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The Effects of NATO and EU Enlargement

Summary

The enlargement to the East decided upon by the NATO countries in Madrid in July of 1997 represents an important contribution to the stabilisation of the Central and Eastern European postcommunist countries, based on the premise that in spite of the ending of the Cold War the geopolitical interests and objectives of the Western European countries and the USA in Europe still differ substantially from those of Russia and that the creation of a comprehensive European security architecture can only be regarded as a desirable distant goal. The initiation of the process of the enlargement of NATO prevents the formation of a security policy "grey zone" in central and eastern Europe which would have included the danger of new "hegemonial contests" in Europe. Russian fears of an increasing strengthening of "American dominance in Europe" in the course of NATO enlargement to the East might be alleviated by a further deepening and expanding of the NATO program Partnership for Peace (PfP+).

Since contrary to the EU, NATO also is a military order power which assists its members militarily in case of threat, EU enlargement, from the viewpoint of the central and eastern European post-communist countries, cannot be regarded as a substitute for NATO enlargement but only as a supplement to it. The Western European Union, as the future military arm of the EU, can only be used militarily in a meaningful way within the framework of the structure of the Combined Joint Task Forces created by NATO and will therefore in the longer term have to resort to the resources of the North Atlantic Alliance.

Introduction

The enlargement of NATO with the inclusion of Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary decided during the NATO summit in Madrid of July 8-9, 1997, is one of the most important events of security policy since the end of the so-called Cold War. NATO faced the difficult task of acknowledging the legitimate security interests of the young democracies of Central and Eastern Europe and, at the same time, not arousing Russia's distrust, i.e. avoiding to create the impression that Central and Eastern Europe would once again – this time very much to Russia's disadvantage – be divided. The limitation of NATO enlargement or, respectively, in any case, its first step, also brought an the danger of new dividing lines from the viewpoint of those countries, which are not at all or not in the near future to be considered as belonging to the circle of eligible applicants. These countries could feel subject to increased Russian pressure.

In order to dispel Russia's reservations, NATO suggested negotiations on a revision of the Conventional Forces in Europe Treaty (CFE), to accommodate Russian wishes for a new definition of national and territorial upper limits (see chapter 4.3). Likewise, in March 1997, an offer was made to Russia for negotiations on a new agreement for nuclear disarmament (Start III), which could accommodate Russia also in the area of nuclear armament. Finally, Russia's inclusion into the circle of the leading industrial nations, G-8 instead of G-7, was offered, and lastly, a certain inclusion of Moscow into the politics of the North Atlantic Alliance was achieved by the NATO-Russia "Founding Act" (May 27, 1997) and the establishment of the NATO-Russia Permanent Joint Council. It can, however, not be definitely predicted whether Moscow will acknowledge these preliminary performances by constructive cooperation or whether it will use them to obstruct NATO – and, in particular, of course, its enlargement to the East – to the extent possible, by continuous new requests for "a stronger voice" in the decision process.

NATO has officially left the door open for further enlargement rounds. The rejected countries, NATO in the meantime counts 12 candidates for membership in total -, have been given the prospect of a continuation of the admittance process. Already in 1999 (which at present seems very unlikely again) the next enlargement step is to be discussed. (At present, however, it seems that there will be no debate or decision on the nomination of new candidates in 1999 – it seems more likely that these decisions will be postponed for three to four years.)

This perspective for the Central and Eastern European countries is at the same time a strain on the relations with Moscow. Russian politicians and writers continue to point out that Moscow has not at all accepted NATO enlargement but has to acquiesce to it for the time being. Further rounds of NATO enlargement, however, they warn, would lead to a strong worsening of relations and "force" new priorities in Russia's security and defense policy. Individual countries, among them especially France and Italy, had requested – much to the USA's discontent – the admittance of further candidates, in particular, Romania and Slovenia, at the Madrid NATO summit in July of 1997. The selection of further countries will also in the future present potential for dispute in the alliance, as in the area of a new organization of the military structure (and especially in connection with France's consideration to reintegrate into this structure).

The current enlargement of NATO and the considerations for future enlargement steps take place with the background of the development that the alliance has evolved more and more from a primarily a defense centred alliance into a diverse, flexible instrument for measures of collective security. The restructuring of commands and the establishment of Combined Joint Task Forces (CJTF) provide instruments which build on the cooperation in the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) and the program "Partnership for Peace" (PfP).

After the last large round of enlargement of the European Union by the so far neutral or alliancefree countries Finland, Austria and Sweden, membership negotiations of the EU have now started with six of the total eleven official applicants. The enlargement policy of the European Union also has significant security policy effects. Therefore, in the following, the effects

of the enlargement of NATO as well as that of the European Union shall be studied. This concerns, in particular, their geopolitical and geostrategic significance, their relevance for NATO and the organisation of the EU itself, and, finally, the policies and politics of Russia and the relations of the great powers.

1. A Changing NATO in a Changing Political Environment

1.1 NATO as Counterbalance to Renationalization of Security Policies and Politics in Europe

NATO, which is first intended as an alliance for collective self-defense, has effected a certain hegemony of the US over Western Europe and limited the hegemonial area of the Soviet Union in Europe during the Cold War. Possibly this "keeping together" of the Western powers – as the basis for the military alliance which "held off" the Soviet imperium – could only be achieved under the aspect of a comprehensive threat to the West (i.e. the not only military and political, but also economic and social challenge on the part of the communist Soviet Union). After its falling away, also the need to secure the "keeping together" has become significantly weaker.

As before, NATO fulfils important functions, even if the original "official" main function as defense alliance seems to have been lost for the time being and, therefore, the question of further development has arisen. As long as NATO continues to exist with its strong structures, it prevents the return to a complete renationalization of the Western Europeans and makes power politics more difficult in the whole European sphere; in particular, because with Germany it includes the European power which (if it should want that), both due to its economic significance as well as with regard to its geographic position, would be at present the only Western European country able to carry out effective power and alliance politics in Eastern Europe.

After reunion, Germany clearly is the most important Western European country according to population and economic strength, and after the collapse of the Soviet Union it has new freedom to act in the East and the South East, which opens the door for speculations on the future role of Germany. Thus the presence of the USA in Europe is a necessity for some, in order not to be subjected to the future hegemony of Germany (and at the same time also in order to be spared new Russian ambitions). For some South Eastern Europeans, however, (a restrengthening) Germany represents the hope for a continental counterbalance to Russia since Germany is acknowledged for a higher interest in Central Europe and the Balkans than the USA.

NATO as before represents a certain military reassurance for its members and offers the basis for a return of increased US forces to Europe in the case of a change in the situation; NATO remains the connecting link between the USA and Western Europe in security policy and provides the USA. with the opportunity to participate in European politics. It can also be worded like this: the far reaching military withdrawal of the USA from Europe creates the impression as if NATO were an alliance with the function of a reserve. It

worked in former times and it still has capable structures as before; something like that is not given up easily.

A decisive component for further development opportunities of the alliance is, of course, the situation of USA interests for and in Europe. On the basis of the conception that the USA has of its global leadership role for the democratic countries – in its own view, as a pioneer for values such as democracy and human rights – , a basic interest in Europe remains at least for the time being, and NATO is the anchor of European and Atlantic stability in this. The definitive interests of the USA in Europe will, in the end, not only result from the further development of Russia and the thus ensuing opportunities of strategic cooperation with this country, but also from developments in east Asia; they will, therefore, concretely also be determined by the role of China and Japan. The USA attempts to achieve global objectives setting by cooperation and balancing of interests with various partners, in which the development of the Chinese-Russian and the Russian-Japanese relations will play a substantial part.

1.2 NATO Today – a Global or a Regional Alliance?

NATO is in a phase of new orientation. According to its original conception it is not missioned to carry out the tasks of a regional order establishing power for Europe and to execute limited regional or local peace support actions in the framework of an all-European security system. The "crisis in meaning" – as it is often called – of NATO causes deliberations on its future role (apart from its enlargement).

Contrary to the regional-sounding name "North Atlantic Treaty Organisation", NATO was and is to be seen primarily in a global-strategic dimension, due to the membership of the USA. Is such an alliance the suitable starting point for the solution of the security policy and order establishing tasks in Europe and for the clearing up of the security problems of the Eastern Europeans? Since the USA has the unchallenged leadership position in the alliance, it would also well be required that it understands itself as an order establishing power for the management of Eastern or South Eastern European conflicts, or, that it awards special powers for action and respective support to its European partners for dealing with these conflicts.

After the Dayton agreement (1995) there now is a regional policing and peacemaking effort in Bosnia which takes place not exclusively with European NATO troops, but with massive, direct participation of US troops and under US leadership. However, one cannot deduce from this a permanent direct engagement of the USA in European conflicts. The American engagement for a solution in Bosnia must rather be seen as an effort to prevent further conflicts arising from the war there. From this, however, it cannot be concluded that the USA intend to take over a permanent order establishing task in Europe, which the EU was not capable of achieving.

For taking over the role of a regional order establishing power, NATO, however, would still need some adaptations because it was not created for routine, limited actions in the framework of peacekeeping, peacemaking and peace enforcement.

In the present times of a dramatic reduction of military resources in Europe one can consider that, for a foreseeable time, the building of new military organisations for regional order establishing and order maintaining tasks is unlikely just for financial reasons. The really decisive cuts in the defense budgets and the forces in the Western European countries at present definitely make the construction of new military structures in Europe impossible. For the foreseeable future, there can only be a further development of what exists, and in the military area only NATO offers itself for this. The conditions for starting have been created – so, e.g., the PfP provides for various cooperation and training programs in the areas of peace support and disaster relief.

The development of the EU into a defense organisation is to be considered only as a long term perspective, and, because of that, in the short term only NATO remains as the basis for a European (military) order establishing and order maintaining policy. This basis will not be NATO as a whole, but an element newly to be created within the alliance which would thus become two dimensional: one of the two dimensions is global. One level below NATO then receives a regional-European dimension for non-strategic tasks, which primarily would have to be solved by the European members (with differing support by the USA, depending on the cause). – One of the most important internal tasks of NATO in the next years will consist of exploring the political and institutional consequences connected with the establishment of this new European pillar within the transatlantic alliance, which includes also the definition of the future role of the WEU and of multi-national forces such as the Euro-Corps. The USA (and Canada) will finally agree to this development: also the USA needs a partner for representing its interests in the world because it cannot manage everything on its own.

From these points of view, the question of NATO enlargement is also a decision on the path for a possible further development of the alliance in the direction of a (also) Europe-oriented order power. The measures for a reform of NATO clearly point in this direction.

1.3 New Tasks by the Reform of NATO

The fundamental changes both of the political as well as of the military framework conditions in Europe (and beyond that also world-wide) have not gone by without leaving a trace in NATO. It was fully aware since the times of the big change in Eastern Europe that it would have to adjust its structures to the new situation, and it has also defined this in its resolutions of the summits in London (1990) and Rome (1991). Since then it is in a process of transformation.

In parallel, however, also the development of the EU must be considered. With the treaty of Maastricht, signed in 1992, CFSP was brought to life. Its final shape is not clear yet, but the political objectives exist, and from them a common defense policy and even a common defense could emerge some day.

However, it has to be noted especially, that the WEU has become a central component of the development of the EU: it was declared the military arm of the EU. Since then, there are strong signs of life from the WEU with the objective to really make it an effective military organisation. The WEU now

has a double function. On the one hand it shall represent the defense component of the EU, and on the other hand it shall form a stronger European pillar within NATO.

Due to the new conditions in Europe, NATO should in the future be able to perform two functions: first, "crisis fire brigade" (as the new main task), and second, carrying out all order establishing and order maintaining tasks in Eastern Europe. NATO can only to a very limited degree fulfil these tasks with its old structures which were designed for counteracting a Soviet attack. Therefore, the CJTF concept was established, which provides a framework for putting together appropriate headquarters for various operations (also outside the NATO area, the so called "out-of-area" operations) for the purpose of peacekeeping, peacemaking and peace enforcement. Such operations will be based on the integrated structure of NATO, but are not necessarily carried out by it as such.

It has already taken two and a half years until agreement on the principles of the CJTFs was reached in the NATO ministerial council in Berlin in June of 1996. The problems have not all been solved yet, but at least an enormous progress of NATO is to be seen in the fact that the USA accepts military operations of the Europeans with NATO resources under WEU leadership. If the NATO Council agrees, the WEU shall undertake peacekeeping, humanitarian or peacemaking missions outside the area of the alliance, and can use or, respectively, receive equipment as well as support from NATO.

Through the CJTFs it shall be made possible that the countries especially interested in a peace mission can put together a common force, which forms itself within the framework of NATO and can use structures of NATO. Such operations can take place under the command of the WEU within the framework of NATO.

Also after an agreement on a concept for realisation of the CJTFs it does not yet say how this will work in real life. This will depend on whether a sufficient common will to take action will exist. It will be easier to find a common will if not all members have to participate in an operation. For legitimising an operation, up to now the UN (Security Council) and/or the OSCE have always been considered. This situation is unsatisfactory in the case of an acute need for action, and requires a new starting point for a solution, which, e.g., could consist of a legitimisation by the EU.

An additional problem arises with operations in which the USA do not want to participate. Why should the USA grant considerable military aid (air transport, satellite reconnaissance and planning capacities, possibly even the lending and providing of fighting means), of which the Europeans have none or too few, for these operations? If all or individual European NATO partners want to form a kind of European order establishing and order maintaining power and can rely on full American support, then vice-versa there will well have to be a support of the Europeans for the Americans in their global activities. Why should rich Europe on its part take the USA under obligation for help for its own actions but remain passive in the other case, when problems in other regions of the world are at stake, which disrupt international order or, respectively, could create new power relations?

conditions to the disadvantage of the West? The Europeans and their part should, e.g., at least for actions in the area of the Middle East, be willing, ready, and participate in case of need in direct military actions. It is difficult to say whether the Europeans would actually be willing to do that in the foreseeable future, because its politicians currently lack the will to deal with threats at a distance, which could, at some time, influence also their own situation negatively.

2. The Arguments in the Enlargement Debate

The earlier argumentation – and probably also the one valid in the future – for and against the enlargement of NATO are to be seen with the background of the respective intentions and objectives, or, respectively, the arguments are often only comprehensible in connection with the motivation.

2.1 Intention and Objective

Political intentions and the pursuance of certain interests often overlay political analyses. This mingling of political motivation and security policy aspects is often done in such a way that one central problem is considered as the issue to be resolved. The aspects and implications of NATO enlargement are then evaluated according to how they affect the solution of the (presumed) central problem – and then you have the desired result.

If the central problem is the structuring of a total European peace order with the inclusion of Russia, the result of the evaluation of the NATO enlargement is clear from the beginning: according to enlargement opponents, enlargement could lead to a new confrontation with Russia, promote anti-Western reflexes within Russia and bring about a solidification of new East-West conflict structures. Since not all Eastern European countries can be admitted immediately, the countries not admitted would again come under Moscow's influence. NATO enlargement would be the relapse into the thinking categories of the Cold War, and Europe would again be divided into blocs. – Viewed like this, NATO enlargement would contradict not only Russia's interests but also those of the West: it cannot desire a new division of Europe and new confrontations. The support of the Russian reform and transformation process by avoidance of signs for an isolation of Russia on the one hand and the consolidation of the development towards free-market economies in the East-European post-communist countries by their integration into the EU on the other hand would thus be a sufficient alternative to NATO enlargement.

Such considerations which are based on the central positioning of the problem of establishing a total, comprehensive European peace order including Russia, however, have a decisive weak point: they drastically exaggerate the relevance of external factors – and, concretely, of the West for Russian internal politics and for the internal balance of power of the political elite; it is, in fact, minimal. In addition, such a "total European peace order" centring and an inclusion of Russia is in reality not planable by the West – it is beyond its capabilities for carrying it out. Expectations, or respectively, hopes that Moscow would on its own part renounce the formation of a new

or, respectively, extended hegemonial area, are not covered in real Russian politics (not only in the CIS).

Other central starting points for an evaluation of NATO enlargement are the development of the alliance and its inner cohesion. – It needs new missions to survive; enlargement to the East could create a meaning. With regard to inner cohesion, enlargement can, however, endanger the coherence of the alliance and dilute its objective. Thus, simultaneously, the survival capability of NATO is argued with the enlargement and, in contrary to it, it is stated that it can only continue to exist in its present form. In this, of course, the respective tasks and functions NATO is allowed, are to be considered.

The complex subject of NATO enlargement requires a complex way of consideration instead of an argument oriented an details. A successful evaluation also presumes that one is clear an the tasks and capabilities of NATO in the future. For NATO, the question of its enlargement is above all a strategic decision.

Yet the debate is rarely waged in its geopolitical dimension but is most of the time oriented towards a political motivation or towards the (happy making) perception of a new European security architecture. Some arguments only raise confusion which sometimes is the intention In order to promote political goals, which are not considered as being favourable if openly admitted.

An example for that, which also according to its nature touches strategic dimensions, is: NATO cannot admit all post-communist countries of Central, Eastern and Southern Europe at once; by the limited enlargement, however, Russia would be challenged and would tend to consider the not admitted NATO applicants as not being located in the area of protection of NATO. The limited enlargement would, therefore, also be the reason for such a development, which, in addition would strengthen the position of the nationalists and imperialists in Russia. The counterargument to this is that the renunciation of NATO enlargement – since this would be interpreted as "consideration" of Russia's interests -would provide the hardliners with enormous stature, because it has become evident that strong politics against NATO enlargement is successful; and this would in turn really encourage Russia to extend its area of dominance ambitiously. Certainly both arguments can be made but both cannot be correct.

2.2 The Cons of Enlargement

It would be more confusing than helpful to enter into the wide and diversified argumentation against NATO enlargement in detail, but before a comprehensive, complex evaluation of the aspects of NATO enlargement is made, the most important arguments existing in the intellectual spectrum of opinions of the critics of enlargement shall be summarised here (and critically evaluated at the same time).

The issue is the establishment of a European peace order with the inclusion of Russia. A system of collective security for Europe is to be aspired for. – Both goals are not realistic.

The strengthening of collective security, i.e. of the OSCE, is to have priority; NATO enlargement would weaken the further development of the OSCE and also endanger armament limitation and disarmament agreements. – The OSCE cannot enforce security. The disarmament agreements were based on a firm behaviour toward Moscow and not on backing off. Russia has in part openly violated the original limitations of the CFE (as, e.g., by the invasion of Chechnya in December of 1994) without triggering any reactions by the West worth mentioning.

The security of the Eastern Europeans is not increased by NATO enlargement since Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary are not threatened, while exposed countries (as, e.g., the Baltic states) cannot be admitted due to the fundamental Russian opposition in this case. – The wish for enlargement does not come from the West, it comes from the Eastern Europeans. The longer Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania cannot join NATO, the more one will be willing in Moscow to surmise a Western recognition of the Baltics as part of the Russian sphere of interest.

The enlargement to the East would mean the return to old patterns of confrontation and would, therefore, not bring stability and security for Central and Eastern Europe. Renunciation of the enlargement, however, creates an open space of competing forces and would, therefore, bring increased instability.

NATO enlargement to the East would narrow Russia's "breathing space", establish a new dividing line in Europe and isolate Russia. – The – geographically – largest country in the world cannot be isolated, and, – if Russia becomes an open democracy – , there also cannot be a dividing line; if not, then the further East the dividing line is, the better.

Instead of NATO enlargement, first (or only) the EU should be enlarged, because also this brings a "win" in security but no (or at least less) confrontation with Russia. – The EU, as is well known, is no defense organisation; it would offer, e.g., the Baltic states only a little more in actual security. In addition, Russia has by no means agreed to an EU enlargement under all circumstances – on the contrary, her representatives always repeat that this is only sustainable if her trade and economic interests in Eastern Europe (e.g. in the energy market sector) remain untouched. Should the EU develop increasingly also into an organisation relevant in terms of security policy, it would additionally only be a matter of time until Moscow would voice massive reservations against its enlargement to the East – just as is the case with NATO.

Enlargement would put NATO to a final test due to the diverging interests and evaluations of the situation. By this, the existence of NATO would be threatened. – NATO cannot avoid a decision process on its future role; without a willingness to change, the alliance would eventually cease to exist in any case.

A large number of arguments against NATO enlargement pertains to the (genuine or presumed) concern over the future of the alliance; e.g., that NATO, the larger it would get, the less effective it would be, or, that the defense guarantee would be diluted, if it would be (unrealistically) expanded to far distant countries. With respect to this, it can only be repeated that

NATO (if it wants to fulfil its function in a changed environment) must continue to develop – and that is with or without enlargement. But many arguments against NATO enlargement can also be used against the existence of NATO itself and create the impression as if it were intended to make it as difficult as possible for NATO. With some cynicism one could attribute to some critics the following way of thinking: In the East-West should therefore get a second chance confrontation Moscow has not been able to bring Western Europe to its knees; it should therefore get a second chance.

The argumentation based on a Russian aggression being improbable to begin with, would have to be raised not only against NATO enlargement to the East but would also challenge the right of existence of the alliance itself, even more: why maintain complex defense structures and continue to develop them and design a complex security architecture at all, if the potential aggressor does not exist?

Some points of criticism (against enlargement) raised in the West repeat Russian positions in part or in total. In general, the counterarguments tend towards (at least) a delay of the enlargement which is in any case in Russian interest. Many counterarguments are also based on the assumption that the peace policy opportunities for the establishment of new security structures should be taken advantage of, so that no "finalised facts" must be created by NATO enlargement. A weakness of this argumentation is that it cannot offer any credible or, respectively, realistic seeming concepts for the case of a failure of a new, idealistic "peace order".

2.3 The Pros of the Enlargement

NATO in its core function was and is a pure defense alliance; it had and has no aggressive objectives. The NATO territory was an area of inner stability and a protected area to the outside. NATO enlargement to the East would, by enlarging the area of the alliance, decrease the grey zone of the insecure and unstable space in between and would at the same time narrow the potential future hegemonial area of Russia in Europe and her geostrategic possibilities.

The limitation of the Russian sphere of influence in Europe should be regarded as positive. If Russia really becomes a democracy (which in no case depends on NATO enlargement), she would want to live together peacefully with her neighbours, without wanting to dominate them. This scenario is in no way secured; on the contrary, development in Russia, especially since 1992, has demonstrated that she is continuously going further away from Western models in politics and economics, instead of coming closer. Numerous Russian positions (among these some of official nature) indicate that Eastern and Central Eastern Europe are still claimed as a "sphere of influence" – even against the resistance of the countries there. Therefore, they should be taken out of Russian "access" as long as this is relatively easily possible. In the times of the Cold War it was often regretted that one could, alas, not help the Poles, the Hungarians, the Czech, etc., (i.e., free them from Soviet dominance) since that would have caused a war – stability had preference over freedom. Now the opportunity is there, to guarantee both: freedom and stability.

The geostrategic enclosing of Russia by NATO enlargement would not only aggravate Russia but would also essentially obstruct her later military operational capabilities. Her economic weakness has inevitably also caused draw-backs for the military possibilities of the country. Thus, by NATO enlargement Russia would lose the capability to wage a conventional war against Europe in the medium term. (It is not intended to make such an insinuation. If, however, such an insinuation is moot because Russia has no aggressive intentions anyway, then NATO enlargement is actually unproblematic.)

Finally and in the end, with all the considerations for Russia's situation, one, important factor should not be overlooked: in the area of the former satellite states of the Soviet Union it is possible to detect a latent instability, and certainly there are absolutely dangerous areas of tension there, but the potential of danger surpassing everything else is Russia herself: her internal stability is fragile; the survival of the present political system with a president of ill health as a leader is, in principal, questionable at any time, – in view of the prevailing economic crisis and a strong and self-confident opposition (which, partly, pursues radical goals as, e.g., the reestablishment of the USSR); the control over several categories of Russia's weapons of mass destruction does not seem completely ensured; substantial areas of the economy and the administration (also the executive authorities) are subverted by organised crime; the very popular calls in Russia for a "strong state" are faced by an actual decline of state power in many areas – and, above all, especially in internal security; Russia has demonstrated again and again in the CIS that she is ready and able to use force for achieving her goals; and even though she is dependent to a high degree on the West, or, respectively, the international financial organisations dominated by it – as was evident again in the crisis of the summer of 1998 which caused the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank to commit loans of 22.6 billion dollars until 1999 –, she entertains at the same time demonstratively close relations with countries like Serbia, Iran, Iraq, Cuba, etc.. In addition, – stated benevolently – the Russian interest in disarmament or, respectively, arms control seems capable of extension: in the Duma (the lower house of parliament) dominated not only by communists and nationalists, opinion is widespread that disarmament is not in line with "national interests" and is "final surrender before the West". Thus the START II treaty, signed by the USA and Russia in the beginning of 1993, is still not ratified by the Russian parliament, and Moscow wants to further "modernise" the CFE treaty to its advantage. The parliament has in fact ratified the chemical weapons convention (signed by Russia in 1993), which prohibits the development, production, storage and usage of C-weapons, in the fall of 1997, but Moscow at the same time wants money >from the West for its implementation. In addition, Moscow has again and again openly threatened breach of long existing disarmament treaties (illegal according to international law) because of NATO enlargement, – however, without raising concern or even criticism in the West.

Two essential aspects for a realistic evaluation are: the alternatives "security from Russia" (in particular for the Eastern Europeans) and "security with Russia" cannot be ignored. In addition, the factor of time must

not be overlooked: if in "in-between" Europe hegemonial areas establish themselves again, then the share of whoever becomes active first, will be larger (at the cost of who reacts – if at all). – If Russia tries to extend her area of dominance as a reaction to the already initiated NATO enlargement, she stands in front of an already narrowed field; however, if NATO enlargement takes place only as a late reaction to the visible extension of the area of Russian predominance, then, vice versa, the action area of NATO is limited from the beginning.

Even the first step for NATO enlargement would be an important contribution to stabilizing Europe, because the present situation in Central Eastern Europe is by no means unproblematic: from a historic point of view security risks have arisen from the weakness of states and >from a security vacuum. Such a vacuum at present exists in Central Eastern Europe. By vague promises of support, as the West provides at present, the situation, however, cannot be influenced. NATO membership of the post-communist countries would, however, effect an immediate stabilization and would also quite certainly guard against attempts by Russia to include these countries again into her own hegemonial area. NATO membership would also make the arising of future open conflicts – and, above all, an involvement of the present NATO applicants – improbable.

The stabilisation of Western Europe after the Second World War (by NATO, the Marshall Plan and European integration) is a model for successful policies. This is one more reason to also view NATO enlargement in connection with the enlargement of the EU.

3. The Alternative to NATO Enlargement – a Security Policy Grey Zone

The question of enlargement to the East does, however, not only concern the new order of the power structures in Europe but also raises important questions on the capability of NATO to function with regard to its core mission, joint defense. By the enlargement question also the question of structuring the defense cooperation between the USA and Western Europe was raised again, whereby the collective defense capability could be put in question in total. One consideration was that enlargement to the East would undermine and erode NATO – still capable of functioning – , which would then not be of advantage with regard to security policy, neither for the old nor for the new members. But on the other hand the continued limitation of collective defense and the obligation to assist to the present area of the treaty would probably also cause erosion since the area covered by the treaty does not seem to be subject to a threat for the foreseeable future. Enlargement to the East would put that into perspective, since threats would seem more likely (but why should one strive for that?), which would make the obligation to assist seem more realistic.

This somewhat complicated seeming consideration reflects the real "crisis of meaning" of NATO. Put to the point, this means: the present NATO area does not seem to be threatened by any direct serious military attacks for the foreseeable future; this, however, according to experience, reduces the willingness to "keep together". For NATO in fact only the "reserve" function

remains in the case of a return to the old East-West confrontation. But this will in the long term not keep it together and then it will face a possibly later recurring threat not as a "unified" alliance. Enlargement to the East would well bring more meaning to maintaining the defense capability since new members seem more endangered, which would keep the senses awake for potential threats. Then, however, the question arises whether the – likewise decreasing – resources will suffice for this expanded defense task. If no, then this means that the credibility of NATO defense up to now would be undermined.

The solution to this problem area is astonishingly simple: a defense alliance must defend what seems endangered. This, according to its own evaluation, are the post-communist countries of Eastern Europe. From the viewpoint of these countries (and probably from the total situation of interest of Central Europe) there needed to be a NATO enlargement with full defense capability. But the question was whether in the enlargement a full obligation to assist (security guarantee) can be given for the new members or whether it would result in a "softer" form of membership with a not de jure but de facto qualified obligation to assist.

Without enlargement to the East the NATO environment in Central Eastern and Eastern Europe may remain unstable and become an area of competing spheres of influence. This is hardly in NATO's interest. The question of enlargement to the East could not be rejected any longer without political strategic damage. From this reality the conclusion had to be drawn to design NATO reform to the effect that it produces a somewhat convincing solution for the Central European countries.

The question now is whether the resolutions or, respectively, declarations of intent made up to now correspond to this. The very limited first enlargement should on the one hand conform the reality of enlargement by accepting three countries which have already progressed far on the transformation path by 1999. On the other hand, this narrow limitation should signal that it is a first and not the only enlargement: the door remains open; enlargement is a process.

It remains in any case undisputed that three things were achieved: first, the limited enlargement, together with the NATO-Russia "Founding Act" as well as the establishment of the NATO-Russia Council, has kept the dialogue with Russia intact. Second, vis-a-vis those candidates which were not considered, the impression that they will definitely not be accepted was not created. Third, the first enlargement does not create any new dividing lines in Europe which could be interpreted as a division into spheres of influence, which is especially expressed by the institutionalised relation of NATO with Ukraine.

In the medium to the long term NATO enlargement to the East is also not to be evaluated as an obstruction of Russian interests, if Russia remains on the path to democracy: the future dangers for Russia herself as well as for the major part of the CIS or, respectively, its close ties to Russia will not come from Europe but from East and South Asia. Russia will one day be dependent on cooperation with Europe in order to protect her interests in the Far East. The stability of Central Europe to be expected through NATO

enlargement to the East is not a bad prerequisite for the above mentioned later cooperation.

4. NATO Enlargement and Russia

4.1 Russia's Policy Vis-a-vis NATO Enlargement

On the one hand, by the inclusion of former Central Eastern European Warsaw Pact countries in NATO Russia's self-understanding as a great power received a heavy blow in any case. On the other hand, the strategic possibilities of Russia are also curtailed by it.

The attempt to prevent the inclusion of the Visegrad countries in NATO, however, had specific geopolitical significance. The verbal assaults and threats of Russian politicians and the military in this connection, which ranged to threats of war, were therefore not surprising. The considerations from the general staff to aim nuclear short range missiles at targets in the new member states in case of NATO enlargement were also meant to be intimidating and threatening. In case of an indication of an inclusion of the Baltic states in NATO even the invasion in the Baltics was demanded in some cases.

A further area of speculation arose in connection with the question, whether Russia wanted to prevent NATO enlargement or whether she only wanted to bargain for a price as high as possible in return for quiet acceptance. Russia's policy vis-a-vis the Eastern enlargement of NATO has by some Western commentators been called an obstruction policy since she announced her rejection in a more or less aggressive form. Russian indignation over the "policy of revanche" of the West and the "lapses back to the Cold War", however, have not been verbally reciprocated but were dealt with very diplomatically in order to avoid any provocation. This conciliatory policy could, of course, also be interpreted as a weakness or indecisiveness of the West.

However, Russia's policy has again and again also demonstrated the willingness for talks. Thus at least a dialogue between NATO and Russia has come into existence. Moscow's arguments to reason its willingness to talk with NATO most recently consisted of (saying) that she wanted "to minimise the negative effects of the Western policy of NATO enlargement", in particular, therefore, the extension of the military infrastructure of NATO since this would inevitably require Russian "military policy consequences". Also, she wanted a larger voice within the out-of-area operations of NATO in the sense of a cooperative policy; at the same time, NATO should also be transformed from a military to a political organisation.

Russia's decreasing or, respectively, compressed military resources correspond to an increase of the military arsenal of NATO due to the enlargement. The disarmament steps of the West actually already carried out and planned for the future do not impress Russia sufficiently (in spite of the fact that there already was a reduction of US troops in Europe from 300,000 to 100,000 and a reduction of NATO fighter planes in Europe from approximately 6,000 to 3,800 units). For Russia, NATO enlargement was and

is a curtailment of her own possibilities and, therefore, a number of security guarantees is being demanded, including a freeze and modernization of weapons and equipment in Central and Eastern Europe.

NATO enlargement to the East in the end means the definition of new spheres of influence in Europe. Why should Russia be ready to accept an enlargement of the Western (and, in her view, US-American) sphere of influence when it means a reduction of her own sphere of influence at the same time? For Russia, NATO enlargement means a strengthening of the American leadership role in the world and the guarantee of a continued American presence in Europe. Therefore, in the attempt of determining an institutionalised relation with the West, for Russia it is significant what the determination of her position is in connection with that: according to her understanding – a great power. One wanted and wants the inclusion in decision making on global political decisions, where also the solution of the problems of the Balkans, in the Middle East, Afghanistan or Cyprus should be included; last but not least one wanted the inclusion (accomplished by now) in the group of the leading industrial nations (now G-8). But also for her own interests Russia had to be interested in an agreement with the West because she cannot any longer afford her military in the present form and because she will also be forced into modernisation measures.

Poland certainly is the most interesting and most important country for NATO enlargement. The relationship between Poland and Russia is traditionally tense. In today's situation, Poland also geopolitically is the key country for the creation of spheres of influence in Europe. From a Russian point of view there is no reason to fear the military potential of Poland, and also Poland as a NATO member does not pose a threat to Russia. But in the Russian internal political debate things look different, and NATO membership of Poland could very well be used as an argument for Russian armament.

In the difficult development of democracy in Russia and with the uncertainties created by economic reform, the search for an external enemy remains a "rewarding" means of internal politics; especially for the older generation of Russians, NATO was and is – independent of its behaviour – a declared enemy. The political elites are concerned about NATO enlargement, but the people hardly notice most of the time; in elections, foreign and security policy topics hardly play a role, and, therefore, also those observers (in Russia as in the West) are not right, who warn against a NATO enlargement because allegedly it would strengthen communists and nationalists against Yeltsin and the "democrats". Since, in addition, all somewhat relevant political forces of Russia speak out decisively against a NATO enlargement (patriotic consensus), it would not make sense, also from a Western point of view, to renounce such a step out of consideration for the internal power relations in Russia, since by doing so – if at all – one side of NATO opponents would practically be supported against the other which on this issue is in total agreement.

The people in Russia are more interested in an improvement of their well-being than in NATO. It is by no means certain that the Russians would be willing to tighten their belts for armament. The quick return of an aggressive Russia as an immediate consequence of NATO enlargement will, therefore,

not happen inevitably, because for Russia NATO is not a real but only a hypothetical, potential threat. NATO has reduced its forces considerably since the end of the Cold War and the members are in the process of restructuring their forces in order to be better able to carry out new tasks of peacekeeping. Also the alert level of the forces of the NATO members has been reduced significantly. An essential aspect is also the reduction of the nuclear forces of NATO. All American ground supported nuclear systems, including nuclear capable aircraft and artillery, have already been withdrawn from Europe. In the sense of an improvement of the security policy climate, NATO is aiming at a further reduction of the nuclear forces, as soon as the START-11 treaty has been ratified by the Russian parliament. This should actually also be in Russia's interest. However, numerous Russian politicians are of the opinion that they are able to exert pressure on NATO via the non-ratification of START II (even though these two questions are not related to each other), and, therefore, there is no ratification in sight.

The cautious proceeding in NATO enlargement to the East seems geopolitically unfounded. This, in particular, includes the intentions of NATO to limit its arms arsenal in the eventual new members in the East and the concession (among others made in the Russia-NATO "Founding Act") not to station nuclear weapons and permanent foreign troops there. The intention of new disarmament talks for another drastic reduction of the nuclear arms potential of the USA and Russia (START III) can effect a further decrease in tension.

The intended strong inclusion of Russia in NATO activities as well as the concessions already made, or, respectively, indicated, have raised concerns in the West – even though only voiced rarely. In fact, it had become clear immediately after the signing of the "Founding Act" that Moscow intends to interpret the capacities of the NATO-Russia Council extensively. This is in line with the course Russia has been already following since 1994, but especially since 1995, namely, to search far less for a genuine cooperation an military policy which is beneficial for both sides than to establish an obligatory mechanism by which she can articulate her interests vis-a-vis and in the alliance, and by which she can carry through her interests as far as possible. The NATO-Russia Council now provides exactly this mechanism. By it Moscow can influence the political agenda of NATO and can steer planned deliberations in the direction wanted by it. It has the possibility, in principle, to put any topic on the agenda and thus make it publicly effective. If NATO then does not want to face the reproach (in the West as well as in Russia), of "pushing Moscow aside" in the European security architecture, then it is under continuous legitimatisation pressure for its decisions and is de facto forced to arrange itself with a country that does not belong in NATO.

There are already now massive signs that Russia is very cleverly using the reluctance of the West to risk a worsening of relations to her advantage. Thus she threatened with a new "Cold War" in the case of an action against the Serbian security forces in Kosovo (according to the chief of administration for international military relations in the Russian Ministry of Defense, General Leonid Ivashov), and with withdrawal from the "Founding Act" and the PfP (according to Primakov stating to his German counterpart in office, Klaus Kinkel). Russia is, therefore, obviously making attempts to put

pressure on NATO and thus establish in the end a veto right in central decisions of the alliance, not actually de jure but still "political" (and thus not any less effective).

4.2 Russia and the USA – Between Cooperation and Confrontation

From an American point of view, one could, however, argue that everything had to be avoided which was negative for the process of the transformation of Russia to a "normal" country. If this process were successful, the Eastern Europeans need not be concerned about their security in any case; if not, the need for action would arise at the given time, instead of being based on early oil pessimistic variations. – The background of this evaluation consisted of the fact that the USA saw its main strategic challenge in Europe only as long as the Soviet Union was strong; but now interest turns to the economic and security policy challenges in East Asia (China, Japan, Korea) and South Asia which have already emerged, before the background of the nuclear arms tests of India and Pakistan in May of 1998.

If the USA allows Russia a large sphere of influence in Europe it can of course also lead to a disruption of the Euro-Atlantic relations which would also for the USA not be negligible. If, however, NATO enlargement or, respectively, its extent determines, or, respectively, limits the future spheres of influence, it of course plays a decisive part for the future role of Russia as a great power.

The various considerations against (the allegedly "hastened") NATO enlargement due to consideration for Russia would intend that there should not be any too big geopolitical changes to Russia's disadvantage. Of course, vice versa, it stands that the maintaining or, respectively, the regaining of the role of a (global) great power for Russia is made more difficult by NATO enlargement and would be limited with regard to opportunities for being effective.

The cooperation of the great powers USA and Russia takes place on the basis of common interests. Today, American interests exist not only with regard to strategic partnership for armament limitation and control as well as the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and respective know-how. Russia is and remains, if only due to its unchanged enormous nuclear potential, a first address for US foreign policy, and therefore, US interest in cooperation with Russia – even without much progress in the Russian reform process – will remain active. This interest in cooperation is, of course, not one-sided because also Russia should in fact have an interest in good cooperation with the USA.

At the same time Russian opinions always point out with determination that the "honeymoon" with the USA immediately after the end of the Cold War is over, and foreign and security policy reporting in all the Russian press is permeated by a – partly rude – basic anti-American sentiment. Moscow's foreign policy has already for a long time very openly counted on counteracting US influence in regions in which it is interested, or, respectively, believes that it needs to be represented in, partly by activating old "friends" from Soviet times (Syria, Iraq, Cuba, Vietnam). The foreign

policy doctrine of Russia postulates a "multipolar" world with at least the USA, the EU, China and, of course, Russia herself; sometimes India and Japan are added. With this, Moscow also wants to underline its independent position. The USA, according to Russian conviction, is striving for a dominant position and, therefore, a "uni-polar" world order from which opposition to the other "poles" results; Washington would, however, as Russia demonstrates her conviction at the same time, not achieve its goal due to numerous resistances in the world. The self-confidence of Russia – in spite of the acute economic weakness (Russia still brings forth only about 10% of the economic performance of the USA) – is in the meantime again reaching so far, that it is explicitly based on the view that no problem of some relevance in world politics must and may be solved without her participation. Therefore, Russia is also challenged in her self-understanding by NATO enlargement to the East.

4.3 Modification of the CFE Treaty

According to the CFE Treaty of 1990, the upper limits for the stationing of forces were adjusted, according to the "bloc principle" of the old constellation of power, NATO – Warsaw Pact. Russia, especially since 1993, requests substantial changes to her advantage by referring to the massive changes that happened in Europe since then – the breakdown of the Warsaw Pact and the USSR. In the center of this were, above all, the "flanks" in the North West and in the South. On June 6, 1996 the "flanks problem" was for the time being solved in the first CFE Treaty control conference in Vienna, mainly by a decrease in the two "flanks regions", so that the original CFE limits (1,300 tanks, 1,380 armored vehicles and 1,640 pieces of artillery) are now applicable to a smaller area; in addition, Russia was given the right to partly take over the CFE armament quotas of the other CIS states. In spite of these concessions, Russian resistance against NATO enlargement to the East has not weakened. Moscow also still wants to achieve further changes to its advantage – above all, the departure from the "bloc principle" – which it will – at least partly – probably be given since in the West the feeling prevails that it has to be "compensated" for NATO enlargement to the East.

It was intended to create a "special zone of stability" with the NATO applicants Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, possibly Slovakia, as well as Ukraine, Belarus and the Russian region of Kaliningrad. In its western area, that is in the area of the future NATO members, the future upper limits should only be exceeded for purposes of manoeuvres and in case of natural catastrophes (and in fact only for a short time). Apart from that there were to be permanent upper limits for conventional weapons. In the area of Ukraine, Belarus and Kaliningrad, there should not be any stationing of Russian arms or equipment above the upper limits at all. Although this proposition apparently favours NATO one-sidedly, it is still a fact that Russia can move her huge reserves more easily across the Ural to the West than the USA its reserves across the Atlantic. Viewed like this, the proposition in fact served the purpose to make clear that from NATO enlargement no conventional threat arises for Russia.

4.4 The Right Time and the Geographic Scope

Also if one agrees with those who think that the renunciation of NATO enlargement would be an enormous concession to a Russia inclined to enlargement and that she would have been supported by a non-enlargement of NATO in playing a role as (Eastern European) order power, it still needs to be considered that Russia is indeed not reduced to a European role but that based on its size it is and will remain a Euro-Asian power.

The planable marking out of the spheres of influence in Europe as it is possible in times of peace and in a phase of a fundamental or, respectively, non-confrontative new order, should, for all European reasons not take place in such a way that future conflicts are basically preprogrammed. Further it needs to be considered that the creation of definitive facts (without provoking new challenges at the same time) requires choosing the right point in time. The right point in time for "taming" Russia, i.e. an ensurement by factual measures (as, e.g., the guarantee for independence for Ukraine, security guarantees for the Baltic people, etc.) so that she cannot build a hegemonial region in Eastern Europe any more, would probably have been immediately after the breakdown of the Soviet Union, i.e. 1991/1992, and it was missed. It can be that the most advantageous point in time is already over, but it does not seem too late to create respective circumstances before the rearrangement of the hegemonial areas to the disadvantage of the West has taken place. With the decision on the first NATO enlargement round the first respective measure has been taken.

But it is also necessary to consider the geographic framework which could narrow the future situation of interests of the great power Russia too much. From the historically grown orientation of Russia and her geographic thinking, certain priorities of direct exertion of influence and a differentiation between direct predominance and intermediate exertion of influence, up to the creation of non-threatened regions, can be assumed. In this, one can, in principle, start from the basis that the interest in Poland as the mutual access door of the East to the centres of Western Europe as well as of the West to the Russian central region must be substantially bigger than the interest in the territories of Slovakia and Hungary located south or, respectively, west of the Carpathians.

The "big lump" that Russia had to "swallow" in the first NATO enlargement is therefore Poland. Poland in NATO and at the same time an independent Ukraine push Moscow, in its view, to the side of European importance. With regard to the continuation of NATO enlargement, the geographic location of the "Central European Core" (that is, apart from Hungary and the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Austria and Slovenia) is very favourable in order to stay permanently distant from the sphere of influence of Russia, since after the first ranking orientation of interests and the possible access to Western Europe via the Poland connection, the second orientation of interests is the access to the Mediterranean Sea via the Balkans connection, and only after that, the Central European Core region which only provides access to the Alps and Northern Italy. Thus also NATO membership of these countries would not preprogram future conflicts with Russia.

A special situation, however, exists with regard to Slovakia. It fulfils – as long as Austria does not decide to join NATO – the function of separating the NATO area Europe North and South, practically lengthens the old neutral corridor Switzerland-Austria by the former NATO areas Europe Central and South. Viewed like this, Russia is without doubt interested that both Slovakia as well as Austria remain at a distance to NATO. It is, however, not of crucial importance.

More important for Russia would be Romania joining NATO. This would on the one hand create definitive facts in the spheres of influence in South Eastern Europe or, respectively, in the Balkans, and on the other hand also with regard to the Black Sea. With Romania, a second NATO state would be a neighbour on the Black Sea which would lead to a total change of the operative possibilities in this region. In addition, Bulgaria joining NATO in the case of membership of Romania would be an absolutely unproblematic issue and would then have to be expected soon.

A still heavier aggravation for Russia would be, as already mentioned, if the Baltic states joined NATO. This would not only have an extraordinary significance for Russian foreign trade, but the Baltics are, even if Russia cannot directly rule these countries, regarded at least as a useful "Glacis" by Russia. The old Russian drive to rule the coasts of the Baltic Sea can only be realised via these countries. In this connection, of course, the question arises whether NATO membership of Sweden or Finland would be meaningful, or, respectively, what Russia's view of this is. With regard to the strategic situation, the Russian Baltic fleet and the North Sea fleet as well as the enormous nuclear potential of the Kola peninsula, membership of these two countries would be of greater importance for Russia than the membership of the Central European countries. For Finland, the vicinity to strategically important regions of Russia and the long land border demand caution. Sweden is in fact geographically further away but with respect to its considerably higher military potential, it is, from a Russian point of view, possibly a challenge. It is difficult to evaluate whether Russia would accept membership of these two or of one of these two countries without significant effects on her foreign and security policy. It is just as difficult to judge whether NATO membership of these two countries would provide a stronger backing for the Baltic people or, if the latter would be subject to stronger pressure by Russia, or, respectively, if Russian concepts would be developed against them which would otherwise not be necessary from a Russian point of view.

NATO enlargement has definitely challenged Russia to energetically discuss her future position or, respectively, her self-understanding as a political and military power earlier than would otherwise have been the case. Since the resources of the country – with the exceptions being territory and nuclear arms potential – do not suffice in any respect for a current role as great power, Russia must now seek the confirmation of this role in international politics. This consists, as explained, to a large extent of countermeasures against Western, especially American, intentions.

4.5 A Second Enlargement Round and Russia

If NATO shall be the basis of a future cooperative all-European security architecture then in fact an orderly relation to Russia in the sense of a security partnership is required. It seems that one has decided that in the West.

The development of a permanent meaningful relation to Russia in the sense of a security partnership poses the question whether NATO enlargement – as officially announced – shall be a continuous process in which new members can be integrated consecutively, or only a one time action. An open process of NATO enlargement could give cause for a permanent irritation to Russia which, according to the present status of NATO's enlargement and reform policies is obviously not intended. Therefore, as a substitute for the acceptance of new members in a second or third round, there could be a further extension of the PfP in the foreseeable future.

That, which was intended as a substitute for membership in the first phase of the development of the PfP and which has in fact developed as a preparation for membership of at least individual countries, could perhaps repeat itself in the second round. The "enhanced PfP" possibly leads to a blurring of the dividing line between members and non-members, if some NATO partners fully use the opportunities of the program by intensifying military cooperation to the extent possible.

The prerequisites for a transformation of NATO to a new kind of security alliance with a tendency to an organisation of collective security are much better than it may seem to some critics. NATO has, as mentioned, understood itself from the beginning as more than just a military alliance. The members are determined to guarantee the freedom, the common heritage and the culture of their nations, which are based on the principles of democracy, personal freedom and the rule of law. The "keeping together" of the Western nations in NATO was also a "keeping together" for maintaining political culture, freedom of "weltanschauung" and the free-market economy system of the West.

Therefore, the larger NATO is, the more countries have the protection of its common defense, the smaller the risks of war are on the continent. A reformed and expanded NATO provides the opportunity of an eventual development of a comprehensive or, respectively, even – if the inclusion of Russia is successful – Euro-Asian security architecture.

5. Increasing Influence of Russia within the CIS as Compensation for NATO Enlargement

After the breakup of the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact dominated by it, there was a vacuum of power in Central and Eastern Europe. The withdrawal of Soviet troops corresponded with the post-communist countries gaining their own national action capability. At the moment they are outside the hegemonial sphere of great powers. They realise the power vacuum and count an admittance to the EU, NATO, and WEU.

Also the successor states of the Soviet Union – at least it seemed like that in some phases – game national sovereignty. Most of them, however, could

never completely separate from Russia economically and militarily. Their future status is still open; in any case it is certain that Russia regards (at least) all of the former Soviet Union as its area of interest and influence ("close neighbors abroad"). The economic relations between the former Soviet republics are exceptionally close as always; there exists a mesh of production capacities, and there are strong dependencies (at least for certain sectors) on Russia for energy and natural resources. Beyond that, Russia is a significant market that partly cannot be relinquished. These circumstances ensure Russian dominance. This is, in particular, also valid for the other two Slavic successor states of the USSR, Belarus and Ukraine. The first, under the leadership of authoritarian governing President Alexander Lukashenko makes efforts to completely "reunite" with Russia; Lukashenko is said to aspire for that since he believes that he has a prospect for the presidential office in such a "greater Russia". Also in Ukraine the continuing heavy economic crisis has caused disappointment in independence for many people – and not only for ethnic Russians who are mainly concentrated in the east and the south of the country. The further course of the country will depend to a large extent on the result of the next presidential elections in 1999. In total, however, national consciousness is higher than in Belarus, so the chances for maintaining sovereignty are higher (see chapter 5.5).

5.1 Russia's Instruments in the CIS

Moscow is allowed an almost unlimited authority by the West – for whatever motives – for the area of the former Soviet Union (with the partial exception of the Baltics). Russia tries to stabilise her surroundings according to her interests – both within as well as outside the CIS or, respectively, the former Soviet Union. After the loss of the Warsaw Pact (as the "outer imperium") the imperialistic claim to power is still maintained in the "inner imperium" versus the former Soviet republics.

The interest of Russia in the CIS not only pertains to the rights of the so-called "Russian speaking" (i.e. the approx. 25 million Russians plus other Russianized Slavs), but also – of course under her leadership and dominance – to the creation of an economic union and a common CIS market as well as a system of collective security. Moscow states explicitly to have security interests in all of the CIS. These are maintained, among other things, by numerous military bases and institutions in almost all countries of the CIS, stationing of border troops on so-called "CIS external borders" and direct or indirect siding in separatist conflicts (Dnestr area, Crimea/Ukraine, Abkhazia and South-Osetinsk, Nagorno-Karabakh and Azerbaijan).

In addition to this, there were military actions where the borderline between peacekeeping and intervention faded from time to time. Russia has tried now and then to obtain mandates from the CSCE/OSCE or, respectively, the UN for its "peacekeeping missions" in the so-called "hot spots" of the CIS (Dnestr-area/Moldavia, Abkhazia and South-Osetinsk/Georgia, Tajikistan), which according to her opinions, would also have to entail respective financing from these organisations; however, this has not happened. In such a case, Western tax payers would in the end have had to pay at least partly for the stationing of Russian soldiers in crisis areas of the CIS. In addition to this, the Russian Ministry of Defense wants to build or,

respectively, maintain "friendly armies" in the CIS republics which shall remain equipped with Soviet, or rather, Russian weapons and whose officers shall be trained in Russian military academies to the highest extent possible; with this Moscow wants to keep possible Western influence in the armies of the CIS states as small as possible.

5.2 Forcing of "Integration" Within the CIS by Russia

Russia's stated goal is the creation of a "common defense area" of the CIS dominated by her. Moscow also regards a NATO enlargement to the East as a challenge to her intentions for the area of the former USSR. With special emphasis it keeps warning against NATO-membership for former Soviet republics even if this is not up for discussion in the alliance itself.

Moscow's efforts to create feelings of threat in the former Soviet republics, to mobilize them against NATO enlargement and to rally them behind it in this issue were only partly successful. Only Lukashenko supports the Russian position without condition. In opposition to that, especially Ukraine, Georgia, Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan have made it clear again and again that they do not share Moscow's concerns and that they not only do not see a danger in the alliance but want to effectively cooperate with it.

Also the particularly intensive "integration" of Russia and Belarus is not directly connected with NATO. Without doubt Russia would also aim for a military pact within the CIS without NATO enlargement, as this would be an important element of her dominance in the so-called "postSoviet sphere". Moscow's pressure for an "integration" as dose as possible within the CIS does not in total make a correlation recognisable with NATO's behaviour. Therefore, because of NATO enlargement, a stronger pressure from Russia on the other CIS states is not yet to be taken into consideration.

5.3 The Special Case of the Baltics

The three Baltic countries, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, are not part of the CIS and aspire for integration into Western economic and political-military organisations. Russia tries above all to prevent an integration of the Baltics into NATO. On the one hand, she has threatened the alliance with "most severe consequences", i.e. end of relations, in the case of an admittance, and, on the other hand, she has always in a harsh tone criticised the situation of the "Russian speaking" minorities in Estonia and Latvia (who, upon reestablishment of independence in 1991 did not automatically receive citizenship) whose human rights are allegedly being violated. The determined Russian position has led to the fact that the Baltic states

1. in reality barely have the prospect to be admitted into NATO in the foreseeable future, as NATO does not at all want to put its relations with Russia at risk; and
2. Moscow has in some cases actually been successful in mobilising Western countries and international organisations against Estonia and Latvia because of the situation of the "Russian speaking" population.

5.4 Will Ukraine Stay Independent

The future development of Ukraine will decisively influence the situation in all of Europe. It is in any case so important for Russia's interest geopolitically and geostrategically that – and this shows all of her policy vis-a-vis Ukraine – it cannot be assumed that she has acquiesced to its "loss" for good. Even diplomatic recognition and numerous bilateral treaties cannot change this. Observers in the West like to point out the Russian-Ukrainian treaty an friendship, cooperation and partnership (May 31, 1997) with which Russia has "definitely" acknowledged sovereignty of Ukraine as well as the inviolability of its borders. In doing this, they certainly overlook the fact that Russia and Ukraine had already committed themselves in 1990 in a treaty (i.e. still as Soviet republics) to acknowledge territorial integrity of each other – and this has not prevented numerous politicians as well as Russia's parliament, to raise territorial claims vis-a-vis Ukraine (most of the time for the port of Sevastopol or the whole of the Crimean peninsula). Ukraine does almost half of its foreign trade with Moscow and, especially with respect to energy resources, is strongly dependent an Russia. In addition, the Russian Black Sea fleet (according to the Russian-Ukrainian treaty an its division of May 28, 1997)¹ will remain an the Crimea at least until the year 2017. Therefore, Ukraine cannot afford a "one-sided" Western alliance, and a NATO membership discussed an various occasions is totally unrealistic for the foreseeable future. Moscow reacts with great sensitivity and always with vehement protest to any alleged or actual sign, of Kiev drawing nearer to the alliance.

The leadership of Ukraine regards its "integration" in the CIS, especially in the military area, sceptically, but due to its economic dependency an Russia, the country will in no case be able to disconnect itself totally or even to a large extent. Thereby Ukraine automatically remains in Russia's area of influence, even when it simultaneously looks for cooperation with NATO and the EU.

When evaluating the security policy orientation of Ukraine, the next presidential elections also have to be taken into account. The present holder of office, Leonid Kutschma, was successful in 1994 (against Leonid Kravchuk who led the Ukraine to independence at the end of 1991) with slogans of redrawing closer to Russia, and the explicitly pro-Russian communists decisively won the parliamentary elections in March of 1998. Therefore, it can be predicted that also in the presidential elections the candidate will win who most credibly conveys to the voters that he represents "proximity" to Moscow. Therefore, at least until the presidential elections, further effective steps towards a moving closer of Ukraine to NATO can hardly be expected.

A possible "return" of Ukraine to Russia at present depends less an Russian attempts of access than an the inner strength (or weakness) of the country itself which again is determined decisively by economic development. The sooner it is achieved to overcome the economic crisis, the faster

¹ See Wjatsheslaw Pichowshek / Inna Pidluska: Hauptaspekte der Militärpolitik der Ukraine (Main Aspects of the Military Policy of the Ukraine), in: Österreichische Militärische Zeitschrift (OMZ) 3/1997, pp. 257f

independence can be reaffirmed. Should recovery, however, have to be waited for, (further) election wins of parties and candidates who stand for "proximity" with Russia or, respectively, even the reestablishment of the USSR, would be the almost inevitable result.

The interest of the West in Ukraine and particularly in ensuring its independence has always been limited; from its point of view, the relations with Russia always had priority. Due to its reservation, Western politics created the impression that it was to be demonstrated to Moscow that there was in no case the intention to "mingle" in its exclusive "area of interest" (i.e. the CIS), e.g. by increased attention for Ukraine and its existence within secure borders.

6. The European Integration Process in the Context of NATO-Enlargement

6. 1 The Postulate for a Strengthening of European Solidarity

Political leadership, conscious of their responsibilities, should in the next years, promote the process of raising the awareness of the necessity of European solidarity. But that the EU consolidates itself and can fulfil the role of a European order power, will require intelligent political leadership in the most important member countries, which will adjust to the new situation and is capable of also obtaining internal acceptance of the integration policy. This is, however, not to be expected very quickly, and the EU, even though already facing several dramatic escalations of the security policy situation in Eastern and South Eastern Europe, could not bring itself to a decisive further development of the CFSP. Improvement of the decision making process as well as organisational and institutional reforms will not achieve too much in the short term. But any further development of CFSP' improves the starting situation for more quickly organising an effective CFSP – if the will to act should still arise within the member states of the EU (because the need to act may become inevitable).

The development of the EU/WEU to a European order power is a medium term perspective. Until then, also short term measures are required for increasing the stability and security in the area between NATO and the CIS. For this, the limited first enlargement of NATO was offered; this and the debate on further enlargement rounds will provide for the time needed by the EU to become a militarily effective organisation itself (or to have one). In the sense of a development of an European order power for crisis management, conflict prevention and possible intervention in war and conflict areas, to reinstall peace and order, the concept of a common security policy of the EU (both in the case of an extension of the second pillar as well as in the case of a strengthening of the EU) would have to lead to a far reaching congruence of the EU (and WEU) and the European NATO partners. The new EU members probably within the short term face the decision on NATO membership, so that they can be included in the WEU, which again is important for the opportunity for the EU to be able to organise a security and defense policy via the WEU.

In the longer term, this concept would mean that a Western Europe, cooperating an security policy and militarily, would be capable to present itself in its own region as an order power, also with regard to military measures. This would in no way hinder the possibilities to act for the organisations of cooperative and collective security, i.e. the OSCE and the UN – an the contrary: the existence of an order power, capable of action and willing to take action, would in many situations decisively increase the willingness to use the services of the OSCE or, respectively, to comply with the recommendations and resolutions of the UN – if there are any.

However, since this will still take its time, NATO is a non-renounceable element of European security for this transition phase until the emergence of a common European will to act.

6.2 NATO Enlargement and the EU-Enlargement

Various considerations aim at the possibly highest identity of the three Western organisations NATO, EU and WEU, since differentiated membership makes the development of a Western European defense identity more difficult. If individual political considerations earlier were based an the argument that future NATO members should qualify themselves via the EU membership and that EU membership should be a prerequisite for NATO, then in the more recent discussions the arguments have gained ground that view NATO enlargement as a step before membership in the EU. From the historic experience of a successful stabilisation of Western Europe after the Second World War by NATO, the Marshall Plan and the EEC, it is evident that security policy and economic stabilisation must go hand in hand.

NATO enlargement would first bring about a security policy stabilisation which should be supported by an increasingly precised EU enlargement program. With an earlier NATO enlargement, the time for the necessary reform of the EU could be won which in turn is a prerequisite for EU enlargement.

The dilemma of the EU is the question: deepening and/or enlargement. It would be an illusion to believe that the integration of the Eastern Europeans in the EU can be carried through simultaneously with the implementation of the monetary union in a few years. The EU does not only need a little bit of time to absorb the most recent enlargement; it is above all institutionally not prepared for a further enlargement (to 20 or even 30 members) and it is also, in terms of economic policies, not yet adjusted for the enlargement to the East (protection of agricultural markets, subsidies for steel, etc.). Either enlargement is achievable only at a late point in time – or finance-intensive EU sectors (agricultural policy, regional and infrastructure policies) would have to be changed substantially for a short term enlargement, for which no intentions are evident. But even if an essential change in policies up to now with regard to the protected sectors (especially agriculture) and the distribution of subsidies to the less well-to-do countries within the EU would be achievable in the short term, the requirement of a structural reform still remains, which guarantees capability for action even after an increase in the number of members.

More security and stability for Eastern Europe by EU integration is therefore, of course, still a central goal which would have to be pursued with all efforts; it is however, not an objective that can be realised in the short term. The revival of Russia's great power ambitions and her attempts to energetically extend its hegemonial area again is so far only contained due to the present economic weakness of Russia. This was made very clear by, e.g., Yeltsin advisor Andranik Migranian (addressing Bulgarian politicians): it would be wrong to believe that Russia does not want to be an imperial power any more – she only does not have the means for it at present.²

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² According to Die Presse, Dec. 24th 1997, p. 5