

CES Project

**NATO's new role
in the NIS area**

R E P O R T

Final Project Report

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INTRODUCTION

This report is an outcome of joint research work carried out by the employees and external co-operators associates of the Centre for Eastern Studies (CES) – a Polish governmental analytical centre. It has been developed as a result of a two-year CES research project titled “NATO’s new role in the NIS area”. In the present **Final Project Report**, all the countries covered by the research are discussed. The report’s conclusions, although mainly based on information given and opinions expressed by the people we talked to, have not been consulted with our interlocutors.

The content of this report contains solely the opinions of the contributing authors, and does not reflect the official position of the authorities of the Republic of Poland.

Assumptions and aims of the project

The North Atlantic Alliance has been increasing its involvement in the process of stabilisation of regions located outside its area and in the co-operation with non-NATO partners, including the countries of the NIS area. Admitting seven new countries from Central and Eastern Europe to NATO, establishing a new scheme of relationships between the Alliance and Russia (the NATO–Russia Council), initiating new forms of enhanced partnership with Ukraine (the Action Plan) and other partners (IPAP, PAP-T, PAP-DIB) and taking decisions (at the Istanbul summit) which are crucial for the development of the Partnership (concerning *inter alia* the focusing of attention on the area of the Southern Caucasus and Central Asia) imply a need to determine further policy towards NATO’s eastern neighbours and to analyse the perspectives for developing relations between the NIS-area countries and the Alliance.

Considering its knowledge of the NIS area and its vital interests, Poland is interested in playing the role of an active participant in the debate focused on this issue. Bearing this in mind, the CES decided to carry out a research project entitled “NATO’s new role in the NIS area” over the period of 2003–04.

The project’s basic aims were as follows:

- a) to compile information and formulate conclusions on relations and co-operation between NATO and the individual partner countries of the NIS area which have taken place to date;
- b) to prepare an analysis of the expectations, concepts and ideas promoted by partner states as well as NATO itself, relating to the further evolution of relations and co-operation between the Alliance and the individual NIS states, and an assessment of realistic perspectives for that evolution and of the role which the Alliance might play in the NIS area;
- c) to present analytical conclusions and suggested actions to be taken (including Poland’s possible contribution) and to take part, together with analysts from the interested countries, in a discussion focused on this issue.

Project implementation

The project was implemented by a team composed of employees and external associates of CES, co-ordinated by Marek Menkiszak. The implementation was divided into two stages:

Part 1 of the project, implemented in 2003, focused on relations and co-operation between NATO and countries of Eastern Europe and the Southern Caucasus, i.e. Russia, Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia. The main result of **Part 1** was the **Interim Project Report**. The assumptions and recommendations contained in the publication were a subject of an international seminar organised by the CES in December 2003. **Part 2 of the project**, implemented in 2004, focused on relations and co-operation between NATO and the countries of Central Asia, i.e. Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan. In the course of **Part 2**, on the basis of the information and opinions collected, and our own analysis thereof, conclusions were formulated concerning new research areas, and the assumptions discussed in the Interim Project Report were updated and partly verified. This **Final Project Report** is the result of the two-year research work. Study visits paid by the project participants to NATO institutions and partner countries in the NIS area played a crucial role in implementing both parts of the project. The information and

opinions collected were the basis for the conclusions formulated by the CES Project team.

As part of the project, the participants carried out a comprehensive search for materials. These were drawn from public sources such as newspapers and magazines (in particular those published in partner states), publications issued by NATO and governments of partner states, and Polish, Western and Eastern analytical centres.

In total, in the period 2003–04 **9 study visits to 12 countries** took place, the total duration of which was 97 days. In May–July 2003, two teams composed of two project participants each paid study visits to 8 countries (the NATO Headquarters in Belgium, and the partner states of Russia, Ukraine, Moldova, Belarus, Armenia, Georgia and Azerbaijan). In June 2004, another visit to NATO Headquarters took place. In September 2004 two teams composed of two project participants each paid **study visits to 4 countries** (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan), and in December 2004 another visit to NATO Headquarters aimed at presenting the results of that part of the project which focused on the Southern Caucasus and Central Asia, and holding meetings related to research activities.

In total, during all the visits, the project participants held **188 meetings with 250 people** – representatives of state administration structures, government and non-government analytical centres and other institutions established in the partner states and dealing with the relations with NATO, structures within the Alliance managing the relations with Eastern partners, Polish diplomatic missions at NATO and in partner states, and diplomatic missions of selected NATO member states in partner countries.

Furthermore, the project participants held a number of meetings with representatives of Polish state administration structures – the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Defence in particular.

The compiled information and opinions, along with the authors' own views, served as the basis for elaborating this Final Report.

Content of the Final Project Report

This Report consists of the following four parts:

Part I contains basic information on the security-related situation in the individual regions covered by the NIS area, the motivations for NATO's interest in the co-operation with the Eastern partners, and the mechanisms of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership with special emphasis on the decisions of the Istanbul NATO summit relating to that issue. The chapter also contains charts in which the main Partnership instruments are discussed, and which contain information on the involvement of individual partner states in those mechanisms and summaries of some of the recent major documents touching upon the issue of the Partnership.

Part II contains a description and assessment of relations and co-operation between NATO and individual Eastern partners, i.e. Russia, Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan. Firstly, this part contains a description of how NATO is perceived in individual partner states, their policy objectives and aspirations towards the Alliance. Furthermore, in Part II the authors have endeavoured to determine NATO's attitude towards those countries, to discuss the evolution of relations and co-operation of those countries with NATO, to present and assess individual co-operation areas and priorities thereof – mainly from the perspective of the partners, to characterise the main problems (in the authors' opinion) arising in those relations and co-operation, their sources and consequences, and conclusions relating to the possible evolution of relations and co-operation, along with suggestions for possible actions to be taken by the Alliance towards individual partner states.

Part III contains general conclusions concerning NATO's policy towards Eastern partners. In particular, the following issues are discussed: the main obstacles impeding the development of co-operation between NATO and the NIS-area countries, on the part of both NATO and the partners; suggested objectives for the Alliance's policy to-

wards the Eastern partners; the proposed assumptions of that policy, and a review of problems occurring in the policy implementation, along with suggested solutions. Furthermore, Part III attempts to answer the question relating to the project title, i.e. the potential new role of NATO in the NIS area.

Part IV focuses on Poland's policy towards NATO's Eastern partners and the role that our country may play in NATO's policy towards them. In particular, it contains an analysis of Polish interests in the NIS area, and of the assumptions of Poland's policy towards the Eastern partners; a description of Poland's potential and the limitations thereof; a profile of Poland's co-operation with the Eastern partners, and ways of implementing Poland's policy towards the Eastern partners as proposed by the authors.

The content of this Report is based on the knowledge gained in the course of research, including information and opinions expressed by numerous interlocutors representing different countries and institutions. At the same time, the Report is a reflection of the authors' personal views and convictions. It should be noted that the authors assumed a more critical approach when preparing their analyses of policies pursued by those partner states which aspire to join NATO and of the policy of the Alliance itself. Bearing in mind the limited size of this publication, a number of significant issues were of necessity treated in a shortened and cursory manner.

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NATO Headquarters: NATO International Staff: Private Office of the Secretary General, Special Adviser to the Secretary General for Central and Eastern European Affairs, Secretary General's Special Representative for the Caucasus and for Central Asia, Division of Political Affairs and Security Policy (Directorate of Euro-Atlantic Integration and Partnership, PfP Section, Russia and Ukraine Relations Section), Division of Defence Policy and Planning (Directorate of Defence Co-operation, Force Planning Directorate), Public Diplomacy Division (Outreach Countries Section, Press and Media Section, NATO Security Through Science Programme), Operations Division (including Civil Crisis Response Section); International Military Staff – Division of Co-operation and Regional Security (Co-operation Policy Branch), Partnership Staff Elements; Permanent Delegations and Missions at NATO Headquarters of: USA, United Kingdom, Germany, France, Italy, Turkey, the Netherlands, Canada, Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan.

Russia: Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia – Department for All-European Co-operation; Russia's Institute for Strategic Studies; Council for Foreign and Defence Policy, Institute of Europe of the Russian Academy of Sciences; Institute of the USA and Canada Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences; Centre for European Security Studies – Institute of Scientific Information for Social Sciences of the Russian Academy of Sciences; Institute for Strategic Assessments; Carnegie Moscow Centre; Institute for Applied Internatio-

nal Research; NATO Information and Documentation Centre in Moscow; NATO Military Liaison Mission in Moscow; Saint Petersburg State University.

Ukraine: National Centre for Euro-Atlantic Integration of Ukraine; NATO and European Security Division of the European Co-operation Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; National Institute for International Security Problems under the National Security and Defence Council of Ukraine; National Institute for Strategic Studies under the President of Ukraine; National Science and Research Centre for Defence Technologies and Military Security of Ukraine (Ministry of Defence); Department of International Co-operation and Board of Scientific-Technical Policy, Department of International Co-operation and European Integration of the Ministry of Emergency Situations and Protection of the Population against the Consequences of the Chernobyl Catastrophe; NATO Liaison Office in Ukraine; Ukrainian Centre for Economic and Political Studies named after O. Razumkov; Centre for International and European Studies at Taras Shevchenko Kyiv National University; Centre for Peace, Conversion and Foreign Policy of Ukraine; Kyiv Centre for Political Studies and Conflictology; Democratic Initiatives Foundation; Atlantic Council of Ukraine; Embassy of Poland (former NATO Contact Point Embassy).

Moldova: General Department of International Security of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Department of Military Policy and International Relations of the Ministry of Defence; Ministry of Reintegration; OSCE Mission to Moldova; Centre for Strategic Studies and Reforms; Euro-Atlantic Centre; Public Policy Institute; Pro Marshall Centre in Moldova.

Belarus: Department of International Security and Arms Control of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Board of International Military Co-operation of the Ministry of Defence; Faculty of International Relations and the Centre for International Studies (CENTIS) of the Belarusian State University (BGU); European Humanities University (EHU); “Strategy” Analytical Centre; Embassy of Poland (former NATO Contact Point Embassy); Belarusian National Front (BNF); United Civic Party (AHP) and independent experts.

Azerbaijan: Foreign Relations Department and Public Policy Department of the President’s Office; Department (Centre) for Foreign Policy Planning

and Strategic Studies of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; International Co-operation Department of the Ministry of Defence; International Affairs Office of the State Border Service; *Milli Mejlis* – the Parliament of the Republic of Azerbaijan (Standing Commission on Security and Defence); Embassy of Turkey (NATO Contact Point Embassy); Department of Conflictology and Migration Studies of the Institute of Peace and Democracy and independent experts.

Georgia: Ministry of Foreign Affairs: Military-Political Department; Ministry of Defence: Department of Defence Policy and International Relations, Department of Euro-Atlantic Integration, Main Personnel Department; General Staff: Strategic Planning Board, PfP Co-ordination Staff; National Security Council: Department of Defence; Parliament: Parliamentary Delegation to the North Atlantic Assembly, Committee for Security and Defence; Embassy of Great Britain (former NATO Contact Point Embassy); The Caucasus Institute for Peace, Democracy and Development; Georgian Foundation for Strategic and International Studies; Georgia for NATO; Southern Caucasus Institute of Regional Security.

Armenia: Ministry of Foreign Affairs: Department of Arms Control and International Security, Policy Planning Department; Ministry of Defence: Department of Foreign Relations and Military Co-operation; OSCE Mission; Embassy of Greece (NATO Contact Point Embassy); Embassy of the USA: military attaché office; Armenian Atlantic Association; Armenian Centre for National and International Studies.

Kazakhstan: Ministry of Foreign Affairs: Department of OSCE and International Security Institutions; Ministry of Defence: Main Directorate for International Programs (Directorate for Kazakhstan–NATO Co-operation); Kazakhstan Institute for Strategic Studies under the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Centre for Foreign Policy and Analyses under the MFA, Embassy of Spain (former NATO Contact Point Embassy); Embassy of the USA (NATO Contact Point Embassy): military attaché office; Embassy of Turkey: military attaché office; Assessment Risks Group.

Kyrgyzstan: Ministry of Foreign Affairs: central ministry apparatus, Department of Western Countries and OSCE; Ministry of Defence: Board for International Co-operation; Security Council; Ministry of Ecology and Emergency Situations: De-

partment of Monitoring and Civil Emergency Planning, Civil Defence Board (international co-operation unit); International Institute for Strategic Studies under the President of the Kyrgyz Republic; Embassy of Turkey (NATO Contact Point Embassy); military attaché office; Embassy of the USA: military attaché office; Border Guard Service; Higher Military College; Institute for War and Peace Reporting; independent experts.

Uzbekistan: Ministry of Foreign Affairs: Department of UN and International Political Organisations; Ministry of Defence: Department for Ensuring Co-operation with NATO; Institute for Strategic and Regional Studies under the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan; Embassy of the USA; Embassy of Turkey (former NATO Contact Point Embassy); Embassy of Germany (NATO Contact Point Embassy); Embassy of Turkmenistan; OSCE Mission; Freedom House office;

Tajikistan: Ministry of Foreign Affairs: Department of International Organisations; Ministry of Defence: Department of International Contacts; Security Council; Committee for the Protection of State Borders; Embassy of France (NATO Contact Point Embassy); Embassy of the USA: military attaché office; United Nations Mission; OSCE Mission; International Crisis Group; “Asia-Plus” Information Agency.

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KEY POINTS OF THE REPORT

I. NATO's relations with its Eastern partners

RUSSIA

The Russian Federation endeavours to develop co-operation with NATO in selected fields, and in doing so it has been employing the new mechanism of privileged partnership initiated in 2002. By engaging in dialogue and co-operation with the Alliance, Russia wants to increase its political prestige and its influence, and gain tangible economic benefits in the field of defence. At the same time, it does not formally aspire to NATO membership, and does not show any willingness to adjust to standards observed in countries of the Alliance through internal transformation. The relations between NATO and Russia are complex. On the one hand, we observe an intensified willingness on Russia's part to co-operate with NATO in some areas, and the number of events carried out by the Alliance in co-operation with Russia, including those related to military co-operation, has markedly increased. On the other hand, however, critical opinions of NATO and of individual allies in Russian rhetoric are heard ever more frequently. Moreover, Russia is departing further and further from the standards observed in NATO states, and treats the Alliance's activity in the NIS area as a challenge to its interests.

In its co-operation with Russia, NATO should focus on selected, specific projects based on real demand which could benefit both parties and encourage Russia to carry out a democratic internal transformation. The divergence between Russia's rights and obligations must not be widened further. NATO and Russia should make theoretical and – more importantly – practical preparation to carry out joint peace support operations in the NIS area.

BELARUS

Belarus does not aspire to become a NATO member and constantly has opposed any enlargement of the Alliance.

The authoritarian internal policy pursued by President Alyaksandr Lukashenko, his aggressive

anti-NATO rhetoric and lack of willingness to co-operate with NATO have made bilateral co-operation very limited. Nonetheless, Belarus must not become completely isolated. From the perspective of both NATO and Belarus, dialogue at lower levels and limited co-operation in practical fields seem to be beneficial and possible. This is further confirmed by the fact that lower-level Belarusian politicians directly responsible for such co-operation have expressed their interest in developing such relations.

UKRAINE

Since 2002 Ukraine has officially aspired to join NATO. The adoption of the NATO–Ukraine Action Plan (NUAP) and Annual Target Plans (ATPs) allowed the renewed systematisation of the fields of co-operation. This co-operation is particularly active in the military field, which is related to the fact that the civilian minister of defence Yevhen Marchuk has given a strong impetus to defence reform. The developments which took place over the period 2003–04 showed however that the Ukrainian authorities used the relations with the Alliance for their own ends, and did not abandon the multidirectional policy.

The democratic revolution has brought an intensified interest on the part of the Allies in Ukraine, and has created a highly favourable political atmosphere around it. If the new president really wishes to lead Ukraine to eventual NATO membership, he will have to demonstrate a determination to achieve real progress in implementing the assumptions of the Strategic Defence Bulletin (SDB), introducing standards observed in NATO states – not only in the military field but also in politics (Euro-Atlantic values) – and to initiate a comprehensive debate which would result in a national consensus relating to NATO membership. Should the new reforms be radical and effective, the raising of bilateral relations to the level of the Membership Action Plan (MAP) in 2006, and eventual NATO membership, seem plausible.

MOLDOVA

Moldova is in NATO's area of interest due to the unresolved conflict over the separatist region of Transnistria, the risk of destabilisation in the region related thereto, and the problem of Russian



troops stationed in eastern Moldova. Chisinau, on the other hand, expects NATO to grant its political support to the resolution of the Transnistria problem and to efforts aimed at withdrawing Russian troops from that area. Moldova has not requested NATO to introduce peacekeeping troops to the conflict region in the future. The development of co-operation between NATO and Moldova in carrying out joint activities as part of Partnership for Peace projects is rather limited. However, one major project carried out within the Trust Fund, closed in 2004, is an exception. Lack of financial resources and structural weakness on Moldova's part, and certain fears expressed by Chisinau connected with Moscow's negative reaction to any intensified co-operation between Moldova and NATO, remain serious obstacles which impede co-operation. It is expected that in the immediate future the level of co-operation between NATO and Moldova will not be altered.

GEORGIA

Georgia is the Alliance's most active partner in the Southern Caucasus and aspires to NATO membership. Georgia sees the development of its co-operation with NATO as a means of strengthening state security in the context of tense relations with Russia, and of obtaining external support for the process of defence transformation. Security problems are of fundamental importance in Georgia. The support granted to Georgia by the Alliance is so insignificant that it cannot influence these problems. Irrespective of the increase in the volume of material and technical assistance offered to Georgia, its security is not expected to improve in a significant way unless its "frozen conflicts" are resolved. It seems that this issue is unavoidable for NATO. The prospects for the development of co-operation between NATO and Georgia within the scope defined in the Partnership are encouraging.

AZERBAIJAN

Azerbaijan wishes to co-operate more closely with NATO and – in the long-term perspective – aspires to membership in the Alliance. Nonetheless, Baku has not decided to announce its unequivocal willingness to join the Alliance because of

several important factors determining its foreign policy (the unquestioned priority of resolving the Karabakh conflict; neighbouring relations with Russia and Iran). From the Azerbaijani perspective, deepening co-operation with NATO may contribute to the improvement of the country's security, but it should be remembered that the only partner which can actually guarantee the country's security is Turkey, Azerbaijan's ally. The development of co-operation with the Alliance is seen as a way of exerting pressure on Armenia, as a method of strengthening the country's position in relations with Russia and of winning foreign support for the process of transforming the armed forces. The prospects for the development of co-operation between NATO and Azerbaijan are fairly positive. However, a serious threat related to the virtualisation of the Individual Partnership Action Plan for Azerbaijan has appeared, which may result from several internal factors determining the policy pursued by the authorities in Baku, including the undemocratic nature of the Azerbaijani political regime.

ARMENIA

Armenia does not aspire to NATO membership, and is mainly Russia-oriented in its security policy. Nevertheless, Armenia's co-operation with the Alliance has been gaining momentum over the last three years. The development of relations with NATO is associated with Yerevan's fears of closer relations between Azerbaijan and the Alliance. Moreover, it is seen as a way of protecting the country against a possible change in Russia's policy towards Armenia, and of reducing the tensions emerging in its immediate neighbourhood. Potential fields of co-operation between Armenia and NATO are limited by the unresolved Karabakh conflict, the alliance with Russia and Armenia's unfavourable relations with Turkey. In its policy towards Armenia, NATO should concentrate on encouraging Armenia to carry out defence reform and resolve its conflicts with its neighbours.

KAZAKHSTAN

Kazakhstan does not strive to integrate with NATO, and its policy towards the Alliance is restrained. The years 2002–04 saw a significant increase in Kazakhstan's activity within the confi-

nes of the PfP. Astana sees the development of co-operation with NATO as a way of gaining real material and political benefits and diversifying military co-operation. Furthermore, Kazakhstan treats its co-operation with the Alliance as a bargaining chip in its relations with Russia. The undemocratic system of government in Astana, Kazakhstan's dependence on its defence co-operation with Russia and the nature of the Alliance's interest in Central Asia (which is practically limited to purposes related to the operation in Afghanistan) restrict the area of co-operation between NATO and Astana. In its policy towards Kazakhstan NATO should offer concrete benefits, but at the same time it should voice some requirements.

KYRGYZSTAN

Although increasingly intensive, the co-operation with NATO is not a priority for Kyrgyzstan, which in the field of security is mainly focused on developing co-operation with Russia. In Kyrgyzstan NATO is seen as a structure which can offer financial and technical support. The negative economic situation in the country and its authoritarian regime limit the prospects for co-operation. NATO should take into consideration that in the near future Kyrgyzstan will continue to depend on external help. While bearing this in mind, NATO should combine the increase in targeted help (including that related to border security) with formulating stricter requirements towards Kyrgyzstan associated with the introduction of the values and standards observed in NATO states.

UZBEKISTAN

Since 11 September 2001, Uzbekistan, which aspires to the role of a regional leader, has been the most active of the Central Asian countries co-operating with NATO. In spite of this, Uzbek authorities have prioritised bilateral relations in their foreign policy. This is why NATO is perceived in the context of relations with the USA. In its foreign and security policy Uzbekistan is driven by the principle of balancing between the three major partners (Russia, China, USA) and avoiding overly close relations with any of these. The most serious obstacle hampering the development of co-operation between NATO and Uzbekistan lies in Uz-

bek president Islam Karimov's authoritarian regime, which is struggling with major internal problems. Due to the nature of the regime, any NATO strategy applied to the authorities in Tashkent is unlikely to result in success, which would mean convincing Uzbekistan to start a more constructive co-operation with the Alliance.

TAJIKISTAN

Tajikistan was the last of the Central Asian countries to develop relations with NATO (it joined the PfP in 2002) and continues to be interested in broadening co-operation. The Alliance is seen as a partner which can help in achieving a partial diversification of co-operation in the field of security. The co-operation itself remains rather limited, which results from Tajikistan's fears of the reaction of Russia, with which Dushanbe has close political and military relations, and from insufficient knowledge of the mechanisms of co-operation. For the Alliance, the importance of Tajikistan lies in the fact that it borders on Afghanistan. NATO should emphasise the development of an informational policy and consider its involvement in the field of "soft" security.

TURKMENISTAN

Turkmenistan is not interested in developing relations with NATO, and bilateral co-operation is limited to civilian affairs. The totalitarian nature of the political regime and the policy of self-isolation in the international context are the main obstacles in deepening its relations with the Alliance. It should be noted, however, that Turkmenistan acknowledges NATO's role in Central Asia and has not withdrawn from relations with the Alliance, even if they are purely symbolic. NATO's initiatives aimed at intensifying its relations with Turkmenistan are regularly ignored by Ashgabat, and the prospects for co-operation remain very limited.

II. NATO's policy towards its Eastern partners

Geographically, the NIS area lies partly in Europe, which is becoming increasingly integrated as a zone of freedom and prosperity. On the other hand, some of the NIS states are located in a zone of instability which is a source of numerous threats for NATO member states in the field of “soft” and traditionally understood security, or they lie in the close neighbourhood of such areas. Instability in the NIS area is further deepened by the deficiency of democratic standards in countries of that region.

Therefore, the basic objective of the policy pursued by NATO and its member states towards its Eastern partners should be to offer active assistance to the process of internal democratic transformation in the partner states (in the defence sectors, in particular) and to support stabilisation efforts in the NIS area by helping the states of that region to improve their capacity to counteract threats related to security, and to co-operate with NATO in that field. In the context of specific problems the Alliance should, *inter alia*, simplify the structure of different forms of partnership; extend the priority of building interoperability with some of the partners, and combine it with the building of democratic defence institutions; combine (whenever possible) the co-operation with partners with the issue of “soft” security; enhance the flexibility of co-operation mechanisms and the financing thereof (by extending the applicability of the Trust Fund mechanism, among other means); counteract the devaluation of major partnership mechanisms, the IPAP and PAP-DIB in particular; strive to eliminate those co-operation initiatives which do not result in tangible benefits; improve the mechanisms of co-ordinating co-operation and assistance (including the bilateral ones) to avoid harmful duplication; enhance its institutional presence in the partner states by offering personnel and technical support to liaison officers and establishing permanent NATO offices; significantly intensify the informational policy in partner states; initiate a discussion with interested partners, focused on local conflicts in the NIS area, support their efforts aimed at resolving such conflicts and organise theoretical and practical preparations to carry out or support a peace support

operation in that area, should an initial political agreement be reached.

NATO has devised instruments such as MAP, NUAP and IPAP which, if applied consistently, might exert serious influence on the NIS area. For NATO, this could be an opportunity to play a new important role as a promoter of democratic change and stability in the area. The lack of political will manifested by some of the partners is a major obstacle to achieving these goals. This mainly results from the undemocratic nature of political regimes in power in most of the Eastern partners. In this context, a comprehensive approach from NATO and all the allies to transformation-related tasks and some forms of co-operation between the Alliance and other democratic structures (such as the European Union and OSCE) in their initiatives in the NIS area, are all the more necessary. The Alliance's internal problems are a fundamental obstacle to NATO's potential in the field of democratic transformation and stabilisation in the NIS area. By this is meant here the lack of a common concept of policy towards that area, the lack of consensus among the allies as to certain forms of partner policy, and the direction of development of relations with individual partners. Without reaching such a consensus based on the community of the allies' interests, NATO might be unable to play its important new role in the NIS area. Reaching such a consensus will not be possible without a comprehensive debate among NATO member states, to which this Report might be a modest contribution.

III. Poland and NATO's policy towards the Eastern partners

Poland's geopolitical location, economic conditions and historical ties make its relations with the Eastern neighbours one of the priorities of Polish foreign policy, and any destabilisation in that area may pose a threat to Poland's interests. The importance of the NIS area in the context of Poland's security requires carefully planned and far-reaching activities aimed at promoting Western, Euro-Atlantic values and stabilisation in the region. It is in Poland's interest that these goals are efficiently achieved within the strong Euro-Atlantic Partnership. Poland's bilateral relations

with the NIS-area countries should not be reduced to making and maintaining contacts and improving the statistics, but should focus on developing effective co-operation combined with joint initiatives carried out under the auspices of the PfP.

As part of the “Eastern dimension” of NATO’s policy, Poland should shift the emphasis from the sphere of declarations to the sphere of practical actions. In this context, Poland’s activities should be backed by proper financial involvement and carried out, whenever possible, jointly with other allies, in particular Western European countries. Poland must strive to keep Eastern issues constantly within the Alliance’s area of interest. From the perspective of Poland’s *raison d’état*, the inclusion of Ukraine in NATO is particularly important. Poland’s most valuable contribution to NATO is its knowledge of the East and its experience in conducting defence reform.

Part I

NATO and the Eastern partners:

basic information

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Introduction

In late 1991 and early 1992 a particular group of states were among others which became NATO's partners. Henceforth these states will be referred to as the Eastern partners. These states were former Soviet republics which entered the international political scene in 1991 following the collapse of the USSR. The term "Eastern partners" will not be used to apply to Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, former Soviet republics which in fact had gained independence a few months earlier, and experienced different political developments.

There is one element apart from geographical location and historical background which links all the Eastern partners defined above. It is the fact that these countries have links with Russia to a more or less close degree, and have institutionalised these relations in the form of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). These countries also share a large amount of problems such as Soviet-type defence structures, difficult economic situations, a deficiency of democratic standards, a number of unresolved conflicts, and other problems associated with the transformation process.

Factors determining security in the NIS area: a brief review

1. EASTERN EUROPE – factors determining regional security

General view

Eastern Europe is a region whose borders (particularly the western ones) are defined according to political rather than geographical criteria. Currently, this region unambiguously comprises the European parts of those post-Soviet states which are not EU or NATO members, i.e. the European part of Russia (including the Kaliningrad oblast, which is a Russian exclave), Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova. The area defined above is large (c. 5.1 million sq. km.) and densely populated (c. 175 million inhabitants); its major part lies within the borders of the Russian Federation. Ethnically, the population is predominantly Slavic (Russians, Ukrainians, Belarusians) but Moldovan Romanians, Turkic peoples (Tatars, Bashkirs, Chuvash, Gagauz,

and others), Caucasian peoples (Chechens, the peoples of Dagestan, and others), Finno-Ugric peoples (Mordvins, Udmurts, Maris, and others) live there too. In terms of religion, Orthodox Christians form a majority, but there are also large groups of Roman Catholics, Uniates and Muslims.

Located within the borders delineated above, Eastern Europe is on the one hand an area interconnected by strong economic ties (energy network, transport system, mutual commercial relations), but on the other it is sharply diversified in terms of the internal situation, the nature and evolution of local political systems, etc.

Since the late eighteenth century a large part of that area, with its turbulent history, has been a component of Russian statehood (the Russian Empire, and later the USSR). Currently, Russia continues to exert massive influence on the Eastern European states which were established after the collapse of the USSR. This is manifested, *inter alia*, in the field of security. Russian troops are stationed in all the states of the region. Russia and Belarus co-operate very closely in the field of security and defence. Nonetheless, the influence in the region of Western states and structures, such as the European Union, the USA and to a lesser extent NATO, is growing.

Factors determining internal security

The Eastern European states are continuing to undergo a complex transformation process. It has been noticeable, particularly in recent years, that there seems to be a growth of systemic divergences among them. In terms of economy, Russia, Ukraine and Moldova are states which have made advanced progress in introducing a market economy, but there is also Belarus, with its basically non-market economy. As far as the political system is concerned, there is an authoritarian dictatorship in Belarus, the strengthening of a moderately authoritarian system in Russia, weak democracy in Moldova and a transformation from oligarchic democracy to Western-type democracy in Ukraine. These aspects, combined with economic problems (most seriously in Moldova), cultural differences and ethnic tensions (especially in Russia and Moldova) tend to foster conflict situations. The scale of such conflicts, however, is usually smaller than it had been in the early 1990s.

Conflict-generating potential of the region

As a region, Eastern Europe does not lack tensions or conflicts. However, these have emerged most clearly in two major areas – Transnistria in Moldova and the Northern Caucasus in Russia. However, threats related to what is referred to as “soft” security are common for the entire region. The frozen Transnistrian conflict in Moldova is one of the most serious sources of destabilisation in the region. Russia is a *de facto* party to this conflict due to the fact, among other things, that the remaining part of the Operational Group of Russian Forces (OGRF) is stationed there. NATO states have made the ratification of the adapted Conventional Forces in Europe Treaty (CFE) dependent on the withdrawal of Russian troops from Moldova and Georgia. Therefore, the solution to this problem is of major importance for relations between the West and Russia, and for the stabilisation of the situation in Europe. Although still there is no peace treaty between Moldova proper and the separatist Transnistrian Republic (the only agreement which is in force is a memorandum not to resort to military measures and the necessity to find a political solution to the problem), an outbreak of armed conflict is not very likely. In spite of that, further political and economic conflicts between Chisinau and Tiraspol cannot be excluded. The functioning of the separatist republic implies a problem of illegal trade in arms (either manufactured by Transnistrian companies, or probably originating from Russian arms depots in Transnistria) and poses threats related to the strengthening of organised crime structures (smuggling, trafficking in human beings, illegal migration). This is connected with the fact that the internationally unrecognised Transnistrian Republic does not consider itself bound by international legal commitments made by Moldova (although the authorities of the separatist republic are in some cases willing to co-operate with structures of other states).

Another serious problem is political and ethnic conflicts in the Northern Caucasus. In this context, the most serious of such problems is the conflict in Chechnya, where separatist tendencies were (and still are) traditionally strong. The intervention of the Russian army and security forces in the republic in the years 1994–96, and

again since 1999, has led to significant human and material losses. In Chechnya and other republics of the Northern Caucasus cases are continually encountered of the authorities' and security forces' violating fundamental human rights and the rule of law, which is confirmed by numerous reports from international democratic institutions and non-governmental organisations. This has caused a radicalisation of the part of the armed Chechen opposition, who more and more frequently resort to terror; in addition – this situation leads to destabilisation, strengthens the influence of Islamic fundamentalism, and causes an escalation of symptoms of terrorism in the entire non-ethnically Russian Northern Caucasus. Combined with long-standing local ethnic conflicts and a difficult economic situation, these developments form an immense potential for destabilisation which additionally poses threat to the neighbouring regions (the Southern Caucasus in particular). Furthermore, it is a source of threats in the field of “soft” security, which impact upon NATO and EU member states, among others.

The other disputes and conflicts emerging in that region do not currently have any major destabilisation potential. This concerns some of the not fully resolved border disputes and ethnic tensions (including those between the Crimean Tatars and the Slavic inhabitants of Crimea in Ukraine).

Apart from the above-mentioned threats, the region of Eastern Europe is where other threats emerge, in particular those related to “soft” security. From the perspective of NATO and EU member states, the most serious problems include limited effectiveness of control over the export of arms and dual purpose products (this problem, to varying degrees, is present in all the countries of the region); the activity of international terrorist networks; drugs smuggling and trafficking in human beings (the main smuggling channels from Asia to Western Europe run through Eastern Europe); cross-border organised crime; the safety of nuclear power plants. The improvement of the safety of nuclear weapon storage and preventing the proliferation of nuclear technologies are problems specific to Russia, a nuclear power.

Final remarks

Despite numerous problems and security challenges, Eastern Europe – compared with the remaining NIS-area regions – has the best prospects for developing and tightening its relations with Euro-Atlantic structures, including NATO. This is further confirmed by the permanent increase in those structures' involvement in Eastern Europe. The European Union has included Ukraine, Moldova and Belarus in the European Neighbourhood Policy (however, it should be noted that Belarus is currently unable to benefit from the main ENP instruments). The EU is continuing to develop its special dialogue and co-operation with Russia. The co-operation between NATO and the states of that region is gaining momentum as well. This includes privileged dialogue and co-operation with Russia, and with Ukraine (in this case, the co-operation has reached the highest level of advancement). The success of the democratic revolution which took place in Ukraine in late 2004 is potentially a positive factor for influencing the region's development prospects. All of these elements are conducive to the adoption of Western standards by at least some of the states of the region.

Marek Menkiszak, Jacek Wróbel

2. THE SOUTHERN CAUCASUS – factors determining regional security

General view

The Southern Caucasus (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia) is a region located between the range of the Greater and Lesser Caucasus and between the Black and Caspian Sea. Although not very large (186,000 sq. km.), the area is highly diversified in terms of ethnic composition (Caucasian nations – Georgians, Abkhaz, Lezgins and others; Turkic nations – Azeris; Indo-European nations – Armenians) and religion (Christians of different denominations; Shiite and Sunni Muslims), and is afflicted with strong regionalisms, separatisms and conflicts which are deeply and firmly rooted in the long and rich history of the region. The Southern Caucasus is internally diversified, but from the functional point of view it is one region, as in principle all local problems influence the general situation in that area. In order to be effective, any possible solutions to these

problems and to the regional development projects should refer to all of the Southern Caucasian states.

The Southern Caucasus is located at a strategic intersection of traditional and present-day communication routes connecting the North with the South (Russia – the Middle East) and the East with the West (Europe – Central Asia; this is the only route which does not run through Russia and Iran). Therefore, control over these routes always was, and continues to be, of strategic importance for Russia, Iran, Turkey, the EU and the USA, and since the collapse of the USSR the competition for such control has had a major influence on the situation of the entire region. The traditional importance of communication routes in the Southern Caucasus is reinforced by relatively large deposits of crude oil and natural gas in the shelf of the Caspian Sea, and by the competition of powers for the control over exploration of deposits and trade in natural resources.

Nearly 200 years of Russian presence in the Southern Caucasus, Russia's strategic interests, the imperial mentality of a significant part of the Russian elites, together with the power of its political, economic (including control over the energy sector, and over the major part of economies of the Southern Caucasian states) and military instruments make Russia's influence the strongest in the region.

Furthermore, Moscow possesses the most useful political, economic and military instruments, which are crucial for resolving the present conflicts. Russia is the only country to maintain bases and military installations in all of the region's republics, moreover, it provides patronage for the majority of political organisations associating Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia, and its control over the economy and its civilisational impact are the most profound. Whereas Russia's presence in the region is approved of in Armenia, it provokes objection in the remaining two republics, most notably in Georgia.

At the same time, the presence and interests in the region of the European Union (concerning, among other matters, the inclusion of the Southern Caucasus in the European Neighbourhood Policy in 2004), the USA (driven by its involvement in ensuring stabilisation in the region, geo-economic interests – searching for alternative sources of crude oil and natural gas – and its

growing political and military presence, seen as an element of establishing the USA's position in the Near and Middle East region and in Russia) and Turkey are becoming more and more serious. The USA's activity is particularly disturbing for Russia (and Iran), and has an impact on the pace at which the political situation is developing.

Conflict-generating potential of the region

During fourteen years of independence the Southern Caucasus has shown considerable potential for instability. Currently, most of the conflicts are in the "frozen" stage, but their deeply rooted causes still remain valid.

1. "Para-states". The civil wars of the early 1990s, supported by Russia's unofficial but considerable help, resulted in the separation of Abkhazia and South Ossetia from Georgia; as a consequence of the conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia, Nagorno-Karabakh and the surrounding areas conquered during the fighting, became separated from Azerbaijan with the help of Armenia, in turn supported by Russia. The political organisms which emerged thereafter possess all the attributes of independence except international recognition; Abkhazia and South Ossetia have close political and economic relations with Russia, Karabakh likewise with Armenia; these "para-states" are treated by Moscow as instruments for exerting pressure on Georgia and Azerbaijan and securing Russia's influence in Armenia. The capital cities have not abandoned the idea of regaining control over these regions, and in the context of the negative results of international mediation (and Russia's deciding vote), the growing danger of armed reintegration (e.g. the cumulating tension over South Ossetia in 2004, and the "arms race" and war rhetoric in Azerbaijan) poses a serious threat to the stabilisation of the entire region. It should be noted that the problem of other separatisms and strong regionalisms, although to an incomparably smaller extent, has so far not been resolved, particularly in Georgia and Azerbaijan.

2. International conflicts. Two of the three Southern Caucasian states – Azerbaijan and Armenia – remain in an actual state of cold war, which is manifested *inter alia* in the maintenance of a mutual and permanent economic and political blockade. Additionally, Armenia is being blocked

by Turkey, Azerbaijan's ally. Furthermore, there is tension in relations between Georgia and Russia; Russia resorted to force and offered military support to Abkhazia and South Ossetia during the civil wars in Georgia in the 1990s, and since 1999 has threatened Georgia with attack (with particular intensity in late 2004 and early 2005) under the pretext of the fight against the Chechen armed underground, which allegedly has its base in Georgia.

3. "Pervasion of conflicts". The situation in the Russian Northern Caucasus has an immense negative impact on the security in the Southern Caucasus. Since the early 1990s the "para-states" have been supplied with volunteers, arms, etc. from the northern part of the Caucasus. The Chechen conflict is the most serious problem, as it is connected with periodic southward infiltration of militants, accusations and threats voiced by Russia, as well as crime-related and humanitarian problems. Moreover, the development of fundamentalist tendencies in the Northern Caucasus (in Chechnya and Dagestan in particular), and the terrorism associated with it, is potentially dangerous, especially for Muslim Azerbaijan. The growing tension in relations between the USA and Iran has an additional negative impact on the Southern Caucasus, in both political and economic contexts.

The unresolved conflicts in the states of the Southern Caucasus are impeding or even blocking international co-operation; they ensure Russia's privileged position, deter political and economic partners, accelerate the local "arms race", etc. Indirectly, they result in criminal threats (e.g. related to smuggling through corruption-stricken borders which are difficult to seal), humanitarian and political problems (such as the question of refugees – mainly Georgians, Azeris and Chechens).

Factors determining internal security

The relative weakness of the state and of political mechanisms remains a major problem for the region. Since independence, the rotation of ruling elites and the succession of power have in the large majority of cases been illegal. In Georgia, there was a civil war in 1992 and a peaceful revolution led by Saakashvili in 2003; in Armenia, a bloodless *coup d'état* in 1998 and a massacre in the Parliament in 1999; in Azerbaijan,

coups d'état in 1992 and 1993, and the legal, although undemocratic, election of Ilham Aliyev in 2003), and the authorities' dialogues with opposition and society do not usually comply fully with Western standards.

Another important obstacle impeding stabilisation in the region is the deep socio-economic crisis which hinders the strengthening of statehood, conflict resolution and the financing of political and social reforms. Mass labour migration (in particular to Russia) is a particularly striking symptom of the crisis – on average, one-third of all the inhabitants of Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia live and work abroad on a permanent or temporary basis.

Final remarks

Despite the fact that the Southern Caucasus is afflicted with deep and complex conflicts and problems, some positive tendencies are noticeable. The growing political and economic involvement of the West (the USA, the EU, NATO) is stimulating internal reforms, and the development of individual states in the region fosters the development of regional and trans-regional co-operation (e.g. in connection with the building of the Baku–Tbilisi–Ceyhan pipeline; NATO as a forum for contacts between Armenia and Azerbaijan) and the process of resolving conflicts (the reintegration of Ajaria in 2004) or at least managing them (South Ossetia, 2004). Apart from that, we have observed a number of positive tendencies in the region which foster the creation of stable and development-oriented political mechanisms, such as the gradual improvement of situation in Georgia following the "rose revolution", and new prospects for the co-operation of Georgia and the region with the West within the confines of the EU's European Neighbourhood Policy.

Krzysztof Strachota

3. CENTRAL ASIA: factors determining regional security

Note: The following text was prepared prior to the March 2005 regime change in Kyrgyzstan

General view

Central Asia (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan) is a highly diversified region in terms of geography (nearly 4 million sq. km. of land of various configurations, climates, availability of water, etc.), demography (ranging from desolate deserts and steppes to one of the world's most densely populated areas, the Ferghana Valley), economy (an abundance of natural resources, in particular large deposits of crude oil and natural gas in Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan, and the exploration thereof; differences in the level of advancement of industry and agriculture); ethnic background (the Turkic or Turanic nations, the Indo-European nations, i.e. the Iranian Tajiks and the Slavic minorities), culture (different traditions and historical civilisation models – steppe cultures, Turkish, Persian, Russian traditions; the non-homogenous attitude towards Islam, et al.) Central Asia's internal diversity has increased since the collapse of the USSR and the beginning of each country's individual transformation processes. This means that security-related problems at sub-regional and local levels are highly diversified.

External factors determining regional security

The distinctive character of the region is particularly visible in the geopolitical context; Russia treats the individual states of the region as its exclusive zone of strategic influence (Moscow claims a right to a monopoly on the military presence in the region, political patronage over the relations of the states of the region with the outside world, and to control over strategic branches of the economy, especially those related to exploration and distribution of fossil fuels). Neither the development of relations with the USA and NATO, nor the participation of individual states in the anti-terrorist campaign after 11 September 2001 (including the presence of American and allied troops in the region) has succeeded in significantly altering this situation. In spite of Russia's still decisive influence, con-

sistent attempts are made to weaken its monopoly, particularly by the USA (within the confines of that country's global policy, and most noticeably after September 11th) as well as by regional powers (China, but likewise India, Pakistan, Iran and Turkey). From the point of view of these states (apart from the USA, which is actively involved in the field of security policy) the main current field of activity is connected with finding durable economic ties (including those related to transport) with the region. It is expected that the influence of these countries will gain in importance, while the mechanism assembled around Russia will lose its impact.

At the same time, it should be stressed that the significance of trans-regional problems very often has an immense impact on the individual states, e.g. the special place and activity of Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan in the Caspian Sea region (and by extension the inclusion of these countries in processes and problems occurring outside of Central Asia), and Uzbekistan and Tajikistan's specific dependence on Afghanistan (until 2001, Afghanistan supported the Islamic opposition in those countries, while at the same time it was a playground for Tashkent and Dushanbe's actions behind the scenes; the issue of drug trafficking still remains a problem), among other matters.

Despite numerous efforts, the Central Asian states have not managed to create an efficient regional co-operation forum in either the political, economic or military dimensions. The only active organisations associating the states of the region (apart from Turkmenistan, which is self-isolated or only symbolically present) are dominated by Russia and subordinate to its interests (e.g. the CIS, the Collective Security Treaty Organisation, and the Shanghai Co-operation Organisation).

Internal factors determining regional security

All the countries of the region are in the phase of shaping their statehood, and undergoing political, economic and social transformation; all of them – although to different degrees – are afflicted with problems related to this issue. In all of these countries, authoritarian tendencies are increasing in strength (in Turkmenistan they are downright totalitarian), which is manifested in the weakness or lack of political opposition (there-

by threatening the radicalisation thereof), instances of human rights violation, etc. These tendencies were further confirmed by the recent elections and electoral campaigns which took place in all the states of the region (starting from the September 2004 elections in Kazakhstan, through the ballot in Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, to the elections in Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan). It should be noted that since the gaining of independence in the region, there have been no instances of a transfer of power (excluding Tajikistan, under the circumstances of a civil war), and the problem of succession of power is one of the major driving forces of internal policy.

Kazakhstan, in connection with the reforms conducted there and the skilful management of the crude oil sector, is a leader among the NIS states in terms of economic development. But with this exception, all the states of the region are struggling with a profound economic crisis which negatively impacts on their independence, development prospects, living standard and public mood. The economic crisis in Uzbekistan has resulted in particularly disturbing social consequences. The region's economic problems are heightened by the consequences of a population boom during the last two decades.

The emergence of an ideological vacuum (not, however, including Turkmenistan), which cannot possibly be filled with national ideas or state ideas, is another negative aspect of the transformation process. Furthermore, the development of externally fuelled religious fundamentalism, which results from the accumulation of problems and reflects social unrest, is particularly dangerous for the entire region. What is most disturbing is the development of the pan-Islamic radical Hizb ut-Tahrir party (mainly active in the whole Ferghana Valley and Uzbekistan), and the emergence in 2004 of a new form of fighting – suicide bomb attacks in Uzbekistan (the perpetrators most probably included citizens of Kazakhstan). None of the measures taken by the authorities of individual states seem to have been sufficient to reverse this process, or at least slow it down. The negative impact on Central Asian security of factors such as the socio-economic crisis combined with geographical determinants (long borders, difficult to protect; the proximity of Afghanistan, the world's leading opium producer; the Central Asian states' location along the fa-

vourable transport routes Afghanistan–Russia–Japan or Western Europe) as well as a relatively weak state apparatus, heightens the threats related to trafficking in drugs, arms and human beings, mainly from the territory of Afghanistan.

Conflict-generating potential of the region

In the post-Soviet history of Central Asia, the most frequently occurring threats to its stability as of now have been outbreaks of local conflicts rooted in mutually reinforcing ethnic/regional, socio-economic and ideological problems (for example, the series of local conflicts and unrest in the Kyrgyz and Uzbek parts of the Ferghana Valley between 1989–1995, and in particular the civil war in Tajikistan between 1992–97), and later, with actions carried out by fundamentalist organisations aimed at bringing down the authorities, especially in Uzbekistan (namely the attacks carried out by the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan in 1999 and 2000, and attacks on government buildings and embassies in Uzbekistan in 1999 and 2004). The emergence of such problems in upcoming months and years cannot be excluded, particularly in the whole Ferghana Valley and Uzbekistan.

Although open armed conflicts between individual states in Central Asia have not broken out, armed incidents have occurred (such as the bombardment of Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan by Uzbek forces during the “Batken crises”), as has indirect participation in domestic conflicts (during the civil war in Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Russia supported the government forces), not to mention demonstrations and threats to resort to force (during the tensions between Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, and between Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan, *inter alia*). Next to matters of prestige, the main causes for tensions were related to border disputes (the process of the final delineation of borders within the region has not yet been completed) and the increasingly urgent problems connected with water management (there is a lack of co-ordination between the states regarding individual sections of the rivers; also, a defective and conflict-bearing system of compensating for concessions in water management policy – the periodical suspension of Uzbekistan's payments to Kyrgyzstan for water with coal and natural gas in the winter months). It must be ta-

ken into account that the problem of water management will gain in importance, which – combined with the lack of efficient co-operation mechanisms – may lead to the potential escalation of conflict.

The situation in Afghanistan is a factor which has traditionally determined security in Central Asia. The perspective of a renewal of fighting in that country (in the case of a possible end of the USA–NATO mission in Afghanistan) could have disastrous consequences for the entire region. Currently, however, this threat relates mainly to the issue of “soft” security.

Krzysztof Strachota

The Importance of the Eastern partners for NATO

There is a number of reasons why NATO has been intensifying its interest in the Eastern partners:

– the enlargement of NATO and the eastward expansion of the geographical and political area of the Alliance’s activity

As a result of the two most recent NATO enlargements (in 1999 and 2004), 10 Central and Eastern European countries were included in the NATO area, whose borders have thus been significantly expanded eastwards. A large number of the newly accepted states are associating their vital interests with the Eastern neighbourhood, and are actively interested in ensuring stabilisation in that region. Following the latest enlargements, the countries of the NIS region (NATO’s Eastern partners) now outnumber the remaining NATO partner states. Currently, the Eastern partners make up 60% of all the countries which participate in the Partnership for Peace (12 out of 20 countries).

– the geography of sources of threats to the security of the NATO area, comprising the southern parts of NIS states, Central Asia and the Southern Caucasus in particular

The evolution of the nature of threats to the security of the Alliance (resulting in the enhanced role of asymmetrical threats) and its related internal transformation have contributed to NATO’s intensified activity in areas located further east of the NATO area. Currently, particular importance is placed on NATO’s peace support operation in Afghanistan, which implies enhanced interest in the security-related situation in the neighbouring regions (including Central Asia), and along routes for the redeployment of troops and equipment (including the Southern Caucasus). Moreover, it has become evident that the area of threats to the security of the North Atlantic area forms a “zone of instability” comprising the Southern Caucasus and Central Asia, among others, as well as Transnistria. Efforts aimed at ensuring stabilisation in these regions have become a driving force in the process of enhancing the Alliance’s involvement in relations and co-operation, and in supporting the reforms conducted in the countries of these regions.

– **the necessity for NATO to take a position on the membership aspirations of some of the Eastern partners, Ukraine and Georgia in particular**
Prospective NATO membership has been considered by some of the Eastern partners as an aim of their security policy. Ukraine and Georgia have clearly expressed such an interest. These two states have developed active co-operation with the Alliance. They have made serious efforts to adjust to the Allies' standards. This has encouraged NATO to enhance its interest and activities related to them.

– **a demand for an assessment of new mechanisms for co-operation with Russia (the NATO–Russia Council), the improvement of relations between NATO and Russia in 2001, which had an impact on the Alliance's co-operation with some other Eastern partners**

Russia continues to be the Alliance's unique partner. An improvement in the relations between NATO and Russia since the events of 11 September 2001 has contributed to the creation of a new form of deepened co-operation. A need has emerged to assess the effects of its functioning. On the other hand, these events have created initially better circumstances for the co-operation of other Eastern partners with NATO, including those which previously used to co-operate with the Alliance on a very limited basis.

– **a need to assess the new mechanisms of co-operation with Ukraine (the Action Plan) and other Eastern partners (IPAP, PAP-T, PAP-DIB)**

Ukraine remains a distinctive partner for NATO, and the positive resolution of the Ukrainian political crisis in late 2004 offers conditions for bilateral relations and co-operation to become yet closer. It seems that an assessment of the effects and a possible revision of the new form of relations between NATO and Ukraine (the NATO–Ukraine Action Plan), initiated in 2002, are necessary. NATO is conducting regular reviews and adaptations of other partnership instruments, particularly the newer ones initiated after 2002, mainly for the benefit of the Eastern partners (IPAP, PAP-T, PAP-DIB).

– **a number of problems in relations with the Eastern partners which require NATO's reaction**
NATO's relations with the Eastern partners abound in numerous problems (discussed in other parts of this Report). Resolving them is not possible without implementation of the hitherto approved decisions and initiatives, and the adoption of new ones, by NATO.

– **the destabilising influence of the unresolved conflicts in the NIS area on the security of the North Atlantic area, regional security and co-operation between the Eastern partners and the Alliance**

The unresolved, "frozen" conflicts in the NIS area, particularly in Transnistria and the Southern Caucasus, have a destabilising influence on the security of neighbouring states and the regions in which they are located. Moreover they create challenges to the security of the North Atlantic area. Furthermore, they impede the development of co-operation between some of the Eastern partners and NATO, limit the prospects thereof, and hinder the processes of stabilisation and democratic transformation in these countries.

NATO's Partnership mechanisms applicable to the Eastern partners after the Istanbul summit

a. Participation of NATO's Eastern partners in Partnership mechanisms

As Partnership mechanisms have developed and evolved, so Eastern partners have participated in their subsequent patterns. The tables below

contain, in highly abbreviated form, basic information on the institutions and mechanisms of NATO's Partnership and the participation therein of the individual Eastern partners, and on the forms of permanent NATO representation in those partner countries¹.

¹ The below discussed Partnership institutions and mechanisms were presented in greater detail in the Interim Project Report published by CES, Warsaw, December 2003.

Table 1: Selected Partnership institutions and mechanisms established prior to the Istanbul summit

Name of the mechanism	Year of introduction (end)	Goals	Implementation forms
North Atlantic Co-operation Council (NACC)	1991 (1997)	A forum of multilateral dialogue and co-operation with countries of the Warsaw Pact, and later with neutral European countries as well; conducting political dialogue in the field of security and defence	Meetings of heads of states, representative of ministries, experts; one meeting formula relating to all participants
Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC)	1997	Has replaced the NACC, an extended forum of dialogue and consultation between NATO and partners focused on issues of policy and security and the co-ordination of PfP; apart from consultation activities referring to security issues considered important for the EAPC participants, the Action Plan provides for consultation and co-operation activities in fields such as crisis response and peace support operations, regional issues, arms control and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, combating terrorism, defence, civil emergency planning, military co-operation, nuclear security, air traffic management, scientific co-operation, etc.	Regular meetings at the levels of ambassadors, ministers of foreign affairs and ministers of defence; occasionally in the form of a summit. Furthermore, starting in 2005, the EAPC will hold annual the meetings in a special format, with participation of representatives from non-governmental structures as a Security Forum. The composition of EAPC may differ: during plenary sessions, with participation of NATO and partner groups, in the NATO plus individual partner country form; within the confines of the EAPC, <i>ad hoc</i> working groups are also active.
"Partnership for Peace" Programme (PfP)	1994	A programme of practical co-operation between NATO and individual partner states (so far reformed several times), aimed at enhancing the stability and minimising threats for peace, and at building reinforced relations in the field of security; on the basis of the PfP Framework Document, participant partner states are obliged to obey the rules defined in the UN Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the CSCE Final Act and in other documents; achieve transparency in defence planning and budgetary matters; ensure democratic control of the armed forces; develop ability to carry out exercises jointly with NATO; to plan and carry out peace support and humanitarian missions.	The Partnership, shaped jointly by NATO and participant states, can be adjusted to the needs of these countries, and provides for a diversification of their participation in individual PfP mechanisms. The basic form of participation in PfP consists in the implementation of a two-year Individual Partnership Programme (IPP) developed on the basis of the Partnership Work Programme (PWP); furthermore, the PfP includes a possibility of the interested partners' participation in PARP, OCC or IPAP.

		The main operational aims of the PfP are as follows: the partners should achieve interoperability facilitating their co-operation with forces of the NATO states and support partner states' efforts connected with defence reform. The PfP enables the partners to take part in individual consultation with NATO, should threats to their security emerge.	
Planning and Review Process (PARP)	1994	A mechanism implemented in a two-year cycle, modelled upon NATO's force planning system, which offers the partners the Alliance's support in the field of determining and assessing the armed forces and capabilities which can be made available for the purpose of co-operating with the Alliance's forces during NATO-led exercises and operations	On the basis of information about the armed forces, inter alia through the preparation of the Survey of Overall PfP Interoperability delivered to NATO by PARP participant states, the so-called Partnership Goals are defined to help prepare the forces of partner states to better co-operate with the forces of NATO states; these goals are jointly approved by NATO and the given partner country
Permanent Joint Council (PJC)	1997 (2002)	A mechanism, meeting in the "16 + 1" formula (since 1999 in the "19+1" formula), for consultation, co-ordination and possible joint decision-making and actions for NATO and Russia, focused on 19 agreed fields	Regular meetings at the levels of ambassadors, military representatives, ministers of foreign affairs, ministers of defence, chiefs of staffs; occasionally in the form of a summit; auxiliary cells: permanent and <i>ad hoc</i> working groups
NATO-Ukraine Commission (NUC)	1997	An organ for consultation and co-operation between NATO and Ukraine which deals with assessment of the implementation of the assumptions contained in the Charter on a Distinctive Partnership, the NATO-Ukraine Action Plan, and possible broadening of forms of co-operation implemented so far	Regular meetings at the level of ambassadors and military representatives, and at the levels of ministers of foreign affairs, ministers of defence and chiefs of staffs; occasionally in the form of a summit
PfP Staff Elements (PSE)	1997	A mechanism for co-operation of officers from NATO states and partner countries, dealing mainly with exercise planning	Cells which function within individual NATO military headquarters, composed of officers from partner countries and member states
Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Co-ordination Centre (EADRCC)	1998	A point for information exchange and co-ordination between NATO and the PfP member states in the field of civil emergency response	Organisation of joint exercises, operations, the functioning of a joint Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Unit (EADRU)
Political-Military Framework for NATO-led PfP Operations (PMF)	1999	A document regulating the forms and rules of the Partners' participation in NATO-led PfP operations	Reinforcement of the consultation process with partner countries in the phase of a crisis escalation, and the partners' broader involvement in discussions of operational plans and in the process of generating forces
Operational Capabilities Concept (OCC)	1999	An instrument aimed at enhancing the Partner's and the Alliance's capabilities to jointly participate in future NATO-led operations; special emphasis is placed on developing allied multinational forces	Establishing a database on the pool of forces and capabilities offered by the partner states for the purpose of exercises and operations, on mechanisms of assessment thereof, and of feedback reception; increasing co-operation between staffs and specific military units, the partners' participation in exercises carried out jointly with NATO forces

PfP Training and Education Enhancement Programme (TEEP)	1999	A collection of methods for optimisation and improvement of training and education within the confines of PfP	Co-operation between NATO's and partners' training and educational institutions, preparing a basis for further actions carried out within the PfP, creation of interoperability instruments for partners, offering them instruments and methods of exercise planning, giving them advisory support in preparing national training and education strategies, establishing distance education and a simulation management network
Membership Action Plan (MAP)	1999	A mechanism of the Alliance's help offered to aspiring countries in their preparations for possible future membership, based on intensified, individualised dialogue	Consists in the adoption of concrete adjustment actions by the participant states on the basis of recommendations issued by the Alliance. Responsibility for implementation thereof falls on the aspiring states; in this respect, NATO and member states offer them comprehensive technical and advisory support, and organise review meetings; MAP offers its participant states a number of issues relating to all aspects of membership, from among which they can select those which they consider most important; participation in PfP and PARP is an integral part of MAP implementation
Trust Fund (TF)	2000	Initially a mechanism for helping partner states eliminate anti-personnel mines; later supplemented by support in the field of destroying arms and ammunition, arms depots, etc. It is planned to be extended with issues of managing the consequences of defence reform	Each project is implemented by the so-called Leading Nation (a member state or, since 2004, a partner state), which is responsible for winning political and financial support for the project; technical implementation thereof is carried out by the NATO Maintenance and Supply Agency (NAMSA)
Virtual Silk Highway (VSH)	2001	An infrastructural programme aimed at helping scientific and academic communities from the Southern Caucasus, Central Asia and Afghanistan gain easier access to computer and Internet networks	Interconnecting scientific and academic institutions from participant states by means of a special satellite network
NATO–Russia Council (NRC)	2002	A mechanism, meeting in the "20" formula, and since 2004 in the "27" formula, for consultation, consensus building, co-operation, common decision making and carrying out joint activities between NATO and Russia in the following 9 fields: struggle against terrorism, crisis management, non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, arms control and confidence-building measures, theatre missile defence, search & rescue at sea, civil emergencies, military-to-military co-operation and defence reform, new threats and challenges (this list may be further extended with new co-operation fields)	Regular meetings at the levels of ambassadors and military representatives, ministers of foreign affairs, ministers of defence and chiefs of staffs; occasionally in the form of a summit. Other bodies are the Preparatory Committee and ca. 20 <i>ad hoc</i> working groups and expert groups

NATO-Ukraine Action Plan (NUAP)	2002	A plan of intensified consultations between NATO and Ukraine, modelled upon MAP, which simultaneously sets goals and strategic priorities pursued by Ukraine on its way to Euro-Atlantic integration in the following fields: political and economic issues, security, defence and military issues, information protection and security, legal issues	The overall reforms goals defined in NUAP are pursued, inter alia, through implementing specific obligations adopted in Annual Target Plans (ATP). Responsibility for the implementation of NUAP falls on Ukraine; NATO states offer help and advice in this respect
Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP)	2002	A mechanism addressed to individual partner states, aimed at offering them tailored support relating to the process of democratic transformation in fields such as political and security policy issues, defence and military issues, public information, science and civil emergency planning, administrative, protective security and resource issues. Another purpose of IPAP is to co-ordinate the bilateral help granted to partners by NATO member states	Implementation of IPAP consists in the given partner state's preparing a Presentation Document on the basis of which this country, in co-operation with the Alliance, prepares a proper Action Plan which defines the following: overall goals of internal reforms and areas of those goals' implementation, and the support to be granted in this respect by NATO and its member states. The IPAP implementation cycle is two years, after which an assessment of the implementation is made; responsibility for implementing IPAP falls on the partners
Partnership Action Plan Against Terrorism	2002	A document aimed at setting rules & priorities of co-operation between NATO and partners in the field of struggle against terrorism and of lines of activity. It defines the following operational goals of anti-terror co-operation: expanding political dialogue and the exchange of information, enhancing the capability to struggle against terrorism, eliminating circumstances which facilitate the operation of terrorist groups, the efficient neutralisation of consequences of terrorist attacks, and supporting partner states in their struggle against terrorism	PAP-T does not have separate implementation mechanisms, it is implemented through the existing Partnership instruments, particularly IPP and IPAP; implementation is subject to assessment published by NATO and partners in reports which contain, among others, a list of planned activities

Source: Informational materials published by NATO; CES materials.

Table 2: Eastern partners' participation in selected Partnership mechanisms (as of January 2005)

Partner	NACC/ EAPC	PfP Framework Document	First IPP	PARP	Trust Fund	IPAP Presentation Document	IPAP approved
Russia	December 1991/ May 1997	22 June 1994	1995 (not implemented)	does not participate	-	does not participate (participation in NRC)	-
Belarus	March 1992/ May 1997	11 January 1995	1997	since 2004	1 project	does not participate	-
Ukraine	March 1992/ May 1997	8 February 1994	1995	since 1995	1 project, 1 project completed	does not participate (participation in NUAP)	-
Moldova	March 1992/ May 1997	16 March 1994	1995	since 1997	1 project under preparation, 1 project completed	does not participate	-
Georgia	June 1992/ May 1997	23 March 1994	1996	since 1999	1 project	7 April 2004	29 October 2004

Azerbaijan	March 1992/ May 1997	4 May 1994	1996	since 1997	1 project	19 May 2004	consultations in progress
Armenia	March 1992/ May 1997	5 October 1994	1996	since 2002	-	has declared willingness to participate	-
Kazakhstan	March 1992/ May 1997	27 May 1994	1996	since 2002	-	considers whether to participate	-
Kyrgyzstan	March 1992/ May 1997	1 June 1994	1996	has declar- ed willing- ness to par- ticipate	-	does not participate	-
Uzbekistan	March 1992/ May 1997	13 July 1994	1996	since 2002	-	17 September 2004	consultations in progress
Tajikistan	March 1992/ May 1997	20 Febru- ary 2002	2004	does not participate	1 project completed	does not participate	-
Turkmenistan	March 1992/ May 1997	10 May 1994	1998	does not participate	-	does not participate	-

Source: NATO International Staff, CES materials

Table 3: Selected other forms of co-operation between the Eastern partners and NATO and member states (as of February 2005)

Partner	Security agreement (NATO certification)	Signing of PfP SOFA	representatives at PSE	participation in NATO or US-led peace support operations
Russia	December 1995 (May 1998)	- (advanced negotiations)	4 liaison officers	Bosnia and Herzegovina (IFOR/SFOR) 1996–2003 – up to 1400, Kosovo (KFOR) 1999–2003 – up to 3400, Mediterranean Sea (OAE) under preparation
Belarus	June 1995 (-)	-	-	-
Ukraine	March 1995 (March 1996)	6 May 1996	3 officers	Bosnia and Herzegovina (IFOR/SFOR) 1996–1999 – up to 550, Kosovo (KFOR) since 1999 – up to 460, Iraq since 2003 – up to 1800, Mediterranean Sea (OAE) under preparation
Moldova	October 1994 (October 1998)	6 September 1996	-	-
Georgia	December 1994 (December 1996)	18 July 1995	-	Kosovo (KFOR) since 1999 – up to 50, Iraq since 2003 – up to 850, Afghanistan (ISAF) since 2004 – up to 50
Azerbaijan	October 1995 (May 1998)	15 January 1998	4 officers	Kosovo (KFOR) since 1999 – up to around 50, Afghanistan (ISAF) since 2002 – up to around 20, Iraq since 2003 – up to 150
Armenia	January 1995 (March 1999)	30 March 2004	-	Kosovo (KFOR) – since 2004 – up to 30, Iraq since 2005 – up to around 50
Kazakhstan	July 1996 (April 1999)	31 July 1996	1 officer	Iraq since 2003 – up to around 30
Kyrgyzstan	June 1995 (March 1997)	-	-	-
Uzbekistan	August 1995 (December 1995)	24 July 1996	-	-
Tajikistan	October 2002 (April 2003)	-	-	-
Turkmenistan	May 1997 (May 1998)	-	-	-

Source: NATO International Staff, CES materials

Table 4: NATO representation in the Eastern partner states (as of January 2005)

Partner	NATO Information Office or Information and Documentation Centre	NATO (military) Liaison Mission	Current NATO Contact Point Embassy	declaration of accepting a NATO liaison officer on a rotational basis
Russia	+	+	Italy	not applicable
Belarus	-	-	Lithuania	not applicable
Ukraine	+	+	the Netherlands	not applicable
Moldova	-	-	Romania	not applicable
Georgia	-	-	Bulgaria	+
Azerbaijan	-	-	Turkey	+
Armenia	-	-	Greece	+
Kazakhstan	-	-	USA	+
Kyrgyzstan	-	-	Turkey	+
Uzbekistan	-	-	Germany	+
Tajikistan	-	-	France	+
Turkmenistan	-	-	United Kingdom	+

Source: NATO International Staff, CES materials

An analysis of the development of NATO Partnership mechanisms allows clear evolutionary tendencies to be defined².

These could be summarised as follows:

1. The portfolio of areas of dialogue and co-operation with partners gradually expanded, and the presence of political aspects thereof grew. This favoured a slow elimination of differences between the NACC/EAPC mechanism and the PfP.
2. Despite the constant focus on building interoperability, the awareness of the need to establish more comprehensive relations with partners gradually grew among the Allies.
3. On the one hand, the partners' participation in shaping the partnership became more and more intense on the other, the Allies' willingness to enhance the Alliance's involvement with the partners grew.
4. To an ever greater extent the Partnerships have created mechanisms to prepare selected partners for prospective Alliance membership.
5. The divergence between the partners and the level of their relations with the Alliance has been

² To find out more about the evolution of NATO Partnership mechanisms prior to the Alliance summit in Istanbul, see the Interim Project Report published by CES, Warsaw, December 2003.

growing. The Alliance has actually departed from the principle of equal treatment of partners, and has multiplied partnership institutions in response to political aspirations of some of the partners.

6. In spite of the increasingly intensive participation of subsequent states in the partnership, it was mainly addressed to countries of Central and Eastern Europe and partners from the NIS area (Eastern partners). Since the recent NATO enlargement (March 2004) the role of the Eastern partners has grown significantly.

7. Problems with implementing the Alliance's initiatives focused on the partners, consistent with the initial assumptions, have been accumulating.

b. The NATO summit in Istanbul and the Eastern partners

On 28–29 June 2004 a **North Atlantic Alliance summit** took place in Istanbul. On 28 June, meetings of heads of state & government of the member states were held, and a meeting of the NATO–Russia Council (NRC) at the level of ministers of foreign affairs took place. On 29 June, the NATO–Ukraine Commission (NUC) and the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) held meetings at heads of states and governments level. Some of the decisions taken at the summit are of major im-

portance for the Eastern partners. Among other things, it was decided that the privileged co-operation with Russia should be continued. The question of observing democratic standards in Ukraine, and in particular of holding free and fair presidential elections, was emphasised, and considered a condition for deepening the relations between NATO and Ukraine. The priority nature of the Alliance's co-operation with countries of the Caucasus and Central Asia was stressed, and in this context new instruments of dialogue and co-operation, in particular the Partnership Action Plan on Defence Institution Building (PAP-DIB), were initiated.

The importance of the summit is connected with the fact that the goals of NATO's partnership policy were precisely defined, and the Alliance declared its willingness to become more deeply involved in the democratic transformation (with defence reform in particular) in the NIS states, especially in the Caucasus and Central Asia.

During the Istanbul summit NATO declared its special involvement in the strategically important region of the Caucasus and Central Asia. In practice, this was confirmed by the decision to appoint a **NATO Secretary General's Special Representative for the Caucasus and for Central Asia**³, as well as to send **two NATO liaison officers** (one to the Southern Caucasus, the other to Central Asia) whose task would be to co-ordinate the Alliance's support for defence transformation in the states of the region⁴.

NATO welcomed the development of the Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP), adopted at the NATO Prague summit in November 2002, which is an instrument of the planned transformation of the defence systems (and also, to some extent, the political systems) of the interested partner states. So far, the following countries have declared their willingness to participate in the IPAP: Georgia (the document has now been endorsed), Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan (consultations on the Presentation Documents which they submitted are in progress) and Armenia (which is currently preparing its Presentation Documents). Kazakhstan is also considering its possible participation in the IPAP.

³ In September 2004 Robert Simmons was appointed to this post.

⁴ Their mission is expected to begin in the first half of 2005.

At the Istanbul summit a new instrument of co-operation with partners was adopted, namely the **Partnership Action Plan on Defence Institution Building (PAP-DIB)**, endorsed on 7 June 2004. It is meant to be an instrument for co-ordinating the actions carried out by partners and the Alliance in the field of introducing democratic standards in defence planning, civilian control of the armed forces, and other aspects of defence system building. As regards the other documents adopted at the summit, a report entitled *The Euro-Atlantic Partnership – Refocusing and Renewal*, endorsed on 23 June 2004, is worth mentioning. It contains a number of initiatives concerning changes to and the development of partnership mechanisms, and a new, clear definition of the fundamental goals of the Alliance's partnership policy.

Below we present the main theses of the major documents adopted at the NATO summit in Istanbul which refer to the Eastern partners. These assumptions have been formally endorsed by the EAPC member states at the Council meeting at the level of heads of state and government. Thus, for the Eastern partner states (all of them are EAPC members), among others, these theses consist a political commitment.

Marek Menkiszak, Marta Jaroszewicz

APPENDIX 1

The Euro-Atlantic Partnership – Refocusing and Renewal; main theses contained in the document

Security depends on domestic reform and wide international co-operation on the part of the partners. Effective security co-operation with NATO is impossible absent basic doctrines and institutions of a fundamentally democratic nature.

Four basic objectives of NATO's Partnership Policy:

1. Dialogue and co-operation, particularly in the field of threats to security and struggle against terrorism – international and domestic issues

2. Reform and promotion of democratic values and democratic transformation – political and practical advice for interested partners on defence and security-related aspects; encouraging institutional reform and supporting efforts by other international organisations carried out in this respect

3. Operations – preparing interested partners for participation in NATO-led operations; developing interoperability and partners' defence transformation in keeping with NATO's own evolving operational role and capabilities

4. Enlargement – supporting partners who wish to join the Alliance

Current NATO Priorities:

1. Geographic Priority: Special Focus on the regions of Caucasus and Central Asia

■ refocus some of the existing resources towards those strategically important regions and support reform in the countries of the region; give priority to partners implementing the following co-operation programmes: IPAP, PAP-DIB, PAP-T and PAPP; enhanced training

and education; increase the volume of help within the PfP trust fund mechanism and within IPAP (for reform-related purposes)

■ expand the mandate and enhance the role of Contact Point Embassies and NATO's support offered to them; expand the contacts

■ encourage exchange of information between Allied advisors in partner countries

■ nominate Secretary General's Special Representative for the Caucasus and for Central Asia

■ positive consideration to the requests of partner countries for enhanced local NATO representation provided that they demonstrate commitment to principles and goals expressed in PfP and engage in reforms and implement IPAP and PAP-DIB, manifest the will for substantial contribution to co-operation with NATO (including in support of NATO operations), offer to provide resources to host NATO representations

■ appoint one NATO Officer for the Caucasus and one NATO Officer for Central Asia, to reside in host countries

2. Substantive priorities

■ **reform** – democratic transformation, in particular the development of democratically responsible defence institutions in partner countries

■ **operations** – promote the development of partners' capabilities and their high-value contribution to NATO operations

■ **dialogue and co-operation** – in particular regarding the fight against terrorism and protection against weapons of mass destruction

3. Matching the ends and means

NATO expects all partners to fulfil their commitments to the protection and promotion of fundamental freedoms, human rights and other fundamental values embedded in the basic documents of PfP and EAPC. NATO will enhance its efforts to develop and reform the Partnership through the following initiatives:

■ PAP-DIB: offer support for developing efficient and democratically responsible defence

institutions, defining reform objectives; pursuing the objectives through IPAP and PARP

- enhance support to nations engaged in IPAP, particularly by the programming of education and training

- welcome continued partner participation in non-Art. 5. NATO-led operations, including partners' enhanced access to documentation and their involvement in decision-shaping process

- continue to develop and give more substance to the Training and Education Enhancement Programme (TEEP) and the Military Training and Exercise Programme (MTEP), including exercise

- encourage the creation of PfP Training Centres, including the new centre in Monterey (USA) to be focused on the Caucasus and Central Asia

- encourage partners' involvement in the Operational Capabilities Concept (OCC) and, if possible, in NATO Response Force (NRF), support the development of partners' rapid response forces and their interoperability with NATO states forces; participation of partners in the Prague Capabilities Commitment (PCC)

- ensure appropriate representation of partners in the Allied Command Transformation at NATO Headquarters in Norfolk, Va.; review the modalities for the PfP Staff Elements (PSE)

- engage partners in military co-operation in protection against weapons of mass destruction and in the Conference of National Armaments Directors (CNAD)

- new EAPC Security Forum – open political dialogue with participation of the public

- develop the Partnership Action Plan against Terrorism (PAP-T), including operations and exercises, training, border security and management, exchange of information

- invite partners to co-operate in the NATO anti-terror Operation Active Endeavour (OAE) to be carried out in the Mediterranean Sea

- enhance co-operation in Air Defence and Air Traffic Management

- give priority to scientific co-operation, in particular in defence against terrorism

- explore whether and how PfP actions could add value to efforts aimed at enhancing maritime and harbour security in the Black and Caspian Seas region

- explore possibilities for using PfP co-operation to support partners in ensuring border security, particularly in connection with the fight against illegal trafficking in arms – to complement the initiatives of other organisations

- enhance NATO information policy in partner countries

- adapt PARP to better correspond to Partnership's overall objectives and priorities, in particular in defence reform and the fight against terrorism

- consider reviewing the EAPC/PfP committee structure

- replace the PfP Partnership Work Programme and the EAPC Action Plan with a single document – the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Work Programme (EAPWP)

- harmonise NATO funding mechanisms for EAPC and PfP, and increase their flexibility

- ensure greater flexibility and efficiency of Trust Fund mechanisms, in particular in the field of managing the consequences of defence reform and destruction of surplus munitions; enable partners to take the lead in developing and implementing PfP Trust Fund projects

- review the size and distribution of NATO's budgetary and human resources, including a possible re-allocation of resources in accordance with the above discussed priorities; the key role of bilateral support offered by the Allies and willing partners to partner countries

APPENDIX 2

Partnership Action Plan on Defence Institution Building – main theses contained in the document

Member states of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) reaffirm their conviction that effective and democratic defence institutions are fundamental to stability in the Euro-Atlantic area and essential for international security co-operation.

PAP-DIB aims to reinforce efforts by EAPC partners to reform and restructure defence institutions in accordance with commitments undertaken in the context of Partnership documents. PAP-DIB is open to all EAPC partners, in particular to states from the Caucasus and Central Asia, and Moldova. It provides a common conceptual platform for co-operation in democratic defence reform, defines common objectives, tailors assistance programmes, and creates new measures of co-operation between security structures.

NATO and partners will explore opportunities to co-operate with other structures, in particular the EU and the OSCE, in achieving these objectives.

PAP-DIB objectives

Develop effective and transparent mechanisms and procedures in the following fields:

1. democratic control of defence activities, including appropriate legislation, co-ordination and regulation of the role and responsibilities of legislative and executive authorities
2. civilian participation in developing defence and security policy, including participation of civilians in defence institutions, co-operation with non-governmental organisations and public access to information
3. legislative and judicial oversight of the defence sector
4. assessment of security risks and defence requirements – in accordance with international commitments

5. optimisation of the management of defence institutions and associated force structures, and their inter-agency co-operation

6. compliance of defence sector practices with internationally accepted norms and practices, including export control on defence technology and military equipment

7. personnel structures, their training and education, promotion of knowledge of international humanitarian law, transparent promotion and career development, and protection of the civil rights and freedoms of members of the armed forces

8. financial, planning and resource allocation procedures in the defence area

9. effective, transparent and economically viable management of defence spending, taking into account macro-economic affordability and sustainability, and development of policies in order to cope with the socio-economic consequences of defence restructuring

10. ensuring effective international co-operation and good neighbourly relations in defence and security matters

PAP-DIB mechanisms

PAP and PARP mechanisms will serve as primary instruments for pursuing PAP-DIB objectives. PARP will be adapted for this purpose. Partners who do not participate in IPAP or PARP may pursue PAP-DIB objectives through IPP mechanisms. New multilateral co-operation activities may also be developed in the EAPC/PfP framework.

NATO's International Secretariat will report periodically to Allies and partners on the implementation and development of PAP-DIB. To the maximum extent possible, NATO-sponsored multilateral activities will be developed in transparency and co-operation as appropriate with other international organisations, in particular the EU and the OSCE. Allies and partners are invited to support and/or contribute to the development and implementation of programmes and activities in support of the Plan, and to provide Partners with tailored bilateral assistance.

Part II

Country reports

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RUSSIA

Russia has expanded its co-operation with NATO in some areas, and it desires to reinforce the mechanisms of its privileged partnership with the Alliance. However, it does not aim at becoming an actual member of NATO, and perceives the Alliance's activity in the NIS area as one of the challenges to its interests.

Approach to NATO

Officially, Russia has declared its interest in co-operation with NATO and in effectively using the instruments offered by the new mechanism of privileged partnership with the Alliance, initiated in 2002. At the same time, it highlights the need for equality in co-operation, i.e. that NATO should respect its interests to a greater extent. Moscow emphasises that it is not applying for NATO membership and it does not intend to undertake the task of reforming its defence system according to the Alliance's models or to adjust to NATO standards.

NATO is treated in Russia as an important element of European security architecture, and as a tool to implement the strategic goals of the USA. The official documents that constitute the formal basis for Russia's foreign, defence and security policies, the Foreign Policy Concept of the RF, the National Security Concept of the RF and the Military Doctrine, which were re-edited in 2000, include texts that are very critical of NATO, and in particular of its enlargement and readiness to conduct operations without a mandate from the UN Security Council⁵.

Since autumn 2003, Russian negative rhetoric aimed at NATO and specific member states has sharpened. Moscow continually criticises the process of NATO enlargement eastwards as being unreasonable in security terms, as creating new divides and as not making a positive contribution to European security. It criticises the standpoint of the Baltic states as part of NATO as allegedly anti-Russian. It is also clearly anxious about the growing activity of the Alliance in the NIS area, including the decisions taken at the NATO

⁵ Cf. *Contseptsiya vneshney politiki Rossiyskoy Federatsyi*, Moscow 28.06.2000; *Contseptsiya natsionalnoy bezopasnosti Rossiyskoy Federatsyi*, Moscow 10.01.2000; *Voyennaya doktrina Rossiyskoy Federatsyi*, Moscow 21.04.2000.

Istanbul Summit to focus partnership on the Caucasian and Central Asian states. Moscow sees the increasing closeness of co-operation between NATO and its NIS partners as a serious challenge to its interests. Russia has particularly strongly criticised the Alliance's member states for their failure to ratify the adapted CFE treaty, and it accuses some of the allies of *de facto* tolerating the presence of terrorists in their territories (referring to Chechen separatists).

Moscow's actual basic objectives in its policy towards NATO are as follows:

- 1) to increase Russia's influence on Alliance policy and its member states, so that they show greater respect for Moscow's interests, and to increase the political significance of Russia as an equal partner in resolving key security issues (the political objective);
- 2) to obtain tangible benefits (finances, technologies, access to arms market, etc.) from co-operation for the Armed Forces and for the Military-Industrial Complex (MIC) of the Russian Federation (the economic objective).

Some Russian civilian experts have displayed a positive attitude towards NATO and co-operation with the Alliance. Still, a great part of them believe that NATO as a structure – and as a US policy tool – is losing its significance, which is a consequence of the unilateralisation of the US policy and of growing asymmetrical and “soft” security threats, which NATO has no instruments to combat. Some experts point out to the deepening contradictions inside NATO. Some Russian military specialists seem to see some potential benefits from co-operation with NATO. However, the Russian military environment predominantly displays a sceptical or even hostile attitude towards NATO, is distrustful about the Alliance's intentions, and convinced of its aggressive nature and its desire to weaken Russia.

The reasons given above, and a range of potential and partly coinciding interests, mean *inter alia* that the bilateral co-operation in the fields of security and defence between Russia and some members of the Alliance is better developed than as a part of the Russia–NATO mechanisms. In particular, this concerns Russia's co-operation with France, Germany and Italy and, to a lesser extent,

with the USA and the United Kingdom. However, this broader topic is beyond the scope of this Report.

Evolution of co-operation

Russia–NATO co-operation calendar

20 December 1991 – the Soviet ambassador in Brussels in fact represents Russia at the inauguration meeting of the North Atlantic Co-operation Council (NACC)

10 March 1992 – Russia becomes a formal member of the NACC

September 1993 – secret letter from President Boris Yeltsin to leaders of Western states – criticism of the idea of NATO enlargement eastwards

January 1994 – Russia submits the “all-European partnership concept”, which in fact would mean building a CSCE-based European security architecture, competitive to NATO

22 June 1994 – Russia signs the Partnership for Peace (PfP) programme Framework Document

December 1994 – Russia postpones the signing of the first Individual Partnership Programme (IPP) as a part of the PfP, following the North Atlantic Council's decisions concerning plans to enlarge the Alliance

31 May 1995 – NATO offers Russia “enhanced partnership”; Russia signs the first IPP (never implemented)

August–September 1995 – crisis in Russia–NATO relations, in connection with NATO bombardments in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the publication of the Study on NATO Enlargement

January 1996 – Russian soldiers begin to take part, under NATO's tactical command, in IFOR Forces (since 1997, in SFOR Forces) in Bosnia and Herzegovina following arrangements on the special chain of command

January–March 1997 – intensive talks on the document concerning NATO–Russia relations

27 May 1997 – signing at the NATO–Russia summit in Paris of the Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Co-operation and Security between NATO and the Russian Federation, the political document that provided the basis for the privileged NATO–Russia partnership, which, *inter alia*, founded the NATO–Russia Permanent Joint Council (PJC)

March 1998 – appointment of a permanent mission of Russia at NATO (including military representation)

March–June 1999 – crisis in Russia–NATO relations due to the bombardment of Yugoslavia by NATO

June–July 1999 – the incident at Slatina airport in Kosovo; NATO–Russia agreement on special rules for commanding Russian soldiers as a part of KFOR; Russia sends a contingent of soldiers as a part of KFOR

5 March 2000 – during a TV interview, President Vladimir Putin does not exclude future Russian membership in NATO

February 2001 – opening of NATO Information Office in Moscow

November 2001 – British proposals concerning new mechanisms for enhanced NATO–Russia co-operation

January–May 2002 – NATO–Russia consultations on the new co-operation formula

May 2002 – opening of the NATO Military Liaison Office (NMLO) in Moscow; retraining centres for dismissed officers begin opening in Russia with Alliance support

28 May 2002 – signing of the "NATO-Russia relations: new quality" declaration at the NATO–Russia summit in Pratica di Mare near Rome, to establish the new privileged partnership mechanism by founding, *inter alia*, the NATO–Russia Council (NRC)

31 July 2002 – completion of the withdrawal of Russian contingents from Bosnia and Herzegovina (SFOR) and Kosovo (KFOR)

September 2002 – adoption of the "Political Aspects of a Generic Concept of Joint

NATO–Russia Peacekeeping Operations" document

February 2003 – NATO–Russia Framework Agreement on Submarine Crew Escape and Rescue

October 2004 – arrangements on initial framework of Political-Military Guidance towards Enhanced Interoperability between Russian and NATO Forces

November 2004 – Russia sends ships to the Mediterranean Sea for their future participation in NATO's antiterrorist operation Active Endeavour; Russian liaison officers start work at SHAPE

9 December 2004 – conclusion of the agreement on the modalities of the participation of Russian ships in the operation Active Endeavour; adopting the NATO–Russia Action Plan on Terrorism

The basic co-operation mechanism is the NATO–Russia Council (NRC), which was founded on the basis of a decision at the NATO–Russia summit in May 2002. As part of this, meetings are held in the following ways: irregular summit meetings (chiefs of states and governments) and regular meetings at ministerial level (until 2004, separate meetings of ministers of foreign affairs and ministers of defence, general chiefs of staff twice a year; since 2004, official meetings of ministers of defence have been limited to once a year), at least once a month on the level of permanent representatives (ambassadors), and in other agreed formats. Apart from that, it has already become a tradition to invite the Russian minister of defence to informal meetings with ministers of NATO member states (currently, twice a year). Within the 9 agreed areas of dialogue and co-operation, the activity of NRC is supported by approximately 20 working and expert groups, which meet as need arises. The NRC agenda is agreed in advance, using consensus, by the Preparatory Committee (PrepCom). One of the rules of work is the equality of the 27 participants in the discussion and the taking of decisions through consensus, and the actual lack of so-called pre-co-ordination (earlier co-ordination of standpoints within the Alliance) in most areas.

The NATO International Staff includes an entity that specialises in relations with Russia (and Ukraine), the Russia and Ukraine Relations Section, as part of the Division of Political Affairs and Security Policy.

The only Russian specialised entity dealing with co-operation with the Alliance is the NATO Section in the All-European Co-operation Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Military co-operation with the Alliance is primarily the responsibility of the International Co-operation Board in the General Staff. The Main Operations Board in the General Staff, which belongs to the structures of the Russian Ministry of Defence, also takes part in military co-operation.

The chief decision-makers in the Russian policy towards NATO are the Russian President, the President's Administration and the Ministry of Defence (including the General Staff), and (to a lesser extent) the Security Council and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

In November 2004, pursuant to arrangements made in April that year, four Russian officers, who make up a liaison office, commenced their work at the Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE) near Mons in Belgium, to ensure better contact between SHAPE and the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation for the implementation of practical co-operation. (Before that, Russian officers had worked at SHAPE until summer 2002 in connection with the participation of the Russian subunits in SFOR and KFOR peacekeeping forces). Russian officers have also been delegated to NATO's Transformation Strategic Command in Norfolk, USA. At the same time, more personnel have been allocated to the NATO Military Liaison Office (NMLO) in Moscow.

For Russia's part, the priority areas in their co-operation with NATO are as follows: the struggle against terrorism, military co-operation to achieve interoperability, co-operation in terms of crisis management, and Theatre Missile Defence (TMD). The development of co-operation in the particular areas indicated in the declaration of May 2002 can be characterised as follows:

Terrorism

The common struggle against international terrorism is still a declared priority for both Russia and NATO. This area of co-operation has been

considered in rather political (as a display of good relations) than practical terms for quite some time. An *ad hoc* working group on terrorism is operating as a part of the NRC. The main result of the dialogue between Russia and NATO in this area is a set of documents concerning joint assessment of terrorist threats (including against passenger planes and peacekeeping forces in the Balkans). Apart from that, there is discussion on the definition of terrorism in military doctrines, and sharing expertise, including at subsequent conferences on the role of the military in the fight against terrorism (the third conference concerning this issue was held in April 2004 in Norfolk, USA). Other elements of co-operation have an antiterrorism aspect. Some Russian specialists are quite sceptical in their evaluation of the prospect of developing co-operation in this field, claiming that NATO as a structure does not have adequate tools to fight terrorism; co-operation in this field is mainly of a bilateral nature, and is subject to obvious limitations (concerning the exchange of classified information)⁶. As the terrorist threat increased in Russia, the statements by the NRC and the NATO secretary general in late August and early September 2004, which condemned subsequent terrorist attacks in that country, were of great political significance for Moscow⁷. They included, among other things, the confirmation of a desire to develop a NATO–Russia Action Plan on the practical struggle against terrorism. In turn, Russia's decision to participate in Active Endeavour, NATO's antiterrorist operation in the Mediterranean Sea, was of great political significance for the Alliance. This decision was taken in June 2004, and in November 2004 – even before the formal, legal and financial disputes between the parties had been settled – two ships of the Russian Black Sea Fleet set out for the Mediterranean Sea. Initially, they only took part in exercises with NATO forces. On 9 December 2004, a NATO–Russia agreement on the modalities of participation of Russian ships

⁶ The strictly bilateral nature of Russia's antiterrorist co-operation with NATO states was emphasised during the meeting of the defence ministers of Russia and the NATO states in Nice on 10 February 2005 by Sergey Ivanov, defence minister of the Russian Federation.

⁷ The statements by NATO Secretary General of 27 August, 1 September and 3 September 2004, and the NRC statement of 7 September 2004.

in the operation was reached. Russia may in fact join Active Endeavour after its ships obtain NATO certificates, which is expected in mid-2005.

On 9 December 2004, the NATO–Russia Action Plan on Terrorism was also signed⁸. The parties undertook therein to co-operate more closely in preventing, combating and managing the consequences of terrorist acts, *inter alia*, through sharing information and expertise, joint threat assessment, joint exercises and scientific and technical co-operation. In this way the antiterrorist co-operation of NATO and Russia entered a more practical phase.

Crisis management

This is one of Russia's priorities, although for NATO's part this topic is basically limited to peacekeeping issues. An *ad hoc* working group on peacekeeping operations is acting as a part of the NRC, and an expert group on crisis planning was operating until late 2004. The main effect of the work so far has been the adoption of the document "Political Aspects of a Generic Concept of Joint NATO–Russia Peacekeeping Operations"⁹, which sets out in greater detail the rules for Russia's participation in specific phases of this kind of operations. Moscow has also attempted to establish military guidelines for joint NATO–Russia peacekeeping operations, yet some of the Allies have opposed this, as it is a matter of great sensitivity for the Alliance (touching as it does upon the issue of operational planning, *inter alia*). Nevertheless, in spring 2004, NATO decided to develop a general document on political and military guidelines for future joint peacekeeping operations. Further, in September 2004 Russia and NATO carried out their first procedural exercises in response to a hypothetical crisis on the basis of the adopted experimental operational concept. The Russian standpoint on peacekeeping operations is quite clear-cut. Moscow is no longer interested in participating in NATO-led peacekeeping operations i.e. as an ordinary contributor (it has shown this by withdrawing its troops from the Balkans, among other actions); instead it wants NRC-led operations (co-deciding on every stage and participation in operational

planning). It is not clear where such an operation could potentially be conducted. Russia has so far been sceptical about the idea of potentially conducting such operations in the NIS area (although it has not explicitly rejected such a possibility). On the other hand, the Russian proposals to support NATO-led operations in Afghanistan have only been accepted to a limited extent (mainly exchange of intelligence information and supporting efforts to combat drug smuggling; co-operation on border security is being considered). The Allies' great hopes for enhancing practical co-operation with Russia arose from the declarations made by Russian representatives in autumn 2003 of the planned establishment in Russia of a peacekeeping brigade operating according to NATO standards and ready for joint action with the Alliance. However, the signals from Moscow were mutually contradictory. In November 2004, Sergey Ivanov, Russian minister of defence confirmed plans to establish a regular peacekeeping force brigade. The Russian side stated that a 2,500-strong 15th Independent Motorised Rifle Brigade had been formed in Samara on 1 February 2005 as a peacekeeping force. Its main objective is to prepare for peacekeeping operations in the NIS area and, possibly, other operations with a UN mandate. According to statements made by the Russian minister of defence Sergey Ivanov in February 2005, the brigade will take part in the programme for developing interoperability with NATO member state forces.

Non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction

For NATO this is one of the priorities of the dialogue. Although Russia has also declared this issue an area of priority, its standpoint in this field remains somewhat evasive. As a part of the NRC, this issue is being dealt with by an adequate *ad hoc* working group and an expert group on nuclear arms control and confidence-building measures. The main effect of the dialogue, which concentrates on the assessment of proliferation-related threats and the security of nuclear weapons' storage, was intended to be the adoption of a document on global trends in proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, planned for autumn 2003. However, this never happened, due to Russia's standpoint and to the lack of agreement in determining the sources of proliferation-

⁸ NATO–Russia Action Plan on Terrorism.

⁹ Political Aspects of a Generic Concept of Joint NATO–Russia Peacekeeping Operations.

-related threats. Russia invited observers from NATO and partner states to exercises in response procedures in the case of nuclear incidents, called Avaria 2004, which were held in August 2004. In December 2004, it was agreed that a report on possibilities for co-operation in the field of protection measures against weapons of mass destruction would be prepared in autumn 2005. Still, NATO is not satisfied with the limited degree of Russia's openness in this area of dialogue. In turn, the predominant opinion on the Russian side is that NATO is not the right partner for Russia in the field of non-proliferation and nuclear security (it is emphasised that Moscow is conducting bilateral talks on this issue, first of all with Washington). Russian experts often suggest that Russia will display greater openness and readiness to co-operate in this field, if NATO and its member states make a proper financial offer.

Arms control and confidence-building measures

This topic has mainly been raised in the context of the adapted Conventional Forces in Europe Treaty (CFE). An adequate expert group is dealing with this subject as a part of NRC. NATO's expectations from Russia include fulfilling the CFE commitments it made at the Istanbul OSCE summit in 1999 (withdrawal of Russian troops, military equipment and ammunition from Transnistria in Moldova, and concluding agreements on withdrawal of Russian forces from Georgia), which Russia has failed to do even though subsequent deadlines have expired (the last deadline for fulfilling the Istanbul commitments expired in December 2003). Most of NATO's member states have made their ratification of the adapted CFE treaty dependent on this. Moscow opposes such conditionality, and demands that NATO member states ratify the treaty as soon as possible and that the Baltic states join in the treaty (which will limit the military consequences of their joining NATO). As Moscow has not managed to win any concessions from NATO, regardless of reoccurring Russian allegations of disassembling the CFE regime and demands to renegotiate the Treaty, the political relations between Russia and NATO have cooled somewhat. This was one of the reasons why President Vladimir Putin rejected the invitation to participate in the

NATO Istanbul summit in June 2004. Another negative factor was a crisis initiated by Moscow in connection with NATO countries' support for the air policing of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia after they joined NATO on 29 March 2004. Moscow was dissatisfied because the decision had not been consulted with it before being taken, and the member states bordering on Russia had rejected its appeal to sign agreements to avoid harmful military activity in the region of their common borders. The Russian side clearly maintains pressure on the Baltic states in connection with this issue, as Russian military aircraft notoriously violate their air space (this concerns Estonia in particular).

Theatre Missile Defence – TMD

This topic and project are essential for both sides. As a part of the NRC it is dealt with by a proper *ad hoc* working group, which is divided into the following subgroups: terminology, TMD experimental concept, TMD operational concept, training and exercises, and TMD system and capabilities. The project idea consists in considering the possibility of interaction between Russian and NATO non-strategic missile defence systems (or the combination thereof into one system) to protect deployed armed forces (and, potentially, strategic objects and cities). So far, the terminology has been agreed on, and an exchange of data on system parameters has taken place. The Allies are financing subsequent stages of the TMD interoperability study. A TMD experimental operational concept has also been adopted, and a command post exercise was conducted on this basis in March 2004. Following a series of such events, field exercises are planned for 2006. The Russian side desires above all to use its missile defence systems for TMD, and is looking for potential military and technical co-operation in the production of new ones. This project is important for Russia for both political (as a psychological breakthrough and a step towards quasi-allied relations) and, even more so, economic reasons (as a potentially excellent chance for engagement and benefits for the Russian Military-Industrial Complex [MIC]). Some of the Alliance member states have expressed an interest in the project.

Search and rescue at sea

For both sides this narrow aspect of co-operation has some significance in propaganda terms: it shows good will and potential benefits. The NATO–Russia Framework Agreement on Submarine Crew Escape and Rescue was signed as a part of the dialogue in February 2003, (in the aftermath of the Kursk submarine tragedy in August 2000) was one of the first effects of the new partnership mechanism. Russia will take part in the NATO rescue exercise Sorbet Royal in 2005. The agreement has not so far been applied during an actual accident.

Civil emergency planning

This area of co-operation is welcomed by both parties. A dedicated expert group has been dealing with it as a part of the NRC. Some of the actions in this field have an antiterrorism aspect. The best visible sign of co-operation was the exercise with the participation of rescuers from NATO countries and partners, which was held in September 2002 at the Russian military test ground in Noginsk. Another spectacular exercise of NATO members, PfP partners and Russia, in the presence of EU and UN observers, was held in June 2004 on the Baltic Sea by the Kaliningrad oblast coastline. The rescuers were practising interaction in managing the consequences of a terrorist attack against a drilling platform. In 2004, Hungary presented an initiative to develop co-operation with Russia on civil emergency planning and crisis management, which was supported by NATO. Russia and NATO agreed in December 2004 to develop a joint exercise plan.

Military-to-military co-operation and defence reform

These are essential issues for NATO; Russia's interest in them, which was very limited until mid-2003, is also growing. This area includes a whole series of narrower issues and initiatives. As a part of NRC, among other groups, an *ad hoc* working group on defence reform is operating. On 9 December 2004, another NRC-MR Work Plan for 2005 and subsequent years was accepted. In the joint announcement by the parties, the plan was described as "ambitious".

In terms of democratic management and financing of the defence system, NATO and Russia are conducting a dialogue which, among other issues,

covers defence planning, a professional army, transparency of the defence budget, democratic civilian control of the armed forces (the latter without any visible results). Conferences and seminars are held, including a seminar on the reform of the Ministry of Defence, which was held in September 2004 in Warsaw.

In terms of the consequences of reduction of the armed forces, the projects of retraining centres for dismissed officers, which have been operating since 2002 in Moscow, St Petersburg, Yaroslavl, Chita, Perm and Kaliningrad, are being successfully continued. Apart from that, bilateral co-operation with the United Kingdom, Germany and Norway is ongoing. The Russian side is very satisfied with the effects of such co-operation. A separate project covers co-operation in demining. In terms of military technical co-operation, dialogue on the restructuring of the defence industry is pending. The Russian side has appealed for a wider opening of NATO member states' markets to Russian arms. In 2004, NATO launched an interoperability study covering NATO and Russian rescue systems in submarines, considering possible future co-operation in the production thereof. In terms of joint exercises and training, a special multi-stage NATO–Russia Exercise and Training Programme (NR-ETP) is ongoing. The number of events being implemented has significantly grown; while there were only 6 events in 2002 and 21 events in 2003, their number grew in 2004 to as many as 57. These are ancillary to the general goal of achieving interoperability¹⁰ between selected forces of NATO states and Russia. The Political and Military Guidelines to Enhance Interoperability between the forces of NATO and Russia, the working out of which was agreed in October 2004 by the defence ministers of NATO and Russia, are also intended to serve this goal. This interoperability is planned to be gradually constructed, starting from the highest level (including communication between general staffs) down to the lowest, with a gradual concretisa-

¹⁰ The term "interoperability" in NATO–Russia relations (as in co-operation with other partners) has a different meaning than the term of interoperability used among NATO member states. Generally, this is defined as the ability of forces from different states to train, exercise, and to operate effectively together in the execution of assigned missions and tasks. See NATO–Russia Glossary of Contemporary Political and Military Terms, Brussels 8.06.2001.

tion of its parameters. The ability to communicate on various levels is a matter of priority. In the opinion of the Alliance's representatives, a qualitative change has taken place in this area of co-operation. Nevertheless, the co-operation predominantly lacks a strictly military nature (visits, conferences, seminars). NATO attaches great importance, *inter alia*, to the interoperability courses which was conducted in autumn 2004 by lecturers from the Alliance member states at the General Staff Academy in Moscow. The co-operation is co-ordinated by the Military Preparatory Committee (Reinforced), which is supported among others by the exercise expert group and logistics group. A certain impediment to the co-operation was posed by the fact that Russia had not signed the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA). Moscow has declared its will to resolve this problem since May 2003; it promised that this would happen by the end of 2004. Consultations on this matter to address the formal and legal reservations on the Russian side were pending between the parties in 2004. Moscow expected this to be a special agreement, different from the standard PfP agreements. The government of the Russian Federation accepted the agreement draft in February 2005, and President Putin signed it on 9 March.

In terms of long-haul air transport, talks are going on between NATO and Russia on the possibility of European members of the Alliance using Russian capabilities in this field. Unfortunately, work on a memorandum of understanding concerning this matter has been impeded for legal and financial reasons. Therefore, Russia is currently concluding bilateral agreements on air transit and transport with selected NATO states. So far, this concerns Germany, France and Italy. On the other hand, NATO has signed a framework agreement on this matter with Ukraine which is competitive to the Russian offer.

New threats and challenges (including Co-operative Airspace Initiative)

This area also includes various issues and projects. For instance, dialogue is pending on new kinds of threat, including to the natural environment. Scientific co-operation has been rapidly developing as a part of the NATO Science Programme. In compliance with Russian appeals, a multilateral dialogue on threats connected with the traf-

ficking of drugs coming from Afghanistan was initiated at NATO in 2004, with the participation of Russia and other partners, and representatives of other organisations. A seminar on this subject was held in October 2004 on the NRC forum.

A separate project, which is a priority for NATO and an essential issue for Russia, is the Co-operative Airspace Initiative (CAI). It provides for the creation of a system for sharing information, according to standards applicable in NATO member states, on air traffic control (covering civilian and military traffic) of NATO and some of its partners, including Russia. A dedicated *ad hoc* working group is dealing with work on this subject; a feasibility study is currently being prepared.

On the other hand, in December 2004, independently of the CAI project, Russia officially presented a proposal for creating a common system to control airspace and air traffic in the border regions between NATO and Russia, initially in the Baltic region. This must be interpreted as an attempt to decrease the military consequences of accepting Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia to NATO for Russia.

Problems in co-operation

The main problems in co-operation with Russia which NATO has raised include: Russia's insufficient openness in the dialogue on non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and on nuclear safety, as well as its failure to comply with its Istanbul CFE commitments.

In addition to the aforementioned problems, co-operation between Russia and NATO in particular areas is hampered by other impediments stemming from the following factors:

- negative perception of the Alliance and its policy (especially NATO's activity in the NIS area) by the ruling elites, a majority of the military elites and a great part of the civilian elites in Russia;
- the evolution of the Russian political system towards authoritarianism, and the increasing discrepancy between the system and the Allied states' standards;
- Russian attempts to undermine solidarity between the Alliance member states and the growing differences in the respective policies of specific Allies towards Russia;

- direct and indirect pressure exerted by Russia on a number of NIS countries to limit the development of their co-operation with NATO;
- differences in the perception of certain interests and values by the parties (which is especially visible in Russia's increasingly assertive policy towards some of the NIS countries and the conflict in Chechnya, even though NATO is not publicly criticising Russia for that);
- differences, smaller than before but still persistent, in the approach to the co-operation (NATO's functional approach, concentrating on selected practical projects, versus Russia's politico-institutional approach of concentrating on working out rules, legal guarantees and creation of institutions);
- the widening gap between the Russia's increasing rights in its relations with the Alliance, and the relatively low level of its obligations;
- Russia's unwillingness to co-operate equally with other partners (especially as part of the PFP);
- differing procedural and technical-military standards;
- carrying out defence reform in Russia according to principles other than NATO standards;
- elements of the Soviet mindset which persist among a part of the Russian administration and military circles;
- signs of a mercantile approach of the Russian side to its co-operation with NATO, i.e. striving to obtain quick and measurable financial and economic benefits, or making the development of co-operation in certain areas or participation in events dependent on financial offers from NATO and the Allies (regardless of the growing financial potential on the Russian side).

Conclusions

The picture of NATO–Russia relations is quite complex. On the one hand, the number of events implemented jointly with Russia, including in the area of military co-operation, is growing, and work on key projects is slowly progressing. On the other hand, a vast number of events boil down to visits, discussions, simulations and working out documents, and these mainly concern non-military areas. The Russian side uses the dialogue forums for political demonstrations, it makes effort only in the areas where it can see essen-

tial benefits for itself, and it does not always fulfil its commitments.

Some clear trends can be observed in Russian policy. Moscow does not conceal its dislike for the growing engagement of NATO and individual Allies (in particular, USA) in the NIS area. Russia treats the issue of independent organisation of exercises as a priority at the expense of its participation in multilateral PFP exercises. The Russian side is trying, so far rather abortively, to include Eastern partners in co-operation under the auspices of the NRC (at the expense of the PFP). Since late 2003, Russia has been lobbying with growing importunity for the Alliance to establish official contacts and start co-operation with the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), of which it is the initiator and the leading participant¹¹. This has to be interpreted as a Russian attempt to impose its control on co-operation between part of the NIS and NATO.

NATO should contribute to Russia's constructive inclusion in the Euro-Atlantic security architecture. To make that realistic, NATO in its policy towards Russia should encourage the country to proceed with internal democratic transformation, including in its defence sector, in compliance with the standards applicable to the Alliance member states. Without such harmonisation of standards, a tangible community of values and basic interests, effective partnership and deepening co-operation between NATO and Russia is impossible, let alone any hypothetical future membership of Russia in the Alliance (which at the present time seems unrealistic). Any actions by Russia that are contrary to those goals (including attempts to slow down NATO's co-operation with other Eastern partners) should be clearly and publicly criticised. Policy towards Russia should be aimed at balancing the rights and obligations of the Russian side. Co-operation with Russia should not be targeted at fast propaganda suc-

¹¹ The Collective Security Treaty Organization was formally created in September 2003 through the institutionalisation of the Collective Security Treaty, which had been signed in Tashkent in May 1992. Its current members include: Russia, Belarus, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. The appeal to establish co-operation between NATO and CSTO was reiterated by Russian president Vladimir Putin in his speech at the session of the Russian Security Council on 28 January 2005.

cess, and broken up into many events that give no real benefits to any of the parties. Instead, it should focus on selected, important projects that have a chance of being successful and of yielding tangible benefits for both parties. Therefore, priority needs to be granted to such areas of co-operation as the Co-operative Airspace Initiative (CAI), co-operation in civil emergency planning, and issues of defence reform and military-to-military co-operation leading to achieving a basic level of interoperability.

In addition to continuing the co-operation in its present forms, NATO should analyse the conditions, rules and feasibility of conducting NATO–Russia peacekeeping operations in selected conflict zones in the NIS area (such as Transnistria, Nagorno-Karabakh, Abkhazia) following the achievement of initial political agreements between the parties. The benefits of such co-operation would include increased chances for settling those conflicts and consequent regional stabilisation, and enclosing Russian policy in a constructive framework of co-operation. It would also reinforce Russia's privileged status in its partnership with the Alliance, and give a practical lesson of interoperability. NATO should adjust the concept and formal framework of joint operations to planning a specific operation, once the operation's place and objective has been established. Developing purely abstractive assumptions seems purposeless in this case.

The same assumption should also underlie another important project in co-operation with Russia, namely Theatre Missile Defence (TMD). This potentially extremely interesting project may serve the security interest of NATO states well, provided that it is adjusted to specific needs. The best way of using it would be providing a cover for forces deployed by the parties as a part of a joint NATO–Russia crisis management operation. This also needs common defining by NATO and Russia, including in geographical terms, of the potential sources of missile attack threats. Creating an abstract co-operation model does not make any sense.

NATO should consider the growing activity of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), which is dominated by Russia; yet it should not, contrary to appeals by Russia and some of its allies, establish official contacts and co-operation with this security structure, as this would

mean an indirect legitimisation of the particular responsibility and rights of Russia in the matters of NIS-area security, and would be tantamount to supporting its asymmetrical relations with part of the countries in the region. This is not in the interest of NATO, as this would not contribute to the democratisation and stabilisation of the area. The same concerns the Shanghai Co-operation Organisation, where Russia and China are the dominant players.

As for more detailed issues, some Russian experts complain that Russian personnel (especially military personnel), trained as a part of either PfP or bilateral co-operation with member states, are not being used properly. This problem needs to be referred to in the dialogue with Moscow.

Due to the fact that the level of reliable knowledge on NATO and its policy is rather low, and that negative stereotypes about it are widespread in Russia, the Alliance should intensify its informational activity in Russia, e.g. by supporting local initiatives in this field. NATO should not ignore Russian anti-NATO propaganda in other countries in the NIS area, and should respond to it. Considering the successful activity of military personnel retraining centres, it is worth investing more means in this practical project.

To other issues, the recommendations included in the chapter on NATO's policy towards its Eastern partners apply.

Marek Menkiszak

BELARUS

Belarus, which has the least developed co-operation with the Alliance among the NIS, does not aspire to NATO membership. The authoritarian internal policy of President Alyaksandr Lukashenka, who is ill-disposed towards NATO, is a major obstacle to enhancing co-operation. Belarus' security policy is Russia-oriented, and Belarus closely and actively co-operates with Russia alone in the military field.

Approach to NATO

The Belarusian authorities have been pursuing a policy which consists in attacking and traducing NATO and the USA on the internal scene, and maintaining contacts with Russia and China in external relations. At the same time, they declare their will to co-operate with the West, including NATO. State propaganda continues to blame the opposition, the West and NATO for the Belarusian government's failures. The same is characteristic of statements by President Alyaksandr Lukashenka, who additionally emphasises the need to protect Belarus from the hegemony of other states (meaning the USA). Of the NIS countries, Belarus is the place where the false Soviet-era stereotype of NATO as an "aggressive military bloc" has been most strongly fixed. Minsk insists that the Alliance is useless, and protests against its enlargement. It is undeniable that Russia and Ukraine have improved their relations with NATO, which has in turn impacted on the situation in Belarus, and President Lukashenka has spoken positively about the West on several occasions. Nevertheless, hopes for a change of the Belarusian policy towards the Alliance have as yet proven vain. Regardless of the generally critical stance on NATO presented by the president's inner circle, individual Belarusian ministries (including the Ministry of Defence) have continued to offer the Alliance limited co-operation in certain areas.

Opposition political parties and non-governmental organisations display a positive attitude to NATO, and are in favour of intensifying co-operation. A desire to join the Alliance has only been declared by the Belarusian National Front (BNF) and the intellectual elites linked to it.

Evolution of co-operation

Due to political reasons, co-operation between NATO and Belarus has been very limited for years. Belarus signed the PfP Framework Document on 11 January 1995, and it submitted the Partnership Presentation Document on 29 April 1996. Belarus does not take part in IPAP, and it does not aspire to NATO membership either. It joined PARP in 2004, but its status at PARP remained rather unclear for some time. Belarus was planning to present the Partnership Goals in autumn 2004, but failed to do so at that time.

Belarus–NATO co-operation calendar

March 1992 – joins NACC

11 January 1995 – signs the PfP Framework Document (as the last but one NIS country)
26 June 1995 – signs the Security Agreement (uncertified by NATO)

29 April 1996 – submits the PfP Presentation Document

1997 – the first IPP

January 2004 – declaration on joining PARP

July 2004 – signs a memorandum of understanding with NAMSA on destruction of mine stocks as a part of the PfP Trust Fund

September 2004 – planned first participation of a Belarusian unit in the PfP Co-operative Best Effort 2004 exercises in Azerbaijan (unsuccessful as the exercises were cancelled)

The Belarusian co-operation with NATO as a part of Partnership for Peace proceeds in two-year Individual Partnership Programme cycles. The IPP for the years 2004–05 was agreed in late 2003 and adopted in early 2004. It provides for 183 events in 21 areas of co-operation (2 more areas than in the preceding IPP). On the Belarusian side, the following authorities are engaged in co-operation: the Ministries of Defence, for Emergency Situations, Foreign Affairs, the State Border Troops Committee and the Belarusian Academy of Sciences. Such co-operation is not intensive, and covers consultations as a part of the EAPC and PfP, the participation of Belarusian representatives in the Partnership institutions as

provided under the PfP, staff talks at NATO headquarters (the Chief of the General Staff of Belarus visited NATO in May 2004), and participation in military & rescue exercises and training. In September 2004, Belarusian armed forces (a unit of the 120th Guard Mechanised Brigade) were to take part in NATO Co-operative Best Effort 2004 PfP exercises in Azerbaijan for the first time; however, this did not happen as the exercises were cancelled. Belarus intends to send its soldiers to subsequent Co-operative Best Effort 2005 exercises, which will be held in Ukraine.

The project for destroying the antipersonnel mine stock in Belarus as a part of the NAMSA-managed PfP Trust Fund is still in its initial phase. A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed with NAMSA in July 2004. The estimated destruction cost of approximately 4.02 million mines (including 3.6 million PFM mines, which Belarus is unable to handle by itself) is approximately 5 million euro. Canada is the project's leading nation, and Lithuania is among the other states that have declared readiness to finance the project. The solutions under consideration are as follows: either to transport the mines to Ukraine, where an adequate mine destruction infrastructure already exists, or to destroy the mines in Belarus. Pursuant to the Ottawa Convention, applicable from 1 March 2004, Belarus must destroy the mine stock within the next four years.

Since mid-2003, Belarusian legislation permits its soldiers to take part in peacekeeping operations abroad (presidential prerogative). At NATO's Istanbul summit, Minsk declared its readiness to prepare a battalion to co-operate in peacekeeping operations with NATO, yet no decisions have been taken so far. Support for the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan (availability of airspace for transit, readiness to provide Il-76 transport aircrafts with crews) was also promised on that occasion. The Belarusian Ministry for Emergency Situations declared its readiness to the EAPC to prepare a team of rapid-reaction rescuers. Bilateral co-operation among other countries with Poland, Lithuania, Latvia and Germany, is developing, even though its level is still low and some difficulties still exist. During the Prague and Istanbul summits, Belarus offered its neighbours co-operation on border protection and air defence exercises.

The authorities have been preparing to launch a local NATO documentation centre at the Belarusian Academy of Sciences for a long time (a delegation from the Academy visited NATO in November 2003). However, statements by some representatives of the authorities indicate that this is just an exception from the rule, and that the anti-NATO indoctrination of the general public is being continued.

Problems in co-operation

The domestic policy practiced by President Alyaksandr Lukashenka, which has been deemed undemocratic by the West, and his aggressive anti-NATO rhetoric and unwillingness to co-operate with the Alliance allow of no opportunity to enhance relations between Belarus and NATO.

Both the authorities and citizens of NATO member states share the view that Belarus is definitely, and to an increasing degree, departing from the democratic standards pertaining to the rule of law and human rights applicable in their countries. Moreover, Belarus has made hardly any progress in establishing democratic control of the armed forces, or in applying transparency rules to the processes of defence and military budget planning. The lack of democratic reform in Belarus has caused NATO take a consistent and tough stance on this country. The limited co-operation programme, including the refusal to sign the Security Agreement, is an intentional element thereof. Knowledge of NATO is very poor among the Belarusian elite (including political scientists and journalists), let alone the general public. Anti-NATO, anti-US and anti-Western propaganda effectively maintains a high level of disinformation. None of the academic and non-governmental initiatives planned in 2003, which were aimed at informational and scientific activity dealing with European and Atlantic security (without mentioning NATO by name), were opened or registered due to lack of support from the authorities. For the same reason, not a single non-governmental organisation dedicated to propagating Euro-Atlantic ideas is operating in Belarus. The closing of the European Humanities University in Minsk in July 2004 put an end to the lectures on NATO and Euro-Atlantic security that used to be given there by two local university teachers.

Conclusions

The discouraging actions on the part of Belarus and, consequently, the current refocusing of the planned NATO activity in the NIS area onto Central Asian and South Caucasian states will only further marginalise Belarus as a current and potential partner of the Alliance.

The improvement of relations between NATO and Russia has not so far resulted in any enhancement of possible co-operation with Belarus.

It would be reasonable to support non-governmental organisations interested in bringing Belarus and NATO closer and in informing the public about the Alliance in a reliable manner.

Engagement in Belarus is a necessity. The Alliance's policy should remain tough, yet must also become more proactive. The ongoing indifference shown by most of the Allies to Belarus needs to be resisted. Previous experience (IPP, PFP Trust Fund) proves that areas of co-operation do exist at a lower level, and these should not be abandoned; instead, this co-operation should be cautiously expanded as far as possible. The new NATO members can play a role in encouraging NATO structures to keep trying to change Minsk's policy. Relations between NATO and Belarus could only intensify, if the country changed its internal policy. Nevertheless, the Alliance should also constantly convey the message of its readiness for dialogue and co-operation.

Stanisław Górka

UKRAINE

Co-operation between Ukraine and NATO has intensified since the Alliance Prague summit. However, because the former Ukrainian authorities have been using relations with NATO for their own political games, and because of their lack of real determination and efficiency in the implementation of NATO standards, no breakthrough in mutual relations has happened that could have lifted Ukraine up to the level of the Membership Action Plan (MAP).

Approach to NATO

Since Ukraine's Strategy on NATO, as adopted by the National Security and Defence Council of Ukraine (NSDC) on 23 May 2002, was approved under a presidential decree, Ukraine has officially aspired to achieve member status in the Alliance. The objective of complete integration with the Alliance is also included in the law on the Foundations of the National Security of Ukraine as of 19 June 2003. On the other hand, official documents exist which imply that Ukraine will not aim for NATO membership, namely the resolution by the Supreme Council as of 1993 on foreign policy guidelines, and the provision concerning the intention to become a non-allied state in the Declaration of Sovereignty as of 16 June 1990. The new version of the Military Doctrine, revised under the presidential decree as of 15 July 2004, specifies Euro-Atlantic integration among the foreign policy priorities, yet it does not set out the goal of membership in a direct manner. This ambivalence in official documents perfectly illustrates Ukraine's attitude to NATO.

Initially, Ukraine demonstrated scepticism about the first enlargement of the Alliance eastwards, yet, unlike Russia, it never formulated a categorical objection to it. Kyiv gladly welcomed the second enlargement and, referring to the officially announced foreign policy line and declarations by NATO representatives that the Alliance's doors remained open, it stated that it perceived Ukraine as a prospective NATO member. Ukraine believes that the transformation and enlargement processes have caused the Alliance to become a key element of the European security system. The most important issues for Ukraine, in the context of enlargement, include preventing any ter-

ritorial claims, preventing the deployment of nuclear weapons in the territories of the new members, and preventing any re-emergence of division lines or spheres of influence in the Euro-Atlantic area.

Ukraine started developing its contacts with NATO to counterbalance attempts to involve Kyiv in eastern integration (inter alia, as a part of the CSTO). During the decade of Leonid Kuchma's rule, co-operation with the Alliance was used as a balance against Ukraine's relations with Russia. It was not accidentally that the signing of the Charter on a Distinctive Partnership and the NSDC's decision coincided with the tightening of relations between NATO and the Russian Federation (PJC and NRC). By developing relations with NATO Kyiv has preserved more room for manoeuvre in its contacts with Moscow. The possibility cannot be excluded that the intensification of co-operation following the Prague summit was a response to the improvement in Russia's relations with the USA and West European states.

On the other hand, NATO is perceived as a constituent of the idea of "Ukraine's European choice". Even that part of the Ukrainian society and representatives of the political circles who are resentful about the Alliance, extrapolating from the experiences of the East and Central European nations, treat joining NATO as a transitional stage on their way towards EU membership. Most Ukrainian experts point to Euro-Atlantic integration as a significant catalyst of the process of transforming and modernising the Ukrainian state, the path of which should be marked with such milestones as membership in the WTO, NATO and the EU. The issue of joining the Alliance, in contrast to the previous aspirants, is not yet a matter of national consensus in Ukraine.

Evolution of co-operation

Ukraine–NATO co-operation calendar

January 1992 – Ukraine's representative takes part in NACC

8 February 1994 – Ukraine signs the PfP Framework Document

March 1994 – beginning of Ukraine–NATO consultations in the "16+1" format

25 May 1994 – Ukraine submits its PfP Presentation Document to NATO

1995 – Ukraine takes part in the 1st PARP stage

13 March 1995 – signs the Security Agreement, NATO certification on 28 March 1996, ratification by the Supreme Council on 12 September 2002

July 1995 – adopting the first Individual Partnership Programme (IPP)

14 September 1995 – Hennadiy Udoenko, minister of foreign affairs, participates in a special NAC–Ukraine session; the parties in their Joint Press Statement voice the expectation of further strengthening of co-operation of "particular importance"

February 1996 – sends a Ukrainian contingent to IFOR (thereafter SFOR) in Bosnia and Herzegovina

6 May 1996 – signs the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA), (ratified on 2 March 2000)

7 May 1997 – opens NATO Information and Documentation Centre (NIDC) in Kyiv

9 July 1997 – signs the Charter on a Distinctive Partnership between the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and Ukraine at the NATO Madrid Summit: NATO declares its support for Ukraine's sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity, inviolability of frontiers and the Alliance's lack of intention to deploy nuclear weapons in the territories of its new members; Ukraine promises reform of the defence sector, reinforcement of democracy and civilian control of the armed forces, as well as increasing interoperability of Ukrainian forces with NATO forces; NATO–Ukraine Commission (NUC) and crisis management mechanism are created

8 October 1997 – opens Ukraine's mission to NATO (with the military mission operating since January 1998)

16 December 1997 – the first NUC ministerial meeting: signing of a memorandum on civil emergency planning, creation of a Joint Working Group on Civil Emergency Planning (JWGCEP) and Joint Working Group on Defence Reform (JWGDR)

4 November 1998 – Ukraine adopts the National Programme of Co-operation with NATO until 2001

23 April 1999 – opening of the NATO Liaison Office (NLO)

1 September 1999 – sends a Ukrainian contingent to KFOR in Kosovo

October 1999 – the first agreement on NATO support for retraining retired Ukrainian soldiers

December 1999 – completion of the Ukrainian contingent's mission at SFOR in Bosnia and Herzegovina

May 2000 – creating a Joint Working Group on Scientific and Environmental Co-operation (JWGSEC)

27 January 2001 – Ukraine adopts the National Programme of Co-operation with NATO for the years 2001–04

6 December 2001 – Ukraine and NAMSO sign a memorandum; beginning of co-operation in destroying Ukrainian weapons and ammunition surpluses as a part of PfP Trust Fund

23 May 2002 – NSDC adopts Ukraine's Strategy on NATO; Ukraine makes a declaration of its desire to apply for NATO membership

9 July 2002 – signing the Host Nation Support (HNS) memorandum (ratified on 17 March 2004)

22 November 2002 – adopting an Action Plan modelled on MAP and the first Annual Target Plan 2002 at NATO Prague Summit

30 January 2003 – creation of the State Council for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration of Ukraine (SCEEAIU)

6 February 2003 – SCEEAIU approves the 2003 ATP

12 December 2003 – creation of the National Centre for Euro-Atlantic Integration of Ukraine (NCEAIU)

31 March 2003 – creation of the Euro-Atlantic Co-operation Directorate as a part of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine

25 March 2004 – SCEEAIU approves the 2004 ATP

31 March 2004 – the first meeting of the Joint Working Group on Armaments (JWGA)

7 June 2004 – signing the Memorandum on Strategic Airlift

Following the Prague Summit, Ukraine–NATO relations gained momentum. Significant as the introduction of such new co-operation mechanisms as AP and ATPs was, still more decisive was the Ukrainian engagement in Iraq, which allowed the US-Ukrainian relations come out from the shadow of the “Kolchuga scandal”, and the nomination of a civilian minister of defence on 25 June 2003. This post was entrusted to Yevhen Marchuk, organiser of the Security Service of Ukraine (SBU) and a former head of NSDC, who had a good reputation in Brussels. He was also believed to be the political author of the decisions taken on 23 May 2002 (see above), and of the idea to send a Ukrainian contingent to Iraq. Some politicians and experts hoped this rapid development would be crowned by signing the MAP at NATO Istanbul Summit, yet neither the reforms launched by the Ukrainian side nor the number of supporters of Ukraine's aspiration amongst the Alliance members had reached the critical mass necessary to do that.

On 17 March 2004, the Supreme Council ratified the Host Nation Support (HNS) memorandum, which provided a legal basis for Ukraine to grant technical, information and medical support to NATO subunits conducting military and peace-keeping activity both inside and from the territory of Ukraine. Such assistance will be provided on a commercial basis, although tax and other duty exemptions have been granted. The Allied forces gained the right of rapid access to the territory of Ukraine, in case it should be necessary for implementing NATO policy. This agreement is of a technical nature. Before it was signed, every event required the signing of separate agreements regulating such issues as visas, taxes, choice of sub-suppliers, possible indemnity, safety of participants and information. Following ratification, this will be regulated at the working level, and not the highest level.

On 7 June 2004, the third session of high-level informal NATO–Ukraine consultations were held in Warsaw (the previous ones had taken place in March 2002 in Berlin and in May 2003 in Washington). Kyiv got the clear message on the eve of the Istanbul Summit that the level of mutual relations would not be changed. The following factors seem to have decided the postponement of the decision to assess the relations until the NUC meeting in December 2004: a distrust of the declarations made by the Ukrainian authorities, and the anxiety that shifting the relations to a higher level could be used for domestic political games; a lack of consensus among the Allies as to the model of developing relations with Ukraine; and the Russian factor (Alliance being unwilling to antagonise Russia further following the acceptance of the Baltic states into NATO). The Memorandum on Strategic Airlift was signed during the Warsaw meeting. Ukrainian An-124-100 Ruslan aircraft had already been used for transporting cargoes from NATO states to Afghanistan (e.g. in 2003–04, Avialinii Antonov carried out 670 flights for the Bundeswehr). In June 2003, at the NUC meeting, a group of Allies (Canada, France, Germany, Denmark, Norway, Luxembourg, Portugal, Turkey, Greece, the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland) signed a letter of intent to use the Ruslans until the A400M plane was made available for operation (estimated for sometime in the period 2010–12). The memorandum is a framework document; it specifies the general rules of financing and insurance, and regulates the legal issues. It does not guarantee that the Ukrainian planes will automatically be chosen; a tendering procedure will be conducted each time. The document must still be ratified. A meeting of the NUC at the level of Heads of State and Government was held on 29 June 2004. The fulfilment of the tasks set in the AP and ATPs was discussed. NATO leaders once again appealed to Ukraine for complete and active implementation of Euro-Atlantic values. Leonid Kuchma guaranteed that the presidential election would be fair and free, inviting international observers to participate; he declared that Ukraine would join the antiterrorist Operation Active Endeavour (OAE), and that the country wished to join in the process of carrying out multinational events under the Prague Capabilities Commitments (PCC). It was agreed that the subsequent NUC session

(December 2004) would be devoted to reviewing Ukraine–NATO relations in order to enhance partnership, if necessary.

Ukraine officially announced its new Military Doctrine shortly after the summit. The previous one had been published back in 1993, and it had determined the status of Ukraine as a non-allied nation. The text of the document was accepted by NSDC in November 2003, and it was approved under a presidential decree as of 15 June 2004. However, its publication was continually delayed. The agreed (though unannounced) text of the document included provisions that unambiguously expressed the country's desire to become a member of NATO (articles 9 and 16). The Military Doctrine text was published in the second half of July 2004, with some amendments¹². Officially, Kyiv claimed that the new version included amendments that were necessary in the light of the decisions taken at the Ukraine–NATO and Ukraine–EU summits. In truth, the motives were more likely to be found in the context of the approaching presidential election, and consequently the growing significance of the Russian factor in Ukraine. The negative effects of the new version seem to have been overestimated. The text, in contrast to the 1993 version, does include references to Euro-Atlantic integration (articles 9, 10, 16 and 21). Nevertheless, it can be amended upon the new president's initiative. Moreover, moderate opinions result from the entire content of decree no. 800/2004, which, apart from changing the Military Doctrine, sets concrete Euro-Atlantic integration tasks for the government (including the allocation of budget funds for the implementation of the 2005 ATP, and agreement on the terms and conditions of Ukraine's joining the OAE and PCC). It needs to be emphasised that the response which the changes in the Military Doctrine have elicited proves that public interest in Euro-Atlantic integration is growing. The Alliance responded in a very calm and moderate way, as inconsistency in setting foreign policy lines had been one of the characteristics of Leonid Kuchma's presidency throughout its entire period. Adopting the Military Doctrine fits the imple-

¹² *Voyenna doktryna Ukrayiny*, approved under decree no. 648/2004 by the President of Ukraine as of 15 June 2004, including amendments adopted under decree no. 800/2004 by the President of Ukraine as of 15 July 2004.

mentation of objective I.1.B.1 under the AP. Alongside the law on the Foundations of the National Security of Ukraine, it creates a base for determining priorities of the national security policy and directions for implementation thereof, which mirrors the new geopolitical conditions, the process of Euro-Atlantic integration of Ukraine (though not as strongly as some supporters of this line might have wished), and the pending reform and transformation of the Ukrainian defence sector.

Yevhen Marchuk was dismissed on 22 September 2004 from the post of defence minister and replaced by Oleksandr Kuzmuk, who had already held the post in 1996–2001, and lost it after such incidents as a missile strike on a residential building in the town of Brovary and the shooting down of a Tu-154 passenger plane. A great part of Ukrainian experts indicated that the reasons for Marchuk's dismissal could also be found in the context of the election campaign.

Conducting an election process in compliance with the rules of democracy was included in the ATP as objective I.1.A.1. NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, during his meetings with Ukrainian politicians, emphasised on many occasions that the manner in which the election was conducted would be an important test of mutual relations. In the Secretary General's opinion, the election failed to meet the democratic standards which Ukraine had undertaken to adopt as a part of the AP and ATPs. Yet the Alliance was satisfied with the way the post-election crisis was resolved. At first, the NUC meeting was postponed and its rank was lowered to ambassadorial level, and finally it was rescheduled. This disturbed the time schedule of work on the 2005 ATP, the draft of which Kyiv presented during the PC session with Ukraine on 14 October 2004.

At the end of 2004, the Allies' interest in Ukraine grew, and a very positive political climate was created. However, initially, representatives of the new authorities (Julia Tymoshenko, Borys Tarasyuk, Anatoliy Grytsenko, and Petro Poroshenko) spoke very cautiously, at times contradicting one another, about the future development of Ukraine–NATO relations. Clearer messages concerning the desire for complete integration with the Euro-Atlantic community were conveyed by presi-

dent Victor Yushchenko at the NUC meeting on 22 February 2005, when he spoke of Ukraine's readiness to join in MAP; in return, he was given assurances of the continuation of the open door policy, and of the Alliance's readiness to adjust the existing mechanisms to the new president's priorities. Yet, seemingly, the new governing team is not going to formulate clear-cut declarations concerning the country's will to become a NATO member (e.g. a formal request for acceptance) in the short term, due to some internal policy issues (parliamentary elections scheduled for spring 2006, and low support among the Ukrainian public for the idea of NATO membership). Instead, it has been decided to focus on using the already existing co-operation instruments to the greatest possible extent, an example of which is the promise of launching the second weapons and ammunition surplus destruction programme as a part of the PfP Trust Fund in spring 2005. According to Ukrainian experts, the composition of the new government¹³ suggests that during the presidency of Victor Yushchenko – in contrast to Leonid Kuchma's rule – numerous declarations unsupported by actual reforms will be replaced with real actions in the field of the Euro-Atlantic integration of Ukraine.

Co-operation management system

The signing of the AP, as compared to the Charter on a Distinctive Partnership, has significantly extended and systematised the areas of co-operation. This co-operation covers political & economic, security, defence & military, informational protection and security, legal issues. The years 2003 and 2004 allowed the institutions responsible for co-operation with NATO, which had been created following the Prague Summit, to grow a little stronger and gain some operational efficiency. The State Council for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration of Ukraine (SCEEAIU), chaired by the

¹³ Borys Tarasyuk, during his previous time in office at the MFA (1998–2000), had already presented himself as a supporter of the Euro-Atlantic integration of Ukraine. He is also the director of the Institute of Euro-Atlantic co-operation, which promotes this idea. Defence minister Anatoliy Grytsenko and his first deputy Leonid Polyakov both originate from the Razumkov Centre (the former was its president and the latter was the military programme director), which is also perceived as an institution that supports the idea of Ukraine becoming a NATO member.

president¹⁴, meets every quarter to set strategic goals and priorities in the field of European integration and develop guidelines for the executive authority. The National Centre for the Euro-Atlantic Integration of Ukraine (NCEAIU) monitors the effects of co-operation with Euro-Atlantic structures at its monthly meetings, helps to co-ordinate it on the national level, and makes concrete suggestions for its development. The NCEAIU is chaired by Volodymyr Horbulin¹⁵. As a part of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, the Euro-Atlantic Co-operation Directorate, headed by General Major Leonid Holopatiuk, has been established. Of the “pre-Prague” system, the institution of national co-ordinators for Ukraine’s co-operation with NATO has been preserved¹⁶. In addition to that, Ukraine’s mission to NATO (of which the military representation operates as a part) is active in Brussels.

On the international level, co-operation is co-ordinated through mechanisms common to all the partner states and by the NATO–Ukraine Commission (NUC), which supervises the operation of the Joint Working Groups on Defence Reform (JWGDR), Economic Security (JWGES), Civil Emergency Planning (JWGCEP), Scientific and Environmental Co-operation (JWGSEC) and Armaments (JWGA). NUC meetings are held irregularly at the highest level (the Washington and Istanbul summits), and on a regular basis on ministerial (twi-

ce a year) and ambassadorial levels. On 1 September 2004, the embassy of the Netherlands became a NATO Contact Point Embassy (preceded by the embassy of the Republic of Poland, which had performed this function for four years). In addition, the Alliance has the following institutions in Kyiv: a NATO Liaison Office (NLO), which co-ordinates the current co-operation (organisation of visits and PfP exercises; it also supported the implementation of the Defence Review), and a NATO Information and Documentation Centre (NIDC), which is in charge of informational activity and of supporting research events covering Ukraine–NATO co-operation.

Implementation of the Annual Target Plans (ATPs)

Of the 259 events covered by the 2003 ATP, 84% were internal events (to be conducted by Ukraine), and 66% covered civilian matters. Of the 29 legal acts envisaged under the 2003 ATP, 22 were adopted. The most important of these included the Law on the Foundations of the National Security of Ukraine (19 June 2003), the Law on Democratic and Civilian Control of the Defence Structures and Public Order Enforcement Organisations (19 June 2003), the law On State Control of International Transfers of Goods Designated for Military Purposes and Dual-Use Goods (20 February 2003), and the Law on State Border Service (3 April 2003). Successes in the 2003 ATP implementation include the establishment of the Civic Euro-Atlantic League Ukraine–NATO by Ukrainian non-governmental organisations, and launching the Ukrainian Research and Academic Network (URAN), which provides access to the general European GEANT network.

The 2004 ATP was approved by the SCEAIU with one quarter delay. It was smaller than the 2003 ATP; it included only 226 events, of which 177 were internal events. The 2004 ATP, as compared to the 2003 ATP, contained fewer deadlines “within one year’s time” and more precise dates. The subject matter of the 2004 ATP was mostly a continuation of the activities initiated under the 2003 ATP. Great emphasis was put on section I.2 covering economic issues, including strengthening state energy security (objective I.2.12). The objective I.3.5 activities (increasing the level of knowledge on NATO activity among the citizens) were enhanced.

¹⁴ Additionally, it consists of the following members: the chairman of the Supreme Council, the Prime Minister, the head of the President’s Administration, the secretary of NSDC, Ukraine’s governmental plenipotentiary for European and Euro-Atlantic integration, the president of the National Academy of Sciences, the director of the National Institute of Strategic Studies and chief of the NCEAIU, and the ministers of foreign affairs, defence, justice, economy and European integration.

¹⁵ The NCEAIU’s composition: the deputy secretary of NSDC; secretaries of state at the ministries of defence, foreign affairs, economy and European integration, industrial policy, emergency situations, finance and justice, the State Committee for Radio and TV Broadcasting, and the Security Service of Ukraine; heads of the Supreme Council’s committees for foreign affairs and for security and defence.

¹⁶ They are nominated by the President of Ukraine. Currently there are 11 of them, and they deal with the following fields of co-operation: defence reform, armament, defence standards and technologies, economy, emergency situations, struggle against international terrorism, science and technology, ecology, standardisation and metrology, transport and air traffic management and information.

Military-to-Military co-operation

Judging from the experience of fulfilling ATP commitments by Ukraine, co-operation is most complete and effective in the military field. The Ministry of Defence had carried out 74 (89%) tasks by the end of 2003. Implementation of other, long-term tasks is in progress. As a part of the 2004 ATP, emphasis was put on developing defence planning procedures in compliance with NATO standards; air traffic information management and sharing; information security, including increasing the level of knowledge among the public on Ukraine–NATO co-operation and defence reform; and minimising the negative effects of reform of the Armed Forces of Ukraine (converting defence facilities, ecological issues, destroying weapon and ammunition surpluses, and social aspects).

The greatest successes included the completion of the Defence Review and the preparation of the Strategic Defence Bulletin 2015 (SDB). The SDB was developed in co-operation with experts from the Alliance member states under the supervision of the state commission for reforming and developing Ukraine's armed forces, other military formations, armament and military technology, chaired by the Prime Minister. The document was presented to NATO member states on 13–14 April 2004, and was approved by a presidential decree on 22 June 2004. The SDB breaks the reform of the armed forces into two stages. The army structure is to be reduced and optimised by 2009, and the armed forces will be equipped with the most modern armament systems within the period of 2010–15. By the end of 2005, the number of the armed forces is to be reduced from 355,000 to 200,000 (160,000 soldiers and 40,000 civilian personnel). In 2015, the armed forces of Ukraine should number 90,000–100,000 (including 70,000–75,000 soldiers). The SDB also includes a financial schedule for implementing the defence reform. The 2015 defence budget value is supposed to reach approx. UAH 17 billion (approx. US\$3.2 billion). The government is supposed to develop a programme for reforming and developing the armed forces of Ukraine until 2009, using the SDB and the Military Doctrine as a basis.

The decree that established the model of the armed forces based on three types of forces, i.e. Ground Forces, Navy and Air Forces (created out

of the combination of the former Air Force and Air Defence Force), came into effect on 22 June 2004. The SDB and MD provide for division of the army into three parts: Joint Rapid Reaction Forces (JRRF), Main Defence Forces and Strategic Reserve. The SDB envisages that the number of conscripts will be limited to 51,700 in 2005, then to 9,100 in 2009, and the army will finally consist of professional military personnel alone in 2015. The process of strengthening civilian control of the armed forces is ongoing. By the end of 2004, civilian officers should take 40% of the posts at the Ministry of Defence; this ratio is due to rise to 80% by the end of 2005.

In 2003, as a part of the Individual Partnership Programme (IPP), Ukrainian armed forces took part in 152 events, including 24 military exercises, 6 of which were held in Ukraine. In 2004, the respective numbers were 220 events, 24 military exercises, 4 held in Ukraine. 298 joint events have been planned for 2005. Exercises held on a regular basis include Peace Shield, Cossack Step, Cossack Express and the ground-and-sea Co-operative Partner. Ukraine designated the following military components for PfP participation in 2004: the 1st Detached Special Forces Battalion (the Ukrainian portion of POLUKRBAT, as a part of KFOR, the 95th Detached Airmobile Brigade of the 8th Army Corps (Zhytomyr), the NBC Company of the 704th NBC Regiment (Sambir), the Engineering Battalion of the 11th Engineering Regiment (Brovary), the 1st Mechanised Battalion of the 72nd Brigade (Bila Tserkva), the 2nd Helicopter Squadron of the 7th Detached Regiment (Kaliniv), 4 aircraft of the 25th Military Transport Aircraft Regiment (Melitopol), the 2nd Company of the 1st Detached Marine Battalion (Feodosia), and the frigate Hetman Sagaydachny (Sevastopol), the corvette Lutsk and the assault ship Kostyantyn Olshansky (both in Novoozerne). The following items have been added to the list for 2005: an An-26 sanitary aircraft, the small tanker Fastiv, the fleet tug Kremenets, and a unit for combating submarine sabotage forces and means. Apart from POLUKRBAT, Ukraine provides components for two other multinational units: "Tysa" (the Ukrainian-Romanian-Hungarian-Slovak engineering battalion) and BLACKSEAFOR (an operational group of 6 Black Sea nations). Ukraine delegated two people to work at the PfP Staff Elements (PSE)

between 1998–2003; currently, it has three representatives there.

Ukraine continues its participation in the 3rd (enhanced and adapted) stage of the Planning and Review Process (PARP). Pursuant to the SDB, the main objective is for the Ukrainian JRRF to achieve compliance with NATO standards by 2009.

The Multinational Staff Officer Centre, which prepares soldiers for work in the multinational staffs of UN and NATO missions, was created in December 2003 as a part of the Academy of National Defence of Ukraine in Kyiv as a continuation of courses held since 2000 (more than 600 students have graduated). The Administrative Agreement on the Creation, Financing and Support of the Activity of the NATO–Ukraine Defense Documentation Office was signed on 3 August 2004.

Since 1999, NATO has supported professional and language courses held by the National Co-ordinating Centre for the adaptation of military service personnel. In 2002, the Donetsk plant destroyed 404,000 antipersonnel mines as a part of the PfP Trust Fund project, in co-operation with NAMSA (the Alliance's input was US\$ 561,000). Implementation of the second project is due to begin in spring 2005. The project provides for the destruction of 133,000 tons of ammunition and 1.5 million SALW items. The project will be implemented in four phases over 12 years (the estimated input of the Alliance's member states is US\$ 27 million). The United States has taken on the role of leading nation for the first phase of the project. Financial support has also been promised by the United Kingdom and Norway.

Ukraine is an active participant in the Alliance-led peacekeeping operations. A total of 2,800 Ukrainian soldiers, stationed in the French sector, took part in the IFOR/SFOR mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina from February 1996 to December 1999. In addition, Ukraine made 10 aircraft available (on commercial terms) for the needs of SFOR. On 1 September 1999, the Ukrainian contingent (the 14th Detached Helicopter Squadron, the 37th Detached Protection Company and the 57th Military Hospital) embarked on their service as a part of KFOR. In July 2000, those troops were replaced by the Ukrainian component of POLUKR-BAT, consisting of 321 soldiers of Multinational Brigade East. The Strpce commune, a Serbian enclave, is their zone of responsibility. In addition to that, 143 Ukrainian soldiers (the Detached Air-

mobile Platoon and the 92nd Detached Platoon of the 11th Detached Engineering Battalion) were stationed in the North sector as a part of BEL-UKROKOS (the Belgian-Luxembourgian-Ukrainian-Romanian unit) from December 2002 to July 2003.

Negotiations on the practical engagement of Ukrainian ships in the OAE are ongoing.

Non-military aspects of co-operation

Ukraine has been co-operating with NATO in the field of Civil Emergency Planning (CEP) since 1992. Member states and the Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Co-ordination Centre (EADRCC) have helped Ukraine manage the consequences of severe flooding in 1995, 1998 and 2001. The Joint NATO–Ukraine Project on Flood Preparedness and Response, as part of which precipitation in the Tysa basin is measured, has been implemented since 2001. It is envisaged that the project will extend over the entire Transcarpathian region in its subsequent stages.

Ukraine, along with Russia, is the most active participant in the Science for Peace (SfP) programme. Ukrainian scientists have received 141 research grants since 1999. 250 researchers have been granted NATO scholarships to conduct research in the Alliance's member states. Currently, Ukrainian scientists are members of 21 groups working on 16 projects.

Three representatives of Ukraine have served their internships at NATO International Staff between 1998–2003. Currently, one person is on internship.

Problems in co-operation

Adopting the SDB is an attempt to respond to the gravest problem facing defence reform, namely financial shortages. The SDB specifies the exact amounts that Ukraine intends to allocate for defence until 2015, providing for realistic increases thereof every year. In 2005, the outlays are due to grow from UAH 4.9 billion (US\$ 920 million) to UAH 6 billion (US\$ 1.13 billion). The reform of the armed forces will allow money to be saved thanks to structural and staff changes. From 1992 to 2003, purchase of new military equipment was at a minimum. In 2004, however, 92% of the defence budget was allocated for current maintenance. If this continues at a similar level, the

Ukrainian army will lose combat capability at some point in the period 2005–10 due to the technological ageing of its equipment. The situation can only change if the reform line set under the SDB is consistently followed.

The lack of NATO consent to the MAP in the second half of 2004 has further worsened the disillusionment of official Ukrainian state structures with the effects of co-operating with the Alliance. Yet it was the Ukrainian side that was to blame for the failure to move mutual relations to a higher level. Apparently, sending troops to Iraq – through winning the favour of the USA – was supposed to take Ukraine significantly closer to the goal of membership, without the need to submit to any scrupulous supervision of its fulfilment of other commitments. The selective implementation of the AP and ATPs was concentrated on military events, avoiding the most urgent internal policy problems. This could be perfectly illustrated by the issue of civilian control of the security structures, which is in fact being implemented only with regard to the armed forces. Moreover, civilian control tended to be defined as presidential control¹⁷. This demonstrates that most of the Ukrainian political elite did not understand that the reforms required by NATO were a value per se, as they contributed to the development of the Ukrainian state in compliance with European standards, and that membership was just a secondary issue. This was confirmed by the events that have taken place during the past year or so: the local election in Mukachevo, the Kravchenko affair, and the *Jane's Intelligence Digest* reports on arms deals with Cuba and Venezuela. Yet it was the course of the presidential election that provided the most flagrant illustration of this problem.

Even though the National Programme for Informing the Society on the Euro-Atlantic Integration of Ukraine for 2004–07 was approved on 2 December 2003, the image of the Alliance has nevertheless worsened. Opinion polls indicate that, if

¹⁷ It is worth noting that the Ukrainian Supreme Council, which is, paradoxically, the most pro-Atlantic parliament so far, has played quite a minor role in deciding foreign and defence policy. These issues are totally monopolised by the president, and the decree “On measures to improve the efficiency of the state foreign policy” of 29 November 2003 has in fact brought the MFA under the control of the Presidential Administration’s Foreign Policy Department.

a referendum were to be held, 14.9% of votes would be cast for and 47.5% against Ukraine’s joining NATO¹⁸. The state-owned mass media have not informed the public on NATO in a reliable manner; instead, they have even occasionally resorted to discrediting the Western partners as a tool in the internal political struggle. Negative stereotypes concerning the Alliance are also reinforced due to the fact that Ukraine belongs to the “Russian information space”. For instance, the war in Iraq is perceived as a NATO intervention, which strengthens the conviction that the Alliance is an “aggressive military bloc”. In addition to the two traditional reasons for aversion to NATO (the post-Soviet stereotypes and the fear of being forced to engage in a conflict), a third one has been developed: membership requires significant financial input, which will have a negative effect on the Ukrainian economy (Prime Minister Victor Yanukovych used to refer to this). The Kyiv NIDC is doing its best to ease the problem. The most recent initiative was the opening of NATO information points at 27 regional libraries in autumn 2004. At the time of the crisis over the Tuzla island¹⁹ the consultation mechanism, envisaged in article 15 of the Madrid Charter, was not employed. Some analysts believe that a chance for increasing public support for membership has been wasted, and Ukrainians have been strengthened in their conviction

¹⁸ 30% of respondents were undecided, 6.3% would not vote and 1.3% refused to answer. Polls conducted by the Democratic Initiatives Fund and the Kyiv International Institute of Sociology on 4–15 February 2005 (sample of 2,040 people, max. error 2.2%).

¹⁹ On 29 September 2003, Russia started to build a causeway in the Kerch Strait on the Taman Peninsula side running towards the Ukrainian island of Kosa Tuzla, while at the same time expressing a doubt as to which state this territory should belong to. As a result, the Ukrainian political elites and public were united in an unprecedented way over the idea of the state’s territorial integrity. Following negotiations between Presidents Kuchma and Putin, the construction work was discontinued on 23 October 2003. On 24 December 2003, the presidents of Ukraine and Russia signed an agreement on co-operation in using the Azov Sea and the Kerch Strait. Pursuant to it, the waters of the Azov Sea and Kerch Strait were considered internal waters of both Russia and Ukraine, with the proviso that the Azov Sea would be divided by the state border, and the principles of using the Kerch Strait would be established under a separate agreement.

tion that NATO is a “club for the rich, who do not care about Ukraine”²⁰.

Ukraine’s policy towards the Alliance changes under the influence of the Russian factor. In the second half of 2004, Ukrainian foreign policy became more East-oriented (changes in the Military Doctrine, the dismissal of Yevhen Marchuk, the stance taken on the conflict in Transnistria, Victor Yanukovich’s declarations on 27 September 2004). This overlapped with already existing problems (the extent to which the Ukrainian defence industry is integrated with that of Russia, the scope of mutual connections between the secret services of the two countries, the presence of the Russian Black Sea Fleet), even if they had not yet been discussed openly. If we add to those still other existing disagreements (e.g. over weapon export control), it comes as no surprise that the Allies were rather uncertain about the sincerity and irrevocability of Ukraine’s decision to strive for membership and about Kyiv’s determination to adjust the entire country, and not just the armed forces, to NATO standards.

Conclusions

The presidential election has put a new perspective on Ukraine–NATO relations. However, any real shifts of the relations’ level can only be expected in the medium term (i.e. within the next two to three years). The Allies need time to evaluate the actions, and not just declarations, of the new president and government. For the time being, Ukraine can count on a change of relations to the Intensified Dialogue (ID) formula. However, this would be merely a *pro forma* event, as the level of co-operation currently set under the AP and ATPs is in fact higher than the one envisaged in the ID. An alternative solution could be making the MAP a long-term programme. However, this would cause a devaluation of the programme; even though Ukraine would be able to sign the document in a shorter time, this would be more a symbolic than an actual success. If Ukraine wants to raise its relations to the level of the MAP (in the current form of the program-

²⁰ Opinion polls conducted by Razumkov Centre in October 2003 showed that only 11.7% of Ukrainians believed that if the political situation became tense, Kyiv could count on NATO assistance (29.8% counted on UN, 20.6% on CIS countries and 19.9% on the EU).

me), it should clearly define its strategic goals once and for all, launch an active public information campaign to develop a national consensus on the membership idea, show more interest and activity in the implementation of the ATP, consistently conduct a transformation of the armed forces in compliance with the SDB’s provisions, and not only ratify the Memorandum on Strategic Airlift but also consistently work towards the signing of contracts that would translate this political agreement into practical actions. NATO should encourage Ukraine to implement internal democratic transformation, in particular with regard to building democratic institutions and a civil society, first of all by enhancing the political components of co-operation as a part of the 2005 ATP. If the new Ukrainian authorities show particular determination and efficiency in bringing the state closer to the member-state standards, it will be reasonable to consider raising the relations up to MAP level during the ministerial meeting in December 2005.

The Alliance should, both politically and practically (through the group of border protection experts as a part of the JWGDR), support the final establishment of the status of Ukraine’s borders and the development of adequate infrastructure at the borders.

Assistance in implementing defence reform should be one of the priorities. It is particularly important to build on the experience of the successful co-operation with the Ministry of Defence in the process of transforming other security structures, including the Security Service of Ukraine. Support for multinational units including Ukrainian components should be increased, not decreased. It would be worthwhile for NATO to consider supporting the idea of a joint military unit designated for peacekeeping missions, which Ukraine, Georgia and Azerbaijan have been trying to create as a part of GUUAM. NATO should exert pressure on Ukraine to use the skills of soldiers who have had practical experience in co-operation with the Alliance’s institutions and subunits in a more comprehensive way.

Priority should also be given to activities aimed at liquidating the deficit of information on NATO among the Ukrainian public. It is worth continuing and broadening the programme covering short trips to NATO institutions for representatives of the mass media (especially TV), non-go-

vernmental organisations and local leaders. It would be reasonable to develop the Kyiv NIDC by both employing more people and expanding its structure. NATO should strongly emphasise the need to create the Ukraine–NATO Co-operation internet information portal, which Ukraine had already undertaken to do in the 2003 ATP. In the context of building a positive image of the Alliance, it is worth supporting projects aimed at alleviating the problems related to transformation of the armed forces. Support for the destruction of Ukrainian weapon and ammunition surpluses as a part of PFP Trust Fund, and for programmes covering the retraining of retired soldiers, should further be increased in the longer term. Successful implementation of the Project on Flood Preparedness and Response in Trans-Carpathia will also have a positive effect on NATO's image.

Michał Kolasiński

MOLDOVA

NATO-Moldovan relations are mainly focused on political dialogue. The basic problems both parties are concerned with include settling the issue of the separatist Transnistrian republic which exists in the territory of Moldova, and the stationing (contrary to international arrangements) of the Operational Group of Russian Forces troops there.

Approach to NATO

Officially, Chisinau has announced that Moldova does not intend to apply for NATO membership. However, it has declared a desire to join the European Union. The policy of this country can be summed up by citing President Vladimir Voronin's speech of 20 May 2004, in which he stated that Moldova was not going to join NATO, because the constitution guarantees state neutrality. A great part of the Moldovan opposition, which would like their country to be a member of the Alliance, has a different opinion on this issue. However, considering the strong position of the ruling camp, it seems Moldova will stick to its current line in foreign policy for some considerable time. Regardless of Chisinau's stand, the unresolved Transnistrian conflict excludes the possibility of NATO taking a positive stance, even if Moldova decided to aspire to membership.

NATO member states have been watching and responding to events in Moldova. When Transnistrian authorities started closing Moldovan schools using the Latin alphabet in the territory controlled by them in July 2004, their actions met with criticism from such countries as the United States and Romania. The two countries caused the Russian initiative of November 2003 concerning a resolution of the Transnistrian conflict (the so-called "Kozak Memorandum") to end in failure. If the Russian project had proved successful, this would have made Moldova even more dependent on Russia and adversely affected the young Moldovan democracy.

Moldova has not put forward any proposals to NATO concerning the possible participation of the Alliance's forces in a potential peacekeeping operation in Transnistria. Chisinau would rather welcome EU engagement; it expects only political support from NATO.

Moldova is trying to co-operate closely with the most powerful NATO member, the United States. Chisinau has sent a small military contingent (42 soldiers in the second half of 2003 and 12 soldiers in the second half of 2004) to Iraq.

The Alliance is concerned with the situation in Moldova for two major reasons: the stationing of remnants of the Operational Group of Russian Forces (OGRV) in the country, and the unresolved conflict over Transnistria. The Alliance started attaching greater significance to Moldovan problems when Romania joined NATO in 2004. The issue of Russian troops stationed in the eastern part of the country constantly arises in NATO's declarations concerning Moldova. The Alliance has criticised Russia on numerous occasions for failing to fulfil its 1999 OSCE Istanbul summit commitments, pursuant to which Moscow was required to withdraw its armed forces, weaponry, ammunition and military equipment from eastern Moldova (the Kolbasna depot) in the territory of the separatist Transnistrian Moldovan Republic) by the end of 2002. Russia also failed to meet the extended deadline, which had been set for the end of 2003, claiming the delays were caused by objections raised by the authorities of separatist Transnistria, where Russian troops are still stationed. The Alliance has made the ratification of the adapted Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) treaty dependent on the withdrawal of Russian forces from Moldova and Georgia. Most NATO member states support this official stance taken by the Alliance. Germany insists on Russian withdrawal from eastern Moldova and, even though it has not made this a condition for CFE ratification, it does not challenge the official standpoint of the Alliance out of solidarity with other Allies. Currently, approximately 1,400 Russian soldiers and more than 15,000 tons of weaponry, ammunition and military equipment remain on Transnistrian-controlled territory. Apart from that, the ceasefire line between Moldova "proper" and Transnistria is guarded by a 500-strong peacekeeping contingent (this is a trilateral, Moldovan-Russian-Transnistrian, contingent). The Alliance's aforementioned standpoint was fully confirmed by the final *communiqué* at the Istanbul Summit of NATO Heads of State and Government in June 2004. In this document, the Alliance appealed for a completion of Russian

troops' withdrawal from Moldova and Georgia as fast as possible, and declared it would continue monitoring the process through the OSCE. The standpoint was additionally supported by the statements, both made in Chisinau, by NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer on 23 September 2004 and US Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld on 26 June 2004. NATO representatives have also been encouraging the international community to engage more actively in efforts aimed at settling the Transnistrian conflict. However, the Alliance is not considering its participation in the resolution of the conflict over Transnistria. NATO has declared its desire to develop co-operation with Moldova as a part of the Partnership for Peace, though the issue of this country is peripheral to the Alliance's general policy. The neutrality of Moldova is not perceived as an obstacle to co-operation by NATO.

A certain democratic deficit, which is characteristic of Moldova's political system under Communist party rule, is not a serious impediment, either: the Alliance co-operates with countries governed by much more authoritarian regimes. The main problem is Moldova's limited financial potential.

Evolution of co-operation

NATO–Moldova co-operation calendar

March 1992 – joins the North Atlantic Co-operation Council (NACC)

16 March 1994 – signs the Partnership for Peace Framework Document

September 1994 – signs the PfP Presentation Document

28 October 1994 – signs the Security Agreement; NATO certification in October 1998

1995 – signs the first Individual Partnership Programme (IPP)

6 September 1996 – signs the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA; ratified on 31 October 1997)

1997 – begins to participate in the Planning and Review Process (PARP)

30 September 2002 – begins to implement the first project as a part of the PfP Trust Fund

Direct co-operation between NATO and Moldova is rather limited. The greatest success of technical co-operation so far has been the already finished programme for the destruction of landmines, outdated ammunition and rocket fuel as a part of the Trust Fund. Funds for this Netherlands-led programme enabled the destruction of 12,000 tons of landmines and 700,000 tons of outdated ammunition and rocket fuel. The project implementation has had a positive impact on NATO's image in Moldova. A feasibility study for another project, which provides for destruction of chemicals and pesticides, has been conducted. Additionally, Moldova participates in the Canada-led Assessment of Natural Risks programme initiated by the NATO Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society (CCMS). As a part of this project, NATO gave Moldova US\$ 1.5 million in 2003 for monitoring the quality of water in the Dniester and Prut rivers.

Moldova is a member of the Southeast European Co-operative Initiative (SECI), which makes it partly involved in NATO co-operation with the Balkan states. Since the signing of the first Individual Partnership Programme in 1995, Moldova has taken part in subsequent IPPs; it implemented the last Individual Partnership Programme for the years 2000–01, but chose not to embark upon the IPP for 2003–04. In 2004, Chisinau announced it was interested in another Individual Partnership Programme and suggested it could be adapted to Moldova's needs. However, no new IPP was agreed until the end of 2004. Moldova has adopted the Partnership Action Plan on Defence Institution Building (PAP-DIB) to support its defence reform. The Moldovan side declares interest in achieving interoperability with NATO, co-operation in defence reform and civil emergency, and in language training. Still, co-operation in these areas is not really advanced.

Moldova has been implementing a programme aimed at establishing civilian and democratic control of the army. The second stage of this process has been scheduled for 2005–08.

Due to financial shortages, Moldovan armed forces can only participate in military exercises to a limited extent. One example illustrating Moldova's engagement in joint exercises during that period is the Peace Shield exercises conducted as a part of the Partnership for Peace on 14–21 July 2003 in Ukraine, which Moldovan subunits par-

ticipated in. This country also took part in the PFP antiterrorist exercises named RESCUER/MEDCEUR 2004, which were held in July 2004 in the Baltic states.

Moldova has established the closest security co-operation of the NATO nations with the Netherlands, proof of which is not only the fact that the Hague is in charge of the landmine destruction project, but also Moldova's participation in the comprehensive NOSTRUM programme, which is conducted by the Centre for European Security Studies (CESS) at Groningen University, and is aimed at developing draft security sector reforms for Moldova and Ukraine. The CESS co-operates in Moldova with the Public Policy Institute and with the Ministry of Defence.

Problems in co-operation

The gravest problem is the weakness of the Moldovan security sector: its financial shortages, institutional inertia, missing basic structural elements, such as a good military property stock-taking system, and incompetence of the officers. This was proven by the thefts of weapons and ammunition from Moldovan army warehouses, which were revealed in September 2004.

The anxiety on Moldova's part that overly close contacts with NATO could provoke a negative reaction from Russia is a problem (though, on the other hand, contacts with the Alliance offer Chisinau some freedom of manoeuvre in its dealings with Moscow). Initially, the ruling camp in Moldova intended to strengthen ties with Russia; however, since 2004, it has been following the pro-Western line with increasing determination, and has even been openly criticising Moscow. Nevertheless, Moldova is heavily dependent on Russia in both economic (including energy import) and political terms; Moscow is able to directly influence the Moldovan political elites, and a large Russian minority lives in the country. Russia has strong influence in the separatist Transnistrian Moldovan Republic, where Russian troops are stationed. If Chisinau tightened its relations with NATO, this could cause a sharp reaction from Moscow.

By the end of 2004, Chisinau had not replied to NATO offers of enhancing the dialogue and co-operation.

Conclusions

Moldova–NATO relations are more important in political than in practical terms. Moldova wants NATO to press Russia to withdraw its troops from Transnistria, and counts on the Alliance’s support in the Transnistrian matter. NATO goals are similar: it wants Moldova to become a stable state, capable of fully executing its sovereign rights over its entire territory – provided, however, that it guarantees adequate rights to the national minorities, and grants a high degree of autonomy to Transnistria. NATO has been consistently urging Russia to fulfil its Istanbul commitments (withdrawing Russian troops from Transnistria). Moldova does not strive for membership in the Alliance, pointing out its neutrality. NATO and its member states are monitoring the situation concerning Transnistria; yet, for the time being, they are not planning to actively engage in the conflict resolution. The NATO-Moldovan project for destroying antipersonnel mines, outdated ammunition and rocket fuel, implemented as a part of the Trust Fund, has proven a success. A feasibility study for another project has been carried out. Common exercises with NATO have given Moldova access to the expertise of member states and partners of the Alliance, which provide conceptual support to the development of the country’s small armed forces. The structural and financial weakness of the Moldovan security sector is a serious problem in co-operation. Another problem is Chisinau’s fear of a negative reaction from Russia to excessively close contacts between Moldova and the Alliance.

NATO should continue to press for withdrawal of Russian forces and weaponry from eastern Moldova. Similarly, ratification of the adapted CFE should still be made dependent on the withdrawal of Russian troops from Transnistria. Moldova’s efforts to establish civilian and democratic control of the army need to be supported. Assistance is also necessary in the case of structural reforms and modernisation of the Moldovan army. Furthermore, it is worth noting a need to support reform to other law enforcement structures. The feedback on Moldovan reforms, which NATO receives as a part of the Planning and Review Process, must be appreciated. The monitoring of the situation concerning Transnistria, and co-operation with OSCE and EU on

this issue, are of great significance. It seems that if the current stalemate in the Transnistrian conflict continues for a long time, which is probable, NATO will not avoid the need to become involved in attempts to settle this conflict in some form.

Jacek Wróbel

GEORGIA

The Georgian “rose revolution” has significantly strengthened co-operation between NATO and Georgia. Tbilisi is the Alliance’s most active partner in the Southern Caucasus. The country aspires to become a member of NATO.

Approach to NATO

Georgia pursues a pro-Western foreign policy, striving for the broadest possible integration with NATO and the EU, and enhancing its relations with the United States. Joining the Alliance is one of the priorities of Georgian foreign policy. This goal, which had already been set during Eduard Shevardnadze’s presidency, is supported by a majority of the Georgian elites. To implement it, the new authorities led by President Mikheil Saakashvili have embarked upon profound reform of the state and its defence system.

The issue of integration with NATO has the rank of a civilisational choice in Georgia, and is seen as a way of ensuring security to the country in the case of tense relations with Russia. In exchange for its co-operation with the Alliance and its specific member states, Georgia wants to obtain foreign aid for its defence reform process, and to reinforce its international and military position on the way to reintegrating the country. In its attempt to regain control over Abkhazia and South Ossetia, Georgia is striving for the widest possible internationalisation of the process of conflict resolution, by means including raising these issues in the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) and NATO forums. Tbilisi also counts on the Alliance’s negotiating potential, which could contribute to reaching an agreement with Russia concerning the liquidation of Russian military bases. Tbilisi has, among other initiatives, suggested transforming the Batumi base into a common NATO-Russian training centre for either the Caucasian region alone or for the entire Black Sea area.

Co-operation with the Alliance is also intended to help Georgia strengthen its role as a transit state, that is, a transfer route for Caspian raw energy materials. NATO is also seen as an instrument of policy of the USA, Tbilisi’s most important foreign partner.

The December 2003 “rose revolution” contributed to a rise in NATO’s interest in Georgia. The events

in Tbilisi revealed the country’s civilisational affinity with the West and the state’s democratic potential. Additionally, they stimulated the debate on the possibilities of integrating the Caucasian countries with Euro-Atlantic institutions²¹. Georgia seems to have been evaluated by NATO as its most promising partner in the region. Still, such factors as the risky actions Tbilisi has taken to reintegrate the country, administrative chaos and incompetence, and the human resources policy practiced by the new authorities have aroused some criticism.

Evolution of co-operation

Georgia–NATO co-operation calendar

June 1992 – joins the North Atlantic Co-operation Council (NACC)

23 March 1994 – signs the PfP Framework Document

December 1994 – signs the Security Agreement

18 July 1995 – signs the PfP Status of Forces Agreement (PfP SOFA)

1996 – adopts the first Individual Partnership Programme (IPP)

October 1996 – holds NATO workshops on regional security

October 1998 – holds an EAPC seminar on regional security

1999 – joins the PfP Planning and Review Process (PARP)

October 1999 – sends an infantry platoon to KFOR (as part of the Turkish battalion)

June 2001 – hosts the Co-operative Partner 2001 exercises

June 2002 – hosts the Co-operative Best Effort 2002 exercises

October 2002 – signs a memorandum of understanding with the NATO Maintenance

²¹ The success of the revolution in Georgia, *inter alia*, provided good grounds for the European Union to decide to include the Southern Caucasus in the European Neighbourhood Policy in 2004.

and Supply Agency (NAMSA) concerning project implementation as part of the PfP Trust Fund

November 2002 – declaration of will to obtain NATO membership

May 2003 – sends an infantry company to KFOR (as part of the German battalion)

7 April 2004 – submits the IPAP Presentation Document

September 2004 – sends a contingent to ISAF

29 October 2004 – approval of the Georgian IPAP by the North Atlantic Council

During the years immediately after Georgia joined the PfP programme, the country was not an active partner. Instead it had the unrealistic expectation of the Alliance engaging in resolving conflicts in the Southern Caucasus. The situation began to change when Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary became members of the Alliance and NATO launched its Kosovo operation. Georgia embarked upon implementation of the PfP Planning and Review Process (PARP), and was also the initiator of an *ad hoc* working group on prospects for regional co-operation in the Southern Caucasus as a part of the EAPC. Additionally, it sent its contingent to KFOR. In 2001, Georgia was the first country in the region to host PfP military exercises.

During the Prague summit, President Eduard Shevardnadze made an official declaration of will for Georgian membership in NATO. The authorities in Tbilisi launched the necessary preparatory processes. However, these were poorly co-ordinated and financed, and their level was significantly at variance with the scope of the pro-integration declarations made by Georgia. Tbilisi adopted the National Euro-Atlantic Integration Programme, which was used by the new authorities as the starting point for developing the Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP). President Saakashvili has not only confirmed that the country would follow the pro-Atlantic policy line, but, most importantly, he has also initiated full-scale internal reform, without which restoring the Georgian defence sector and army to good condition would have been impossible. In April

2004, Georgia was the first country to submit an IPAP Presentation Document, and six months thereafter, the North Atlantic Council approved the final version of this country's Individual Partnership Action Plan. Georgia was also the first country where a NATO liaison officer, appointed under the Istanbul summit decisions, was to start his work from the beginning of 2005. Tbilisi has declared that, following the implementation of its IPAP goals, it will make efforts to join the Membership Action Plan (MAP).

One of the Georgian authorities' current priorities in their co-operation with both the Alliance and its particular member states is to obtain the most possible external aid to facilitate reform of Georgia's defence system and armed forces in compliance with NATO standards. Until recently, Tbilisi's participation in the PfP was focused on achieving interoperability. Now, to a great extent this also covers issues of reforming the security sector, in the broad meaning of the term, and defence reform. This has become possible, *inter alia*, owing to the considerably increased amount of foreign aid addressed to Georgia, as well as to the fact that the USA has trained and equipped four battalions of the Georgian army, making them interoperable with the forces of NATO member states.

The Individual Partnership Action Plan, which was approved by the NAC in October 2004, is the key instrument of co-operation in defence reform between Georgia and NATO. The document sets out Georgian plans for reform in the political, security and defence areas. One of its tasks is to facilitate the co-ordination of Tbilisi's co-operation with NATO and its specific member states regarding the internal transformation of Georgia. The IPAP includes both purely political commitments by Georgia (respect for human rights and completion of the democratisation process) and those concerning the defence system (changing the structure of the Ministry of Defence, democratic civilian control of the armed forces, granting separate powers to the General Staff and the Ministry of Defence, adopting an effective defence planning system). The main objectives of the Georgian defence reform for the years 2005–06 include the following points: conducting a strategic defence review, establishing a resource and personnel management system, a logistics and infrastructure management system, developing a trai-

ning and education system, along with introducing uniform training standards for individual soldiers and small units, and introducing the Georgia–NATO Air Situation Data Exchange (ASDE) system. Georgia has also started the process of transforming and reducing numbers of military personnel, especially in the National Guard. The internal troops have been integrated into the army. It is worth emphasising that the implementation of IPAP is the responsibility of Georgia alone; NATO and the Allies only support and verify the process.

Georgia has declared the participation of one infantry company in PfP operations and exercises as a part of PARP, among other units; this infantry company can be transformed into a battalion by 2005, provided that Tbilisi gets adequate external support. In a desire to change its image as a security consumer, Georgia is trying to participate actively in peacekeeping and stabilisation operations, both NATO-led and conducted by the antiterrorist coalition. Two Georgian units are taking part in KFOR: an infantry platoon in the Turkish battalion, and an infantry company which is part of the German battalion. In September 2004, Tbilisi sent a small contingent to ISAF. In addition, Georgia increased its military contingent in Iraq up to 850 soldiers in February 2005 (at the end of January this year, it consisted of approximately 300 soldiers). It needs to be highlighted that this is the largest national contribution proportionally to population of all the states participating in the stabilisation operation in Iraq.

Tbilisi's other co-operation priorities include border security, and the combating of terrorism and illegal military groups. Georgia and NATO also co-operate in the fields of public diplomacy, science and environmental protection, civil emergency planning and co-operation in using water resources. A project covering recycling small arms and clearing the Vaziani military test ground of unexploded ordnances is being implemented as a part of the Trust Fund mechanism. Additionally, Georgia is taking part in PfP exercises and language trainings.

The greatest proportion of foreign aid comes to Georgia as a part of bilateral co-operation. It is worth mentioning here, first of all, the significant military and financial aid given by the United

States. In addition to training the aforementioned battalions as part of the Georgian Train and Equip Programme (GTEP), which was completed in April 2004, Washington has supported Georgia in building its air forces, reforming the Ministry of Defence, and military and other training schemes. Moreover, on 1 February 2005, the Georgian authorities started recruiting soldiers for a new US training programme, the Sustainment and Stability Operations Programme (SSOP), aimed at training Georgian forces for participation in peace support operations. It is anticipated that four battalions and several other units of the Georgian army will be trained. The United Kingdom is supporting Georgia in its defence reform and language training; Turkey is training troops for pipeline protection, while supporting the education of officers at the Georgian Academy of National Defence; and Germany is providing help in junior officer training and logistics. Apart from that, Georgia receives support from the Baltic, Balkan and Scandinavian states. In addition, the Allies helped Tbilisi during the process of IPAP preparation.

Georgia has opted for development of regional co-operation as a part of the PfP and EAPC, and it is working on its image as a leader of change in the Southern Caucasus and a moderator of regional dialogue. Yet, on the other hand, it opposes any such regional approach to the Southern Caucasian countries that would make Georgia's progress in enhancing its co-operation with the Alliance dependent on the progress made by Azerbaijan or Armenia.

Problems in co-operation

Georgia still has many serious security problems; some parts of its territory, Abkhazia and South Ossetia, are out of central control, which in turn contributes to the development of organised crime and weapon & drug smuggling. The key objective of Tbilisi's internal and foreign policy is to regain authority over those territories, which are unofficially supported by Russia. Some experts even believe that Georgia could agree to slow down the process of its integration with NATO in exchange for concessions from Moscow in resolving the problem of Abkhazia.

On the other hand, the Georgian elites seem to overestimate their country's strategic significance

for the United States and the scale of the US engagement in the region. It also seems that Tbilisi has unrealistic expectations about both prospects of Georgian integration with NATO and any possible engagement by the Alliance in resolving the problem of the “frozen conflicts”.

Georgia’s security is undermined by Russian policy, which is contrary to the vital interests of Georgia. In the opinion of the great majority of the Georgian public, Russian policy towards Georgia is aimed at maintaining Tbilisi’s dependence on Moscow and decreasing the country’s stability. Moscow unofficially supports the secessionist tendencies in the territories that have rebelled against Georgia, maintains its military bases in the country (in Akhalkalaki and Batumi), and still has extensive economic influence. The allegations that Tbilisi shelters Chechen terrorists, which are repeatedly raised by Moscow, are particularly dangerous for Georgia. Russia has also announced that it is considering the option of launching a preventive attack against terrorist hideaways outside the Russian Federation. Apart from that, Moscow has so far made signing the interstate treaty to regulate Russian-Georgian relations dependent on concluding an agreement concerning the status of the Russian military bases in Georgia. Additionally, it demands that Georgia should make a legal undertaking that no military bases of any third state will be located on its territory (this concerns a potential US base).

Regardless of the numerous positive internal changes that have taken place since the “rose revolution”, Georgia still has to cope with malfunctioning state structures, administrative confusion and a non-transparent human resources policy. The chaos is worsening due to the fast rotation of people in the government positions; since the regime change in autumn 2003, the minister of defence has changed three times. Furthermore, the authorities’ policy towards the mass media and political opponents, as well as the operation of the police, stray far from democratic standards. Even though the defence budget was increased in 2004 (up to approximately US\$ 50 million), Georgia remains unable to allocate adequate funds to maintain the national defence system. For this reason it has decided to reduce its armed forces and shorten the period of mandatory military service. Tbilisi is also forced to face the pro-

blem of inefficient defence planning. Although Georgia has promised to conduct a defence review that will serve as a basis for planning its ultimate defence system structure by 2005, it has not so far developed a national security strategy. Other serious persistent problems are that Georgia lacks effective mechanisms to co-ordinate the process of receiving and using foreign aid, as well as the duplication of that external aid. It seems that these issues can be resolved, at least partly, by implementing the IPAP goals.

The condition of the armed forces and the management system thereof are far from perfect. The army has, in a sense, been divided into two different groups: the GTEP-trained part (consolidated as a part of the elite 11th Brigade), which is better equipped, receives better pay and operates on the basis of contracts, and the weaker part, which has not received such training. There are also great differences between officers. For their part, the authorities frequently change the commanding officers and use the army in their propaganda campaign against the rebel regions. The problem of theft and corruption in the army has not yet been settled; the mass media recently reported the theft of rocket fuel from a former Soviet airbase, and the sale of a large amount of weapons (still in good technical condition) to a scrapyard by military men. As experts have noted, the personnel clean-up carried out in February 2005 in the General Staff was linked to the investigation into the embezzlement of funds and corruption at the Ministry of Defence conducted by the local prosecutor’s office. Moreover, even though the internal troops have been included in the structure of the armed forces, they have not yet been reorganised. Furthermore, the duties of the fleet and the coast guard overlap.

Conclusions

The change of regime in Georgia has contributed to improving the country’s internal situation and a positive change to Georgia’s international image. It has also facilitated faster development of co-operation with NATO. The support Georgia receives from the Alliance is too small to have a significant effect on the improvement of this country’s security. Georgia still has enormous security problems, which if it does not resolve, it will have no chance of achieving NATO membership.

Nevertheless, the prospects for developing co-operation between NATO and Georgia within the scope set under the Partnership seem to be quite inviting, provided that Georgia manages to conduct a real, and not merely superficial, reform of the defence sector, and does not treat its relations with the Alliance and the aid received from it as simply a means of reintegrating the country. It also appears that Georgia should lower its expectations regarding the pace of its integration with the Alliance.

Increasing material and technical aid will not help Georgia improve its security situation, unless the problem of the “frozen conflicts” in South Ossetia and Abkhazia is resolved. NATO should not avoid this issue, and should consider the possibility of its limited participation in resolving these problems. The Alliance should also support Georgia in its attempts to bring these issues for discussion in a wider international forum. NATO should not cease reminding Russia of the need to fulfil its Istanbul commitments under the Adapted Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) treaty. NATO would also be acting appropriately if it made an attempt to create a draft strategy covering the Southern Caucasus, an attempt to answer the question concerning the long-term interests of the Alliance member states in this area. Nevertheless, NATO should not on any account give up its “open door” policy towards the candidates, or disregard the membership aspirations of such countries as Georgia.

As for more detailed issues, it seems that NATO should exert efforts for the IPAP to become an efficient tool for co-ordinating the bilateral aid granted by its member states to Georgia, and an instrument for enforcing profound internal changes, and should not just be one more mechanism of co-operation as a part of the PfP, which are already numerous. NATO should also consider the possibility of sending a team of advisors, and not just one liaison officer, to Georgia. Broader regional co-operation, with the participation of the Caucasian states, Romania or Ukraine, and the process of sharing transformation experiences by the Baltic states also need to be supported. Considering the insufficient level of knowledge about the Alliance among the Georgian public, NATO should also support Tbilisi’s plans to found a NATO Information Office.

Marta Jaroszewicz

AZERBAIJAN

Azerbaijan is striving for closer co-operation with NATO, as well as for closer bilateral co-operation with some of the member states, yet it has not so far decided to make an unambiguous declaration of desire to join the Alliance.

Approach to NATO

For more a decade Azerbaijan has been pursuing a cautious and careful foreign policy, which consists in walking a fine line between the West and Russia, trying to avoid any formal political declarations and decisions that Moscow could interpret as aimed against Russian interests. In spite of this limitation, Baku has taken action to gradually tighten its co-operation with Western structures, including NATO and the European Union. According to Baku’s declarations, co-operation with the Alliance is one of its foreign policy priorities; while definitely the key objective is to regain the territories of Nagorno-Karabakh, which it lost as a result of the war with Armenia, and the neighbouring areas occupied by Armenian troops. Maintaining appropriate relations with Russia and Iran is also important for Baku.

The Azeri authorities have not decided yet whether to unambiguously announce Azerbaijan’s desire to join the Alliance. As a matter of fact, such a declaration was made on 18 April 2003 by the then president Geidar Aliev at the time of his meeting with Bruce Jackson, President of the US Committee on NATO, and it was repeated on several occasions thereafter by politicians of various ranks. Still, contrary to some observers’ expectations, it was not confirmed by President Ilham Aliev during the Istanbul NATO Summit on 28–29 June 2004. This choice not to raise the issue of Azerbaijan’s aspirations to NATO membership was above all dictated by the aforementioned conditions under which Baku must conduct its foreign policy, and should not be interpreted as a lack of will to join the Alliance in the longer term. Azerbaijan actively co-operates with both NATO and its particular member states; it has sent military contingents to Kosovo, Afghanistan and Iraq. Most experts are convinced that Baku will make its declaration of desire to join NATO “in due time”.

Baku is aware of its strategic importance for the Alliance (namely its geopolitical and transit advantages: its geographic location between Russia and Iran and between the Caspian region and Turkey; its economic advantages, based on deposits of raw energy materials) and hopes for closer co-operation. However, independent observers believe that it is the success of the Georgian pro-Western foreign policy which will be the key issue in Azerbaijan's integration with Western structures, and that both capitals should conduct consistent and coherent actions to mutually support one another in their integration with the Euro-Atlantic world. Unfortunately, this is not always reflected in the activities taken by Baku. The main assumptions of the current NATO policy towards Azerbaijan are not to exclude integration, and enforce transformation at the same time.

Evolution of co-operation

Azerbaijan–NATO co-operation calendar

- 4 May 1994** – signs the PfP Framework Document
- 1997** – joins the Planning and Review Process (PARP)
- 1999** – sends an infantry platoon to KFOR (as a part of the Turkish battalion)
- 2 April 2000** – signs the PfP Status of Forces Agreement (PfP SOFA)
- 2002** – sends a platoon to Afghanistan as a part of the Turkish contingent: since 2003 as a part of ISAF
- 25 January 2002** – USA waives section 907 of the Freedom Support Act
- 2003** – sends a military contingent to Iraq (under US command)
- 2 April 2003** – signs a memorandum of understanding with the NATO Maintenance and Supply Agency (NAMSA)
- 19 May 2004** – submits an Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP) Presentation Document

13 September 2004 – NATO cancels the Co-operative Best Effort 2004 exercises, which were supposed to be held in Azerbaijan

For most of the last decade, especially before 11 September 2001, a great disproportion was noticeable between the actions taken by Baku for establishing closer ties with NATO and the steps taken to that effect by the Alliance. This was due to several factors: the lack of a precise policy on the part of the Alliance towards the Southern Caucasus; the incompatibility of the then PfP with the expectations and capabilities of the post-Soviet states, and the unresolved conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh, which seriously curtailed (and still curtails) the possibilities of development of military co-operation with Azerbaijan. Until 2002, the US Freedom Support Act, Section 907 was in force, which, *inter alia*, banned the granting of military assistance to Azerbaijan.

For its part, Baku has done much to intensify its co-operation with NATO. Azerbaijan actively participates in military and civilian events as a part of the PfP, as well as in bilateral and regional events with NATO members and countries in the region (except for Armenia, which is treated as an occupier). Azerbaijan is interested in transforming the National Training Centre into the Regional PfP Training Centre, though this initiative may not arouse broad interest in the region.

In 1997, Baku decided to take part in the Planning and Review Process (PARP), made available a peacekeeping unit, and established an inter-agency Governmental Commission on co-operation with NATO, which holds monthly meetings on the ministerial level (its Working Group, which develops most of the documents, meets twice a month). However, one should not forget that, regardless of the commission's existence, all and any decisions concerning co-operation with NATO are taken by the president of Azerbaijan, and the commission merely co-ordinates the co-operation. The role of the parliament boils down to a passive and loyal rubber-stamping of the necessary acts of law.

As a part of the PARP for 2000–02, Baku set 27 goals, 25 of which have been met; the implementation deadline for the remainder has been extended until 2006. Azerbaijan has undertaken to implement 33 goals in the years 2004–06. It is

worth noting that in January 2004, the State Border Service and the internal troops were covered by the PARP. Azerbaijan has offered one infantry company, one rescue platoon, one medical platoon and one engineer platoon for participation in the PARP and exercises; one squadron of Mi-8 helicopters will join them in 2005. Azerbaijan has chosen the ambitious task of extending the interoperability commitments it made under PARP over all its armed forces (though the implementation of this declaration is rather dubious, mainly due to insufficient funds).

Azerbaijan has made the best possible efforts to adopt Western (including NATO) norms and standards (STANAGs). The Commission on NATO Standards, which has translated and made available more than 250 NATO standards, was created in November 1997. NATO communications and topography standards have been partly adopted (any broader and faster adjustment is impeded, *inter alia*, by financial difficulties). Representatives of the authorities claim in their official statements that NATO standards have been fully implemented in the field of military training. Still, independent experts have expressed serious doubts about this, pointing out to the fact that Soviet methods are still used as a model both in the military education system (as was proven, *inter alia*, by the protest of students of the Baku military academy in September 2002) and in the army itself (in January 2005, a scandal involving officers of the Barda and Shamkir garrisons was uncovered: in December 2004, at least ten, or (according to other sources) several tens of high-ranking military officers, were arrested on charges of corruption and demoted).

The first Individual Partnership Programme (IPP) was signed in 1996. In connection with the implementation of the Individual Partnership Programme (IPP) for the years 2001–02 Azerbaijan took part in 335 events, in which 850 people took part.

On 2 April 2003, Azerbaijan and NATO Maintenance and Supply Organization (NAMSO) signed a memorandum of understanding, which made it possible to employ the PFP Trust Fund mechanism. An agreement initiating a project as a part of the Trust Fund, which provides for the liquidation of unexploded ordnances in the area of the former Sologlu military base, was signed on 14 February 2005. The project, which costs 1.4 mil-

lion euro, is managed by Turkey, and the UNDP is one of its contributors.

Azerbaijan has been taking part in the work of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly (associate delegation status), and is actively participating in the Rose-Roth Initiative (a co-operation programme for the NATO Parliamentary Assembly with parliaments of the post-socialist countries). The serious process of comprehensively reforming the State Border Service, scheduled for many years, is aimed at transforming it from a typically military structure (Soviet concept of border troops) into a civilian-type law enforcement organisation, and was set in motion in summer 2002. This reform is supported by many NATO member states, including Poland.

The participation of Azeri military personnel in foreign missions – as a part of KFOR (since 1999) and ISAF (since 2003), as well as in the stabilisation operation in Iraq (since 2003) – has greatly contributed to Azerbaijan's closer co-operation with NATO and, in particular, to the development of bilateral contacts with Washington. Baku has also made its airspace and airports available for the needs of the operations in Afghanistan and Iraq.

In May 2003, the NATO Secretary General, George Robertson, received a memorandum whereby Azerbaijan declared its will to embark upon an Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP). The Presentation Document was presented in May 2004. It provided for intensive co-operation with NATO in the fields of defence structure and political reforms, and presented various aspects of such reforms. The declared priorities included border control, defence reforms and the struggle against terrorism. The authorities in Baku also undertook to successively implement NATO standards in the fields of democratisation, transparency and adequate relations between military and civilian structures. Work on the document is pending.

Azerbaijan's co-operation with NATO member states is characterised by its unusually active engagement in co-operation with the United States and Turkey, and relatively less active co-operation with other members of the Alliance. The significant intensification of co-operation between Baku and NATO was a result of the rapid development of US-Azeri co-operation during the first term in office of President George W. Bush who, following 11 September 2001, took a number of actions

to enhance co-operation with several Central Asian and Southern Caucasian states, including with Azerbaijan. Washington waived section 907 of the Freedom Support Act in January 2002, and Azerbaijan sent one platoon to Afghanistan in the same year. In August 2003, the first Azeri military contingent (150 soldiers) was deployed in Iraq under US command. US aid, including direct aid to Azeri armed forces, has clearly increased over the past two years. However, its level is still unsatisfactory for Baku; it is impeded, *inter alia*, by the very strong pro-Armenian lobby in the USA (the Congressional Caucus on Armenian Issues consisted of more than 130 congressmen in January 2005). A topic that regularly arises during US politicians' and military officials' visits to Azerbaijan is the issue of the possible location of some sort of US military base in this country, which poses a serious problem to the relations of Baku with Tehran and Moscow. Along with the United States, Turkey is the most important partner for Azerbaijan of the NATO member states. Ankara has for many years been actively engaged in providing financial, technical and advisory assistance to Azerbaijan. The Azeri-Turkish Military Co-operation Council, which is in charge of both issues concerning the training of Azeri officers in Turkey and the training held by Turks in Azerbaijan (in compliance with NATO standards) is operating in Baku. Turkey is one of the key weapons suppliers for the Azeri army. The decisions of the NATO Istanbul summit concerning the Caucasus and Central Asia met with a positive reception in Baku. The satisfaction of both parties with the mutual co-operation, including with the Azeri IPAP, which is still at the consultation stage, was clearly emphasised at the time of the visit of NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer to Baku on 5 November 2004. Nevertheless, the Alliance once more excluded the possibility of its participation in the process of settling the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (NATO believes the OSCE Minsk Group has an adequate mandate to deal with this issue), or of opening a "NATO base" in any of the three Southern Caucasian republics.

Problems in co-operation

The Alliance's co-operation with Azerbaijan faces a number of serious problems, which greatly frus-

trate both any intensification thereof and the implementation of the commitments already made. From Azerbaijan's perspective, the unresolved conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh is the gravest problem of state. Regardless of numerous declarations by NATO stating that the Alliance acknowledges the OSCE Minsk Group's powers to deal with this matter, Azerbaijan keeps expecting the Alliance to engage in some way in settling the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (the Alliance's intervention in Kosovo is the most frequently mentioned precedent here). The pressure exerted by Baku on NATO is partly connected with the sentiments of public opinion, which has insufficient knowledge of the essence of the Alliance and the benefits Azerbaijan may get from co-operating with NATO, even if the Alliance does not engage in settling the conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh. The commonly shared view among the public is that NATO is, first of all, an anti-Russian alliance, and should therefore take decisive actions against the Armenians in Karabakh, who, according to most of the public, have been and are still supported by Russia (further, the perceived inefficiency of the OSCE or the UN is in public opinion a result of Moscow's activities). The negative response from the Alliance is perceived in Azerbaijan as Western states applying double standards, and is the main reason for disillusionment with the West (as well as providing a good excuse for Baku to avoid military reform, on the pretext that they need to keep significant forces in readiness in case a military conflict breaks out).

The conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh, which has not been settled for more than a decade now, has radicalised public sentiment so much (which is additionally stirred up by state propaganda) that any open co-operation with Armenia has become impossible for the authorities. Numerous incidents show the scale of this phenomenon. On 13 January 2004, three Armenian officers were refused permission to board a plane going from Istanbul to Baku. The officers were going to take part in the NATO conference on preparations for the PFP Co-operative Best Effort exercises, which were intended to be held in September in Azerbaijan; in spite of having NATO invitations to the meeting, the Armenian delegation were refused entry visas. Several months thereafter, an aggressive propaganda campaign was launched against the participation of Armenian military personnel in

the exercises in Azerbaijan. Even though intensive talks continued between Baku and NATO Headquarters in Brussels until the last moment, the parties failed to reach a compromise. As a result, the Allied Command Europe cancelled the Co-operative Best Effort exercises on 13 September 2004, which were supposed to have taken place between 14–26 September. Another serious incident happened on 19 February 2004, when an Azeri officer murdered an Armenian lieutenant (they had both been attending an English course held in Budapest as a part of the NATO PfP programme). The incident caused growing tension and mutual accusations between Yerevan and Baku, and provoked a wave of public outrage in Azerbaijan (where the Azeri officer became a hero for part of the public).

A serious problem that casts a shadow on bilateral co-operation is the non-democratic rule in Azerbaijan. The Azeri political elites are aware of the insufficient level of implementation of the Western democratic standards, the rule of law, human rights, etc., but the common opinion is that democratic values should be adopted gradually and carefully, and in cases where democratisation is not necessary, it should be avoided. Moreover, certain changes are often made only in the formal aspect to satisfy the requirements of Western states, and even then they are not in fact respected. Such convictions and behaviour may seriously affect Azeri aspirations in the longer term.

The fact that Ilham Aliev became president in October 2003 guarantees the maintenance of the *status quo* in Azerbaijan's foreign policy, including on the issue of integration with Euro-Atlantic structures. However, according to some experts, his less than fully secure position on the internal scene may prove to be a serious obstacle in fostering further tightening of relations with NATO – and, above all, the internal reforms necessary for this to continue.

Finally, a significant problem is Azerbaijan's (relatively) weak financial condition, which seriously hampers the development of co-operation with the Alliance, and especially the republic's adjustment to NATO standards (even more so because a very large part of the armed forces' budget is allocated for maintaining operational readiness on the Azeri-Armenian border/ceasefire line). Nevertheless, it needs to be emphasised that even

though Azerbaijan's military budget does not fully correspond to its needs, in comparison to its Southern Caucasian neighbours, this state has much greater capabilities for self-financing.

The Azeri ruling class emphasises the mutual strategic dependence of Azerbaijan and Georgia on the path to integration with Euro-Atlantic structures; moreover, most of them are convinced that Azerbaijan is a much more important partner than Georgia for the West because of its geographic location, the Caspian oil reserves and the country's greater economic potential (according to this theory, Georgia is only to be treated as a transit state). This conviction that Azerbaijan has a unique significance for the West at times results in Baku disregarding some of NATO's appeals, especially those concerning democratisation. The standpoint presented by the United States and many other Western states after the undemocratic presidential election (October 2003) additionally strengthened Baku in its conviction that political stability and the oil business is much more important for the West than democracy.

Conclusions

For Azerbaijan, enhancing co-operation with NATO is a process that has contributed to improving its security condition, though only the friendly Turkey is a real guarantor of the country's security. As for regional security, any potential greater engagement by the Alliance in the Southern Caucasus may have consequences that are difficult to predict. Moscow's negative reaction would be very probable, and the Kremlin could readily exert pressure on Baku to limit its co-operation with the Alliance, as the Azeri ruling class know how important Moscow's standpoint is for resolving the conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh.

The approach to NATO, which can be determined as "think regionally, act individually", seems to have the greatest chance of success, as any regional initiatives based on the joint participation of Azerbaijan and Armenia will be doomed to failure until the conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh is resolved. Therefore, in spite of financial limitations, NATO should consider the possibility of responding positively to Azerbaijan's proposals for opening an Information Office and a Military Liaison Mission, or a NATO Information and Documentation Centre in Baku, especially as this

would tangibly support the co-ordination of co-operation under the IPAP.

It seems that Azerbaijan's priorities in the PfP and in establishing closer ties with NATO, apart from democratic reform, should include achieving interoperability with NATO and adopting NATO standards, and in particular strictly adhering to those standards in military education. Azerbaijan is another area where great opportunities for the NATO Maintenance and Supply Agency (NAMSA) and using the Trust Fund mechanism (projects for decontaminating one of the post-Soviet bases, demining and rocket fuel oxidation) could open up. It thus appears that, considering Azerbaijan's internal and external conditions, NATO is able to efficiently support and, if necessary, exert pressure on Baku to embark upon certain democratic reforms; this opportunity has however been used in an inefficient manner so far. All efforts must be made to develop an IPAP that will enforce transformation, provided however that it allows the authorities in Baku to maintain tangible capabilities as well as genuine will to implement such transformation. This is because the Individual Partnership Action Plan for Azerbaijan is under serious threat of becoming "virtual", due to the internal conditions resulting from the policies Baku pursues, including the undemocratic nature of the regime.

The complex process of transforming the State Border Service from a typically military structure into a civilian-type law enforcement organisation, and using the Trust Fund mechanism in the most comprehensive way, deserve special support.

Wojciech Bartuzi

ARMENIA

Armenia does not aspire to NATO membership, and its security policy is mainly Russia-oriented. Nevertheless, the country's co-operation with the Alliance has significantly intensified during the past three years.

Approach to NATO

Armenia is in a close defence alliance with Russia, while at the same time being the Southern Caucasian link of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO). These factors limit Armenia's opportunities to develop co-operation with the Alliance, and cause the country to refrain from aspiring to NATO membership. Maintaining friendly relations with NATO is an element of the so-called complementarity policy aimed at diversifying external ties, which actually boils down to finding a counterbalance to the influence of Russia, and making security provisions in case Russia chooses to change its policy towards Armenia. Moreover, Yerevan seems to be anxious about the increasing closeness of relations between Baku and Washington.

As some analysts emphasise, the alliance with Russia gives Armenia a firm security guarantee, yet it does not lead to a reduction in the tension between Armenia and its neighbours. Developing relations with the Alliance contributes to a positive evolution of the country's immediate international environment. Co-operation with NATO is used by Yerevan as a means to participate in processes taking place in the region, from which Armenia is partly excluded due to the conflict with Azerbaijan over Nagorno-Karabakh. On the other hand, it is worth remembering that it is the existence of this unresolved antagonism that forces other regional players and international organisations to enter into dialogue with Armenia. The anxiety that Azerbaijan could integrate with NATO provides strong motivation for Yerevan to draw closer to the Alliance. Moreover, the Euro-Atlantic Partnership, in the broad meaning of the term, is one of the few forums where Armenia can hold discussions with Turkey, which it does not maintain diplomatic relations with. Owing to its co-operation with NATO, Armenia receives material and advisory aid for its defence sector and is gaining valuable military expertise.

Co-operation with NATO is also seen as an instrument of Armenian-US relations, and as an opportunity to highlight Armenia's European heritage.

The authorities' representatives emphasise that Armenia is pursuing a pragmatic strategy, free of empty political declarations, with regard to NATO, which is aimed at the broadest possible development of co-operation with the Alliance. Nonetheless, this cautious strategy seems to be dictated by the fear of a possible negative reaction from Moscow.

Armenia's geostrategic location, which affects the country's security and development opportunities, its close ties with Russia, its lack of mineral raw materials and the not fully democratic regime mean that both the Alliance and its particular member states attach less significance to co-operation with this country than they do with Georgia or Azerbaijan. Still, NATO seems to appreciate the conscientious manner in which Armenia has fulfilled its commitments under the PfP, as well as the relatively low level of corruption in the country.

Evolution of co-operation

Armenia–NATO co-operation calendar

March 1992 – joins the North Atlantic Co-operation Council (NACC)

5 October 1994 – signs the PfP Framework Document

January 1995 – signs the Security Agreement

1996 – adopts the first Individual Partnership Programme (IPP)

September 2001 – participates in Co-operative Best Effort 2001

October 2002 – joins the Planning and Review Process (PARP)

November 2002 – wins associate delegation status at the North Atlantic Assembly

June 2003 – hosts Co-operative Best Effort 2003 exercises

February 2004 – sends a contingent to Kosovo

30 March 2004 – ratifies the PfP Status of Forces Agreement (PfP SOFA)

August 2004 – appoints an ambassador to NATO

Armenia was an inactive partner immediately after joining the PfP. However, the geopolitical changes in the region, the improvement of relations between NATO and Russia, and the fact that Georgia and Azerbaijan had embarked on the path of integration with the Alliance caused Armenia to take part in PfP military exercises for the first time in history in 2001. Yerevan joined the PARP in 2002, and one year later it hosted the Co-operative Best Effort 2003 exercises. In February 2004, Armenia sent an infantry platoon to KFOR, and entered into the PfP SOFA with NATO in March. Apart from that, Yerevan participates in the Operational Capabilities Concept. Armenian forces were to have taken part in the Co-operative Best Effort 2004 exercises in Azerbaijan, which were cancelled by NATO due to the actions taken by the Azeri authorities to prevent Armenia from participating in the event. Armenia has also declared its will to embark upon an Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP), and it has submitted an official document to that effect. Work on developing the Presentation Document is pending. Additionally, Armenia has offered to host the Co-operative Associate 2005 exercises in its territory, and it has appointed an ambassador to NATO.

The key priorities of Armenia's co-operation as a part of the PfP include achieving interoperability by selected units of the Armenian armed forces with NATO member states' forces, as well as participation in NATO-led peacekeeping operations. Ultimately, Armenia plans to have a motorised infantry battalion operating in accordance with the Alliance's military standards formed by 2010, and to take part in multinational peacekeeping operations.

Currently, a thirty-strong Armenian infantry platoon serves as a part of the Greek battalion at the US-commanded multinational brigade in Kosovo. The authorities in Yerevan have sent a 46-strong contingent consisting of engineers, medical personnel and drivers to Iraq.

Other priority areas in Armenia's co-operation include participation in NATO exercises and training, and obtaining material and technical assistance

from the member states. The Armenian authorities, in co-operation with the USA, have opened a demining centre, which they are now striving to transform into a regional PfP training centre. Thanks to support from Washington, Yerevan is also modernising its military communications system.

Other areas of co-operation between Armenia and NATO include detecting weapons of mass destruction, civil emergency assistance, language training and scientific co-operation. Armenia is interested in receiving advisory assistance from the Alliance to reform its defence sector. The authorities also state that a potential Armenian IPAP would have a limited form, and would hardly touch the issue of defence reform. The official reasons Yerevan gives for the impossibility of conducting defence reform are the conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh and the need to keep the armed forces in constant operational readiness. Still, this standpoint seems to originate from the authorities' unwillingness to establish rules for democratic control of the defence system.

Armenia opposes the option of NATO engagement in resolving the Nagorno-Karabakh issue out of fear that Georgia – or even worse, Azerbaijan – could achieve a higher level of co-operation with NATO. Instead, it promotes the idea of regional co-operation in the Southern Caucasus, and of treating the region as an indivisible whole. Armenia's joining the IPAP is a separate issue. Before Yerevan finally confirmed its desire to participate in this mechanism, the Armenian authorities had been sending self-contradictory messages to Brussels on the possibility and time of joining the IPAP. This appears to have been a result of the instrumental treatment of IPAP not as a mechanism supporting the reform process, but as a response to the presentation of such a document by Azerbaijan. The situation could also be a sign of the existence of some tension between the "pro-Western" MFA and the "Russia-loyal" Ministry of Defence.

Problems in co-operation

Development of Armenia's co-operation with NATO is curtailed by three interlinked factors: the unresolved conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh, the alliance with Russia, and poor relations with Turkey. The unsettled conflict with Azerbaijan over Nagorno-Karabakh limits the possibilities

of granting military aid to Armenia for fear of contributing to improving Yerevan's war capabilities. The conflict also dooms to failure any concept of regional co-operation as a part of the PfP. In turn, Armenia's close military ties with Russia, the existence of a large Russian military base in Gyumri, and the joint Russian-Armenian border protection system on the Turkish and Iranian borders leave Armenia little freedom of manoeuvre in developing its co-operation with the Alliance. Doubtless, the tense Turkish-Armenian relations also pose a serious obstacle on this path. Turkey as a member of the Alliance co-decides on NATO's policy towards Armenia. The political co-operation between Armenia and Iran, which is accused of working on a nuclear weapons programme, seems to be of some significance in this issue also.

It is also worth noting concept-related and ideological problems. It appears that some of the Armenian officers linked to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs overestimate Armenia's capability for manoeuvring in foreign policy, while another part, linked to the Ministry of Defence, is unaware of the existence of a certain margin of freedom that Armenia could use to establish international ties to improve state security. The Armenian ruling class treats co-operation with the Alliance as an instrument, a bargaining chip, in their relations with other entities. Moreover, the uncompromising anti-Turkish stance of the Armenian diaspora and the predominant role the Karabakhi elite plays among the authorities in Yerevan, seriously reduce Armenia's room for compromise in negotiations with Turkey and Azerbaijan.

Other significant limitations on co-operation with NATO include Armenia's unwillingness to conduct defence reform and implement Western solutions to that effect, its undemocratic political system, and Armenia's financial problems and dependence on foreign aid. There is also a lack of reliable information on the mechanisms of NATO operation, because the Armenian media has been monopolised by Russian sources. Worth mentioning are also such organisation-related and technical problems as poor knowledge of English among the military personnel and civil servants, an organisational culture inherited from the Soviet period, and the existing tension between various internal structures dealing with NATO co-operation.

Conclusions

For the aforementioned reasons Armenia is NATO's least active partner in the Southern Caucasus, and there seems to be no chance of changing this situation in the immediate future. Nevertheless, the certain evolution that Yerevan's policy towards the Alliance has undergone proves that NATO is becoming increasingly important to Armenia. For this reason, the Alliance can play a positive part in stimulating changes both in this country and throughout the entire region. The situation would radically change if Turkey and Armenia established diplomatic relations, which, considering Turkey's pro-EU aspirations, seems possible.

In its policy towards Armenia and Azerbaijan, instead of making subsequent attempts to foster a regional approach to the Partnership, which is difficult to achieve in Southern Caucasus, NATO should engage more actively in resolving the real problems of these countries, and encourage Russia to participate constructively in this process. In the case of Armenia, the Alliance could take the following actions: exert more emphasis on the need to hold peace negotiations with Azerbaijan, and encourage Armenia and Azerbaijan to conduct defence reforms. NATO should also raise the issue of democratisation in its dialogue with Yerevan, and make any further development of military co-operation (which is beneficial for Armenia) dependent on the need to undergo internal transformation.

If Armenia joins the IPAP, real implementation of the document's provisions should be insisted upon. It also seems that consenting to Yerevan's adopting a very limited IPAP could cause a devaluation of this mechanism. Moreover, NATO should launch a more active information policy addressed to Armenia, and make it a more generous offer of training and foreign studies, giving top priority to the Ministry of Defence's officers and experts.

Marta Jaroszewicz

KAZAKHSTAN

Kazakhstan is not aiming at integration with NATO, and its policy towards the Alliance is rather cautious, avoiding any specific undertakings. Nevertheless, over the past year and a half, the scope of Kazakhstan's co-operation has significantly expanded as part of the Partnership for Peace programme.

Approach to NATO

Co-operation with the Alliance is not one of Kazakhstan's foreign policy priorities. For Astana, Russia is still the strategic ally in the field of security. Membership in the Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO) and in the Shanghai Co-operation Organisation (SCO) is also of key significance for this country. Additionally, Kazakhstan attaches great importance to the development of its bilateral relations with China as well as with the United States.

According to declarations by representatives of the authorities, Kazakhstan is not aiming at integration with the Alliance; instead it seeks to be its active partner. Developing co-operation with NATO is perceived in Astana as a way of obtaining tangible material and political benefits. Kazakhstan uses its co-operation with the Alliance as a valuable bargaining chip in its relations with Russia. The main strategic goals of Kazakhstan with regard to NATO include:

- achieving practical material and technological benefits (in the military field) and diversification of military co-operation;
- obtaining certain concessions from Russia as well as more room for manoeuvre in its relations with this country;
- intensification of relations with the West, including the USA;
- building up its prestige in the international arena and raising its rating against its regional rival, Uzbekistan.

Kazakhstan pursues a cautious wait-and-see policy towards the Alliance. It is unwilling to undertake not only such obligations that could meet with a negative reaction from Russia but also any obligations that might bring forth changes in its internal system. It seems possible that this policy could evolve, if a crisis similar to the Batken events of 1999–2000 broke out in the region; the

basic determinant of such a possible change would be the effectiveness of the policy line adopted by Russia, the CSTO, the SCO and the West with regard to such a crisis.

In the opinion of some experts, Kazakhstan's policy towards NATO is realistic and based on the conviction that the Alliance's interest in Central Asia is only temporary. However, it seems that Kazakhstan is not totally convinced that the interest in the region of NATO and its member states, in particular the USA, is short-term and dictated merely by the need to ensure logistic backup for the operation in Afghanistan. On the one hand, this uncertainty raises Astana's anxiety, yet on the other encourages it to broaden the scope of its co-operation with the West. Kazakhstan's growing interest in NATO, which has been visible in recent years, can therefore be seen mainly as a function of Astana's policy towards Russia; it can nevertheless also be linked to the wish for some limited diversification of its defence co-operation, and for an adequate response to NATO's growing engagement in the region.

For the Alliance, Kazakhstan (along with Uzbekistan) is its most important partner in Central Asia. The main reasons for this include the country's relatively stable political situation, its significant economic and military potential, and its oil reserves. Other important factors in this context include the friendly relations between Kazakhstan and Russia, its modest expectations with regard to the Alliance, and the geographical closeness of China. On the other hand, it has some disadvantages, including its overall geographical situation, i.e. the greater distance to Afghanistan as compared to Uzbekistan or Tajikistan, little room for manoeuvre in its relations with Russia, and the close links between the security sectors of the two countries.

Evolution of co-operation

In March 1992, Kazakhstan joined the North Atlantic Co-operation Council (NACC) and, following that structure's transformation, it became a member of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC). It signed the PfP Framework Document on 27 May 1994, and in July 1996 it joined the PfP Status of Forces Agreement (PfP SOFA). It prepared the first Individual Partnership Programme (IPP) in 1996. As late as 2001–02, the co-

operation between Kazakhstan and NATO was very modest, and was limited to diplomatic contacts, and Kazakhstan's participation in EAPC meetings, seminars and exercises. The events of 11 September 2001 and the intensification of the US policy towards Central Asia as a result thereof, the Alliance's consequent engagement in the operation in Afghanistan and the closer relations between NATO and Russia caused a revitalisation of the NATO-Kazakh co-operation. At that point, Kazakhstan declared its willingness to make its airports available for the needs of the Afghan operation. In May 2002, it joined the Planning and Review Process (PARP), and in January 2004, the Operational Capabilities Concept (OCC). Kazakhstan also delegated one officer to the PfP Staff Elements (PSE). Apart from that, Astana took part in the exercises conducted in 1997–2000 as part of the Central Asian Peacekeeping Forces Battalion CENTRASBAT, as well as in numerous PfP military exercises, and those held by the USA, including in Co-operative Nugget, Co-operative Osprey, Combined Endeavour and Steppe Eagle. Kazakhstan was the only country in the region to send a contingent to Iraq. This 27-strong unit of engineer personnel serves as a part of the Multi-national Brigade Centre-South under Polish command.

During the EAPC meeting of ministers in December 2004, Kazakhstan declared its wish to join the Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP); it has however not yet confirmed this by presenting any official document. Until recently, some representatives of the Kazakh authorities were anxious that participation in the programme entailed far-reaching political commitments that Astana was unable to fulfil. In general, Kazakhstan has a positive opinion about the decisions taken at the Istanbul summit. Nevertheless, Kazakh officials emphasise that Kazakhstan had already suggested opening a NATO office in Almaty several years ago, and sending only one liaison officer to the region will be of merely symbolic meaning. Nevertheless, Kazakhstan is interested in accepting the officer. Additionally, Kazakhstan expressed its will to host an EAPC Security Forum.

The OSCE and International Security Institution Department deals with co-operation with NATO as part of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Ministry of Defence has a separate Directorate in charge of operational co-operation with NATO.

The structure of the Ministry of Defence also includes a special information centre, which is used by other ministries and offices as a basic source of information on NATO, the PfP and the EAPC. One of Kazakhstan's priorities as a part of PfP is strictly military co-operation: achieving interoperability with forces of the Alliance member states by selected units (chiefly, the peacekeeping battalion KAZBAT) and participation in training and exercises. Kazakhstan is also interested in obtaining material and consulting aid in the military and technical field. Kazakhstan is reforming its armed forces, and wants aid from the West for that purpose. Astana has declared that it will adjust its armed forces' structure to meet Western standards by 2010. However, in the opinion of some experts, Kazakhstan will not give up Russian standards for weapons, command structures, communications, etc. On the other hand, significant US military aid for that country cannot pass unnoticed.

Kazakhstan has declared itself in favour of participation in PARP by sending one peacekeeping battalion, KAZBAT, including support units, which is supposed to achieve full interoperability with NATO forces by the end of 2006. One air-borne company of the battalion is intended to be fully ready from the beginning of 2005. Kazakhstan is also interested in applying NATO standards to all its airmobile forces, and it plans one more brigade of those forces to have achieved full interoperability by the end of 2006 so that it can take part in NATO PfP operations. Services reporting to the emergency agency (it has offered the participation of a crisis management team in PARP) and border guards also take part in PARP, although to a limited extent.

Kazakhstan's other priorities include co-operation in combating terrorism and co-operation in combating illegal religious extremist groups. Kazakhstan also emphasises the need for NATO's engagement in the fight against drug smuggling and border security in the broad meaning of the term. Kazakhstan has suggested that it create with NATO a Regional PfP Training Centre to train antiterrorist units operating in mountain areas. Kazakhstan is also searching for leading nations to help it as a part of the PfP Trust Fund mechanism in managing the waste coming from rocket fuel, unexploded shells on the test grounds and light arms. Most probably, the United States will

take part in the implementation of this project. Other areas of co-operation between Kazakhstan and NATO include non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, participation in language training, scientific co-operation and ecological co-operation. In 2004, Kazakhstan founded a linguistic academy for military personnel; there are plans to turn it into a regional institution. Kazakh experts believe that regional co-operation as a part of PfP is hardly possible, yet they can see some possibility of limited operational co-operation. Kazakhstan benefits more from bilateral assistance by the Alliance's member states than from the support granted to it as a part of the PfP. Major donors include the USA, Turkey, Germany, France and the United Kingdom. Washington provides Astana with significant aid in the process of ensuring security on the Caspian Sea, including equipping the coastline guards and forming the fleet, as well as the training of sailors.

Problems in co-operation

The non-democratic government in Astana, Kazakhstan's dependence on defence co-operation with Russia and the limited interest of the Alliance in Central Asia mean that the area of co-operation between the Alliance and Astana is significantly curtailed. For those reasons, NATO has hardly any capability to influence Kazakhstan, while Astana wants from the Alliance concrete material aid that would not oblige them to mutual commitments in terms of political co-operation. It sometimes seems that Kazakhstan sees assistance from the Alliance as a reward due to the country because of its strategic geographical location.

The nature of Kazakhstan's strategy towards the Alliance is rather reactive; this means that Astana expects NATO to make co-operation proposals while itself it barely tries to attract the Alliance's support for issues that are important for Kazakhstan. The development of mutual relations is also impeded by Kazakhstan's unwillingness to make political commitments. The impact of the Russian factor on Kazakhstan's policy towards the Alliance is part of a separate group of problems. It seems that a great part of the proposals made by Kazakhstan to NATO and Western countries are aimed only at strengthening Astana's position against Moscow.

The significant organisational and technical factors hampering co-operation with NATO include differing organisational cultures, strong centralisation of the bureaucratic apparatus in Kazakhstan, and an inability to work in compliance with the organisational principles applicable within the Alliance. Kazakhstan has still not ratified the Security Agreement with NATO, and in consequence it fails to provide NATO with a great part of the information necessary to implement PARP. The Kazakh ruling elites, both political and military, have not rid themselves of a Soviet mindset of stereotypes which inherently mistrusts Western countries and organisations. Intellectually, they are relatively closed-minded, and people who have been able to change their approach to work thanks to participation in training in the West cannot find their way among the organisational arrangements in Kazakhstan. There also are some linguistic problems; very few officers speak English, and those who do are mainly junior officers. Even though Kazakhstan's economy is rapidly developing, the country is still rather reluctant to co-finance the events it undertakes jointly with NATO or the Alliance's member states. Another problem is rather the unfavourable image of the Alliance among the governing elites. Kazakh experts reproach NATO for the following perceived failings: a lack of any strategy towards Central Asia, a lack of knowledge of the region's special features, promoting democratisation instead of granting assistance in fighting regional threats, and an unwillingness to face the problems deepened by the ISAF operation, including the growth in drug smuggling from Afghanistan. They are also critical about the course of NATO's operation in Afghanistan so far. There is also some anxiety that NATO could interfere with Kazakhstan's internal affairs, and that the Alliance's member states could provide assistance to the democratic opposition in Kazakhstan. It also seems that, because NATO offers assistance in an inflexible way, Kazakhstan prefers to develop bilateral relations with individual Alliance member states, especially with the USA.

Conclusions

Kazakhstan has great economic potential and a relatively stable political situation, which opens up some prospects for co-operation with NATO.

However, Astana is not interested in broadening the scope of its co-operation with the Alliance more than necessary, one of the reasons for which being its strong ties with Moscow. Therefore, the process of intensifying NATO's policy towards Kazakhstan must be handled with great care, especially considering the fact that NATO does not provide too many stimuli, either positive or negative, for this country. Therefore, the Alliance should offer Kazakhstan concrete benefits and set some requirements, such as ratification of the Security Agreement. Astana should also be encouraged to join the IPAP, on condition however that it will be a real driving force for democratic reform in this country. It is also worth raising the issue of conducting defence reform in relations with Kazakhstan.

The Alliance should also determine at least its short-term strategy concerning Central Asia, to be followed with regard to each country of the region individually. In addition to the operational tasks connected with the Afghanistan operation, they must set goals that could yield tangible benefits to Central Asian countries to help them resolve the problems existing in the region.

Kazakhstan hopes it will be given the opportunity for economic and expert engagement in Afghanistan, and aims at obtaining modern military technologies. Kazakhstan would certainly welcome the Alliance's participation in the fight against the actual threats to its security, as well as co-operation with other organisations in combating drug trafficking, border security or the resolution of ecological problems. These wishes of Astana should be taken advantage of wisely. Kazakhstan's aspirations to play a more important role in the international arena and to earn greater prestige in international relations must also be employed in encouraging the country to co-operate. It is also worth putting greater emphasis on the Alliance's PR addressed to the Kazakh public, breaking Russia's information monopoly, and promoting a positive image of NATO and the West, in the broad meaning of the term, as systems representing an attractive form of modernisation. It would also be worthwhile to consider the possibility of supporting Astana in its striving to open a Regional PfP Training Centre, or participation in the PfP Trust Fund mechanism. The option of NATO granting support to BOMCA

(the EU Border Management Programme for Central Asia) or launching a process similar to the Ohrid Process for Border Management and Security should also be considered.

Marta Jaroszewicz

KYRGYZSTAN

Note: the following text was prepared prior to the March 2005 regime change in Kyrgyzstan

Kyrgyzstan's co-operation with NATO is developing, even though it is not a priority for the country's authorities. Further, it remains dependent on financial support from the Alliance's member states.

Approach to NATO

NATO is one of the numerous security structures that Kyrgyzstan co-operates with. The country authorities clearly give higher priority to Kyrgyzstan's membership in the Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO) and the Shanghai Co-operation Organisation (SCO) and to its bilateral co-operation with Russia, than to relations with NATO. Kyrgyzstan shows some interest in developing co-operation with NATO, yet it emphasises that it is not intending to integrate with the Alliance. Consequently, Kyrgyzstan does not strive to adopt NATO standards.

NATO is primarily perceived in Kyrgyzstan as a structure that can provide financial and technical assistance for its armed forces and other security structures in both multilateral and bilateral forms (from particular member states). Some experts notice that the image of NATO is quite negative among public opinion, and that the Kyrgyz governing elites are anxious that NATO and its member states could interfere with the political processes in Kyrgyzstan. The current relations between Russia and the Alliance, and the position of China, are the key factors influencing Kyrgyzstan's approach to NATO.

NATO's interest in developing relations with Kyrgyzstan, which had been very slight, has grown in recent years. The establishment of the antiterrorism coalition's airbase and the Alliance's increasing engagement in Afghanistan have greatly contributed to this. Nevertheless, due to Kyrgyzstan's limited potential and activity as part of the Partnership, these relations are not a matter of priority for the Alliance. Bilateral engagement and aid from specific NATO member states are noticeably more substantial than those offered by the Alliance as a whole.

Evolution of co-operation

Political relations between Kyrgyzstan and NATO were initiated in 1992. Kyrgyzstan formally became a member of the North Atlantic Co-operation Council (NACC) on 10 March 1992, and it continued its participation in this forum following its transformation in May 1997 into the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC). After the Partnership for Peace (PfP) programme was launched in 1994, Kyrgyzstan's president Askar Akayev signed the PfP Framework Document and submitted the PfP Presentation Document on 1 June 1994 in Brussels. In May 1995, Kyrgyzstan and NATO agreed on the first Individual Partnership Programme (IPP), which was implemented in 1996. Initially, the IPP provided for implementation of approximately 80 events annually, mainly seminars and training sessions. With time, this number exceeded 100. Kyrgyz soldiers started participating regularly in a number of exercises as a part of the Partnership for Peace programme or other similar events, including in Co-operative Osprey, Co-operative Aura, Co-operative Support, Combined Endeavour, Co-operative Dragon, and in 1997–2000, as a part of CENTRASBAT, the common battalion of peacekeeping forces from Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan.

On 23 June 1995, Kyrgyzstan signed the Security Agreement with NATO and obtained NATO certification in March 1997.

Following the events of 11 September 2001, co-operation between the Alliance's member states and Kyrgyzstan became more active, particularly as a part of the antiterrorist coalition in Afghanistan. In December 2001, Kyrgyz authorities provided the coalition forces with access to the Manas civil international airport near Bishkek, where the Gansi airbase was created. Fighter planes and over 2,000 soldiers of the coalition forces are still stationed there under bilateral agreements. The Kyrgyz authorities support NATO efforts to stabilise Afghanistan, and declare their readiness to support that country's economic reconstruction. In 2004, Kyrgyzstan made proposals to NATO concerning its potential engagement as a part of ISAF, though on a limited and non-military basis. However, Kyrgyz experts are critical of the effects of the Afghan operation, including the activity of ISAF forces, which have been under

NATO command since 2003. In particular, they emphasise the problem of the growing influx of drugs from Afghanistan to Kyrgyzstan.

Kyrgyzstan's co-operation with NATO has noticeably grown since 2001, although it is still rather limited. Declared priorities include co-operation in combating terrorism, preparing selected units of the armed forces and other forces (including those of the Ministry of Ecology and Emergency Situations and the National Guard) to achieve interoperability with NATO member state forces for peacekeeping operations and antiterrorist actions, creating and training (with the aid of the Alliance member states) special units designated to fight against terrorism in mountain areas, and co-operation in communications. Kyrgyzstan places particular significance on non-military co-operation, especially in the fields of medicine, emergency, civil communication, scientific co-operation and language training. Kyrgyzstan also strives for co-operation with NATO in border security, which is a matter of priority for Bishkek. The authorities engaged in co-operation on the Kyrgyz side include the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Defence, and Ecology and Emergency Situations, the National Guard, the Border Guard, the International Strategic Studies Institute under the president of Kyrgyzstan, and the Kyrgyz Academy of Sciences.

Political decisions concerning co-operation are taken by the president, and the Ministry of Defence plays the main part in the implementation thereof. There are no independent units in charge of co-operation with NATO among the Kyrgyz state administration authorities.

Kyrgyzstan declared its will to join the Planning and Review Process (PARP) during the visit of NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer to Bishkek in October 2004. As a result, work on PARP documents has commenced in Kyrgyzstan. At the same time, the Kyrgyz side emphasises the difficulties, mainly financial, in implementing those objectives. By 2005, Kyrgyzstan plans to create (or rather recreate the previously liquidated) peacekeeping company that will be designated for co-operation with NATO, along with the special search and rescue unit of the Ministry of Ecology and Emergency Situations and special force subunits. There are also plans to create a re-

gional training centre for rescuers in Kyrgyzstan as a part of the PfP, and to transform it thereafter into a training centre for peacekeeping forces. Kyrgyzstan is not considering participating in the Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP), claiming it is not ready and has insufficient information about this initiative. Instead, it applies for aid to various countries and structures, including NATO, for liquidating uranium waste storage yards, which are hazardous to the environment, and re-cultivating the land previously used by military bases (the latter action as a part of the Trust Fund mechanism on the basis of a declaration of support from the Netherlands and Luxembourg), *inter alia*. Kyrgyz representatives have also suggested that the new NATO member states can donate it any military equipment they have left over from the Soviet period. Kyrgyzstan wants the annual meeting of the new EAPC Security Forum to be held in Bishkek in 2006, and that its main subject should be trans-border threats in Central Asia. In December 2004, during the meeting of EAPC ministers, Kyrgyzstan suggested expanding the scope of the Trust Fund to cover issues of border security and control, in particular in the context of antiterrorist actions as a part of the Partnership Action Plan Against Terrorism (PAP-T). It also appealed to NATO to hold regional tactical exercises and training in Central Asia to promote interoperability, and to hold introductory courses in interoperability and PARP.

In January 2003, Kyrgyzstan joined the IT network as a part of the Virtual Silk Highway (VSH) project, and received computer hardware of significant value that enabled it to connect a number of higher education institutions and research institutes with their counterparts abroad. Kyrgyzstan has also created (with US aid) a computer network that connects its security institutions with other PfP participants as part of the PfP Information Management System (PIMS).

Kyrgyzstan does not accept any far-reaching consulting assistance from NATO member states, nor has it declared any desire to adopt NATO standards in reforming its armed forces. Instead, it is greatly interested in aid from the Alliance's member states in equipping and training its armed forces in selected areas. Kyrgyzstan has declared its intention to enter into the PfP Status of Forces Agreement (PfP SOFA), although it has not so far done this.

Kyrgyzstan's bilateral co-operation in the field of security with particular NATO member states, as well as with Russia and China, is clearly better developed than as a part of NATO. The most active Allies include the USA and Turkey, and to a lesser extent Germany, the United Kingdom and France.

Kyrgyz officers study at military academies in Turkey (over 500 graduates), the USA, Germany, France and the United Kingdom, as well as at the PfP training centre in Ankara. Soldiers of the Kyrgyz special forces are trained in the USA and Turkey. The USA has helped Kyrgyzstan, *inter alia*, to create a NCO school with US instructors, purchased two helicopters, and is planning to train Kyrgyz peacekeeping forces. English, French, German and Turkish language courses, which are sponsored by individual Allies, have been made available at the higher school for officers in Bishkek. Kyrgyzstan is still dependent on Russian military equipment, and this dependence has so far not been significantly curtailed by the aid the Allies have offered in the form of equipment (especially communication equipment).

Problems in co-operation

The country's serious economic difficulties and low level of socioeconomic development, and, consequently, the extremely low level of financing and poor condition of the armed forces, greatly impede the development of co-operation between Kyrgyzstan and NATO. All this makes Kyrgyzstan dependent on external aid regarding co-operation in the field of security, including co-operation with NATO; the country is often unable to allot even small amounts of money for the implementation of joint events. Another serious problem is insufficient political will on Kyrgyzstan's part to enhance its co-operation with the Alliance (in contrast to its willingness to work with certain selected Allies), which basically originates from the fear of a negative reaction from Russia and China. An additional, essential problem is the fact that the security priorities of NATO and Kyrgyzstan differ to some extent. For Kyrgyzstan, most important is effective assistance in the struggle against terrorism, Islamic extremism, drug smuggling and illegal immigration, in border security and building its own security forces, as well as guaranteeing effective

external security. In Bishkek's opinion, NATO is not able to offer much in these fields. In turn, the Alliance wants the whole region to conduct democratic reform of its security structures and provide effective support to stabilise the region, which Kyrgyzstan is either unwilling (in the former case) or able to only a limited extent (in the latter) to ensure. A further significant problem is the authoritarian nature of Kyrgyzstan's political regime and the great distance between the respective socio-political, legal, economic and security-related reality of Kyrgyzstan and NATO member states.

Numerous specific problems in Kyrgyzstan–NATO co-operation include the low level of knowledge about the Alliance, its policy and operating principles among the Kyrgyz elites and public; the predominant Soviet-type training methods and mindset in the security structures; and a malfunctioning bureaucracy. The bad financial situation also causes serious personnel shortages in the defence sector, in particular, a great deficit in staff who know foreign languages; and a high level of corruption. The fact that Kyrgyzstan currently does not have a military representative at NATO Headquarters in Brussels clearly affects the development of co-operation. This is mainly due to financial shortages, although a lack of political will on the authorities' part also seems to have an effect in this case.

Conclusions

First of all, in its policy towards Kyrgyzstan NATO must clearly define its priorities as a part of the general policy towards the region. NATO should bear in mind that Kyrgyzstan will remain dependent on foreign aid in the immediate future. The Alliance's member states should increase the volume of the aid they grant to Kyrgyzstan to implement concrete objectives that both strengthen this country's armed forces (including training and equipping special forces dedicated to combating terrorism in mountain areas), and build a positive image of NATO in Kyrgyz public opinion (including in the fields of disaster response and liquidation of uranium waste storage yards). Part of these activities can, and should be, carried out using the Trust Fund mechanism. The Alliance should co-ordinate the aid it provides to a greater extent. However, NATO should

combine an increase in the aid level with a stepping-up of its requirements of Kyrgyzstan concerning the fulfilment of the commitments made by the country as a part of the PfP, regulating the legal basis for relations with NATO (including ratification of SOFA), increasing transparency in the defence policy, gradual adoption of NATO standards in reforming security structures (implementing objectives under the Partnership Action Plan on Defence Institution Building), and more extensive political and legal changes of a democratic nature.

NATO should pursue an active information policy in Kyrgyzstan, co-operating on this with the partly free local mass media and the numerous and actively operating non-governmental organisations; increase the number of internships and trainings addressed mainly to representatives of the younger generation, in particular those held inside Kyrgyzstan itself. It is also necessary to fight actively against negative stereotypes of NATO.

NATO's image in Kyrgyzstan will depend heavily on how the NATO operation in Afghanistan proceeds. The Alliance should make all possible effort to improve its efficiency and encourage Kyrgyzstan (along with other countries in the region) to support the operation, even if only symbolically. The Alliance could either implement (in co-operation with other structures such as the European Union and the OSCE) some soft security tasks (e.g. border security, combating drug smuggling, etc.) or only support them in certain fields. This is one reason for supporting the proposal to expand the Trust Fund mechanisms into border security, and increasing assistance from NATO and particular Allies in this field, including reforming, training and equipping border services.

Marek Menkiszak

UZBEKISTAN

Uzbekistan, which aspires to become the regional leader, has shown the greatest engagement of all the Central Asian countries in co-operating with NATO since 11 September 2001. However, this co-operation has been impeded by the nature of the regime of Uzbek president Islam Karimov, which is a cause of serious internal problems.

Approach to NATO

Uzbekistan is the most populous country of Central Asia (holding almost 50% of the region's population); it is located in the centre of the region, and there are large Uzbek minorities in every of the neighbouring states. For these reasons, Uzbekistan perceives itself as the most important country in the region, and treats NATO as one of the tools that allow it to play this role. In the first years after gaining independence, relations with NATO were treated by Tashkent as a factor which reinforced its young statehood.

Uzbekistan's foreign policy is characterised by relatively substantial independence from Russia in comparison to other Central Asian states. Uzbekistan has the best opportunities among the region's other countries to develop co-operation with NATO, although it is worth noting that Uzbekistan tries to avoid excessively antagonising Russia, which is not favourably disposed towards overly high activity on the part of the Alliance and its member states in this region. Tashkent has preferred NATO to other Western organisations as it has paid relatively less attention to the issues of human rights, democratisation and economic reform in Uzbekistan.

Uzbekistan is not interested in becoming a member of NATO. In foreign relations, Uzbek authorities give top priority to bilateral relations, including with the Alliance's member states. For this reason, NATO is seen through the prism of relations with the USA. Uzbekistan sticks to the rule of maintaining a balance between the three great actors (Russia, China and the USA) and avoiding too close ties with any of them in its foreign and security policy. As part of this strategy, Uzbekistan joined the Shanghai Co-operation Organisation (SCO) in June 2001. In the opinion of Uzbek president Islam Karimov, too close co-operation with any of the individual actors could

endanger the country's sovereignty, which he identifies with his unlimited authority inside the country. There are periods when Uzbekistan's relations with Russia, USA and China become colder or warmer. Following the terrorist attacks in Tashkent in late March/early April 2004, the country's relations with NATO and the USA have somewhat cooled, proof of which are the critical opinions expressed by Tashkent of the operation in Afghanistan, and allegations that Western countries have been interfering with Uzbekistan's internal affairs. Instead, ties with Russia have tightened, as exemplified by the signing of a strategic partnership agreement in June 2004.

Tashkent sees no contradiction between its relations with Russia and China and those with NATO and the USA. In the opinion of Uzbekistan, since 11 September 2001, all those countries have common interests in the fields of security, the fight against Islamic terrorism and drug trafficking. Since that date, Uzbekistan has treated its co-operation with NATO as an element of its participation in the coalition against international terrorism and radical Islam. US and NATO operations in Afghanistan are perceived by Tashkent as factors that improve the country's security, because the base for armed radical Uzbek-Islamic opposition has been liquidated as a result of them. Uzbekistan, as a member of the antiterrorist coalition (providing logistic support) and a frontline country, bordering on Afghanistan, perceives itself as a state directly endangered by international terrorism, and in effect aspires to be the USA and NATO's most important partner in Central Asia. This strategy is aimed at both obtaining large amounts of financial aid and legitimising the regime by persuading NATO and the USA to refrain from raising the issue of president Karimov's policy towards the internal opposition in their mutual relations. President Karimov brands all internal opposition as inimical to the regime and the antiterrorism coalition, and labels every political movement referring to Islam as extremist. The regime blames the appearance of Islamic terrorist groups in Uzbekistan not on internal factors (authoritarianism and the dire socioeconomic situation) but on external ones, to wit, an attack by international terrorism. The West disagrees with this standpoint, and individual member states of the Alliance have

raised the issue of human rights violations; Tashkent's hopes of getting large financial aid have therefore not materialised, and Uzbekistan has been reviewing its attitude towards NATO and the USA.

Evolution of co-operation

Uzbekistan became a member of the North Atlantic Co-operation Council (NACC) – since 1997, the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council – in March 1992. On 13 July 1994, Uzbekistan signed the Partnership for Peace (PfP) Framework Document. In August 1995, Tashkent submitted the PfP Presentation Document. On 16 August 1995, Uzbekistan signed the Security Agreement with NATO, which guarantees secure exchange of information between the Alliance and its partners. On 24 July 1996, the PfP Status of Forces Agreement (PfP SOFA) was signed by Uzbekistan and NATO. The Individual Partnership Programme (IPP) was developed on the basis of the Uzbek Partnership Presentation Document. A document to that effect was signed on 26 June 1996. The terrorist attacks against the USA on 11 September 2001, which were logistically supported from al-Qaida bases in Afghanistan, appeared to be a real turning point in the history of relations between NATO and Uzbekistan. Several weeks afterwards, US forces launched Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan using bases in Uzbekistan. Since 16 April 2003, when NATO decided to take over command of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) operation which had been conducted in Afghanistan from December 2001, the territory of Uzbekistan has become the key logistical base for that mission.

In 2002, Uzbekistan signed a memorandum of understanding with the NATO Maintenance and Supply Agency (NAMSA). In June 2002, Uzbekistan joined the Planning and Review Process (PARP). In September 2004, Tashkent submitted the Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP) Presentation Document.

NATO–Uzbekistan political relations are relatively intensive as compared to other countries of the region. In the period 1996–2003, several important visits were made. In November 1996, President of Uzbekistan Islam Karimov paid a visit to NATO Headquarters in Brussels. In 1997, 2000, 2003 and 2004, subsequent NATO Secretaries Ge-

neral visited Tashkent. President Karimov took part in NATO summits in Washington (1999) and Prague (2002). In 2004, the heads of the Uzbek Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Defence participated in the Istanbul NATO summit.

In July 2001, the Uzbek mission to NATO headquarters was established. In November 2001, the first consultations of the Uzbek ministers of defence and foreign affairs with ambassadors of the Alliance member states were held in Brussels as a part of the “19+1” formula.

Uzbekistan is the most actively engaged of all the Central Asian states in practical co-operation with NATO. Since 1996, Uzbek armed forces have taken part in numerous common exercises as part of and in the spirit of PfP, including in Co-operative Aura, Co-operative Automation, Co-operative Banner, Co-operative Chance, Co-operative Demand, Co-operative Determination, Co-operative Guard, Co-operative Nugget, Co-operative Osprey, Co-operative Support, Strong Resolve and Co-operative Safeguard. In 2001–03, representatives of the Uzbek armed forces took part in 11 exercises as a part of PfP.

In April 2003, the Ferghana-2003 exercises were held in Uzbekistan. Their objective was to train participants how to manage consequences of natural disasters. These were the first exercises of this kind to be held in Central Asia. As a part of IPP 2003/2004, Uzbekistan was engaged in 182 events. As a part of IPP 2004/2005, Uzbekistan has been and is going to be engaged in 139 events.

The operation in Afghanistan has been the most important area for developing co-operation between Uzbekistan and NATO since the attacks of 11 September 2001. Uzbekistan has provided NATO and the USA with access to its military bases, which is vital for implementation of the operation. The Khanabad airbase has been made available to US forces, and the Termez base hosts NATO forces (under German command).

Uzbekistan has chosen 10 goals for implementation as a part of PARP. Among other things, these have included military personnel training and the teaching of Western foreign languages. The most important issue has been the training of a peacekeeping forces' battalion with a medical unit. PARP ensures that the battalion will be trained and equipped in accordance with a special pro-

gramme complying with NATO standards. Currently, the battalion is composed of 150 soldiers to rise to a maximum strength of 450. According to some observers, the original plan that provides for readiness of the battalion by the end of 2005 is unrealistic, and its implementation deadline has been extended to the end of 2006. A 12-strong unit of the battalion took part in the PfP exercises Co-operative Best Effort in Armenia in June 2003. The only PARP 2002 goal pertaining to air forces concerned strategic air transport, i.e. ensuring transport to the peacekeeping battalion. PARP 2004 includes 13 goals covering, *inter alia*, logistics, communications, air transport for the peacekeeping battalion, communication system and increasing demining capabilities. However, preparing the peacekeeping forces' battalion remains the most important task.

Owing to the aid from the USA and the United Kingdom, a language training centre has been established as a part of PfP structures. Branches have been opened at senior military institutions. English, French and German courses are available at the centre. The best graduates receive grants to study foreign languages abroad.

In 2003, Uzbekistan decided to create a PfP training centre, where officers could be trained in compliance with NATO standards and, as a result, to increase the interoperability of the Uzbek armed forces and other PfP members during common exercises. Approximately 3,000 officers are to be trained at the centre. The opening of the centre, which had been planned for September 2004, has been delayed. In October 1999, a seminar and conference on security in Central Asia were jointly held by NATO and Uzbekistan in Tashkent. In turn, in June 2002, a conference was held by the NATO Science Committee. Uzbekistan receives nearly 60% of the NATO-sponsored academic grants allocated to Central Asia.

In August 2002, Uzbekistan was the first Central Asian state to join the Virtual Silk Highway (VSH). The project has most users in Uzbekistan, compared to other countries in Central Asia. In 2003, thanks to US support, the Special Information Technology Centre for Modelling and Simulation was created, which enables Uzbek officers to participate in computer training and exercises. Individual NATO member states provide military assistance to Uzbekistan. Most significant was

the aid granted by the USA (US\$ 36 million in 2002–03). Twenty Uzbek officers either have been or are being trained at the US Armed Force CENT-COM HQ. At least 10 Uzbek officers take part in training covering the priority areas of bilateral co-operation every year. Four joint exercises of US and Uzbek forces are held annually. Germany, the United Kingdom and Turkey are, respectively, Uzbekistan's second, third and fourth most important bilateral co-operators from among NATO's member states.

Problems in co-operation

The basic problem in the relations of NATO with Uzbekistan is the difference of their mutual perceptions and expectations. Tashkent often overestimates the Alliance's capabilities, expecting assistance (especially financial), equipment supplies and support in resolving such basic security problems as terrorism, religious extremism and drug trafficking. Following 11 September, Uzbekistan's expectations were very high. Now, the disillusionment of the Uzbek side is in direct proportion to those earlier expectations.

On the one hand, NATO is implementing concrete goals in the region: co-operation with partners to receive support for its antiterrorist and peacekeeping operations (in particular, ISAF in Afghanistan, which is of great political significance for NATO); on the other, it encourages democratic defence reforms in those countries. The Alliance is not interested in engagement in the soft security field, considering that it basically has no mandate for such work.

From NATO's perspective, the key obstacle to the development of its co-operation with Uzbekistan is the authoritarian rule in the country, which prevents greater openness on the Uzbek side and its readiness to accept external monitoring to verify how the country fulfils its commitments. The fact that there usually are fewer candidates than places available for them at trainings abroad is the most flagrant symptom of this problem. In the opinion of independent observers, increasing the number of foreign grant holders is seen by President Karimov as a potential threat to the regime's security. According to experts, other sources of problems in developing co-operation with Uzbekistan include ineffective bureaucracy, centralised decision-making (any decision, even on the

least significant issue, must be taken by the President), limited interest in matters concerning reform of the armed forces to adjust them to NATO standards, serious shortages of personnel speaking foreign languages (the Uzbek IPAP sent to Brussels used Russian), the hidden hostility some of the administration feels towards NATO (an inheritance of the Soviet mindset), abusing the term “state secret”, the weak position of the army (the proportion of its forces to those of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and National Security Committee is 1:3), non-transparency of the defence budget, inability to use allocated funds effectively, lack of co-ordination between the particular sectors which make mutually contradictory statements, and scant knowledge of the rules according to which the Alliance operates. According to the Uzbek side, NATO does not understand the peculiarity of the region and the local way of thinking, e.g. when it demands democratic reform. Uzbekistan is reluctant to become involved in the regional co-operation which is, in turn, fostered by NATO. Tashkent emphasises that each of the region’s countries has a different character. In the opinion of the Uzbek elites, the Alliance allocates too little financial means for aid to PfP participants. They see this as due to the fact that the West does not have a comprehensive vision of aid to Central Asia, the foundation for which should be financial support for economic development, as the best guarantee of political stabilisation and eliminating causes of terrorism. Tashkent has reservations towards what it sees as NATO’s patronising and paternalistic approach to its partners. They say this has been proven by the fact that PfP members were not admitted to participate in work on the document *The Euro-Atlantic Partnership – Refocusing and Renewal*. Tashkent is also aware of the lack of consensus within NATO with regard to its Central Asian policy, as well as of the great divides caused by the Iraqi crisis. The Uzbek elites are confirmed in their conviction that the decision-making process at NATO, composed as it is of 26 member states, is too time-consuming, and that bilateral co-operation with specific Alliance members is much more effective.

Similar to the other Central Asian states, Uzbekistan provides NATO with access to its air space and bases on condition of obtaining financial benefits from doing so. In 2004, serious tension

in the relations between Uzbekistan and NATO arose due to the issue of the Alliance’s liaison officer in Central Asia. Uzbekistan, perceiving itself as the regional leader, suggested that the permanent liaison office should be located in Tashkent, to which the Alliance disagreed and introduced a rotation system. As a result, Uzbekistan was the last country in the region to agree to the liaison officer’s stay in its territory.

Conclusions

Uzbekistan plays the role of an important logistical base for the antiterrorist operation in Afghanistan. Even though Uzbekistan is actively involved in military co-operation with the Alliance’s member states, albeit predominantly bilateral (especially, with the USA), it seems unlikely that Uzbekistan could use IPAP in accordance with its planned goals (principally as an instrument for controlled and Alliance-supported democratic defence and institutional reform). This is even truer because Tashkent’s demanding, and recently critical, approach towards the Alliance is curtailing the chances of closer co-operation. Nor is the bad and worsening domestic situation of Uzbekistan conducive to this. Any potential destabilisation of Uzbekistan, considering its situation and number of inhabitants, would certainly greatly affect the entire region.

On the other hand, Uzbekistan will remain an important base for the ISAF operation in Afghanistan, owing to its geopolitical situation. Developing logistics (ground supply) for this operation may prove conducive to keeping the relations between Uzbekistan and NATO on an even keel. The Alliance may try to strengthen co-operation on the “Afghan foundation”, offering Tashkent joint actions in the border region (exercises, co-operation on Uzbek-Afghan border security) or sending Uzbek liaison officers to Afghanistan. Another platform for co-operation between NATO and Uzbekistan could be built on practical activities as part of the struggle against Islamic terrorism, i.e. the potential training and equipping of Uzbek special units. In the longer term, NATO could extend this programme over other units of the Uzbek army. By training special units and maintaining co-operation in the border region, NATO could indirectly support Tashkent in combating drug trafficking, which Uzbekistan

claims is a serious threat to the country's security. Nevertheless, NATO should make increasing its assistance dependent on Uzbekistan's fulfilling its commitments. It is also worth strengthening NATO's information policy to promote a positive image of the West (in the broad meaning of the term) as a good example to follow. The Alliance should include in its political marketing such elements as increasing the number of internships and trainings addressed to representatives of the young generation and local implementation thereof.

Nevertheless, the success of the recommended actions depends on reaching a consensus among NATO member states as to the nature of the Alliance's engagement in the region and, even more so, on a constructive approach on the part of the Uzbek government. President Karimov's distrust of enhancing co-operation with NATO is due to the difficult internal situation in the country, which raises the authoritarian regime's fear of any "interference" from outside that could adversely affect its stability. Reinforcement of the regime's domestic position depends on improving the socioeconomic situation, which requires liberal economic reforms and softening the hard line towards the opposition. NATO member states could attempt to convince the Uzbek authorities to conduct reforms as a necessary condition for investment and financial aid, and to accept limited political reform (controlled, slow, top-down liberalisation). An additional cost of such a strategy would be criticism by human rights organisations. Another problem would also be getting all the Alliance's members to support such a "pragmatic" standpoint. However, taking into account the style of ruling and the mindset of President Karimov, even if NATO adopted such a strategy, it would not provide any serious opportunity to change the Uzbek regime's conservative approach. Therefore, it needs to be assumed that a cooling of the relations between NATO and Uzbekistan in the future is a probable scenario. Moreover, Uzbekistan may, as a result of a potential destabilisation of its internal situation, turn from a partner to a problem for the Alliance – into a kind of failing state.

Adam Balcer

TAJIKISTAN

Tajikistan has declared its will to intensify its currently underdeveloped co-operation with NATO, even though the country's relations with Russia impede its development to a considerable extent; insufficient knowledge of the mechanisms for co-operation on the Tajik side is one of the problems.

Approach to NATO

Tajikistan is closely tied to Russia in both political and military terms, which has a direct effect on its relations with NATO. In the field of security, this country relies on the Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO) and the Shanghai Co-operation Organisation (SCO), and above all on the presence of Russian military forces on its territory. Under the terms of the agreement signed during President Putin's visit to Dushanbe in October 2004, the status of the Russian 201st Division has been changed: it has been transformed into a permanent base, which means a strengthening of Russia's influence there (the base also serves as a guarantee of the country's stability, to some extent). Russian border guards who serve at the border with Afghanistan will be gradually replaced by Tajiks; the process is planned to be concluded by the end of 2005.

The country's strong bonds with Russia do not totally prevent Tajikistan's co-operation with NATO and the West, although they limit it. The Alliance is seen as one of the most important Western structures, and as an organisation that is able to provide financial and technical assistance in modernising the army. The Tajik side has also begun to consider NATO as a potential partner that can contribute to an at least partial three-way diversification of co-operation in the international arena, including in the field of security.

Before adopting the PFP, Tajikistan was the least active country in Central Asia; however, over the last three years, it has been trying to intensify its contacts with NATO and the West (which was proved by its signing of an agreement on partnership and co-operation with the European Union in October 2004). This is mainly linked to the Alliance's engagement in Afghanistan, which has a direct effect on Tajikistan's security and internal situation. NATO's image in Tajik public opi-

nion is relatively positive, although very few Tajiks know what the Alliance is; many identify NATO with the United States. For NATO, Tajikistan is a first-rank actor in Central Asia because it borders on Afghanistan, and because of its significance for regional stability.

Evolution of co-operation

Tajikistan was a member of the North Atlantic Co-operation Council (NACC) and since 1997 has belonged to the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC). However, it has not actively engaged in co-operation, the only exception being its participation in the NATO Science Programme (there were even cases when the right to represent the country at EAPC meetings was transferred to the Russian delegation). Tajikistan was the last NIS country to sign the PfP Framework Document; it did so as late as 20 February 2002. This can be explained by the fact that during the civil war the current president, Emomali Rakhmonov, was mainly supported by Russia, while the West was much more critical about him. Another vital factor was Tajikistan's reluctance to become involved in any initiatives of military nature because of its war experiences (e.g. it has not joined CENTRASBAT). Dushanbe was showing signs of a desire to join the PfP and intensify its relations with the Alliance as early as mid-2001. The Tajik authorities have emphasised that the change in their approach to NATO has also resulted from the Alliance's new Tajikistan policy in connection with the beginning of the Afghan operation.

Tajikistan adopted its Individual Partnership Programme (IPP) for the years 2004–05 in late 2003. Nevertheless, it has declared that it is still too early to develop an Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP), and that it is not ready yet for participation in the PfP Planning and Review Process (PARP); it has been quite cautious about implementing the principles of the Partnership Action Plan on Defence Institution Building (PAP-DIB), claiming that its knowledge is insufficient. Work on ratifying the PfP Status of Forces Agreement (PfP SOFA) has already taken some considerable time. In March 2003, President Rakhmonov paid a visit to NATO Headquarters. He also headed the Tajik delegations to NATO summits in Prague and Istanbul.

Tajikistan's priorities in its co-operation with NATO as a part of PfP include civil emergency planning, fight against terrorism, rescue operations, personnel training, language training, expert assistance in transforming defence institutions, adopting planning standards and establishing civilian control of the armed forces. Yet Tajikistan is most interested in co-operation with NATO in the fields of border security and combating drug and people smuggling, while at the same time claiming the Alliance shows insufficient understanding towards it. The Tajik authorities are waiting for NATO's decision on establishing a border guard training centre; the talks (with OSCE participation) have been going on for two years now, yet it seems that the centre will not be created in the immediate future. Dushanbe displays a positive attitude to the Istanbul summit's decisions, including the initiative to designate a NATO liaison officer for Central Asia; Tajikistan has officially declared that it is ready to provide an office for the officer.

Tajikistan has offered significant assistance to NATO member states during the Afghan operation by providing the United States and France with access to its air space and designated airports. Currently, under a bilateral agreement, only the French forces, who have a small contingent of soldiers (approximately 150) stationed in the Dushanbe airbase, are staying on Tajik territory. During the visit of NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer in October 2004, Tajikistan was the first country of the region to sign an agreement with NATO on transit to Afghanistan.

Tajikistan has so far not participated in any exercises of a military character together with NATO, although it does not exclude such an option for the future. The greatest multilateral event it has participated in as a part of the PfP were the Fergana-2003 civilian exercises covering emergency management at the time of natural disasters. Nevertheless, Tajik units have taken part in exercises and training on Tajik territory, jointly with the French and Americans. Tajikistan's bilateral co-operation with some NATO member states is better developed than is its engagement in multilateral co-operation as a part of the PfP. Very few officers go on trainings to NATO member states. Traditionally, most of them graduate from military education institutions and take courses in Russia, which is due to both the modest offer

of scholarships in the West and to language-related problems. It is worthwhile paying attention to the systematically growing engagement of India in Tajikistan, including in co-operation in the military training area.

Tajik state structures do not include a centre for co-ordinating co-operation with NATO; all key decisions to this effect are taken in the president's inner circle.

According to observers, Tajikistan is currently conducting an ambitious reform of its armed forces. The Tajik army is considered one of the most experienced in the region, yet its greatest problem is its insufficient level of financing (this also applies to other security structures, in particular the border guards). There is persistent dependence on Russian military technology. Except for some limited control by the parliament, there is no civilian control of the armed forces.

Tajikistan participates in the Alliance's science programme. In February 2003, it joined the Virtual Silk Highway (VSH). As a part of the Trust Fund, it has implemented one project concerning mine destruction (with financial support from the Netherlands and Canada).

Problems in co-operation

Tajikistan is one of the poorest countries in Central Asia. The five-year civil war has exacerbated the already serious economic crisis, and there are hardly any prospects for overcoming it today. Another problem is the undemocratic political system, even though Tajikistan is one of the most pluralist countries of the region (an Islamic party is operating there legally), with at least partly free mass media and, as some experts emphasise, at least a chance of political transformation.

Tajikistan's international co-operation in the military field has to a great extent been monopolised by its close ties with Russia. Dushanbe's cautious approach to developing co-operation with NATO stems from its fear of how Russia (and increasingly China) will react. Nearly a million Tajik immigrants working in Russia, and the presence of the Russian military base in the territory of Tajikistan, are tools that Moscow may use to affect the country's internal situation. Many people note that information about the external world reaches Tajikistan mostly *via* Russian-lan-

guage mass media. Tajik elites, including MFA and MoD officers, do not have even elementary knowledge about NATO, do not understand the difference between particular instruments of co-operation, the potential options of its development, nor of the benefits it gives. Other obstacles to Tajikistan's co-operation with NATO include a lack of foreign-language knowledge among military personnel (this is important for potential interoperability), a Soviet-type mindset, bureaucratised structures which show almost total lack of activity and readiness to co-operate, extremely low financial potential, and a lack of representation at NATO Headquarters. The latter problem is due not to insufficient political will, but to financial shortages; meanwhile, as the Tajik MFA emphasises, its representation is necessary to further develop mutual relations.

Tajikistan welcomes any financial, material and training assistance offered by NATO and its member states, while complaining at the same time that what it receives is still far from sufficient. Nonetheless, it is not interested in implementing the standards applicable in the Alliance (except for some individual areas covering planning, among other things). The opinion that the country has practically received nothing in exchange for its co-operation with NATO in the Afghan operation is becoming increasingly widespread among official structures in Tajikistan. The problem of growing drug smuggling, which poses a threat to the security and stability of the state, is also worth mentioning. The authorities do not fight effectively against the smuggling, and the problem is worsened by the high level of corruption. Many independent experts are anxious that smuggling will intensify once the Tajik side takes over control of the border.

Conclusions

Tajikistan, due to its strong bonds with Russia, is forced to pursue a cautious policy, which currently excludes anything other than a moderate closing of its relations with NATO. The engagement by the Alliance's member states in Tajikistan following the commencement of the operation in Afghanistan has not challenged Russia's dominant position in the security field, although this has enabled Tajikistan to diversify its security policy to a certain degree. It seems that co-

-operation with NATO will develop, albeit very slowly. It is very important to determine precisely the Alliance's priorities and expectations with regard to Tajikistan and the entire region, as will be the success of the operation in Afghanistan. Tajikistan's co-operation with NATO could definitely become more active, if the Alliance engaged in soft security, i.e. border protection and combating drug and people smuggling. This would mean the provision of greater technical, expert and financial assistance. In this area, NATO could use its co-operation with other international organisations, in particular with the OSCE and the EU (e.g. as a part of the EU Border Management Programme for Central Asia). The Alliance should create a training centre for border guards as a facility for the entire region, which would also contribute to building a positive image of NATO. However, this would mean that NATO would have to decide to become engaged in the field of soft security. Development of military co-operation could also be stimulated, if the Alliance and its specific member states presented a set of specific actions covering participation in the modernisation of the Tajik armed forces, and training & courses at military schools in NATO member states. Increasing assistance should definitely be made dependent on the implementation of the commitments Tajikistan has made as a part of the PfP and on advancing the ratification of SOFA. However, the Alliance should be very cautious and careful in taking such steps, so that they are not perceived as an attempt to squeeze Russia out of the region (which is also important because of the potential reaction of China and Iran). NATO should take into account the fact that Tajikistan will remain dependent on external aid (which currently comprises approximately 20% of the country's GDP), and therefore incapable of co-operation that would involve any financial input on its part. The Alliance should put a greater emphasis on the development of its information policy, including covering possible programmes and mechanisms of co-operation with NATO. In particular, the Trust Fund has great and unused development potential in Tajikistan. The creation of an information centre would, at least partly, break the monopoly of Russian-language mass media on information about the Alliance. Increasing NATO's activity in the field of public diplomacy, which can for instance be done by using the NATO

Contact Point Embassy and by co-operating with mass media and non-governmental organisations, is a very important task. The number of programmes and language training workshops addressed to military personnel should be significantly increased. NATO should consider the possibility of granting financial support, through one of its member states, to Tajikistan in opening a representation office for this country at NATO Headquarters (Germany has proposed a similar initiative), which would contribute to improving Tajik officers' and military personnel's knowledge about NATO and its co-operation mechanisms.

Wojciech Konończuk

TURKMENISTAN

Turkmenistan, governed by a totalitarian regime, emphasises its neutrality and is uninterested in developing co-operation with NATO.

Approach to NATO

Relations with NATO are not one of the priorities of Turkmen foreign policy, which is determined by its neutral status and the isolationist nature of the political system. The Alliance is perceived by the country as one of the key structures of the Western world, and it is identified with the United States. Since 1991, Turkmenistan has been striving to lessen its dependence on Russia. Its relations with NATO fit into a broader strategy of diversifying its partners in the international arena. Unlike other countries in the region, Turkmenistan has not been a member of the Collective Security Treaty Organisation or the Shanghai Co-operation Organisation, the creation of which had been initiated by Russia, and its membership in the Commonwealth of Independent States is in fact limited to the role of an observer. Nevertheless, Moscow's reaction is still taken into consideration in deciding about the form of relations with NATO (though to a lesser extent than before), due to the country's heavy economic dependence on Russia. Notwithstanding that, Turkmenistan has repeatedly emphasised that it does not perceive enlargement of the Alliance as a threat to either itself or the region. As a rule, Ashgabat does not get involved in the institutionalised co-operation of Central Asian states either, as it prefers bilateral relations to multi-lateral ones.

Even though Turkmenistan is the least active participant of the PfP and its participation in the programme is merely formal, Ashgabat believes that passive participation is better than being outside the Partnership altogether, especially as Turkmenistan can see the growing significance of the Alliance in the region and its engagement in Afghanistan. For NATO, Turkmenistan is important because of its geographical position (it borders on Iran) and the significance of this country for the stability of the region (the Afghan operation).

Evolution of co-operation

Turkmenistan was a member of the North Atlantic Co-operation Council (NACC) from 1992, and it has been a member of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) since 1997. On 10 May 1994, it was the first Central Asian country to join the PfP. President Saparmurad Niyazov paid a visit to NATO Headquarters as early as 1993 in his search for support in creating national armed forces, as well as technical assistance and aid in personnel training. In the early 1990s, many Turkmen military officers took part in courses and internships at education institutions in NATO member states. When the UN officially granted neutral status to Turkmenistan in December 1995, the country's relations with the Alliance nearly came to a standstill, which was also an effect of the growing isolationist tendencies and the increasingly active raising of issues of human rights violations and the non-democratic system of government by the West and NATO. President Niyazov paid another visit to Brussels in 1998. Low-ranking Turkmen delegations also took part in the NATO summits in Prague and Istanbul, though they acted there more as observers than as active participants.

As the operation in Afghanistan began, the Turkmen side started making declarations of increasing its co-operation with NATO. Still, it soon appeared that no real implementation thereof followed. Turkmenistan has not totally given up its contacts with the Alliance, nor has it taken any steps towards actual development thereof. In March 2004, Turkmenistan presented its Individual Partnership Programme (IPP) for the years 2004–05, yet it shows no interest in developing the Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP) or joining the PfP Planning and Review Process (PARP). It is also unwilling to ratify the PfP Status of Forces Agreement (even though it has embarked upon negotiations in this matter) or to implement the principles of the Partnership Action Plan on Defence Institution Building (PAP-DIB). In its official declarations, Turkmenistan specifies the following priorities of co-operation as a part of PfP: civilian personnel training, strengthening the armed forces, defence budget planning and disaster response. At the same time, Ashgabat's activity in partnership programmes is very low. Since the mid 1990s, Turkmenistan has not taken

part in any exercises or training that provide for military participation; its co-operation is only limited to the civilian area, and the scope of this co-operation is rather small. The only exception that Turkmenistan makes to the rule of non-engagement in initiatives of military character with NATO member states are its quite intense relations with Turkey, as a part of which, *inter alia*, Turkmen military personnel study at Turkish higher education institutions (approximately 200 people annually). In the period 1999–2000, at least ten Turkmen officers were on internship at the US Defence Department as a part of the International Military Education and Training (IMET) programme. The training held by US specialists for Turkmen border guards serving on the maritime border is also worth mentioning.

Because of its tense relations with Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan has purchased great amounts of military equipment in recent years. Still, paradoxically, in spite of the relatively high level of its defence spending (according to some estimates, this is the highest per capita rate among the Central Asian states), the armed forces of Turkmenistan are gradually becoming less professional. This is an effect of a deliberate policy line taken by President Niyazov, who does not want the generals to become politically important, as this could pose a threat to his absolute power.

The actual areas of Turkmenistan's activity as a part of PfP cover participation in civilian training, civil emergency planning and science programmes of the Alliance. In August 2003, it joined the Virtual Silk Highway (VSH) project. The most significant of the few PfP activities hosted by Turkmenistan was the annual training in Civil Emergency Planning (CEP) and in Civil Military Co-operation (CIMIC) held in 2002 in Ashgabat. NATO representatives have on numerous occasions taken part as observers in Turkmen army exercises (including large exercises in August 2004).

Following the beginning of the operation in Afghanistan, the United States and NATO paid more attention to Turkmenistan and its strategic location. It was the first country to consent to use of air and ground corridors in its territory to supply humanitarian aid to Afghanistan. Yet Ashgabat did not agree to the establishment of a transit airbase, which Germany had striven for. On the other hand, it unexpectedly agreed to accept the Alliance's liaison officer.

Problems in co-operation

The key problem in co-operation with NATO is the non-democratic and totalitarian nature of the political regime, which is potentially profoundly unstable. Almost all decisions are taken exclusively by the president; there is practically no public opinion. Ashgabat welcomed the abolishment of the Taliban regime (despite the fact that before 11 September 2001, Turkmenistan had maintained extensive economic and political relations with them), yet it was not a beginning of a new stage in the country's relations with NATO. Turkmenistan can see neither any need for nor any benefit from developing its co-operation with the Alliance, which is also demonstrated by the lack of any mission from the country at NATO Headquarters. One can guess that the Turkmen side lacks knowledge of the existing mechanisms for co-operation with NATO that could be used even in the circumstances of the current internal situation in the country. Unlike other states in the region, Turkmenistan does not show any interest in co-operation in the field of soft security, regardless of the growing problem of drug smuggling from Afghanistan.

As the Alliance's operation extended over the north-western part of Afghanistan, it became necessary to sign an agreement on transit with Turkmenistan that would cover a greater scope than humanitarian aid. NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer raised this issue during his visit to Ashgabat in October 2004, yet the Turkmen side responded with reluctance to his proposals.

In contrast to other countries in the region, the Russian-language mass media have little impact in Turkmenistan, which enables the state propaganda to draw the image of the Alliance as it sees fit, depending on how the situation develops. Even though the Turkmen press depicts the active relations of Uzbekistan or Kyrgyzstan with NATO as negative examples that pose a threat to the stability of the entire region, it would be a gross overstatement to say that a deliberate policy aimed at discrediting NATO exists.

Conclusions

The possibilities for co-operation between NATO and Turkmenistan are still very limited. President

Niyazov's regime is uninterested in activating these relations, and systematically rejects any initiatives of co-operation offered by the Alliance. It seems that only a more active NATO policy in the Central Asian region, with clearly determined goals, could lead to the greater engagement and participation of Ashgabat in PfP programmes. The Alliance should take into consideration the fact that Turkmenistan will remain a totalitarian state in the immediate future, and that its internal instability will continue to worsen. The success of the operation in Afghanistan, especially in view of the fact that it has expanded onto areas bordering Turkmenistan, will be vital for improving NATO's image there.

In its contacts with the Turkmen side, NATO should emphasise the benefits that Turkmenistan may gain as a result of using the partnership programmes. There is great potential for developing co-operation between Turkmenistan and the NATO Maintenance and Supply Agency (NAMSA) as a part of the Trust Fund mechanism. Turkmenistan has to be invited to greater participation in the training, internships and science programmes held by the Alliance, even though it may seem difficult because of the distrust the country manifests. NATO could use Turkey, which has especially close relations with Ashgabat, in its attempts to encourage Turkmenistan to resume co-operation.

Wojciech Konończuk

Part III

NATO policy towards its Eastern partners: Proposals

Marek Menkiszak

Introduction: NATO's character, limitations and capabilities

The North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) is a political and military alliance and an intergovernmental international organisation. As an organisation, therefore, NATO has no interests of its own and does not pursue any independent policy of its own. Its decisions are based on a consensus of member states, and it is the member states who hold all the power in the Alliance. NATO cannot take any action whatsoever if any one of the twenty-six member states objects. This fact naturally imposes certain limitations on the Alliance's activities.

NATO expresses the interests of its member states. All of them have endorsed the provisions of the North Atlantic Treaty, including the commitment to collective defence and the values named in the Treaty's preamble. NATO is therefore not only a functional organisation, but also a structure representing a community founded on democratic values. At the same time, it is the Western world's most important security organisation.

The community for which NATO provides an organisational framework has certain important shared interests. It protects a certain way of life and a certain formula of state organisation, and it is in this community's best interest that this model, usually termed liberal democracy, should spread in its environment, improving stability, and reducing threats to member states.

All NATO member states are formally equal within the organisation, and this equality is safeguarded in the consensus-based decision-making mechanism. However, it is only natural that member states with the largest military and financial potential, as well as those who have special interests, should influence the Alliance's activities to the greatest extent.

Those member states should have clear and coherent visions of the objectives that the Alliance is supposed to implement in its relations with partners, and of the instruments with which such objectives should be accomplished. If such visions exist and their fundamental elements are concordant, then one can reasonably speak of a stra-

tegy of the Alliance's activities, although this strategy does not stand for a detailed plan, but rather a vision, which one should consistently put into practice. Hence, the provisional term "NATO policy", used in the further part of this Report, is subject to the limitations discussed above.

An analysis of the fourteen years of dialogue and co-operation between NATO and its Eastern partners in the NIS area leads to certain conclusions which are briefly presented below.

Major obstacles in NATO's relations with its Eastern partners

The partnership between NATO and countries that once belonged to the hostile Warsaw Pact has, generally speaking, been a success story. It is a record of the victory of a democratic defence organisation's force of attraction, and the aspirations of countries which used to be deprived of the possibility to freely decide their policies and ways of safeguarding security. A large number of countries that formerly belonged to the Warsaw Pact are presently NATO members. The remainder co-operate with the Alliance, participating in various forms of partnership, and some of them have been making serious efforts to join the Alliance in the future.

However, even though the successes are unquestionable, the further development of partnership between NATO and the Eastern partners is stumbling on certain major obstacles, which are found both on the part of individual partners and on the part of the Alliance.

Briefly, these obstacles could be characterised as follows.

a. Obstacles on the part of NATO's partners:

– a lack of understanding of the principles of NATO's operation

Many of the Eastern partners possess very limited knowledge about NATO, its policy and its operation, or understand them incorrectly. In parti-

cular, partners tend to show little understanding for NATO's limited financial and human resources, the consensual decision-making method which affects the speed and quality of decisions, the procedures in force at NATO, the mechanisms of partnership, the significance that NATO attaches to the fulfilment of commitments, the limits of the scope of NATO's activities and the instruments at the Alliance's disposal, especially with regard to "soft" security. In addition, partners sometimes fail to understand the fundamental truth that NATO is a collective defence system rather than a collective security system. This deficit of understanding is found in its severest form in Central Asian partners.

– wrong expectations, or the absence of any clearly defined expectations, regarding the Alliance, and a tendency to use co-operation to the partners' own ends

This problem is closely linked to the preceding one. The failure to understand the way the Alliance operates leads to wrong expectations. Most frequently, partners expect the Alliance to provide substantial financial and technical aid for security and defence purposes, and to materially support their efforts in the sphere of "soft" security (especially with regard to combating drug smuggling, illegal migration and organised crime). Such expectations are most common in Central Asia. In the Southern Caucasus, on the other hand, NATO is usually expected to become involved in the regulation of regional and local conflicts (while no regard is paid to the scepticism of most NATO members in this respect), or to provide training and technical support to help partners develop armed forces that will be able to restore their territorial integrity by force. Partners, including those in Eastern Europe, frequently overestimate the dominant role of the United States in NATO, and the US' ability to influence the Alliance's policy; they overlook the limitations imposed by the consensus principle. Some partners, especially in Central Asia, find it difficult to clearly define their expectations, and adopt passive and receptive attitudes. Even more frequently, certain partners (especially those in Central Asia and the Southern Caucasus) try to use co-operation to their own ends, striving to maximise their measurable benefits while at the same time avoiding making any concrete commit-

ments to NATO. In some cases, the chief reason for starting co-operation with the Alliance is the desire to use NATO to solve certain internal issues or problems in relations with neighbours, while the countries in question do not really intend to subscribe to NATO's standards.

– **the incompatibility of NATO's and the partners' priorities concerning co-operation**

This problem is closely linked to the two discussed above, and is analysed in detail with regard to individual partners in the respective parts of this Report.

– **the deficit of democracy in internal systems (including in the defence sector) or fully developed authoritarian systems**

A common problem among the Eastern partners is that they subscribe insufficiently to NATO's values or do not subscribe to them at all, and fail to abide by the principles and procedures to which NATO member states adhere, in what is called a value gap. A great majority of the Eastern partners are more or less authoritarian states, and some of them could even be termed totalitarian (Turkmenistan). The incompatibility with NATO's standards and the democratic principles of this defence system's operation is a serious obstacle not only to political dialogue, but also to the practical implementation of partnership initiatives. This problem is found in the most acute form in Central Asia, as well as in Azerbaijan and Belarus. In a related problem, most Eastern partners subscribe only superficially to the "Atlantic values", and are unwilling to make any commitments concerning democratic defence reforms.

– **defence reforms which are non-compliant with NATO standards, or the absence of any defence reform**

Nearly all the Eastern partners are implementing defence reforms, or declare that they plan to do so. However, only some of them are using the experience and standards of NATO countries to any significant extent in their reform efforts. This is due to the undemocratic character of their systems, as mentioned before, and/or unsolved regional and local conflicts. Meanwhile, supporting democratic defence reforms in partner countries is one of NATO's fundamental objectives.

– **local conflicts and disputes between partner states**

This is a fundamental problem, which has a highly detrimental effect on NATO's co-operation with some Eastern partners. This issue affects the Southern Caucasus and Moldova most seriously, and to some extent it is also found in Central Asia. The conflicts, which are usually "frozen", not only destabilise the security situation in the respective regions, but also prevent or seriously hamper regional horizontal co-operation between partners and the implementation of democratic defence reforms by individual partner states. Thus the conflicts are a fundamental obstacle to the implementation of the very objectives of NATO's partnership policy.

– **poor organisational culture, inefficiency of state apparatuses, dominance of Soviet mentality and proneness to corruption**

In the early phases of their independence, the Eastern partners inherited ineffective and undemocratic structures and mechanisms of defence institutions, and indeed the entire state apparatus, from the Soviet Union. Very few partners have made serious efforts to alter this condition, and frequently the changes have been only partial. These problems were conserved by the undemocratic political systems discussed above. This led to serious consequences, such as inefficiency of the state bureaucracy, poor organisational culture, and the incompatibility of procedures in many partner states with the standards prevailing in NATO countries. The most serious problem, however, is the residue of the Soviet mindset frequently found among the military and state officials. Such a way of thinking manifests itself in the systemic intransparency of decision-making processes in the security and defence sphere, a high degree of centralisation, coyness and obsession about state secrets, superficial declarations, and problems with implementing decisions. These problems are conserved by the presence of officers trained in the former USSR and Russia, who still predominate in the command structures of nearly all the Eastern partners. Finally, most partner states, especially those experiencing economic difficulties, are seriously affected by corruption and nepotism.

– **financial and human resource shortages**

The Eastern partners commonly suffer from defence funding deficits and shortages of qualified personnel. This significantly limits the ability of some partners to co-operate within the partnership framework, and makes some partners dependent on external support to be provided by the Allies. This problem is coupled with the question of corruption and nepotism referred to above.

It is up to the partners themselves to address the above problems. In order to do this, they will have to show determination and make serious efforts, and the Alliance can and should support them in this endeavour.

b. Obstacles on the part of NATO

There are also some obstacles to the development of partnership on the part of the Alliance and its member states.

Briefly, they can be characterised as follows:

– **lack of consensus, or difficulties reaching consensus, over a series of important issues**

Individual Allies have different approaches to a number of important questions concerning the Alliance's character, transformation, enlargement and relations with other defence organisations. The differences that most greatly affect the partnership relate to questions such as the directions and scale of NATO's external activity (including operations), the permanent representation of the Alliance in partner countries, the scope of the Alliance's commitments (especially with regard to "soft" security), the possibility of NATO co-operating with other structures within the partnership policy framework and the "division of tasks" between NATO and such structures, the evolution of certain partnership mechanisms (including the IPAP and Trust Fund), and NATO's policy towards individual partner states. This affects the speed and quality of decision-making over a number of questions in NATO's partnership policy.

– **NATO's focus on issues other than partnership**

The partnership with the East is presently regarded as one of the pillars of NATO's activities. However, contrary to official declarations, not all

Allies see this partnership as a priority. In the present transformation period, the Alliance faces other highly important tasks, such as reform of its own internal structures and forces, certain important operations, and the development of dialogue and partnership with the European Union. This affects financial decisions related to partnership, leading to mounting problems with the financing of projects (especially within the Trust Fund framework).

– **the need to consolidate the Alliance following the second wave of eastward enlargement, and the reluctance of most Allies to consider further enlargements**

The recent NATO enlargement in March 2004, which involved a decisive majority of the official candidates (seven out of ten states having been admitted), arrested the attention of Allies and gave rise to some concern over the cohesion and effectiveness of NATO and its decision-making mechanisms. The enlargement entailed a substantial change of the geo-strategic situation in Europe. Hence, many Allies are cautious or unwilling to discuss the prospects of further NATO enlargements, especially in an easterly direction. Moreover, many of them are satisfied with the institutional solutions and mechanisms implemented for partners in 1997, 1999, 2002 and 2004. Meanwhile, the prospect of membership plays a very important role in policy towards certain partners.

– **attachment to the idea of "ownership" of partnership**

NATO and a number of its member states are strongly attached to the principles which underlie the existing partnership mechanisms, these being inclusiveness, self-differentiation and ownership. As a result, the more ambitious ends and means of NATO's partnership policy are sometimes curbed, routine steps in, and poor co-operation results are regarded as acceptable. Another related problem is the tendency to maintain an artificial balance between policies towards certain partners (especially within the same region), and to make actions addressing certain partners dependent on the opinions of other partners. Sometimes this approach impedes the development of co-operation with certain partners.

– **limited interest shown by some Allies in developing relations with Eastern partners, and differing views on the geographic priorities of partnership**

Different Allies see different regions and states as priorities of NATO's partnership policy. In part, this is due to objective circumstances such as the geographic location of individual NATO members. Some Allies tend to pay more attention to the Mediterranean region and Greater Middle East than to Eastern partners.

– **fear of Russia's negative reaction to increased NATO activity in the NIS and to closer relations between the NIS and the Alliance**

The position of Russia is a special factor which affects the attitude of some Allies towards co-operation with certain of the Eastern partners. The especially close ties existing between some NATO members and Russia, and the sensitivity of such members to the views of Russia (as the latter is openly critical about certain aspects of NATO's partnership policy), impede the development of NATO's relations with some of the Eastern partners, and make it difficult to reach consensus in some situations.

– **absence of a clear vision of an "eastern policy" in some leading NATO members**

Some member states, especially the United States, exert significant informal influence on the Alliance's policy. However, at times these countries appear to have no clear, coherent vision of NATO's policy strategy towards the Eastern partners, which should be implemented using the instruments available within NATO.

– **the Allies' reluctance to get involved in the resolution of "frozen" conflicts in the NIS area**

Most NATO member states are sceptical or critical of the idea that NATO should become involved in some way in the regulation of regional and local conflicts in the NIS. There are various reasons for adopting this kind of attitude, including the perceived contradiction between such involvement and NATO's role as a collective defence system, concerns about the effectiveness and possible negative consequences of such involvement, reluctance to interfere with what is regarded as the partners' internal problems, fear of a negative reaction from Russia, etc. However, as was noted

above, such conflicts significantly curtail NATO's possibility of developing co-operation with some partners.

– **shortages of human and financial resources**

There are some objective factors such as limited resources in NATO's budget and the financial difficulties experienced by some member states, as well as subjective factors such as the differences between individual Allies' attitudes towards NATO's partnership policy, including the policy towards Eastern partners (as mentioned before), which seriously hamper the development of the partnership. NATO and some member states possess insufficient financial and human resources to fully implement the more ambitious objectives of the partnership policy.

Suggestions concerning the basic objectives and principles of NATO policy towards the Eastern partners

a. Basic objectives

Given the situation in the NIS area, the importance of the Eastern partners to NATO, and the Alliance's character, all discussed above, one can conclude that the fundamental objective of the Allies' policy towards their Eastern partners implemented within the NATO framework should be to actively support transformation and stabilisation in the partner states.

Supporting transformation means a series of actions by NATO and its member states aimed at transformation of the greatest possible number of Eastern partners, and of their defence institutions in particular, through the implementation of modern democratic Euro-Atlantic standards.

Supporting stabilisation means a series of actions aiming to engage as many Eastern partners as possible in close, constructive co-operation with NATO in order to strengthen regional and international security, in keeping with the Atlantic interests and values (especially through the partners' participation in NATO-led peace support

operations or joint operations), and to support resolution of conflicts that destabilise the area.

These two objectives are complementary. Encouraging and supporting the development and reform of democratic defence institutions and wider institutional frameworks in the Eastern partners is a necessary precondition for lasting stabilisation in Eastern Europe, the Southern Caucasus and Central Asia. Without it, it will not be possible to eliminate or reduce the threats to the Allies' security generated in that part of the world. On the other hand, solving the security problems in these regions and minimising threats from outside, especially through closer co-operation with NATO, may provide the necessary shield for democratic reforms.

b. Principles

The implementation of the above-mentioned basic objectives within the framework of partnership institutions and mechanisms must be founded on certain principles. These principles should be:

– Diversification

The Eastern partners do not form a uniform group. On the contrary, they increasingly differ from one another in every respect. The differences are both individual and regional. The Eastern partners may be provisionally divided according to two criteria: their aspirations and their capabilities. As far as aspirations are concerned, there is a group of states that hope to join NATO (Ukraine, Georgia, Azerbaijan), and a group of countries that do not aspire to NATO membership (the remaining Eastern partners). In terms of capabilities, there are countries which are able to co-finance their co-operation with NATO more than others, in spite of the economic difficulties they are experiencing (Russia, Belarus, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan as well as Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan), and those that largely depend on external assistance (Moldova, Georgia, Armenia, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan). It is obvious that when formulating its Eastern policy, NATO should adopt different approaches to the different categories of partners.

It is very important that NATO's Eastern policy take into account regional differences between partners. Eastern Europe differs from the South-

ern Caucasus (because of its potential, Russia forms a separate category of its own), which in turn differs from Central Asia. It is wrong to juxtapose the latter two regions, as the Alliance has done in its policy to date. While Central Asia and the Southern Caucasus are similar in some ways, there are too many political and cultural differences between the two regions. In addition, it appears that these two areas have different political outlooks. The Southern Caucasus has prospects of membership in NATO, even if they are only theoretical at this time, while the Central Asian countries should develop closer co-operation with NATO without such prospects in the foreseeable future.

Thus, the policy of NATO and the Allies towards Eastern partners should be multilevel, and should comprise:

1. general principles applicable to all Eastern partners;
2. regional policies (for Eastern Europe, a provision being made for the specifics of Russia, for the Southern Caucasus and for Central Asia);
3. functional policies (for partners who aspire to NATO membership and for the remainder; for partners with greater capabilities and for those who require more support);
4. separate policies for individual Eastern partner states.

– Ambitious approach

Some of the mechanisms developed over the fourteen years of the NATO partnership policy evolution are founded on very ambitious assumptions. In particular, this refers to the Membership Action Plan (MAP), the NATO-Ukraine Action Plan (NUAP), and the Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP). Indeed, these instruments were conceived in order for the Alliance to support a planned and comprehensive democratic transformation of the defence systems and other institutions of the participating partner states. Using these instruments, NATO and the allied states can obtain insights into the situations of the partner states, as well as the tools to support necessary changes by providing advice and aid. The partner states make voluntary commitments to NATO, and the Alliance evaluates the implementation of such commitments by using various formulae. Thus, the initial assumption of

these instruments is that they should be “intrusive” in the positive sense of the word. The effective use of such instruments by the partners may, but need not necessarily be, the first step towards their future membership in the Alliance. Therefore it is very important that the instruments in question should be used precisely in the manner described above. NATO should not allow any curtailing of ambitions, especially by the partners. Neither should it accept the exclusion of any important spheres or objectives (e.g. democratic defence reform) from the commitments made by partners, nor remain passive if partners fail to fulfil their commitments. Partnership instruments should not become routine, or merely a way to sustain ineffective dialogue with partners. Should this be the case, it would be advisable to scrap such instruments in relations with certain of the partners. Other partnership institutions and mechanisms should also be approached in an ambitious manner.

– **Comprehensiveness**

NATO is first and foremost a defence alliance, and its co-operation with partners naturally focuses on security and defence-related issues. Obviously, however, the Alliance must not fail to see that security and defence have to be regarded in connection with the other spheres of a state’s functioning, including political, legal and economic issues. No democratic defence reform can be implemented in a state that has no intention of changing the undemocratic character of its regime, of respecting human rights and the rule of law, or of adhering to other Atlantic values. Therefore, the tendency to expand the Alliance’s area of interest, as is visible in the development of partnership mechanisms, is the correct one. For obvious reasons, this applies first and foremost to states wishing to become NATO members in the future. However, NATO should also continue trying to encourage comprehensive democratic reforms in those partner states that do not aspire to membership. In addition, the appropriate attitude of individual partners in this respect should become a necessary precondition for closer co-operation with the Alliance.

– **Inclusiveness and “joint ownership”**

NATO partnership is founded on two basic principles (expressly quoted and defined in the Basic Document of the EAPC²²):

- inclusiveness, which means that all partners have equal opportunities to participate in dialogue and co-operation with the Alliance;
 - self-differentiation, which means that individual partners themselves decide on the areas and the level of their relations with the Alliance.
- Properly construed and applied, both these principles appear to be generally sound. However, there is also the concept of “ownership”, a term that is frequently used in discussions about partnership. Ownership means that it is the partners who in fact define the objectives of their partnership with the Alliance. They are the hosts of such a partnership, and they are supposed to initiate actions and define the level of ambition in partnership co-operation.

It appears advisable to revise or even re-define these principles. Inclusiveness and self-differentiation offer the partners a chance to participate in various partnership mechanisms, provided they themselves want to, but these principles cannot guarantee participation to all partners or ensure the same level of co-operation to everyone: these must depend on the partners meeting certain requirements defined by the Alliance. Thus, the idea of the partners owning partnership mechanisms should be replaced by the concept of “joint ownership” by the partners and NATO. Both NATO and the partners are the hosts of the partnership. It is NATO who defines the general objectives of individual partnership mechanisms, and the partners subscribe to them (or not), formulating their own detailed goals, tasks, schedules and implementation methods that suit both sides, in interaction with NATO. While respecting its partners’ sovereign decisions, the Alliance should not refrain from clearly expressing its own interests and objectives concerning co-operation with individual partners, and it should assess the partners’ attitude towards co-operation in this context. Partners who are ready and able to implement more ambitious partnership goals should get an opportunity to do so, participating in more advanced forms of co-operation and benefiting

²² Basic Document of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council, Sintra 30th May 1997.

from more support from the Alliance, than those who adopt a different attitude.

– No artificial linkages

In its co-operation with individual partners, NATO sometimes tends to maintain some artificial balance, or to compensate to some partners for the decisions concerning closer co-operation with other partners. This phenomenon is most apparent in certain specific “triangles”, i.e. in the relations between NATO, Russia and Ukraine; NATO, Azerbaijan and Armenia; and NATO, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. This policy is usually founded on good intentions, as NATO endeavours not to provoke some partners by its co-operation with other partners, not to harm relations between partners involved in ongoing mutual disputes, and endeavours to encourage partners involved in less advanced co-operation to start closer co-operation, and to avoid granting excessive privileges to certain partners. Nevertheless, this kind of approach usually undermines the fundamental objectives of NATO’s partnership policy.

The basic criteria according to which the Alliance evaluates its partners should be their commitment to co-operation with NATO, and to internal transformation in keeping with NATO’s values and standards, as well as the compatibility of NATO interests and the given partner’s interests with respect to security. NATO should acknowledge the positions of individual partners, including their views on the scope of partnership co-operation; but it must not make the development of co-operation with some partners dependent on the opinions of other partners. NATO and individual partners must remain sovereign in their decisions concerning partnership. The Alliance must not artificially restrain co-operation with selected partners; neither should it compensate to some partners for decisions concerning co-operation with other partners, if there is no sufficient justification for such compensation.

– Open door to membership

One of the declared aims of partnership is to prepare selected partners for future membership in the Alliance²³. This poses the question about the limits of NATO enlargement in general, and in

²³ *The Euro-Atlantic Partnership – Refocusing and Renewal*, Brussels, 23rd June 2004.

the easterly direction in particular, the prospect of membership being one of the strongest stimuli encouraging NATO’s partners to implement comprehensive transformation.

NATO should reassert the formula expressed in the Alliance’s Strategic Concept and *communiqués* of the North Atlantic Council in connection with the provision of Article 10 of the North Atlantic Treaty: “No European democratic country whose admission would fulfil the objectives of the Treaty will be excluded from consideration [for an accession invitation by the Allies]²⁴”. However, while existing NATO documents (in particular, the North Atlantic Treaty, the Study on NATO Enlargement and the Membership Action Plan) set forth the conditions for accession in a fairly detailed manner, the term “European country” has not been defined.

It seems that according to the above provisions and declarations, the natural geographic limit of NATO enlargement in the foreseeable future should be the area of “political Europe” including Eastern Europe and the Southern Caucasus. Still, this concept should not predetermine developments in the more distant future. It should merely be conducive to the creation of a system of diversified levels of partners’ integration and co-operation with the Alliance.

NATO should provide all the European partners who, in the Allies’ opinion, are genuinely willing to become members with as much assistance as possible to this end. However, this must not lead to an artificial lowering of the membership criteria or putting certain partners in a privileged position. In order for NATO to keep its cohesion and power, it is absolutely imperative that the candidate countries demonstrate the following:

1. in their internal and external policies, they subscribe to the Atlantic values genuinely and not superficially;
2. they meet the basic standards shared by the Euro-Atlantic states, and are able to ensure effective interoperability with the Allies;
3. their fundamental security interests are compatible with those of NATO members.

– Better co-ordination with other bodies

NATO’s policy towards the Eastern partners does not exist in a vacuum. The New Independent Sta-

²⁴ The Alliance’s Strategic Concept, *op. cit.*, point 39.

tes are partners not only of NATO and its members, but also of other international organisations, in particular the European Union, the OSCE and the Council of Europe. In recent months and years some of these organisations have activated policies towards the Eastern partners, and as a result it has become enormously important for these organisations to exchange information and co-ordinate policies, so that they implement convergent or complementary objectives, do not mutually torpedo their efforts, and do not carry out similar, hence redundant, undertakings. NATO should intensify dialogue with the EU and the OSCE in order to create a platform for regular exchange of information, discussion and, possibly, co-ordination of policies addressing the Eastern partners. Obviously, NATO's priority will remain the broadly understood security and defence-related issues; the Alliance will maintain its autonomy of decision, and will not depend on the intentions of other organisations. However, by formulating its political requirements to partners (especially those aspiring to membership) in co-operation with other European organisations, the Alliance can contribute to the democratic transformation of those partners.

As the scope of NATO's interests gradually expands to include "soft" security issues, including border security in particular, it is essential and timely to co-operate with organisations that possess skills and experience in this respect (such as the UN, EU or OSCE), thus benefiting the Alliance's partnership policy.

Problems affecting the partnership policy's implementation, and suggested solutions

Multiple partnership institutions

Over the last fourteen years of the partnership's evolution, many institutions and mechanisms have been developed which serve similar purposes, or are designed to satisfy the political ambitions of individual partners. Presently, there are seven main formulas/circles of partnership in the eastern direction, including the EAPC, the "regular" PfP, the PfP-PARP, the IPAP, the MAP (potentially), the partnership with Ukraine and the

partnership with Russia. They form a complicated system, and the relations between them are sometimes unclear.

Suggestions:

The Alliance should step up efforts to simplify the main partnership formulas and reduce their number, while at the same time making them more flexible and more individual, and developing "functional partnerships" and regionally-oriented partnerships. The following four general partnership formulas might well be left in place:

1. EAPC/"regular" PfP (combined) – for general political and security dialogue, and for practical co-operation with "inactive partners";
2. IPAP/PfP-PARP – for partners wishing to co-operate more closely with the Alliance, but which do not have membership aspirations;
3. MAP – including Ukraine and, prospectively, also Georgia and Azerbaijan (initially, "MAP-oriented IPAP") – for active partners with membership aspirations;
4. dialogue with Russia.

Functional forms of partnership, such as thematic Action Plans, Trust Fund mechanisms and mentor partnerships, could develop alongside the above formulas.

The problem of priorities and areas of co-operation with partners

Defining interoperability as the chief priority of co-operation with partners does not always produce the desired results. Due to serious financial or institutional difficulties, some partners are unable to reach an adequate level of interoperability with NATO within a satisfactory timeframe. If the Alliance restricts its interest in the transformation of partner states solely to the area of defence, these countries will not become full-fledged partners, and the stabilisation effect will not be achieved. A separate issue relates to the possibility of NATO starting co-operation with partners on "soft" security, including border protection, the fight against weapons and drugs smuggling, human trafficking and organised crime, etc., which is presently the subject of debates among Allies.

Suggestions:

An adequate minimum level of interoperability with NATO, necessary to enable joint action, is

very important for both practical and political reasons. In the case of some partners, more emphasis should be placed on assisting them in developing basic democratic state institutions (in the area of defence as well as in other sectors), laying a foundation for real interoperability. In this context, the assumptions presented in the Report on the Comprehensive Review of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council and Partnership for Peace, *Euro-Atlantic Partnership – Refocusing and Renewal*, and especially the implementation of the Partnership Action Plan on Defence Institution Building (PAP-DIB), should be supported. In terms of “soft” security, while remaining a political and military alliance, NATO could join the co-operation with partners to some extent, acting jointly with organisations such as the United Nations, the European Union or the OSCE, especially in areas in which it possesses certain competencies, such as border service reform.

The problem of flexibility of partner co-operation mechanisms

Although decisions taken within the Alliance are generally addressed in the right direction, the mechanisms for co-operation with partners (which generally deserve good reviews) are still not flexible enough, especially in terms of rapid response to the partners’ needs and evolving security situations.

Suggestions:

It is worth supporting the direction of the partnership’s evolution outlined in the Report on the Comprehensive Review of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council and Partnership for Peace, and the document entitled *The Euro-Atlantic Partnership – Refocusing and Renewal*. In particular, one should consider creating new functional Action Plans in selected important spheres of co-operation. The scope of the Trust Fund mechanism’s application should be expanded to new areas of co-operation, in particular to address the social consequences of defence reforms and border security. One could also back the idea of developing functional mentor partnerships (i.e. mentor partnerships in selected areas of co-operation), based on the formula of a partner coupled with a mentor (a NATO member), and designed to implement specific co-operation projects under NATO’s aegis.

The problem of devaluing some partner co-operation mechanisms

There is a risk that some new important mechanisms for the co-operation with partners, such as the IPAP and the PAP-DIB, might become devalued. According to its initial assumptions, the IPAP was an ambitious instrument through which the Alliance intended to support democratic defence reforms and broader institutional reforms in selected partner countries. At present, however, this mechanism is beginning to change its shape. By encouraging successive partners to join this mechanism, NATO appears to have accepted a lowering of IPAP’s ambitions, and the exclusion of key elements such as democratic defence reforms from the commitments made by some partners. Thus, IPAP may become the standard partnership co-operation instrument available to all partners, which runs counter to its primary assumptions and its initially “exclusive” character. In the case of the PAP-DIB, no separate mechanism has been provided to verify the fulfilment of commitments: it was assumed that such verification could be done through the IPAP, the PARP and the IPP. However, these mechanisms (except for the IPAP, provided it is implemented according to its initial assumptions) do not guarantee the Alliance a sufficient degree of control over the implementation of commitments made by partners. As a result, there is a risk that the PAP-DIB concept may become diluted and less effective, and some partners may adopt a selective or superficial approach to the Plan with NATO’s *de facto* approval. This would run counter to the very objectives of NATO’s partnership policy.

Suggestions:

The Alliance should not allow a devaluation of the IPAP and PAP-DIB. Rather than focusing on the number of partners participating in these mechanisms, NATO should ensure that their use by selected partners is adequate. The Alliance should not accept unambitious commitments by partners, and in particular it should not allow any *de facto* exclusion of important areas from such commitments (such as democratic defence reform and its components). Any IPAP that fails to meet the fundamental objectives defined by the Alliance should not be adopted. NATO should consider developing separate mechanisms for supervising the implementation of PAP-DIB by

individual partners, e.g. through thematic reports submitted by partner states and evaluated by NATO.

The problem of insufficient financing and “virtualisation” of co-operation with partners

The amounts of funds allocated to co-operation with partners are insufficient, and the funds that are available are not always used effectively. Co-operation with partners is sometimes “virtual” (there are no measurable results except for a “good atmosphere”). The existing system of co-operation financing does not encourage increased spending.

Suggestions:

NATO’s present budget reform (according to the objective-based budget principle) should be backed, and co-operation with the partners should be reviewed. The number of undertakings implemented within the partnership framework should be reduced in favour of improving their quality and effectiveness. In particular, those projects that do not yield any specific benefits to NATO or the partners, but serve merely to maintain dialogue or make reports more appealing, should be eliminated. More funding should be earmarked for selected promising co-operation projects with individual partners (according to the benefit criterion). To this end, one could consider establishing separate funds for the most important priority projects. The Trust Fund mechanism should definitely be used more extensively, as it is a most flexible tool that provides fast and effective financing of specific projects in various areas of co-operation. Member states should be encouraged to implement bilateral assistance and finance it from their own resources, in co-ordination with one another and under NATO’s formal auspices. The mentor partnership mechanism could be applied in this context.

The problem of bilateral co-operation between member states and partners

There is a tendency to develop deeper, purely bilateral co-operation between individual Allies and partners, while co-operation under the auspices of NATO lags behind. In addition, member states do not exchange information and co-ordinate their assistance/co-operation with partners to

a sufficient extent. The result in some cases is redundant actions addressing the same issues, interoperability problems, and in extreme situations, the wasting of a portion of assistance. The efforts undertaken within NATO to address this problem have failed to produce fully satisfactory results. Moreover, some member states are using assistance to partners as a way to get rid of obsolete military equipment of doubtful value. Another problem is the growing need (mentioned before) to co-ordinate assistance provided by NATO and other international organisations.

Suggestions:

The Allies should definitely be encouraged to expand their commitments to partners under the auspices of NATO. This is in the best shared interest of the Allies. It is worth backing the suggestions concerning co-ordination that are presented in the Training and Education Enhancement Programme (TEEP) and the Report on the Comprehensive Review of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council and Partnership for Peace. The existing channels for co-ordination and information exchange should also be strengthened, including those within the framework of the International Military Staff, the PfP Co-ordination Cell (PCC), the NATO Training Group (NTG) as well as other structures, agencies and working groups, not to mention the clearing house mechanisms. In addition, we could consider strengthening the verification mechanisms for the implementation of Partnership Action Plans. Ideally, assistance/co-operation should be co-ordinated by the partner state concerned. In practice, however, the internal structures in a number of partner states do not function effectively, and for this reason the burden of such co-ordination has to be divided among NATO, the partners and the Allies. Obviously, overlapping assistance/co-operation projects are not always an evil in themselves. Yet such overlapping should be eliminated in those cases where it leads to wasting of NATO’s joint funds, or creates problems for the partner states. It might be worthwhile to consider implementing some mechanisms for evaluating the quality of the military equipment provided free of charge to partners. The idea of individual Allies specialising in co-operation/assistance, as presented in the Report, should also be considered, and possibly actively supported. The idea of co-

-ordinating assistance to partners provided by NATO and other organisations should also be encouraged. This concept should be put on the agenda of NATO's dialogue with the EU, OSCE and the UN. Finally, the creation of a permanent channel for ongoing assistance co-ordination and information exchange should be considered.

The problem of NATO's institutional presence in partner states

A number of partner states have been making efforts, as yet in vain, to have NATO Information and Documentation Centres or (civilian) NATO Information Offices (and possibly NATO Military Liaison Offices (NMLO)) established in their respective territories. The functioning of NATO Contact Point Embassies is not always effective, and is not of itself sufficient to satisfy the growing co-operation needs. The Istanbul Summit's decision to send NATO liaison officers to the regions of the Southern Caucasus and Central Asia was an appropriate but insufficient move, as it alone cannot provide for effective implementation of the tasks identified in that decision.

Suggestions:

NATO should respond affirmatively to suggestions concerning the creation of NATO Information Offices and NMLOs in the territories of active partners, and NATO Information and Documentation Centres in the less active partners who need an increased supply of reliable information about the Alliance. The conditions for establishment of such offices, as set out in *Euro-Atlantic Partnership – Refocusing and Renewal*, appear to be excessively rigorous, especially those relating to financing. In fact they deprive partner states with limited resources of any possibility to have such offices established in their territory. Given the shortage of financial and human resources within NATO, one could consider some off-budget financing mechanisms for such undertakings, including in particular the mentor partnership mechanism. Another option is to create target funds on terms similar to those of the Trust Fund. It must be ensured that the centres/offices thus established represent the interest of the Alliance as a whole. NATO should treat the Istanbul decisions concerning liaison officers as a first step towards expanding the Alliance's institutional presence in the partner states. In particu-

lar, such officers should be provided with offices, auxiliary personnel and all necessary equipment.

The problem of NATO's informational policy

In most partner states, little or very little is known about NATO, its policies and the principles underlying its activities. This seriously limits opportunities for closer co-operation. As a result of some partners' deliberate state policies, harmful stereotypes and false information about NATO are sometimes spread. The Alliance's activities in the field of informational policy, as implemented chiefly by the NATO Contact Point Embassies, are apparently insufficient.

Suggestions:

NATO should make an active informational policy a priority in its co-operation with Eastern partners. Both NATO and individual Allies should provide more financing for NATO's information efforts in the partner states, including through local and cross-border mass media. The Alliance and its members should organise conferences, seminars, workshops, training and briefings to spread information about NATO among the elite and the wider public. Also, NATO should always react to any false information being spread about it through the media in some partner states. In addition, NATO should firmly support, financially and otherwise, local initiatives aiming to disseminate reliable information about the Alliance (by translating NATO's materials and materials about NATO into local languages, organising libraries, seminars and conferences on subjects related to the Alliance and its policy, internships for activists of local non-governmental organisations dealing with NATO-related issues, etc).

The problem of horizontal regional co-operation

NATO is right to support the development of horizontal regional co-operation, especially in certain regions. However, in some cases the Alliance seems to have insufficiently considered the fundamental obstacles to such co-operation (most apparent in the Southern Caucasus).

Suggestions:

Without addressing fundamental obstacles such as unregulated local conflicts and the lack of con-

fidence between some partners, effective horizontal regional co-operation will not be practicable. Therefore NATO should make its policy on this issue more realistic, and not simply push for co-operation where it is not practicable. On the other hand, the Alliance should support any ideas which are conducive to the expansion of an area of democracy and stability by the use of regional co-operation mechanisms. First and foremost, this refers to co-operation in the Black Sea region under the auspices of NATO. NATO should not legitimise or back regional security structures founded on standards different from NATO principles, or structures pursuing policies that are not fully compliant with the Alliance's values and interests. In the NIS area, this refers in particular to the Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO) and the Shanghai Co-operation Organisation (SCO), the two organisations with which NATO should not establish relations or develop co-operation. The Alliance should back proposals submitted by some partners such as the one to create Regional PfP Training Centres. NATO should consider developing a network of specialised centres of this kind. This is why it is advisable to support the proposals presented in the TEEP programme concerning the creation of such networks, the creation of the Consortium of Defence Academies and Security Studies Institutes and the SIMNET simulation network for PfP training. In this context, it is a good idea to use the positive experiences from the Virtual Silk Road (VSR) project launched within the NATO research co-operation programme.

The problem of NATO's involvement in the resolution of local conflicts in the CIS area

NATO is evading a debate on local conflicts in the NIS and the Alliance's possible role in efforts towards resolving such conflicts. Meanwhile:

1. the conflicts in question threaten to destabilise the region, create security threats in the direct vicinity of the North-Atlantic area or threats to some member states of the Alliance;
2. it will not be possible to carry out effective democratic defence reforms in a number of partner states before these conflicts are resolved;
3. before these conflicts are resolved, closer co-operation between some partners and NATO will not be possible, let alone such partners' mem-

bership in the Alliance (this is clearly stipulated in the Study on NATO Enlargement and the MAP programme²⁵);

4. before these conflicts are resolved, effective horizontal regional co-operation between some partners will not be possible;

5. Russia's de facto monopoly on conflict resolution in the NIS area is politically unacceptable, while a possible NATO commitment in the area could become a testing ground for the new mechanism of co-operation with Russia, namely the NRC peace support operations;

6. some partner states involved in conflicts regard NATO as an effective guarantor of their security.

Suggestions:

NATO should include the question of local conflicts in its dialogue with the partners concerned. It should also back political efforts towards peaceful and permanent resolution of such conflicts, including through activities such as the organisation (e.g. in the EAPC forum) or supporting of conferences, seminars, workshops, expert meetings, etc. It should also consider supporting proposals for ways to resolve the conflicts in question by providing expert assistance, and possibly financial assistance, and it should include the issue of conflict resolution in the agenda of NATO's dialogue with the EU, OSCE and the UN. Finally, it should open a debate on the terms, forms and mechanisms of its possible involvement in conflict regulation once the parties have reached preliminary political agreement, and possibly start operational planning in this field. If there are adequate political conditions for a peace support operation in one of the conflict areas, NATO could theoretically become involved in conflict resolution in one of the following ways:

- NATO providing protection for an OSCE observers' mission, or logistic and/or staff support for a stabilisation mission carried out by European Union forces based on the "Berlin Plus" formula²⁶;

²⁵ Cf. Study on NATO Enlargement, *op. cit.*, Chapter I, point 6; Chapter 5, point 72; Membership Action Plan, *op. cit.*, I/2.

²⁶ EU operation using NATO resources, according to documents from December 2002 and March 2003. See EU–NATO Declaration on ESDP, Brussels, 16 December 2002. The NATO–EU Security of Information Agreement, effective as of 14 March 2003, is unpublished.

- a NATO-led peace support operation involving the partners;
- a NATO–Russia (NRC) peace support operation involving other partners.

An NRC operation would be the most ambitious form of NATO involvement. If such an operation is implemented, some underlying principles should be agreed upon in advance. When formulating such principles, the following considerations should be taken into account:

- special regulations should be agreed concerning Russia's role in operation planning and management, which should not undermine the security principles and the interests of the Allies and other partners;
- the operation should be implemented in compliance with NATO standards and procedures;
- the Alliance should have adequate control over operation planning and implementation;
- selected partners should be allowed to take part in the operation;
- conditions should be created in which the operation will produce a genuine resolution of the conflict, rather than simply conserving the *status quo*;
- conditions should be created in which the operation will not maintain the presence of foreign troops in the countries concerned against the will of such countries;
- conditions should be created in which the operation will not one-sidedly affect the interests of any of the sides in conflict, their neighbours or any other countries concerned.

The problem of human resource management

The skills of state institution personnel (both civilian and military) who have been trained at NATO or member state academies, are not utilised adequately in a number of partner states. Such persons are not promoted adequately and sometimes resign from service. On the other hand, training is at times provided to the wrong persons, who fail to meet the criteria or guarantee benefits to both sides.

Suggestions:

The question of personnel use should be raised regularly in dialogue with partners. NATO should either monitor recruitment to various kinds of

training or be otherwise involved in the process. It should be suggested to partners that they develop institutional solutions such as national monitoring systems for human resource management.

The problem of exercises and training

In some cases, the opportunities to participate in training and exercises offered to partners are insufficiently adjusted to the partner's needs and capabilities. The language barrier remains an important factor, impeding the development of partnership.

Suggestions:

NATO's offer to partners in this respect should be continually reviewed and optimised, based to a large extent on the partners' suggestions, i.e. partners should not be invited to take part in exercises on too large a scale, and many more regular language courses should be organised in the partner states. Special emphasis should be placed on language training on the widest possible scale. The development of a separate Partnership Action Plan on language training should be considered.

The problem of study visits and internships

In the case of some countries, the programmes of study visits to NATO are still too narrow, addressing mostly journalists and NGO personnel. Insufficient use is being made of the internship opportunities at NATO.

Suggestions:

The number of study visits for representatives of the state administration of selected partner states should be increased, and the adequate quality of such visits should be ensured. The proposals presented in the Report on the Comprehensive Review of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council and Partnership for Peace with regard to extending the duration and scope of internships at NATO should also be supported, especially those offered to civilian specialists from partner states. Such internships should be offered mainly to the younger generation.

Conclusion: NATO's new role in the NIS area?

A section of the NIS area belongs to Europe in geographical terms. It is therefore in the best interest of the Euro-Atlantic community to ensure that countries from that area adopt European democratic values, standards and institutions to the widest possible extent, leading to the completion of the natural process of Europe's unification as an area of freedom and prosperity. On the other hand, some of the New Independent States belong to a belt of instability that generates a number of "soft" and conventional security threats to NATO member states, or they directly border areas creating such threats. Instability in the NIS area is exacerbated by the democracy deficit in countries belonging to this area.

For these reasons, the democratic transformation and stabilisation of the NIS constitute an important task and an important challenge to the Western world, and promoting such transformation and stabilisation is in the Western community's best interest. As a powerful political and military alliance defending the interests and values of the democratic world, NATO has a potentially very important role to play in this respect. The Alliance and its member states can help democratic transformation and stabilisation of the NIS by promoting their standards, especially in the fields of security and defence, and by providing practical assistance to strengthen the partner states' ability to counter common security threats affecting both the partner states and the Allies (including through joint participation in peacekeeping and stabilisation missions).

Over the fourteen years of its partnership policy development, NATO has created instruments that can significantly influence the security situation in the NIS area, provided they are used appropriately and consistently. NATO could play a new, important role, promoting democratic change and stability. The most important means in this context are "intrusive" (in the positive sense of the word) instruments such as the Membership Action Plan (MAP), the NATO-Ukraine Action Plan (NUAP) and the Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP). With those instruments,

NATO can monitor and support the planned process of democratic transformation in willing partner states, in the defence sphere in particular, but also in other fields. For some of the partner states, this can be the first step towards their future membership in NATO. Other partnership instruments can also influence partners in keeping with the Allies' interests, although to a lesser extent.

The lack of political will on the part of some partner states is a serious obstacle which impedes the implementation of those objectives. In particular, this refers to the partners' reluctance to join those spheres and forms of co-operation with the Alliance which are designed to lead to democratic reforms in the defence sector in the broad meaning of this term. The main reason for this is the undemocratic character of the political regimes in a great majority of the Eastern partners. Consequently, a comprehensive approach is needed towards transformation tasks on the part of NATO and the Allies, as well as an expansion of the scope of NATO's interest and commitment to spheres that are not related to defence exclusively. It is increasingly urgent that the Alliance co-operate with other democratic organisations, the European Union and the OSCE in particular, in their efforts addressing the NIS. Only co-ordinated action aimed at the same or complementary ends can be truly effective.

Any full realisation of NATO's potential with respect to democratic transformation and stabilisation in the NIS stumbles on the Alliance's internal problems. The Allies do not have a coherent common vision of NATO policy towards the area, and sometimes fail to reach consensus on some forms of the partnership policy and the question of developing relations with individual partner states.

If the Allies fail to reach such a consensus based on their shared fundamental interests, NATO will be unable to play its new important role in the NIS. We believe that there exists a natural community of interests of the Allies with respect to NATO policy towards the NIS, even if it is not always realised. Reaching such a consensus will not be possible without a serious debate among the Allies, to which the present Report may be a modest contribution.

In this connection, it should be emphasised that:

1. A strategic, long-term and comprehensive approach is necessary in the policy of the Alliance and its members towards the Eastern partners.
2. Co-operation with different Eastern partners poses different demands, and each partner country should be treated individually. However, some issues, problems and tasks of partnership are common for different Eastern partners, which justifies thinking about some general assumptions of NATO policy in this respect.
3. The Alliance needs to adopt a philosophy of more active involvement in the transformation processes taking place in the Eastern partner states, in order to safeguard the security of the Allies and the entire international community, and it has to make this task its genuine priority.

Marek Menkiszak

Part IV

Poland and NATO's policy towards their Eastern partners

Marta Jaroszewicz

The peculiar character of the NIS area

Poland's geopolitical location, economic situation and historical background make its relations with Eastern neighbours one of its foreign policy priorities, and any destabilisation in that area may constitute a threat to the Republic of Poland's vital interests. Although the outbreak of a large-scale armed conflict in the NIS area is not very probable, the current situation in that area implies a number of challenges and threats to the security of both Poland and Europe as a whole. In this context, such threats are related to the possible outbreak of local armed conflicts, weapons and drugs smuggling, the development of organised crime and informal paramilitary groups. Numerous unresolved ethnic and territorial conflicts, serious political and social problems and the lack of efficient mechanisms for handling regional conflicts can lead the situation in the NIS area to develop in a highly unpredictable way. Conflicts, followed by rapid destabilisation in the region and the surrounding area, should not be excluded. Furthermore, tensions are rising as a result of the paternalistic tendencies in Russia's policy towards the region. Other worrying situations arising in this region include the development of authoritarian tendencies, the use of military forces for political purposes, the increase in the level of military expenditure and the lack of efficient control over the export of weapons from the NIS area. It is in Poland's strategic interest that the NIS achieves greater stability, and that the threats mentioned above are minimised or averted from Poland's borders to as great an extent as possible.

Poland's security is principally influenced by the political and military situation in three of its neighbouring countries, the former Soviet republics of Russia, Belarus and Ukraine. The keys to strengthening this security are as follows: maintaining positive relations with Russia; supporting the development of a civil society with a parallel maintenance of contacts with lower-level authorities in Belarus; helping Ukraine integrate with Euro-Atlantic structures; and finally, offering able support for the transformation processes in the entire NIS area. From the point of view of Poland's *raison d'état*, the most favourable evolution of

the Euro-Atlantic Partnership would be one which simultaneously allowed the development of friendly relations with Russia and the integration of interested partners from the NIS area (in particular Ukraine) with the Alliance. However, such a process of evolution should not allow the Alliance's defence functions to be weakened.

Polish strategy assumptions

Since it joined the Alliance, Poland has frequently emphasised the need to energise its co-operation with its Eastern partners, and considers it a key element of its policy within the Alliance. This assumption is an element of a wider strategy of Polish foreign and security policy which prioritises the development of relations with its Eastern neighbours in both bilateral and international (EU and NATO) contexts. Poland strives to extend the zone of stability and security to the discussed area by (*inter alia*) creating new, more efficient regional co-operation mechanisms, counteracting stereotypes according to which the NIS area is seen as a homogenous zone of exclusively Russian influences, differentiating EU and NATO policy towards the countries of that region, and refocusing Western policy towards the Eastern partners. Furthermore, Poland supports the idea that the EU and NATO should leave an "open door" for those NIS-area countries which have expressed their willingness to join the two structures and have fulfilled membership conditions. Additionally, active participation in the "Eastern dimension" of NATO's policy is a means of familiarising Western countries with problems occurring in the NIS area, and will also strengthen Poland's image as a country which is well acquainted with the situation in that region. Combating the false image of Poland as a Russophobe country – an image still popular among some Western elites – would appear to be another objective of this line of Polish foreign policy.

Bearing in mind Russia's location as a neighbouring country, its international importance and the volume of its military potential, Poland is trying to expand the scope of its co-operation with Russia by (*inter alia*) taking active part in the NATO–Russia Council (NRC). Poland sees Ukraine's deeper integration with NATO as a particularly important objective of its policy within the

Alliance. Due to fundamental political obstacles related to the nature of the current government in Belarus, the co-operation with this country carried out within PFP is rather limited, a position which is inconsistent with Poland's *raison d'état*. It is in Poland's interest that Belarus does not become completely isolated from international influences. Warsaw has offered political support to Moldova in its efforts to withdraw Russian troops from Transnistria. Poland's relations with the countries of Southern Caucasus and Central Asia, aimed at supporting the transformation and stabilisation processes, have so far been rather limited; however, they currently are gaining momentum due to the international community's intensified interest in that region.

Poland's potential and limitations

Poland's economic and military potential does not predestine it to play the role of an independent architect which could shape the "Eastern dimension" of NATO's policy. Nonetheless, Poland's security interests and historical and political ties do not allow it to withdraw from involvement in that respect. Setting priorities and introducing a hierarchy of priorities to its policy could be one possible solution that Poland may implement to minimise any such divergence. It should be stressed that even the most active attitude reflected in declarations and documents is hardly effective if not supported by even the slightest financial involvement. By offering its material and financial participation in the operation in Iraq, Poland has demonstrated its intention to be an active "exporter" of security on a global scale. Carrying out efficient actions at a regional level also requires considerable financial involvement.

Poland has emphasised its role as a promoter of Ukraine's Euro-Atlantic aspirations and as a country which tries to counteract the total isolation of Belarus. However, a large proportion of common Polish-Ukrainian initiatives is effected outside of the NATO channel, and the Trust Fund project recently started in Belarus has so far been implemented without any financial involvement on Poland's part. This should be changed; that is, Poland should become involved in these projects.

What is important in this context is Poland's credibility as a country which promotes the idea of further development of the "Eastern dimension" of the Alliance's policy.

As a medium-sized country, Poland is obliged to search for partners willing to support its concept of the "Eastern dimension" of NATO policy. In this sense, the key partners certainly include the USA, Turkey and the Baltic states. It should be noted here that while pursuing its policy within the Alliance, Poland must consider the differences in NATO's development concepts which are being promoted by different members of the Alliance. In the current situation, Warsaw's interests and aspirations may be achieved only by way of careful consideration and diplomatic strategy.

Equally important is the fact that Poland should co-ordinate its actions towards Ukraine and other NIS states, carried out within NATO and EU, and win support for its initiatives from other Alliance members such as Germany.

At the same time, it should be remembered that Poland – driven by its *raison d'état* – must take the Russian factor into consideration in its actions realised within NATO. The stereotype of Poland as a country characterised by anti-Russian attitudes, which is still popular among most of the elites in the NATO allies, is a false image of Poland's real interests, an image which hampers the process of Poland's achieving its goals. In order to change this image, which is highly unfavourable to Warsaw, Poland should continue its participation in the NATO–Russia Council in spite of the fact that Polish initiatives have so far been often disregarded by the Russian partners. In doing so, Poland should take into consideration some of the Alliance members' unwillingness to develop relations with the NIS states in a way inconsistent with Russia's concepts.

The basic potential which Poland has contributed to the "Eastern dimension" of NATO's policy is its knowledge of the NIS area and its experience related to its successful defence reform. Poland should continue to shape its image as a source of valuable opinions and analyses of the problems of Eastern countries; it should use its historical ties and familiarity with the Eastern culture of administration to propagate democracy and freedom in that area; and – when necessary – it should offer its good offices in negotiations. How-

ever, it should be remembered that due to certain still unresolved historical problems, the actions Poland carries out in the NIS area must be cautious and tactful.

On the other hand, Poland's experience in conducting defence reform can be important for the NIS states, as it was thus transformed from a country with a military system compliant with Soviet standards into an EU and NATO member state. Poland's experience may be particularly valuable in the context of ensuring civilian control of the armed forces, conducting a defence review, building a system of standards for arms, etc. From Poland's perspective, a transformation of the Partnership into a mechanism which actively supports reforms of the security sector (*inter alia*, through the implementation of the Individual Partnership Action Plan) could be highly beneficial. Such a transformation would promote a democratic transformation in its broad meaning, and offer solutions for real security problems in the NIS area. Poland's valuable experience resulting from its defence reform might contribute to a further strengthening of Poland's position within the Partnership, if Warsaw could offer appropriate financial means to achieve this goal.

Poland's priorities and activity areas

Since it joined NATO, Poland has striven to become an active participant in the dialogue and co-operation with its Eastern partners, both within the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council and in the course of practical co-operation within the PfP. Furthermore, Poland has played a significant role in the second wave of NATO's enlargement, and has been an active advocate of Ukraine's Euro-Atlantic aspirations. Polish diplomatic posts in Kyiv and Minsk served as NATO contact point embassies for a considerable period of time. Ukraine is Poland's closest non-NATO military partner. Polish-Ukrainian co-operation in the security field (both within the PFP and bilaterally) is flourishing. Regular higher-level visits are organised, permanent expert consultation channels are active and common peacekeeping troops are being formed. The co-operation plan for 2004 included nearly 80 events, focused on joint participation in peacekeeping missions and on sup-

porting Ukraine in its co-operation with the Alliance and achieving the goals set in the NATO–Ukraine Action Plan. Co-operation in operations in Iraq and co-ordination of activities carried out by the common peacekeeping battalion POLUKR-BAT are considerable parts of that collaboration. Moreover, Poland is an active member of the Joint Working Group on Defence Reform, existing within the PfP, where it has been supporting Ukraine in strengthening civilian control of the armed forces, conducting a defence review, performing duties resulting from Host Nation Support, setting standards for military equipment and arms, etc. The lack of projects focusing on co-operation between the defence industries is probably the weakest element of the military co-operation between Poland and Ukraine.

So far, one of the greatest obstacles preventing the further development of relations between Ukraine and NATO has been related to the fact that the former authorities in Kyiv exploited those relations for their own ends, as well as the deficiency of democratic standards in Ukraine. A successful outcome of the Ukrainian political crisis which resulted from forged presidential elections, and Poland's role in these events, have now however given new impetus for the development of co-operation. Poland plans to present and discuss new initiatives focused on Ukraine within the forum of EU and NATO.

Proportionally to its political and financial capacities, Poland is an active member of the NATO–Russia Council. Furthermore, it seeks an enhancement of bilateral co-operation with Russia; sadly, Polish initiatives are usually ignored by the Russian side. In the context of co-operation within the NRC, Poland is particularly interested in those areas which may prove useful in boosting mutual confidence in relations with Russia, and increasing the level of complementarity between the defence systems of Russia and the NATO states. These areas include non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, defence reform, the Co-operative Airspace Initiative (CAI), the Theatre Missile Defence (TMD) and Civil Emergency Planning (CEP). In 2003, within the NRC's framework, Poland organised a series of workshops on the consequences of using weapons of mass destruction. In September 2004 a meeting took place in Warsaw which focused on the issue of restructuring the Ministry of Defence. Poland has gran-

ted financial support to the project, which is aimed at unifying the principles of airspace control between Russia and the NATO states, the Co-operative Airspace Initiative (CAI), and at NRC activities focused on elaborating the assumptions of co-operation in the area of theatre missile defence (TMD). Furthermore, Poland was a co-organiser of the Kaliningrad 2004 civil emergency exercise. The problem of determining the status of licences and property rights with respect to arms manufactured in the USSR remains unresolved, and continues to cast a shadow over military co-operation between Poland and Russia. Russia demands that its military intellectual property rights relating to arms produced in the Soviet era, which are still used by the Polish army, are acknowledged.

The serious electoral manipulations which took place during the referendum in Belarus in October 2004, combined with the policy of persecution and arrest pursued towards the political opposition by Belarus' president Alyaksandr Lukashenko's regime, has obliged Poland to limit its co-operation with Belarus. The bilateral defence co-operation is focused *inter alia* on border issues, weapons smuggling and trafficking, confidence & security building measures, and civil emergency activities. In contrast, Poland's relations with the states of the Southern Caucasus have been intensified. Poland has donated military equipment and arms to Georgia, and in 2002 it expressed its willingness to take part in the Train and Equip (GTEP) program. Georgia, on the other hand, has asked Poland whether the latter would be interested in supporting Georgia in setting up and implementing military standards.

In the context of the still-unresolved Karabakh conflict, the scope of Poland's co-operation with Armenia and Azerbaijan is limited. Nonetheless, an agreement between Poland and Armenia on defence co-operation was signed in Warsaw in September 2004. It is hoped that a similar document will be signed with Azerbaijan in the immediate future. In Iraq a 46-strong Armenian contingent has recently been included in the multinational division under Polish command.

Furthermore, as part of its co-operation with the states of the Southern Caucasus and Central Asia, Poland offers training programs for officers organised by the National Defence Academy and the Training Centre for Peacekeeping Troops. As re-

gards the Central Asian states, Poland's co-operation with Uzbekistan is developing rapidly, and practical co-operation with Kazakhstan is being continued. In Kazakhstan a 27-strong Kazakh contingent has been included in the multinational division Centre-South under the Polish command.

Conclusions

Poland's co-operation with its Eastern neighbours, although readily apparent and sometimes exceptionally successful (as in the case of the recent events in Ukraine), still seems to be insufficiently backed by strategic vision and a definite plan of action. The significance of the NIS area for Poland's security requires **carefully designed and far-reaching activities aimed at promoting Euro-Atlantic values and stabilisation in the region**. It is in Poland's interest that these goals are efficiently pursued within the strong Euro-Atlantic partnership. From this perspective, it seems that the policies most worthy of recommendation are to strengthen this mechanism and carry out the largest possible proportion of bilateral co-operation between Poland and the Eastern partners **within NATO**. For instance, Poland could develop practical co-operation with Ukraine within ISAF forces in Afghanistan.

As a NATO state with a 5-year membership history, and as part of its strategy focused on the "Eastern dimension" of NATO's policy, Poland should shift the emphasis **from the sphere of declarations to the sphere of practical actions**, backed by appropriate **financial involvement**. Poland should seriously consider the option of establishing a permanent item in the budgets of the MoD and the MFA, to be used for implementing activities which result from the PFP and for increasing the flexibility of financing bilateral initiatives and actions carried out within NATO. Poland's activities as part of the "Eastern dimension" of NATO's policy should be made attractive to other allied states, in particular **Western European** countries. In its strategy within NATO, Poland should take **Russia's international importance** into consideration, but at the same time it must not abandon its own security interests. Poland should promote the idea of establishing a **group of countries** within NATO which would be particularly interested in eastern issues and

serve as a catalyst for the Alliance's activity in the NIS area. Bilateral relations between Poland and former USSR countries should not be focused solely on making and maintaining contacts and improving statistics, but also on the **development of effective co-operation** adjusted to the activities carried out within the PFP.

Above all, Poland should focus on maintaining **eastern issues within the Alliance's area of interest**. From the perspective of Poland's *raison d'état*, particular emphasis should be placed on **including Ukraine into NATO** and promoting Euro-Atlantic values among other states of the NIS area, so that Poland is not obliged to play the role of a "bulwark" or "bridge" between Western and Eastern Europe. Poland's geographical location predestines it to strive for the widening of co-operation in the field of "**soft**" security. Poland's most valuable contribution to the "Eastern dimension" of NATO's policy is its **knowledge of the East** combined with its **experience in conducting defence reform**. It is important to make sure that this potential is used wisely.

All the tasks discussed above are exceptionally difficult and require significant amounts of time. However, a successful completion thereof will be a *sine qua non* condition of guaranteeing a permanent strengthening of Poland's security.

Marta Jaroszewicz