, as demonstrated above, the United States is prepared to be more critical of Russia's policy choices. Still, during their first meeting in Ljubljana, Slovenia, the American and Russian Presidents had the chance to reaffirm their respective countries' commitment to partnership with each other for the promotion of

mutual interests. President Bush expressed his certainty that he can trust the Russian President, and in turn, President Putin reassured the world that his country and the United States are partners facing common threats that need to be countered. There seem to be very good intentions on both sides to work closely together.

## CHAPTER V:
## RUSSIA ON THE PATH TO SOLID COOPERATION WITH THE WEST

Russia is likely to pursue an all-directions policy in the international arena. Though NATO expansion remains a critical issue on the agenda of Russia's relations with the West, Russia is certainly not about to push confrontation any further, because she simply does not want to fall into disfavour with the West. There are several reasons why Russia will choose to scale down confrontation and seek to establish a more cooperative relation with the West:

Economic reforms and transition to the free market system has brought about the emergence in Russian society of a strong financial elite who understandably has a considerable influence on the Kremlin's internal and external policies. These financial circles should strongly object to the Russian government following an anti-Western rhetoric, but would rather campaign for a more realistic, economy-oriented strategy that would further Russia's economic interests as well as their own. This can only be achieved through a constructive dialogue between Russia and the West, a dialogue that can bring to surface the common goals and interests in the business field, such as investment opportunities, instead of aimlessly bickering over NATO expansion. Though economic prosperity in Russia has been slow in coming and the average Russian's living standard leaves a lot to be desired, it can be said that the Russian society has undergone profound changes since the dissolution of the Soviet Union, so much so that it is now a common belief altogether that Russia has no other realistic choice than to stay on the track of capitalist reform, adapting its policies to the needs of economic and political transformation.

Furthermore, there seem to be but a few voices that call for a different approach of the matter. True, nationalists and communists continue to regard the

United States and NATO as the traditional enemy, but their arguments have little bearing on the elaboration of Russia's foreign policy. First, after the Constitution adopted in 1993, the executive branch has emerged strengthened, able to formulate its own policies without having to take into consideration the opposition's accusations and threats. What is more, the public itself in Russia doesn't seem all too interested in matters of foreign policy, because it is, quite justifiably so, focused on the domestic situation, which continues to be bleak. That means that the opposition (nationalists and communists) can hardly inspire a popular insurrection against the government on grounds of misguided foreign policy.

Lastly, it is evident from Russian President Putin's statements in the press that Russia is well aware that it is in her best interest to work closely with the West (the United States and the European Union) on issues of international security and economic cooperation, while at the same time pursuing a policy of solidifying democratic governance and furthering transition to the free market system.

In an on-line interview conceded by the Russian President[41], when asked about the development of democratic principles in Russia, he said that: " As long as I remain head of the state, we will stick to democratic principles of development, we will develop the political structure of the society, we will develop the civil society, we will strive for imposing social control over state institutions. We will do that consistently. And, I am convinced, for the state there is no alternative to democratic development and to the market economy." In another part of the interview, when asked about the war in Chechnya, the President called onto the West "… to cooperate with us, to work together on solving one of the key problems of the modern world – fight against extremism and terrorism. And in our country, and in Europe as a whole, in the world, there will be order, prosperity and development."

## CHAPTER VI:
## RUSSIAN FOREIGN POLICY OBJECTIVES

Russia realizes that that she no longer possesses the superpower status she did during the Cold War era. Though she remains a great nuclear force, the sole state capable of destroying the United States, in economic terms she can by no means

compete with America. If there ever was an official Russian policy of reinstating Russia to its past great power grandeur, it must be presumed replaced by a more pragmatic one, professing the creation of a multi-polar world, where there exist different power centers that can mitigate the effects of American hegemony and thus alleviate Russian concerns about American domination in international politics. This policy was heralded by Yevgeni Primakov, when he succeeded Andrei Kozyrev as Foreign Minister.

When Primakov became Foreign Minister in the beginning of 1996 many thought that Russian diplomacy would work toward the emergence of a strong coalition around the axis of Russia, Iran and China, as a counterweight to American hegemony. Relations between Moscow and Beijing have become tighter since President Yeltsin and Prime Minister Li Peng exchanged visits to each other's countries back in 1996. President Putin has already met with Chinese and Iranian officials. He ha made advances to Iran for the joint exploitation of the Caspian oil and has offered an arms sale agreement.

Despite good relations, it should not be assumed that Russia is considering a strategic alliance with China and / or Iran to be a realistic option[42]. First of all, such an alliance clearly has an anti-American and anti-NATO orientation, since there are no palpable common interests justifying its existence. Such an eventuality would lead to tension in relations with the West and consequently seriously jeopardize all involved countries' prospects of gaining access to western capital and technology, which they so badly need. Russia is by no means giving up on the West. As a consequence, Russia's efforts to approach those countries should only be seen as a desire to establish a form of collaboration not only with the West but also with many other partners. This way, Russia hopes that alternative centers of power can be formed without endangering her status as a privileged partner of the West.

Russia's priorities with respect to the so-called "near-abroad", namely the newly independent states, are likely to cause some friction with NATO and the United States, if intentions are misinterpreted. Russia wishes to foster good relations with the former republics of the Soviet Union, especially with Ukraine, which constitutes her "door" to Europe. After the dissolution of the Soviet Union Russia has consistently tried to re-establish some kind of dominance over the emerging states. The

Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) was devised by Russia in order to decisively influence the internal affairs of the participating states.

Russia's activities in the near abroad were seen with suspicion by the West as well as the former Soviet republics themselves. There were fears of an upsurge of Russian imperialism, which would push Russia to reintegrate the past Soviet space into a new state where she would play a leading role. The newly independent states, mistrustful of Russian plans, started to demonstrate little interest in CIS procedures. The 1992 Tashkent Treaty on Collective security signed by the CIS members remained practically dead letter, whereas several members of the Commonwealth developed their own political organization, the GUUAM (from the initials of the participating countries Georgia, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan and Moldova), which of course excluded Russia. On the other hand, the Baltic States never missed the chance of discrediting Russia to the West, pressing for their immediate incorporation into the Alliance. They were granted political support by states such as Ukraine and Poland[43].

Russia's "near abroad" policy failed, because it rested on the doctrine that Russia had special or even exclusive rights and responsibilities to care about "law and order" in the former Soviet Union[44], thus infuriating the other states of the CIS, who were not about to relinquish their independence. What's more, Russian policy focused less on true economic cooperation and more on political dominance, failing to take account of the real needs of her "partners", which, in any case, she could never have shouldered anyway due to her own bleak economic situation.

The former Soviet space will always be of special interest to Russia. The West itself should want Russia to be involved in the region so as to prevent ethnic conflict from arising, with possible spillover effects and the event of a large-scale war, as well as to control the upsurge of Islamic radicalism. The question is whether Moscow will choose to carry on the old tactics or will rather choose a more benign policy of cooperation, resting on mutual trust, fairness, respect for the independence of the states and for their national interests and collaboration in the economic field.

One of Moscow's primary foreign policy objectives is to avoid at all costs any new division lines in international relations, particularly in Europe. Apart from the issue of NATO expansion, Russia is worried about a growing tendency to

categorize civilizations into different groups that are, by dint of their inherent characteristics or political-historical experiences, somehow destined to clash with one another. Such an example is offered by the West's perception of the Islamic world as being negatively predisposed to "western civilization". This perception is generated by the terrorist activities of some extremist Islamic groups. It is a fact that the United States views Islamic fundamentalism as the most alarming threat that will be faced in the years to come.

Such division lines are disquieting Russia, because the most obvious one is the division of states into Cold War winners and losers, a notion Russia completely abhors. It has already been mentioned that Secretary of State Colin Powell has talked about America possessing the ideology that has defeated the Soviet Union[45]. Such rhetoric corresponds more to the cold-war mentality than it does to the new political environment that has emerged after the fall of the Iron Curtain. Russia rejects the idea of having lost the Cold War to the West. Rather, she feels just as victorious, since the dissolution of the Soviet Union did not result from a lost war with the United States or NATO, but was accomplished from within, and the transition to democratic governance was a peaceful, though not without turbulence, process.

Another goal of Russian diplomacy is the coordination of the international community in a number of fields such as the settlement of conflicts, the advancement of arms reduction dialogue and the transition to a new security system that will take account of the profound changes that have occurred within the last decade. Russia claims for herself a special role in conflict resolution on the basis of her great power status. This is one of the reasons for Russian participation in the Implementation Force (IFOR) in Bosnia and later the KFOR in Kosovo. Russia had a national interest in engaging herself militarily in those regions, albeit under indirect NATO command, which consisted in asserting her presence in Europe and having a say in European security. Russia's role in ending the conflict in Kosovo was crucial. It is widely accepted that when it had become apparent that Russia was not going to stand by Yugoslavia, the Milosevic regime felt constrained to give in to NATO demands[46], as it found itself internationally isolated.

On the issue of arms reduction dialogue, Russia attaches special importance to the revision of the Conventional Armed Forces in Europe Treaty (CFE). After the

first wave of NATO expansion and with further enlargement scheduled to take place in 2002, thousands of pieces of treaty-limited equipment are estimated to have been added to the NATO arsenal[47], thus upsetting the balance struck with the CFE Treaty. The Founding Act signed between NATO and Russia has explicitly provided for an adaptation of the Treaty, "taking into account Europe's changing security environment and the legitimate security interests of all OSCE participating states[48]". Russia also promotes the signing of a treaty among the states that possess nuclear weapons for the total ban of nuclear tests[49].

Russia's favorite foreign policy objective has been the effort to elevate the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) to the status of a coordinating mechanism of all other security organizations operating in the continent. The argument is that OSCE is the only forum with a truly pan-European character, since it gathers all European states, as well as North America and Russia, hence it is the only one that has the legitimacy to shape the new security environment, now that the division into opposing blocs is no more. According to the Russian plan, all other organizations dealing with security issues – NATO, the UN, the European Council, the Western European Union and even the Commonwealth of Independent States should be subordinated to the OSCE. This new security system envisaged by Moscow would serve another purpose dear to Russia: undermine NATO's role as the core security organization in Europe. The Alliance never agreed with this plan. Taking into consideration the new security environment in Europe and the world, NATO has transformed itself, adopting a new security concept in April 1999 to reflect those changes, but it has unequivocally stated that it will remain at the forefront of security developments. As a consequence, Russia has for the time being abandoned the project.

In connection to the above, Russia would wish to see a halt in the NATO expansion process, especially where it concerns the Baltic States and Ukraine. Despite the military collaboration between the two parties in the Bosnian and Kosovo forces and despite the institutionalization of consultation on security issues in the framework of the Founding Act, both parties have yet to completely trust each other. Thus Russia, in her heart of hearts, continues to regard the enlargement of the Alliance as a move compromising her national interests and will keep on resisting it.

## CHAPTER VII:
## THE PARTNERSHIP FOR PEACE

The question of NATO expansion to include Eastern European countries has been on the agenda since the early days following the demise of the Soviet Union[50]. After the Soviet Union was dismantled, its former satellites felt they were encircled on the one hand by the western club of nations, from which they had been excluded, and on the other hand by a humiliated Russia, whose intentions were seen as far from benign. Naturally, they sought to obtain security guarantees from the West, lest Russia should try in the future to bring them forcefully again under its sphere of influence. NATO tried to palliate their concerns by offering consultative structures, such as the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC), whereby Central and East European countries could participate in the Euro-Atlantic dialogue. The latter was created in October 1991[51] with a view to adapting NATO to the new geopolitical situation in Europe. However NATO was not willing to extend any invitation for admission at that time.

In a visit to Poland in August 1993, the then Russian President Boris Yeltsin, unambiguously stated that a possible Polish decision to join NATO wouldn't be in conflict with Russia's interests, thus bringing the issue to the forefront. However, he recanted afterwards in a letter he sent to the leaders of the West in October 1993, saying that Russia would view the eventuality of NATO expansion as a security threat.

It was at this time that the idea for the Partnership for Peace Program (PfP) was conceived. It is argued[52, 53] that the PfP was a plan devised by the then American President Bill Clinton in order to compromise two conflicting interests. On the one hand, the Central and Eastern European countries were exerting pressure for a closer cooperation with NATO, the NACC falling short of their expectations. This demand became more urgent particularly after the October 1993 suppression of the Duma by the Russian President, which was conducted with the support of the army. Moscow seemed to be getting more aggressive and indeed it is argued[54] that the military leaders demanded in exchange for their assistance the adoption of a tougher foreign policy evolving around Russia's vital interests (prevention of NATO expansion being

at the heart of those interests) and abandoning the futile hope of cooperation with the West on an equal basis.

This brings us to the second conflicting interest that Bill Clinton had to accommodate and this was Russia's expressed opposition to NATO expansion eastwards. Russia's departure from the moderate, almost servile, stance it had adopted towards the West during the fist "honeymoon period" that followed the collapse of the Soviet Union had been made clear as early as the beginning of 1992, surprising the West, which had taken Russian acquiescence for granted[55]. Now Russia got tougher and only a couple of months later, the ultra-nationalists and the communists would sweep the vote in the national election, leaving the West, and especially the United States, nonplussed.

The PfP was designed to meet the legitimate demands of the Soviet Union's former satellites, bringing them closer to the Alliance without however offering membership, as such a move would seriously aggravate relations with Russia. The program was adopted at the NATO Council summit meeting on January 10, 1994. It invited countries outside the Alliance, including Russia, to participate. Expansion was postponed, but the documents stipulated that active participation in the program would pave the way for gradual NATO enlargement.

The objectives[56] of the program envisaged, among other things, transparency of national military planning and defense budgets, democratic control of the armed forces, joint training exercises and maneuvers and the exchange of military specialists. The members of the Alliance undertook the political commitment to assist in promoting democratic reform in the East European countries. Each participating country would hold meetings with NATO in the "16+1" format, namely on an individual basis, to study the characteristics of each program separately. Other forms of consultation would be implemented complementarily, such as within the framework of NACC, for the discussion of general problems, and within the "16 + active partners" format, for the exchange of information on military strategy only among the partners who would be willing to take part in this form of consultation on the basis of mutual benefit.

As early as November 1993, Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev expressed his approval of the American proposal as a solution to the dilemma outlined

above that President Clinton was facing. However, whereas the Eastern European countries considered the PfP to be a waiting room leading to the club of NATO nations, Russia regarded it merely as a transitional phase leading to a pan-European security system, in which NATO would only constitute one pillar. It has been Russia's primary objective in security policy since the collapse of the Soviet Union, as stated above, the elaboration and promotion of the idea that the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE, former CSCE), of which Russia as well is a member, should rise to a pan-European security organization that will coordinate all other existing mechanisms such as NATO, the Western European Union, and even the Commonwealth of Independent States. Russia was hoping, in vain, that the Partnership for Peace might be a Western initiative towards that direction.

In light of the above, Russia decided to join the PfP in March 1994. However, a series of events in the United States and Russia postponed Russian participation. In the United States, an anti-Russian feeling emerged, which can be attributed in part to uncovering of the Aldrich Ames case. Washington was shocked to find out that Moscow had a spy for ten years in the heart of the CIA. Cold War reactions were instinctively caused. Russia's shift towards a more assertive foreign policy on the other hand had already started to bring about a negative change in American perception of Russia.

In Russia, the PfP attracted a great deal of negative criticism in the Duma and in the press. The main area of contention evolved around the fallacy that the PfP did away with the idea of expansion. It was argued in Russia, quite correctly so, that the program presumed that participating members would be someday invited to join the Alliance, thus only temporarily delaying enlargement. What's more, with many republics of the former Soviet Union and other Central and Eastern European countries applying for the program, the list of potential NATO members was suddenly becoming too long! Furthermore, Russia resented the fact that the structure of the program favored a participant's individual cooperation with the Alliance (16+1), as this was felt to contribute to the weakening of the pan-European model that Russia was so desperately trying to push forward. Another drawback of the program that worried the Russians a lot was the fact that PfP envisaged the transition of military

hardware of the Central and Eastern European countries to NATO standards, which meant that Russia would lose her traditional arms markets.

All things considered, it was not in Russia's best interests to stay out of PfP, because that would mean inability to influence, however little, the Alliance's development and would amount to total isolation. At this time, an idea for a special relationship between Russia and NATO was conceived. Russia sees herself as a great power and a major player in international politics. Clearly, the procedures stipulated in the PfP program for the small and medium-sized countries of the former Eastern bloc, were deemed unsuitable for a great power like Russia. Russia possesses a special status and it ought to have been offered a package by NATO that reflected this status.

As a result, on May 1994 Russian President announced that his country would not accede to the PfP without a special protocol. The West agreed to negotiate a special protocol regulating the relationship of the two parties, without however amending the framework agreement, which would apply to all members of the program. In the negotiations that ensued, Russia once more tried to sell the idea of the enhancement of the OSCE to the core security organization in Europe and placing NATO and the NACC under its umbrella. The Alliance expressed its outright rejection of these proposals. It viewed with skepticism the Russian suggestion to set up a regular or ad hoc consultation mechanism between the parties and also stated that Russia would not have a right of veto regarding NATO decision-making.

Following the failure to find common ground in the negotiations, Russia did agree to join without any preconditions. It is argued[57] that by that time, Russia had realized that a partnership between equals with NATO was merely unrealistic. The situation called for a more pragmatic review of the relationship. The assessment made by the Russians must have led to the conclusion that the West, through the PfP, was slowly removing from Russia her traditional former satellites, leaving her isolated in the corner of Europe, bordered by not-so-friendly states. A "Realpolitik" consideration must have prevailed, according to which, it was much preferable for Russia to join the Partnership on NATO's terms, becoming actively engaged in its activities and being in a position to participate in consultations, even without a right of veto, than to stay on the outside, alienated and encircled.

In June 1994 Russia finally signed the framework agreement. However, during the negotiations, the Alliance had seemed willing to accord Russia the status she deservingly claimed for herself. The parties expressed their intent on continuing the dialogue in order to draft an individual program of partnership "corresponding to Russia's size, importance and capabilities", and it was also understood that they would furthermore foster cooperation within and outside the PfP, on a number of issues pertaining to European security, military and peacekeeping activities.

After long deliberations, in late 1994 two documents were produced: an individual program of cooperation between Russia and NATO within the framework of the Partnership for Peace and a document on broader cooperation, outside the PfP, establishing an ad hoc consultation mechanism on security policy matters. In May 1995, after a brief period of more tensions due to the resurfacing of the NATO enlargement issue, the Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs Andrei Kozyrev signed the two documents, namely *the NATO – Russia individual Partnership Program* under PfP and the *document on the Areas of pursuance of a broad, enhanced NATO/Russia dialogue and cooperation*. The latter envisaged dialogue and cooperation beyond the PfP program such as sharing of information on issues regarding security related matters, political consultations on issues of common concern (proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, nuclear policy, conflicts in Europe) and cooperation in a number of issues including peacekeeping.

In practice, though very promising, not much was made of Russia's participation in the Partnership for Peace Program. Russia made very little effort to actively engage herself in the program. It has been argued[58] that in effect, Russia's main purpose for signing the program was more a political instrument than a means of achieving integration with NATO structures. In the back of Russian leaders' minds was the recurring issue of expansion. Russia might have been contemplating binding the Alliance with a partnership agreement, so as to threaten to withdraw from it once NATO would proceed with enlargement, thus raising the political cost of an eastward expansion and complicating things for the Alliance. Moreover, Russia didn't want, through a possible enthusiastic support, give to NATO any more credence than was absolutely necessary for the smoothness of the bilateral cooperation. More significant proved to be the Russian participation in the NATO-led Implementation Force in

Bosnia, since it was the first instance in which Russia acknowledged a legitimate role for the Alliance outside its borders.

All in all, Russia was not really interested in the substance of the PfP program itself. She was not seeking to reform her military according to NATO's standards or to address internal security concerns through consultation with the Alliance. As a result Russia left the individual program practically unimplemented and, after it expired in 1998, refused to renew it. By then, a new document had been signed between, the parties, representing a milestone in their relation.

## CHAPTER VII:
## THE FOUNDING ACT

The passing of the military infrastructure of the Central and East European countries to NATO under the PfP program, through its upgrading to the Alliance's standards, represented a threat for Russian military circles. First of all, such an event upset the balance struck between the West and Russia regarding conventional forces in Europe, solidified in the CFE Treaty. Just as importantly, Russia resented the fact that she would lose traditional arms markets, a huge source of income.

The war in Bosnia exacerbated Russia's feeling of isolation. It marked the first instance that the Alliance expressed its willingness to engage itself in an out-of-area operation. Russia felt NATO was assuming a more assertive role, instead of serving exclusively defensive purposes. On the other hand, talk about expansion was becoming more heated than ever. Russia was not gaining anything from the so-called partnership with the West, on the contrary, her positions were continuously undermined and eroded.

In light of these developments, President Yeltsin removed Andrei Kozyrev from his post and appointed Yevgeny Primakov, a more sophisticated diplomat, as Foreign Minister. Primakov's appointment signaled a shift of Russian foreign policy to a more emancipated model. The new Foreign Minister championed the doctrine of "multi-polarity", according to which Russia should try to limit her dependence on the West and try to establish partnerships with other centers of power, such as China, Iran or India[59].

By 1997, NATO had resumed the enlargement rhetoric, provoking the indignation of Russian officials. Russia started to reaffirm its staunch opposition to the Alliance's plans and, as was seen above, effectively terminated participation in the PfP. Primakov raised the stakes by declaring that the expansion of the Alliance would constitute a clear menace to his country's national interests, warning the West that the communists / ultra-nationalists might rise to power in Moscow, with unpredictable consequences for Russia and the world. On the other hand, he left the door open for a dialogue with NATO, in order to minimize the dangers of expansion[60]. Primakov pressed for security guarantees from NATO, especially with respect to non-deployment of nuclear weapons on the territory of the new members and the revision of the CFE Treaty. The Foreign Minister was seeking for a contractual agreement between the parties to best ensure Russian interests.

The negotiations were lengthy and produced the *Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security between the Russian Federation and NATO*. It was signed in Paris in May 1997, only two months before the Alliance, in its summit in Madrid, extended an official invitation to three Central and East European countries, namely Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic, to become full members. The fact that the Founding Act preceded chronologically the invitation to the aforementioned countries to join was intentional. As the July Madrid summit agenda had been decided on in advance, great efforts were undertaken for the conclusion of an agreement with Russia before the date of the summit, so as not to exasperate her any further.

The Founding Act represents another compromise between Russia and the West. It granted Russia the gratification of being offered an arrangement uniquely drafted for her, as a power enjoying a special status in European security. Russia had battled for a document that would institutionalize anew her relations with NATO in a legal context. The demand for a legally binding treaty harks back to the time of Russian acquiescence to German reunification, when the West, in return for Russia's consent, allegedly promised not to expand NATO eastwards, a promise subsequently broken. Moscow's objectives[61] focused primarily on minimizing the military consequences of NATO expansion, such as the deployment of nuclear weapons and / or ground forces on the territory of the new members, as well as the incorporation of

Soviet-built infrastructure into NATO's capabilities. NATO on the other hand, had a twofold objective: While appeasing Russia in view of the upcoming expansion, the Alliance sought to obtain official acquiescence to enlargement, through a more intricate engagement of Russia in the NATO structures.

Great controversy surrounded the legal nature of the Founding Act. As stated above, Russia insisted on a legally binding document (a treaty) and subsequently interpreted it as such. NATO rejected this view, insisting that the commitments outlined therein should be political. So, in the end, the term "Act" was chosen, reflecting the absence of a contractual relationship.

In the preamble, the two parties state that they do not consider each other to be enemies. They share the goal of overcoming the vestiges of earlier confrontation and competition and of strengthening mutual trust and cooperation. In the first part of the Act, the parties agree to some common principles. Particularly important is the principle of "respect for sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity of all states and their inherent right to choose the means to ensure their own security, the inviolability of borders and people's right of self-determination as enshrined in the Helsinki Final Act and other OSCE documents". NATO relies on this principle, mutually agreed to, when it argues in favor of offering membership to such countries as the Baltic states and Ukraine, stressing that it is their inalienable right to decide whether they wish to accede to the Alliance, without being subject to Russian intervention[62]. Russia, in turn, evokes the underlying principle of the Act of not threatening the security of any nation in the Euro-Atlantic area to defend its position that expansion up to Russian borders would amount to serious security concerns for the country.

The American counterargument, very often repeated in public, is that, if Russia truly wishes to be part of an undivided Europe, then the logic of looking at the countries of Central and Eastern Europe as a buffer zone separating Russia from Europe is cold-war inspired and flawed. American President George Bush repeated it, quite diplomatically, in Warsaw, Poland, in June 2001. It is often argued, that Russia must decide where she belongs. If she considers herself a democratic state, sharing the ideals and values of the Euro-Atlantic community, then there is no point in perceiving a threat in enlargement. If, on the contrary, Russia still thinks in cold-war

terms, then her anxiety may well be justified. Many in the West, including former National Security Adviser to the U.S. President Zbigniew Brzezinski[63] have yet to be convinced of Russia's genuine intentions towards the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and of the role she is willing and prepared to assume in Europe and the world.

The Founding Act provides for some important concessions on the part of NATO. Under Chapter III which deals with the Areas for Consultation and Cooperation it is stated that "the member States of NATO (…) have no intention, no plan and no reason to deploy nuclear weapons on the territory of new members (…) and do not foresee any future need to do so". In another paragraph, NATO undertakes "to carry out its collective defense and other missions by ensuring the necessary interoperability, integration, and capability for reinforcement rather than by additional permanent stationing of substantial combat forces". These are explicit NATO commitments that try to accommodate Russian demands. They are unilaterally undertaken so as to avoid any misconception that the Russians may have of being able to enforce such NATO obligations. Still, there is a certain deal of ambiguity concerning those caveats. For example, what is the level of "substantial" combat forces? And what about a temporary rather than "permanent" stationing of such forces on the territory of new member states? It is not absolutely obvious that the two sides will see things eye to eye when it comes to interpreting certain provisions of the Act.

Another area of contention during the negotiations for the Founding Act was Russia's pressing demand to be awarded a right of veto in the decision-making of the Alliance, particularly on the issue of expansion. NATO was adamantly opposed to that. Hence, the final provision reads as follows: Provisions of this Act do not provide Russia or NATO, in any way, with a right of veto over the action of the other nor do they infringe upon or restrict the rights of Russia or NATO to independent decision-making and action. NATO officials keep repeating that it is unacceptable to NATO that any non-member state of the Alliance, including Russia, should have any say in any of the matters of its competence. NATO Secretary General, Lord George Robertson, in an interview with CNN[64], in June 2001, made clear that, despite good relations between NATO and Russia, the latter should not hope to be able to prevent

the Alliance's decision to formally invite, at its Prague summit in 2002, more countries, most probably the Baltic ones as well, to become full members.

The Act provides for the establishment of a mechanism for consultation and cooperation. It is the Russia-NATO Permanent Joint Council. The central objective of this Permanent Joint Council will be to build increasing levels of trust, unity of purpose and habits of consultation and cooperation between Russia and NATO, in order to enhance each other's security and that of all nations in the Euro-Atlantic area and diminish the security of none. In this way, Russia did gain some access to the NATO deliberations process, thus contributing to the formulation of NATO policy, without however, as mentioned above, assuming a decisive role in the Alliance's decision-making. The Permanent Joint Council (PJC) is to meet at various levels, at the level of Foreign Ministers and at the level of Defense Ministers twice annually, and also monthly at the level of ambassadors and permanent representatives. Should it be deemed appropriate, the PJC can also meet at the level of Heads of State and Government.

There is a broad scope of areas of consultation and cooperation. These are of mutual interests to the parties and concentrate mainly on European security issues, conflict prevention, joint operations, peacekeeping operations, exchange of information, nuclear safety, drug trafficking, terrorism and others. The Act reiterates the position that NATO perceives its role rather as complementary to the one of the U.N. and the O.S.C.E. than antagonistic.

The Founding Act must be considered to be a mild success at the diplomatic level. NATO for the first time offers to Russia a special arrangement, in recognition of the country's status, whereas the PJC constitutes a forum where significant issues can be discussed and decisions made. However, there doesn't seem to have been enough political will regarding the implementation of the Act. The PJC has been criticized by the Russians as ineffective[65], serving merely as a "talking shop" without any substantive decision-making powers. Russia's main diplomatic goal, which was the prevention of further expansion, has turned against her, since the signing of the Act gave the green light to NATO to proceed with enlargement. Russia remains embittered, while the Alliance is preparing to incorporate another wave of aspirant members, the Baltic States having very good chances of being successful candidates.

It is clear that, the sincere efforts notwithstanding, mistrust is always there. NATO and Russia have come along way since the end of the Cold War, and the conclusion of the Founding Act is the most significant step toward partnership. One should not expect attitudes to change overnight. After all, all things considered, ten years in history is not such a long time. What is encouraging is that NATO and Russia possess the mechanism to conduct constructive dialogue. Trust is something the two parties need to work hard on building and there is no reason why they shouldn't succeed.

## CONCLUSIONS

The end of the Cold War and, consequently, the absence of the Soviet threat, did not render NATO obsolete. On the contrary, it can be said that the challenges that have emerged in the new security environment call for a continuing presence of a strong military organization to ensure enduring peace and stability. The risks that the world must face today are connected primarily with proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the possibility of a rogue state or even a non-state entity acquiring such weapons and attacking the United States and its allies. International terrorism represents a growing concern to the western world, while drug trafficking in Asia is rampant. In addition, ethnic conflict in Europe, as is witnessed right now in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, is a destabilizing factor with possible spillover effects for other countries.

All these threats are new and NATO has had to take them into consideration when drafting its new strategic Concept in 1999. The Alliance has undergone a transformation, adapting to the new circumstances. It should no longer be seen merely as a military Alliance with a defensive character, but as a political one as well, gathering the nations that share common democratic values and respect for human rights and the rule of law. NATO appears determined, for the first time in its history, to intervene beyond its borders, even militarily, in those cases where atrocities are being committed, as was the case in Yugoslavia, in order to promote peace and stability. The intervention in Kosovo demonstrated to the world that the Alliance was

ready, without a specific mandate from the U.N. Security Council, to carry out a large-scale military confrontation.

In light of NATO's character as a political forum of democratic nations, expansion to incorporate those states that had authoritatively been excluded from it and pushed into the arms of the Soviet Union seems a logical consequence. Russia however worries about that, as well as the new identity and tasks that NATO has awarded itself. Russia opposes expansion mainly because she fears that the West is trying to isolate her in the corner of Europe, deprive her of her privileged relationship with her former satellites and undermine her national interests. This is why she is so fiercely opposing enlargement to include the Baltic States and Ukraine.

Regarding those states, and generally the countries of the former Soviet Union, Russia is realizing that she cannot determine their fate anymore. If Russia wants to have good relations with them, she needs to make clear that she denounces her imperialistic past and seeks a genuine, benign form of cooperation with them, especially in the fields of trade and energy. This way, there will be reciprocal benefits, which will reflect positively on the welfare of the world community as well, including the United States and NATO.

Despite the aforementioned differences, it is almost certain that there won't be any serious tensions in the relations between Russia and NATO. Russia knows that she cannot be too tough with NATO, because militarily and politically, she is rather weak. Russia needs a solid cooperation with the West, not only in matters of common security concerns, but also for the flow of western capital and investment so badly needed in the country. Establishing alliances with other emerging regional powers, such as China or Iran, would upset NATO and jeopardize Russia's chances of consolidating the partnership that has been developed with NATO. Rather, Russia is likely to make overtures to such states in order to counterweight American dominance in the international arena, but will almost definitely not cross the line.

In the last decade NATO and Russia have found channels of communication. It would be impossible to think a couple of decades ago that the Americans and the Russians would sit at the same table and plan common military operations, as was the case with SFOR and KFOR. The Founding Act signed between NATO and Russia provides for a forum of consultation, the Permanent Joint Council, on a number of

security matters, including peacekeeping operations. Although there is criticism about certain ambiguities in the wording of the Act or its nature, it must be stressed that it represents a major breakthrough. Surely, there are differences between the two sides, but these can be overcome step by step with constructive dialogue and mutual understanding.

Russia's place is in Europe. NATO is aware of this fact and has made efforts towards bringing her closer. Russia has tried at times to set her own terms for a rapprochement with the Alliance. Part of these diplomatic tactics is her continuing opposition to expansion. Russia doesn't really oppose expansion as such nor does she see NATO as threat: she is merely trying to raise the cost of a future concession she might have to make in order to gain more advantages. It is obvious that the partnership that has been established between NATO and Russia is very strong and mutually useful. Neither party in inclined to forgo the benefits.

The future of the relationship between NATO and Russia looks very promising. The former adversaries have come a very long way during the past ten years. They went through an initial period of euphoria, lacking at the means to identify the situation they were dealing with and to act accordingly. Now that the smoke has cleared and the obstacles are well known, a mature relationship has flourished. The former adversaries are true partners. They are no longer afraid of each other. They do have their differences, as it is natural that they should. And they are working closely together to overcome them. In the future they may be a few difficult moments to come, like for example NATO's expected invitation in the summit of Prague next year to the second wave of aspirant members to join, which will most likely include one or more Baltic States. Russia is expected to raise objections. One should not however underestimate the work that has been done all these years through discussions and consultations and the familiarity that the two parties now have with each other. Expansion is nowadays only one of the issues that the two parties are discussing. The partnership means a lot more than that and it is stronger than ever.

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