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Eastward enlargement

NATO and the EU

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Introduction

In 1989, the peoples of Central and Eastern Europe dramatically unravelled the Cold War division of Europe through a decisive rejection of the Soviet-controlled regimes which had held power for the previous forty years. This rejection of their post-World War II political fate was paralleled with a deeply-felt yearning to return to the European family of nations. In particular, they sought to obtain the security, prosperity and freedom that the countries of Western Europe had enjoyed whilst they had suffered the humiliation and the political and economic degradations of Soviet imperial rule. In political shorthand, this was translated into the desire to join, or more accurately to re-join, the West.

This desire to join the West has been given its most concrete expression by the demand of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe to acquire full membership of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) and the European Union (EU). With justification, these countries have viewed NATO and the EU as the critical structural foundations of the political stability and the economic prosperity which has so marked the progress of Western Europe after the devastation of World War II. The countries of Central and Eastern Europe have not perceived membership of NATO and the EU as merely of symbolic value. It is seen as an essential prerequisite for the success of their efforts to transform themselves from their communist past.

NATO and the EU have made significant moves towards meeting the aspirations of the newly liberated countries of Central and Eastern Europe. NATO has offered various mechanisms and institutional fora, most notably the Partnership for Peace programme (PFP), for increased cooperation between NATO and the former Warsaw Pact countries. The EU has similarly reached trade agreements with the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and offered greater collaboration for the governments of those countries to participate in EU policy making processes. However, on

the critical question of offering full membership of NATO or the EU for the aspirant countries from the East, there has been considerably more reticence. In the early part of 1997, neither of these bodies, despite their formal commitment to take on new members, have yet explicitly identified individual candidates as candidates for full membership.

However, this reticence is almost certainly going to change at the NATO summit in Madrid in July 1997. At the December 1996 NATO ministerial meeting in Brussels, it was agreed that in Madrid the first new candidates from Central and Eastern Europe, most probably Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary, would be formally invited to initiate negotiations for membership of NATO. Implicitly, it is clearly the intention of the 16 NATO governments that the timing of the incorporation of these members into NATO should coincide with the 50th anniversary of the organisation in 1999.

If the planned schedule is maintained, the Madrid Summit in July 1997 will mark a major milestone in the evolution of a new security architecture in Europe which will seek to consolidate the unification of the continent and prevent the emergence of a "security vacuum" in Central and Eastern Europe. However, it is important to stress that this is only one, even if qualitatively more significant, step in the ongoing evolution and adaptation of the major European institutions. NATO enlargement to incorporate Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic still leaves many other states in Central and Eastern Europe outside of NATO's gates. Their security concerns, and in particular the considerable reservations and outright hostility of Russia to NATO enlargement, will need to be addressed. NATO enlargement is also coinciding with a radical restructuring and internal reform of NATO which seeks to make the organisation more flexible and capable to meet the more diffuse and complex security challenges of the post-Cold War period. In addition, it is inevitable that the first steps towards NATO enlargement will place pressure on the EU to accelerate its process of expansion eastward and to ensure that its internal reforms facilitate the accession of new members.

The process of eastward enlargement is, therefore, going to continue to

present major challenges and difficult decisions. For the next decade, the management of this process of eastward enlargement will exercise the diplomatic acumen and ingenuity of the leaders and officials of the governments of the Atlantic Alliance and the EU.

Objectives of this study

This study will not offer predictions for the future evolution of eastward enlargement. Nor will the study directly address the issue of whether eastward enlargement, particularly by NATO, is a desirable or undesirable strategic objective. Rather, this study analyses the progress made since 1989 in promoting the process of eastward enlargement and seeks to provide the conceptual tools for understanding the dynamics, most notably the national interests of the major states within NATO and EU, which both propel and impede this process. By so doing, it is hoped that the reader will have a better context for understanding the many challenges that face, and will continue to face, the United States and the major European states in the practical implementation of eastward enlargement.

The study has three main sections:

Chapter 1 provides an overview of the post-Cold War security environment in Europe. In particular, it analyses the impact of the Yugoslav conflict on European security and how this conflict highlighted the need for major internal reforms of the principal European security institutions and the implications this has had for progress towards eastward enlargement.

Chapter 2 provides a detailed assessment of the moves made by NATO, the EU, and the Western European Union (WEU) towards eastward enlargement and the difficulties and obstacles they have faced in promoting their objectives to the East. Discussion of the WEU is included in this section since, although formally independent of the EU and NATO, it acts as the "defence arm" of the EU and is closely associated with NATO.

Chapter 3 outlines the positions adopted by the countries deciding upon, and being affected by, the process of eastward enlargement. First, this involves an assessment of the positions taken by the major NATO and EU countries - Germany, the United States, France and the United Kingdom. Second, Russia's stance towards NATO enlargement is assessed. Third, the position of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, which are potential NATO and EU candidate members, is described.

The conclusions of the study will focus on the most immediate challenges facing NATO and the EU in the light of the probable decision in July 1997 to invite the first new members from Central and Eastern Europe to join NATO.

Chapter 1: European security after the Cold War

The euphoria of the events of 1989, when Eastern Europe liberated itself from the Soviet and communist yoke, was replaced by increasing gloom and despondency as the conflict in the former Yugoslavia, a country undeniably in the heart of Europe, imploded into bitter and violent fighting in 1992 and 1993. The impact of the Yugoslav conflict on the issue of eastward enlargement has been twofold. First, it demonstrated the urgency and need for NATO and the EU to continue to play a role in promoting stability within the European continent. But, second, it also showed that neither the institutions nor the policy-making structures of NATO and the EU were adequately configured to deal with the type of post-Cold war security challenges that the conflict in the former Yugoslavia represented.

As a result, both institutions became more acutely aware of the urgency of radical internal reforms to adapt to the new challenges of the post-Cold war security environment. To the extent that the requirement of internal reform has been considered as a prerequisite for any adoption of new members from the East, this has had the effect of delaying the process of eastward enlargement.

This chapter examines the structural changes and developments in the European security environment in the aftermath of the Cold War, which were first most clearly exposed by the war in the former Yugoslavia. The implications this has had on eastward enlargement will then be assessed.

From optimism to uncertainty - the impact of the Yugoslav conflict

In the immediate aftermath of the Velvet Revolution, the member states of NATO and the EU tended politely to ignore the requests for membership

from Central and Eastern European countries. This was principally due to an innate conservatism which cautioned against any precipitate reforms to institutions which had so successfully challenged and ultimately defeated the communist threat. However, there was also a further perceived justification for deflecting these demands. This was based on the belief that, in the post-Cold War period, the process of political and economic transformation in Central and Eastern Europe would primarily be self-generating. In this analysis, institutions were only of secondary importance to the inherent dynamic of political democratisation and economic liberalisation which the end of the ideological struggle of the Cold War had unleashed.

Francis Fukuyama, in his essay on the *End of History*, provided the philosophical defence for this liberal optimism, arguing that the end of the Cold War had definitively confirmed that there could be no alternative to capitalism and democracy as the models for economic and political organisation.¹ Implicit in this approach was the reassuring expectation that the European continent had been radically transformed by the demise of Marxism-Leninism and the collapse of the Soviet Union. One could hope therefore that, at least in the near to medium future, there would be no significant challenges to the stability and security of Central and Eastern Europe. In this putatively more benign environment, it followed that there was no need hastily to expand NATO and the EU, with all the associated sensitive strategic, political and economic reforms that would require. Instead, there could be a relatively long breathing space as the aspirant countries engaged with those internal reforms which would make them acceptable candidates for membership.

However, this belief in an inexorable process of liberal expansion did not last for long. Fukuyama's analysis was always treated more sceptically in Europe than in the United States. Europeans have a keener sense of the turbulent, conflictual and violent nature of the history of their continent than Americans who, from time to time, succumb to the vision of a conflict-free federation of liberal democracies.

Nevertheless, the European nations were just as shocked and unprepared as the United States for the extreme violence of the successive wars

of succession in the former Yugoslavia. At first, the Western European states, emboldened by the increased level of political integration sanctioned by the Maastricht Treaty, saw the Yugoslav conflict as the ideal opportunity for the European Union to exert its newly consolidated independent powers. As Jacques Poos, the Luxembourg Foreign Minister heading the EU troika that tried to stop the war in Yugoslavia, exclaimed in 1991, this was to be "the hour of Europe".² The humiliating exposure of the weakness and the ineffectual vacillations of the EU during the four year civil war in the former Yugoslavia until the Dayton Accords in November 1995 have been described in detail elsewhere.³ But, two general conclusions can be drawn from the Yugoslav conflict which have a direct impact on the issue of NATO and EU enlargement.

First, the developments in Yugoslavia conclusively demonstrated that the end of the Cold War had not resolved all the multiple underlying sources of conflict within Europe. Indeed, as many commentators were quick to note, the East-West division in Europe had itself been a significant stabilising factor which had smothered or frozen many ethnic, religious and political disputes. In the absence of this overarching Cold War structure, these disputes could once again become the source of conflict both between states and, even more insidiously, within states.

Samuel Huntington, in his provocative article on the *Clash of Civilisations*, provided a number of important insights into this new reality by suggesting that differences of culture could become significant sources of conflict in the absence of a bipolar international order.⁴ In this respect, Huntington noted that the Yugoslav wars were being waged on the historic faultlines between the Islamic world, Eastern orthodoxy and Western catholicism. Although Huntington has been rightly criticised for placing too much emphasis on these "cultural" factors for the causes of the conflict - there were multiple other causes for the bloody fragmentation of Yugoslavia - the basic insight is significant. In Central and Eastern Europe, the countries with a predominantly orthodox background, such as Romania, Bulgaria, Ukraine, Belarus and Russia, have not progressed as fast in their political and economic transition as the countries with a historically more

Western orientation, whether Catholic or Protestant, such as the Czech Republic, Poland, Hungary and the Baltic countries.

Although these "cultural" elements should not be viewed in too deterministic a fashion, Huntington's argument, taken in parallel with the events in the former Yugoslavia, is a warning against presupposing that stability can be presumed in Central and Eastern Europe. Not very far from the surface, there are significant disputes over borders, minority rights, and other issues which could, if not adequately addressed, escalate into violent conflict. Also, all the countries in the region are struggling with the considerable social dislocations caused by the painful process of economic reform. As a general pattern, the more eastward one looks the more politically destabilising this process is emerging, with the social, political and economic flux in Ukraine and Russia being the most extreme manifestations. As the Yugoslav conflict demonstrated, if a conflict does escalate, other European states will be hard pressed to contain the ensuing instability, let alone be capable of resolving the internal causes of the violent upheaval.

This leads to the second major consequence of the Yugoslav war. Just as the developing conflict undermined the sense of complacency at Europe's intrinsic stability, so the belief in the internal strength and cohesion of the principal Western European institutions - NATO and the EU - was radically weakened. In this first major post-Cold War security challenge, both these institutions revealed significant deficiencies and a perceptible fragility which, at the very least, suggested the need for substantive internal reforms. The first casualty was the EU's ambitious proclamation at Maastricht in 1991 of a Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). The Yugoslav war demonstrated, in graphic detail, how diverse and *uncommon* were the national interests of the EU member states over a crisis which had a direct and immediate impact on the security of the European Union as a whole. The dispute between Germany, and Britain and France, over the question of recognition of Croatia and Bosnia Herzegovina was symptomatic of the inherent difficulties of forging a unified EU security policy in areas where there were significantly diverging national interests at hand.

The cracks in the unified stance of the EU was to be followed by an even more intense internal dispute within NATO. This was again due to fundamentally diverging national perceptions of the nature of the conflict, and the corresponding policy prescriptions to be pursued. The main rift was primarily between the United States and the European countries (principally Britain and France as the major EU troop contributors to the UN peacekeeping operations), which in turn threatened to undermine the transatlantic linchpin of the Atlantic Alliance. Whilst the United States focused on Serbia as the clear aggressor and recommended anti-Serb peace-enforcement measures, principally through NATO air strikes, the European allies counselled a more neutral stance which would protect the UN-sponsored peacekeeping operation and would promote a diplomatic settlement between the warring parties. Although the Dayton accords in late 1995 succeeded in forging a mutually acceptable compromise, which in turn healed the ruptures and reinvigorated NATO, the crises of the previous three years had exposed the fragilities of the Atlantic Alliance. As in the EU, the Yugoslav conflict demonstrated how difficult it would be to forge a common US-European policy towards post-Cold War security problems where there exist significant divergences of national interest.

Implications of the Yugoslav conflict for eastward enlargement

These two overarching consequences of the Yugoslav conflict have had a direct impact on the quest of the Central and Eastern European countries for membership of NATO and the EU. On the one hand, the escalation of the conflict in the former Yugoslavia and the extreme violence which ensued, has confirmed the need for a greater urgency to expand the structures of NATO and the EU eastward so as to underpin the stability and security of the European continent. The evidence that many regions of the post-Cold War political settlement, most notably in Russia and the European parts of the former Soviet Union, suffer from similar symptoms

to those in the former Yugoslavia has only intensified the sense of urgency. At least in part, it is in response to this strategic challenge that both NATO and the EU have promised that enlargement will definitely take place.

However, the slowness and delays of both NATO and the EU in fulfilling promises to adopt new members reflects the other legacies of the Yugoslav conflict. Almost a decade after the Velvet Revolution, the EU has still not provided a timetable or specified the initial candidates for membership and the earliest probable date that new members will be formally welcomed into NATO is in 1999. The core problem is that, to accept new members of NATO or the EU requires the existing members to take on new responsibilities, most critically the responsibility to provide defence and security guarantees. Yet, as the Yugoslav crisis revealed, adopting new responsibilities without developing the institutional mechanisms for ensuring the smooth implementation of these obligations is the surest way to undermine the cohesion and integrity of the institutions themselves. In this sense, the Yugoslav crisis has engendered a considerable caution amongst the existing member states of NATO and the European Union, since it revealed how divergent their national interests can be and how difficult it is to subsume these differences to promote joint, multilateral action.

Underlying the cautious response to the Central and Eastern European requests is, therefore, a fear that the cost of expanding NATO and the EU eastward might ultimately be the undermining of the cohesion and integrity of the institutions themselves. As a result, the existing members of NATO and the EU have agreed that, as an essential pre-condition for the adoption of new members, substantive and wide-ranging internal reforms must be implemented. Also, given these concerns over institutional integrity, it is argued that, on any realistic scenario, new members can only be taken on gradually and on a case-by-case basis. But, however cogent this logic might be for preserving institutional integrity, it is far less clear that such a conditional and incremental process of enlargement will satisfy the security and defence needs of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe. Particularly for those countries excluded from the first wave of new members, there is a real danger that their sense of insecurity will increase rather than

be diminished by the process of eastward enlargement.

This, at heart, is the dilemma facing the United States and the Western European countries as they contemplate the enlargement of NATO and the EU. The external security situation sanctions the logic of enlargement, thereby overcoming the artificial Cold War East-West division and providing the institutional support for the stabilisation of East and Central Europe. However, the internal logic of institutional consolidation counsels a policy of caution and, at best, gradual incremental change. Without such a cautious and gradual approach, the danger is that the necessary internal reforms will not be implemented which can ensure that, in the process of taking on new responsibilities towards East and Central Europe, the cohesion and integrity of NATO and the EU are not fatally undermined.

Adapting to the end of the Cold War - NATO and the EU

In the shifting and radically transformed strategic environment of the post-Cold War era, the need to identify the core underlying purpose and value of the Atlantic Alliance and the European project has been widely discussed. One issue on which there is a widespread consensus is that the essential purpose and rationale for the existence of NATO and the EU was something more than the defence of Western values against the threat of Soviet expansionism, however important and nearly all-consuming that mission was. More fundamentally, these institutions were rooted in an overarching strategy of European and transatlantic institutional integration which sought to provide a critical dynamic to supplant the national divergences which had come so close to destroying European civilisation from 1914 to 1945. At a fundamental level, NATO and the EU were created to ensure that there should be no recurrence of a major European war. The success of these institutional arrangements in achieving this goal during the Cold War explains why such institutions are perceived to be important to European security thinking. At the bedrock of the transatlantic and European integrated structures, there lies a firm conviction that stabilising

institutions are essential for preserving and sustaining European stability.

It was for this reason that the immediate response to the end of the Cold War, both in Washington and the European capitals, was that NATO and the EU continued to have a vital role to play in the post-Cold War era. It was commonly felt that these institutions had a purpose and *raison d'être* which transcended the Cold War and which was based upon a common and shared community of values. Despite the withdrawal of Russia from Eastern Europe, there was a general consensus that the engagement of the United States, through the Atlantic Alliance, remained critical to European security. Within the European Union, there was also a widespread conviction that the process of integration, of "deepening the union", remained a vital European interest, not least for ensuring that a reunified Germany stayed firmly embedded within the structures and institutions of the European Union. And, the inevitable logic of NATO's and the EU's new post-Cold War purpose was that the stabilising benefits of integration should not indefinitely be restricted to the countries of Western Europe but gradually draw in those countries which had been liberated from Soviet imperial control.

The end of the Cold War, therefore, did not dampen, but rather considerably increased, the enthusiasm for the development and extension of the integrative processes of NATO and the EU. However, there was a far slower realisation of how the end of the Cold War had also materially affected the dynamic of integration. There was only a gradual awareness that the absence of a clear external enemy did present a significant obstacle to the drive for military and political integration and had introduced, in many important areas, powerful new disintegrative processes.

This was most clearly the case with NATO where the constant Soviet threat provided the impetus for military integration for collective defence purposes. But, albeit in a more subtle manner, the Cold War also provided a strategic framework in which the construction of a European identity made sense to the peoples and nations of Western Europe. The threat of a Soviet-imposed Eastern European identity acted as a significant catalyst for the construction of a contrasting Western European identity, which in turn

legitimated the sublimating of national sovereignties required for the construction of such an identity. In the aftermath of the Cold War, as the fraught process of the ratification of the Maastricht Treaty revealed, the peoples of the EU states have shown themselves to be far more sceptical of the benefits of integration and more wary that these benefits do not outweigh the consequent loss of national sovereign powers.

This process of disintegration is nowhere more clearly pronounced than in the field of security and defence policy. As the clear and unambiguous Soviet threat has dissolved, the attempt to define new potential threats, or "risks" as NATO defines them, has been an acute source of division.⁵ It has been increasingly the case that the priority given to these potential threats has been dependent on the perceived national interests of the members states of the EU and NATO. Within the EU a clear division has emerged between those states which accord priority to the perceived threats from the South and those which focus principally on the East. The southern Mediterranean countries, such as Spain, Italy and France have shown greatest concern over the threat of Islamic extremism and instability originating from North Africa and the Arab world. In contrast, Germany and the Scandinavian countries have directed most of their energies to the quest of stabilising Central and Eastern Europe. Greece's Balkan orientation and Britain's semi-detachment on the periphery of the European continent have only added to the fragmentation of a common sense of purpose in EU foreign and security policy.

NATO has also suffered from a similar process of internal disorientation. The most significant aspect of this has been the continuing uncertainty over the United States' strategic engagement in Europe. The Clinton administration has been torn over whether to re-direct attention to domestic issues, whether to focus US foreign policy towards the Asia-Pacific region, and the extent to which US engagement in Europe is still critical in the post-Cold War era.⁶ For their part, the European allies have been divided over how far they should remain dependent on the United States within the NATO framework and the degree to which they should be developing a European capability based on the security and defence pillar of the Euro-

pean Union and the Western European Union. Superimposed on these problems has been the evidence, most clearly visible during the Yugoslav conflict, of the diverging and the fluid nature of national interests in defining security and defence policies. The Dayton Accords in November 1995 ensured that these divergences did not escalate out of control and, to an extent, a new transatlantic consensus was attained, but it would be premature to assume that all the varying conflicts of interest have been definitively resolved.

Thus, the larger picture that emerges from the end of the Cold War is that, whilst the value of NATO and EU integration and expansion have retained their saliency, the reality is of increasing divergencies of perceived national interest and a far greater difficulty at arriving at common policies which can be the basis for joint multilateral action. Attempts to resolve this dilemma have only tended to add to the confusion and to undermine further the lack of common purpose. Although all member states agree that institutional reform of the EU and NATO are critical if NATO and the EU are to be revitalised, the nature and content of these reforms are bitterly contested. This is most graphically seen in the EU where the debate since the Maastricht Treaty has focused almost entirely on how to further the project of European integration with, at the same time, managing increasing divergencies of national interest. At one extreme, Great Britain radically questions the logic of further integration when national divergences are inevitably becoming more fluid. At the other extreme, Germany promotes the need for further integration precisely to overcome the re-nationalisation of European interests and values. The degree to which this internal institutional debate has become almost the sole obsession of the EU is reflected in the 1996-97 inter-governmental conference (IGC) directing the greater part of its energies to the issue of institutional reform.

NATO has not suffered so publicly from such displays of internal wrangling, but the quest for institutional reform has been almost as intense and divisive. Like the EU, NATO has sought to preserve and extend the benefits of integration whilst accommodating the changed strategic environment and the greater fluidity of national interests. In particular, it has tried to institutionalise the reality of ad hoc alliances which have been the basis of the actions taken in

the Gulf War and the Yugoslav conflict. This has been developed through the concept of Combined Joint Task Forces (CJTF) which seeks to provide the assets of the NATO integrated structure but which can be utilised by varying coalitions of NATO members, including non-NATO members within the Partnership for Peace programme.⁷

For a period, discussions over the CJTF concept were blocked by a dispute between France, which sought to ensure that NATO assets could be used by a European coalition under WEU command and control, and the United States which was determined to maintain a veto over the use of such assets if the Europeans were to decide upon a collective action not involving US troops. After much diplomatic wrangling, a compromise was reached. However, new Franco-American disagreements re-appeared in late 1996 over NATO plans to reform and slim down its command structure with France demanding that a European should have control of Command South which the United States has refused to countenance. However, it is expected that a compromise on this issue will be reached prior to the July 1997 NATO Summit, so that an agreed and comprehensive reform package can be announced at the meeting.

Both the EU and NATO, therefore, have been engaged in a divisive and introspective debate over the requirements of institutional reform for the post-Cold War period. More than anything else, this has been the reason why the critical decisions over NATO and EU enlargement to Central and Eastern Europe have tended to be subordinated to these internal developments. The European Union has specifically stated that EU enlargement eastward cannot be addressed until the 1996-97 inter-governmental conference has introduced the promised institutional reforms. NATO has certainly been more proactive over the enlargement question but the resolution of its internal reforms has also tended to take priority over making firm decisions to accept new members from the East. At the July 1997 NATO Summit, it is only because it is intended that the plans for internal reforms of NATO will be confirmed that this will open the path for the accession of new members from Central and Eastern Europe.

Enlargement to East and Central Europe - the strategic context

The Madrid NATO Summit highlights that decisions over enlargement cannot be postponed indefinitely. At stake is the simple issue of credibility. At some point, the failure to address, in a concrete manner, the promises made to the countries of East and Central Europe is bound to affect the credibility of NATO and the EU and their constituent member states. Leaders such as President Clinton and Chancellor Helmut Kohl have expended considerable political capital in reassuring the Central and Eastern European countries that the question of enlargement is not one of "whether but when and how".⁸ Failure to live up to these promises would result in a considerable loss of personal prestige as well as provoking an uproar in the capitals of East and Central Europe. It should also be remembered that, particularly in the United States and Germany, there are powerful domestic constituencies which would react negatively to continued postponement of the enlargement issue.

A second significant factor is that a NATO or an EU which failed to take on new members from East and Central Europe would have increasing difficulty in justifying their historic purpose and mission. Even though enlargement will inevitably pose a difficult set of choices with some undoubted costs, to rigidly maintain the status quo could be even more costly. To perpetuate the division of Europe on the old Cold War East-West divide would symbolise a loss of political nerve and would inevitably appear as a failure adequately to respond to the post-Cold War unification of Europe. It would leave NATO and the EU appearing as cosy introspective clubs, more concerned about protecting their own high levels of security and prosperity rather than extending these benefits to those parts of Europe struggling to rid themselves of their communist legacy. Such a development would radically undermine the pretensions of NATO and the EU to represent a "community of shared values", which is open to all European states upholding the principles of democracy, a market economy, and the rule of law.

Barring a major change in plan, the NATO Summit in Madrid in July 1997 will provide the first breakthrough in specifying the potential new members of NATO and setting out a clear timetable for their accession. In itself, this will be a major milestone and will require considerable political and diplomatic efforts and imagination to ensure that the Summit will be successfully managed. In one sense, the Summit will be the culmination of almost a decade of deliberation and planning. But, the decisions taken at the Summit will also be only the start of a new and even more complex phase as NATO enlargement ceases to be a purely theoretical issue and is actually implemented and as the pressure on the EU to follow NATO's example becomes stronger. For the next 10-20 years, if not for longer, the issue of NATO and EU enlargement will be a key strategic question in European and transatlantic politics. Inevitably, difficult choices will be confronted and decisions will have to be made.

The importance of the issue of eastward enlargement cannot be over-estimated. Its impact on Europe's future is self-evident. The nature and form of the response to the Central and Eastern Europe's requests for membership of NATO and the EU will be a critical determinant of the future shape of Europe - the future stability, the prosperity, and, on a deeper level, the very meaning of what it is to be a European - will be inextricably bound up with this issue.

However, these decisions will also have a significance and impact transcending the specific European context. The United States has closer cultural affinities, more substantial economic interests, and deeper institutional linkages with Europe than with any other region of the world. How the United States responds to the progress towards NATO enlargement will inevitably have an impact on its policies towards these other regions. The NATO question will also be a significant factor in the United States internal domestic debate about its future foreign policy and geo-political role in the post-Cold War era.

Finally, it should not be forgotten that Russia's destiny is always to be a European power, even though it can be doubted whether Russia will ever be fully European. As Robert Blackwill has eloquently emphasised;

There is no security problem on the [European] Continent that is not made more manageable through Russian co-operation, and none that does not become more intractable if Moscow defines its interests in ways that oppose Western objectives.

The Russian dimension will be a critical factor in the deliberations over NATO and EU enlargement, particularly the former against which Moscow has consistently placed itself in strong opposition. The manner in which Russian opposition is managed, the degree to which Russia feels itself excluded or included in the emerging European political, economic and security architecture, will have a significant impact on the future stability of Europe and the degree to which Russia will play a constructive or obstructive role in European affairs. All of this will also have an important affect both on Russia's internal evolution, and on Russia's projection of its geo-political power to other non-European regions of the world.

Chapter 2: The challenge of eastward expansion - institutional responses

Chapter 1 set out the general problems and issues facing policy makers in the post-Cold War security environment. This chapter assesses the responses of the principal European institutions to this changed environment, focusing on the moves made towards eastward enlargement. NATO and the EU are the principal institutions which are analysed but there is also an assessment of the Western European Union which has had its own independent pretensions for eastward enlargement.

The issue of NATO enlargement will be first addressed, providing a detailed account of NATO's adaptation to the end of the Cold War since 1989 and the various moves that the organisation has made towards extending its activities to the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and to the countries of the former Soviet Union. NATO's future plans for enlargement of NATO to take on new members from Central and Eastern Europe will also be assessed.

Second, the issue of EU enlargement to the countries of East and Central Europe will be analysed. This will include an account of the various economic and political issues which will need to be resolved in order for the EU to be in a position to adopt new members into the EU from Central and Eastern Europe.

Finally, there will be an assessment of the prospects for full membership of the WEU to be offered to the countries of Central and Eastern Europe. Although the WEU remains institutionally independent of the EU, it was designated in the Maastricht Treaty as the "defence component of the EU". The WEU is also considered to be the European defence pillar of NATO and some have argued that the WEU enlargement could potentially be an alternative to NATO enlargement.

NATO enlargement

The North Atlantic Treaty was signed in April 1949 with membership drawn from both sides of the North Atlantic. The signing of the Treaty reflected the need of the Western European countries to gain US assistance to secure themselves from the perceived threat of Soviet expansionism, which had become particularly acute after the 1948 communist takeover in Czechoslovakia.

There are three aspects of the formation of the Atlantic Alliance which have a continuing relevance to the post-Cold War era. The first is that, though the fears of a resurgent Germany were a significant factor in the formation of the alliance, the perceived threat from the Soviet Union was the principal catalyst. From its very beginnings, NATO was primarily an anti-Soviet alliance and its organisational structures, doctrines and planning were predicated on the constant external threat posed by the Soviet Union's military power in Eastern Europe. The withdrawal of Soviet forces from Eastern Europe and the subsequent disintegration of the Soviet Union in 1991 posed, therefore, a profound challenge to the *raison d'être* of NATO for which there were no clear historical analogies or parallels. This simple fact should not be forgotten in the post-Cold War enthusiasm to emphasise NATO's non-military political underpinnings.

The second significant aspect of this early period was that the United States was initially reluctant to be drawn into a treaty-based European security arrangement. This reflected the deeply-embedded historical reservation against being drawn into "entangling alliances", particularly with the notoriously fickle and unreliable European states. As a result, the US first demanded that the Europeans should themselves provide evidence that they had made significant progress towards a collective defence arrangement. The 1948 Brussels Treaty between the UK, France, Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg was the main European response to this demand. The critical article 4 of this Treaty undertook that, if any of the signatories became the object of an armed attack, they would "afford the party so attacked all the military and other aid and assistance in their power".

In response to these European efforts, and the growing evidence during 1948 of Soviet hegemonic ambitions, the US agreed to be a signatory of the North Atlantic Treaty. But, it is significant that, due to the continuing US reservations, the collective defence provision in the Washington Treaty was notably weaker than that provided in the Brussels Treaty. The famous article 5 of the Washington Treaty states that:

an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all and [...] if such an armed attack occurs, each of them [...] will assist the Party and Parties so attacked by taking forthwith, individually and in concert with the other Parties, such action it deems necessary, including the use of armed force, to restore and maintain the security of the North Atlantic area.

A close reading of the article is significant because it actually provides for a far more conditional and less automatic response than has generally been assumed by NATO member states. In addition, the question of the interpretation of article 5 will become a critical issue in the enlargement debate, as NATO will need to clarify what security guarantees it will be providing to any new members from East and Central Europe. Some more conspiratorially-inclined commentators from Europe argue that the US is pushing for enlargement so as ultimately to weaken its collective defence responsibilities towards all NATO member states. A more literal interpretation of article 5 would accommodate such a weakening of US commitment, with a significant impact on the US nuclear guarantee in particular.

The third aspect which can be drawn from this early period is something already mentioned in the previous section. This is the fact that NATO was not conceived as purely a military alliance. The primacy of a political alliance based on a shared set of values, a "community of shared values" was emphasised in the preamble to the Treaty which states that the Parties are determined to "safeguard the freedom, common heritage and civilisation of their peoples, founded on the principles of democracy, individual

liberty and the rule of law". In fact, the military aspects of the Alliance, in particular the integrated military structure, only evolved in response to the outbreak of the Korean War in June 1950. In the post-Cold War era, the political dimension to the Alliance provides probably the most fundamental legitimisation for NATO's continued existence.

Sense of *déjà vu*: the Cold War analogies

It is also important to note that most of the post-Cold War dilemmas and problems facing NATO are not completely new and have some clear analogies and links with developments during the Cold War. First, the accession of new members into NATO is not new: Greece and Turkey joined in 1952, the Federal Republic of Germany in 1955 and Spain acceded in 1982. All these accessions (as well as Italy's initial inclusion in the Alliance) involved, with varying degrees of intensity, similar anxieties, concerns and fears which have characterised the enlargement debate towards East and Central Europe. Also, although geo-political factors were central in the decision to accept these earlier members, a secondary but significant set of considerations was that such accessions would, in Strobe Talbot's words, "promote democracy within NATO states and good relations among them".⁹

Second, the existence of major transatlantic disputes between the United States and her European NATO partners, which became so prominent during the Yugoslav conflict, has clear historical parallels. US-European differences were as frequent and often as acrimonious during the Cold War. The Suez crisis, the issue of US nuclear control and Western European influence on US nuclear policy in Europe, the Urengoy pipeline dispute in 1982, differences over the policy of *détente* - all of these issues, and many more, were constant sources of friction between the United States and her European NATO allies.

Third, the issue of out-of-area actions by NATO is not a radical new departure in NATO discussions. There is nothing in the Charter to prohibit such actions, since the geographical delimitations set out in article 6 only refer to the collective defence obligations set out in article 5. There is nothing to

stop NATO member states engaging in collective actions outside these geographical limitations. During the 1980s, there was also discussion about the possibility of NATO becoming involved in operations in support of Persian Gulf security in response to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the Iranian revolution. Such discussions did not progress far because there were significant divergencies between NATO member states over policy towards the Persian Gulf region; and because there were fears that such actions might be seen as provocative by the Soviet Union and undermine NATO's avowedly defensive posture. Such concerns have clear analogies with the discussions between NATO member states over the issue of NATO engagement in the former Yugoslavia or in Central and Eastern Europe.

Finally, the attempt by NATO to forge concrete links with the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and with the Soviet Union is not purely a post-Cold War phenomenon. As early as 1963, the North Atlantic Council decided to seek measures which would achieve "a genuine and fundamental improvement in East-West relations". This became translated into what was called the "Harmel exercise", named after the Belgian Foreign Minister who proposed the report of 1967, which set out a secondary function of NATO, beyond its first function of collective defence, to establish a more stable relationship with the Soviet Union and the countries of the Warsaw Pact. NATO, thereby, became a central forum for the implementation of the policy of *détente*, providing its good offices to promote negotiations over such issues as the German question, arms control and balanced force reductions in Europe. NATO also sanctioned, and was closely involved with, the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) and over the Vienna Mutual and Balanced Force Reduction negotiations (MBFR). Thus, for a long period prior to the end of the Cold war, NATO was engaged in a process of dialogue and co-operation with its Eastern counterparts.

1990 and the unification of Germany

The revolutions in Central Europe in November-December 1989 did initiate a strategic transformation in Europe which had no comparable analogy with any of the developments of the previous forty years. As such, they demanded a response from NATO which recognised the extraordinary nature of these events. This was first provided at the London Summit in July 1990 where the London Declaration invited the six Warsaw Pact countries (Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, Romania and the Soviet Union) to visit Brussels to address the North Atlantic Council. It also invited these governments to establish regular diplomatic liaison with NATO and to share thinking and deliberations and to intensify military contacts. Later that year, new liaison ambassadors from the Warsaw Pact participated in briefings at NATO headquarters.

The next major development was the transformation of East Germany from a key Warsaw Pact member in November 1989 to a full member of NATO in October 1990, representing the first major expansion of NATO eastward. The negotiations over the security framework for a united Germany underwent a number of twists and turns and have left a controversial legacy. Russia, in particular, has argued that the NATO commitment, first articulated in 1993, to take on new members from Central and Eastern Europe goes against the spirit, if not the letter, of the agreement for East Germany to be incorporated into NATO.

At the start of the negotiations, the Soviet government was strongly opposed to the Germany-in-NATO framework and this was reiterated by President Gorbachev in his meeting with President Bush in June 1990. However, in Gorbachev's meeting with Chancellor Kohl in July 1990, Gorbachev made the critical concession that, in the wake of Germany's unification, its eastern part might be unilaterally pulled out of the Warsaw Pact and integrated into NATO, so long as no nuclear weapons nor any foreign troops would be permitted to be deployed there. The reason for Gorbachev making this concession was principally due to the failure of the East German government to stabilise its domestic situation as a reformist

communist state in November 1989. As de facto unification had taken place on 1 July 1990 with the economic and monetary union of the two German states, Gorbachev realised his influence over developments had dramatically weakened. As well as agreeing to the NATO concession, Gorbachev also agreed that all-German elections could take place irrespective of the Two-plus-Four agreement which was signed on 12 September 1990.

However, it is widely believed in Moscow that the 1990 negotiations were predicated on the understanding that there would be no further NATO expansion. Sergei Karaganov, a leading Russian security figure, articulates this grievance eloquently:

In 1990 we were told quite clearly by the West that the unification of Germany would not lead to NATO expansion. We did not demand written guarantees because in the euphoric atmosphere of the time it would have seemed indecent - like two girlfriends giving written promises not to seduce each other's husbands.¹⁰

Although it is always difficult to adjudicate over disputes where there is no written record, a number of points can still be made. First, the Western participants deny that any such informal guarantees were made. Second, at the time of the negotiations the Warsaw Pact still existed and was expected to continue to exist, not least by the Soviet government. Third, at that time NATO member states were in no way contemplating any further expansion of NATO and nor, whilst the Warsaw Pact was still in existence, were any of the states of Central and Eastern Europe making requests for NATO expansion. The evidence indicates, therefore, that the Russian grievance is probably more an exercise in retrospective wishful thinking than an accurate reflection of the substance of the negotiations at the time.

1991 and the North Atlantic Co-operation Council

However, the fast pace of developments during 1991, not least the Soviet coup in August and the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact earlier in the year, forced the issue of NATO expansion onto the agenda. In reaction to the Soviet coup, there emerged the first direct calls by the Central and Eastern Europeans for full membership of NATO, expressed most notably by President Vaclav Havel of Czechoslovakia.¹¹ NATO, for its part, struggled to find a response which would adequately express the reality of a definitive end to the Cold War, as well as protect the agreements secured on the Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) and the Strategic Arms Reductions Talks agreements (START) signed earlier in the year.

At the Summit in Rome in November 1991 NATO responded to these challenges by articulating a New Strategic Concept which recognised that the threats of the past had been superseded and that the remaining "security challenges and risks" were "multi-faceted and multi-directional". The three risks which were identified were those of a resurgent Russia, Islamic fundamentalism from the South, and instability in Central and Eastern Europe. NATO's doctrine was also re-defined to include the three pillars of "defence, dialogue and co-operation", adding a new third pillar to the Harmel doctrine of "defence and dialogue". To put flesh on these doctrinal reforms and to consolidate the idea of "security for a Europe whole and free", there was announced the formation of the North Atlantic Co-operation Council (NACC) to whose inaugural session in December 1991 all members of the former Warsaw Pact Treaty were invited. With the disintegration of the Soviet Union, all the newly independent states were also invited to join the Council, including the states of Central Asia, which broadened the membership to 35 (the membership in 1997 stands at 38).

The inaugural meeting was little more than a formal get-together but at the March 1992 meeting a "Work Plan for Dialogue, Partnership and Co-operation" was developed which covered a range of topics: political and security related matters, defence planning and military matters, defence conversion, economic issues, science, challenges of modern society,

dissemination of information, policy planning consultations, and air-traffic management. NACC, whose most high-level gathering is an annual Ministerial meeting, has a defence counterpart in the Group on Defence Matters, and has also spawned parallel committees at the Defence Planning Committee and Military Committee levels. Much of NACC's work has focused on the sphere of civil-military relations, with various initiatives on the role of the military in a democratic society. In March 1993, NACC also initiated a programme of co-operation in the area of peacekeeping, which suggested that NACC members might join with NATO forces in peacekeeping operations. Attached to NACC there was also instituted a High Level Working Group that has been dealing with the implementation of CFE and its successor CFE-IA which sets national limits on manpower limits.

Yet, however active and generative of initiatives the NACC Forum could be presented, there was little that could be done to disguise its deficiencies as seen from the perspective of the Central and Eastern European countries seeking membership. These states became increasingly disillusioned with NACC for a number of reasons. First, the NACC relationship did not offer any security guarantees and did not specify any timetable, or establish any criteria, for accession. Given that this was their key objective, the "prize" they sought from NATO, this was bound to be a source of considerable disappointment. Second, the absence of any substantial financial contributions towards the initiatives developed by NACC meant that the emphasis was far more on "dialogue" than the much trumpeted "partnership" which was supposedly being offered. Third, NACC's inclusion of all the states of the former Soviet Union, most controversially the non-European states of Central Asia, resulted in a large, unwieldy body not very different from the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe. For the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, this degraded NACC into a glorified talking shop which had little substantive impact or decision making capabilities. In addition, the inclusiveness of NACC was perceived by the Central and Eastern European countries as morally failing to differentiate between the historical victims and the historical aggressors of the post-World War II settlement.

1993 and the enlargement issue

However, the difficulty faced by the NATO member states was that these criticisms did reflect the underlying logic behind the creation of NACC. First, the absence of any provision for extending NATO security guarantees reflected the strong disposition against accepting new members from Central and Eastern Europe into the alliance. This was partly due to a fear that such an enlargement would weaken and undermine the alliance, since the aspirant members were felt to be incapable of meeting the high standards and responsibilities demanded of membership and also, in many instances, had significant unresolved disputes with their neighbours. There was also domestic political considerations over the wisdom of extending security guarantees, given that this would depend on domestic public support which had been promised the benefits of the "peace dividend". In this regard, it is important to remember that any new member of NATO has to be approved by the executives and the parliaments of all of the 16 allies.

Second, the policy of equal treatment of all the states of Central and Eastern Europe and of the former Soviet Union was established deliberately. This was driven by the determination not to alienate Russia in its difficult period of transition towards democracy and a market economy. In simple terms, there was the fear that the Russian generals would not accept such a re-orientation of NATO strategy and that, if this was promoted, they would seek to undermine Yeltsin's liberalising and pro-Western policies. On a more abstract level, the policy of equal treatment was also predicated on the desire not to draw new lines and divisions in Europe. To select certain countries for membership would inevitably mean the exclusion of others, which would only increase rather than lessen their sense of insecurity. This problem was only accentuated by the fact that the most likely first candidates, the so-called Visegrad countries of Central Europe - Poland, Hungary and the Czech and Slovak Republics - enjoyed relatively greater security and stability than the countries to their East, such as Ukraine, Belarus, the Baltic countries, Bulgaria and Romania. To increase

the Visegrad countries' security through NATO membership would only establish a zone of far greater insecurity to their East.

Nevertheless, although these arguments continued to have salience, there emerged during 1993 a growing mood in certain Western capitals that the NACC solution was not satisfactory and that the issue of enlargement had to be confronted. The first hint of this came in Spring 1993 IISS annual lecture, when the German Defence Minister, Volker Rühle, argued that certain countries of Central Europe, namely the Visegrad four of Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic and Slovakia, should be selected for early membership of NATO prior to EU membership, at the latest by the year 2000.¹² The reason for this shift of policy was primarily due to the increasing difficulty the German government had in refusing to support the Central Europeans' requests for membership. In particular, the German government found it difficult to reject the Central Europeans' argument that, if NATO was not just a security but also a political alliance, why should their requests for membership not be acceded to. The logic of this line of argument was, in many ways, irrefutable. If NATO was a community of shared values, and if the ex-communist countries now accepted, and were making substantive moves towards realising these shared values, what argument could there be against their eventual inclusion in the alliance?

With the German government setting the ball rolling, the momentum for enlargement then shifted to the other side of the Atlantic. In the United States, the question of NATO enlargement was driven, to a large degree, by a sense of increasing frustration at the seeming impotence and lack of purpose of NATO in the post-Cold War era. The indecisiveness of NATO's role in the former Yugoslavia fuelled this frustration, which then became deflected into criticisms of NATO's perceived failure to embrace the new democracies of Central and Eastern Europe. In August 1993, Senator Lugar expressed this sense of exasperation when he stated that: "The common denominator of all the new security problems in Europe is that they lie beyond NATO's current borders [...] NATO must either develop the strategy and structure to go out of area or it will go out of business".¹³

The Clinton administration, however, remained cautious over NATO enlargement. In particular, there was strong opposition from within the Pentagon, which sought to protect NATO's military capabilities, and from important constituencies in the State Department, who were concerned not to provoke Russia. However, Clinton was himself attracted to a policy of enlargement as a vehicle for differentiating his administration's policy from his predecessor's. In addition, domestic politics impinged as the mid-term elections in late 1993 drew closer and the almost 23 million voters with Central European ancestry became a significant electoral force. In September and October as the elections loomed, a number of statements made by the administration suggested that enlargement was now firmly on the agenda.

The momentum towards NATO enlargement was also promoted by Yeltsin's visit to Warsaw in September 1993 and the final communiqué which stated that Polish membership of NATO would not be contrary to Russian interests.¹⁴ Although the Warsaw statement was in reality far more ambiguous than the literal interpretation suggested, and gained an immediate adverse reaction by important constituencies in Moscow, most notably the military, it considerably strengthened the pro-enlargement school in Washington. However, the December 1993 elections in Russia, with the success of the ultra-nationalist Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, swung the pendulum back to the more cautious approach. But, with the NATO Summit in January approaching, this more cautious attitude confronted the increased urgency and stridency of the Central and Eastern Europeans' requests for membership, which was a natural reaction to Zhirinovskiy's openly neo-imperialist calls for Russian expansionism and even the partition of Poland.

1994 and Partnership for Peace

Throughout 1993, a number of options were considered for how to respond to the enlargement issue. One suggestion was an associate membership could be offered, providing the consultative provisions of article 4

but not the security guarantees of article 5. This was rejected as an inadequate response to the Central and Eastern Europeans' requests and as insufficient to gain their approval and support. Another proposal was to link NATO enlargement with EU enlargement. The United States was unhappy with this as it constrained their freedom of action to specifically European developments. It was also felt to be artificially linking two different processes with their diverging pre-conditions and trajectories for membership.

The eventual compromise that was reached at the Brussels Summit in January 1994 consisted of three elements as set out by President Clinton. First, he called upon the NATO allies to commit themselves to the principle of NATO expansion. Second, he called for a new and more intensive form of relations with Russia. And, third, he proposed the Partnership for Peace as NATO's new military co-operation programme with non-NATO states which would, in the words of the Summit Declaration, "forge new security relationships between the North Atlantic Alliance and its Partners for Peace".

It became clear during the Summit that the central and most developed of these elements was the PFP programme. The details of NATO enlargement (and the proposed new relationship with Russia) were left vague and ambiguous. The immediate response of the Central and Eastern Europeans was, as a result, broadly unenthusiastic, viewing PFP as yet another device to avoid the enlargement issue. A number of Western commentators were similarly disappointed. Henry Kissinger bemoaned the fact that NATO had missed an historic opportunity to expand whilst Russia was still weak.

There was some justification for this initial scepticism over PFP. Partnership did not offer the much prized article 5 security guarantees, instead only offering the right to consult NATO allies in the determination of a threat to security as set out in article 4. Also, PFP did not breach the principle of inclusiveness established by NACC, even extending the principle by inviting all CSCE as well as NACC members to become Partners. By 1996, this had resulted in there being 27 Partners. In addition, the five objectives of PFP did not establish anything which NACC had not itself

sought to achieve. These five objectives were: To facilitate transparency in national defence planning and budgeting processes; to ensure democratic control of defence forces; to maintain the capability and readiness to contribute to operations under the authority of the UN and/or CSCE; to develop co-operative military relations with NATO, for the purpose of joint planning, training and exercises in order to strengthen their ability to undertake missions in the fields of peacekeeping, search and rescue, humanitarian operations and others as may be subsequently agreed; and to develop over the longer term, forces that are better able to operate with those of the members of the North Atlantic Alliance.

Although these provisions did not offer any radically new departures, PFP did nevertheless include some significant developments in comparison with NACC. First, despite broadening the potential membership, PFP did indirectly breach the principle of equality of treatment through the concept of Individual Partnership Programmes (IPP). IPPs allow each country to agree on a programme of activities with NATO and to develop its Partnership at its own pace and within its preferred scope. This permits a considerable degree of self-differentiation between Partners, with those countries seeking NATO membership having the opportunity to develop more intense relations with NATO, whilst allowing those countries seeking a weaker institutional link the freedom to establish more limited areas of co-operation. By 1996, 17 IPPs had been established which had led to bilateral relationships between NATO and Partner countries of differing content and intensity. This represents a significant evolution of the NATO-NACC arrangement, permitting a degree of self-differentiation not present earlier.

The second major advance was in the content of the partnership offered by PFP. PFP offered a significant shift from NACC's emphasis on dialogue on doctrinal issues to concrete measures for enhancing operational co-operation and joint action, which was provided explicitly through a framework for NATO-Partners joint action for peacekeeping operations. In this regard, there were five most significant innovations in the PFP programme. These were: PFP operating under the authority of the North Atlantic Council, from the 16 allies, rather than NACC. The formation of a

Partnership Co-ordination Cell at Mons, Belgium, alongside SHAPE. This greatly facilitates communications between NATO and Partners, particularly when it comes to planning an operation such as the NATO peace Implementation Force (IFOR - SFOR from late december 1996). The promotion of interoperability has been made the primary military objective under PFP. NATO has already made available over 800 standardisation documents, which are being progressively incorporated into Partner's military doctrine, concepts of operations and standard operating procedures. In January 1995, a biennial Planning and Review Process was introduced, which mirrors NATO's long-standing defence planning system. This, in turn, will have a significant influence in moving interested parties towards greater interoperability with NATO forces.

All these mechanisms of PFP contribute significantly to cultivating a multinational peacekeeping capability for interested Partner members, in which interoperability between NATO and Partner forces is promoted - this also being the most stringent and difficult pre-condition for entry as full members of NATO. The engagement of 13 Partners in the SFOR bears witness to the fruits of these developments.

Finally, however, PFP represented a significant development from NACC in that it was linked, if rather ambiguously and indirectly, with the commitment to NATO taking on new members. However, the inherent ambiguity only accentuated the demands of the Central and Eastern European countries for the modalities of NATO enlargement to be made more specific.

1995 and the NATO Enlargement Study

The January 1994 Brussels Summit left many unanswered questions over NATO enlargement and its connection with PFP. Was NATO enlargement a separate process from PFP and, if not, how did PFP contribute to enlargement? Did PFP truly play, as promised at the Summit, "an important role in the evolutionary process of the expansion of NATO" or was it, as

its critics suggested, a mechanism for effectively stalling the process? In a similar vein, was PFP principally a means for placating Russia and confirming that NATO enlargement had been indefinitely postponed or was it a genuine exercise in preparing participating countries for membership?

In attempting to answer these questions, Western leaders tended throughout 1994 to send contradictory signals. In Warsaw in July 1994, Clinton stated categorically that the issue of NATO enlargement "is no longer a question of whether, but when and how. And that expansion will not depend on the appearance of a new threat in Europe".¹⁵ However, earlier in the year a joint US-Russia declaration described PFP as an "important element of an emerging new European Security architecture", which suggested that PFP was intended to become a permanent structure rather than a preparatory process for NATO membership. Added credence to this view was given at a press conference in August 1994, where Yeltsin expressed his satisfaction that NATO had not been expanded. Russia's agreement to sign the PFP Framework Document in June 1994 appeared to reflect this growing confidence over the postponement of NATO enlargement.

It came as a surprise to Russia, therefore, and to many other commentators, that the NATO Foreign Ministers meeting in December 1994 decided to initiate a specific study on enlargement. Russia expressed its disappointment by refusing to sign the IPP, and the agreement for a political relationship outside PFP, which had been prepared for the December meeting. The reasons why NATO decided to take this next step on the enlargement question can again be primarily linked to US leadership. Three factors appeared to be influential. First, domestic pressures played their part with the Republicans' "Contract with America", stating that Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic and Slovakia should be in a position to join NATO no later than 10 January 1999. Second, continuing exasperation over NATO policy in Bosnia fuelled the momentum for NATO expansion. And, third and perhaps most critically, the 1993 Russian elections had weakened the "Russia First" policy of the State Department and had led to a growing consensus that enlargement, promoted through PFP, might be a

necessary precaution against things going badly wrong in Russia.

However, the NATO Enlargement study which was published in September 1995 only partially clarified the ambiguities and issues raised by enlargement.¹⁶ Clearly reflecting its committee origins in the US government, it showed all the signs of a compromise between State Department concerns not to alienate Russia, the Clinton administration's wish to enlarge NATO and the Pentagon's desire not to militarily weaken NATO. Critically, the study did not address the question of "who" might be the first candidates or "when" they might be admitted, confining itself to more general questions of "why and how". In addition, it did not specify any explicit conditions for entry, barring the well-known general conditions, arguing that such criteria could only be determined on a case-by-case basis.

Nevertheless, the study did make a number of significant points, which were admittedly buried in the broad generalities offered in the bulk of the document.

On the question of why the alliance should take on new members the study reiterated the normal considerations of how it would enhance stability and security for all countries in the Euro-Atlantic area. But, it stressed that "new members will enjoy all the rights and assume all obligations of membership under the Washington Treaty". It also confirmed that PFP will continue to have a role as both preparing candidates for membership and for strengthening relations "with partner countries that may be unlikely to join the alliance early or at all". It was also emphasised that NATO enlargement "complements the enlargement of the EU, a parallel process that also, for its part, contributes significantly to extending security and stability to the new democracies in the East". Finally, it made the important point that ultimately it would be the 16 allies which would decide by consensus on whether to invite new members "according to their judgement of whether doing so will contribute to security and stability in the North Atlantic area". Thus, the success of aspirant members' fulfilling the criteria for entry could only be a necessary not a sufficient condition for accession.

On the question of how the study first examined how enlargement

would contribute to stability and security, focusing particularly on Russia and those initially excluded from membership. In this regard, it stated that the enlargement did not imply the demarcation of "spheres of influence" in Europe and that the alliance considers it desirable to develop the NATO-Russia relationship through the IPP and the enhanced NATO-Russia dialogue formally accepted by Russia in May 1995. The study also stressed that the alliance attaches "particular importance to our relations with Ukraine". But, it was also made clear that "no country outside the alliance should be given a veto or droit de regard over the process and decisions" of enlargement, which clearly implicitly referred to Russia.

Next, the study focused on how enlargement will strengthen the effectiveness of the alliance. It first made clear that new members must accept the full obligations of the Washington Treaty, particularly the military obligations under Article 5. The study then proceeded to its most controversial points. First, whilst it outlined the various forms that allies contribute to NATO collective defence, most notably the French and Spanish variations, it made clear the preference for new allies to accept full participation in the integrated military structure and the collective defence planning process. As one NATO official expressed it informally, "we want no new France's or Spain's". Second, whilst it was stressed that there was no "a priori requirement for the stationing of alliance troops on the territory of new members", this should not be "foreclosed as an option". Similarly, whilst there was no "a priori requirement for the stationing of nuclear weapons on the territory of new members" and that, in the present international climate the current nuclear posture would suffice, NATO would want to maintain "its right to modify its nuclear posture as circumstances warrant".

Finally, on the question of what aspirant members needed to do to prepare for membership, it was reiterated that there would be no "second tier security guarantees for members and no modifications of the Washington Treaty for those who join". New members would be full members with all the associated responsibilities and obligations. The political requirements for membership added nothing new to the list of good neighbourly rela-

tions, respect for human rights, commitment to the market economy and democracy, and the establishment of civilian control of the military. On the military front, it was stressed that involvement in PFP was a critical mechanism for gaining improvements in interoperability but that, since PFP was limited to peacekeeping operations, it was not sufficient. Thus, in order for aspirant members to be capable of fulfilling the requirements for collective defence, there was the need for expanded efforts towards standardisation and, as such, there would need to be a "country-by-country assessment of prospective members" standardisation", dealing with the "more than 1,200 agreements and publications that new members should undertake to comply with".

Steps towards the NATO Summit in Madrid in July 1997

Since the publication of the Enlargement study, NATO has set itself three principal tasks to implement for the NATO Summit in July 1997. The NATO Ministerial meeting in December 1996 in Brussels confirmed that progress had been made and that the Madrid Summit would see the first new members from Central and Eastern Europe being formally invited to join the organisation as full members.

These three tasks towards enlargement include: First, country-by-country assessments of prospective new NATO members, noting in particular their technical and military preparedness for membership, which will be used in the final political decision of determining which countries will join. Second, the development and enhancing of a NATO-Russia relationship, in particular seeking to give concrete expression to the NATO-Russia dialogue which was agreed with Russia in May 1995. At the December 1996 Brussels meeting, NATO foreign ministers confirmed that greater urgency will be given to this task, so as to ensure that taking on new NATO members does not damage NATO's relations with Russia. Third, developing and enhancing NATO's PFP relationships with those countries which will not be included as the first candidates for membership.

The first of these tasks is perhaps the least difficult of the three. Since April 1996 individualised dialogues with aspirant members have taken place and are expected to continue till Spring 1997. These dialogues are limited to technical military issues, such as budgeting, command structure, the presence of foreign troops, the stationing of nuclear weapons, the pre-positioning of equipment, intelligence sharing, and integration into the force planning process. It is important to stress that these reports cannot determine "who" will be the first candidate(s) nor "when" they will be scheduled to join NATO. This can only be a political decision taken by consensus of the 16 allies, most probably at the Madrid Summit in July 1997. Membership negotiations will then take place well into 1998. It is also highly probable that the first candidates will be drawn from Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary. But, so as to minimise the costs both financial and political, it could be the case that only one of these countries will be selected in the first instance.

The second of the tasks - the desire to develop a more intensive NATO-Russia relationship - is a far more difficult proposition. The essential problem is that Russia has consistently maintained its opposition to NATO enlargement and made it clear that any intensification of a NATO-Russia partnership is conditional on NATO not taking on new members. Admittedly, there have been occasional cracks in the seemingly unconditional Russian rejection of NATO enlargement, the most well-known of which was Yeltsin's Warsaw statement in September 1993. But, as noted above, this seeming approval of Polish membership was rapidly reversed. Since then, Western diplomats and commentators have regularly been reassured that the Russian position has been moderated only later to find out that the essential underlying opposition to NATO enlargement remains unchanged.

Russia is, though, a country attuned to the demands of realpolitik. If NATO enlargement is to take place regardless of Russian opposition and, given that Russia is not in a position to obstruct such a move, Moscow will seek to obtain the greatest concessions as possible from NATO and its governments. The dilemma for Western governments will be to find some compromise which will satisfy Russia's minimal demands without under-

mining the objectives and aims of eastward enlargement. The trouble is that, at least in the security field, such a compromise will be difficult to find. Russia's key demand is to have a real voice in European security matters, meaning in the final analysis the right of co-decision making and the implicit right of veto, which Western governments will not be willing to concede. The critical question is whether Russia will, when it comes to the crunch, accept the enhanced consultative mechanisms and the more developed structures for cooperation which will probably be the most that the West will offer in exchange for deferring to Russian sensibilities over enlargement. This issue is dealt with in greater length in chapter 3 and in the conclusions.

The third task, of defining new security relations with countries not accepted as first candidates for membership, is perhaps even more difficult than the Russian issue. Robert Hunter, the US ambassador to NATO, has offered some conceptual guidelines by suggesting that PFP would be furthered

to enable countries that are full participants to have a permanent association with NATO that is as close as possible, short of a formal membership. We want to make the difference between being a Partner and being an Ally razor thin; so that every nation, ally or partner, can share in the promise of a secure future in a peaceful Europe.¹⁷

This suggests that a beefed-up PFP would be the probable avenue for reassuring those countries which are excluded, perhaps permanently, from the first tranche of memberships. To some extent, moves have already been made in this direction by the development of a NATO-Ukraine dialogue, modelled closely on the NATO-Russia model.

However, it is difficult to see how substantial progress on this issue can be made until the decision is made as to who and when the first candidate(s) will be and the response to that decision by Russia. Until such time, there is no strategic compass available for determining the nature and content of the type of relationship which NATO would be required to adopt.

EU enlargement

In the international media, the question of NATO enlargement has received far greater attention and coverage than the closely connected issue of EU enlargement to the countries of Central and Eastern Europe. This is not because governments, or the general public, feel that the issue of EU enlargement is less important than NATO expansion. Indeed, there is a widely-held view that incorporation of Central and Eastern Europe into the EU is critically important to the future stability and prosperity of the region and that, in the longer term, it will have a greater and more profound impact on the region than the benefits conferred through membership of NATO.

This view has a convincing logic and rationale. Ultimately, for all its ambitions to have a political purpose and role, NATO remains principally focused on the military and defence sphere. The EU, in contrast, has a much wider mandate, involving itself far more deeply with the economic, social and political dimensions of its constituent nation-states. As such, the EU is justifiably considered to be a more effective catalyst than NATO in promoting the economic, political and social reforms which are the critical pre-conditions for the future prosperity and stability of Central and Eastern Europe. As a result, few dissent from the view that EU enlargement is just as, if not more, significant than NATO enlargement. At the very least, it is accepted that the processes of NATO and EU expansion should be closely co-ordinated and move, as far as possible, in convergence with one another.

Given the importance of EU enlargement, there remains the apparent paradox of why the issue has not received wider public attention. One factor is that the issue has never been perceived as controversial or problematic as NATO expansion. The end of the Cold War never engendered the same level of debate or questioning of the *raison d'être* of the EU as was the case with NATO. It was taken for granted that the EU would have a continuing role and function whilst NATO had a far more difficult task in re-defining itself for the post-Cold War era. This was also reflected in EU

and NATO attitudes to Central and Eastern Europe. As early as 1989, Jacques Delors accepted that the EU would have to accept new members from Central and Eastern Europe, whilst NATO was much slower in coming to similar conclusions. In addition, the EU, in contrast to NATO, never had to confront Russian opposition to its enlargement plans. Indeed, Russia has been surprisingly supportive of EU expansion, welcoming Finland's accession to the EU and even approving Lithuania's application to join the EU in striking contrast to its unambiguous opposition to that country's NATO ambitions.

The fact that EU enlargement is, in principle, less controversial than NATO enlargement is undoubtedly one important factor for it not receiving the same amount of media attention. But, a further associated factor reflects the perception, at least among the wider public, that the process of EU enlargement has advanced as far, if not further, than NATO enlargement. In comparison with NATO's continuing ambiguity over which countries will be the first candidates for membership, the EU has defined a clearer position. In the Copenhagen Summit in June 1993, 10 countries (Poland, Hungary, the Czech and Slovak republics, the Baltic countries, Slovenia, Romania and Bulgaria) were identified as the prospective candidates for accession. In the Essen Summit one year later, detailed and extensive pre-accession strategies were defined for the countries of Central and Eastern Europe to adopt in preparation for accession. In addition, some EU leaders have given the clear impression that the Central European countries are on the fast track to membership. One notable example was Chancellor Kohl's promise in July 1995 that Poland could hope to be a member of the EU by the year 2000¹⁸ Such statements have only strengthened the general perception that the dynamic of EU integration eastward is more advanced and is encountering fewer obstacles than the NATO enlargement process.

However, in reality, as will be argued below, the position of the EU towards the challenge of eastward enlargement is far less advanced than is generally supposed. Indeed, NATO is in fact much closer to accepting new members from the East than the EU. Whilst it could be the case that some

Central European countries will be members of NATO before the year 2000, it is highly unlikely that any of them will be even close to EU membership.

One reason for this increasing divergence is that the demands made on the Central and Eastern European countries for EU membership are more stringent and difficult to implement than those required for NATO. This is perhaps a more justified cause for delay, given the far larger *acquis communautaire* which the EU has accumulated than anything comparable within NATO.

But, this is not the whole story. Another critical factor is that, in reality, the EU has found it more difficult than NATO to engage in the necessary internal institutional reforms to be in a position to accept new members from the East. Whilst NATO has focused a large part of its attention to the demands of Central and Eastern Europe, such as with NACC and the PFP, the EU has been almost completely engrossed in its internal affairs. The Maastricht legacy of monetary union and the ambition for a full political union within the existing EU has overshadowed any discussion about what to do with those countries outside the union, particularly the relatively conflict-free countries of Central and Eastern Europe. The fact that the 1996-97 IGC is dealing almost solely with internal institutional reforms is paradigmatic of the EU's inward-looking orientation. In addition, the fact that the existing EU countries have such radically differing policy positions towards these internal issues contributes to the further marginalisation of the eastward enlargement question. As will be argued below, this will inevitably have negative repercussions for the fast accession of countries from Central and Eastern Europe.

The reality is, therefore, that the EU is emerging as far less prepared than NATO for the issue of eastward enlargement. The reasons, and the implications for this, will be addressed in the rest of this section. These internal problems are also the principal reasons why the EU is finding it so difficult to define a cohesive security and defence identity, which was envisioned in the Maastricht Treaty to be developed through the CFSP and the WEU. Later in the chapter, it will be argued that for similar reasons, it is highly unlikely that the WEU will be in a position to offer any realistic alternative to NATO for the security requirements of Central and Eastern Europe.

EU enlargement - the historical legacy

Like NATO, the EU has had considerable experience of accepting new members. From the original six countries which signed the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) in 1952, which formed the European Economic Community (EEC) in 1957 and the European Communities (EC) in 1967 (Belgium, France, West Germany, Italy, Luxembourg and the Netherlands), Britain, the Republic of Ireland and Denmark joined in 1973; Greece joined in 1981 and Portugal and Spain in 1986; and Austria, Finland and Sweden were accepted as new members of what had now become the European Union in 1995. The cumulative experience of all these accessions to the EU has meant that there are clearly defined guidelines and procedures for those countries seeking admission to join the EU and reasonably well-established pre-conditions for the economic, social and political reforms required for any application to be favourably considered. In general, the EC and the EU has always sought to keep its doors open to new potential members which can fulfil the pre-conditions and contribute to the goals of the Union.

However, where the EU has differed from NATO has been in its gradual development towards increasing integration and the building of supranational institutions and decision-making structures. Whilst the integrated military structure of NATO was broadly established in the 1950s, the EC/EU has engaged in a more evolutionary process of integration. The reasons for this go to the heart of the logic and rationale of the process of European integration. After the failure in the 1950s to create a political union or a defence union (the proposed European Political Union and the European Defence Community), the architects of European integration envisioned a deliberately evolutionary process, starting with the less controversial economic aspects but always conceiving that this would only be an initial stepping stone to a final destination of a political union. As Christoph Bertram has rightly stated:

The Union's purpose has always been political rather than economic. The idea behind European integration is primarily about power - the domestication of power through the domestication of intra-state politics and the joining of power to again give Europe a voice in the world.¹⁹

This can clearly be seen in the historical development of the process of European integration. From the ECSC in 1952, the Treaty of Rome in 1957 established the European Economic Community; in 1967, the ECSC, the EEC and the European Atomic Energy Community were amalgamated into the EC and in 1968, a customs union was formed; and in 1987, the Single European Act was established which created an internal market for the free movement of "goods, persons, services and capital". The culmination of this process was the Maastricht Treaty in 1992 which sought to create "an ever closer union among the peoples of Europe" through a timetable for Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) and the development of a Common Foreign and Security Policy which, in turn, envisioned "the eventual framing of a common defence policy".

Maastricht watershed

The Maastricht Treaty, though, has become a major watershed in the process of European integration. The problem that many countries had in gaining popular support for the ratification of the Treaty, alongside the controversial opt-out clauses to the Treaty gained by Britain and Denmark, reflected growing scepticism over the rationale and justification for increasing European integration. The sense of popular disenchantment with European integration has only been accentuated by the social and economic costs of the EU countries seeking to satisfy the criteria for EMU. To a much greater degree than earlier, there has been a real questioning amongst European elites whether the idea of "an ever closer union" is something which the peoples of Europe genuinely want.

But, this represented only half of the problems facing the implementa-

tion of the Maastricht Treaty. The paradox was that this exercise in greatly expanding the process of integration within Western Europe took place at the very time that Europe had become re-united with the liberation of Central and Eastern Europe from Soviet rule. Those who negotiated the Treaty almost consciously ignored these revolutionary developments. However, the necessary implications have not taken long to come to the surface. The presence of a large number of European countries to the East, with their very complex communist legacies, legitimately requesting membership of the EU has inevitably raised the issue of whether an increasingly integrated EU would be capable of responding to their requests. In the language of the EU, this has starkly raised the question of whether the process of "deepening" is compatible with the demands of "widening" the Union.

But, even more fundamentally, the question has been asked whether the process of increasing integration has not been undermined by the end of the Cold War. As has been argued in the previous chapter, the Cold War did have a significant influence on the process of European integration by providing a constant external threat. With that threat removed, there has inevitably been a weakening of a common sense of purpose amongst EU states. This was most graphically demonstrated in the EU's muddled response to the Yugoslavia crisis, but the evidence of increasing internal disunity has been noticeable in a variety of other policy areas.

The implications of the Maastricht Treaty for the countries of Central and Eastern Europe seeking membership are twofold. First, as candidates applying for admission after Maastricht, the conditions and requirements for membership are more stringent and complex than for countries which joined earlier. The post-Maastricht *acquis communautaire*, the so-called patrimony of the Union, represents a daunting set of conditions which involves a considerable erosion of national sovereignty. It cannot be excluded that, like Norway, some of the governments of Central and Europe might balk at the implications for their relative loss of sovereign powers.²⁰ But, the second and more significant implication is that the Central and Eastern Europeans' applications are likely to remain on "hold"

until the internal EU debate of the relationship between “deepening” and “widening” has been resolved. Alain Juppé, the French Foreign Minister, highlighted this when he commented in January 1995 that eastward enlargement would no longer be on the agenda if the 1996-97 IGC on the realisation of the Maastricht Treaty were to fail to lead to a consolidation of the EU.²¹ Juppé was, in essence, making clear that eastward enlargement would be made strictly subordinate to the demands of Economic and Monetary Union.

Given that EMU, and the various other dimensions of the Maastricht Treaty, continue to be highly controversial, the splits and divisions within the EU are likely to make any satisfactory compromises difficult to obtain. At worst, this could lead to institutional paralysis and the inability to accommodate the demands of Central and Eastern Europe. At best, it will mean a period of some delay before new members from Central and Eastern Europe would be fully incorporated, with the ambitious timetable of around the year 2000 almost certainly being missed.

The evidence for these internal constraints against fast eastward enlargement will be addressed in the rest of this section. First, though, it is necessary to outline the moves that the EU has already made to address the needs and demands of Central and Eastern Europe.

Progress on EU enlargement

Europe Agreements. The first major response of the EU to the countries of Central and Eastern Europe after the end of the Cold War was the signing of Association Agreements (Europe Agreements in accordance with Art. 238 EEC-Treaty) in 1992 and 1993 with Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Romania and Bulgaria, which were operated on an interim basis pending ratification in 1994. The Baltic countries and Slovenia have now either signed similar Europe Agreements or are in the process of negotiations for such agreements.

The Agreements formulated the goal of setting up a free trade area for

industrial goods within a time-frame of ten years. This intention, however, was graduated according to commodity groups and within groups, according to the principle of asymmetry, meaning that the EU liberalises earlier than the partner countries. These agreements, however, were signed during a period of recession within the EU and were consequently far from generous. In the annexes to the agreements for each country, a host of exceptions were specifically laid out and contingent protection of EU markets were permitted through anti-dumping actions and safeguard measures (usually quotas) where imports were loosely defined as causing "serious injury to domestic producers and bringing about serious deterioration in the economic situation of the region". Even more damagingly, the very areas where the Central and Eastern European economies had a competitive advantage - in agricultural products, textiles, clothing, coal and steel products - the EU categorised as "sensitive areas" which were subject to especially restrictive regulations.

These restrictions in trade for "sensitive goods" have been the source of considerable frustration in Central and Eastern Europe. It also meant that initially the Europe Agreements had only modest trade creation effects. This is changing, though, as liberalisation increasingly comes into force, with free trade in the industrial sector being realised in 1998. Trade in agricultural products remains, though, highly restricted. The negative impact of this has been that the trade balance on agricultural products has moved increasingly in favour of the EU from a deficit in 1992 to a growing surplus.

The overall impact of the Europe Agreements is, therefore, in some dispute. But, however the costs and benefits are assessed, the reality is that the countries of Central and Eastern Europe have had a remarkable success in re-orientating the vast majority of their trade with the EU. In addition, their economies are growing faster than the EU's, and once the full effects of trade liberalisation are felt, it is estimated that exports from the East could increase from as much as 10-16% per annum.²²

Copenhagen Summit in June 1993. The European Council in Copenhagen was the next most important development. The Europe Agreements

had only mentioned the question of accession in the preambles to the agreements. At Copenhagen, a slightly more concrete resolution was agreed, which stated that "the associated countries in Central and Eastern Europe that so desire shall become members of the European Union". The conditions of membership included a democratic order based on the rule of law with guarantees for human rights and protection of minorities; a market economy which is sustainable in competition; and the declaration of support for the political, economic and monetary union, including the willingness to adopt in its entirety the *acquis* of the community. These conditions were relatively unexceptional. However, what was distinctively new was the addition of a further criterion that accession would also be determined "by the ability of the EU to integrate new members". This condition has clear parallels with the conditions for membership outlined in the NATO Enlargement Study.

Essen Summit in December 1994. At the European Council in Essen in 1994, a structured pre-accession strategy was laid out for the ten associated states, involving the phased adoption by the applicant countries of the *acquis communautaire*. It was also agreed that there would be regular, at least annual, meetings among heads of governments, as well as among numerous other ministers of foreign affairs, finance, economic, agriculture, transport, justice and home affairs. It was even agreed that the Europe Agreement countries should participate in foreign and security policies as well as interior and legal policies. Mirroring the NATO's Partnership for Peace, this could be called the EU's Partnership for Prosperity.

However, these agreements were not reached without opposition. Plans to turn the bilateral free trade agreements into a single free trade area in the industrial field failed to be approved. France, with the support of the southern Mediterranean countries, also ensured that the 1.1bn ECUs provided to the associated states up to 1999, would be matched by more funds for the Mediterranean, specifically North Africa. In general, the southern EU countries were far more lukewarm over eastward enlargement than the northern countries, particularly Germany.

The constraints against EU enlargement

On the surface, the present status of negotiations of the EU towards eastward enlargement is not dissimilar to that of NATO. Like NATO, the EU is engaged in individualised dialogues with the countries of Central and Eastern Europe over the steps required for achieving the necessary pre-conditions for accession. The EU has forged a set of institutional arrangements and joint actions which have a parallel with NATO's Partnership for Peace. The EU, like NATO, has also produced a pre-accession strategy at the Essen Summit which identifies the "why" and "how" of enlargement, not unlike the 1995 NATO Enlargement Study. Also, like NATO, the EU has so far resisted making explicit "when" and "who" will be the first candidates to become new members. Although the EU has gone further than NATO in specifying 10 potential candidates, there remains the same basic problem of which of those countries would actually be selected for initial admission.

The EU Timetable. However, the EU is in reality far less prepared than NATO to make the critical decisions over eastward enlargement. Part of the problem is, as stated above, the necessity for the EU to address a number of other items on its agenda. These are partly derived from the implementation of the Maastricht Treaty and partly from the steps required to reform the EU's institutions and practices to make it capable of functioning efficiently with an enlarged membership. The first hurdle is the successful conclusion of the IGC which will hopefully conclude in 1997 after the British elections and with ratification taking place in 1998. In 1998, however, decisions will have to be made over moving towards Economic and Monetary union. A new budget package by 2000 would then put forward a new deal between net contributors and beneficiaries, taking account of the needs of the East. As one French diplomat has stated, "it is only then that we can begin serious enlargement negotiations".²³

Yet if the time taken for the accession negotiations with Spain and Portugal is a guide, there would be a delay of several years. It could be

2005 at the earliest before Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovenia could join. But, this timetable is itself dependent on there being no major delays or problems in the attainment of the earlier agreements. This is, in no sense, assured. First, there is the question whether the IGC can overcome opposition, notably from Britain, to improvements to the functioning of the union through measures such as extended qualified majority voting. Second, uncertainty over the planned monetary union could lead to a delay of EMU, and the resulting crisis of confidence would make it difficult for the EU to respond with accession talks to the East. Third, the negotiations over a new budgetary deal is bound to be a difficult process, particularly as it seeks to address the financial implications of the accession of the relatively poorer central and Eastern European states.

The obstacles against eastward enlargement only become more apparent when the potential impact on the EU is analysed in greater detail. The most common of these obstacles against EU enlargement include:

Threat of Increased Competition. Some sense of this can be seen in the fear amongst many in the EU that speedy entry of Central and Eastern Europe would lead to tougher cut-price competition with the loss of livelihoods and jobs inside the EU as well as massive movements of labour from the East to the West. In more subtle versions, emphasis is placed on the economic and social costs and the excessive strain on reform countries in the event of an overhasty integration into the single market.

Such arguments, however, run contrary to both theoretical knowledge, especially the theory of comparative costs, and to empirical evidence. The very fact that the central and Eastern European countries have achieved considerable successes in trade with the West, despite the trade restrictions on sensitive goods, is an argument for swift external integration. Analogously, it would be flawed to argue that the prosperity and the economic development of the East, which is the most important factor in reducing the migration of labour, would be promoted through barriers to the Single Market. Rather, it is free trade with unimpeded access to the EU market which provides the best guarantee for the speedy and successful transformation of the reform countries into stable democracies and market econo-

mies. Nevertheless, despite the cogency of these arguments for the mutual benefits to be gained through increased economic incorporation, the political reality is of considerable fear and resistance of the perceived implications.

Financial Strains. These reservations against speedy entry for Central and Eastern European countries come predominantly from those countries which have a low level of pay and relatively large shares of the agricultural products, raw materials and light industry in exports. However, the fact that these countries are also net recipients of EU budget payments indicates the real source of their concern - with the financial implications rather than the impact of increased competition. On a rough estimate, in 1992 the peripheral countries of the EU (Ireland, Greece, Spain and Portugal) received 15 times more per capita aid than the Central and Eastern European reform countries. If analogous assistance were to be provided to these latter countries, it would result in approximately a two-fold increase in the current structural fund expenditures. The countries of Central and Eastern Europe would also be entitled to money from the Cohesion Fund. In addition, the large and relatively poor agricultural sectors of these countries would, on present procedures, lead to the substantial transfer of the common agricultural policy funds. One discussion paper in the commission reportedly estimated that, in the event of accession by the reform countries, the annual agricultural and structural policy payments would be at almost 70 billion ECU.²⁴

However, according to existing rules, any increase of community expenditures is only possible if it is "prosperity neutral", meaning that it keeps pace with the development of the national economies in member states. In addition, a ceiling for the expansion of the community budget has been fixed at 1.27% of EU gross domestic product. Net payers are, therefore, highly unlikely to finance additional expenditures; the only alternative is through the redistribution of the agricultural, structural and social policy transfers to the detriment of the previous net beneficiary countries. The latter, however, see their appropriations as a legitimate entitlement and promised in treaty form. If these financial transfers were to

be threatened, they would probably refuse to back any accession by the Central and Eastern European countries. In general, this financial issue is likely to be a major obstacle to eastward enlargement which will become increasingly apparent as the budgetary negotiations, which have to be concluded by 2000, are initiated after the 1996-97 IGC.

Agriculture. The ramifications of eastward enlargement go further, though, than the prospective financial strains. The EU agricultural commissioner, Franz Fischler, is acutely aware of the potential impact of the accession of the Central and Eastern European countries to the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). Reforms of the CAP will necessarily be required, with all their associated sensitive political implications, if Fischler can successfully ensure that the "goal of enlargement must not reside in killing off the CAP".²⁵

Institutional Strains. The institutional consequences of eastward enlargement are also substantial. Under present rules for the European Council, the accession of the Visegrad countries would represent a further shift in favour of the smaller countries at the expense of the large countries. It would also make the Council an increasingly unwieldy body. If every Council member were to be granted 20 minutes speaking time this would extend the minimum duration of a meeting to six hours. Under present arrangements, the European Parliament would also increase its numbers to 756 if Poland, the Czech and Slovak republics and Hungary were to join. It is difficult to imagine that a parliament of this size, with a host of languages and the absence of European parties, would be capable of expressing a common will and purpose.

Future steps for EU enlargement

All these institutional and structural obstacles against eastward enlargement indicate the seriousness of the crisis facing the EU over this issue. The core problem is that the previous strategies for managing the expansion of the Union are inadequate for meeting the challenges of such enlargement. In the past, there were two principal "strategies of evasion". First, there

was the strategy of fostering consensus through financial transfers, most strikingly through the creation of new assistance funds in the fields of structural, regional and cohesion policy. Second, there was the strategy of seeking consensus through the increased application of qualified majority decisions.

Neither of these strategies are adequate for resolving the institutional and structural problems posed by eastward enlargement. The application of existing agricultural, structural and regional policies to the economically weaker countries of Central and Eastern Europe would increase community expenditures to a politically unacceptable level. It would also make previous net beneficiaries, as well as net paying countries, resistant to the speedy accession of reform states.

Eastward enlargement would also endanger the strategy of gaining consensus through majority voting. Majority decisions are generally only accepted where a community consensus can be formed which embraces both majorities and minorities, and where the outvoted minorities do not view the majority decisions as extraneous decisions. Such a consensus requires a sense of common identity and purpose, which is traditionally only to be found within nation states. In the post-Cold War era, and with a Europe embracing its western, central and eastern parts, it is highly unlikely that such a consensus can be formed. It is this critical dilemma which the IGC is attempting to resolve and is unlikely ultimately to reach to a fully satisfactory compromise. The essential problem is that the IGC is seeking to extend the process of integration and joint decision-making at precisely the time that the national interests of the EU states are becoming increasingly heterogeneous. The accession of the Central and Eastern European countries would only accentuate this fragmentation of interests in the European context.

The reality is, therefore, that the issue of eastward enlargement presents a profound challenge to the existing institutions and practices of the EU which are not going to be easy to resolve. Paradoxically, the EU is finding it even more difficult to adapt to the end of the Cold War than NATO. Although NATO appeared ineffective and paralysed during much of the

Yugoslav crisis, it has managed to re-assert its identity and purpose with surprising rapidity. The Dayton accords in late 1995 was the most significant catalyst for this reinvigoration of NATO. The burgeoning France-NATO *rapprochement* has, despite continuing lower level conflicts such as control of NATO Command South, provided further confirmation of the increased vitality of the Atlantic Alliance. For NATO, the major problem over eastward enlargement is less the internal implications, though these are important, but the potential external consequences, particularly with regard to Russia's reaction.

Thus, NATO is currently in a position to make the critical decisions and choices over enlargement and it is highly probable that the July 1997 Madrid Summit will make substantive and dramatic moves in this regard. The EU, in contrast, is not nearly as prepared to make such decisions. Numerous institutional and structural reforms have to be addressed first before any decision on eastward enlargement can be considered. It will almost certainly be the case that any EU decisions will be made in the context of choices and decisions already articulated by NATO. The British EU commissioner, Neil Kinnock, might have broken ranks with the rest of the commission in stating that EU enlargement will only take place in 10-15 years time (i.e from 2005-2010) but he was expressing an increasingly commonly held view.

This is not to say that the issue of EU is less significant than NATO enlargement or will cease to be an important item on the EU's agenda. The future prosperity and democratic stability of Central and Eastern Europe, its security in the wider sense, is critically dependent on the region's access to the markets of the West and ultimately through its incorporation into the EU's single market. It can also be plausibly argued that, even if the process towards monetary union and institutional reform were to be delayed and encounter substantive obstacles, the drive towards eastward enlargement might become even more urgent. The European *projet*, like any ideological construct, deplores a vacuum. Enlargement to the East, driven by Germany's concerns and anxieties, might replace the western integrationist dynamic as the principal self-justifying ambition for the EU.

However, even if this were to be the case, it would most probably follow decisions made by NATO.

When decisions on eastward enlargement do take place, it is also likely that the countries of Central and Eastern Europe would not be offered full and immediate membership. Some variation of a phased or partial membership would probably be considered. But even such relatively cautious moves would not be without problems. Within the EU, there is a growing debate over the implications of a "multi-speed" or "variable geometry" Europe, with "core" and "periphery" countries grouped around certain functional areas. The problem is that the formation of an internally differentiated European Union represents a significant departure from previous practice and tradition. As a result, there is strong resistance to seeing such arrangements formally institutionalised, even if they do become a *de facto* reality in areas such as monetary union.

Nevertheless, ideas associated with this debate have been promoted as potential avenues for bringing the countries of Central and Eastern Europe more rapidly into EU institutions. One suggestion has been that these countries could be offered immediate or speedy membership of the two intergovernmental pillars of the EU - the common and foreign security policy and the co-operation on justice and home affairs. In particular, it has been suggested that membership of CFSP could respond to the Central and Eastern Europeans security concerns. This, in turn, leads to the suggestion that what would really provide genuine security reassurance would be membership of the Western European Union.

WEU enlargement

Throughout its existence, the Western European Union has been a shadowy organisation whose potential as an independent European defence and security organisation has consistently failed to materialise. Until 1984, the WEU had been almost completely subsumed by NATO. In that year, principally as a response to President Reagan's Strategic Defence Initiative,

there was an attempt to resurrect and "make better use of the WEU framework". Advances were made and the WEU has played an active, if rather limited, role in upholding the maritime embargoes during the Iran-Iraq war, the Gulf War in 1990-1 and the Yugoslav crisis.

The end of the Cold War considerably boosted expectations for the WEU to take on a more active and substantial role. The Maastricht Treaty fed these expectations by laying the foundations for a common foreign and security policy which would "include the eventual framing of a common defence policy" with a central role played by the WEU. In Petersberg in 1992, the WEU Council of Ministers also set out an ambitious programme for strengthening the WEU's operational role through member states providing military units, under WEU authority, which could be employed for peacekeeping, humanitarian and rescue, and peacemaking tasks. A WEU planning cell was established to plan and co-ordinate any such WEU operations. The decision by NATO that a WEU-directed CJTF would be permitted to use NATO assets has also given the potential for the WEU to have a more operationally independent capability.

The WEU has also been engaged in concrete steps to extend its activities to the countries of East and Central Europe. WEU enlargement has been almost a mirror image of NATO enlargement. After the formation of NACC in 1991, the WEU established a Forum of Consultation with the states of Central and Eastern Europe. After the creation of the Partnership for Peace programme in January 1994, the WEU admitted nine Central and Eastern European states as associate members (Poland, Hungary, the Czech and Slovak Republics, Romania, Bulgaria and the three Baltic states). Like PFP, the associate memberships allow these states to take part in discussions, participate in military exercises and contribute to WEU operations. However, associate status does not provide security guarantees or promises of full membership.

Future prospects for WEU enlargement

Although the issue of NATO enlargement has tended to dominate discussion and the policy agenda, there are a number of influential advocates of the advantages of WEU enlargement as an alternative to NATO enlargement.²⁶ In particular, such advocates argue that, in contrast to NATO, the WEU is a collective defence organisation which does not inherit the Cold War associations of NATO, most notably its anti-Soviet legacy. As a result, Russia has been relatively unconcerned over the prospects of WEU enlargement and has not articulated the extreme opposition as in its reaction to NATO expansion.

An additional dimension behind the seeming attractiveness of WEU enlargement rests on the fact that the WEU is a distinctively European institution. Although the WEU is required to co-operate closely with NATO and is institutionally separate from the EU, it is nevertheless closely tied to the Union. At the Maastricht Treaty the WEU was defined as the "defence component of the European Union" with the task to "elaborate and implement decisions and actions of the union which have a defence implication". The WEU, therefore, is strongly supported by those countries, such as France, which seek to promote a European Security and Defence Identity (ESDI) which would work closely with the Atlantic Alliance but could also act, if required, independently from NATO. In the wider context of European construction, WEU enlargement to the East would represent a concrete step for Europe and the EU taking responsibility for the region's security and defence requirements. And, again, such WEU enlargement has the intrinsic advantage that, like EU enlargement, it is viewed favourably in Moscow.

However, there are a number of countervailing constraints against the prospect of WEU enlargement as an alternative to NATO enlargement. The first major set of obstacles is quite simply that it does not respond to the demands of the Central and Eastern Europeans. Their objective is NATO membership since NATO provides the security guarantees that they perceive to be credible and effective. The WEU is perceived in a far more

ambiguous manner.

It must be admitted that this is a fairly reasonable assessment on the part of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe. Although article 5 of the Brussels Treaty, which underpins the WEU, does provide for collective defence which "affords the party attacked all the military and other aid and assistance in their power", this provision has effectively remained an exercise in rhetoric. In the context of the post-Cold War era, where there is no immediate and easily definable threat, its function is even more questionable than the less binding collective defence provisions of article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty. The fact that the WEU, in contrast to NATO, does not have the operational capabilities to offer effective collective defence, only adds to its institutional deficiencies as a collective defence organisation. It should also be remembered that the Brussels Treaty is up for review in 1998 and article 5 could be revised to take into account the existing realities.

The 1992 Petersberg declaration, with its emphasis on humanitarian, rescue and peacekeeping tasks, indicates the orientation of the WEU towards security rather than defence missions. Many of the ideas behind WEU enlargement also focus more on the security rather than defence dimension. The December 1995 WEU Parliamentary Assembly debated the issue of granting Central and Eastern European countries "soft security guarantees" by inviting them to become full WEU members without collective defence guarantees, while at the same time offering them membership of the CFSP and Justice and Home Affairs pillars of the EU.²⁷ But, it is difficult to see how this would satisfy Central and Eastern European demands, since the WEU package would provide them with neither the economic benefits of the EU nor the hard security guarantees offered by NATO.

It would also be a mistake to see Russian tolerance of WEU enlargement as an argument in its favour. Russian leaders and analysts are hard-nosed realists in their political judgements and assess external threats in terms of military capabilities. NATO is considered a threat since it has effective military capabilities. The WEU is not considered a threat because

it lacks such capabilities. If this were to change, Russian attitudes would also change. The underlying tension with Russia can be seen in the Russian Foreign Minister's response to the WEU offering associate membership to Central and Eastern Europe. Kozyrev welcomed "constructive dialogue and practical co-operation with the WEU" but warned that this would be conditional on WEU expansion not being in "contradiction with the need to establish a truly pan-European system of security and co-operation".²⁸

The second set of factors which militate against WEU enlargement is that the trend has been towards an increasing marginalisation of the WEU, as NATO has assumed a more dominant position in European security and defence matters. This trend was confirmed during the Yugoslav war as NATO emerged as the only effective and credible body to provide a resolution of the crisis. The contrast with the WEU's ineffective and marginal role was starkly demonstrated. The crisis also showed that the greatest threat to European security was not the imposition of US hegemonic power but rather the threat of US disengagement and withdrawal from Europe. The French agreement in late 1995 to participate fully in NATO's Military Committee was the most striking evidence of this change in perception, and has resulted in France's decreased enthusiasm for promoting the WEU as an alternative to NATO.

It has also been noticeable that NATO has become increasingly europeanised in the post-Cold War era, thus undermining much of the underlying logic of the WEU. One striking indication of this can be seen in the June 1995 British and French initiative, announced in Paris rather than Brussels, to establish a NATO Rapid Reaction Force in response to Bosnian Serb hostage taking in the former Yugoslavia. More generally, it is now almost inconceivable to imagine that the WEU would find the necessary will to engage in military operations if NATO itself was incapable of acting. The agreement to permit a WEU-led CJTF is, in the end, a sop to the European enthusiasm for the rhetoric, rather than the implementation of, defence and security europeanisation and thus does not represent a genuine threat to the primacy of NATO.

This impacts directly upon the question of WEU enlargement. The

danger is that, if the WEU were to enlarge eastward without a similar NATO move, it could have the same consequences as European attempts unilaterally to deal with Yugoslavia. The Europeans would be in danger of making promises that they then would not be capable of fulfilling. It is difficult to imagine that the United States would be so tolerant of a second demonstration of European impotence and loss of collective will. It is for this reason that the United States in 1995 gave such firm warnings that Finland should not join the WEU, which is its legal right as an EU member. The fact that it was the US, rather than the EU countries, which made this clear indicates a certain irresponsibility on the side of the EU states. The United States is determined that no security guarantees should be provided by the "back door" without NATO first agreeing to them. The EU has moved towards accepting that this needs to be defined clearly as a part of its policy.

The third set of constraints against WEU enlargement relates to its unsatisfactory internal constitution. Membership of the WEU includes an unfortunate four-tiered structure, which reflects the WEU's asymmetry both with the EU and NATO. The first tier includes the ten full members of the WEU. But, there is a second "observer" category for Austria, Denmark, Finland, Ireland and Sweden, who are EU members but have not been willing fully to join the WEU. There is also an "associate membership" of non-EU European NATO members, which includes Iceland, Norway and Turkey. The final "associate partners" category include the nine Central and Eastern European countries. Despite all these attempts to be as inclusive as possible, there are continuing anomalies in the WEU's membership. Finland, which is an EU member, has no status in the WEU and Denmark, which is both a full EU and NATO member, has only the loosest of associations with the WEU.

The problem with this institutional confusion is that the WEU ends up as a poor decision-making body. The fact that not all EU members are willing to accept the responsibilities for collective defence is a weak link in the arguments for the incorporation of the WEU into the EU. For this reason, it is probable that British resistance to such incorporation will carry

the day at the 1996-97 IGC.

But, this reflects the wider issue that defence is a serious matter, which requires a clear commitment of all members of a defence community to fulfil their obligations. The current members of the WEU do not provide this linkage. It is difficult to imagine the WEU being capable of making decisions over controversial security or defence issues which NATO is not far better placed to address. NATO has the structural advantage of an integrated military structure and a hegemonic power, the United States, whose views have a determining influence over NATO decision-making.

Why the WEU is not the solution to eastward enlargement

In conclusion, therefore, the promotion of WEU enlargement to Central and Eastern Europe cannot provide a satisfactory solution to the security demands of Central and Eastern Europe. First, in terms of its membership structure and its operational capabilities, the WEU is not in a position to provide any meaningful security guarantees to the East. The WEU needs to engage in further institutional reforms and, more critically, WEU member states will need to provide far more resources to build up a strategic command system, a heavy lift capacity and other key military resources which are currently dependent on the United States. Second, the issue of WEU enlargement unnecessarily complicates the drive for EU enlargement. By bringing in security and defence issues, the WEU could potentially delay EU expansion and distract the EU from its most important mission which is to provide the economic and political pre-conditions for stabilising the post-communist East.

Finally, the WEU adds confusion to the issue of NATO enlargement. The possibility that countries might join the WEU before NATO potentially aggravates relations with the United States, by presenting the prospect of "back door" security guarantees which the US has not independently sanctioned. In addition, forcefully promoting WEU enlargement potentially provides the ammunition that many domestic forces in the US seek for

promoting increased disengagement from European security affairs. After the developments in the former Yugoslavia, even the most ardent Euro-enthusiasts should be cautious about projecting a European defence identity which can operationally rival the existing capabilities of NATO. For this reason alone, the WEU is unlikely to be actively promoted as a genuine alternative for NATO to provide the security guarantees which the countries of East and Central Europe are seeking.

Chapter 3: The challenge of eastward enlargement - country responses

Although institutions like NATO, the EU and the WEU do attain a certain independence and internal dynamic of their own, it is ultimately the member states of these institutions which determine policy and make the critical decisions. In this sense, institutions are at the service of their member states, particularly the most powerful of these states, and not the other way round. This is even more the case with decisions like eastward enlargement which are politically highly sensitive and have significant strategic and geo-political implications. Thus, how the various nation-states define their national interests with regard to this issue is critical for understanding the probable future evolution of the process of eastward enlargement.

This chapter will, therefore, focus on the ways in which the individual states affected by the issue of eastward enlargement are defining their specific *national* interests towards this issue and the difficult choices it presents. First, this will involve an assessment of the positions of the most important of the existing member states of NATO and the EU who will be required to make the eventual decisions either to accept or to reject new members. Second, the position of Russia, whose opposition to NATO enlargement represents a major obstacle to the success of the policy, will be analysed, with particular attention given to its possible reactions to any NATO expansion. Third, there will be an assessment of the candidate countries of Central and Eastern Europe, indicating those countries most likely to be adopted as new members, and the potential dilemmas and difficulties this would pose to those countries whose requests for membership will probably, in the first instance, be denied.

The previous chapter argued that NATO is far more advanced than the EU to make the critical decisions over eastward enlargement. Whilst NATO

will almost certainly be inviting new members to start the negotiations for accession in Summer 1997, the EU will probably delay confronting these difficult choices until the new millennium. For this reason, the balance of this chapter will be focused more on the issue of NATO rather than EU enlargement.

The United States and the Western European states

The Franco-German alliance is often described, not least by enthusiast German federalists, as the “motor” of European integration. In a similar way, it has become increasingly evident that the US-German alliance provides the underlying momentum for NATO enlargement to the East. Thus, in both the NATO and EU enlargement processes, Germany occupies a central role. It is, thus, important to examine Germany’s stance towards the dual enlargement process which will be of such critical importance to its future development.

Germany

In the context of the post-Cold War debates over the EU and NATO, Germany adopts what might be called the “institutional maximalist” position. As is well known, the German government is deeply committed to the integrationist agenda for the EU, seeking to promote a federal Europe which has increased supranational powers. It is strongly in favour of monetary union, of the extension of qualified majority voting to areas such as justice, security and defence, and the expansion of the powers of the European parliament. At the same time, Germany has been the strongest advocate for promoting the “widening” of the union to take on new members from Central Europe. It has also been in the forefront of the drive towards NATO enlargement and, as was noted in the previous chapter, it was Volker Rühle, the German Defence Minister, which first placed this

issue onto NATO's agenda in Spring 1993.

The German government has also made clear that it does not consider these various objectives to be in conflict with one another. It argues that EU enlargement to the East does not weaken the drive towards a more integrated Union, as Britain hopes and France fears, but rather that a "deepening" of the union is a pre-condition for a successful "widening" of the union. Similarly, whilst Germany recognises that NATO and the EU are not presently congruent and will not embrace the East simultaneously, it argues that, in a rather unfortunate phrasing, a "final congruence" can be reached, whereby the European members of NATO corresponds more or less to the EU.²⁹

The critical question is why has Germany developed this "institutional maximalist" position? The roots of this position lie in the two persistent patterns in Germany's foreign policy since World War II: *idealism* and the pursuit of *balance*. The idealist strain derives from Germany's reaction to its own aggressive, nationalist past and the perceived success of the process of inter-state co-operation and integration, which has been most visibly symbolised by the Franco-German relationship. There is a strong conviction in Germany that the model of Franco-German co-operation should be extended to the rest of Europe to promote a pan-European peace, based on dialogue and common structures, which can make a decisive break with the continent's legacy of war and conflict. It is this idealism which suffuses Germany's stance towards the European Union. Amongst most German elites, there is a passionate belief that deeper European integration corresponds to German national interests and is the best means to guarantee peace and security on the European continent.

However, the idealist strain in German foreign policy has also been complemented by the persistent pursuit of balance, traditionally along the East-West axis. This balance has, though, meant different things to different German leaders. For the Federal Republic's first Chancellor, Konrad Adenauer, balance meant joining the Western Alliance and the United States, so as to re-build Germany without threatening its neighbours. For Willy Brandt, balance was re-defined as *Ostpolitik* which involved the

development of working relationships not only with East Germany but also with the other Warsaw Pact countries including the Soviet Union. This policy, involving a constant German balance between its interests in the West and the East, became the defining feature of Foreign Minister Genscher's long period of office during the 1970s and 1980s.

In the reunified Germany under Chancellor Kohl, the policy of *Ostpolitik* has assumed a new and more urgent mission. It has been re-defined as a German resolve to ensure that the old Cold War East-West division is dissolved and that there is no re-emergence of the old dynamics and rivalries that have historically been the sources of conflict in Central Europe. There is a clear consensus that Germany's eastern borders cannot remain the eastern edge of either the EU and NATO and that these Western institutions are the vehicles for projecting democracy and stability and for preventing the emergence of instability on the eastern border destabilising Germany itself. Thus, Germany's ardent advocacy of NATO and EU enlargement is driven by this new definition of the logic of balance, of a new German *Ostpolitik* promoted through NATO and the EU.

However, what distinguishes this new *Ostpolitik* from its earlier version is that, in the post-Cold war period, Germany is a more influential and central actor in European politics. In geo-political terms, Germany has been the principal beneficiary of the end of the Cold War. A re-unified Germany within a re-unified Europe is a Germany which has regained its central geo-strategic position in Europe. In a world where power is defined more in economic than military terms, and with a weak and introspective Russia, the reunified Germany is clearly the dominant European power. The end of the Cold War also coincides, and in some senses legitimises, Germany's coming to terms with its past and its re-assertion as a "normal" power willing to promote its specific national priorities and objectives.

However, this is not to say that Germany is wanting to break free from its Western European institutional ties. Rather, Germany is determined to see those institutional ties spreading eastward precisely so that Germany does not have to deal with Central Europe on its own. German strategy is to initiate policy, keep the issue of eastward enlargement firmly on the

agenda, but also to ensure that it secures allies for its objectives so that the final decisions represent a common NATO and EU policy. It is for this reason that Germany places so much significance on its relations with the US and France, since these are the powers whose assent is critical for, respectively, NATO and EU enlargement.

But, as with earlier periods in *Ostpolitik*, Germany has also been very active in including Russia in dialogue and discussion over NATO plans, most particularly as regards the process of NATO enlargement, and in seeking to find proposals and ideas which might relieve Russian security fears. In this way, Germany has sought to become the mediator between Russia and the United States over their competing visions for the future of European security.

However, Germany's balancing between East and West has its limits. If it came to the crunch, Germany's post-Cold War priorities lie more in promoting stability in the East than deepening integration in the West. The fact that Germany is becoming the dominant trading partner for Central Europe; that Germany's economic interests and its future competitiveness lie in developing trade and investment in Central and Eastern Europe; and that Germany cannot hope to remain disengaged or unaffected from instabilities arising to its East - all these factors promote a growing German orientation to the East. Historical memories, both of German guilt and Central European instability, have also impelled Chancellor Kohl to make highly personal commitments in favour of EU and NATO enlargement to Central Europe. Poland, in particular, is a key German priority which was reflected in Kohl explicitly promising that Bonn would push for Polish membership of these institutions by the year 2000.³⁰ Having made such promises, though, has only accentuated the need for Germany to gain support from its NATO and EU colleagues for such a fast-track process of enlargement.

The United States

The Clinton administration has been the strongest ally of Germany on the issue of NATO enlargement to the East. Once Volker R  he set this issue onto NATO's agenda in early 1993, Germany was relieved that the US decided to assert its leadership and set about defining how this process of enlargement should be promoted. The PFP proposals unveiled in early 1994 were inspired and drawn up by the US, and the September 1995 NATO Enlargement Study was similarly marked by its origins in the Washington. Clinton's appointment of Madeleine Albright - a vocal and committed advocate of NATO enlargement - to replace Warren Christopher as Secretary of State for his second term also indicates that the president is determined to take the lead on the issue of European security in 1997 and beyond.

Although the United States has come close to adopting the German position on NATO enlargement, it has arrived at this position for markedly different strategic and geo-political reasons. Whilst Germany has been forced to become increasingly engaged in European affairs since the end of the Cold War, the United States has been moving in the opposite direction towards growing disengagement. There are multiple factors behind this. Clearly, the end of the Cold War has been a significant element for weakening the glue of the transatlantic alliance, which was most clearly demonstrated during the Yugoslav crisis. But, the advent of the Clinton presidency, the first US leader not bound by the memory of World War II, and an administration which was determined to focus attention on domestic rather than international affairs, added to the momentum for US disengagement from Europe. The administration's resolve to pay greater attention to its international economic relations also aggravated relations since Washington has increasingly perceived the EU as more of a protectionist threat than an ally. A shift from Europe to Asia Pacific has also been noticeable in US foreign policy as the latter region increasingly appears the more dynamic trading partner.³¹

All these factors have undoubtedly changed US perceptions of its future

role and degree of engagement in Europe. However, it would be a mistake to think that these pressures have irreparably damaged the strong cultural, historical and institutional ties which have traditionally bound the United States in a far closer embrace with Europe than with any other region of the world. The United States remains committed to NATO as the institutional forum for transatlantic relations and for providing the integrated multinational forces which have become even more vital in the post-Cold War environment, as demonstrated in the Gulf War and the Yugoslav conflict.

However, commitment to NATO does not, in itself, translate into a commitment to see NATO take on new members from Central and Eastern Europe. Indeed, there have been powerful constituencies in Washington which initially tried to resist NATO enlargement. The Pentagon was concerned that such enlargement might weaken the operational capabilities of NATO. The State Department, particularly those sections dealing with Russia, were also initially opposed, since NATO expansion was considered to be provocative to Russia and which could undermine Yeltsin's liberalising, pro-Western orientation.

The US-European dispute over Bosnia during 1993 appears to have provided the first impulse towards a change of policy over eastward enlargement. The evidence of NATO disarray and disunity provided ammunition to those in Washington who sought NATO to re-define its mission, with enlargement as a necessary step if NATO were not to be reduced into insignificance. The December 1993 Russian elections and the upsurge of support for the extreme nationalist Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, provided support to the idea that NATO enlargement might be a crucial safety guarantee if Russia were to return to its neo-imperialist traditions. Domestic factors also contributed to this dynamic as both the Republican and Democrat parties sought to galvanise support from the 23 million Americans of Central European origins. In this regard, it was noticeable that Presidential candidate Robert Dole placed NATO enlargement as top priority on his foreign policy agenda. After the June 1996 elections Dole intended to visit Warsaw, Prague and Budapest. The political commentator

William Safire noted that this is “a tour which will be seen as political; Polish-American voters are a force in Illinois, New Jersey and Michigan; Hungarian-Americans in New Jersey and Florida; Czechs in Texas and Illinois”.³²

The Clinton administration has been undoubtedly influenced by these factors but the critical turning point came when Clinton himself became converted to the idea of eastward enlargement as a way of differentiating his foreign policy to that of his predecessor. The enthusiasm for the idea has grown markedly since then and senior administration officials have been at great pains to justify the logic and rationale behind accepting new members. Strobe Talbot provided an article in the *New York Review of Books* in August 1995 which set out to explain why the administration believes enlarging NATO “encourages European integration and enhances European security which will benefit all the peoples of continent, and the larger transatlantic community as well”. Richard Holbrooke addressed Russian concerns by the confident assertion that “enhancement of stability is a mutual interest of Russia and the United States. NATO, which poses no threat to Russian security, seeks a direct and open relationship with Russia”.³³ Robert Hunter, US Ambassador to NATO, has even presented PFP as America’s post-Cold War Marshall plan.³⁴

However, the seeming political consensus in Washington behind NATO enlargement has increasingly found voices of dissent. The first major detractor, outside the world of academe or think tanks, came from Senator Sam Nunn, former chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee. In a speech on 22 June 1995, he said that

*by forcing the pace of NATO enlargement at a volatile and unpredictable moment in Russia’s history, we could place ourselves in the worst of all security environments; rapidly declining defence budgets, broader responsibilities and heightened instability. This is the stuff self-fulfilling prophecies, and historical tragedies, are made of.*³⁵

Other critics have followed Nunn's example, focusing in particular on the potential financial costs, estimated in the region of \$20bn, and more emotively on the human costs of US soldiers potentially having to die to defend the Polish-Belarus border.

Nevertheless, there remains a strong consensus behind NATO enlargement in the United States which has a wide bi-partisan base. Madeleine Albright's strong defence of the principle of NATO enlargement at her Senate confirmation delighted her predominantly Republican audience.³⁶ It seems likely that, barring major unforeseen developments, NATO enlargement will continue to secure sufficient political support in the Congress to overcome any potential detractors.

France

Just as it is vital for Germany to gain US support for NATO enlargement, so it is critical for Germany to obtain French agreement for the process of EU enlargement. As in other areas of EU policy, the Franco-German alliance has been the fundamental underpinning of the process of EU expansion and integration. However, over the issue of EU enlargement to the East, France's position has significantly diverged from that of Germany's. President Mitterrand's initial reaction to the reunification of Germany and the liberation of Central Europe was one of disquiet and even dismay. In 1991, he upset the Central and Eastern European states by stating that it would take them "tens and tens of years" before they would be ready for membership of the EU. Further diplomatic damage was incurred when it emerged that Mitterrand's grand idea of a European Confederation was to include the Soviet Union as well as the Central European states.³⁷ In addition, Mitterrand regularly repeated, against the hopes of the British, that the issue of eastward enlargement can in no way be permitted to obstruct the course of EU integration set out at Maastricht.

Mitterrand's distinct lack of enthusiasm for the post-1989 developments reflects a more profound French pessimism in the aftermath of the

Cold War. During the Cold War, France had carved out an independent role which had given it certain privileges disproportionate to its actual economic and political power. It had devised a policy promoting a maximum degree of possible independence and the development of a European entity that would contain West Germany, as did NATO, but would also be capable of resisting US supremacy. In this way, France offset West Germany's economic dynamism with its independent nuclear force and its *de facto* leadership of the European Community given German inhibitions due to Germany's past and its division.

From the French perspective, Germany's gains from the end of the Cold War have been secured at the expense of French interests. A reunified Germany, a Germany which has also transcended its past, is no longer a Germany so dependent on France or so willing to submit its decision-making to French leadership. For a statesman like Mitterrand, with his Metternich-inspired geo-strategic outlook, a reunified Germany which is free to act to its East, to create potentially a new German *Mittleuropa*, represents a radical shift in the European balance of power to the detriment of France and to European security as a whole. Mitterrand's response was to promote even more urgently the process of European integration so that Germany could be bound more tightly into Western European institutions and decision-making procedures. But, particularly during the troubled referendum campaign over Maastricht, it became apparent that not all French elites were convinced of the rationale for this strategy and began asking whether France should not be clawing back, rather than continuing to cede its sovereign powers from Brussels.

However, this initial reluctance to consider seriously the requests of Central and Eastern Europe for membership of the EU gradually became more relaxed. After much prevarication, France has re-affirmed its commitment to the Franco-German alliance, working on the assumption that it was still better to influence Germany from within the EU than from a more independent stance. It has also judged that, since eastward enlargement is such a high priority for Germany, it would be better to work with Germany on this issue than permit Germany to go out on its own. For its part,

Germany has gone to great lengths to reassure France. Germany has included France in the so-called Weimar Group which brings Germany, France and Poland together.³⁸ Germany has also been at pains to affirm that "widening" the union would not come at the expense of "deepening" the union, as Britain had been advocating, but rather there would be a Hegelian synthesis whereby "deepening" would be the pre-condition for "widening".

France's stance towards Central and Eastern Europe also became more enthusiastic with the change to a conservative government in 1993. The new Prime Minister Edouard Balladur agreed to the Copenhagen Declaration which offered the reform countries of the East the prospect of joining the Union. He also unveiled the Pact for Stability, under the auspices of the CFSP, as a programme for resolving the problems of minorities in Central and Eastern Europe in preparation for joining the EU. This became known as the Balladur Pact, which was signed in Paris in 1995, and has had some success in promoting good neighbourliness, notably with the signing of a Slovak-Hungarian accord. France has also played with some of the ideas of "variable geometry", projecting the existing European Union with an inner core counter-balanced by a wider partnership association with countries currently outside the EU.

However, France's stance towards eastward enlargement has maintained certain distinctive features. First, as the Balladur Pact highlighted, France is keener on a political union than an economic union with the East. This reflects its commitment to preserving the Common Agricultural Policy and its resolve to ensure that the integrationist agenda and need for institutional reform should strictly precede any decision to take on new members. Second, France has consistently demanded that any movement to the East should be balanced by the EU addressing the needs of the South. At the Essen Summit in 1994, France, along with Italy and Spain, secured equivalent financial commitments to North Africa as were gained by Central and Eastern Europe. And, third, France has refused to differentiate between the nine countries which are prospective candidates and has been the strongest advocate for Romania and Bulgaria. This indicates a French determination to have its own sphere of influence in the East to counter-balance Germany's influence with its immedi-

ate neighbours in Central and Eastern Europe.

In general, therefore, France has a distinctly more lukewarm stance towards enlargement to Central and Eastern Europe than Germany. It is willing to accommodate German objectives but principally as a means to influence Germany's wider European objectives and to ensure a more gradualist process of enlargement. Similar policy objectives can also be seen in France's attitude to NATO enlargement to the East. Although it has not wished to obstruct German and US policies in this direction, it has made clear that it considers NATO must engage in further internal reforms before acceding to requests from the East. In particular, French policy has sought to strengthen the European pillar of NATO and to reform NATO structures and decision-making processes so that they remain under firmer political control. Thus, in both the EU and NATO, France promotes internal reform as a critical pre-condition before contemplating eastward enlargement.

United Kingdom

Great Britain obviously is a major power in the councils of NATO and the EU but it has not played an influential role in the eastward enlargement debate. On the issue of NATO enlargement, Britain has tended towards the more cautious end of the spectrum. Under the stewardship of Foreign Minister Douglas Hurd, the Foreign Office demonstrated a particular sensitivity to the security challenges facing Russia. In 1993, Britain and Russia agreed to a joint declaration on peacekeeping which sought to promote greater Russian respect for the traditional principles of peacekeeping such as gaining the consent of the parties concerned, impartiality, and the minimum use of force. As a former colonial power itself, Britain has perhaps had greater sympathy towards the post-colonial anxieties of Russia than the perceived security concerns of the former Soviet satellite states. More generally, Britain has focused more on the damage that eastward enlargement might have on relations with Russia, and with other states of the former Soviet Union, than on the security gains that it

would confer on the Central Europeans.

Some sense of the direction of British thinking can be gleaned from the deliberations of the all party Commons Defence Committee in August 1995.³⁹ Its final report concluded that the Visegrad countries should not be given the impression that they head the queue for membership of NATO. Indeed, the committee recommended that accession should be on a case-by-case basis and was in favour of giving priority to the neutral European countries, such as Austria, Finland and Switzerland to be encouraged to join. The Committee was also strongly opposed to Baltic entry into NATO given those countries' sensitive relations with Russia.

The British government is likely to adopt a similarly sceptical attitude to NATO enlargement as the critical decisions are confronted. However, when it comes to the crunch, and if there is a strong US-German consensus in favour of enlargement, Britain is unlikely to continue its resistance. Britain does not want to damage what remains of its "special relationship" with the United States. It also wishes to preserve that relationship against any further consolidation of the US-German relationship. Neither of these objectives would be attained if Britain were to continue strongly opposing NATO enlargement to the East against the wishes of Germany and the United States.

In contrast to NATO enlargement, Britain is much more in favour of the projection of EU enlargement. But, British influence on this matter is considerably undermined by its isolation in the EU and the internal divisions within John Major's government and the Conservative party over European policy. Most of Britain's EU partners perceive British support for enlargement as a rather transparent attempt to undermine the process of integration and to transform the EU into a looser free trade area. They also see a fundamental contradiction between British support for enlargement and its refusal to countenance any extension of qualified majority voting. Given these internal contradictions, it is highly unlikely that Germany, in particular, would consider London to be a useful ally in its quest for eastward enlargement. For the foreseeable future, it will be the Franco-German axis which will drive the future progress of the EU, both in its internal reforms, in its integrationist agenda, and in its external enlargement.

Other European states

There are two other groups of European states which have some influence on the eastward enlargement debate. The first group is that of the Scandinavian countries which have developed a specific interest in the fate of the three Baltic states. Denmark, in particular, has been concerned about this issue and has even threatened to veto NATO enlargement to the Visegrad countries of Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic unless it includes some or all of the Baltic states. The other NATO members are likely to resist such a move. One possible compromise might be that one or more of the Baltic states would be included in the first tranche of EU enlargement. Estonia is normally the country selected as the most appropriate candidate given its relatively healthy economic situation. If this were to be the case, it would demonstrate an interesting way how NATO's decisions might influence the process of EU enlargement.

The second group of states includes the southern Mediterranean states of the EU and NATO, such as Italy, Spain, Portugal and Greece. Their immediate concern is that the re-orientation of European security and economic interests to the East might be at their expense. Although they have little direct influence in NATO or the EU on this matter, they have sought to make their voice heard through French mediation and patronage. France shares a number of their interests, such as instability in North Africa and protection against Eastern European agricultural and industrial goods. But, as argued above, French policy is still predicated on the primacy of the Franco-German alliance. However, the support of the southern Mediterranean countries strengthens France's bargaining power in relation to Germany and can be an influential in securing compromises and adequate compensation from Germany in exchange for eastward enlargement.

Russia and NATO enlargement

There is now a consensus amongst practically all sections of the Russian establishment that NATO enlargement would be detrimental to Russian security interests and must be unconditionally opposed. Although there have been times when Russia has appeared to soften its stance, most notably with Yeltsin's statement in Warsaw in 1993 which appeared to sanction Poland's accession to NATO and most recently with Primakov's seemingly emollient response to the NATO ministerial commitment to NATO enlargement made in December 1996, Russia has subsequently made clear that its opposition remains steadfast and uncompromising. The argument offered by the West that NATO enlargement would consolidate stability in Central Europe, which would be in Russia's interest as well as the West's, simply cuts no ice in Moscow. The consensus in Russia is that NATO enlargement can only have negative consequences for Russian security interests and thus has no redeeming features.

The sources of this Russian opposition are rooted in a general sense of disillusionment with the West. In the immediate aftermath of the disintegration of the Soviet Union, Russia enjoyed what Moscow now calls its period of "romantic infatuation" with the West. The first post-Soviet government of Yegor Gaidar sought to promote Russia's integration with the West and to transform Russia into a "normal" post-colonial Western power akin to France or Britain. However, from about late 1992 onwards, Russia has engaged in a painful re-orientation of its national interests and priorities. What has subsequently emerged is a new hierarchy of these objectives. The first and most immediate challenge has been to ensure the integrity of the Russian Federation, which has been most directly threatened by the Chechen secessionist campaign. The second most important objective has been the forging of closer relations with the other countries of the former Soviet Union, the so-called "Near Abroad", and ensuring that instability and conflict from these regions should not escalate and spread into Russia itself. As a result of these more immediate challenges, Russia has subordinated its relations with the West and the wider world to a third tier of interest.⁴⁰

Russia has not, though, considered this relative subordination of its relations with the West as, in itself, a reason for any weakening or cooling of these relations. From the Russian perspective, the deterioration of these relations is *not* primarily due to actions that Russia has taken. Rather, from the Russian perspective, a greater proportion of the blame rests with the West which has consistently taken an unsympathetic and excessively critical view of Russian foreign policy initiatives which Moscow believes it has been in its national imperative to adopt. In this regard, the Russian government has been very sensitive over Western criticisms of its Chechen operation, which Moscow considers a legitimate action to preserve its territorial sovereignty. Similarly, Russia has been dismayed at Western critiques of its peacekeeping operations as neo-imperialist adventures, when Moscow considers them as necessary interventions to preserve stability in the Near Abroad. In this more overarching context, the West's determination to extend NATO eastward appears in Moscow as the most blatant manifestation of Western misunderstanding of Russia's legitimate security concerns.

Why Russia objects to NATO expansion

Put simply, Russia opposes NATO enlargement because it does not want the world's most effective military organisation, in which Russia has no voice, to move closer to Russia's borders. More fundamentally, NATO enlargement appears in Russia to be symbolic of the West's lack of mutual trust. Moscow argues that, if the West genuinely does not perceive Russia to represent a threat, then there is no need to enlarge NATO; *ipso facto*, if NATO does enlarge, then the West has demonstrated that it does not trust Russia.

Russia has also been at pains to convince the West that the logic of a unified Europe demands a pan-European security structure. Russian diplomats have forcefully argued that the Conference for Security and Co-operation in Europe (from 1995 the Organisation for Security and Co-

operation in Europe - OSCE) should be transformed into a pan-European security body. In the negotiations leading to the October 1994 Budapest CSCE review conference, Russia argued that the CSCE should become the overarching co-ordinating, sometimes more controversially the "commanding", body overseeing the activities of the CIS, NACC, the EU, the Council of Europe, NATO and the WEU.⁴¹ Russia also argued that the decision-making procedures of the CSCE should be reformed through the creation of an executive committee along the lines of UN-style European Security Council. Although Russian diplomats acknowledged that it would be difficult to gain unanimous support for these proposals within the existing CSCE, they were nevertheless shocked that their suggestions were so categorically and unconditionally rejected by the West. As this has resulted in the OSCE being consigned to institutional impotence and oblivion, Russia was not predisposed to welcome the alternative NATO-Russia partnership, particularly as it was designed to complement rather than preempt NATO enlargement.

Russian opposition to NATO enlargement has also been strengthened by the belief that the Western plans for NATO enlargement have involved a significant element of deception. The Russian government originally, if reluctantly, accepted the PFP proposals because it assumed that this represented the West's compromise over the NATO enlargement issue. The Foreign Minister, Andrei Kozyrev, argued that Russian acceptance of PFP was the price which had to be paid for NATO to delay, hopefully indefinitely, any decision over NATO enlargement. Seen in this context, it is understandable why NATO's decision in December 1994 to initiate the Enlargement Study caused such dismay. However, there remained sufficient hope that the enlargement issue was still only at its preliminary discussion stage for Russia to agree to sign NATO's Individual Partnership Programme and the enhanced NATO-Russia Dialogue and Co-operation document in May 1995. But, these small remnants of Russian faith quickly evaporated when, in June, NATO started its aerial bombardment of Serb positions in Bosnia without consulting Moscow and when, in September, the NATO Enlargement Study committed NATO to accepting new mem-

bers from the East and did not rule out the stationing of foreign troops or nuclear weapons on their territory.

It has been this keen sense that the West has engaged in deliberate deception which has consolidated Russian opposition. In the bureaucratic infighting in Moscow, it is the military's stance, advocating a far more rejectionist position over NATO, which has appeared to be vindicated in contrast to Kozyrev's more conciliatory strategy. This is the principal reason why, particularly since the dismissal of Kozyrev and his replacement by Yevgeny Primakov, that Moscow has taken such a firm line against enlargement of NATO to Poland, which at other times Russian officials hinted that they might be willing to stomach. The conviction is that, given past experience of NATO duplicity, accession of Poland and the other Visegrad countries would only be the stepping stone to NATO considering further expansion eastward into the countries of the former Soviet Union.

And, it is with this scenario that the Russian response is at its most vehement and uncompromising. Given its tense relations with the Baltic countries and the critical importance of these countries for Russia's security and defence framework, any hint of Baltic accession to NATO inevitably accentuates Russian paranoia. Also, given the geo-political isolation of the Baltic states, it would be difficult for NATO Article 5 guarantees to be provided without the forward deployment of foreign, probably, American troops. To say the least, this would not be contemplated with relish in Moscow. But, the Baltic contingency pales into relative insignificance compared to the Russian reaction to any indication that Ukraine might be a potential NATO candidate. Such a scenario provokes only the most extreme neuralgia in Russian circles. Russia is still far from accepting the legitimacy of the independent Ukrainian state, maintains a intense national conviction that the Crimea and Sevastopol are sovereign Russian territory, and would thus resist forcibly any extension of the NATO umbrella to cover Ukrainian territory.

NATO can, of course, dismiss these Russian fears as unnecessarily alarmist. But, it cannot dismiss them entirely because NATO has linked, if

in a rather ambiguous manner, the process of enlargement with the PFP programme, to which the Baltic states and Ukraine have shown considerable commitment. If PFP helps "prepare interested partners for the benefits and responsibilities of eventual membership", as the NATO Enlargement Study stresses, then Baltic and Ukrainian accession is on the cards. The same study also states that, once the first invitations are presented, "it will be important not to foreclose the possibility of eventual alliance membership for any European state" and that "no country outside the alliance should be given a veto or *droit de regard* over the process and decisions". For Russians to be told that they have no right of veto, when that is precisely what they lack, only adds to the sense of betrayal and disillusionment.

What might Russia do if NATO enlarges?

Russian officials have not been shy to indicate what possible responses they could take if NATO enlargement were to take place. There has clearly been an interest in Russia to colour these responses in a rather lurid and alarmist manner so as to indicate Russian seriousness of intent. However, the actual response in the West has tended to be dismissive, suggesting that these threats are either the consequence of pre-election bargaining or the outpourings of disaffected imperialists within the Russian armed forces. The optimistic view in the West is that, with the election now decided, Russia will realise that it has to negotiate seriously and that it would be better to obtain as good a deal as possible from the West in exchange for acquiescence to NATO adopting new members from Central Europe.

However, as the deadline of the Madrid Summit looms, there is still no clear indication that Moscow has weakened its fundamental opposition to NATO enlargement. Given this, it is important to survey the range of policy options which Moscow might contemplate if it finally decides that it needs to make some response to the new challenge presented by NATO. The following list of options indicate the wide range of any possible

Russian response and is by no means comprehensive. In addition, this list does not represent any particular hierarchy of priorities, though clearly some of the suggested moves are more provocative than others.

Withdrawal from PFP. One obvious potential move would be to withdraw Russia from the PFP programme. Russia might also recommend friendly states, such as Belarus and the Central Asian states, to follow its decision. It should be remembered that, from the very beginning, large sections of the military have been opposed to PFP and the Russian Duma has voted overwhelmingly for withdrawal. If such a decision were made, it would also undoubtedly impact upon Russian participation in SFOR in the former Yugoslavia and result in a withdrawal both from the field of operations and from NATO Headquarters. Inevitably, this would perpetuate the present lack of progress on substantiating the NATO-Russia Enhanced Dialogue.

Review of Russian commitment to OSCE. Russian attempts to strengthen the CSCE/OSCE have led to a Russian willingness to permit CSCE missions onto the territory of the former Soviet Union. After the start of the Chechen conflict in December 1994, Russia accepted three OSCE missions to Chechnya and then, in April 1995, the stationing of a permanent mission in Grozny. Russia also supported the creation of a CSCE peacekeeping force for the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, though it was not greatly distressed when the UN partially legitimated the CIS peacekeeping operation.

However, Russian willingness to countenance further activities of the OSCE on the territory of the former Soviet Union would be greatly weakened by a decision to enlarge NATO. From the Russian perspective, this decision would symbolise the West's rejection of creating a pan-European security structure and its resolve to perpetuate the division of Europe through an enlarged NATO military bloc. Since Russia would seek to counter-balance this through a countervailing military bloc, the OSCE would have no role to play as an operational security body.

Withdrawal from CFE. The Russian reaction to NATO enlargement could also torpedo the 1990 CFE treaty, which limits conventional arma-

ments. Since 1992, Russian officials have argued that the Treaty needs to be revised given the collapse of the Warsaw Pact and the Soviet Union. Russian concerns have subsequently focused on the "flank limits" which cap the number of heavy weapons Russia can position along its northern and southern borders. These concerns have only been accentuated by the instabilities in the Caucasus and the Chechen conflict. NATO has sought to seek a compromise with Moscow through a partial re-drawing of the map of the flank zones and utilising the provisions within the Treaty for flexibility, but which nevertheless stops short of a complete renegotiation of the Treaty.⁴²

However, when the November 1995 deadline for the full implementation of the Treaty came into effect, Russia had still not complied with the flanks restrictions. The Russian mood has also become more intransigent on this issue. If, though, Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary, together with their quotas, were to join NATO, the incongruence between the Treaty and the political realities could no longer be papered over. It would give the Russian military the perfect excuse to withdraw from the CFE Treaty and embark on a rearmament programme.

Failure to ratify START II. The Start II Treaty, which was signed in January 1993, commits Russia and the United States to reducing their strategic nuclear arsenals to 3,500 weapons - significantly below the 6,000 called for in the 1991 START I. However, neither the US Senate nor the Russian Federal Assembly has ratified START II and NATO enlargement would almost certainly inhibit Russian ratification. Russian critics of the treaty argue that it provides a significant nuclear advantage to the United States, since it requires Russia to engage in a more dramatic restructuring of its nuclear forces. In addition, they argue that Russia is currently in no position to afford a sharp reduction of its nuclear forces given its inability to maintain a large conventional army. In the event of NATO enlargement, these arguments will inevitably have a greater salience.

Lowering of the nuclear threshold. NATO enlargement would certainly result in shifts in Russian military strategy. Given that NATO represents a conventionally far superior military force, Russian strategy would probably

involve greater reliance on nuclear weapons to provide a means of deterrence against NATO. Russian strategy would, somewhat ironically, mirror NATO's strategy during the Cold War of using its nuclear deterrent as a counterweight to Soviet conventional superiority. Russia could also decide that its strategic vulnerability requires the forward deployment of these weapons in Kaliningrad, Belarus and Western Russia. It should also be considered that Russia might judge that reliance on tactical nuclear weapons alone would not be strategically viable. They might then consider the re-introduction of intermediate nuclear weapons into the European theatre, thereby undermining the INF Treaty.

CIS Integration. With NATO enlargement, there would clearly be pressure for greater consolidation of the CIS, in particular its defence dimensions. Some moves in this direction have already been made. The decree on CIS strategy, signed by Yeltsin on 14 September 1995, stated that Russia would push harder for the transformation of the commonwealth into a true collective security alliance and aim for a more consistent implementation of completed military pacts, such as the May 1992 Tashkent collective security agreement.⁴³ The burgeoning relationship between Russia and Belarus, with President Lukashenka of Belarus enthusiastically promoting integration, could fairly easily be transformed into a defence union where Russian forces and nuclear weapons could be deployed on the western borders of Belarus.

However, the really sensitive issue would be Ukraine. If NATO were to expand, it would seem probable that Moscow would be distinctly less tolerant of Ukraine's independent stance towards the CIS. Russia could be tempted to exert more pressure on Ukraine to, at the very least, reaffirm its neutrality and, at most, to integrate politically and militarily with the rest of the CIS to counter-balance NATO. Over Ukraine, Russia also has a formidable array of levers for pressure, such as its oil and gas supplies, the Black Sea Fleet and Crimea, the close co-operation between Russian and Ukrainian enterprises, and the large ethnic Russian minority in eastern Ukraine. To date, Russia has been remarkably restrained from using these formidable levers at its disposal. But, in the context of NATO enlargement,

that restraint may no longer hold. It is also difficult to see how the West could seek to protect Ukraine from these pressures which would not in turn contribute to exacerbating the situation. Economic threats against Russia, such as the withdrawal of IMF support, would be potentially the most effective but might not be sufficient if Russia considered the issue one of vital national importance.

Foreign Policy Changes. It should be remembered that Russia is not just a European power but a country whose borders stretch from Europe to the Middle East and to the Far East. Along or close to all Russia's non-European borders, there are multiple points of instability and a number of countries which have conflictual relations with the West. In the eventuality of a NATO enlargement, Russia's sense of exclusion from the West could easily be translated into more assertive diplomacy towards the East.

There are many potential foreign policy choices open to Russia which could complicate Western policy making. In the Far East, a consolidation of Russia's *rapprochement* with China could resurrect Kissinger's triangular diplomacy but, this time, to the United States' disadvantage. In the Middle East, Russia could strengthen its already strong strategic ties with Iran and re-introduce itself to the arms-hungry pariahs of the region, such as Iraq, Libya and Syria. In Central Asia, Russia could undermine Azerbaijan's and Kazakhstan's oil connections with the West by increased destabilisation of the region. This is not to say that Russia will necessarily promote all, or any, of these policies but they are all levers which Russia could exert, if it felt it was in its national interest.

The countries of Central and Eastern Europe

On the issue of eastward enlargement, the countries of Central and Eastern Europe fall into two broad categories. First, there are the Visegrad countries of Poland, the Czech and Slovak Republics, and Hungary which are generally recognised to be the first candidates for membership of NATO

and the EU. Their geographical proximity, their relatively advanced economies and more stable democratic systems set these countries apart from their eastern neighbours, though Slovakia's position has been considerably undermined by its more authoritarian government and its relative lack of success in its reform programmes. The second category consists of those countries which are not generally considered to be the first candidates for accession. These countries can be divided into three further sub-groups; Romania and Bulgaria which remained politically independent, if under Soviet tutelage, during the Cold War; the three Baltic states which were part of the Soviet Union but are not now members of the CIS; and Belarus and Ukraine which were both formerly part of the Soviet Union and are currently members of the CIS.

This section provides a brief analysis of the economic and political situations in these various countries, their relative readiness and willingness to take on the responsibilities of membership of NATO and the EU, and the dilemmas and problems they will face if and when NATO and the EU decide which countries will be the first new members.

The Visegrad countries

Poland, Hungary, and the Czech and Slovak Republics have been the most insistent *demandeurs* for accession to NATO and the EU. They are also generally considered to be the most probable first candidates. The first critical question is whether they are ready for membership or, more accurately, whether they are close to fulfilling the necessary political, economic and military pre-conditions for membership.

Given their recent communist past, all the Visegrad countries suffer from a common legacy of a poorly performing economy, an authoritarian system of governance and a Soviet-style military not under effective democratic control. However, although all these countries continue to be in the midst of economic and political reforms, they have made remarkable progress towards the consolidation of Western-oriented market economies,

fully functioning liberal democratic political systems and a restructured military. In economic terms, the Visegrad countries currently enjoy fast growth and have radically re-oriented their trade away from the former Comecon countries to the West, and the EU in particular. Even though the GDP per capita of these countries remain far below the average in the EU, once Purchasing Power Parity exchange rates are used as in the table below, the countries of Central and Eastern Europe do not lag far behind the poorer EU countries such as Greece and Portugal. As was argued in the previous chapter, there is little justification for denying EU membership on grounds of economic backwardness and lack of competitiveness.

Comparisons of GNP per capita in US\$ at market exchange rates and at PPP exchange rates in 1992

	Market exchange rates	PPP exchange rates
Germany	23,030	20,610
Greece	7,290	8,010
Portugal	7,450	10,120
Turkey	1,980	5,170
Czech Republic	2,450	7,160
Slovak Republic	1,930	5,620
Hungary	2,970	5,740
Poland	1,910	4,880

Source: Daniel Gros and Alfred Steinherr, *Winds of Change* (London: Longman, 1995), p. 460.

If a similar comparative assessment is made of the Visegrad countries' military capabilities, then analogous conclusions can be drawn. Again, their capabilities do not match those of the highly advanced armed forces of the Western European countries such as France and the United Kingdom. But

as a Rand Report suggests, if the comparison is made with second-tier NATO militaries, such as Spain and Portugal, which are roughly comparable with Poland and Hungary in terms of population and territory, then they actually come out the same or even better in terms of the quality of CFE-limited major weapons systems.⁴⁴ In addition, some of the equipment that the Central Europeans have is better-suited to the terrain in which they might have to operate, such as the Balkans, than comparable Western equipment. In fact, the Rand Report concludes that in this regard the Central Europeans are not all that far behind Italy, Belgium or the Netherlands.

Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary are also on the road to achieving a basic level of compatibility with existing NATO forces by 1999. Central European soldiers deployed to a NATO operation can also be expected to be at a level comparable to that of NATO soldiers. In addition, they have specific linguistic skills and a familiarity with Soviet-style weapons and tactics which would be useful against the type of opponents NATO is likely to confront in the future. Their involvement, with the exception of Hungary, in IFOR/SFOR in the former Yugoslavia also indicates a willingness to contribute to NATO out-of-area operations. Overall, there would appear to be few strictly technical military grounds for greatly deferring membership of NATO for these countries.

When assessing their political readiness to join NATO and the EU, it is best to examine the Visegrad countries individually. The *Czech Republic* is the Central European country which arguably has the fewest political problems. It has no notable external disputes with its neighbours, no significant ethnic minorities, and it is arguably the only country that has its military under democratic control. In addition, the Czech Republic is the most advanced in terms of economic reforms and meets more of the Maastricht criteria for monetary union than most EU members. There are, thus, few insurmountable obstacles facing Czech accession to the EU. The only question over its readiness to join NATO is the considerable reduced size of armed force, cut from 106,000 men at the time of the Czech-Slovak split in 1993 to 65,000 by 1995. Some NATO officials have asked

whether, with such a small force, the Czech Republic can contribute greatly to NATO's activities.

The question of *Poland's* membership of NATO and the EU is much more complex than the Czech Republic's. Poland's economic record is good, and some economists consider that Poland might be the economic "miracle" of the East rather than the Czech Republic, but the country continues to suffer from high rates of inflation and certain sectors of its economy, notably in agriculture, banking and financial services, are far from ready for EU accession. In terms of NATO, Poland's military can potentially contribute significantly to the Alliance since its army is widely recognised as the most professional and well-trained in Central Europe. However, Poland has hitherto been unsuccessful in bringing the military under democratic control which had been principally caused by constant infighting between former President Walesa and a succession of defence ministers over control of the armed forces. However, the election of a new president, Alexander Kwasniewski, should herald an improvement in civil-military relations and the subordination of the General Staff to the minister of defence rather than the president.

Poland has been the most enthusiastic advocate of eastward enlargement, particularly of NATO. This policy has been even more forcefully promoted by the Democratic Left Coalition (SLD) government under Kwasniewski. Poland also has a powerful ally with Chancellor Kohl of Germany who has become personally committed to Polish entry into NATO and the EU. However, Poland is the only Visegrad country directly to border the Soviet Union in the form of the Russian Kaliningrad enclave and Russia has made clear its opposition to Polish accession. The country's large territory and its strategic depth significantly complicates, and potentially greatly increases the financial cost of, NATO providing article 5 security guarantees. If Russia were to respond in some of the ways indicated above, strengthening of Poland's eastern border would be an inevitable necessity.

Hungary differs from Poland and the Czech Republic in not having a common border with a NATO member. Like Poland, though, questions

have been raised about effective democratic control of the Hungarian military with signs of backsliding since the return of the Socialist party, led by Gyula Horn, in May 1994. Whilst Hungary has no major internal ethnic minorities, it does have significant external minorities in Slovakia, Romania and Serbia which have occasionally created tensions with its neighbours. However, the government of Gyula Horn has give a high priority to reducing these tensions with Slovakia and Romania, with a bilateral treaty signed with the former in March 1995 (in response to the Balladur Plan) and a similar treaty signed with Romania in the latter part of 1996. In its economic policies, the government launched a tough austerity package in March 1995 which has contributed to a revival of the Hungarian economy. However, Hungary's high level of indebtedness remains a problem, as does the high percentage of GDP spent on welfare.

Slovakia is currently the most problematic of the Visegrad countries in terms of its political and economic developments. The pace of economic and political reforms has slowed since Prime Minister Vladimir Meciar returned to power in September 1994. The mass privatisation programme has been cut back and the role of the state in the Slovak economy has been increased. Meciar has also sought to curb the independence of the media and engaged in an open effort to oust President Michal Kovac. The Slovak government has also back-pedalled on the treaty with Hungary on its large Hungarian minority, which has impeded implementation of that treaty. All these developments have damaged Slovakia's chances for early membership in the EU and NATO. For its part, the Slovak government has made periodic indications that it might seek a closer economic and political relationship with Russia.

One final point which should be noted is that Slovakia is not the only country where enthusiasm for NATO enlargement has been in decline. In a survey of attitudes towards NATO in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, there was a marked discrepancy between an average of 71% of the elites in these countries calling for NATO membership within 5 years as against only 44% of the general populations. Some of this scepticism, which has been growing since the publication of the NATO Enlargement

Study, appears to be filtering through to the political parties of the region. In January 1996, the main Czech opposition party, the Social Democrats, promised to hold a referendum before any decision to join NATO. The party also confirmed that, if the Czech Republic did join NATO, it would not permit foreign troops or nuclear weapons to be based on its territory. Some NATO member states, most notably the US, expressed their displeasure with this, since the NATO Enlargement Study specifically stressed that no *a priori* pre-emption of the decision of whether or not to station foreign troops or deploy nuclear weapons should be permitted.⁴⁵

Indeed, the evidence is growing that, as NATO enlargement rises more clearly on the political horizon, there is mounting public disquiet over the obligations which NATO membership brings. The calls for referenda over any decision regarding membership have multiplied through out the region. Resistance to the stationing of foreign troops and nuclear weapons have grown, as can be seen in a September 1995 poll in Poland which found 59% of respondents against the basing of foreign troops and 82% against the deployment of nuclear weapons in Poland. The table below is taken from a United States Information Survey (USIA) poll in early 1995; attitudes can be expected to have hardened since.

Public opinion on possible NATO requirements

	Czech Republic	Hungary	Poland	Slovakia
Sending troops to defend another country				
Support	43	26	55	33
Oppose	49	68	35	59
NATO troops stationed in our territory				
Support	30	35	56	26
Oppose	63	58	34	68
Regular exercise of NATO forces in our country				
Support	33	28	45	23
Oppose	59	66	45	70
Increased proportion of national budget for military, not social needs				
Support	8	9	23	7
Oppose	85	85	67	75

(Source: USIA Surveys, 1995)

The non-Visegrad Eastern European countries

The countries to the East of the Visegrad four face some of the greatest dilemmas over the issue of NATO enlargement. Given that they are highly unlikely to be the first candidates for accession, these excluded countries face an uncertain and potentially dangerous security environment in the

advent of their neighbours' being granted NATO membership. Most immediately, they would confront the threat of a new division of Europe, a division which would place them in a qualitatively more destabilising "security vacuum" between an enlarged NATO and a dissatisfied and belligerent Russia. It is a policy issue which will also be foremost in NATO thinking since it would hardly be beneficial to overall European security if, by increasing the security of its new members, this greatly increases the sense of insecurity of the rest of Eastern Europe.

Unfortunately, there are no easy answers to these difficult questions and choices. For the countries of Central and Eastern Europe concerned - Romania, Bulgaria, the Baltic states, Belarus and Ukraine - three general policy orientations towards the issue of eastward enlargement can be determined. The first is to ignore the issue of postponement and maintain a strong commitment to joining NATO and the EU, even if the prospects do not look good in the near to medium future. The second is the option of maintaining a strictly neutral position which favours neither East nor West. And, third, there is the option to forge closer ties with Russia and voluntarily to accept a subordination to a Russian sphere of influence. All the non-Visegrad countries of Eastern Europe have adopted one or more of these stances at different times and sometimes simultaneously.

Of the two countries which were never part of the Soviet Union, *Romania* and *Bulgaria*, diverging policy stances can be seen. As a non-Slavic state with a clear self-perception of belonging to the West, *Romania* has been one of the most enthusiastic advocates for NATO and EU enlargement. It was the first country to join the PFP programme and accession to the EU has been one of the few issues on which everyone in Romanian politics agrees. However, Romania inherited one of the most distorted economies and closed societies in the former East bloc after suffering a particularly repressive and destructive form of communism under dictator Nicolae Ceaucescu. Its political system remains far from democratic as President Ion Iliescu has perpetuated the continued power of the former communist party, though his credentials as a politically astute operator willing to engage in economic and political reforms has enhanced

his reputation. Economically, Romania remains far behind the Visegrad countries with its 23 million population having a per capita GDP of about \$1,200 in 1994 as against \$4,000 in Hungary. In addition, Romania has significant ethnic minorities on its territory, though its relationship with its Hungarian minority has improved. Romania does have the benefit of an influential advocate in France, who has adopted the Romanian cause partly to counter-balance German influence in the Visegrad countries. Despite this, though, Romania's prospects for joining NATO and the EU are poor.

Bulgaria has continued to favour EU membership but its attitude towards NATO enlargement has grown increasingly more sceptical than Romania's. Whilst President Zhelyu Zhelev has maintained a pro-NATO position, his Bulgarian Socialist Party Prime Minister Zhan Videnov has been markedly cooler. In a visit to Brussels in April 1995, Videnov declared that joining NATO was not a priority for his government and that eastward expansion should not be "at the expense of the security of other countries".⁴⁶ There is also strong circumstantial evidence that a military alliance with Russia is being discussed in Sofia. Historic and ethnic ties, alongside a common anti-Turkish sentiment, have promoted this growing Russo-Bulgarian *rapprochement*. On the EU front, Bulgaria is seen in Brussels to be the most laggard of the nine Reform countries. Reviews of current legislation show that Bulgaria conforms with EU regulations in only 40 out of some 200 areas identified as important for integration into the EU. Bulgaria has a sponsor in Greece but this is unlikely to accelerate its path towards EU membership.

The Baltic States have real security concerns which would be greatly accentuated by a NATO enlargement which excluded them. Lithuania is the only Baltic state which has managed to defuse tensions surrounding its ethnic Russian minority, though it must consider the status of Kaliningrad since Lithuanian territory separates this enclave from the rest of Russia. Lithuania would like to see the demilitarisation of Kaliningrad but Russia has responded that this would only occur if Poland and Lithuania were not to join NATO. Estonia and Latvia, though, continue to have strained relations with Russia over their ethnic Russian minorities which provokes

strong nationalist feelings in Moscow as well as amongst ethnic Estonians and Latvians. As argued above, there is almost no chance that NATO will consider taking on any new members from the Baltic states, given their geo-strategic isolation and minuscule defence forces. The EU might be able to offer some compensation by selecting one or more of the Baltic states for early accession into the EU but that depends on the EU overcoming its present institutional and political inertia. The only other viable avenue for reassuring the Baltic states would be additional Western statements expressing their commitment to the protection of the political independence and territorial sovereignty of these countries. Greater political and economic co-operation with the other Nordic and Baltic countries, such as Denmark, Sweden, and Finland, would also be beneficial.

Belarus and Ukraine lie on the furthestmost eastern part of the European territory bordering Russia and thus face the most immediate fall-out of any Russian retaliation against NATO expansion. Both countries have formally remained committed to a position of neutrality and non-alignment. However, *Belarus* has increasingly asserted an anti-NATO position which even surpasses that of Russia's. In April 1995, President Lukashenka condemned the pursuit of NATO membership of Central and Eastern European countries as "creating an imbalance of forces in Europe likely to lead to military confrontation". He added that "militarily and politically we have two options; either we protect our national assets with Russia or we make the republic a corridor for the passage of giant military formation".⁴⁷ Lukashenka has also used the excuse of NATO expansion to discontinue the CFE treaty-mandated destruction of weapons.

Lukashenka's belligerence has notably increased since the publication of the NATO Enlargement Study. During early 1996, the Belarus president called for a political, economic and military union with Russia; warned that he would allow nuclear weapons to be stationed in the republic if NATO enlargement took place; and called for a "road corridor" through Belarus to link Russia with Kaliningrad.⁴⁸ The Russian government has been forced to deny or qualify many of Lukashenka's pronouncements but it would be wrong to dismiss the Belarusian president as a crazed maverick.

Lukashenko has a surprising level of popularity even within Russia and Yeltsin, from time to time, has emphasised that he has by no means ruled out unification with Belarus.

Finally, *Ukraine* faces the most daunting challenges if NATO enlargement were to take place. Like Belarus, Ukraine has adopted a neutral and non-aligned stance but it has been less committed to the CIS, refusing to sign the 1992 CIS Tashkent Collective Defence Treaty, and has had a far more hostile relationship with Russia. Ukraine's stance towards NATO enlargement has tended to vacillate, reflecting the complicated internal balancing act in its foreign policy between East and West. Under former President Kravchuk, Ukraine wholeheartedly endorsed NATO's plans. A more cautious line was originally adopted by the incoming President Leonid Kuchma in 1994 who re-confirmed Ukraine's neutrality and non-alignment and expressed his concern that NATO enlargement must accommodate Russian interests.

However, since mid-1995 the Ukrainian position has tilted towards a more favourable assessment of NATO's policies towards the East. Ukraine has participated with growing enthusiasm in PFP joint exercises and activities. In May 1995, when Clinton visited Kiev, the US delegation noted a perceptible shift in favour of NATO enlargement compared to the previous year. The following month, Kuchma stated that "the process of NATO enlargement is underway and it is impossible to stop it" and noted that, although Ukraine was officially non-aligned, "it is nonsense for Ukraine to be non-aligned. Ukraine's geographical position contradicts this doctrine".⁴⁹ In the same month, Ukraine was also offered a special dialogue and an enhanced relationship with NATO, mirroring the similar deal offered to Russia.

In practical terms, though, Ukrainian membership of NATO is a political non-starter and, as was argued above, Russia has the political will and significant levers of pressure to influence developments in Ukraine which the West cannot match. NATO's offer of an enhanced relationship with Ukraine represents a signal of its concern but it is difficult to imagine how it can increase Ukrainian security without the prior success of the Russia-

NATO enhanced relationship. There is also the problem that, by offering the same deal to Ukraine, this can potentially devalue the proposed special relationship with Russia.

The extent to which the United States has committed itself to Ukraine is also a significant expression of its commitment to Ukrainian independence. Ukraine is now the third largest recipient of US aid after Israel and Egypt. Senior US officials make regular visits to Kiev and former Secretary of State Warren Christopher sought to reassure Ukraine that the US considers the country "a linchpin of European security". In these ways, the United States has shown a commendable commitment to Ukraine but, if it came to the crunch, it can do little to protect Ukraine if Moscow were to react negatively in the event of NATO deciding to adopt new members.

Where greater support for Ukraine could be provided is through the EU. The truth is that the EU's contribution to the Ukrainian economic and political situation has been nothing short of scandalous. Of the \$5 bn Ukraine received in 1995, the net contribution of the EU was about \$30 million.⁵⁰ Since Ukraine has not been recognised as a reform country, it suffers from the full trade restrictions on "sensitive goods" which constitute the vast bulk of Ukraine's exports. One third of Ukraine's exports are steel; one third chemicals; and one third textiles and agricultural products. As a result, a half of Ukraine's exports continue to flow into Russia.

The first practical step the EU could make to promoting Ukraine's security - by increasing its prosperity and decreasing its dependence on Russia - is for the EU to contribute far more to Ukraine's economic recovery and to open up the EU for Ukrainian exports. The idea of a European Free Trade Zone, which some economists have recommended, would be a good step since it would strengthen the hand of reformers not only in Ukraine but in all the European countries of the former Soviet Union. Trade between East and West would be encouraged, thereby unravelling what is currently an economic iron curtain between the countries of the CIS and the rest of Europe, which includes both the EU and the Reform countries. This would also obviously enhance Ukraine's prospects for building upon its Western political and economic orientation.

However, in the final analysis Ukraine's fate rests on the larger geo-strategic relationship between NATO, the United States and Russia. Ukraine's fate is in the hands of external powers and forces which is the reason why, especially from the Ukrainian perspective, the issue of NATO enlargement has to be so carefully managed.

Conclusion: The way forward

At least from the perspective of the aspirant Central European countries, the process of NATO and EU enlargement has not been fast. The underlying causes for the difficulties and obstacles facing enlargement, which were first exposed by the Yugoslav conflict, were analysed in chapter 1. The war in Yugoslavia highlighted the institutional weaknesses in NATO and the EU in two critical areas. First, the war demonstrated how difficult it currently is for NATO and EU member states to reach common positions upon which joint action can be agreed. In the post-Cold War era, national interests and objectives are increasingly diverging which directly weakens the capacity of quasi-supranational institutions, such as NATO and the EU, to define a collective purpose and will. Second, the war revealed the urgent need for internal reform of NATO and the EU if they are to meet the security demands of the post-Cold War era. In particular, the challenge for both these institutions has been to consolidate the principle of solidarity, which is the foundation for effective joint action, with the requirement of greater operational flexibility, which is essential for managing the more fluid post-Cold War political and security situation. In general, NATO has moved more effectively and swiftly than the EU to find a solution to this challenge.

Despite these obstacles, however, substantial progress has been made in the promotion of eastward enlargement. Details of the various proposals and measures taken by NATO, the EU, and the WEU in furthering the process of eastward enlargement are covered in chapter 2. The momentum for this dynamic has been sustained by three main factors. First, there is the simple question of credibility. Having made repeated promises that enlargement will take place, the credibility of these western institutions, and their respective members states, would be critically damaged by a direct refusal to countenance further expansion. Second, although eastward

enlargement potentially involves significant political and economic costs, maintaining the old East-West division in Europe is widely considered to be even more unacceptable. Third, and perhaps of greatest significance, is that the most powerful states in the EU and NATO, Germany and the United States, have been the most committed towards NATO and EU enlargement. As is argued in chapter 3, the post-Cold War reunified Germany has emerged as the most powerful and influential European state and its commitment to both NATO and EU eastward enlargement has been critical. US support for NATO enlargement has likewise maintained the dynamic of expansion.

In an ideal world, it would be best if NATO and the EU were to take on new members from Central and Eastern Europe at the same time and at the same pace. However, the reality is that NATO has emerged as the clear front runner in making substantive offers to aspirant members in the East. The causes for this were addressed in chapter 2. One factor is that membership of the EU requires the fulfilment of a more complex and demanding set of conditions, the so-called *acquis communautaire*, than is required for NATO membership. However, a more important cause of the EU's relative slowness of response is that, in comparison to NATO, the EU has a more ambitious reform agenda, including the establishment of European Monetary Union, which has tended to relegate the issue of eastward enlargement. In addition, the EU has been as yet unwilling to grasp the difficult, and politically sensitive, issues which would inevitably arise from the accession of up to ten new members from Central and Eastern Europe.

NATO is, therefore, set to make the first substantive move towards accepting new members from Central and Eastern Europe. It is expected that at the Madrid Summit in July 1997, the first candidates will be identified and will be invited to participate in the negotiations for full membership. This landmark summit will have to make a number of sensitive and difficult choices, the ramifications of which will be the focus of considerable political and diplomatic activity. This final section will seek to address the most important and controversial of these choices and decisions. These include: Who and when to accept first members? What are the practical

implications of such a decision, particularly as regards the provision of security guarantees and the attendant financial costs and military obligations? How can one minimise the negative reaction from Moscow and ensure that Russia accepts the logic of enlargement? What to do about the countries of Central and Eastern Europe which are not accepted for membership in the first instance? What role can the EU play in developing its enlargement process and its relations with Central and Eastern Europe?

Who and when to take new members?

It is fairly clear that the front runners for the first tranche of members into NATO are Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary. Slovakia, the remaining Visegrad country, has effectively ruled itself out by its turn towards authoritarian government, its poor economic record, and its failure to subordinate the military to democratic control. In Slovakia's place, Slovenia might be promoted in the first group of members, since its political and economic record is excellent and even Russia does not object to its membership of NATO.

The next question is whether NATO would take these three Visegrad countries and Slovenia as one bloc or whether they might be treated on a case-by-case basis with one or two of them being accepted for negotiations before the other(s). However, whatever strategy is adopted, it is clear that the political impetus is for the negotiations for membership to be concluded by the 50th anniversary of NATO in 1999. It should also be remembered that the national parliaments of all 16 of the Allies have to ratify the accession of new members, so the timetable is quite tight.

One critical question which will arise after NATO has identified its candidate members is how the EU will respond. After NATO's decision, the pressure on the EU will inevitably grow to identify its new candidate members and to accelerate the process of enlargement. Those countries which have been offered membership of NATO will certainly make more forceful their representation for complementary EU membership. However,

a number of countries who are unlikely to be asked to join NATO, and who will feel bitter about their exclusion, will seek compensation from the EU. Scandinavian countries in the EU, like Denmark and Finland, have already been pressing for the EU to consider the Baltic states in its first tranche of members so as to alleviate the Baltic sense of insecurity in the eventuality of a NATO enlargement which excludes them.

What commitments and obligations will NATO and the new members be required to adopt?

The NATO Enlargement Study left this issue relatively open, requiring candidate states not to exclude *a priori* the stationing of foreign troops and nuclear weapons on their territory. However, the study did emphasise that the French and Spanish options of refusing to join NATO's military command structure was not open to aspirant members. Nevertheless, given the need to minimise the financial and political costs to NATO member states and to convince Russia of the logic of enlargement, it is probable that the commitments will not be very extensive. It seems highly unlikely that nuclear weapons or foreign troops will be stationed on the territory of the new members. This was confirmed at the December 1996 NATO ministerial meeting when it was stated that NATO had no plans for such deployment. NATO will also undoubtedly seek to reassure Russia that enlargement will not involve the militarisation of the eastern borders of these states. In addition, given that NATO is in the process of drastically reducing its command structures, it is almost certain that no new NATO Commands will be designated for the territory of the new members.

Such a relatively low-key extension of NATO into the potential new members is not solely for Russia's benefit. It would also have the advantage of reducing the financial costs, for both the existing and candidate members, of the process of enlargement. NATO has not itself provided any costings of enlargement since that would involve an assumption of who those new members are. However, specialists from Rand have

provided some estimates, ranging from \$10-20bn for the provision by NATO of self-defence support to the new member states to \$55-110bn for full forward presence of NATO.⁵¹ Clearly, NATO enlargement with associated costs closer to the lower end of the scale would be politically more attractive to NATO governments which are, in any case, under considerable domestic pressure to contain or reduce defence costs.

What to do with Russia?

Russia will inevitably loom large over the Madrid 1997 Summit. As argued in chapter 3, there is an almost universal Russian consensus in opposition to NATO expansion and Moscow has indicated a number of anti-Western policies it might adopt, if NATO enlargement takes place. It is clearly in the West's and NATO's interest to ensure that Russia does not adopt these policies and generally to minimise the extent of Moscow's negative reaction to any NATO decision to take on new members.

However, it is difficult to see how NATO can fully accommodate Moscow's concerns. The present approach of arguing that NATO enlargement is in Russia's as well as the West's interest, since it entrenches stability in Central Europe, is not a fruitful avenue to explore. This argument simply cuts no ice in Moscow and will not weaken Russian opposition.

Another more effective avenue is for Western governments to confirm and demonstrate the non-threatening and limited nature of NATO enlargement. In part, this requires the kind of reassurances that have already been made that nuclear weapons and foreign troops will not be moving closer to Russia's borders. In part, it involves NATO leaders explaining the internal reforms that are being implemented within NATO, which are aimed at transforming the alliance from a monolithic anti-Soviet military machine to a more flexible and open-ended structure, which can even permit the participation of Russian forces such as in IFOR/SFOR.

But, NATO governments also need to grapple with how to reassure

Russia that NATO is not engaged in a rolling process of expansion which is aimed at encircling Russia. One solution would be to state that there will be no further accessions to NATO after the first candidates are selected. However, this would be a difficult position for NATO to adopt given its commitment that accepting new members would not prejudice the claims of the other Central and Eastern European states. Nevertheless, it could still be made clear that further accessions will only be considered after a lengthy period of time, since NATO can only gradually absorb the new members it has taken on. To satisfy Russia further, it would be important to break the perceived linkage between PFP and NATO membership, since this gives the impression in Moscow that NATO intends to pursue a gradual process of encirclement right up to Russia's borders.

A complementary avenue for seeking to placate Russia is through giving greater substance to the NATO-Russia relationship. The importance of NATO developing its own individual relationship with Russia, reflecting Russia's weight and influence in European security affairs, has been recognised ever since the Brussels 1994 summit. However, progress in developing this relationship has not been good. In May 1995, a framework for Enhanced NATO-Russia Dialogue and Co-operation was signed in Moscow but this was a fairly anodyne document and has not provided the dynamic for substantive negotiations. Progress has also been inhibited by a Russian reluctance to engage in such negotiations whilst its opposition to NATO enlargement was ignored. However, after the December 1996 ministerial meeting, Russia indicated that it had now accepted that enlargement was going to take place and that it was willing to engage more intensively in discussions over a renewed NATO-Russian relationship, even though its principled opposition to NATO enlargement remained steadfast.

There have been numerous ideas for how to give greater substance to the NATO-Russia relations. There have variously been ideas of a non-aggression pact, a NATO-Russia Charter and a "committee of 17", grouping NATO's full members and Russia.⁵² All these suggestions seek to give Russia a real voice in European security matters but without endangering the independent decision-making of NATO. In a recent book, Christoph

Bertram has provided an interesting variant of how a Russia-NATO relationship might be constructed.⁵³ He argues that a committee, a declaration, or even a treaty is not adequate; instead, there must be established a full-blown institution involving Russia on the one side and NATO on the other. The possible features of this institution would include: The Secretary-General of NATO and a Russian counterpart to act as chief co-ordinating officers, responsible to a Council of Ministers, consisting of the Russian Foreign and Defence Ministers and their Western counterparts chosen by rotation within NATO, and to a Committee of Permanent Representatives. A Military Committee of representatives of the Russian Defence Ministry and the NATO Military Committee to act as the permanent group for exchanging information on military planning and military operations, as well as preparing joint operations, including peacekeeping. A Nuclear Planning Group to address issues of de-nuclearisation and nuclear proliferation. An Arms Control Working Group to look at ways to implement the arms control agenda, including the issue of arms exports. A Parliamentary Contact Group to bring together, on a regular basis, a delegation of the North Atlantic Assembly, and the Russian Duma.

Bertram's radical suggestions indicate, however, the difficulties and pitfalls of establishing a more permanent institutionalised structure for a NATO-Russia relationship. If a forum something along the lines suggested by Bertram were to be established, the West might gain greater influence over Russian actions and policies but the *quid pro quo* is that Russia would also be able to influence NATO's policies and decisions. The latter eventuality would lead many, particularly in Central and Eastern Europe, to perceive the proposed forum as a NATO-Russia condominium. But, on the other hand, Russia would not be fully satisfied by such a forum because it does not provide the amount of "voice" it seeks. Perceiving itself as a Great Power in Europe, Russia will not be satisfied with purely consultative arrangements, however institutionalised they might be, but wants a "voice" which has real powers to initiate and veto proposals. This is an arrangement the West will not accept.

Nevertheless, the experience of the Contact Group for the former

Yugoslavia indicates the extent to which Russian inclusion as a participating Great Power flatters Russian pride and overcomes its anxieties to be treated as an equal in European security matters. There is much mileage to be gained from providing the formal appearance of such inclusion and equality, even if the reality is a more elevated form of consultation.

What to do with the other excluded Central and Eastern European states?

The Baltic States and Ukraine, which face genuine security threats given their problematic relations with Russia, would undoubtedly be adversely affected by any NATO decision to enlarge. It is difficult to see what could be done to resolve their security dilemma which is not itself dependent on the success of a NATO-Russia *rapprochement*. Further Western statements of their commitment to the political independence and territorial sovereignty of these countries would help. Also, convincing these countries that PFP provides real security guarantees, if not to the extent of article 5, could go some way to alleviate their fears. There are also certain measures which could be taken to enhance PFP, which would make Partners more directly involved in NATO decision making such as permitting them to participate directly in NATO Commands rather than through the Partnership Coordination Cell. However, realistically, none of these moves can fully compensate for the failure to attain the security prize of article 5.

What role can the EU play?

However, there is a potentially vital role that the EU could play to ameliorate the sense of exclusion and insecurity in the Baltic states and Ukraine. One option is that, in the aftermath of the Baltic states' failure to join NATO, one or more of these states could be included in the first tranche of

EU members. Estonia is the country sometimes identified as a potential initial candidate, given its relatively healthy economic condition. In the case of Ukraine, the EU could go much further in opening its markets to Ukrainian goods and in providing financial assistance. The EU's present record in this regard is deplorable, with most Ukrainian exports deemed to be "sensitive" and facing formidable trade barriers. As a result, half of Ukraine's exports continue to flow to Russia. The EU's failure to commit itself to Ukraine can also be seen in the fact that, of \$5bn provided in financial assistance to Ukraine in 1995, the net contribution of the EU was \$30m.⁵⁴ In reality, there exists an economic iron curtain separating the CIS countries from the rest of Europe which the EU should seek to dismantle. In so doing, this would be the most concrete step that could be taken to support Ukraine's determination to balance its relations between Russia and the West.

However, particularly in the case of Ukraine, Russia has the political will, and multiple levers at its disposal, to exert pressure on Kiev to align its policies with Moscow. If Russia were to respond negatively to NATO enlargement, it seems unlikely that Moscow will tolerate Ukraine's continuing independent stance towards the CIS. If only for the future fate of Ukraine, this should engender caution in the West as to how it manages the process of NATO enlargement.

Notes

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⁵ For discussion of NATO's post-Cold War "new strategic concept" see Clive Archer, *Organising Europe: The Institutions of Integration* (London: Edward Arnold, 1994), pp. 232-3

⁶ See Philip H. Gordon, "Recasting the Atlantic Alliance", *Survival*, 38:1, Spring 1996.

⁷ For a more extensive analysis of the CJTF concept, see Charles Barry, "NATO's Combined Joint Task Forces in Theory and Practice", *Survival*, 38:1, Spring 1996.

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⁹ Strobe Talbot, "Why NATO should Grow", *New York Review of Books*, 10 August 1995.

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¹¹ "President Havel's Address to the NATO Council", *NATO Review*, April 1991, pp. 31-5. Contrast with Havel's suggestion of dissolving NATO along with the Warsaw Pact a year earlier in Vaclav Havel, "The Future of Central Europe", *The New York Review of Books*, 29 March 1990.

¹² Volker Rühle in his Alastair Buchan Memorial Lecture, 26 March 1993, at the International Institute for Strategic Studies in London. See also Klaus Kinkel in *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 6 March 1993.

¹³ Richard P. Lugar, "NATO: Out of Area or Out of Business", press release, 2 August 1993. For a good analysis of the US debate at this time, see Stanley Kolber, "The United States and the Enlargement Debate", *Transition*, 15 December 1995.

¹⁴ Joint Russian-Polish Declaration of 25 August 1993 in *Diplomaticheskii Vestnik*, 17-18, 1993, pp.14-6.

¹⁵ See *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents*, 30:2, pp. 41-2.

¹⁶ A condensed version of the Enlargement Study can be found in "NATO Rationalises its Eastward Enlargement", *Transition*, 15 December 1995.

¹⁷ Ambassador Hunter, "NATO and the Partnership for Peace", *United States Information Service Press Release*, 17 January 1996.

¹⁸ Christopher Bobinski, "Poles await the starting gun to begin race for EU Entry", *Financial Times*, 10 July 1995.

¹⁹ Christoph Bertram, *Europe in the Balance* (Washington D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1995), p.55.

²⁰ Note the increasingly eurosceptic views of the Czech prime minister Vaclav Klaus in Vincent Boland, "Is the EU good enough for the Czechs?", *Financial Times*, 2 August 1995.

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²⁶ For example, the former US Ambassador to Poland, R. T. Davies and 17 other State Department officials, including Paul Nitze and Jack Matlock, have promoted this WEU alternative to NATO enlargement, see R. T. Davies, "Should NATO Grow? - A Dissent", *New York Review of Books*, 21 September 1995.

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³⁵ Sam Nunn, "The Future of NATO in an Uncertain World", *Vital Speeches of the Day*, 15 July 1995.

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³⁹ David Fairhall, "No NATO Queue-Jumping, Says MPs", *Guardian*, 10 August 1995.

⁴⁰ For a good analysis of this, see Neil Malcolm, "The New Russian Foreign Policy", *The World Today*, February 1994.

⁴¹ See Michael Mihalka, "Restructuring European Security", *Transition*, 30 June 1995 p. 6.

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⁴³ Full text of the decree can be seen in *Rossiiskaya gazeta*, 23 September 1995.

⁴⁴ Thomas S. Szayna, "Central European Defence Industries and NATO Enlargement", *Rand Report*, January 1996.

⁴⁵ *Guardian*, 1 February 1996.

⁴⁶ *OMRI Daily Digest*, 19 April 1995.

⁴⁷ *Interfax*, 5 April 1995.

⁴⁸ *Independent*, 16 March 1996.

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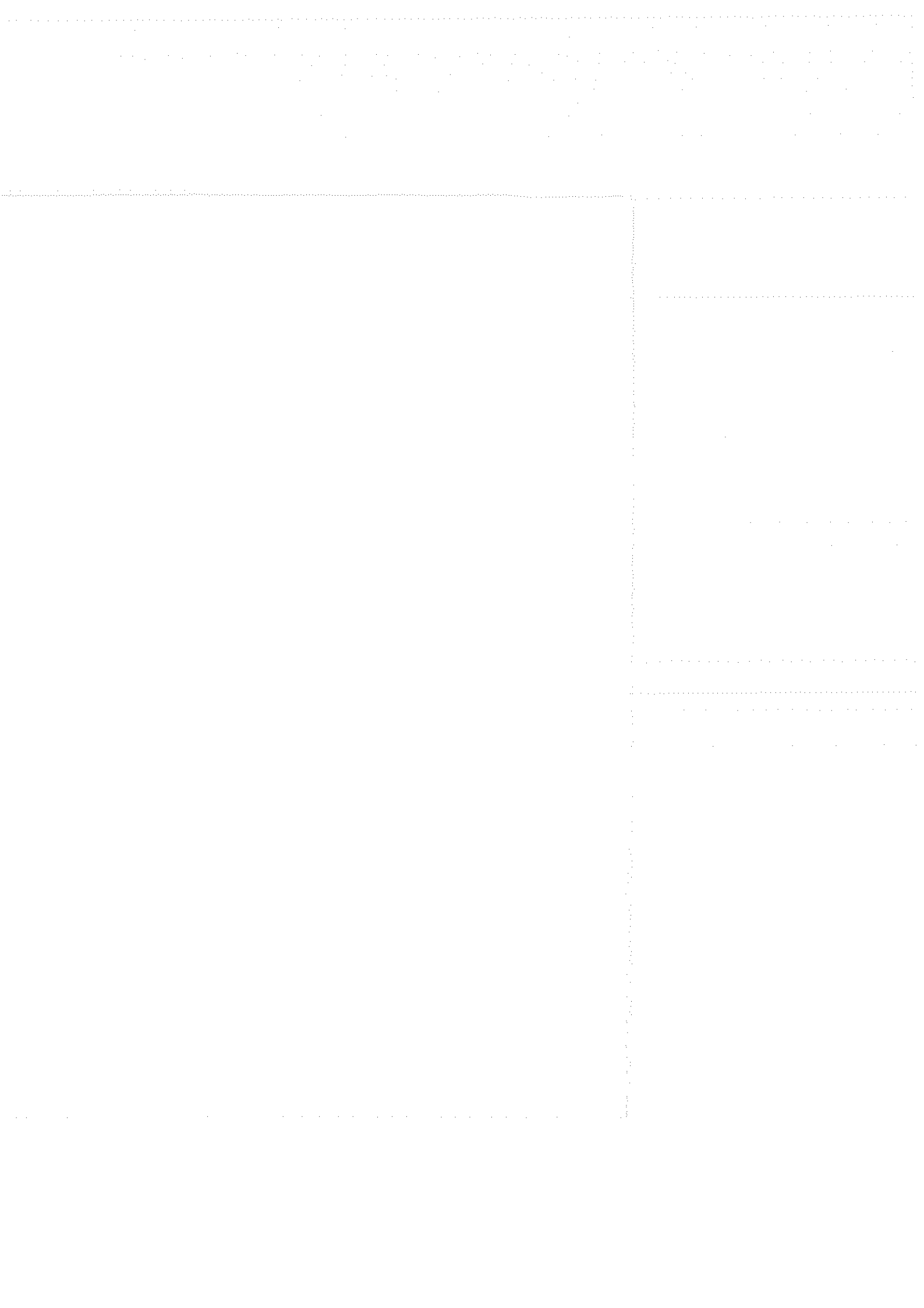
⁵⁰ Anders Aslund, "Behind the New Iron Curtain in Europe", *Financial Times*, 23 January 1996.

⁵¹ Ronald D. Asmus, Richard L. Kugler and F. Stephen Larrabee, "What will NATO Enlargement Cost?", *Survival*, 38:3, 1996.

⁵² For the EU Foreign ministers call for a non-aggression pact, see *International Herald Tribune*, 20 March 1996; for Secretary of State Christopher's suggestion of a charter, see "Speech in Stuttgart", *US Information Service*, 6 September 1996; for German suggestions of a "committee of 13", see *Financial Times*, 6 January 1997.

⁵³ Christoph Bertram, *Europe in the Balance* (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1995), pp.36-7.

⁵⁴ Anders Aslund, "Behind the New Iron Curtain in Europe", *Financial Times*, 23 January 1996.



Eastward enlargement

With the peaceful revolutions of 1989, the Central and East European countries reunified a Europe which had been divided throughout the Cold War. It has been natural that most of these states have demanded and have, in principle, been promised membership of the two institutions which have been perceived to be the foundations of Western Europe's security and prosperity - NATO and the EU. However, progress towards NATO and EU enlargement has been fraught with difficulties and obstacles. This study analyses the major constraints against enlargement, focusing on the difficulties that NATO and the EU have faced in adapting themselves to the post-Cold War strategic environment. The study also evaluates the progress that has nevertheless been made and assesses the future prospects for enlargement, focusing in particular on the implications of the expected NATO decision to be the first to invite new members to join the organisation.

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