

# Foreign Military Bases in Eurasia

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# Contents

<i>Preface</i>	<i>iv</i>
<i>Abbreviations and acronyms</i>	<i>v</i>
<i>Map of British, French, Soviet and US troops based abroad in Eurasia, 1990</i>	<i>vi</i>
<i>Map of Russian, US and other troops based abroad in Eurasia, 2006–2007</i>	<i>vii</i>
<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
A historical overview	2
<b>2. Reconfiguring US foreign bases</b>	<b>5</b>
Background	5
The changing policy of US foreign base alignment	6
The new US global posture	12
US domestic criticism	16
Table 2.1. Major NATO and US military bases in Eurasia	8
<b>3. Repositioning NATO and US bases in Europe</b>	<b>20</b>
Germany	23
South-Eastern Europe: the Black Sea bases	24
Central Europe	27
The Eastern Mediterranean region	29
<b>4. South-West and North-East Asia</b>	<b>31</b>
South-West Asia	31
East Asia and the Indian Ocean region	36
<b>5. Russia and the near abroad: from retreat to recapture</b>	<b>43</b>
Central Asia: replaying the ‘Great Game’?	46
Russia’s southern perimeter	56
Belarus: facing NATO’s advance	62
Table 5.1. Major Russian foreign military bases and installations in Eurasia	46
<b>6. Conclusions</b>	<b>63</b>
<b>About the author</b>	<b>69</b>

## Preface

The basing of military forces on foreign territory, at locations leased from or co-occupied with the local authorities (or, rarely, held extraterritorially), is a practice almost as old as warfare itself. Bases can have an economic, political or demonstrative rationale but in all periods their pattern has been linked with the strategic dictates and relationships of the time. Observing changes in the way they are placed, owned and used can provide many clues to the most significant trends of security evolution. This paper examines what has been happening in basing practices in Eurasia since the end of the cold war.

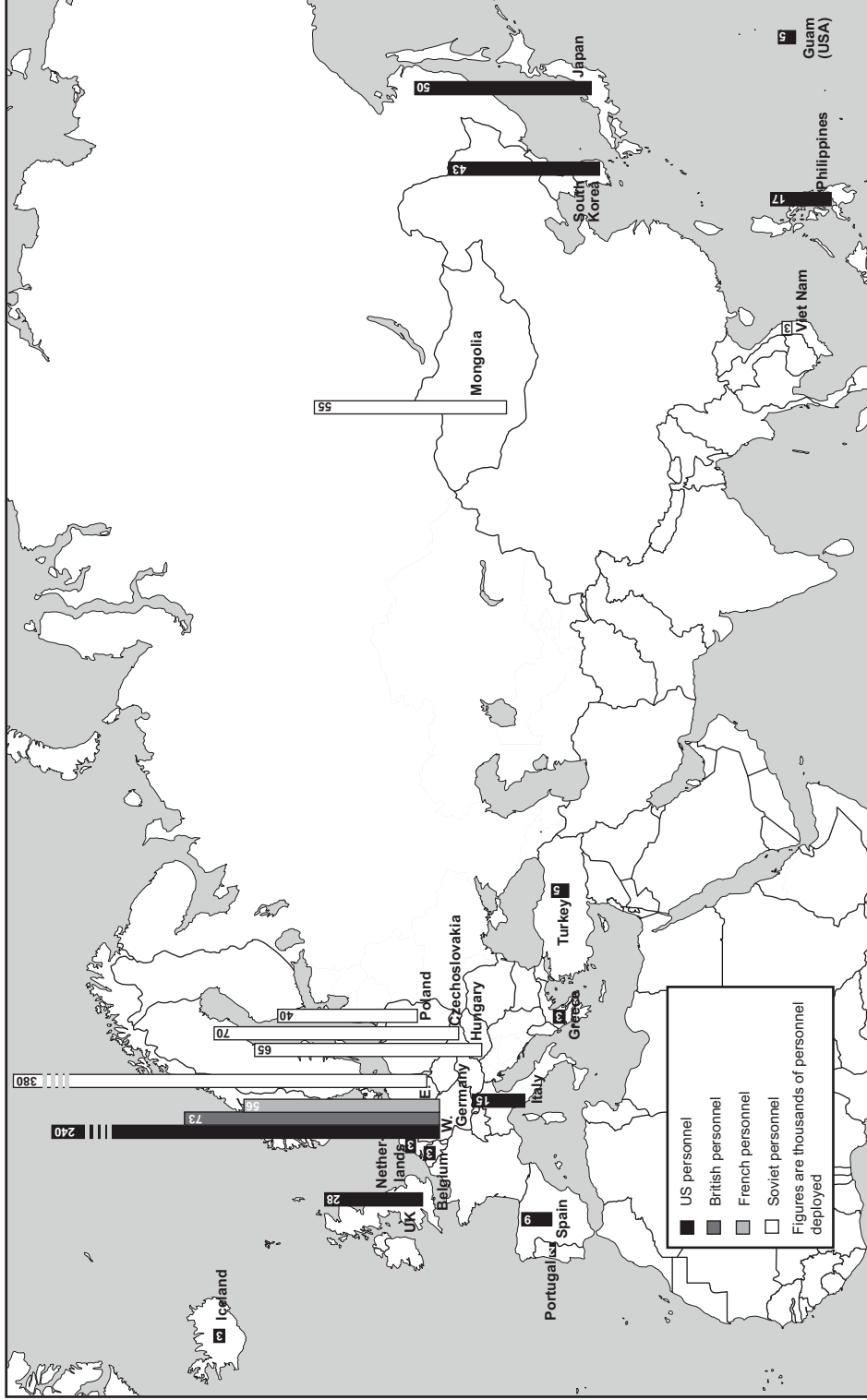
Up to 1989–90, bases were used by the Soviet Union, the United States and their military alliances in an essentially symmetrical way. Each side clustered its forward bases in the heart of Europe to block and deter the other, while the larger powers competed for extra-European bases that could serve their global mobility or give an edge in regional conflicts. That pattern has been replaced by a less symmetric and possibly transitional situation. In places such as Central Asia, the South Caucasus and the eastern edge of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), Russia and the USA are still engaged in a mutual balancing game. More broadly, however, US basing policy has been transformed by the demands of the global campaign against new (including non-state) threats and of operations in Afghanistan and Iraq; while Russia's overall basing pattern has drawn inwards to provide a defensive cordon around its territory and to pin down its remaining allies. Neither great power has found the process simple, and the USA in particular has run into sensitive disputes with friendly host countries as well as suspicions and protests from Russia. US basing has also become a more nationally driven policy, with new examples of NATO's collective use of facilities limited to the new theatres of conflict outside Europe. Emerging powers like China and India are barely starting to join in the basing game but seem likely to have such ambitions in future.

Zdzislaw Lachowski tells the story of Euro-Asian basing changes in meticulous detail in this paper, bringing together a collection of facts and lessons that has not been easily accessible in one place before. His conclusions raise interesting questions about the rationality and viability of current basing strategies, hinting that further changes might be in store as a result of global policy reassessment by future US administrations and further shifts in political relationships and the nature of regimes in the post-Soviet sphere. This analysis should be of equal value to military and political observers and to those interested in tracking the strategies of the major powers. I am grateful to Zdzislaw Lachowski for his original and thorough research, to Jetta Gilligan Borg and Caspar Trimmer for the editing, and to David Cruickshank for the maps.

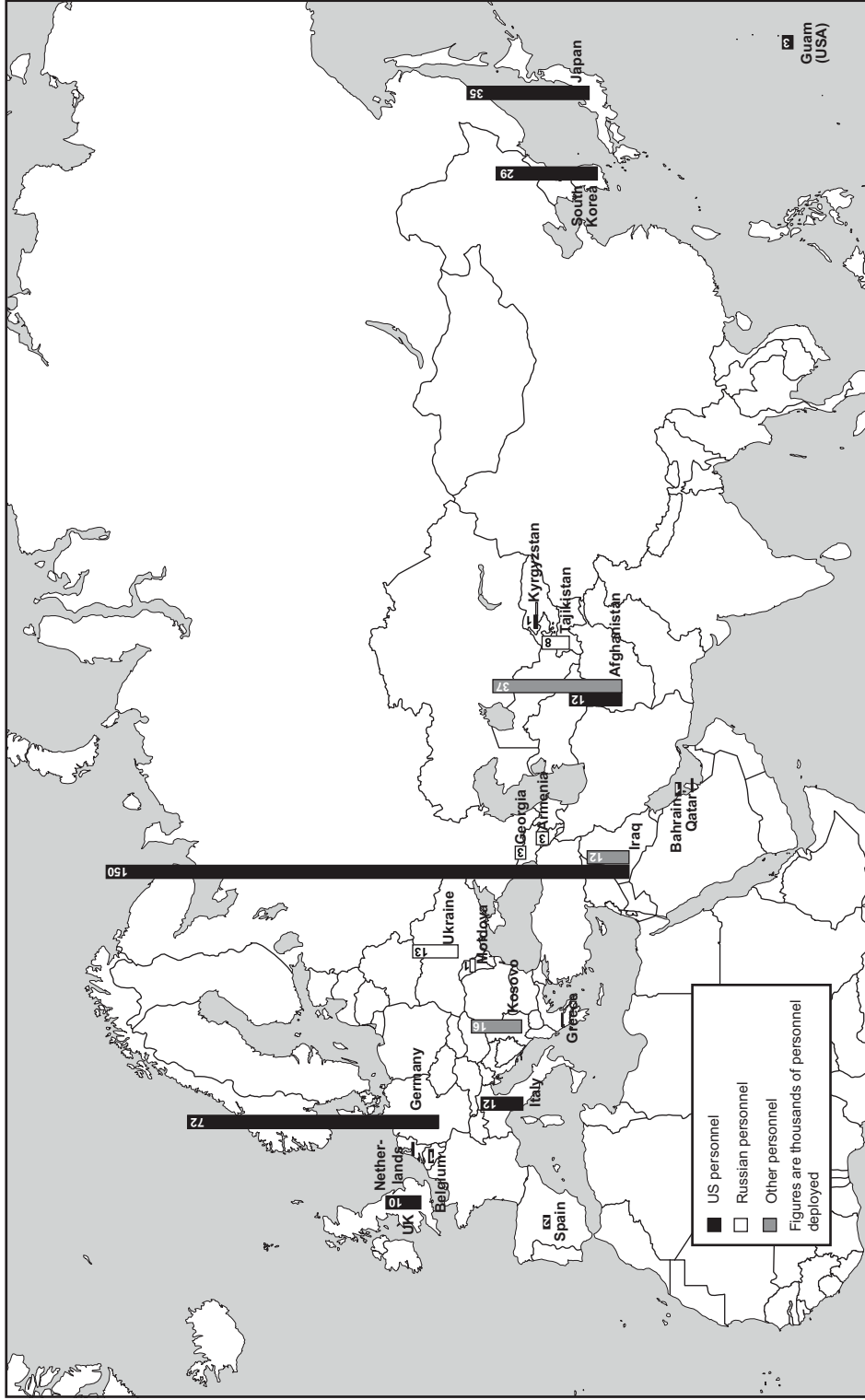
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June 2007

## Abbreviations and acronyms

AWACS	Airborne warning and control system
BRAC	Base Realignment and Closure
CBO	Congressional Budget Office
CFE	Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (Treaty)
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
CRS	Congressional Research Service
CSL	Cooperative security location
CSTO	Collective Security Treaty Organization
DOD	Department of Defense
EETF	Eastern European Task Force
EFI	Efficient Facilities Initiative
ERI	En route infrastructure (base)
EU	European Union
EUFOR	European Union Forces in Bosnia and Herzegovina
FOB	Forward operating base
FOS	Forward operating site
GUAM	Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan and Moldova
IGPBS	Integrated Global Presence and Basing Strategy
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
K-2	Karshi–Khanabad (base)
km	kilometre
KFOR	Kosovo Force
MOB	Main operating base
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
OBC	Overseas Basing Commission
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
PAC	Patriot Advanced Capability (missile)
QDR	Quadrennial Defense Review
SACEUR	Supreme Allied Commander Europe
SFOR	Stabilization Force in Bosnia and Herzegovina
SCO	Shanghai Cooperation Organization
UN	United Nations
WTO	Warsaw Treaty Organization



*British, French, Soviet and US troops based abroad in Eurasia, 1990*



*Russian, US and other troops based abroad in Eurasia, 2006-2007*





# 1. Introduction

On 16 August 2004 the President of the United States, George W. Bush, announced that some 60 000–70 000 US troops stationed in Asia and Europe would be returned to the USA over the coming decade. This realignment of forces signals a major change in US global and regional policies that will affect the structure of US and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) base deployment (referred to as ‘basing’ or ‘forward basing’ by the military) throughout the world.<sup>1</sup> In the 1990s Russia had begun pulling out of its cold war spheres of influence, but it either halted or began to reverse its base withdrawal process at almost the same time as Bush’s plan was made known.

Large numbers of foreign military bases are located in Eurasia.<sup>2</sup> Most of them are the legacy of the cold war and are situated at places that were possible points of engagement between NATO and the Warsaw Treaty Organization (WTO). When the cold war ended, the rationale for this pattern of military basing ceased to be valid. However, concepts change more rapidly than practices, and the USA took almost 15 years to develop a new policy for alignment of forces that could respond rapidly and flexibly to the changed situation. Base realignment is the central element of a larger transformation of the US global defence posture by updating the type, location, number and capability of the US military forces, and the nature of US alliances.

The major stimulus for this realignment was the launch of the so-called ‘global war on terrorism’ following the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks on the USA. The key threats to the USA were redefined as growing religious extremism and other asymmetric threats (e.g. unconventional warfare, crime, and the threat of the proliferation of weapons and technologies of mass destruction). The US ‘global war on terrorism’ focuses on sources of instability in the crisis-prone regions of Asia and the greater Middle East<sup>3</sup> and the problem of access to energy resources.

<sup>1</sup> In this paper the term ‘base’ is used for a location from which operations are launched or supported, or an area or location containing installations or facilities that provide logistical or other support. See e.g. US Department of Defense, *DOD Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms*, URL <<http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/jel/doddict/>>. Historically, the term base implies unrestricted access and freedom of operation for the user state both at the base and from it. Nowadays, a foreign base is defined as a facility where the user state’s access is restricted (e.g. through status of forces agreements). Robert H. Harkavy has proposed using ‘foreign military presence’ for both bases and facilities. See Harkavy, R. H., SIPRI, *Bases Abroad: The Global Foreign Military Presence* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1989), pp. 7–8. Forward basing pre-positions military personnel or equipment at strategic foreign locations so that they can be used in time of crisis or combat with minimum delay.

<sup>2</sup> Eurasia is defined here as the landmass of Europe and Asia, except the Middle East.

<sup>3</sup> This paper uses Rosemary Hollis’s definition of the greater Middle East: ‘bounded by Turkey in the north and the Arabian Peninsula state of Yemen to the south, and stretching from Egypt, Israel and Lebanon in the west to Afghanistan in the east’. Hollis, R., ‘The greater Middle East’, *SIPRI Yearbook 2005: Armaments, Disarmament and International Security* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2005), p. 223. The Middle East is defined as the geographical area comprising the Arab states (from Egypt in the west to Iraq and Oman in the east) and Israel.

## 2 FOREIGN MILITARY BASES IN EURASIA

The new US security policies and the consequent transformation of the US armed forces have necessitated a comprehensive review of the missions and tasks of the US military, particularly in the light of the threats associated with failed states, under-governed areas within states and regional conflicts. The financial burden of maintaining a sizeable foreign military force and the need to justify the level of military spending have also been important US considerations. If the process of base realignment is to solidify relations with the allies and partners of the USA, rather than damage them, then the political elite and the people of the countries that host US bases also have to be convinced of the need for change. The wars in Afghanistan and Iraq continue to cost large amounts of money and complicate the US basing process.

Unlike the US plan, little is known about Russia's foreign basing policy. In the first decade or so after the end of the cold war Russia began to reduce the number of its troops or to withdraw them from installations that it could no longer afford to maintain, both inside and outside the former sphere of influence of the Soviet Union. In an attempt to retain its influence on its perimeter, Russia maintained some bases, although their number dwindled: sustaining those bases was costly because of worsening domestic economic conditions. Recently, Russia has taken steps to reassert its influence in the regions adjacent to its territory in order to meet the threats it perceives from NATO and the USA and, in future, from some Asian powers—particularly China.

### **A historical overview**

Foreign basing is an established instrument of power projection that addresses a wide spectrum of the political, military, economic and other interests of states. The history of foreign military presence goes back to antiquity (vide the Greek city states' expansion and wars in the fourth century BC). In modern times, expansionist powers such as the Venetian and Genoan republics, the colonial Iberian monarchies, the Low Countries, France, Italy and, foremost, the British Empire have set up trading posts, entrepôts and bases overseas to consolidate their might and influence and to secure vital interests. The period of East–West confrontation that started in the late 1940s was exceptional. It led to the unprecedented consolidation of two alliances and to rivalry between two superpowers—the Soviet Union and the USA—for global supremacy, containment, control of satellite states and access to sources of energy. Attempts were also made to strengthen the strategic communication lines of each alliance while weakening those of the others.<sup>4</sup> The states of both blocs built up global networks of military facilities in friendly and client countries as part of strategies that aimed to confront, encircle or intimidate the other side. The methods, means of diplomacy, and conditions for acquiring and

<sup>4</sup> On foreign military bases in the cold war period see Harkavy (note 1); and Duke, S., SIPRI, *United States Military Forces and Installations in Europe* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1989).

keeping foreign bases evolved, but for the most part basing remained a bloc rivalry-driven activity.

The nature of the military bases established by each bloc varied. The West shared a common menace and a formidable enemy and had a vital interest in building effective strategic frameworks and defence installations. In general, the USA and its allies adopted a policy of containment of the Soviet Union and of its satellites and clients through an elaborate system of alliances, bilateral agreements and other arrangements. Staging areas were also established at places of competition and potential confrontation (e.g. in Europe and the Middle East and in East, South-East and South-West Asia). Relations between the USA and host countries evolved over time and the purely political and security character of the basing policy changed. Frequently, relations were put on a commercial footing, with the USA making substantial financial contributions, providing security assistance (mainly through arms transfers) and offering economic aid to host countries (including debt relief, credits and increased defence industrial cooperation).

The Soviet Union and the WTO states remained virtually locked in the Eurasian heartland for decades, with only a few allies outside the area (e.g. Cuba). In the 1970s the Soviet Union broke out of Western containment by acquiring military facilities in various countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Middle East. However, in the 1980s this became too economically and politically demanding, and a burden was created that the Soviet Union, and later Russia, was ultimately unable to bear.

The end of the cold war not only brought about numerous changes in international security policy but also created the urge to demonstrate cooperation and build confidence across former divisions. In spite of the declared political partnership between Russia and the USA and huge cutbacks in Western Europe's heavy armaments, there was no radical realignment of armed forces in the last decade of the 20th century. This was partly because of uncertainty about future developments in Russia and the post-Soviet space. Regional unrest, conflicts on the periphery of Europe, conservatism and bureaucratic resistance also prevented a dramatic 're-posturing' of armed forces.

However, the rationale for maintaining the previous pattern of foreign force alignments and postures was weakened, and the number of troops and bases decreased—although their configuration remained almost the same. This was especially true of the US forces. Russia lost or withdrew from all its bases outside the former Soviet space but sought to retain a presence in select areas of the so-called near abroad.<sup>5</sup> Today, the traditional roles of bases (the defence of an ally or allies, deterrence and counterbalancing functions, defence of the home country and intelligence gathering) remain relevant but are not as highly prioritized as in the past. In contrast, counterterrorism and expeditionary missions have gained in prominence.

The shock of the terrorist attacks of September 2001 led to a significant redirection of US attention (and military assets) from Europe to Central and South-West

<sup>5</sup> The term 'near abroad' is frequently used in Russia to refer to the countries in Eastern Europe and Central Asia that were once Soviet republics.

#### 4 FOREIGN MILITARY BASES IN EURASIA

Asia, including the Caspian–Caucasus area. The broad international anti-terrorist front that formed after the attacks on the USA broke down old barriers to cooperation, enabling Western forces to deploy in and close to certain parts of Asia that had been considered Russia’s traditional sphere of influence. The East European and Asian states where the USA is involved politically and militarily—Afghanistan, Iraq and some Central Asian states—and the proximity of US forces to the borders of China and Russia have created a qualitatively new situation. The US presence has acted as a catalyst for change in post-Soviet countries whose populations have begun to demand democratization and reform, which has created growing anxiety for the leaders of these states.

This paper examines how forward military basing in Eurasia has changed in the light of the new global and regional challenges and strategies. The interplay between the former cold war adversaries and the states that emerged after the end of the cold war as regards foreign basing policy is the dominant feature of the realignment process. Apart from Iraq, Middle East basing issues are discussed only with regard to their supportive role and indirect bearing on Eurasia. Although the USA has demonstrated its global reach by repositioning its forces in areas such as Africa and Latin America, Eurasia is and arguably will remain its main area of strategic interest and the focus of its most energetic basing efforts. Certain parts of Asia have emerged as new areas of concern, which has strengthened the motivation for establishing bases there.

Chapter 2 presents an overview of the new US policy of realignment of military forces in the region and discusses the rationale and premises for, the opportunities for and the obstacles to this policy. Chapter 3 addresses the implications of US relocation for certain parts of Europe. NATO and US basing efforts in North-East and South-West Asia, the response of the governments and people of those countries, and the impact on regional and global policies are discussed in chapter 4. Chapter 5 addresses Russia’s efforts to secure and re-establish its presence in its neighbourhood and discusses the intensifying competition and political games that Russia is playing with the West. The final chapter summarizes the analysis and offers conclusions about the consequences of the new developments in foreign basing and their possible impact on Eurasia.

## 2. Reconfiguring US foreign bases

### Background

Since the 1940s the US military has maintained a large contingent of forces on active duty stationed permanently outside the USA. In the 1950s and the 1960s one-quarter to one-third of all US active forces served abroad, mainly in Europe and East Asia. During that period the issue of base realignment was debated by US presidents, the Department of Defense (DOD) and the Congress. In the early 1960s, under President John F. Kennedy's Administration, the first review of US foreign basing policy was conducted with the aim of modifying US deployments abroad to better address the new military threats of the time. Several dozen bases were closed by the late 1960s. A combination of factors contributed to the changes in the US defence posture: the high cost of maintaining foreign bases; military-technological progress, which made some bases superfluous; increased resistance to the US military presence in some countries and public concern over national sovereignty; the improved capabilities of allies and friendly governments; and the changing political environment.<sup>6</sup> In the mid-1970s, in the aftermath of the Viet Nam War, the Congress sought increased powers in relation to national security decision making and obtained the right to veto the closure of military bases. Consequently, mainly owing to fear of the socio-economic effects of large-scale base closures in the USA, no major base was closed over the next decade.

By the end of the 1980s, nearly 400 000 military personnel were deployed abroad. After the end of the cold war and the 1991 Gulf War the USA began the first round of restructuring, which was mainly quantitative. About 60 per cent of US foreign military installations were closed, and over 270 000 army personnel returned to the United States—the largest component being land forces from Europe, mainly Germany.<sup>7</sup> At least six US Air Force wings were disbanded and seven airbases were closed in Europe.<sup>8</sup> In the 1990s, at the request of the host governments, the USA also closed large military facilities in Panama, the Philippines and Spain.<sup>9</sup> (A total of 97 US foreign bases were closed between 1988 and 1995.) In 2001 the Administration of George W. Bush launched a broad programme of

<sup>6</sup> Suter, T. C., 'Base rights agreements', *Air University Review* (July/Aug. 1983), URL <<http://www.airpower.maxwell.af.mil/airchronicles/aureiew/1983/jul-aug/suter.html>>.

<sup>7</sup> According to Gen. James L. Jones, the US European Command force structure was reduced between 1991 and 2004 from 315 000 troops and 1421 installations to 112 000 troops and 491 installations concentrated in Western Europe. Statement of General James L. Jones, US Marine Corps Commander, United States European Command, before the Senate Armed Services Committee on 23 Sep. 2004, URL <<http://www.defenselink.mil/DODgic/olc/docs/test04-09-23Jones.pdf>>.

<sup>8</sup> A US Air Force wing comprises 1000–5000 personnel stationed at an airbase.

<sup>9</sup> Joyce, M., 'American base closures in Europe: stalled, but inevitable', *RUSI Newsbrief*, vol. 25, no. 6 (June 2005), p. 63.

## 6 FOREIGN MILITARY BASES IN EURASIA

reform, known as 'force transformation' and intended to shift the US military posture to meet the new challenges and threats.

The number of US troops based outside the USA fell to approximately 197 000 by 2002. An additional 200 000 soldiers were deployed on temporary assignments in Afghanistan, Iraq and elsewhere. Significantly, the overall pattern of deployment has remained unchanged from the mid-20th century cold war model that was designed to deter the Eastern bloc. As of early 2007, the majority of US forces stationed permanently on foreign soil is concentrated in Europe and Asia. The US forces in Europe include air and land forces in Germany (approximately 72 000); air force personnel in the United Kingdom (10 000); land, air and naval forces in Italy (about 12 000); and personnel at smaller military facilities. Such US bases are located in Belgium, Greece, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain and Turkey. In East Asia major US contingents are stationed in Japan (around 35 000 troops) and South Korea (about 30 000). Large forces are also stationed on Guam, on Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean, in the Middle East (Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, etc.) and on Cuba.<sup>10</sup>

According to the DOD, in September 2005 (the most recent date for which data are available) the USA had a total of 3731 military installations around the world, including those in the USA. In foreign countries, the USA had 766 installations, including 15 large and 19 medium-size military bases (see table 2.1).<sup>11</sup> (These numbers do not include numerous facilities in such places as Afghanistan, Iraq, Israel, Kosovo, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan and Pakistan.) It is difficult to determine the precise number of US foreign bases because of US reporting methodology. For example, the US military and intelligence installations in the UK are not mentioned. Some estimates thus put the number of separate US facilities in other countries at about 1000.<sup>12</sup>

### **The changing policy of US foreign base alignment**

The cold war structure of US forces around the world resulted in a bipolar, linear and geographically limited configuration. Today the world community, and the USA in particular, instead faces multiple, asymmetric, global and transnational types of threat.

In the 2000 presidential election, George W. Bush campaigned on a platform of force transformation and adaptation to a new world. A review of US foreign basing in the summer of 2001 resulted in a Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) Report.<sup>13</sup> It stated that the USA had 20–25 per cent more foreign bases than it needed, and

<sup>10</sup> International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS), *The Military Balance 2007* (Routledge: London, 2007).

<sup>11</sup> US Department of Defense, 'Base structure report: fiscal year 2006 baseline', 2006, URL <[http://www.acq.osd.mil/ie/irm/irm\\_library/BSR2006Baseline.pdf](http://www.acq.osd.mil/ie/irm/irm_library/BSR2006Baseline.pdf)>.

<sup>12</sup> See e.g. Johnson, C., 'America's empire of bases', Global Policy Forum, Jan. 2004, URL <<http://www.globalpolicy.org/empire/intervention/2004/01bases.htm>>.

<sup>13</sup> US Department of Defense, 'Quadrennial Defense Review Report', 30 Sep. 2001, URL <<http://www.defenselink.mil/pubs/qdr2001.pdf>>.

the Secretary of Defense, Donald Rumsfeld, initiated a comprehensive, strategy-based review of various aspects of the US global defence posture, including the size, location, type and capability of US forward-based military forces. The Efficient Facilities Initiative (EFI) of 2001 addressed all US military installations and made changes to the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Act of 1990.<sup>14</sup> It authorized Rumsfeld to recommend a single round (rather than two) of base closures and realignments to an independent commission in 2003. Rumsfeld requested that the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff examine foreign basing needs and plans for closing such installations by March 2003.

The attacks of September 2001 and the subsequent wars in Asia did not slow the pace of work, and the basing realignment scheme readily dovetailed into the Bush Administration's concept of pre-emptive strikes against hostile countries and terrorist groups. Referring to the war in Afghanistan, the 2002 US National Security Strategy asserted that the USA would require 'bases and stations within and beyond Western Europe and North-East Asia as well as temporary access arrangements for long-distance deployment of U.S. forces'.<sup>15</sup> The basic document providing for a global realignment of US forces was the 2004 DOD Integrated Global Presence and Basing Strategy (IGPBS), an unclassified version of which was included in the DOD's report to the Congress.<sup>16</sup> Changes in the 2004 global defence posture had direct implications for the ongoing and parallel 2005 Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) process because of the need to accommodate approximately 70 000 troops and their families returning to the USA at the same time as the DOD was eliminating bases in the USA and realigning others.<sup>17</sup> Both efforts are key components of the Bush Administration's defence transformation agenda. They are distinct yet interdependent and compete for the same resources.

The US National Defense Strategy of March 2005 stressed that US military forces need to operate in and from four regions: North-East Asia, the East Asian

<sup>14</sup> The purpose of the EFI was: (a) to evaluate the continuing need for domestic DOD installations based on the availability of such installations worldwide and the results of an overseas basing review to be conducted on completion of the Quadrennial Defense Review; and (b) to consider how best to organize important military assets to meet future national security needs. US Department of Defense, 'Efficient Facilities Initiative of 2001', Fact sheet, Press Advisory no. 149-P, 3 Aug. 2001, URL <<http://www.defenselink.mil/news/Aug2001/d20010802efi.pdf>>; and Defense Base Closure and Realignment Act of 1990, US Public Law 101-510, 5 Nov. 1990, URL <<http://www.brac.gov/docs/BRAC05Legislation.pdf>>.

<sup>15</sup> The White House, 'The National Security Strategy of the United States of America', Washington, DC, Sep. 2002, URL <<http://www.whitehouse.gov/nsc/nss.html>>, p. 29.

<sup>16</sup> US Department of Defense, 'Strengthening U.S. global defense posture', 17 Sep. 2004, URL <[http://www.defensecommunities.org/ResourceCenter/Global\\_Posture.pdf](http://www.defensecommunities.org/ResourceCenter/Global_Posture.pdf)>.

<sup>17</sup> On BRAC see the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission website at URL <<http://www.brac.gov/>>. The BRAC Commission is intended to 'ensure the integrity of the base closure and realignment process', to 'take into account the human impact of the base closures' and to 'consider the possible economic, environmental, and other effects on the surrounding communities'.

## 8 FOREIGN MILITARY BASES IN EURASIA

**Table 2.1.** Major NATO and US military bases in Eurasia

Type of base/location	Base and location
<b>Permanent bases and hubs in Europe (NATO and US)</b>	
Germany	Geilenkirchen airbase, North Rhine-Westphalia Grafenwöhr-Hohenfels-Vilseck army training complex, Upper Palatinate and Bavaria Ramstein airbase, Kaiserslautern, Rhineland-Palatinate Spangdahlem airbase, Rhineland-Palatinate
Greece	Souda Bay airbase, NATO–US naval support, Crete
Greenland	Thule airbase, early warning, Thule
Italy	Aviano airbase, Roveredo in Piano Camp Ederle army base, Vicenza Camp Darby army base, Pisa La Maddalena naval base, near Sicily US Navy headquarters, Naples Sigonella naval air station, Sicily
Spain	Naval Station Rota, Cadiz
United Kingdom	Royal Air Force Lakenheath airbase, Suffolk Royal Air Force Mildenhall airbase, Suffolk
<b>Permanent and enduring bases and hubs in Asia<sup>a</sup></b>	
Afghanistan (NATO and US bases)	Bagram airbase (NATO and US), north of Kabul Kandahar airfield, Kandahar
Iraq (US and coalition bases)	Camp Anaconda/Balad airbase, Balad, north of Baghdad Al Taji Army airfield/Al Taji Camp, north of Baghdad Camp Falcon army base, Baghdad Camp/Post Freedom army, airborne division, Mosul Camp Victory army base, Baghdad airport Camp Marez army base, Mosul airport Camp Renegade army base, Kirkuk Camp Speicher, Tikrit area Planned consolidated hubs: Tallil near Baghdad, Al Asad, Balad, Irbil or Quayyarah
Indian Ocean (US and British)	Diego Garcia, US and British navies and air forces
Japan (US bases)	Atsugi naval airbase, Honshu Kadena airbase/ammunition storage annex, Okinawa Camp Butler, Marine Corps base, Okinawa Futenma Marine Corps air station, Ginowan Iwakuni Marine Corps air station, Osaka Misawa airbase, Misawa City, Honshu Sasebo, naval base, Sasebo, Kyushu Torii Station, army base, Okinawa Yokosuka naval base, near Tokyo and Yokohama Yokota airbase, near Tokyo Camp Zama (US–Japanese), army base, Honshu



Type of base/location	Base and location
South Korea (US bases)	Camp Casey, US Army, Tongduchon Camp Humphreys, Pyongtaek Osan airbase, Osan Kunsan airbase, Kunsan Yongsan Army Garrison, Seoul (to be relocated) 2 new main operating bases, planned to be established south of the Han River
<b>Forward operating bases in Europe (European Union, NATO and US)</b>	
Bosnia and Herzegovina (European Union Forces, EUFOR)	Eagle Base, Tuzla (EU/US) Camp McGovern, Brcko Mostar 'Europe Base', south-eastern Bosnia and Herzegovina Banja Luka metal factory, north-western Bosnia and Herzegovina
Bulgaria	Novo Selo training area, Novo Selo Bezmer airbase, Yambol Graf Ignatievo airfield, near Plovdiv
Czech Republic–Poland	US missile defence bases (planned)
Romania	Mihail Kogalniceanu airbase, Constanza Babadag, Cîncu and Smardan training ranges
Serbia, Kosovo	Camp Bondsteel, US Army base, Urosevac
Turkey	Incirlik airbase, near Adana
<b>Forward operating bases in Asia</b>	
Afghanistan (NATO and USA)	Kabul airport, Kabul Khost airbase, eastern Afghanistan Shindand airbase, south of Herat Camp Bastion, British base, Helmand province
Guam (USA)	Camp Andersen airbase
Kyrgyzstan (NATO and US)	Manas/Ganci NATO–US airbase, Bishkek

<sup>a</sup> Enduring bases are intended to be used for an indefinite period.

littoral region, the Middle East and South-West Asia, and Europe.<sup>18</sup> The trend in US thinking is to move towards smaller, more flexible expeditionary units (brigades), instead of large divisions, in order to be able 'to respond rapidly to emerging crises and control escalation on our terms'.<sup>19</sup> The 2005 National Defense

<sup>18</sup> US Department of Defense, 'The National Defense Strategy of the United States of America', Mar. 2005, URL <<http://www.defenselink.mil/news/Mar2005/d20050318nds1.pdf>>, pp. 18–20.

<sup>19</sup> Transformation will include rearrangement of brigades in order to achieve self-sufficiency, increased combat power, rapid deployability and flexibility. The number of active modular brigade combat teams (BCTs) will increase from 33 to 43 to enable the army to field forces on a rotational basis. The central element of the new system is equipping the brigades with speedy, lightly armoured

## 10 FOREIGN MILITARY BASES IN EURASIA

Strategy combines forces that will be stationed at permanent bases with other land, sea, air and special forces that will serve on a rotating basis at smaller facilities ('lily pads'),<sup>20</sup> which will be supported by readily available and strategically pre-positioned stocks of equipment. The bases will be used jointly by the army, navy, air force and marines, in contrast to the traditional approach of each branch of the US military working independently. The global plan for US base realignment has not been revealed in all its aspects and the timetable remains uncertain.<sup>21</sup> The process is meant to be carried out on a step-by-step basis, and the US plans and decisions will be presented successively.

The 2006 QDR states that the USA 'will continue to adapt its global posture to promote constructive bilateral relations, mitigate anti-access threats and offset potential political coercion designed to limit US access to any region'.<sup>22</sup> It will also seek to deter 'any extremists who use terrorism as their weapon of choice, and who seek to destroy our free way of life' as well as to address the perceived emerging threat to US dominance of near-peer competitors, such as China, India and Russia.

### *Towards a realignment*

Interest in the realignment of forces increased in the spring of 2003, after the swift defeat of Saddam Hussein in Iraq and in the run-up to the NATO enlargement of 2004. Realignment aimed to reduce the number of US soldiers in large, expensive bases on the perimeter of the former Soviet Union. The following other reasons for favouring the plan were also presented.

1. Because the location of future crises and conflicts was difficult to predict, military forces should be more flexible and expeditionary (i.e. not tied to specific locations).

2. The basing infrastructure had become too large, costly and cumbersome, and the overextended US forces needed to reduce their presence abroad.

3. Armed forces in Europe were too far from current and envisaged conflicts, for example in Asia or Africa.

4. US bases at strategically important locations needed to be reorganized or relocated in order to enhance the safety of the military personnel, to avoid friction with the local people and to improve the quality of life of the military staff.<sup>23</sup>

and computerized Stryker vehicles that can be moved to a conflict area within 96 hours aboard C-130 aircraft.

<sup>20</sup> Lily pads are minimally equipped training and deployment sites in areas where the USA has traditionally not had basing infrastructure: Africa, Central Asia and Central Europe.

<sup>21</sup> It is estimated that the process will take 6 to 10 years.

<sup>22</sup> US Department of Defense, 'Quadrennial Defense Review Report', 6 Feb. 2006, URL <<http://www.defenselink.mil/pubs/pdfs/QDR20060203.pdf>>, p. 42.

<sup>23</sup> US Congressional Budget Office, 'Options for changing the Army's overseas basing', May 2004, URL <<http://www.cbo.gov/showdoc.cfm?index=5415&sequence=0>>.

The USA needs to maintain good relations with its allies and partners on whose territory US forces are stationed. Although not openly acknowledged as a problem, dependence on the political support of the host countries has been perceived as significantly hampering US military operations. The USA's seeming distrust of other countries or reluctance to be tied to cooperation with them can be illustrated by several examples. On 12 September 2001, in response to the attacks on the USA, NATO invoked Article 5 of the 1949 North Atlantic Treaty to demonstrate the support of the other allies for the USA, but the United States did not take up the offer.<sup>24</sup> In September 2003 the US Middle East air command post (Combined Air Operations Center) was moved from Saudi Arabia to the Al Udeid base in Qatar. The DOD has also signalled that the number of US forces in Kuwait may be reduced. In the wake of Turkey's refusal to allow US forces to use the NATO air-base at Incirlik during the 2003 invasion of Iraq, the number of US forces there was cut to a minimum.

However, NATO and the USA have jointly deployed their personnel and equipment at bases and other facilities in Central Asia that were used as staging areas for their operations in Afghanistan. After 2001 NATO and the USA acquired basing rights in Kyrgyzstan, at the Ganci airbase, and in Uzbekistan, at the Karshi-Khanabad (K-2) base, and landing rights at airfields and permission for overflights in other Central Asian countries.

In May and June 2003, after the defeat of Saddam Hussein's forces in Iraq, it became apparent that the DOD was accelerating its redeployment planning. In November 2003 President Bush announced that his administration would intensify multi-year consultations with the Congress and with 'friends, allies and partners overseas' on the global force posture.<sup>25</sup> During the 2004 presidential campaign, not only Democratic presidential candidate John Kerry and other top Democratic politicians but also Republican politicians attacked the Bush Administration's proposals as 'dangerous and politically motivated', as potentially weakening the USA's relationship with NATO and as harmful to the campaign against terrorism.<sup>26</sup> Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld reassured the NATO allies that any changes to the US force posture would be made in consultation with them and would not be detrimental to their interests.<sup>27</sup> Russia, in turn, expressed concern that the new basing scheme

<sup>24</sup> The North Atlantic Treaty (Washington Treaty) was signed on 4 Apr. 1949, URL <<http://www.nato.int/docu/basic/txt/treaty.htm>>. Article 5 of the treaty states that 'an armed attack against one or more' NATO member is 'considered an attack against them all' and that the other members will come to the defence of the state that was attacked.

<sup>25</sup> The White House, Office of the Press Secretary, 'Statement by the President', Washington, DC, 25 Nov. 2003, URL <<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/11/20031125-11.html>>.

<sup>26</sup> 'Bush tells veterans of plan to redeploy G.I.'s worldwide', *New York Times*, 17 Aug. 2004; and 'Senator condemns Pentagon move to cut number of US troops based in Europe', *Financial Times*, 5 Mar. 2004.

<sup>27</sup> US Department of State, International Information Programs, 'Rumsfeld: future U.S. military posture won't disadvantage allies', 25 Mar. 2004, URL <<http://usinfo.state.gov/>>.

## 12 FOREIGN MILITARY BASES IN EURASIA

might be directed at encircling or threatening it, because of the arrangements under way in Central Asia.<sup>28</sup>

Consequently, in early 2004 senior US officials travelled to more than 20 capitals throughout the world to explain the US plans, to consult on related issues and to consider possible negotiations and arrangements (legal, logistic, etc.). According to the then Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR), General James L. Jones, the implementation of the base realignment project received ‘assurances of support and understanding’ from US allies. Russia was repeatedly assured that any redeployment of US troops in Europe was ‘not aimed at Russia’, that it would reduce the overall US presence, and that US troops would not be shifted ‘to the east’ (i.e. closer to the European borders of Russia and its allies).<sup>29</sup>

In June 2004 the US Administration submitted a ‘conceptual proposal’ to the South Korean Government, and six weeks later the two states signed an agreement on US troop relocation in South Korea. The DOD revealed in 2004 that the US armoured divisions in Germany would be cut back in future and replaced by a lighter brigade. The European Union (EU) and NATO negotiated the takeover by the European Union Forces (EUFOR) in December 2004 of the NATO-led Stabilization Force in Bosnia and Herzegovina (SFOR) mission. As the result of talks conducted in 2004–2006, Japan reached an agreement with the USA on the relocation of the US bases there.

### **The new US global posture**

In a speech delivered on 16 August 2004, President Bush outlined further shifts in the foreign deployment of US military forces.<sup>30</sup> Some 70 000 military personnel (plus roughly 100 000 dependents) are scheduled to return to the USA by 2011–14. The number of foreign bases and facilities that the USA maintains will also be reduced from 850 to approximately 550 in the same period. US military officials stressed that the redeployment would be a global realignment of forces and capabilities, not a force reduction or a change in force structure.<sup>31</sup> In September 2004 Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld stated that US troops would be located ‘where wanted, welcomed, and needed’ and placed in locations ‘where they can easily and quickly be moved’ and have ‘reasonable access to ample training areas’. Rumsfeld

<sup>28</sup> ‘Powell seeks to reassure Russians on new troops’, *New York Times*, 28 Jan. 2004.

<sup>29</sup> ‘Gilmore, G., ““Significant portion” of troop shifts to be Europe-based forces’, News transcript, US Department of Defense, 16 Aug. 2004, URL <[http://www.defenselink.mil/news/Aug2004/n08162004\\_2004081610.html](http://www.defenselink.mil/news/Aug2004/n08162004_2004081610.html)>.

<sup>30</sup> The White House, Office of the Press Secretary, ‘President’s remarks to Veterans of Foreign Wars convention’, Dr Albert B. Sabin Cincinnati Cinergy Center, 16 Aug. 2004, URL <<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2004/08/20040816-12.html>>.

<sup>31</sup> US Department of Defense, ‘Defense Department background briefing on global posture review’, 16 Aug. 2004, URL <<http://www.defenselink.mil/transcripts/2004/tr20040816-1153.html>>. Rumsfeld has stressed that capability is more important than numbers. Banusiewicz, J. D., ‘Fewer numbers don’t mean less capability, Rumsfeld says’, News transcript, US Department of Defense, 3 June 2004, URL <[http://www.defenselink.mil/news/Jun2004/n06032004\\_200406034.html](http://www.defenselink.mil/news/Jun2004/n06032004_200406034.html)>.

summarized the strategy behind the global posture review for the US Senate Armed Services Committee in the following four points.

1. Additional naval and air capabilities will be moved to Asia. The facilities and headquarters in North-East Asia will be consolidated, and hubs for special operations forces will be set up. Multiple avenues for access in contingency operations will be created.

2. In Europe, the emphasis will shift to lighter and more deployable ground capabilities, rapidly deployable special operations forces and advanced training facilities.

3. In the greater Middle East, so-called warm (i.e. kept in readiness) facilities, which were provided by the host countries during the operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, will be maintained for contingency purposes and for forces that serve on a rotating basis.

4. An array of smaller cooperative security locations for contingency access is envisaged for Africa and the western hemisphere.<sup>32</sup>

The six strategic roles of the 2004 US global defence posture are: (a) expanding the responsibilities of allies by building new partnerships and encouraging transformation, both in the capabilities of allied military forces and in the ability of allies to assume broader global roles and responsibilities; (b) creating greater operational flexibility to address uncertainty by emphasizing flexibility in force posture (military forces will not be concentrated in a few locations or focus on particular scenarios); (c) focusing on and functioning in various regions of the world; (d) developing rapidly deployable capabilities to ensure the rapid and effective flow of US capabilities into, through and from foreign theatres of operation (as in Kosovo and Afghanistan); (e) developing effective military capabilities (not numbers of personnel and platforms) that create decisive military effects and enable the USA to execute its security commitments globally; and (f) providing stability for US military forces and less disruption for their families by reducing the number of foreign postings.<sup>33</sup>

An additional reason why US forces will be realigned is to seek the permission of host countries with more permissive environmental regulations and fewer restraints in order to 'support greater operational flexibility' and 'maximize' the freedom of US forces. This approach represents a response to the growing civilian opposition to the environmental contamination caused by existing US bases (e.g. in Japan and South Korea) and an attempt to avoid international legal constraints (e.g.

<sup>32</sup> US Department of Defense, 'Global posture: testimony as prepared for delivery by Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld, Senate Armed Service Committee', 23 Sep. 2004, URL <<http://www.defenselink.mil/speeches/2004/sp20040923-secdef0783.html>>.

<sup>33</sup> US Department of State, International Information Programs, 'U.S. outlines realignment of military forces', 16 Aug. 2004, URL <<http://usinfo.state.gov/is/Archive/2004/Aug/17-437847.html>>; The White House, Office of the Press Secretary, 'Making America more secure by transforming our military', Fact sheet, Washington, DC, 16 Aug. 2004, URL <<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2004/08/20040816-5.html>>; and US Department of Defense (note 16).

## 14 FOREIGN MILITARY BASES IN EURASIA

by means of bilateral agreements with host countries to secure an exemption from the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court).

According to the 2006 QDR, the future joint (i.e. co-located) forces will use host-state facilities with only a modest supporting US presence, thereby decreasing the need for foreign US main operating bases with large infrastructures and reducing the exposure of US military personnel to asymmetric threats. The US foreign basing posture will include upgraded air-support infrastructure, additional forward-deployed expeditionary maritime capabilities, long-range strike and intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance assets, and ground forces such as lightly armoured vehicle units. The combination of sea basing,<sup>34</sup> the reassessment of US foreign stationing, and enhanced long-range strike and pre-positioned capabilities are intended to reduce the 'forward footprint' (i.e. forward basing) of the joint force.<sup>35</sup>

The 2004 US foreign basing posture enhances the ability to rapidly project military force and to combine forward basing with the use of military forces that serve on a rotating basis. The forces and operating bases are being located so that they compensate for the limitations of strategic air- and sealift assets and make use of the existing bases and equipment. There are three major types of US joint (inter-service) forward facilities: main operating bases (MOBs), forward operating sites (FOSs, also called lily pads) and cooperative security locations (CSLs). These are supported by pre-positioned sites and en route infrastructure (ERI) bases.<sup>36</sup> The MOBs serve as hubs (i.e. huge military facilities) with spokes to FOSs and sub-spokes to CSLs. The DOD is careful to avoid the term 'base' except for permanent large facilities. However, for example, the terms 'FOS' and 'FOB' (forward operating base) continue to be used interchangeably by experts.

*Main operating bases.* The thrust of change is towards a limited number of large US bases. MOBs are existing, strategic hubs located in friendly host countries with

<sup>34</sup> Sea basing is generally seen as an option that exploits the inherent advantages of sea-based forces: their ability to operate at a distance and without dependence on foreign bases. 'The future joint force will exploit the operational flexibility of sea basing to counter political anti-access and irregular warfare challenges. The Maritime Prepositioning Force (Future) family of ships will advance the capability of sea basing to support a wide spectrum of joint force operations. Special Operations Forces will exploit Afloat Forward Staging Bases (AFSBs) to provide more flexible and sustainable locations from which to operate globally. The fleet will have greater presence in the Pacific Ocean, consistent with the global shift of trade and transport. Accordingly, the Navy plans to adjust its force posture and basing to provide at least six operationally available and sustainable carriers and 60% of its submarines in the Pacific to support engagement, presence and deterrence.' US Department of Defense (note 22), p. 59.

<sup>35</sup> US Department of Defense (note 22), p. 65. Rapid global mobility is central to the effectiveness of the future force. The joint force will 'deliver the right capabilities at the right time and at the right place'. Mobility capabilities will be fully integrated across geographic theatres and between war-fighting components and force providers, with response times measured in hours and days rather than weeks.

<sup>36</sup> On US military facilities see 'Introduction: US military facilities', GlobalSecurity.org, URL <<http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/facility/intro.htm>>. According to the 2005 US National Defense Strategy, 'In addition to these, joint sea-basing too holds promise for the broader transformation of our overseas military posture'. US Department of Defense (note 18), p. 19.

permanently stationed combat forces and robust infrastructure, command and control structures, family-support facilities and strengthened force-protection measures. These strategically vital installations are envisaged for long-term use and serve as anchor points for processing, training and combat and to demonstrate the USA's commitment to its allies. US MOBs include many of the large current strategic locations in Europe and Asia, such as the Ramstein and Spangdahlem airbases in Germany; the Naval Station Rota in Spain; the 173rd Airborne Brigade in Vicenza, the US Navy's European headquarters in Naples and the airbase in Aviano, Italy; the Kadena airbase in Okinawa and the Yokosuka naval base, Japan; and Camp Humphreys in South Korea. These MOBs will be 'consolidated but retained' and will increasingly be joint installations with the units of two or more services. The USA does not plan for MOBs in Central, North-East and South-East Asia, or in Africa or Latin America.

*Forward operating sites.* The US FOSs will be used in the so-called arc of instability that extends from West Africa, across southern Asia and the Pacific Ocean to the Andes mountains. These lily pads will be anchored to existing MOBs. In response to the September 2001 attacks, in October 2002 the USA set up Camp Le Monier in Djibouti as a forward base in the Horn of Africa to cope with terrorists operating in that area. The base was a prototype for the FOS strategy.<sup>37</sup>

The FOSs will be used primarily as starting points for forces that serve on a rotating basis. They are expandable, host-state facilities that are 'kept warm' with limited US military support and possibly as sites for pre-positioned equipment. The small number of staff at the FOSs will be ready to assist in resupplying active forces. So-called light-switch (i.e. ready for immediate use) facilities—such as Eagle Base at Tuzla in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Camp Bondsteel in Kosovo, the Incirlik airbase in Turkey, and the Thumrait and Masirah airbases in Oman—will support forces that serve on a rotating basis rather than permanently stationed ones and will be the focus of bilateral and regional training.<sup>38</sup> Backup support by an MOB may be required. Facilities in Bulgaria and Romania have been identified that can be designated as FOSs to serve as staging areas in crises. Similar facilities may be established in the South Caucasus.

*Cooperative security locations.* The CSLs will be basic, forward-operating facilities with no permanent US forces stationed at them. They will be maintained by contractors or the host country. The CSLs will be used on a contingency basis and will serve as the focal point for security cooperation activities. They may also con-

<sup>37</sup> The USA established a base at Djibouti's international airport and built it up to a strength of some 2000 soldiers, chiefly Special Operations Forces operating against terrorists throughout the region. 'Worldwide orientation of U.S. military basing: Part II: Central Asia, Southwest Asia, and the Pacific', Center for Defense Information, Straus Military Reform Project, Washington, DC, 7 Oct. 2003, URL <[http://www.cdi.org/program/relateditems.cfm?typeID=\(8\)&programID=37](http://www.cdi.org/program/relateditems.cfm?typeID=(8)&programID=37)>.

<sup>38</sup> According to Gen. James L. Jones, '[T]hey would be maintained with barebones infrastructure when we are not using them, and they will immediately go from cold to hot if we need them for training or to respond to a crisis'. *Jane's Defence Weekly*, 29 Oct. 2003, p. 32.

tain pre-positioned equipment and will be expandable to become FOSs if needed.<sup>39</sup> Many of the CSLs will be located in Africa or on its periphery to stave off possible terrorist activities and to protect the interests of the US oil industry (e.g. in the Gulf of Guinea). Examples of cooperative security locations include Libreville airport in Gabon, the Dakar airbase in Senegal and the Entebbe airport in Uganda.<sup>40</sup>

*Pre-positioned sites.* The key to the US forward footprint is an effective pre-positioning programme. Pre-positioned sites, some of which already exist, contain materiel for combat, combat support and combat service support and are tailored and strategically located in secure sites to enable and augment both forces that serve on a rotating basis and expeditionary forces. They may be co-located with an MOB or an FOS, are usually maintained by contractors and may also be sea based.

*En route infrastructure bases.* ERI bases are strategically located enduring (i.e. meant to be used for an indefinite period) assets with infrastructure that provides the ability to rapidly expand, project and sustain military power for, for example, forces that serve on a rotating basis or the NATO Response Force. ERI bases serve as anchor points for processing, training and combat and to demonstrate US commitment. They can also function as an MOB or an FOS. Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan and Operation Iraqi Freedom underlined the importance of such bases in Germany, Italy, Portugal, Spain, Turkey and the UK.

### US domestic criticism

The DOD's basing strategy was criticized in 2003–2005 by analysts and by members of the US Congress during a series of hearings. The most radical critics perceived the realignment plan as modern imperialism and militarism and the military bases as an expression of colonial politics.<sup>41</sup> An eight-member bipartisan congressional panel—the Commission on Review of the Overseas Military Facility Structure (Overseas Basing Commission, OBC)—was proposed in an April 2003 bill sponsored by senators Kay Bailey Hutchison and Dianne Feinstein, both members of the Senate Military Construction Appropriations Committee. Its purpose was 'to assess the adequacy of the U.S. military footprint overseas, consider the feasibility and advisability of closing any current U.S. installations, and provide to Congress

<sup>39</sup> 'These are really barebones sites for special forces, hospitals, true expeditionary forces, that can literally dot the landscape'. Jones (note 38).

<sup>40</sup> Other potential host countries have been mentioned, including Algeria, Chad, Ghana, Mauritania, Namibia, Sao Tomé and Príncipe, and South Africa. Outside Africa, Australia and possibly Viet Nam are under consideration. The US troop increase in Iraq in 2007 put a great strain on the pre-positioned 'war reserve materiel sites'. Reportedly, equipment should be available for 5 full combat brigades—2 in Kuwait, 1 in South Korea and 2 aboard ships stationed at Diego Garcia and Guam. However, the stocks at Diego Garcia and Guam have been used up, and the reserves at Kuwait are being used to service units rotating in and out of Iraq. Only in South Korea is the stock close to complete. Tyson, A. S., 'Military ill-prepared for other conflicts', *Washington Post*, 19 Mar. 2007, p. A01.

<sup>41</sup> See e.g. Johnson (note 12); and Klare, M., 'Imperial reach', *The Nation*, 25 Apr. 2005, URL <<http://www.globalpolicy.org/empire/intervention/2005/0425imperialreach.htm>>.



recommendations for a comprehensive overseas basing strategy that meets the current and projected needs of the United States'. The OBC was intended to 'help to ensure that there is not a disconnect between realignment overseas and the closing of bases in the United States'.<sup>42</sup> The OBC reviewed the IGPBS, including its geopolitical posture; operational requirements; the mobility of the forces (including air- and sealift); the quality of life of the military personnel; the costs of basing, base realignment and closure; and the timing and synchronization of various related undertakings.<sup>43</sup>

In a 10 July 2003 statement the White House threatened that it would not cooperate with the OBC, arguing that a congressional commission supervising the DOD was unnecessary. Nonetheless, the OBC was established when President Bush signed the financial year 2004 Military Construction Appropriations Act in November 2003.<sup>44</sup>

The OBC found that the IGPBS was not well synchronized with other relevant efforts, including BRAC, army modularization and joint force transformation; operations in Afghanistan and Iraq; and diplomatic and legal endeavours. Given the depth and breadth of the IGPBS's multiple tasks, the commission warned that there was a danger of attempting to accomplish too many things at the same time. The OBC's major recommendation was to slow the process and change the order of the repatriation of 70 000 soldiers that was planned for 2006–11, although it did not propose another time schedule. It also suggested that 'it has been too much the purview of a single agency' and proposed that an inter-agency entity rather than the DOD integrate implementation of related national security activities within 'an overall architectural design'. The OBC also called on the Congress to become more actively involved in oversight of the global basing process.

Even before the OBC's report was published, various US experts expressed concern about the IGPBS and offered advice to the commission about its work. Their views and proposals can be summarized in six main points.

1. It is not certain that the proposed combination of MOBs, FOSs and CSLs will improve US military deployment flexibility.
2. New global basing arrangements should not be driven by operational expediency but should be part of an overall national, political and diplomatic framework, including the security strategy and force posture review process.
3. The current US military force deployments around the globe do not exist where they are as a favour to the host countries but are positioned primarily to protect US interests.

<sup>42</sup> Homepage of US Senator Dianne Feinstein, 'Senators Hutchison and Feinstein introduce legislation creating an Overseas Military Base Commission', 29 Apr. 2003, URL <<http://feinstein.senate.gov/03Releases/r-overseasbasing.htm>>. Hutchison and Feinstein's bill was intended to protect bases in Texas and California. They demanded that the DOD close overseas bases first and bring US soldiers home, thus lengthening the lifespan of the domestic bases.

<sup>43</sup> US Department of Defense (note 16).

<sup>44</sup> Military Construction Appropriations Act of 2004, US Public Law 108-32, 22 Nov. 2003, URL <<http://www.asafm.army.mil/cong/cbreps/docs/2004L/MQOL/2004MILCON.pdf>>, section 128.

## 18 FOREIGN MILITARY BASES IN EURASIA

4. Global realignment should be carried out together with US allies and the host countries. Otherwise the USA risks sending the wrong signal to its friends and foes.

5. In most cases foreign deployment is advantageous to the USA because it is less expensive to station troops abroad than in the USA, particularly when the host countries underwrite their cost by constructing facilities or offsetting the annual operating and maintenance costs.

6. If foreign bases are closed and the troops returned to the USA, costs may increase, at least in the short run. Additional facilities will need to be built in the USA, and in some cases the DOD will have to purchase more air- or sealift.<sup>45</sup>

The US realignment of forces will require substantial spending and may not be worth the price. A May 2004 study by the non-partisan Congressional Budget Office (CBO) suggested that base closures would be expensive in the short term. While annual savings could exceed \$1 billion, the net initial investment to relocate US military personnel would amount to up to \$7 billion. The CBO study also concluded that redeployment would 'produce at least small improvements in the United States' ability to respond to far-flung conflicts'.<sup>46</sup> The DOD estimated that implementation of the IGPBS would cost \$9–12 billion, while the OBC, totalling all costs, arrived at a figure of approximately \$20 billion.<sup>47</sup> These costs also came at a time when military spending was increased by operations abroad and, to some extent, by the needs of homeland security.

The DOD responded by criticizing these assessments and by stressing the advantages of base realignment for force transformation, financial savings, social and economic gains, and the like.<sup>48</sup> The DOD claimed that the foreign base realignment

<sup>45</sup> For these and other reactions to the base realignment proposal see the discussion on the website of the Center for Defense Information, Straus Military Reform Project, Washington, DC, URL <[http://www.cdi.org/program/relateditems.cfm?typeID=\(8\)&programID=37](http://www.cdi.org/program/relateditems.cfm?typeID=(8)&programID=37)>; and Klaus, J. K., *US Military Overseas Basing: Background and Oversight Issues for Congress*, US Library of Congress, Congressional Research Service (CRS) Report for Congress RS21975 (CRS: Washington, DC, 17 Nov. 2004), URL <<http://www.fas.org/man/crs/RS21975.pdf>>.

<sup>46</sup> US Congressional Budget Office (note 23).

<sup>47</sup> 'Report of the Commission on Review of the Overseas Military Facility Structure of the United States to the President and the US Congress', 9 May 2005, URL <<http://www.fas.org/irp/agency/DOD/obc.pdf>>. The Bush Administration hoped that the planned closure of 33 of the 318 major domestic military bases and the realignment of another 29 would save \$49 billion over the next 20 years. Porth, J. S., US Department of State, International Information Programs, 'U.S. military base closings may save \$49 billion over 20 years', 13 May 2005, URL <<http://usinfo.state.gov/usinfo>>. This estimate has been challenged by an independent commission as overstated by some 50%. 'Benefit of U.S. base closings challenged', *International Herald Tribune*, 15 Aug. 2005. In Nov. 2005 the BRAC panel decided that the number of major base closures would be reduced from 33 to 22 bases. Miles, D., 'BRAC deadline expires; DOD to begin closures, realignments', News transcript, US Department of Defense, 9 Nov. 2005, URL <[http://www.defenselink.mil/news/Nov2005/20051109\\_3280.html](http://www.defenselink.mil/news/Nov2005/20051109_3280.html)>.

<sup>48</sup> Rumsfeld characterized some OBC actions as 'unhelpful', particularly the posting on the Internet of information that may have been classified. US Department of State, International Information Programs, 'Rumsfeld: base-closing concept incorporates strategic thinking', 17 May 2005, URL <<http://usinfo.state.gov/is/Archive/2005/May/17-67692.html>>.

process was ‘deliberate, thoughtful and flexible’, dovetailing with several other initiatives, such as BRAC, a mobility capabilities review and the 2006 QDR.<sup>49</sup> Then SACEUR General Jones stated that the plan ‘is both flexible and open to change in its specifics’.<sup>50</sup> The DOD also stressed that the changes are intended to relieve stress on servicemen and their families.<sup>51</sup> DOD officials avoided discussion of the cost of the plan and stated that the assumptions for the CBO’s analysis differed from those of the department.<sup>52</sup> It appears likely that this highly politicized debate will continue in the coming years.<sup>53</sup>

<sup>49</sup> Miles, D., ‘Overseas realignment process proceeding in “deliberate, thoughtful” manner’, News transcript, US Department of Defense, 9 May 2005, URL <[http://www.defenselink.mil/news/May2005/20050509\\_949.html](http://www.defenselink.mil/news/May2005/20050509_949.html)>.

<sup>50</sup> Miles, D., ‘EUCOM commander describes overseas basing priorities’, News transcript, US Department of Defense, 10 May 2005, URL <[http://www.defenselink.mil/news/May2005/20050510\\_985.html](http://www.defenselink.mil/news/May2005/20050510_985.html)>.

<sup>51</sup> Sample, D., ‘Overseas basing changes mean less troop stress, DoD tells Senate’, News transcript, US Department of Defense, 29 June 2005, URL <[http://www.defenselink.mil/news/Jun2005/20050629\\_1902.html](http://www.defenselink.mil/news/Jun2005/20050629_1902.html)>.

<sup>52</sup> US Department of Defense (note 11).

<sup>53</sup> For the DOD response to the OBC’s criticism see US Department of Defense, ‘Defense Department Special Briefing’, News transcript, 9 May 2005, URL <<http://www.defenselink.mil/transcripts/2005/tr20050509-2701.html>>.

### 3. Repositioning NATO and US bases in Europe

The presence in Europe of US troops assigned to NATO has long been a tangible demonstration of the USA's commitment to the defence of its West European allies,<sup>54</sup> and NATO's policy of forward defence and forward basing exemplify the risks shared by the NATO allies. The 2004 realignment plan of George W. Bush's Administration will result in a large reduction in the number of US troops in Europe because the continent is no longer considered the central area of possible political and ideological confrontation or military clashes. The US focus has shifted eastward towards Europe's periphery and the greater Middle East, and southward to Africa.

The Bush Administration has gone to great lengths to assure its allies and partners that the changes will not be detrimental to them, but the closure of the USA's European bases has revived European fears of a strategic disassociation between the transatlantic allies. Concern has been expressed that future security partnerships will be based on new geographic and strategic arrangements rather than on existing structures, ultimately leading to the decay and possible dissolution of NATO.<sup>55</sup> Some analysts have also expressed the view that the US decision was militarily the right one and long overdue but that it represented a weakened US commitment to the host countries and illustrated a new US unilateralism.<sup>56</sup> Some of the countries have been concerned about the loss of economic and security advantages associated with the presence of US and NATO military bases. The Bush Administration's proposal to reduce the number of US bases in Europe has also been perceived by some as retribution against Germany, in particular for its opposition to

<sup>54</sup> Apart from the 1949 North Atlantic Treaty (note 24), especially Article 3, the legal basis for the stationing of US forces in Western Europe is the Agreement between the Parties to the North Atlantic Treaty Regarding the Status of Their Forces, 19 June 1951, URL <<http://www.nato.int/docu/basicxt/b510619a.htm>>. Individual NATO members have signed additional or supplementary agreements or exchanged notes with the USA regarding various aspects of the US use of land and facilities on their territory, logistics support, etc. These include the Convention on Relations between the Three Powers and the Federal Republic of Germany, signed on 26 May 1952 at Bonn, available at URL <<http://www.ena.lu/mce.cfm>>; and defence, economic and status of forces agreements, and protocols for individual countries. Generally, the agreements are intended to last for the duration of NATO's existence. See Duke (note 4).

<sup>55</sup> The 2002 US National Security Strategy reaffirmed that '[T]he presence of American forces overseas is one of the most profound symbols of the U.S. commitments to allies and friends'. The White House (note 15), p. 29. See also US Department of State (note 27).

<sup>56</sup> Two observers state: 'Still the most serious potential consequences of the contemplated shifts would not be military but political and diplomatic. . . . Unless the changes . . . are paired with a sustained and effective diplomatic campaign, therefore, they could well increase foreign anxiety about and distrust of the United States.' Campbell, K. M. and Johnson Ward, C., 'New battle stations?', *Foreign Affairs*, Sep./Oct. 2003. A 2004 editorial warned that 'NATO is the only alliance capable of sharing some of the global military burdens that have now overstretched America's ground forces'. 'Military bases in Germany', *New York Times*, 14 June 2004.

the war in Iraq, and its Asian plans as penalizing South Korea for its disagreement with the USA over North Korea.<sup>57</sup> In 2003–2004 it appeared that Central Europe would be the main hosts of US troops and equipment, and various arguments for not redeploying troops and equipment there were made by experts in the USA and elsewhere, particularly in Russia,<sup>58</sup> although the potential host countries warmly welcomed the idea.

In the wake of the Dutch and French referendums rejecting the EU constitutional treaty in May and June 2005, the US Overseas Basing Commission stated in September 2005 that these votes ‘highlighted the continued political weakness of the [European] Union and thus the importance of NATO to our relationship with Europe’. The OBC argued that a strong US presence (including a heavy brigade with ‘an organic, offensive tank-killing capability’) was necessary in Europe because of the need for German bases to serve US troops in Iraq, concern about terrorism reaching Europe and the sense of disarray in the EU.<sup>59</sup>

Until 2004 the USA maintained an extensive network of some 300 ground installations and more than 200 airbases and related installations in Europe.<sup>60</sup> According to the DOD, nearly half of these will be shut down in the next decade. The US European Command (EUCOM), headquartered in Germany, plans to decrease the number of its troops from the current level of 72 000 to about 68 500.<sup>61</sup> The forces remaining in Europe will focus on being able swiftly to deploy to temporary locations elsewhere in the arc of instability. Realignment will reduce the number of US ground forces in Europe from five brigades to one (along with units of the restructured US Fifth, or V, Corps), resulting in the removal of some 38 000 troops. Eventually, the main US deployable units will comprise one brigade at Vilseck, Germany; an expanded airborne brigade at Vicenza, Italy;<sup>62</sup> and two F-16 combat aircraft squadrons at Aviano, Italy (the Southeast Task Force).

President Bush has stated that a ‘very substantial’ US military ground presence will remain. Bases of major strategic importance located in Germany, Italy and the UK or installations that serve useful military purposes will be retained and upgraded, but facilities which are no longer needed will be closed. For example, on

<sup>57</sup> O’Hanlon, M., ‘Bold basing plan’, *Washington Times*, 4 Feb. 2004. South Korea and the USA disagreed over the extent of South Korea’s engagement policy towards North Korea.

<sup>58</sup> Korb, L. J., ‘The Pentagon’s eastern obsession’, *New York Times*, 30 July 2003.

<sup>59</sup> Quoted in Dempsey, J., ‘Questioning EU’s will, U.S. panel backs NATO’, *International Herald Tribune*, 13 Sep. 2005, URL <<http://www.ihf.com/articles/2005/09/12/news/nato.php>>.

<sup>60</sup> In order to avoid an exaggerated picture, it is worth pointing out that, as of early 2007, the USA has only 5 main operating airbases in Europe, and the number of US aircraft has been reduced from more than 700 to fewer than 200.

<sup>61</sup> According to Gen. Jones, by the end of 2006 the USA will have closed 43 bases and transferred some 10 000 military personnel to bases in the USA. Statement of General James L. Jones, US Marine Corps Commander, United States European Command, before the Senate Armed Services Committee on 7 Mar. 2006, available at URL <<http://www.eucom.mil/english/Command/Posture/posture.asp>>.

<sup>62</sup> In 2006 3 Germany-based US battalions and support units were added to the 173rd Airborne Brigade stationed at Vicenza. This step contributed to a crisis in the Italian Government in Feb. 2007. Kinglan, T., ‘Italy approves expansion of U.S. base’, *Defense News*, 22 Jan. 2007, p. 6.

1 October 2006 the US air- and naval base at Keflavik, Iceland, which had existed there since 1951, was closed.<sup>63</sup> Some F-15 combat aircraft stationed in the UK may also be removed.<sup>64</sup> Restructuring will also occur. The European headquarters of the US Navy was relocated from London to Naples to emphasize the new geostrategic approach. The USA reportedly intends to regroup and redeploy its special operations forces, which are currently spread out over several European bases, to the US base at Rota, Spain, for missions in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Africa.

The realignment plan is not to move substantial US forces closer to the former Soviet space in Europe. Lily pad-type bases are being set up in Eastern and Southern Europe, and small contingents of NATO and US troops will be redeployed there for training and exercises and to conduct tasks performed by forces that serve on a rotating basis.

The USA not only intends to close bases, but also plans to establish new sites in Europe for interceptor missiles as part of its National Missile Defense system. Along with the two existing sites, in Alaska and California, other anti-missile installations are expected to be built in the UK and in some Central European countries (see the discussion below).<sup>65</sup>

The terrorist attacks of September 2001 accelerated the process of elaborating an out-of-area role and new power-projection tasks for NATO, and since 2002 NATO has embarked on various missions both in and outside Europe that require appropriate bases. The NATO members, together with the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council states, play a critical role in the Balkans. In Bosnia and Herzegovina NATO led SFOR until December 2004, when EUFOR assumed its role. NATO Headquarters Sarajevo continues its activities in Bosnia and Herzegovina to counter terrorism, assist in defence reforms and support security. In Kosovo, a NATO-led, multinational peace enforcement force (Kosovo Force, KFOR) is stationed at several forward operating bases, including Lipljan, Novo Selo, Urosevac (Camp Bondsteel), Mitrovica and Prizren.<sup>66</sup>

The political and strategic developments in Europe have led to major changes in force deployment patterns in Central, Eastern and Southern Europe. The US military envisages that, when the base relocation process is complete, two-thirds of US 'maneuver forces' will be positioned in Eastern and Southern Europe.<sup>67</sup> Select states and regions of particular interest are discussed below.

<sup>63</sup> In May 2006 the DOD also announced the closure of 2 US bases in the UK and of an army storage facility in the Netherlands as part of its global military transformation.

<sup>64</sup> Gordon, M. R., 'A Pentagon plan would cut back G.I.'s in Germany', *New York Times*, 4 June 2004.

<sup>65</sup> Dinmore, G., 'Britain picked as possible "star wars" site', *Financial Times*, 23 Mar. 2006.

<sup>66</sup> See also the KFOR website, URL <<http://www.nato.int/kfor/kfor/about.htm>>.

<sup>67</sup> Statement by General Bantz J. Craddock, Commander, US European Command, before the Committee on Armed Services, US House of Representatives, 15 Mar. 2007, URL <<http://www.eucom.mil/English/Command/Posture/posture.asp>>.

## Germany

The vast majority of NATO's military bases, more than 250 installations, are located in Germany. In 1990 at the end of the cold war there were 47 major US military bases, including 10 major airbases, in western Germany. In the following five years, 21 of these bases were closed, others were reduced in strength, and 9 bases were unaffected.<sup>68</sup> As noted above, the process of further base removals has since then accelerated. The bases in Germany have several advantages: they are located in a stable, hospitable democratic country; the premises are excellent and well equipped with numerous amenities for soldiers; and they are relatively close to the Middle East.<sup>69</sup> In spite of its opposition to the war in Iraq, the German Government did not impose restrictions on the use of US bases during the conflict and it has continued to protect the bases.

The largest US contingent in Europe will remain in Germany, although two divisions that comprise more than 60 per cent of the US ground forces in Germany are being pulled out.<sup>70</sup> In July 2006 one of these, the 1st Infantry Division, left Germany for the USA, and the 1st Armoured Division is scheduled to follow. Subordinate units of the 1st Infantry Division and selected V Corps and US Army Europe units will also be relocated to the USA, inactivated, converted or reassigned in Europe. The 1st Infantry Division will be replaced by a 4000-strong, rapid-response brigade equipped with Stryker light-armoured vehicles. The division is currently located at Vilseck, near the US Army's training facility, Garrison Grafenwöhr. By 2007, 11 US bases are to be turned over to Germany,<sup>71</sup> and two more are to be turned over at a later, unspecified date.<sup>72</sup>

The facilities at Grafenwöhr and Hohenfels are huge complexes that train NATO and US army forces for combat and peacekeeping tasks. Together with the Vilseck training facility they serve as a key MOB and provide a power-projection platform for sending forces to the greater Middle East and Africa as required. The UK also

<sup>68</sup> Cunningham, K. B. and Klemmer, A., Bonn International Center for Conversion (BICC), *Restructuring the US Military Bases in Germany: Scope, Impacts, and Opportunities*, BICC Report 4, (BICC: Bonn, June 1995), URL <<http://www.bicc.de/publications/reports/report04/content.php>>, p. 6.

<sup>69</sup> Germany remains the country on the European continent with the most nuclear weapon facilities: 3 nuclear bases, 2 of which (Ramstein and Büchel) are fully operational and may store as many as 150 nuclear gravity bombs out of the total of some 480 stored in Europe. See Kristensen, H. M., *U.S. Nuclear Weapons in Europe: A Review of Post-Cold War Policy, Force Levels, and War Planning* (Natural Resources Defense Council: Washington, DC, Feb. 2005).

<sup>70</sup> Each of the 2 divisions has had only 2 combat brigades (the third is based in the USA) and each has had 12 500 of its total 16 000 personnel stationed in Germany.

<sup>71</sup> US Department of State, International Information Programs, 'U.S. to return 11 bases to Germany within two years', 29 July 2005, URL <<http://usinfo.state.gov/eur/Archive/2005/Jul/29176287.html>>.

<sup>72</sup> In 2004 Germany launched a broad programme of cuts in the number of German personnel and bases together with the repositioning of US forces in Germany. A total of 105 bases are to be closed, and by 2010 the number of German military bases will be fewer than 400. Bonn International Center for Conversion (BICC), *Conversion Survey 2005: Global Disarmament, Demilitarization and Demobilization* (BICC: Bonn, 2005), p. 47.

maintains large forces in North Rhine-Westphalia and Lower Saxony as part of the British Forces Germany.<sup>73</sup>

The large NATO airbases at Ramstein and Spangdahlem will undergo costly upgrades to consolidate US operations in and from Europe. The Geilenkirchen airbase is a NATO main operating airbase that operates three forward bases in Greece, Italy and Turkey.<sup>74</sup> In October 2005 the USA returned the Rhein-Main airbase (at Frankfurt airport) to Germany and the air force activities there were shifted to the strategic transportation nodes at the Ramstein and Spangdahlem airbases. Two squadrons of F-16 combat aircraft will probably be shifted from the Spangdahlem airbase to the Incirlik airbase in Turkey. The USA has also launched various training programmes at its German bases with troops from Eastern Europe, including Russia.<sup>75</sup>

### **South-Eastern Europe: the Black Sea bases**

The shift in US interest and engagement from Europe to Asia, and to some extent Africa, meant that bases were needed near potential crisis areas in these regions. Two waves of NATO's enlargement, in 1999 and 2004, facilitated the required base reconfiguration. NATO used some bases and installations in the region during the Kosovo campaign in 1999 (e.g. Taszár in Hungary<sup>76</sup>) and the 2003 invasion of Iraq (Sarafovo airport and the port of Burgas in Bulgaria, and the Mihail Kogalniceanu airport and the Black Sea port of Constanta in Romania).

In South-Eastern Europe, bases on the western Black Sea coast can be used as a natural extension of NATO and US influence towards strategically critical regions.<sup>77</sup> In December 2003 US delegations visited Bulgaria and Romania to

<sup>73</sup> The British Forces Germany (BFG) is the successor to the British Army on the Rhine and the Royal Air Force Germany (the RAF has now essentially withdrawn), which were disbanded in 1994. The BFG's headquarters is at Herford near Bielefeld, and garrison units are located at Gütersloh, Hohn, Osnabrück and Paderborn. On the BFG see URL <[http://www.bfgnet.de/bfgnet/home/home\\_sub/home.htm](http://www.bfgnet.de/bfgnet/home/home_sub/home.htm)>.

<sup>74</sup> The NATO Airborne Early Warning and Control Force E-3A component is stationed at the NATO Geilenkirchen airbase in Germany. It includes 3000 soldiers and NATO civilians representing 13 NATO member states. The FOBs are located at Aktion, Greece; Trapani, Italy; and Konya, Turkey; the forward operating location is at Ørland, Norway. For more information see URL <<http://www.e3a.nato.int/default.htm>>. The other, E-3D component, is at RAF Waddington in the UK.

<sup>75</sup> Such activities have taken place at Garrison Grafenwöhr and at Ramstein airbase. 'U.S. base in Germany draws trainees across Europe', *Defence News*, 27 June 2005, p. 20; and *Atlantic News*, 25 July 2006.

<sup>76</sup> Taszár, the first NATO military base on the territory of the former WTO, was used in 1995–2004. The successes of the NATO missions in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo eliminated the need for this staging area for allied troops.

<sup>77</sup> Radu Tudor writes that 'the US relocation of bases to the Black Sea could close the "defensive arc" and create the foundation for projecting security and stability forward into new arenas'. Tudor, R., 'Black Sea emerges as strategic hub following NATO expansion', *Jane's Intelligence Review*, Aug. 2004, p. 48. According to US ambassador to Bulgaria John R. Beyrle, 'a terrorist attack against shipping or [Black Sea] port facilities would directly threaten the interests and economic security of the United States, and of all the nations which use the energy from the region. Aside from terrorist



assess locations that had been proposed by both countries as possible allied bases. The vast training grounds in Bulgaria and Romania and the proximity of both countries to the Black Sea region, the Caucasus and the Middle East make them attractive in the light of the force transformation plan. Both countries strongly backed the US-led coalition during the war in Iraq, contributed troops and access to bases, and hosted thousands of coalition troops at their bases. This compensated for NATO's curtailed access to Turkish bases (see below). Bulgaria and Romania are staging areas for Afghanistan and Iraq and both hope that the current US force relocation will lead to the permanent presence of US troops on their territories. In early 2005 Bulgaria, Romania and the USA began to discuss basing, spurred on by NATO's plans to extend the mandate of Operation Active Endeavour from the Mediterranean to also cover the Black Sea. The US European Command planned to create the Eastern European Task Force (EETF), to be based in Romania and focused on the Black Sea region, the Caucasus and Central Asia.

### *Bulgaria*

In 2003 Bulgaria proposed that four to five military bases be provided to NATO and the USA in the Pleven (north) and Plovdiv (central) regions and at the Black Sea ports of Varna and Burgas. The training areas at Koren and Novo Selo were also of interest to the USA. Bulgaria recommended its naval base at Atiya as the first NATO base on the Black Sea and offered the use of the military airbases at Krumovo and Graf Ignatievo.<sup>78</sup> On 28 April 2006, a Bulgarian–US defence cooperation agreement was signed. It stipulates the range, order and conditions of the shared use of several military facilities in Bulgaria and allows US troops to share training bases as part of the EETF (now renamed the Joint Task Force–East), although the USA will not formally possess the bases.<sup>79</sup> Under the terms of the 10-year agreement, some 2500 US troops will temporarily be assigned to the Bulgarian bases for several months at a time.<sup>80</sup> The first US military personnel will arrive in 2007 or 2008 and will be stationed mainly at the Novo Selo training area and the Bezmer airbase.<sup>81</sup> The Graf Ignatievo airbase will be used primarily for logistical support, and storage facilities in Aytos near the port of Burgas are also covered by the agreement. Aside from the contribution to its security, Bulgaria

threats, the Black Sea is also “a potential avenue for other kinds of global threats”. These threats include illegal migration and human trafficking, as well as smuggling of drugs and weapons, thus the United States and all democratic nations have an interest in controlling this traffic’. US Department of State, International Information Programs, ‘U.S. negotiating use of shared military bases in Romania, Bulgaria’, 4 Nov. 2005, URL <<http://usinfo.state.gov/eur/Archive/2005/Nov/04-490927.html>>.

<sup>78</sup> ‘Bulgaria expects NATO bases, says For[eign]Min[ister] Passy’, *Bulgarian News Digest*, 19 Aug. 2003.

<sup>79</sup> According to the US Embassy in Bulgaria, ‘There will be no “U.S. military bases” in Bulgaria’. US Embassy in Bulgaria, ‘Frequently asked questions and answers about shared military facilities’, URL <[http://sofia.usembassy.gov/shared\\_facilities\\_faqs.html](http://sofia.usembassy.gov/shared_facilities_faqs.html)>.

<sup>80</sup> During force rotation there may be periods when ‘there are two groups of 2500 soldiers at one time in Bulgaria’. US Embassy in Bulgaria (note 79).

<sup>81</sup> The first Bulgarian–Romanian–US training exercise was held in Novo Selo in July 2006.

expects military benefits from sharing its facilities with the US troops, including ‘training and working together with one of the best equipped and trained military forces in the world’.<sup>82</sup> Economic benefits are also expected through the creation of jobs in the communities near the bases and owing to the need to obtain supplies and services from local businesses. The USA will benefit from the reduced cost of maintaining the installations.

### *Romania*

In 2004 Romania offered NATO and the USA the use of the Mihail Kogalniceanu airbase (which US troops had left in June 2003) and of the nearby port of Constanta in eastern Romania.<sup>83</sup> The Babadag training site and the military port of Mangalia were also proposed as potential NATO bases. On 6 December 2005, Romania and the USA signed a military access agreement allowing US troops to establish rudimentary shared facilities (i.e. an FOS) for training, pre-positioning and, if needed, staging and deployment in Romania. Personnel stationed permanently in and rotated from Germany or the USA will take part in temporary deployments to four facilities at the Mihail Kogalniceanu airbase and at Babadag, Cincu and Smardan. Some 100 US troops will be stationed permanently at the airbase as headquarters staff.<sup>84</sup> In November 2005 Human Rights Watch reported that the Mihail Kogalniceanu airbase (and Szymany airport in Poland) had been used in 2001–2004 for Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) ‘rendition’ (unlawful transfer) flights transporting suspected terrorists captured in Afghanistan between countries for interrogation in Central Europe.<sup>85</sup> Romania and Poland denied the reports, but Romania later conceded that such flights may have passed through the country.<sup>86</sup>

The US agreements with Bulgaria and Romania were criticized by Russia as contravening various post-cold war agreements: the NATO pledges in 1996–97 not to deploy nuclear weapons or a substantial number of combat forces or build up

<sup>82</sup> US Embassy in Bulgaria (note 79).

<sup>83</sup> The USA had made major investments in the Mihail Kogalniceanu airbase, which was a major redeployment area for US troops en route to Iraq. ‘Romania lobbies to host U.S. military base’, *Washington Post*, 12 Oct. 2004, p. A24. On Romanian assets see also ‘Rumsfeld eyes base for rent in Romania’, *New York Times*, 12 Oct. 2004. Reportedly, a Romanian general was dismissed in May 2005 for divulging to the media that the USA would set up 2 bases there within a year.

<sup>84</sup> US Department of State, International Information Programs, ‘Rice hails Romania as one of United States’ “strongest friends”’, 6 Dec. 2005, URL <<http://usinfo.state.gov/eur/Archive/2005/Dec/06-97381.html>>.

<sup>85</sup> Human Rights Watch, ‘Human Rights Watch statement on US secret detention facilities in Europe’, Human Rights News, 7 Nov. 2005, URL <<http://hrw.org>>.

<sup>86</sup> President Traian Basescu stated: ‘I have never rejected this reality but we reject any allegation that under [US–Romanian] cooperation human rights were not respected’. ‘Romania “unsure on CIA flights”’, *The Guardian*, 9 Feb. 2006. The former head of Romania’s Foreign Intelligence Service told European Parliament lawmakers that the Romanian authorities were forbidden access to the military areas at the Mihail Kogalniceanu airport under a 2002–2003 agreement with the USA. ‘Romania’s effort lax on CIA jails, EU says’, *International Herald Tribune*, 23 Oct. 2006, URL <<http://www.iht.com/articles/2006/10/19/news/detain.php>>.

infrastructure on the territories of the new NATO members, and the 1997 NATO–Russia Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security.<sup>87</sup>

### Central Europe

When the planned redeployment of US forces was initially announced, Russia's response was muted.<sup>88</sup> Russia was more concerned about possible deployments in Poland and the Baltic states than in its other former satellite states.

Hungary and Poland, however, responded to the US initiative with enthusiasm, offering the use of facilities, training areas, airspace and other forms of military cooperation. These offers were made with an awareness of the expected social and economic benefits and associated security protection and military assistance that would follow on such cooperation. Hungary and Poland were eager to present their countries as inexpensive (the cost of living in both is lower than that in e.g. Germany), more convenient (training areas are larger and lack the restrictions imposed at West European ranges) and safer (the countries are ostensibly less likely to be the targets of terrorist attacks). The favourable attitudes of the Hungarian and Polish governments towards NATO and the USA, and their willingness to demonstrate their suitability for membership in the run-up to the 1999 enlargement of NATO, contrasted with the attitudes of other countries.<sup>89</sup>

*Poland* was viewed favourably as a potential basing area, and in late 2003 it expressed its willingness to host US bases. Polish officials suggested various sites for US use, such as the Biala Podlaska base, approximately 160 kilometres east of Warsaw. However, the offer was not accepted and with the passage of time the likelihood of the establishment of a US base in Poland has lessened.

In mid-2004 the USA announced that it had entered into talks with the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland about the possibility of basing US missile defence interceptors and radars in those countries.<sup>90</sup> By 2006 only the Czech Republic and Poland continued to be under consideration. The USA's insistence that the host country cedes its sovereignty (via a status of forces agreement, SOFA) over the future missile defence site was controversial, and Poland expressed strong

<sup>87</sup> NATO, Meeting of the North Atlantic Council in defence ministers session, 'Final Communiqué', Brussels, 18 Dec. 1996, URL <<http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/1996/p96-172e.htm>>; NATO, 'Statement by the North Atlantic Council', Brussels, 14 Mar. 1997, URL <<http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/1997/p97-027e.htm>>; and NATO, Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security between NATO and the Russian Federation, Paris, 27 May 1997, URL <<http://www.nato.int/docu/basicxt/fndact-a.htm>>. See also 'Primakov: NATO bases in Romania and Bulgaria would break accords', Interfax, 21 Dec. 2005, URL <<http://dlib.eastview.com/sources/article.jsp?id=8795888>>.

<sup>88</sup> See Plugatarev, I., 'Pentagon sokrashchaet voiska v Yevrope' [The Pentagon cuts its troops in Europe], *Nezavisimoye Voennoye Obozreniye*, 20 Aug. 2004, URL <[http://nvo.ng.ru/wars/2004-08-20/1\\_europe.html](http://nvo.ng.ru/wars/2004-08-20/1_europe.html)>.

<sup>89</sup> 'Military bases to be moved east', *The Guardian*, 2 May 2003.

<sup>90</sup> Boese, W., 'U.S. eyes missile defense site in Europe', *Arms Control Today*, July/Aug. 2004, URL <[http://www.armscontrol.org/act/2004\\_07-08/MDSite.asp](http://www.armscontrol.org/act/2004_07-08/MDSite.asp)>.

reservations about the idea.<sup>91</sup> It was reported, however, that Poland was willing to allow US interceptor missile bases on its territory in exchange for a package comprising upgraded air defence (including the Patriot Advanced Capability, PAC-3, missile defence system) and a Polish–US security agreement.<sup>92</sup> For domestic political reasons, the Czech Republic procrastinated about approval of the US plans until the end of 2006. In January 2007 the Czech Republic and Poland agreed to start formal negotiations with the USA on the deployment of a radar system in the Czech Republic and an associated missile defence system in Poland, to be manned by a total of 350 US military and civilian personnel. In both countries the future deployments were strongly opposed by the public. This has also become a matter of open complaint by Russia, which threatened either to terminate or suspend some arms control agreements, and has led to criticism by France and Germany.

In 2003 Lithuanian Defence Minister Linas Linkevicius suggested that NATO should set up military bases in *Lithuania* or in Estonia or Latvia. However, then Chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff General Richard Myers dismissed the idea as contravening NATO's commitments.<sup>93</sup> In December 2003 the USA began consultations with NATO members on the realignment plan. The establishment of new bases on the territory of future NATO members was discussed, and Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov insisted that the US plan respect the limitations of the 1990 Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE Treaty).<sup>94</sup> In February 2004 the Russian defence minister demanded that Russia's military should be allowed permanently to monitor these facilities to verify that they pose no threat to Russia. Russia has since repeatedly insisted that the establishment of NATO military bases in the Baltic states would be viewed as a threat, while NATO has claimed that it will not set up such bases in the region.<sup>95</sup>

<sup>91</sup> Traynor, I., 'Poland reluctant to give America sovereignty over missile base', *The Guardian*, 27 July 2006. A SOFA is an integral part of the overall military bases agreement that allows the US military forces to operate in the host country. (The USA also has a multilateral SOFA with the NATO allies.)

<sup>92</sup> 'Poland considers its price for allowing US interceptor bases', *Jane's Defence Weekly*, 20 Sep. 2006, p. 7.

<sup>93</sup> Interfax (Moscow), 25 June 2003 in 'Russia assails Lithuania's statement on locating NATO bases in Baltic countries', Foreign Broadcast Information Service, *Daily Report—Central Eurasia (FBIS-SOV)*, FBIS-SOV-2003-0625, 25 June 2003. The offer was apparently motivated by familiar concerns (not to become a second-rate member) and by economic reasons. Estonia and Latvia stated that they did not have such plans. 'Estonia not planning to host NATO bases', Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL), *RFE/RL Newswire*, 23 June 2003. RFE/RL publications are archived at URL <<http://www.refrl.org>>.

<sup>94</sup> *Atlantic News*, 10 Dec. 2003, p. 5. The US global defence posture report to Congress made an assurance that any changes in the USA's European posture will be consistent with its CFE Treaty obligations, NATO policy statements and other commitments. US Department of Defense (note 16). For the text of the CFE Treaty and protocols see Koulik, S. and Kokoski, R., SIPRI, *Conventional Arms Control: Perspectives on Verification* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1994), pp. 211–76; and the OSCE website, URL <<http://www.osce.org/>>.

<sup>95</sup> Center for Defense Information (CDI), 'James Appathurai: NATO will not deploy military bases or nuclear weapons in Baltic states', *CDI Russia Weekly*, 5 Nov. 2004, URL <<http://www.cdi.org/russia/329-14.cfm>>.

In February 2004 the issue of NATO aerial patrols of the Baltic borders was raised by Russia. While it was hard to construe as a threat patrols of the borders of the Baltic states by four NATO aircraft stationed in Lithuania, Russia voiced anxiety that this might be followed by further deployments (e.g. an enhanced NATO presence and the subsequent creation of large NATO or US military bases close to its borders). In response, in April 2004 NATO reiterated its previous pledges not to deploy nuclear weapons or substantial conventional armaments on a permanent basis on the territories of the new member states, and the Baltic states again promised to demonstrate military restraint and promptly to accede to the adapted CFE Treaty (i.e. the CFE Treaty and the Agreement on Adaptation) regime when it enters into force.<sup>96</sup>

### **The Eastern Mediterranean region**

The case of *Turkey's* opposition to the 2003 invasion of Iraq demonstrated that even the staunchest NATO ally may disassociate itself from the USA and other partners in time of need. The preparations for and conduct of the war in Iraq not only led to a serious political intra-alliance crisis, but also raised the question whether securing basing rights in wartime is possible and, if so, how to facilitate it. Both the Turkish authorities and the Turkish public opposed the war. Turkey did not join the US-led coalition and insisted that a UN resolution authorizing the use of force be obtained. In talks with Turkey the US military requested the use of Turkish airbases and the Turkish air corridor in order to launch attacks on Iraq. Turkey's Parliament authorized the USA and other foreign air forces to use its airspace but refused to permit the use of its bases. This affected the British and US aircraft involved in the northern no-fly zone in Iraq,<sup>97</sup> and the US-led coalition had to rely on other bases in the region. The Turkish actions precipitated the US decision to reconsider the future status of the NATO airbase at Incirlik.<sup>98</sup> By May 2003 the UK and the USA had withdrawn 50 aircraft and 1400 personnel from the Incirlik airbase.

Unlike the situation in Saudi Arabia, where the USA pulled out its troops in 2003 owing to the anti-US sentiment among the population, Turkey's Incirlik airbase is too valuable a strategic asset to be easily abandoned. Three factors make the base valuable: (a) its proximity to potential trouble spots, such as Iran and Syria,

<sup>96</sup> NATO, 'Chairman's statement', Informal meeting of the NATO–Russia Council at the level of foreign ministers NATO Headquarters, Brussels, 2 Apr. 2004, URL <<http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/2004/p040402-nrc-e.htm>>. See also Lachowski, Z., *The Adapted CFE Treaty and the Admission of the Baltic States to NATO*, SIPRI Policy Paper no. 1 (SIPRI: Stockholm, Dec. 2002), URL <<http://www.sipri.org>>. For the text of the Agreement on Adaptation see *SIPRI Yearbook 2000: Armaments, Disarmament and International Security* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2000), pp. 627–42, and the OSCE website (note 94)

<sup>97</sup> The defeat of Saddam Hussein's regime in Iraq ended the need for the use of Turkish-based air missions to monitor the no-fly zone over northern Iraq and the use of Saudi bases to enforce the southern part of that no-fly zone.

<sup>98</sup> 'Turkish decision closes Incirlik airbase', *Defense News*, 23 Mar. 2003, p. 4.

which currently cannot be replaced by a base in the insecure and unstable Iraq; (b) its large capacity, which enables it to serve as a major staging area for regional operations; and (c) the significant savings associated with not having to relocate from the Incirlik airbase to another base.<sup>99</sup>

The main problem is the operational restrictions on the use of the airbase, particularly the need to ask for advance landing permission every time aircraft arrive at the Incirlik airbase from another part of the world. Turkey's unenthusiastic response to the USA's informal requests to change or more flexibly interpret the bilateral 1981 Turkish–US Defence and Economic Cooperation Agreement has so far blocked the plan to deploy 48 F-16 combat aircraft from Spangdahlem, Germany, to Incirlik.<sup>100</sup> In early 2005 it was reported that Turkey would allow the Incirlik airbase to be used for US logistical operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, but Turkey has ruled out a *carte blanche* arrangement for unspecified or unlimited US missions.<sup>101</sup> Turkey also turned down the US request to conduct training flights over the Konya area (NATO E-3A Component FOB) in central Turkey. In spite of the disagreement over the future status of the Incirlik airbase as a hub for Middle East operations, it has been used extensively since early 2004 for the rotation of tens of thousands of US troops to and from Iraq, a sign of improved Turkish–US relations. The Incirlik base has also been used for humanitarian operations, such as the relief operation after the October 2005 South-Asian (Kashmir) earthquake and for the evacuation of US citizens from Lebanon during the war between Hezbollah and Israel in July 2006. Turkey's concerns about US plans for the future of the Kurdish part of Iraq and US policy on the greater Middle East remain the main obstacles to agreement on the future use of the Incirlik airbase.

*Cyprus* is also of interest in the basing schemes for the region. Under the terms of the 1960 treaty granting Cyprus independence, two British sovereign base areas exist in Cyprus. Formally, both bases—Akrotiri and Dhekalia in southern and eastern Cyprus, respectively—constitute British territory in perpetuity. A total of some 3500 British personnel are based on the island. In the cold war period Cyprus was a staging post for most of the British and US activities in the Middle East and North Africa, and during the 1991 Gulf War and the 2003 invasion of Iraq it was used for the deployment of British and US troops. In the run-up to the referendum on reunification of Cyprus in the spring of 2004, speculation spread that the USA was interested in upgrading its intelligence presence in Cyprus.<sup>102</sup>

<sup>99</sup> Coats, G., 'New role sought for U.S. base in Turkey', *Defense News*, 12 Jan. 2004, p. 16.

<sup>100</sup> The Agreement for Cooperation on Defense and Economy between the USA and Turkey in Accordance with Articles 2 and 3 of the North Atlantic Treaty was signed on 29 Mar. 1980 and entered into force on 18 Dec. 1980; the text is available at URL <[http://ankara.usembassy.gov/treaty\\_websites.html](http://ankara.usembassy.gov/treaty_websites.html)>. See also Enginsoy, U. and Bekdil, B. E., 'Allies at odds over Incirlik', *Defense News*, 6 Sep. 2004, p. 11.

<sup>101</sup> Enginsoy, U. and Bekdil, B. E., 'Turkey, U.S. closer to compromise on air base', *Defense News*, 14 Feb. 2005, p. 36; and Enginsoy, U. and Bekdil, B. E., 'Turkey to accept U.S. base request "soon"', *Defense News*, 28 Mar. 2005, p. 6.

<sup>102</sup> Athanasiadis, I., 'US seeks major military base on united Cyprus', *Asia Times*, 10 Apr. 2004, URL <[http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Middle\\_East/FD10Ak04.html](http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Middle_East/FD10Ak04.html)>.

## 4. South-West and North-East Asia

Since 2001 world attention has shifted from Europe towards areas of instability and conflict in South-West and North-East Asia. Military bases serve different purposes depending on where they are located. Currently, in Afghanistan and Iraq they chiefly play the role of supporting troops in action against insurgents and terrorists by providing the necessary infrastructure—airfields, storage, backup facilities and services, and the like. The bases in the Middle East aim to ensure political stability, protect Western businesses and safeguard oil supplies. Recently, the Bush Administration has added its ‘freedom agenda’ to this list.<sup>103</sup> The USA is the main actor—backed either by coalitions of the willing or NATO. At least since 2002, NATO has reinforced its *raison d’être* via expeditionary missions and acquired access to facilities through agreements with host countries. In North-East Asia the patterns of the cold war have been retained: the robust bases there are intended to be used for co-defence by the USA’s local strategic partners in the event of a conflict or confrontation and for extended deterrence of US adversaries in the region.

### South-West Asia

The protracted wars being waged in Afghanistan and Iraq and the growing investments in terms of both troops and resources make it appear likely that US and coalition forces will remain in both countries for a long time. The official US position is that ‘long-term U.S. presence in these countries is a sovereign choice for their people and governments’.<sup>104</sup> In spite of repeated assurances from the Bush Administration that the USA is not seeking permanent bases in Afghanistan and Iraq, these assertions are challenged by opinion polls and experts.<sup>105</sup> ‘With installations in Iraq and Afghanistan, U.S. troops would surround America’s biggest rival for influence in the region: Iran. Iraqi bases also would improve U.S. ability to check Syria, and keep watch over vital Arabian Gulf oil states—an ability damaged by the need to pull out of Saudi Arabia shortly after the Iraq invasion’.<sup>106</sup> A 2005 US

<sup>103</sup> The freedom agenda refers to the Bush Administration’s goal of promoting democracy throughout the world. The White House, ‘President Bush Addresses United Nations General Assembly’, New York, 19 Sep. 2006, URL <<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2006/09/20060919-4.html>>.

<sup>104</sup> US Department of State (note 33).

<sup>105</sup> See Gramaone, J., ‘No plans for long-term U.S. bases in Iraq, Rumsfeld says’, News transcript, US Department of Defense, 23 Dec. 2005, URL <[http://www.defenselink.mil/news/Dec2005/20051223\\_3735.html](http://www.defenselink.mil/news/Dec2005/20051223_3735.html)>. Brig. Gen. Mark Kimmitt also noted: ‘The US will not maintain any long-term bases in Iraq. Our position is when we leave we will not have any bases here’. ‘US general maps out strategic refit for Iraq, Middle East and Asia’, *The Guardian*, 7 Feb. 2006.

<sup>106</sup> Trowbridge, G., ‘Is U.S. planning permanent bases in war zones?’, *Defense News*, 9 May 2005. There is already a regional network of bases in the neighbouring countries. Bases that support Afghanistan and Iraq include the Ali Ali Salem airbase in Kuwait, Ali Sayliyah and Al Udeid airbases in Qatar, and Al Dhafra in the United Arab Emirates.

Congressional Research Service (CRS) memorandum noted that, in addition to the almost \$1 billion spent in 2001–2004 by the Bush Administration for military construction projects in and near Afghanistan and Iraq, the DOD had requested another \$1 billion for 2005. In the light of this, the CRS memorandum questioned whether this expenditure heralded a long-term US presence in the region or was intended to be used for short-term improvements to US troop facilities.<sup>107</sup> US basing policy in the area remains ambiguous owing to political factors both within and outside the region. With the escalation of hostilities in Afghanistan and Iraq, the US strategy has evolved towards consolidating US forces at huge military facilities (hubs) as a means of reducing US troop requirements in the region. Apparently, this is being done at the expense of the NATO allies and counter-insurgency tactics (e.g. fielding small teams of advisers), a trend that is criticized both in the USA and among the coalition partners as counterproductive.<sup>108</sup>

### *Afghanistan*

In the wake of the September 2001 attacks, NATO supported the US-led Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan in various ways, including by providing access to ports and bases, overflight rights, and the like. In late 2001, during the first months of the war, 14 NATO member states deployed forces in the region and 9 of them took part in combat operations. The NATO states and other partner countries have provided some 95 per cent of the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), which is based in Afghanistan and operates parallel to Operation Enduring Freedom. After successfully providing security assistance, peacekeeping and reconstruction aid in the northern and western parts of Afghanistan, since mid-2006 ISAF has embarked on more challenging hard security, counter-insurgency missions in the southern and, since October 2006, the eastern provinces of the country. ISAF's security mission has expanded to include the entire country and as of March 2007 it has some 37 000 troops at its disposal.<sup>109</sup>

The possibility of setting up permanent US military bases in Afghanistan was discussed in early 2005 when, during a visit to the country, US Senator John McCain suggested that US bases there would be in the interest of US and regional

<sup>107</sup> Belasco, A. and Else, D., *Military Construction in Support of Afghanistan and Iraq*, US Library of Congress, Congressional Research Service (CRS) Report for Congress (CRS: Washington, DC, 11 Apr. 2005), URL <<http://www.fpc.state.gov/c14641.htm>>. According to the CRS the total spending in 2001–2005 was \$2241.3 million.

<sup>108</sup> See e.g. Rogers, P., 'The Pentagon overstretch', openDemocracy, 29 Sep. 2005, URL <[http://www.opendemocracy.net/conflict/nato\\_2880.jsp](http://www.opendemocracy.net/conflict/nato_2880.jsp)>; and Moulton, S., 'Getting the right troops in the right places', *International Herald Tribune*, 15 Sep. 2006.

<sup>109</sup> International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), 'Key facts', 20 Apr. 2007, URL <<http://www.nato.usmission.gov/dossier/Afghanistan/Placemat%2020%20Apr%2007.ppt>>. See also O'Bryant, J. and Waterhouse, M., *US Forces in Afghanistan*, US Library of Congress, Congressional Research Service (CRS) Report for Congress RS22633 (CRS: Washington, DC, 27 Mar. 2007), URL <<http://www.fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/82599.pdf>>. According to O'Bryant and Waterhouse, the USA has c. 25 000 troops stationed in Afghanistan.



security.<sup>110</sup> Two months later the Afghan President, Hamid Karzai, declined to confirm whether a long-term security arrangement with the USA would include the establishment of permanent US bases in Afghanistan, and US Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld stressed that ‘we think more in terms of what we are doing than the question of military bases and that sort of thing’.<sup>111</sup>

At a meeting on 23 May 2005, Bush and Karzai signed the Joint Declaration of the United States–Afghanistan Strategic Partnership, which stated that ‘U.S. military forces operating in Afghanistan will continue to have access to Bagram Air Base and its facilities, and facilities at other locations as may be mutually determined and that the U.S. and Coalition forces are to continue to have the freedom of action required to conduct appropriate military operations based on consultations and pre-agreed procedures’.<sup>112</sup> Although the Joint Declaration did not grant permanent basing rights to the USA, which would have been too controversial for the Afghan public, it permitted a standing US military presence in the country.

As of early 2007, some 3500 US military personnel (as well as several thousand ISAF troops) were stationed at the Bagram airbase, in eastern Afghanistan, north of Kabul, and hundreds of aircraft were based there and at 13 other airfields in Afghanistan. As NATO’s security responsibilities in Afghanistan increased, plans were made for NATO to share the operational costs and control of the airbase, which was intended to become its logistical hub. NATO assumed responsibility for military operations from the US forces in eastern Afghanistan in October 2006, but the Bagram airbase remains under US command. Bagram and other bases are also used by US forces as prison facilities for alleged terrorists and rebels. Other US-controlled logistical centres in Afghanistan include the Kandahar airfield in southern Afghanistan, where about 500 US personnel are stationed; Kabul airport; and the Shindand airbase in the western province of Herat. Shindand is some 35 km from the border with Iran and of particular concern to the Iranian authorities, who fear that its military facilities and other smaller FOBs could be used for aggressive encircling or military operations against Iran. Bases outside the country that support NATO and US operations in Afghanistan include the Ganci airbase at Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan; several bases in the Gulf, including the Al Dhafra airbase in

<sup>110</sup> When asked what a ‘long-term strategic partnership’ between Afghanistan and the USA could entail, McCain (stressing that it was his view) identified military partnership, including ‘joint military permanent bases’. Quoted in Synovitz, R., ‘Afghanistan: how would permanent U.S. bases impact regional interests?’, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, 23 Feb. 2005. McCain’s office later qualified his statement to the effect that ‘he did not mean to imply that [such a commitment] would necessarily require permanent U.S. military bases’ in Afghanistan.

<sup>111</sup> Rumsfeld as quoted in Shanker, T., ‘Afghan leader to propose strategic ties with the U.S.’, *New York Times*, 14 Apr. 2004. Reportedly, on 8 May 2005 Karzai invited about 1000 Afghan delegates to a national consultation in Kabul on whether Afghanistan should host permanent US bases. Their response was ambivalent: they supported an indefinite presence of foreign forces to maintain security but asked Karzai to delay his decision.

<sup>112</sup> The White House, Office of the Press Secretary, ‘Joint Declaration of the United States–Afghanistan Strategic Partnership’, Washington, DC, 23 May 2005, URL <<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2005/05/20050523-2.html>>.

the United Arab Emirates; the Al Udeid airbase in Qatar; and the Incirlik airbase in Turkey.<sup>113</sup>

The base in Afghanistan that receives the largest share of funds from the US DOD budget is the Bagram airbase. (Until 2005 the Karshi–Khanabad airbase in Uzbekistan, which supported military activities in Afghanistan, was also one of the main recipients of DOD funds.) As of early 2005, \$83 million was being spent on military construction and upgrading at the Bagram airbase and the Kandahar airfield. Other estimates say that the US Air Force was investing more than \$120 million at Bagram and Kandahar to repair, enlarge and extend the runways, taxiways, airfield lighting and other facilities.<sup>114</sup> The CRS estimated that, in 2001–2004, \$120 million was spent to support military construction in Afghanistan, and another \$230 million was requested for financial year 2005.<sup>115</sup> Forward support bases (FSBs) in Kabul and Mazar-i-Sharif (north), Herat (west), and Kandahar (south) provide medical evacuation and security assistance to ISAF and NATO military–civilian provincial reconstruction teams.

### *Iraq*

The situation in Iraq is more complicated than that in Afghanistan because Iraq is strategically located and potentially capable of limiting the activities of major US Middle East rivals such as Iran and Syria. In early 2003 both the UK and the USA planned to set up military bases in Iraq and retain them after the withdrawal of the invasion force. (NATO does not officially participate in combat missions in Iraq, and its role is limited to training tasks for the Iraqi military.) The DOD planned to establish four airbases to support the forces operating in Iraq and to serve as an alternative to similar bases in Saudi Arabia and Turkey, both of which were reluctant to support the invasion of Iraq.<sup>116</sup> The UK also planned to make Basra airport a major logistical hub and helicopter base.

The USA encountered serious legal obstacles to implementation of its long-term deployment plans. It hoped that an internationally recognized government in Iraq could conclude relevant agreements after the handover of sovereignty in June 2004. However, the two main political factions in Iraq are nearly united in their demand for a quick US withdrawal rather than an open-ended US military presence. Although the Kurds in Iraq might welcome the long-term presence of US

<sup>113</sup> Katzman, K., *Afghanistan: Post-War Governance, Security, and U.S. Policy*, US Library of Congress, Congressional Research Service (CRS) Report for Congress RL30588 (CRS: Washington, DC, 23 Aug. 2006), URL <<http://www.fpc.state.gov/c4763.htm>>, pp. 21–22. See also ‘Afghanistan—airfields’, GlobalSecurity.org, URL <<http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/afghanistan/airfield.htm>>.

<sup>114</sup> Rolfsen, B., ‘Afghan base runways challenge U.S. pilots’, *Defense News*, 22 Aug. 2005.

<sup>115</sup> Belasco and Else (note 107), p. 3.

<sup>116</sup> The 4 airbases were planned to be located at an isolated airstrip designated H-1 in western Iraq; at Bashur in the Kurdish north; at Tallil near Nassiriya in southern Iraq; and at Baghdad international airport. Ripley, T., ‘US and UK reveal plans to set up bases in Iraq’, *Defense News*, 30 Apr. 2003.

bases in the northern part of the country,<sup>117</sup> the existence of such bases could adversely affect both domestic unity and relations with Iraq's neighbours. The presence of US bases in Iraq is unlikely to be tenable politically because insurgent attacks make investment in Iraq unattractive; Iraqi national interests are unclear because of the conflicting interests of the political factions; and the USA is generally regarded negatively and as an unwelcome occupier.<sup>118</sup> Possible repercussions in the region must also be taken into account. A status of forces agreement has not been signed, but the US and coalition forces operate in Iraq and use its facilities under temporary memoranda of understanding.

Even before the Joint Declaration of the United States–Afghanistan Strategic Partnership, the USA had taken steps that suggested it was planning a permanent presence in the conflict zones in Asia.<sup>119</sup> US estimates indicate that some \$300 million had been spent for military installations in Iraq by 2004, and \$670 million was requested for financial year 2005.<sup>120</sup> In Iraq the largest amounts have been received by the co-located Balad airbase and Logistics Support Area Anaconda, Baghdad; by the co-located Al Taji Military Complex and Camp Cooke; and by Camp Speicher in Tikrit. The DOD's spending on military installations has caused concern in the Congress about a loophole in the definition of 'military construction' and its own limited control over the DOD's performance in this area.<sup>121</sup>

In May 2005 President Bush signed the supplemental funding bill that provided resources for the construction of bases—'in some very limited cases, permanent facilities'—in Iraq. At that time it was estimated that US forces possessed 110 military bases and installations in Iraq. In mid-2006 it was reported that 48 FOBs in Iraq had been transferred to Iraqi control.<sup>122</sup> Of the remaining facilities, 14 are to remain enduring bases and will be consolidated into four large airbases (mega-bases). The mega-bases are to be located at Tallil (south), Al Asad (west) and Balad (centre), where major facilities already exist, and at either Irbil or Quayyarah (north).<sup>123</sup>

<sup>117</sup> Iraqi President Jalal Talabani, a Kurd, has expressed hope for a long-term US military presence in Iraq—some 10 000 soldiers and 2 airbases in Iraqi Kurdistan to prevent 'foreign interference'. 'Iraq is not in chaos', *Washington Post*, 25 Sep. 2006. Talabani's wish contrasted with polls showing that most Iraqis disagreed with their leaders. 'Most Iraqis favor immediate U.S. pullout, polls show', *Washington Post*, 27 Sep. 2006.

<sup>118</sup> Marten, K. and Cooley, A., 'Permanent bases won't work', *International Herald Tribune*, 3 Feb. 2005.

<sup>119</sup> Trowbridge, G., 'Is U.S. planning permanent bases in war zones?', *Defense News*, 9 May 2005.

<sup>120</sup> Belasco and Else (note 107), p. 3.

<sup>121</sup> Belasco and Else (note 107), pp. 10–12. See also 'Iraqi airfields', *GlobalSecurity.org*, URL <<http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/iraq/airfields.htm>>.

<sup>122</sup> US Department of State, International Information Programs, 'U.S. announces transfer for two northern Iraqi provinces', 8 Aug. 2006, URL <<http://usinfo.state.gov/usinfo/>>.

<sup>123</sup> Spolar, C., '14 "enduring bases" set in Iraq: long term military presence planned', *Chicago Tribune*, 23 Mar. 2004; and 'Iraq facilities', *GlobalSecurity.org*, URL <<http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/facility/iraq-intro.htm>>.

*Supporting operations in South-West Asia: the Gulf region*

US bases in the Gulf countries play a special role and are crucial for protecting US interests in the region and the areas adjacent to it. The US Central Command (CENTCOM)<sup>124</sup> has consolidated bases or established new bases in Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates for auxiliary tasks, primarily for combat forces in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Since the 1991 Gulf War the USA has maintained substantial pre-positioned army assets in Kuwait. US Air Force troops had been stationed at the joint Saudi Arabian–US Prince Sultan airbase south of Riyadh since 1979, and Saudi Arabia was a key base in the Gulf War and for enforcement of the no-fly zone over Iraq until the 2003 invasion of Iraq. The flights to enforce the no-fly zone and the potential use of Saudi Arabia for retaliatory attacks against Arab states in the ‘global war on terrorism’ made the US presence in Saudi Arabia highly unpopular there. The USA therefore withdrew most of its forces to the large Al Udeid airbase in Qatar (with accommodation for approximately 10 000 military personnel), where construction has continued since 2000.<sup>125</sup> The US bases in the region are perceived by the host countries as a guarantee against Iran’s attacking them. However, they also fear that, in a military conflict between Iran and the USA, Iran would retaliate against them.

According to President Bush’s realignment plan the USA will maintain, and in some cases upgrade, ‘without permanence’, sites in the Middle East for forces that serve on a rotating basis and for contingencies (as FOSs and CSLs). They will be supported by forward headquarters and advanced training facilities.<sup>126</sup> For these purposes, the USA has established a network of pre-positioned war reserve materiel locations, such as those at the Seeb, Thumrait and Masirah airbases in Oman; at the Al Udeid airbase in Qatar; and at the Manama naval base in Bahrain (US Naval Forces Central Command, the Fifth Fleet).<sup>127</sup>

**East Asia and the Indian Ocean region**

The access routes to the area that extends from north-eastern through south-eastern to southern Asia are controlled by US bases in Japan, South Korea and various islands in the Indian Ocean. During the cold war the bases were intended to constrain the strategic freedom of the Soviet Union and its allies in those areas; today they are meant to contain China and India, and deter North Korea, rather than Russia. The USA has no peer to its strength in the region. China has stated that it

<sup>124</sup> The CENTCOM area of responsibility extends to 27 states in Central Asia, East Africa and the Middle East. In 2008 the US African Command (AFRICOM) will take over responsibility for all of Africa, except Egypt.

<sup>125</sup> ‘US to move headquarters out of Saudi Arabia’, *Jane’s Defence Weekly*, 7 May 2003, p. 7.

<sup>126</sup> US Department of State (note 33).

<sup>127</sup> On these and other facilities see ‘US Central Command facilities’, GlobalSecurity.org, URL <<http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/facility/centcom.htm>>.

does not seek to establish foreign military bases, while India has apparently embarked on its first, modest foreign basing effort (in Farkhor, Tajikistan).<sup>128</sup> Although it is not the case throughout all of Asia, in North-East Asia there is strong domestic opposition to the establishment of US military bases, particularly to their size and location and the terms of stationing. In Japan and South Korea there is intense debate about cultural and historical sensitivities, the obstruction of urban development caused by the presence of bases, cost sharing and the need for environmental clean-up of the bases being handed over by the USA. For its part the USA has committed to pull out more than 20 000 US troops from the region and will attempt to make optimal use of its military installations in the Asia–Pacific region, in Guam (bombers and submarines), and in Hawaii and Alaska (co-locating Stryker brigades with high-speed naval lift and C-17 transport aircraft). Numerous FOSs and CSLs also exist in or are being considered for Mongolia, the Philippines and Thailand, and probably Australia, Malaysia and elsewhere.<sup>129</sup>

### *The Korean peninsula*

The history of US bases in South Korea dates back to the 1950–53 Korean War and the subsequent containment and deterrence policy directed at North Korea. A dialogue between North and South Korea opened in the 1990s (and continues to evolve) and US thinking about the Korean peninsula has undergone a change from the cold war view. The decisions on realignment were shaped by the above-mentioned factors and the progress of democratization in South Korea as well as by the USA's own policy of enhancing US strategic flexibility.<sup>130</sup>

In May 2003 the South Korean President, Roh Moo-hyun, and US President Bush agreed to consolidate the US forces on the Korean peninsula and to relocate Yongsan Garrison, which is located in the centre of Seoul, as soon as possible. The US bases north of the Han River, close to the border with North Korea, will also be repositioned, taking into account the political, economic and security situation on the Korean peninsula and in North-East Asia.<sup>131</sup> In the spring of 2004 the USA announced the relocation of some 3600 troops from South Korea to Iraq, another signal of the coming changes in the US military presence abroad.

<sup>128</sup> On China's position see e.g. Zhang, Z., Speech at the 42nd Munich Conference on Security Policy, 5 Feb. 2006, URL <[http://www.securityconference.de/konferenzen/rede.php?menu\\_2006=&menu\\_konferenzen=&sprache=en&id=173](http://www.securityconference.de/konferenzen/rede.php?menu_2006=&menu_konferenzen=&sprache=en&id=173)>. On India's position see Walsh N. P., 'India flexes its muscles with first foreign military base', *The Guardian*, 27 Apr. 2006, URL <<http://www.guardian.co.uk/india/story/0,,1761360,00.html>>.

<sup>129</sup> Kamphausen, R., 'U.S. national defense strategy and implications for the Asia–Pacific', Speech at the 2005 Pacific Symposium, Honolulu, Hawaii, 9 June 2005, URL <<http://www.comw.org/cmp/fulltext/0404kamphausen.pdf>>.

<sup>130</sup> Nam, C., 'Relocating the U.S. forces in South Korea', *Asian Survey*, vol. 46, no. 4 (July/Aug. 2006), pp. 616–18.

<sup>131</sup> US Department of State, International Information Programs, 'U.S., South Korea "will not tolerate" nuclear North Korea: joint statement following Bush, Roh Moo-hyun White House talks', 14 May 2003, URL <<http://usinfo.state.gov/usinfo>>.

On 7 June 2004 the Bush Administration presented a detailed plan for the withdrawal of one-third of its more than 37 000 troops in South Korea by the end of 2005. The South Korean authorities were concerned that a reduction on this scale might result in grave security consequences, which led to reconsideration of the timetable. On 23 July a formal agreement was reached whereby some 8000 US personnel stationed at Seoul are to be relocated 70 km south, to Pyongtaek, by December 2008. In a three-phase withdrawal, 12 500 soldiers will also be pulled out of South Korea: 5000 troops in 2004; another 5000 soldiers in 2005–2006; and 2500 troops in 2007–2008. By early 2007 there were 29 000 US military personnel in South Korea. The eventual transfer of the 2nd Infantry Division, stationed north of Seoul, to enduring hubs in Pyongtaek was also discussed.<sup>132</sup> By 2008 the widely scattered military installations are to be combined in two main operating bases at new joint facilities south of the Han River; however, the plan has encountered difficulties and withdrawal may be delayed until 2012.<sup>133</sup> Some \$11 billion has been earmarked (\$6 billion of which will be provided by South Korea) to enhance more than 100 military capabilities on the peninsula, including the introduction of Stryker light-armoured vehicles, upgrades to Patriot anti-ballistic missile systems and the use of unmanned aerial vehicles. To compensate for the removal of ground forces from South Korea, a substantial number of heavy air force bombers and attack aircraft have been moved from the USA to bases throughout the region. Other high-technology equipment, such as a new generation of sensors, smart bombs and high-speed transport ships, should in the DOD's view more than compensate for the decrease in the number of troops.<sup>134</sup>

The relocation of US military bases in South Korea should be viewed in the broader context of relations between the two countries and differences over North Korea. The US policy complements President Roh's policy of South Korean self-reliance in defence matters and an equitable politico-military alliance with the USA. The US plan is to reduce the number of US troops on the peninsula; end the strategy of keeping forces near the demilitarized zone between North and South Korea; hand over most defence missions to South Korea; consolidate the US

<sup>132</sup> US Department of State, International Information Programs, 'U.S., South Korea agree on U.S. troop relocation', 23 July 2004, URL <<http://usinfo.state.gov/eap/Archive/2004/Jul/26-450225.html>>.

<sup>133</sup> Admiral William J. Fallon noted: 'The realignment and consolidation of U.S. Forces Korea into two hubs optimally locates forces for combined defense missions, better positions U.S. forces for regional stability, greatly reduces the number of major installations, returns most installations in Seoul to [South Korea], and decreases the overall number of US personnel in Korea. When completed, these initiatives will also result in joint installations that provide more modern and secure facilities, expanded training space, a less intrusive presence, and an enhanced quality of life for both Koreans and US forces and their families'. Statement of Admiral William J. Fallon, U.S. Navy Commander, U.S. Pacific Command, before the Senate Armed Services Committee on U.S. Pacific Command Posture, 7 Mar. 2006, URL <<http://www.pacom.mil/speeches/speeches.shtml>>. On the delay see Gross, D. G., 'Relocation of U.S. bases in South Korea', *Comparative Connections*, Apr. 2007, URL <[http://www.csis.org/media/csis/pubs/0701qus\\_korea.pdf](http://www.csis.org/media/csis/pubs/0701qus_korea.pdf)>.

<sup>134</sup> Kirk, J., 'U.S. to pull out from S. Korea bases', *Washington Times*, 17 Dec. 2004; and Shanker, T., 'In shift, U.S. plans high-tech defense of Seoul', *International Herald Tribune*, 30 Aug. 2005.

presence around hub bases; return the land occupied by many small bases scattered throughout the Korean peninsula, thus hopefully alleviating the local population's opposition to the US presence; and pursue a policy of strategic flexibility that would enable US rapid deployment forces on the Korean peninsula to respond to regional crises and conflicts.<sup>135</sup> In February 2007 the South Korean and US defence ministers agreed that the USA would transfer the wartime command of South Korean forces to South Korea by 2012.<sup>136</sup> The strategic flexibility policy has caused serious concern in both South Korea and China.

The transformation of the US presence in Asia and the realignment of US forces on the Korean peninsula as part of the global defence posture report has effectively disconnected proposed changes in the US defence posture on the Korean peninsula from the North Korean nuclear issue. In South Korea, the relocation issue led some segments of the population to call for the further reduction or eviction of US forces, which were alleged to pose a greater threat to peace than North Korea, while others voiced concern that the USA would abandon South Korea. The latter concern is based on the view that the USA is curtailing its presence, including basing, in order to focus its capabilities on countering terrorism elsewhere or because of the grim forecast that the USA is preparing for an attack on North Korea.<sup>137</sup> China has also interpreted the US redeployment as designed to give more flexibility for attacking China itself from various quarters, with fewer US troops facing the consequent risks in the front line and less chance of being restrained by South Korean wishes.<sup>138</sup> Fearing that the new policy might entangle South Korea in US responses to a China–Taiwan conflict, President Roh stated that ‘US Forces Korea should not be involved in disputes in Northeast Asia without our consent’.<sup>139</sup>

### *Japan*

The US military presence in Japan began at the end of World War II. Okinawa's proximity to potential hot spots determines its strategic importance in the security and defence policy of the Japanese–US relationship. Originally, Okinawa hosted some 75 per cent of the US ground forces in Japan, although the number has now been nearly halved to some 25 000. Some US forces stationed in Japan were

<sup>135</sup> The text of the US–South Korean statement on the launch of the Strategic Consultation for Allied Partnership is reproduced in US Department of State, International Information Programs, ‘U.S.–South Korea relationship enters new era, State says’, 19 Jan. 2006, URL <<http://usinfo.state.gov/eap/Archive/2006/Jan/20-573902.html>>.

<sup>136</sup> US Department of State, ‘U.S., South Korea to transfer wartime force command in 2012’, 23 Feb. 2007, URL <<http://usinfo.state.gov>>.

<sup>137</sup> Snyder, S., ‘CBMs and other security mechanisms pertinent to the Korean peninsula following the start of a peace process: an American view’, Unpublished paper presented at a SIPRI seminar, Stockholm, 16 May 2006.

<sup>138</sup> Choe, S.-H., ‘Shift GIs to Taiwan? Never, China envoy says’, *International Herald Tribune*, 22 Mar. 2006.

<sup>139</sup> ‘Roh tells U.S. to stay out of regional affairs’, *Washington Times*, 11 Mar. 2005.

deployed to regions of combat during the Korean, Viet Nam and Gulf wars. At present, some 35 000 US troops are stationed in Japan.

The rationale for the 1960 Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security between Japan and the USA and the need for US bases on Japanese territory was debated after the end of the cold war.<sup>140</sup> However, several factors, such as China's growing military strength, North Korea's missile and nuclear tests and Japan's associated security vulnerability, moderated the more extreme standpoints. Okinawa was the focal point of the debate. The US presence there has long met with severe criticism and protests by the local population, which has complained about crowding, alleged increased crime, accidents caused by military activities, US use of valuable land and the noise associated with US forces. In 1996 it was agreed that one-fifth of the land used for US military installations in Okinawa would be returned to Japanese control and that the controversial US Marine Corps Air Station Futenma would be returned to Okinawan control within five to seven years.<sup>141</sup>

In the spring of 2004 the USA asked Japan for permission to replace the Futenma airbase with a facility at Marine Corps Camp Schwab in Nago, an existing US base in the less populated northern part of the island. The talks stalled, however, owing to several factors, including strong domestic opposition, especially local protests on Okinawa, and the Japanese Government's reluctance or inability to persuade the public that the national interest should occasionally override local concerns. Nonetheless, in early 2005 it was agreed that an offshore airfield could be built at Nago to replace the airfield at Futenma, although environmentalists protested because part of the base would be built on coral reefs. The agreement was reached as part of a security transformation package that reflected the new Japanese-US relationship. According to observers, in the discussion of the realignment of US forces, the USA focused on the command element while the Japanese negotiators sought to reduce the difficulties caused by the presence of US bases.<sup>142</sup> In October 2005 it was agreed that the Futenma airbase facility would indeed be moved to Camp Schwab. The agreement was a breakthrough but many details, such as cost sharing, were not worked out. In April and May 2006 the Japanese and US defence ministers finalized the relocation plans: construction of the airfield at Nago is to be completed by 2014; the Futenma airbase will remain operational until the construction of the airfield is finished; and the Futenma airbase will then be returned to civilian use.

Other aspects of US basing that have been discussed include: (a) improving the interoperability of US forces by moving the headquarters of the US 1st Army Corps from Fort Lewis, Washington, to Camp Zama, near Tokyo, and enhanced

<sup>140</sup> The Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security between Japan and the United States of America was signed on 19 Jan. 1960 and entered into force on 19 June 1960. URL <<http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/n-america/us/q&a/ref/1.html>>.

<sup>141</sup> Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 'Japan-US. Special Action Committee (SACO) Interim Report', 15 Apr. 1996, URL <<http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/n-america/us/security/seco.html>>. The base was built on the outskirts of the city of Ginowan. However, owing to the growth of Ginowan, the base is now in a densely populated area of the city, occupying 25% of it.

<sup>142</sup> Halloran, R., 'U.S., Japan redraw alliance', *Washington Times*, 15 Apr. 2005.



intelligence sharing; (b) constructing a new heliport at Camp Schwab; (c) relocating some 7000–8000 Marines from Okinawa to Guam, a US territory in the Pacific, which will play a greater role in Japanese–US relations and the ‘security architecture of the Asia–Pacific region’;<sup>143</sup> and (d) stationing a nuclear-powered aircraft carrier in Yokosuka port (the most strategically important US foreign naval base), near Tokyo. The last two proposals elicited strong protests from local residents and politicians. In a related occurrence, the residents of Iwakumi, in western Japan, voted against expanding the nearby US base.

Some 8000 marines will be relocated to Guam by 2014, leaving about 15 500 US troops in Okinawa. Japan has agreed to cover 60 per cent of the estimated \$10 billion cost of the relocation. However, the overall cost will probably be about \$20–30 billion, and this remains a highly charged issue in Japanese politics. Several facilities south of the Kadena airbase, the largest US airbase on Okinawa and located close to its urban area, will be returned wholly or partially to Japanese administration. The control structures of Japanese and US forces at Camp Zama, south-west of Tokyo, will be more closely integrated. Japan will build a new bilateral air defence command centre at the Yokota airbase, west of Tokyo, so as to increase interoperability with US forces. Smaller relocations are also planned.<sup>144</sup>

In the summer of 2006 Japan and the USA announced that PAC-3 ballistic missile interceptors would be deployed at the US bases on Okinawa and on mainland Japan (at the Yokosuka naval base and the Yokota airbase), and later redeployed to Japanese Self-Defence Force bases, in order to address the growing concern about the repeated missile launches by North Korea over the Sea of Japan. An additional 600 specially trained US troops will be needed in Japan to operate the PAC-3 system. Such a move is likely to spark local opposition, but the Japanese authorities are allegedly determined to quash any such protest.<sup>145</sup>

### *Diego Garcia*

Three bilateral British–US treaties signed between 1966 and 1976 established the military status of Diego Garcia in the British Indian Ocean Territory. The USA stations long-range B-1 and B-2 bombers, airborne warning and control system (AWACS) aircraft and cargo pre-positioning ships at Diego Garcia, and a US signals intelligence (SIGINT) post may be located on the island. Diego Garcia is near

<sup>143</sup> US Department of State, ‘United States, Japan reaffirm commitment on security cooperation’, 1 May 2006, URL <<http://usinfo.state.gov/usinfo>>. Guam will function as a base in the Pacific Command (‘an unsinkable aircraft carrier’) and be used to overcome the ‘tyranny of distance’. Guam’s infrastructure is poor, and the cost of improving it has yet to be determined as well as whether the US Congress will allocate the necessary funding.

<sup>144</sup> US Department of State, ‘United States–Japan roadmap for realignment implementation issued following May 1, 2006 meeting of the U.S.–Japan Security Consultative Committee involving Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, Japanese Minister of Foreign Affairs Taro Aso, Japanese Minister of State for Defense Fukushima Nukaga’, 1 May 2006, URL <<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2006/65517.htm>>.

<sup>145</sup> Faiola, A., ‘U.S., Japan to start deploying missile interceptors’, *Washington Post*, 21 July 2006.

## 42 FOREIGN MILITARY BASES IN EURASIA

international shipping lanes and there is no local population.<sup>146</sup> It has been used as the largest British–US naval support and pre-positioning base in the Indian Ocean and played a key role in keeping India, the main Soviet partner in the region during the cold war, at bay.

India and the Soviet Union initially protested against the militarization of Diego Garcia, and India sought to declare the Indian Ocean a zone of peace. Indian–US relations have improved since the end of the cold war, and some naval cooperation has developed between the two countries. Diego Garcia is an important air and naval base that served as a main platform during the Gulf War and the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq.

<sup>146</sup> In the 1960s and 1970s the local population was forcibly relocated from the island to Mauritius and the Seychelles. For some time Mauritius has pressed claims to sovereignty over Diego Garcia, while assuring the USA that it would not affect the US leasing of the island, and the deportees have brought legal cases asserting their claim to return.

## 5. Russia and the near abroad: from retreat to recapture

Like tsarist Russia, the Soviet Union was obsessed with the idea that it was encircled because of its geographical position, with limited access to the high seas and a restricted number of major ports that remain accessible in winter. After World War II the Soviet Union tightened its control over its European satellites and set up numerous military bases on their territories. From the 1960s the Soviet Union also sought to counter the ring of US-led alliances around the Soviet bloc by forward-basing its troops in countries close to the USA and its allies. After the revolution in Cuba in 1959, the Soviet Union built a vast military infrastructure on the island as its closest available facility to the USA. The Soviet Union competed for and gained influence in the developing world and elsewhere, while Soviet servicemen made port calls for replenishment, refuelling and maintenance or stationed military personnel in Angola, Egypt, Finland, Guinea, Libya, Mongolia, Syria, Tunisia, Yemen, Yugoslavia and Viet Nam.<sup>147</sup>

After the collapse of the Warsaw Treaty Organization and the break-up of the Soviet Union, Russia had to abandon most of its bases. In 1991–94 Russian troops withdrew from bases in the former German Democratic Republic (East Germany), Czechoslovakia, Poland, Hungary and the Baltic states. In 1994, after the last Russian troops pulled out of Estonia, Germany and Latvia,<sup>148</sup> the Russian Federation possessed only 28 foreign bases or other installations in the former territory of the Soviet Union, in the newly independent post-Soviet states of Armenia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Moldova, Tajikistan and Ukraine. By 2002 Russia had closed its intelligence installations in Lourdes, Cuba, and its largest naval base outside the WTO, in Cam Ranh, Viet Nam. Together with the external politico-military reasons, domestic factors and budgetary constraints played a major role in these changes.

Although Russia still fears encirclement, the lines of its forward defence have receded. Russia continues to treat the former non-Russian Soviet republics paternalistically as entities in its near abroad and has attempted to choose the methods of control that best serve its interests. Politically, Russia has sought to tie the former Soviet republics to institutional arrangements that it controls, such as the

<sup>147</sup> Solovyov, V. and Ivanov, V., 'Voyenno-bazovaya udavka: SShA po-prezhnemu stremyatsya okruzhit' Rossiyu po perimetru' [The military bases' running knot: the USA once again encircles Russia in its perimeter], *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, 23 Jan. 2004.

<sup>148</sup> The Russian troops essentially left Lithuania and Poland in 1993. After 31 Aug. 1994 only small units remained to run facilities in Paldiski, Estonia (staying until 1996 to dismantle 2 nuclear reactors at the submarine base), and in Skrunda, Latvia (where an early-warning radar station was operated until 1998). On troop and base withdrawals from Central Europe see Lachowski, Z., 'Conventional arms control and security cooperation in Europe', *SIPRI Yearbook 1994* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1994), pp. 577–81; and Lachowski, Z., 'Conventional arms control and security dialogue in Europe', *SIPRI Yearbook 1995: Armaments, Disarmament and International Security* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1995), pp. 777–80.

Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), and to win Western approval of the post-Soviet zone as a kind of Russian Monroe Doctrine area.<sup>149</sup> Militarily, Russia has endeavoured to maintain or impose various elements of military integration (provision and standardization of weapons and military equipment, a common air defence system, joint training, etc.) with varying degrees of success. Economically, it has subsidized its allies and clients through low prices on energy and deliveries of military hardware and arms.<sup>150</sup>

Throughout the 1990s military force, including foreign military presence, were the major elements of Russia's influence and policy in the CIS area. After their initial withdrawal from the new states of the South Caucasus, Russian forces returned either on the strength of basing agreements, mainly to protect the borders of the new states, or as alleged peacekeeping contingents. In 1997 Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan and Moldova, which hosted Russian forces, formed GUAM with the aim of fostering cooperation outside Russia and the CIS.<sup>151</sup> They began to seek US support to deal with Russia, which eventually led to the so-called Istanbul commitments of 1999, stipulating that Russia should remove its bases from Georgia and its troops and equipment from Trans-Dniester in Moldova.<sup>152</sup> In contrast, in the latter part of the 1990s Armenia and Ukraine consented to the establishment and retention of Russian bases on their territories.

In the wake of the 2001 terrorist attacks on the USA and the US focus on Afghanistan and its neighbourhood, Russia's attention also shifted to that region and to the former Soviet Central Asian republics. After a short period of cooperation with the West, Russia took steps to counteract Western influence and reassert its own influence in Central Asia by signing an agreement with Kyrgyzstan to upgrade a Russian airbase in that country. Russia also sought to stabilize and formalize the deployment of its remaining forces in Tajikistan as a military base, but did not fully succeed until 2004. Outside the CIS, Russia withdrew from the Balkans by August 2003 and brought home the peacekeeping contingents that had been stationed in Bosnia and Herzegovina since 1996 and in Kosovo since 1999.<sup>153</sup>

<sup>149</sup> Adomeit, H. and Reisinger H., *Russia's Role in Post-Soviet Territory: Decline of Military Power and Political Influence* (Norwegian Institute for Defence Studies: Oslo, 2002), p. 5. The CSTO is discussed below.

<sup>150</sup> Bailes, A. J. K., Baranovsky, V. and Dunay, P., 'Regional security cooperation in the former Soviet area', *SIPRI Yearbook 2007: Armaments, Disarmament and International Security* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, forthcoming 2007).

<sup>151</sup> In 2005 GUAM was revitalized, and formally institutionalized in 2006 as the Organization for Democracy and Economic Development–GUAM. On GUAM see Bailes, Baranovsky and Dunay (note 150).

<sup>152</sup> The Istanbul commitments were adopted at the 1999 Istanbul Summit of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). See the OSCE website at URL <<http://www.osce.org>>.

<sup>153</sup> On 1 Oct. 2005 a unit of Russian forces taking part in the UN peacekeeping operation in Sierra Leone withdrew, ending Russian troop involvement far from the borders of Russia. A 'material and technical' station remains in Tartus, Syria, to service the Russian Navy. Russia denies that it plans to turn the station into a permanent naval base.

The issue of the withdrawal of Russian forces in Georgia remained at an impasse in 2001–2004. In 2005 Georgia and Russia signed a joint statement on removal of the Russian military bases in Georgia by 2008.<sup>154</sup>

In spite of these changes and in spite of maintaining a smaller army than that of the Soviet Union, Russia has retained its plans for mass-scale war in terms of threat perception and organization.<sup>155</sup> Naturally, this has affected the conceptual and organizational shape of Russia's policy on foreign military bases. Russia's provisional national security concept and military doctrine documents of 2000 provide terms for the deployment of Russian troops in 'strategically important regions' outside the country as joint (CIS mixed formations) or national groups and individual bases.<sup>156</sup> Today there are an estimated 25 Russian military installations located in nine former Soviet republics—Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Tajikistan and Ukraine—including seven major military ground, air and naval bases, as well as military depots, radio-location stations for controlling outer space, early-warning hubs and other minor facilities (see table 5.1). The current pattern of Russian bases abroad reflects Russia's strategic focus in the post-Soviet area: (a) on Central Asia (in order to curtail the increasing influence of China and other states in the region), where there are two major bases in Kant, Kyrgyzstan, and Dushanbe, Tajikistan; (b) on the south—in Armenia, Georgia and the Crimea (Ukraine); and (c) on possible forward basing in the western theatre adjoining the NATO area, in Belarus.

<sup>154</sup> Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 'Joint Statement by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation and Georgia', 30 May 2005, URL <[http://www.in.mid.ru/brp\\_4.nsf/clndr?OpenView&query=31.05.2005&Lang=ENGLISH](http://www.in.mid.ru/brp_4.nsf/clndr?OpenView&query=31.05.2005&Lang=ENGLISH)>.

<sup>155</sup> Abdullaev, N., 'Russian war policy keeps strong Soviet slant', *Defense News*, 22 May 2006, p. 33.

<sup>156</sup> The 2000 National Security Concept (political strategy) of the Russian Federation states that 'the interests of ensuring Russia's national security predetermine the need, under appropriate circumstances, for Russia to have a military presence in certain strategically important regions of the world. The stationing of limited military contingents (military bases, naval units) there on a treaty basis must ensure Russia's readiness to fulfil its obligations and to assist in forming a stable military-strategic balance of forces in regions, and must enable the Russian Federation to react to a crisis situation in its initial stage and achieve its foreign-policy goals'. 'Russia's national security concept', *Arms Control Today*, Jan./Feb. 2000, URL <[http://www.armscontrol.org/act/2000\\_01-02/docjf00.asp](http://www.armscontrol.org/act/2000_01-02/docjf00.asp)>. The relevant paragraphs of the 2000 Russian military doctrine further develop the concept: '20. With a view to forming and maintaining stability and ensuring an appropriate response to the emergence of external threats at an early stage, limited contingents of the Russian Federation Armed Forces and other troops may be deployed in strategically important regions outside the territory of the Russian Federation, in the form of joint or national groups and individual bases (facilities). The conditions for such deployment are defined by the appropriate international legal documents. 21. When mixed military formations of the CIS are created, they are manned by servicemen of the member states in accordance with their national legislation and the interstate agreements adopted. Servicemen who are citizens of the Russian Federation serve in such formations, as a rule, under contract. Russian troop formations located on the territory of foreign states, irrespective of the conditions of deployment, form part of the Russian Federation Armed Forces and other troops and operate in accordance with the procedure there established, taking into account the requirements of the UN Charter, UN Security Council resolutions, and the Russian Federation's bilateral and multilateral treaties'. 'Russia's military doctrine', *Arms Control Today*, May 2000, URL <[http://www.armscontrol.org/act/2000\\_05/dc3ma00.asp](http://www.armscontrol.org/act/2000_05/dc3ma00.asp)>.

**Table 5.1.** Major Russian foreign military bases and installations in Eurasia

Country	Base and type of military activity
Azerbaijan <sup>a</sup>	Gabala (also known as Lyaki): Space Forces, <sup>b</sup> 37th Air Army of Long-range Aviation and independent radio technical node
Armenia <sup>a</sup>	Erebuni (near Yerevan): 426th Aviation Group and 520th Aviation Headquarters Gyumri: 127th motorized rifle division at 102nd military base
Belarus	Baranovichi (near Gantsevichi): Space Forces, <sup>b</sup> independent radio technical node and 37th Air Army of Long-range Aviation Vileyka: 43rd navy communications node
Georgia <sup>a</sup>	Akhalkalaki: 147th motorized rifle division at 62nd military base Batumi: 145th motorized rifle division at 12th military base Abkhazia and South Ossetia: peacekeeping force units
Kazakhstan	Sary-Shagan training ground (near Priozersk): Space Force <sup>b</sup> and 37th Air Army of Long-range Aviation Baikonur: cosmodrome (9 launch complexes and 14 launch pads) and independent radio technical node
Kyrgyzstan	Kant airbase, Collective Security Treaty Organization Collective Rapid Deployment Force and 5th Air Army
Moldova, Trans-Dniester	Tiraspol: Operational Group of Russian Forces in Trans-Dniester General Staff, former 8th Separate Guards motorized rifle brigade units
Tajikistan	Nurek: Unit 7680, Space Forces <sup>b</sup> and 37th Air Army of Long-range Aviation satellite surveillance centre Dushanbe–Kulyab–Kurgan-Tyube: 201st military base: Volga–Ural Military District 201st motorized rifle division and 670th aviation group (Aini)
Ukraine	Sevastopol: Russian Black Sea Fleet naval base

<sup>a</sup> Azerbaijan, Armenia and Georgia host the North Caucasus Military District Group of Russian Forces units in Transcaucasus.

<sup>b</sup> The Space Forces, a part of the Russian armed forces, are responsible for Russian safety and security in military space activities and anti-missile defence.

### Central Asia: replaying the ‘Great Game’?

In the first decade of the 21st century Central Asia became the main test site for politico-military cooperation between the new post-cold war partners in the after-

math of the events of September 2001. The suddenly upgraded political significance of Central Asia created considerable unease in Russia. On the one hand, it was unable to shoulder the burden of control and protection of the former Soviet republics and challenge the USA; on the other, political and other benefits stemmed from the rapprochement with the USA and Western Europe. Russia thus consented to tolerate the temporary installation of NATO and US bases in the hope of meeting the new security threats posed also for itself by terrorism, crime, insurgency, Islamic radicalism, smuggling of narcotics and nuclear materials, and the Taliban regime in Afghanistan. The former Soviet republics in the region took advantage of their newly acquired autonomy in international politics and security, and in the latter half of 2001 NATO and US troops (predominantly air forces) arrived at the former Soviet bases in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan. Tajikistan also opened its airfields to US aircraft, while Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan extended overflight rights to NATO and the USA. These steps heralded the building of a broad US military infrastructure in the region. In early 2002 some 8000–10 000 NATO personnel were present in Central Asia.<sup>157</sup>

China soon expressed concern over the long-term NATO and US presence by sending an envoy to the former Soviet republics and convening a meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO).<sup>158</sup> Since, as noted above, US bases already exist in Japan and South Korea and the USA has a security relationship with Taiwan, China perceives the growing US presence in Central Asia as a form of encirclement. Reports that the USA might deploy its troops in Kazakhstan prompted the chief of the Chinese General Staff to warn that such a move would pose ‘a direct threat to China’s security’.<sup>159</sup>

The positive relationship between Russia and the USA did not last long. Russia soon realized that the Western political, military and economic presence in a region that it had traditionally dominated could become permanent. Having concluded that

<sup>157</sup> Kazakhstan formally does not have any foreign military bases on its soil. The Baikonur space-launch complex, which has existed since 1955, was leased to Russia through a 20-year agreement in 1994. It is designed to launch space devices for defence, economic, scientific and commercial purposes. The Russian troops and equipment deployed there are ‘within the limits required for [Baikonur’s] proper maintenance and security’. Idrissov, E., Ambassador of Kazakhstan, London, Letter to the author, 11 June 2004. There was speculation about the possible move of the US military base to eastern Turkmenistan after Uzbekistan demanded that the USA leave its Karshi–Khanabad base in 2005. However, these reports were disavowed by US officials. Pannier, B., ‘Central Asia: U.S. embassy says no plans to open military base in Turkmenistan’, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, 7 Sep. 2005.

<sup>158</sup> The SCO was established in June 2001 and consists of China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. Its agenda is broad, including various political and security issues, especially with regard to counterterrorism, but it lacks the internal cohesion of a strong international institution. On the SCO see Bailes, Baranovsky and Dunay (note 150); Maksutov, R., ‘The Shanghai Cooperation Organization: a Central Asian perspective’, SIPRI Project Paper, SIPRI, Stockholm, Aug. 2006, URL <<http://www.sipri.org/contents/worldsec/eurosec.html>>; and Bailes, A. J. K. et al., *The Shanghai Cooperation Organization*, SIPRI Policy Paper no. 17 (SIPRI: Stockholm, May 2007, URL <<http://www.sipri.org>>.

<sup>159</sup> ‘US in replay of Great Game’, *The Guardian*, 20 Jan. 2002, URL <<http://observer.guardian.co.uk/print/0,3858,4339101-102275,00.html>>.

this would not serve its long-term interests, Russia began to counteract NATO's influence and reassert its hold on the region. The formation in 2002–2003 of the CSTO demonstrated Russia's determination to stop the erosion of its interests in the region and revive its multilateral and bilateral political, military and security relationships with the Central Asian states.<sup>160</sup> The rationale was purportedly counterterrorism. In 2003 Russian Defence Minister Sergei Ivanov announced that Russia reserves the right to defend Russians who live in the former Soviet republics.<sup>161</sup> Ivanov expressed Russia's determination to increase its military presence in the CIS, especially in Central Asia, and called for the eventual withdrawal of the military bases established there by the US-led international anti-terrorism coalition. Russia, the CIS and the CSTO repeatedly stressed that such bases were only permitted for the period necessary to stabilize Afghanistan and to achieve the goals set forth by the coalition. The Russian military also feared that the USA might deploy missile defences in Central Asia that could hit Russian intercontinental ballistic missiles in their boost phase.

In granting basing permission, the governments of the Central Asian states were motivated by a desire to maintain the right balance between China, Russia and the USA and the other players in the region (a multi-vector policy).<sup>162</sup> In addition to protection against terrorism and assistance to bolster their military structures, the Central Asian states apparently counted on lavish economic and financial assistance and, more importantly, direct or indirect support for the existing regimes. However, US military assistance was increasingly linked to a commitment to political and economic reform and further democratization. This created difficulties in cooperation that also affected basing rights. In contrast, Russia was keen to provide seemingly no-strings-attached military assistance, including compatible equipment, spare parts and weapons as well as political support in the event of domestic upheaval. The dynamics of the region thus led in a relatively short time to expulsion of the NATO and US forces or attempts to renegotiate the terms of basing.

The 'colour revolutions' in Georgia, Kyrgyzstan and Ukraine from November 2003 till March 2005 affected US basing.<sup>163</sup> On 5 July 2005, at the SCO summit in Astana, Kazakhstan, the SCO's member states—at the instigation of China and Russia—adopted a declaration demanding a deadline for ending the US military

<sup>160</sup> The CSTO members are Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan in Central Asia; Belarus and Russia in Eastern Europe; and Armenia in the South Caucasus.

<sup>161</sup> Ivanov stressed that '[T]he CIS is a very crucial sphere for our security. Ten million of our compatriots live there, and we are supplying energy to them at prices below international levels. We are not going to renounce the right to use military power there in situations where all other means have been exhausted.' 'Moscow stresses the possibility of using military force in the CIS', Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL), *RFE/RL Newslines*, 10 Oct. 2003.

<sup>162</sup> On this multi-vector policy see Maksutov (note 158).

<sup>163</sup> The colour or flower revolutions were non-violent protests for democracy against authoritarian governments in formerly Communist countries in Eastern Europe and Central Asia and with a specific colour or flower as their symbol.



presence in Central Asia.<sup>164</sup> The basing agreements in the region are bilateral, but the multilateral message from the SCO summit seemed to presage a new Central Asian security alignment. The hostilities in Afghanistan soon entered a new, particularly violent phase, however, and the Astana summit's demand for the withdrawal of US troops was dropped from the agenda of the subsequent SCO summit meeting.

Nevertheless, a crisis in US–Uzbek relations, prompted by US concern over democracy violations and a pro-Russian shift in Uzbekistan's policy, led to US forces withdrawing from that country in 2005—a lesson on the risks of subjecting anti-terrorist cooperation to the whims of fickle alliances and weak regimes.<sup>165</sup> The presence of small French and German military contingents in Uzbekistan and Tajikistan (150 and 160, respectively) are not contested by either Russia or the Central Asian governments.

The interaction of China, Russia and the USA in Central Asia has led to claims that these powers are replaying in this region—rich in oil and gas reserves—the same kind of 'Great Game' of military–diplomatic rivalry as was waged between tsarist Russia and the British Empire in the 19th century. Whether it is a zero-sum game or normal competition remains to be seen. Evidently, Russia is still unable to realize its ambition to assume full responsibility for the entire region.

### *Kyrgyzstan*

Kyrgyzstan is the only country that hosts both a Russian and a US base on its territory. The case of Kyrgyzstan epitomizes the uncertainties of operating military bases in countries where democracy is immature. At the beginning of the 21st century Kyrgyzstan was perceived as the most democratic of the post-Soviet states in Central Asia, and a NATO airbase was opened near Bishkek, the capital, in December 2001.<sup>166</sup> The Ganci airbase shares its runway with the country's main international airport, Manas, and played an important role in the final phase of the anti-Taliban operation in Afghanistan. The troops and aircraft were predominantly from the USA, with contributions from Australia, Denmark, France, Italy, South

<sup>164</sup> The statement read: 'Considering the completion of the active military stage of antiterrorist operation in Afghanistan, the member states of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization consider it necessary that respective members of the antiterrorist coalition set a final timeline for their temporary use of the above-mentioned objects of infrastructure and stay of their military contingents in the territories of the SCO member states'. Declaration of Heads of Member States of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, Astana, 5 July 2005, URL <[http://www.sectsco.org/news\\_detail.asp?id=500&LanguageID=2](http://www.sectsco.org/news_detail.asp?id=500&LanguageID=2)>. Russia demonstratively distanced itself from the declaration. Melikova, N., 'Amerikantsev toropyat uyti iz Azii' [Americans are urged to leave Asia], *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, 6 July 2005.

<sup>165</sup> Nevertheless, speculation has been fuelled by the USA's alleged attempt to set up another base in Turkmenistan, whose regime was even more despotic than the other governments in Central Asia. See e.g. Panfilova, V. and Myasnikov, V., 'Amerikanskiye igry Turkmenbashi' [Turkmenbashi's American games], *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, 6 Feb. 2006; and Pannier (note 157).

<sup>166</sup> Initially, it appeared that NATO's air forces would be stationed in Osh, another former-Soviet base in Kyrgyzstan.

Korea, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway and Spain. Half a year after the opening of the base some 1000 US troops, another 800–1000 from coalition states and about 30 NATO aircraft were deployed at the base to support fighter, tanker and cargo operations in Afghanistan. Apart from its anti-terrorist purpose, Russian observers alleged that the base monitors the nearby Chinese airspace and carries out intelligence activities.<sup>167</sup> In 2005 it was reported that the US embassy in Bishkek had approached the Kyrgyz Government with a request to station AWACS aircraft at the Ganci airbase, but the request was reportedly refused.<sup>168</sup>

In October 2003 Russia and Kyrgyzstan agreed that Russia could open a new airbase in Kant, close to the US one—the first military base opened abroad by Russia since the end of the cold war. The officially stated aim was to protect the borders of Russia and its CSTO partners and to combat hostile terrorist and criminal raids on Central Asian states.<sup>169</sup> However, the Kant airbase was evidently also a political demonstration of Russia's general status in the region and a counterweight to the Ganci airbase. Russia apparently hoped that the Kant airbase could become an outpost of its interests in Central Asia.<sup>170</sup> The Russian aircraft stationed there are part of the CSTO Collective Rapid Deployment Force, and the Kant airbase has been used in large-scale CSTO manoeuvres since 2004. The base was also intended to be used for monitoring, constraining and possibly containing Uzbekistan's activities and policy, because Uzbekistan at that time was considered the promoter of Western interests in Central Asia.<sup>171</sup> Reportedly, from the beginning, the Russian base has not made any substantial impact on practical security problems (e.g. anti-drug operations) in the country or the region.<sup>172</sup>

Kyrgyzstan's policy of attempting to accommodate the powers involved in Central Asian politics was designed to increase its international prestige and influence and to confront the national and religious extremism in the region. However, the violent events in the spring of 2005 that led to a change of government altered

<sup>167</sup> Panfilova, V., 'Kirgiziya stanovitsa azyatskim avyanostsem' [Kyrgyzstan becomes an Asian aircraft carrier], *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, 20 Feb. 2006.

<sup>168</sup> The Kyrgyz foreign minister claimed that he received a similar request from NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer. Kabar News Agency (Bishkek), 'Kyrgyzstani foreign minister refuses US request to host spy planes', 4 Mar. 2005, Translation from Russian, World News Connection, National Technical Information Service (NTIS), US Department of Commerce.

<sup>169</sup> Russian Security Council Secretary Igor Ivanov claimed that 'The base in Kant, like CSTO forces, cannot be used to resolve the internal political problems of the organization's member states . . . [It] effectively performs important missions to guarantee the external borders of the CSTO states'. Interfax-AVN, 'Russian Security Council chief outlines restricted role of airbase in Kyrgyzstan', 27 Apr. 2006, Translation from Russian, World News Connection, National Technical Information Service (NTIS), US Department of Commerce.

<sup>170</sup> Mukhin, V., 'Rossiya vernulas' v Tzentrlnuyu Aziyu' [Russia has returned to Central Asia], *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, 24 Oct. 2003; and Socor, V., 'More than just a base: Russia opens airbase in Kyrgyzstan', *IASPS Policy Briefings: Geostrategic Perspectives on Eurasia*, no. 33 (30 Oct. 2003).

<sup>171</sup> Allison, R., 'Strategic reasons in Russia's Central Asia policy', *International Affairs* (London), vol. 80, no. 2 (2004), pp. 287–88.

<sup>172</sup> Plugatarev, I., 'Aviabaza "Kant": kontrol' nad vsej Centralnoi Azyei' [The Kant airbase: control over entire Central Asia], *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, 30 Sep. 2005. The base played a role in facilitating the escape of ousted Kyrgyz President Askar Akayev and his family in Mar. 2005.

Kyrgyzstan's policy towards the great powers. The presence of foreign bases did not affect the internal politics of the country during that critical time but became an issue after the change of government, in part owing to pressure from China, Russia and NATO. In July 2005 the Kyrgyz Parliament voted to grant diplomatic immunity to Russian troops stationed in the country, a status already enjoyed by the US-led coalition forces. Although Kyrgyzstan signed the SCO's Astana Declaration, which includes a demand for an end to the foreign military presence, Kyrgyz officials apparently sought to reinterpret it and maintain the status quo.<sup>173</sup> In the autumn of 2005 Kyrgyz and US officials reached an agreement that allowed the USA to continue using the Ganci airbase. However, the expulsion of the USA from the Karshi–Khanabad base visibly weakened the US position in negotiating the terms of base leasing.

Kyrgyzstan's manoeuvring room had shrunk compared with the period before the so-called tulip revolution in the spring of 2005. The new Kyrgyz President, Kurmanbek Bakiyev, increasingly favoured cooperation with Russia, the CSTO and the SCO. Russia promised to make additional investments in the Kant airbase and the Kyrgyz economy and eventually dismissed the idea of setting up another Russian base in Osh. Apparently, Russia at this stage wanted to avoid charges of increased rivalry with the USA and further militarization of the region.<sup>174</sup>

In the autumn of 2005 the new Kyrgyz Government requested a review of the financial arrangements with the USA, which were allegedly unfavourable to Kyrgyzstan. In October and November 2005 the first rounds of talks were held with US officials on the technical and financial terms of the use of the Ganci airbase. The Kyrgyz Government sought to levy a new charge for aviation fuel dumped by US aircraft at Ganci.<sup>175</sup> This was followed by demands that the USA compensate Kyrgyzstan for \$80 million which allegedly had been siphoned out of the country, but the DOD refused and argued that the graft allegations were a domestic Kyrgyz affair. In mid-December Kyrgyzstan demanded that the USA pay 100 times the \$2 million-a-year rent for the leasing of the base.<sup>176</sup>

<sup>173</sup> For a summary of the discussion among Kyrgyz experts on the pros and cons of the US presence see Marat, E., 'Kyrgyz experts oppose Bishkek's decision to limit U.S. military presence', *Eurasian Daily Monitor*, 19 July 2005, URL <[http://www.jamestown.org/edm/article.php?article\\_id=2370028](http://www.jamestown.org/edm/article.php?article_id=2370028)>.

<sup>174</sup> McDermott, R. N., 'Russia studies Osh for possible new military base in Kyrgyzstan', *Eurasian Daily Monitor*, 2 June 2005, URL <[http://www.jamestown.org/edm/article.php?article\\_id=2369829](http://www.jamestown.org/edm/article.php?article_id=2369829)>. Another report at that time suggested that a Chinese military base could be deployed in Osh under the auspices of the SCO. Aгенство Voennykh Novostei, 'Kyrgyzstan: Chinese military base may be deployed in Osh as part of SCO', 31 May 2005, World News Connection, National Technical Information Service (NTIS), US Department of Commerce.

<sup>175</sup> Reportedly, former President Akayev's family was involved in dishonest business dealings concerning the fuel contract between the DOD and the Kyrgyz firms. 'Pentagon's fuel deal is lesson in risks of graft-prone regions', *New York Times*, 15 Nov. 2005.

<sup>176</sup> Sevastopulo, D., 'Kyrgyz rent rise intensifies US battle over base', *Financial Times*, 15 Dec. 2005. In comparison, the annual revenue of Kyrgyzstan is about \$250 million. In Jan. 2006 new terms of a base agreement were made public with Kyrgyzstan seeking annual rental payments of \$50 million. The new terms were to include rent, compensation for purported environmental damage (pollution), and landing and take-off fees for aircraft.

Ultimately, on 14 July 2006, Kyrgyzstan and the USA resolved the payment dispute: the USA stated 'its expectation to compensate equitably the Kyrgyz government and Kyrgyz business for goods, services and support of U.S. operations'.<sup>177</sup> The statement did not specify how much the USA would pay Kyrgyzstan for continued use of the base,<sup>178</sup> nor did it indicate whether agreement had been reached on a specific time period for US use of the base. The statement stressed that the issue 'should be viewed in the context of the larger, robust bilateral relationship'. The USA expected to provide Kyrgyzstan with \$150 million in total assistance and compensation by the end of 2007.

In contrast to the dispute between Kyrgyzstan and the USA, Kyrgyz–Russian relations and the corresponding status of the Kant airbase underwent a favourable change. Kant is now an organic component of the CSTO's Collective Rapid Deployment Forces,<sup>179</sup> a permanent 'collective security' base for the CSTO members. In February 2006 Russia announced its decision to expand the base by the end of 2006: the base hosts some 500 troops and 25 aircraft and helicopters. Unlike the USA, Russia does not pay rent or landing and take-off fees to Kyrgyzstan. However, since the spring of 2005 Russian influence has increasingly limited Kyrgyzstan's political options. Russia's intentions are not clear, but it may choose to use the Ganci airbase issue as a bargaining chip in its further political manoeuvring with the USA.<sup>180</sup> Political tension related to the Manas base increased in early 2007 after the killing of a Kyrgyz citizen by a US serviceman and because of unsubstantiated rumours that US tactical nuclear weapons for eventual use against Iranian nuclear facilities are stored at the base.<sup>181</sup>

### *Uzbekistan*

Uzbekistan is the most populous and strategically crucial country in Central Asia, and it plays a pivotal role in the region. It was one of the first supporters of the US anti-terrorist campaign, and in 2001 it allowed the USA and Germany to use its bases in Karsi–Khanabad and Termez, respectively, on a temporary basis to launch anti-terrorist operations in Afghanistan. The Government of Uzbekistan has been under pressure from China and Russia as well as from Islamic radicalism (the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan and Hizb ut-Tahrir). It has therefore sought political support from the West, particularly the USA, to strengthen its domestic sta-

<sup>177</sup> US Embassy, Bishkek, 'Joint Statement of the United States and the Kyrgyz Republic on the Manas coalition airbase', 14 July 2006, URL <<http://bishkek.usembassy.gov>>.

<sup>178</sup> Kyrgyz Security Council Secretary Miroslav Niyazov disclosed that the USA will pay \$20 million, an eightfold increase, and will provide 3 Russian-made Mi-8 helicopters.

<sup>179</sup> Reportedly, the Kant airbase is actually subordinated to the Russian 5th Air Army.

<sup>180</sup> Observers suspected that the Russian intelligence service attempted to covertly derail the US military's use of Manas. McDermott, R., 'Washington secures deal on Kyrgyz base', *Eurasian Daily Monitor*, 17 July 2006, URL <[http://www.jamestown.org/edm/article.php?article\\_id=2371281](http://www.jamestown.org/edm/article.php?article_id=2371281)>.

<sup>181</sup> Marat, E., 'Public anger against US military base grows in Kyrgyzstan', *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, 17 May 2007, URL <[http://www.jamestown.org/jamestown.org/edm/article.php?article\\_id=2372171](http://www.jamestown.org/jamestown.org/edm/article.php?article_id=2372171)>.

bility, to provide military–technical investment and assistance (mostly in the form of leasing payments for the use of Uzbek bases) and to restrain China’s influence.

In October 2001 Uzbekistan granted permission for US troops and aircraft to operate a base rent-free, and the number of troops was expected to grow to 3000 by mid-October 2001, including special operations forces. The K-2 airbase in the south-east of the country became the USA’s largest foothold in the region and the key element of its regional balance of forces with Russia.

However, US–Uzbek relations were increasingly clouded by Uzbek President Islam Karimov’s repression of domestic opposition and Uzbekistan’s poor human rights record, reportedly including torture and deaths in its prisons. The Uzbek Government ignored US criticism, assuming that the USA had no better alternative to the K-2 base and would thus not press the issue of human rights violations.<sup>182</sup> In mid-2004 the USA demonstrated its disapproval by withholding around \$18 million in financial aid to Uzbekistan, although DOD and other US officials assured the Uzbek authorities that the USA continued to be interested in the region and in cooperation with Uzbekistan.

The May 2005 massacre in Andijon forced the USA to choose between the demands of anti-terrorist cooperation and its democracy-promotion agenda in Uzbekistan,<sup>183</sup> a choice that had implications for US efforts to change the conduct of other undemocratic regimes. President Karimov refused to allow an independent investigation of the Andijon incident, and in June the Uzbek Government banned US night-time flight operations at the K-2 base and heavy-lifting aircraft were refused landing permission.<sup>184</sup> In effect, heavy cargo aircraft were diverted to the Ganci airbase in Kyrgyzstan and HC-130 search-and-rescue flights and tanker operations were diverted to the Bagram airbase in Afghanistan.

Two days after the SCO summit at Astana, on 5 July 2005, the Uzbek Foreign Ministry stated that: ‘any prospects for a U.S. military presence in Uzbekistan were not considered by the Uzbek side’.<sup>185</sup> At the end of July, Uzbekistan delivered a note to the US embassy in Tashkent requesting that the USA vacate the K-2 base, withdraw its approximately 800 troops and material from Uzbekistan, and terminate the 2001 agreement between the two countries within 180 days.<sup>186</sup> In

<sup>182</sup> The US State Department complained as early as 2002 that torture was used ‘as a routine investigation technique’ in Uzbekistan. The British ambassador to Uzbekistan was unusually outspoken in criticizing his government and the USA for ignoring Tashkent’s human rights record.

<sup>183</sup> Hundreds of demonstrators, perhaps as many as 1000, were shot at Andijon on 12–13 May, probably owing to the overreaction of the security forces. On the Andijon shootings see Dunay, P. and Lachowski, Z., ‘Euro-Atlantic security and institutions’, *SIPRI Yearbook 2006: Armaments, Disarmament and International Security* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2006), pp. 49, 61–62.

<sup>184</sup> As observers noted at the time, ‘American policy toward Uzbekistan looks like it is divided, ambivalent and uncoordinated, despite administration claims to the contrary’. Blank, S., ‘Is America’s military base in Uzbekistan at risk?’, *Eurasian Daily Monitor*, 22 June 2005 URL <[http://www.jamestown.org/edm/article.php?article\\_id=2369923](http://www.jamestown.org/edm/article.php?article_id=2369923)>.

<sup>185</sup> ‘Uzbek threat to close US base’, *The Guardian*, 8 July 2005.

<sup>186</sup> The note was made public on 29 July, the day after the USA arranged the airlift from Kyrgyzstan to Romania of some 439 Uzbeks who fled Andijon in May. In Sep. 2005 the DOD decided to

September, after talks with Uzbekistan, the USA decided ‘to leave [K-2], without further discussion’.<sup>187</sup> In contrast, despite EU sanctions against Uzbekistan, Germany will be allowed to operate for ‘a long time’ from its Termez airbase, which is close to the Afghan border and responsible for the delivery of humanitarian aid to Afghanistan.<sup>188</sup>

The Uzbekistan crisis raised the issue of whether the K-2 base was vital to military and humanitarian operations in Afghanistan. It had been a forward base to support combat operations against the Taliban in northern Afghanistan but had lost at least some of its importance as the military operations moved to the south and south-east of the country. The US military was also operating from two large bases in Afghanistan: at Bagram airport near Kabul and at Kandahar in the south. Although the USA had expected to be evicted from the K-2 base,<sup>189</sup> the loss of the base does create logistical problems for the military operations in Afghanistan and for the humanitarian relief work in the region. The K-2 base has functioned as part of the regional network of operating sites and is relatively close not only to Afghanistan, but also to Iran, Pakistan and western China.<sup>190</sup>

The crisis in US–Uzbek relations had a favourable impact on Uzbekistan’s relations with Russia. In November 2005 Russia and Uzbekistan signed a treaty of alliance which, among other things, alluded to the possible establishment of a Russian military base in Uzbekistan.<sup>191</sup>

### *Tajikistan*

An April 1999 treaty provided for the establishment of a military base for the Russian 201st motor-rifle division outside Dushanbe, the capital of Tajikistan,<sup>192</sup> but

pay Uzbekistan nearly \$23 million for past use of K-2 despite State Department and congressional concerns about financing the autocratic regime in Tashkent.

<sup>187</sup> US Department of State, International Information Programs, ‘U.S. will leave Uzbek base but seeks ongoing bilateral dialogue’, 29 Sep. 2005, URL <<http://usinfo.state.gov/eur/Archive/2005/Sep/29-264158.html>>.

<sup>188</sup> Carstens, P., ‘Mit Unterstützung Europas: die Bundeswehr darf “auf lange Zeit” in Usbekistan bleiben’ [With Europe’s support: Bundeswehr can remain in Uzbekistan ‘for a long time’], *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 16 Dec. 2005. Leftist and pacifist groups in Germany have called for abandoning the Termez base in protest against the Andijon massacre, but the government decided not to take such a step.

<sup>189</sup> US Undersecretary of State for Political Affairs R. Nicholas Burns stated: ‘We did see an indication that this would occur, we knew it would occur’. US Department of State, International Information Programs, ‘U.S. chose human rights over air base in Uzbekistan, Burns says’, 2 Aug. 2005, URL <<http://usinfo.state.gov/eur/Archive/2005/Aug/03-145083.html>>.

<sup>190</sup> Hoffman, D. and Welt, C., ‘Gilded lily pad’, *American Prospect*, 20 June 2005.

<sup>191</sup> Finn, P., ‘Russia–Uzbek military pact allows mutual use of bases’, *Washington Post*, 15 Nov. 2005, p. A15. Russian observers were more sceptical about the possibility of establishing a Russian base in Uzbekistan due to the lack of resources. See Plugataev, I., ‘Tashkent vozvrashchaet v kollektivnyi dogovor [Tashkent returns to the collective treaty], *Nezavisimoye Voennoye Obozreniye*, 18 Nov. 2005, URL <[http://nvo.ng.ru/printed/wars/2005-11-18/2\\_tashkent.html](http://nvo.ng.ru/printed/wars/2005-11-18/2_tashkent.html)>.

<sup>192</sup> The Treaty between Russia and Tajikistan on the Status and Terms of the Presence of the Russian Military Base on the Territory of Tajikistan was signed on 16 Apr. 1999 and entered into force on 16 Oct. 2004.

disagreement about its economic, property, financial, political and military provisions delayed its implementation for five and a half years. Another factor in the delay was Tajikistan's apparent desire to explore closer security relations with the USA. The stationing of Russian troops in Tajikistan thus had no legal basis until 2004. In the spring of 2004 Russian–Tajik relations deteriorated when the Tajik Government decided not to renew a 10-year bilateral agreement, which expired in 2003, authorizing Russian troops to guard the Tajik border. Talks on two possible Russian bases were also stalemated. The proposed Chkalovsk base, in northern Sughd province, was no longer under serious consideration, and the fate of the base at Dushanbe, where Russian troops were stationed, was also uncertain.

However, in June 2004 Russia and Tajikistan agreed to establish a permanent Russian military base, and the 4th military base of the Russian Defence Ministry was inaugurated by Russian President Vladimir Putin and Tajik President Imomali Rakhmonov during Putin's visit to Dushanbe on 17 October 2004.<sup>193</sup> (At the same time, Russia handed over the protection of the Afghan–Tajik border to Tajikistan.<sup>194</sup>) The base also houses the 201st motorized rifle division and will host 5000 Russian troops, making it the largest foreign base in the CIS except for the Black Sea Fleet base at Sevastopol, Ukraine. The complex comprises several installations in and near Dushanbe and in the Kulyab area south of Dushanbe, including the Aini airfield and the Nurek (Okno) space surveillance optical electronic centre. The base is intended to 'provide conditions for neutralization of terrorist and extremist incursions all over the entire CIS territory and render assistance in combating narcotics [trafficking] and organized crime'.<sup>195</sup>

Its improved relations with Russia and the SCO notwithstanding, Tajikistan has cautiously sought to maintain Western security interest in the country. The USA is permitted to use Dushanbe airport for refuelling its aircraft and for emergency landings. Two military transport aircraft, 6 combat aircraft and some 150 technicians and soldiers were initially deployed by France at Dushanbe airport to support its contingent in Afghanistan. In 2006 France announced plans to temporarily deploy additional aircraft and to double the number of its military personnel in Tajikistan to 400.<sup>196</sup> In mid-2006, during US Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld's visit to Dushanbe, the possibility of increased US base use or the stationing of US

<sup>193</sup> Additional military-related bilateral agreements were signed in June 2005, finally giving the base *de jure* status. Formally, it acquired military base status 1 year after the Oct. 2004 signing. It has been renamed the 201st military base.

<sup>194</sup> Socor, V., 'Russian army base in Tajikistan legalized; border troops to withdraw', *Eurasian Daily Monitor*, 19 Oct. 2004, URL <[http://www.jamestown.org/edm/article.php?article\\_id=2368712](http://www.jamestown.org/edm/article.php?article_id=2368712)>. While Tajikistan recognizes the need for Russian military support in a crisis, Russia will retain an advisory role and lend assistance in the protection of the Afghan–Tajik border against drug smuggling incursions.

<sup>195</sup> Plugatarev, I., 'Moskva obzavelas' samoi bolshoi voennoi bazoi za rubezhom' [Moscow has acquired the biggest military base abroad], *Nezavisimoye Voennoye Obozreniye*, 22 Oct. 2004, URL <[http://nvo.ng.ru/printed/wars/2004-10-22/1\\_tajikistan.html](http://nvo.ng.ru/printed/wars/2004-10-22/1_tajikistan.html)>.

<sup>196</sup> 'France boosts military presence in Tajikistan', Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, News and analysis, 11 May 2006; and *Atlantic News*, 19 Dec. 2006.

troops in the country was reportedly discussed in the light of the questionable reliability of Kyrgyzstan.<sup>197</sup>

India is a rising power in the region, and in the spring of 2006 it acquired its first foreign base, an airbase in Tajikistan. The base is an extension of the field hospital in Farkhor, some 90 km from Dushanbe, which India set up in the late 1990s to treat Northern Alliance combatants fighting the Taliban in Afghanistan. Farkhor (Aini) is a former Soviet base where a squadron of Indian MIG-17 V1 helicopters will be stationed. This projection of India's military presence to Central Asia demonstrates its positioning in the evolving strategic game between the major powers in the region.<sup>198</sup>

### Russia's southern perimeter

The Caspian and Caucasus regions are critically important to Russia's security policy for a variety of reasons, including communications, strategic defence, energy sources and lines of transport. Russia's pull-out from the former Soviet republics in the South Caucasus immediately led to difficulties and controversy. The region was beset by unrest and hostilities at the time of the Soviet Union's break-up in late 1991. The newly formed states of the South Caucasus faced problems stemming from past and current policies, such as inter-ethnic confrontation, nationalist aspirations, social and economic chaos, and refugees, as well as the absence of adequate institutions and indigenous military and security forces. These problems were compounded by the inter- and intra-state conflicts that soon broke out and by the divisive nature of the policies initially adopted towards the region by Russia.

This period provided evidence of Russia's continuing influence on the course of violent developments in the region. The Soviet Transcaucasus Military District was disbanded in September 1992. Russian troops pulled out but soon returned, intent on staying for an extended period, either on the strength of basing arrangements (chiefly to protect the borders of the new states) or as peacemaking (*mirotvorcheskiye*) contingents.

After September 2001, the spectre of a long-term US presence in the South Caucasus has increasingly become a matter of concern to Russia. For example, in Georgia the inception of the US train-and-equip programme in 2002 and the possible establishment of US bases there caused concern in Russia and apparently contributed to delaying the withdrawal of its troops from Georgia. The interest of Azerbaijan and Georgia in joining NATO and their increasing contacts and cooperation with the alliance have added to the unease in Russia. The area between the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea has acquired greater importance with the growing assertiveness of Iran, the West's need for better access to the greater Middle East and issues related to the demand for energy. Reports of the possible establishment

<sup>197</sup> Roberts, K., 'Rumsfeld in Tajikistan to review military cooperation', *Defense News*, 10 July 2006, URL <<http://www.defensenews.com/story.php?F=1940456&C=asiapac>>.

<sup>198</sup> Walsh, (note 128); see also Daly, J. C. K., 'India: a new player in Central Asia?', *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, 24 May 2007, URL <[http://www.jamestown.org/edm/article.php?article\\_id=2372187](http://www.jamestown.org/edm/article.php?article_id=2372187)>.



in Azerbaijan of US cooperative security locations as a forward position in the region, midway to South-West Asia, have caused increasing anxiety in Russia.<sup>199</sup> The Gabala early-warning station in Azerbaijan was leased to Russia in 2002 for 10 years. It covers the southern hemisphere and plays a critical role in Russia's air defence system. However, Russia and Iran perceive two US radar stations that were recently set up in Azerbaijan close to the Georgian and Iranian borders as the first step in the implementation of NATO–US plans to gain a permanent foothold in the region. Such speculation intensified after Uzbekistan's decision to evict US troops from its K-2 base in 2005.<sup>200</sup>

### *Georgia*

In the early 1990s Russian military intervention saved Georgia from early dissolution. Under the terms of the 9 October 1993 military cooperation agreement between Georgia and Russia, Russian garrisons were to be stationed at several strategic places on Georgian territory.<sup>201</sup> Four Russian military bases existed in Georgia by virtue of a 15 September 1995 agreement with Russia. Georgia subsequently insisted on closing two of them: the Vaziani airbase near its capital, Tbilisi, and the Gudauta base in the separatist province of Abkhazia. Russia would probably have continued to use the other two, the 62nd military base at Akhalkalaki and the 12th military base at Batumi, for some time but they were intended to be dismantled eventually. Under the Istanbul commitments, adopted at the 1999 Istanbul Summit of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), Georgia and Russia signed a joint statement to the effect that Russia would reduce the number of its heavy ground weapons on Georgian territory by the end of 2000.<sup>202</sup> The Russian heavy weapons located at Vaziani and Gudauta and the repair facilities in Tbilisi were to be withdrawn at the same time, and the bases themselves were to be disbanded and closed by mid-2001.<sup>203</sup> However, none of these goals was met (as discussed below).

The issue of foreign military presence on the territory of a state party was disputed during the CFE Treaty adaptation negotiations in the latter half of the 1990s,

<sup>199</sup> See Ziyadov, T., 'U.S troops in Azerbaijan? Moscow says no, but Baku says maybe', *Eurasian Daily Monitor*, 15 Aug. 2005, URL <[http://www.jamestown.org/edm/article.php?article\\_id=2370148](http://www.jamestown.org/edm/article.php?article_id=2370148)>.

<sup>200</sup> On the possibility of setting up US bases in Azerbaijan see e.g. 'Amerikanskiye bazy ukrepyat pozitsii Ilkhama Alieva' [US bases strengthen Ilham Aliev's position], *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, 3 Aug. 2005; Ziyadov (note 199); and Giragosian, R., 'Azerbaijan: relations with U.S. enter a new phase', *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*, 8 Aug. 2005.

<sup>201</sup> A series of agreements were signed in 1993–94, the most important being the Treaty of Friendship, Neighbourly Relations and Cooperation signed by presidents Boris Yeltsin and Eduard Shevardnadze on 3 Feb. 1994.

<sup>202</sup> On the Istanbul commitments see note 152.

<sup>203</sup> Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, Final Act of the Conference of the States Parties to the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe, Annex 14, Joint Statement of the Russian Federation and Georgia, Istanbul, 17 Nov. 1999, URL <<http://www.osce.org/mc/13017.html>>.

especially with respect to Georgia and Moldova. Together with these countries' bilateral agreements with Russia on force withdrawals, the 1999 Agreement on Adaptation provides that the CFE Treaty-limited equipment of a party 'shall only be present on the territory of another State Party in conformity with international law, the explicit consent of the host State Party, or a relevant resolution of the United Nations Security Council'.<sup>204</sup> It was hoped that the adapted CFE Treaty would enhance regional stability and the independent sovereignty of Russia's neighbours. However, because of Russia's failure to complete its troop withdrawals—a condition of ratification of the adapted CFE Treaty by NATO members—the treaty has not yet entered into force.<sup>205</sup>

The Western powers and the OSCE offered financial assistance to both Georgia and Russia to facilitate the withdrawal of Russian forces. Despite Georgia's insistence that all Russian forces should be withdrawn by the end of 2002, Russia proposed that the heavy equipment at Akhalkalaki and Batumi remain there for 15–25 years and offered military assistance in exchange. Russia handed over control of its Vaziani base to Georgia on 29 June 2001, but it failed to pull out of the Gudauta base. In November 2001 Russia announced that the base had been dismantled and the troops withdrawn. However, until Russia formally transfers the base to it, Georgia regards the closure of the base as incomplete.

After the impasse of 2001–2004 the issue of the withdrawal of Russian forces from Georgia came to a head in 2005. Russia had already reduced the number of its heavy ground weapons deployed in Georgia to the levels agreed at the Istanbul OSCE summit, but the process of troop withdrawal from the bases progressed in fits and starts. Since 2003 Russia has under various pretexts suspended or stalled talks on a withdrawal. Various political and other factors, including the completion of the US three-year train-and-equip programme in Georgia in 2004, apparently accommodated Russia's concerns and contributed to a settlement in 2005. Russia has, however, made excessive demands for financial compensation and proposed eventual co-location of the existing bases with anti-terrorist centres.<sup>206</sup> During the negotiations in early 2005 Georgia's President Mikheil Saakashvili declared that after the closure of the Russian bases no foreign bases would be permitted on Georgian territory, which apparently satisfied Russia.

On 30 May 2005 the Georgian and Russian ministers of foreign affairs issued a joint statement on the cessation of the functioning of the Russian military bases and other military facilities and the withdrawal of Russian forces from Georgia.<sup>207</sup> The withdrawal was to take place in stages from June 2005 until an unspecified date in 2008. The final stage was to be the removal of heavy equipment from the Batumi

<sup>204</sup> Agreement on Adaptation of the CFE Treaty (note 96), article I.3.

<sup>205</sup> See Lachowski, Z. and Sjögren, M., 'Conventional arms control', *SIPRI Yearbook 2007* (note 150).

<sup>206</sup> Initially, Russia attempted to persuade the West to pay the cost of pull-out and redeployment in Russia. However, in Apr. 2005 Russian Defence Minister Ivanov stated that Russia could afford the cost, estimated at \$250–300 million.

<sup>207</sup> Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (note 154).

base and the closure of the Tbilisi headquarters of the Group of Russian Forces in the Transcaucasus (GRFT). Georgia will assist in various ways in the organization of the withdrawal. Russia will not replace or replenish the withdrawn weapons and military equipment. Three supplementary agreements were envisaged on: (a) the functioning and closure of the bases in Akhalkalaki and Batumi (where a total of approximately 3000 Russian military personnel are stationed); (b) the establishment and functioning of the anti-terrorist centre; and (c) transit through Georgian territory.<sup>208</sup> The agreement is in line with the 1999 Istanbul Georgian–Russian joint statement, and necessary measures will be taken to determine whether Russia has completed its withdrawal from the Gudauta base.<sup>209</sup>

On 31 March 2006 additional agreements were signed on the withdrawal of Russian forces from the Akhalkalaki and Batumi bases and from other Russian military installations in Georgia, and on the transit of military equipment and personnel through Georgian territory. At the end of 2006 the GRFT headquarters was closed ahead of schedule. The Akhalkalaki base is to be completely closed by October 2007, with a possible extension until 31 December 2007, unless inclement weather delays the withdrawal. The Batumi base is to be completely closed before the end of 2008.

### *Moldova*

Under its 1994 constitution, Moldova is permanently neutral and refuses to host foreign forces on its territory. Moldova has problems with its territorial integrity and, encouraged by Russia, the Trans-Dniester region has proclaimed its independence. Russia withdrew its heavy weapons from Moldova by 2003, but the lack of a political settlement over Trans-Dniester caused Russia to delay withdrawal of its remaining 1500 troops and disposal of roughly 20 000 tonnes of stockpiled ammunition and equipment (2006 estimates).<sup>210</sup> Since 2004 Moldova has sought international support in its settlement talks with Russia to address Russia's strategy of keeping it divided and weak. Moldova has also alleged that military equipment is secretly being manufactured in the Trans-Dniester region. Unlike the situation in Georgia, Russia apparently has no intention of removing its forces from Trans-Dniester. The Russian facilities in Trans-Dniester's capital, Tiraspol—the staff of

<sup>208</sup> In this context, Azerbaijan expressed concern about the transfer to Armenia of some treaty-limited equipment from the Russian bases in Georgia. Russia has stated that the equipment transferred to Armenia will not exceed the adapted CFE Treaty ceilings and will remain under Russia's control.

<sup>209</sup> The relevant, vaguely worded provision relates to a multinational mission to be sent to the Gudauta base to check whether Russia has fulfilled its obligations regarding withdrawal. Germany has offered to lead the mission.

<sup>210</sup> In 2002 Russia pledged to complete the withdrawal of its forces by the end of 2003, 'provided necessary conditions are in place', which it has since interpreted as political, not technical, circumstances. Russia claims that it cannot override the objections of the Trans-Dniester authorities to removal of the ammunition, so its troops must stay on to protect those arsenals. The Russian–CIS 'peacekeeping' force will also allegedly remain, pending a political solution, which Russia makes impossible because of its support for the Trans-Dniester separatist entity.

the Operational Group of Russian Forces in Trans-Dniester (formerly the 14th Army) and two battalions—do not have official base status.

In October 2005 an enlarged '5+2' negotiating format (Moldova, the Trans-Dniester entity, Romania, Russia and Ukraine, with the EU and the USA as observers) was agreed in an attempt to overcome the deadlock. However, events in the following months demonstrated that Russia was not prepared to honour its Istanbul commitments until there is a political settlement of the Trans-Dniester conflict, and the Russian peacekeeping troops will remain indefinitely. Ammunition removal activities are also stalled.

### *Armenia*

Unlike other countries in the South Caucasus, Armenia is a military ally of Russia and a member of the CSTO. The Russian 102nd military base is located at Gyumri, near the Turkish border, and uses the Erebuni military airfield, near Yerevan, according to the provisions of the 1995 Armenian–Russian treaty on military bases in Armenia.<sup>211</sup> Some 3400 Russian personnel are stationed at these facilities; additional troops are deployed along the borders with Iran and Turkey. According to official data, some 5400 Russian troops are stationed on Armenian territory. Officially, the base aims 'to guarantee stability in the region and ensure Russian security interests and attainment of CSTO Charter objectives in the collective security format. . . . Russia defends not only its own interests, but the interests of its allies'.<sup>212</sup> The growing arms race in the South Caucasus, especially between Armenia and Azerbaijan over Nagorno-Karabakh, has led Armenia to welcome the Russian presence. Russia's military presence has been consolidated, not reduced, since the early 1990s. In 2005 it was reported that the installations at Gyumri will be developed to accommodate the Russian military hardware being transferred from Georgia.<sup>213</sup> Allegedly, this equipment will not be handed over to Armenia but will remain under the full control of Russia.

### *Ukraine*

Russia's largest foreign military base is Sevastopol, on the Crimean Peninsula. It hosts the main facilities and forces of the Russian Black Sea Fleet,<sup>214</sup> whose stra-

<sup>211</sup> The Treaty between Armenia and Russia on the Military Base on the Territory of the Republic of Armenia, was signed on 16 Mar. 1995 in Moscow and entered into force on 27 Aug. 1997.

<sup>212</sup> Nikolai Bordyuzha, Secretary-General of the CSTO, stated that the base 'does not threaten a single state in the region and has the only objective to prevent undesirable developments in the region'. Agentstvo Voennykh Novostei, 'CSTO chief says military base in Armenia defending Russian allies' interests in Caucasus', 13 Mar. 2006, World News Connection, National Technical Information Service (NTIS), US Department of Commerce.

<sup>213</sup> Mukhin, V., 'Kavkazkoe usileniye' [The Caucasian reinforcement], *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, 27 Jan. 2006.

<sup>214</sup> Before the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the Black Sea Fleet was stationed in Sevastopol, Odessa, Donuzlav and Poti. The Russian fleet is stationed at Feodosya, Sevastopol and, temporarily, Nikolaev. The air force is stationed at 2 main airfields: Gvardeyskoe and Sevastopol (Kacha).

tegic purpose in the cold war period was to constrain NATO's manoeuvring room in the region and keep it 'within Turkey's coastal waters'.<sup>215</sup> The issue of splitting the navy between Russia and Ukraine after the break-up of the Soviet Union was extremely controversial and it took several years to divide the Black Sea Fleet and the associated infrastructure between the two countries. In May 1997 agreement was reached on, among other things, the leasing of naval facilities and berths in Sevastopol to Russia until 2017.

Even before the Orange Revolution in Ukraine, President Leonid Kuchma's regime sought to explore a more West-oriented policy. One possible obstacle to Ukraine's joining European institutions, particularly NATO, was the Russian military presence there. Anticipating a possible shift in Ukraine's foreign and security policy, Russia began to rethink the use of Sevastopol's facilities after 2017.<sup>216</sup> In spite of rumours of an earlier move from Sevastopol to another base, Russian Defence Minister Ivanov asserted that the Russian fleet 'has no plans to leave'. He stated that 'the principal base of the [Black Sea] was, is and will [exist] in Sevastopol', leaving the issue of its duration deliberately vague.<sup>217</sup> Russia's naval bases on its own shores—one being developed in Novorossiysk and another planned at a location between Gelendzhik and Tuapse—are not planned as an alternative, but rather as a supplement, to Sevastopol.<sup>218</sup>

In the spring of 2005 Ukrainian Foreign Minister Borys Tarasyuk protested against Russian demonstrations of strength (the Russian Special Forces had landed illegally in the Crimea during an exercise) and notified Russia that Ukraine would not extend the 1997 agreement when it expires in 2017.<sup>219</sup> Russian-Ukrainian relations worsened at the end of 2005 and the beginning of 2006 in the context of disputes over gas delivery and pricing. Ukraine threatened to raise the cost for the Russian Navy's deployment at Sevastopol. At the end of 2006 the domestic political situation in Ukraine (the rivalry of President Viktor Yushchenko and Prime Minister Viktor Yanukovich) was volatile. The prospects for Ukraine's accession to NATO had also diminished owing to the public mood, the reluctant stance of the

<sup>215</sup> Abdullaev, N., 'Russia to shift Black Sea fleet out of Ukraine: alters strategy of NATO containment', *Defense News*, 16 Apr. 2006.

<sup>216</sup> Russian Defence Minister Ivanov announced in the summer of 2004 that the Russian Government had decided to build a base for the Black Sea Fleet in Novorossiysk, Russia. Myasnikov, V., 'Chernomorskiy flot idyot na slom: Ukhod Rossii iz Sevastopola—glavnoe usloviye vstupleniya Ukrainy v NATO' [The Black Sea fleet is to be scrapped: Russia's exit from Sevastopol—the main condition of Ukraine's joining NATO], *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, 30 July 2004.

<sup>217</sup> Ivan Safranchuk's statement, quoted by Ivanov, V., 'Sevastopolu ishchut podmenu [A substitute for Sevastopol being sought]', *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, 18 Feb. 2005.

<sup>218</sup> Development of support installations in Solyonnye Ozera (Temryuk) near Kerch, Russia, is also being considered.

<sup>219</sup> Kuzio, T., 'Ukraine asks Russia to begin preparations for withdrawing Black Sea Fleet', *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, 20 Apr. 2005, URL <[http://www.jamestown.org/edm/article.php?article\\_id=2369617](http://www.jamestown.org/edm/article.php?article_id=2369617)>. Article 17 of the 1996 Constitution of Ukraine prohibits foreign military bases on its territory; a change of the relevant provision would require a two-thirds majority in the Ukrainian Parliament.

Yanukovich government towards the alliance and NATO's own 'Ukraine fatigue'. All these factors make the future of the Sevastopol base uncertain.<sup>220</sup>

### **Belarus: facing NATO's advance**

Belarus and Russia responded to NATO's impending first enlargement in 1999 by repeatedly threatening to resort to countermeasures: new troop and equipment deployments by Russia in Belarus, stationing tactical nuclear weapons on Russia's borders, targeting new NATO members with strategic nuclear weapons, and the like.<sup>221</sup> Russia also expressed concern at the second, and major, enlargement of NATO in 2004 but did not represent that enlargement as a threat to its security. Current relations between NATO and Russia can be summarized as troubled yet cooperative. Most recently, the USA's use of military bases in Bulgaria and Romania, and its planned anti-ballistic missile site in Poland and associated radar installations in the Czech Republic have triggered new Russian protests and threats. Russian military installations already exist in Belarus (see table 5.1). In early 2006 senior Russian generals not only announced Russia's intention to set up an airbase in Belarus with the clear purpose of countering the basing schemes but also questioned whether it was any longer in Russia's interest to put the adapted CFE Treaty regime into effect.<sup>222</sup> Soviet-built facilities that could be used for an airbase exist at Baranovichi, Lida and Mochulishche, where squadrons of strategic bombers or fighter aircraft were stationed in the past, but a site has yet to be chosen. Baranovichi is the preferred choice because it is located close to a large training range: the Belarusian air defence group of forces and maintenance facilities. As a first step, Russia has provided four squadrons of C-300 surface-to-air missile systems to Belarus, which were deployed in Brest and Grodno, close to the border with Poland. The future of Russian basing in Belarus depends on resolving President Aleksandr Lukashenka's predicament: NATO is on his doorstep and the 'union' with his Russian ally has become increasingly uneasy.<sup>223</sup>

<sup>220</sup> In the autumn of 2006 the Black Sea Fleet basing agreement became a pretext for Russia to question indirectly Ukraine's sovereignty in the Crimea. President Putin proposed extending the time frame of the agreement beyond 2017, offering Ukraine economic and political advantages. This led to a disagreement over the prolongation issue between the Ukrainian president and prime minister, with the latter accepting the possible extension. Kozhukhar, I., 'Tchem Sevastopol luchshe Novorossiyska? [How is Sevastopol better than Novorossiysk?]', *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, 31 Oct. 2006.

<sup>221</sup> Woehrel, S., *NATO Enlargement and Russia*, US Library of Congress, Congressional Research Service (CRS) Report for Congress 97-477F (CRS: Washington, DC, 14 Apr. 1998), URL <<http://www.countingcalifornia.cdlib.org/crs/pdf/97-477.pdf>>.

<sup>222</sup> Babakin, A. and Myasnikov, V., 'Sozdaetsya antivarshavskiy blok' [An anti-Warsaw bloc is being established], *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, 17 Feb. 2006; and RosBiznesKonsalting, 'Ivanov: RF mozhet vyyti iz DOVSE [Ivanov: [Russian Federation] may leave the CFE Treaty]', URL <[http://top.rbc.ru/index.shtml?news/daythemes/2006/01/24/240000604\\_bod.shtml](http://top.rbc.ru/index.shtml?news/daythemes/2006/01/24/240000604_bod.shtml)>.

<sup>223</sup> On the Belarus–Russia Union see 'Belarus–Russia Union state', GlobalSecurity.org, URL <<http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/belarus/union.htm>>.

## 6. Conclusions

Foreign military bases will remain an indispensable element of the force deployment plans of several of the world's major powers and alliances for a long time to come. They will continue to serve the purposes of establishing states' presence abroad and projecting their military policies and strategies. However, the basing patterns have changed dramatically since the cold war era, when the major powers tended to build up 'mirror-image' structures.

Force realignment in Eurasia reflects the growing need to reposition foreign-based military resources in order to better and more effectively perform both traditional and new functions. Europe is no longer viewed as a theatre of future strategic deployment but is now important as a gateway to Asia, the Middle East and North Africa. Eurasia is a special case that illustrates the overlapping agendas of the Western powers, Russia and the regional states. While Russia and the USA are still the states with the largest foreign military presence worldwide, both China and India (and possibly Iran) will probably also see a need to promote and protect their interests abroad through basing activities. NATO's aspirations to play a global role through out-of-area engagement have meant that the organization also uses or has bases outside Europe.

Six elements characterize the current status of foreign military bases. First, the sole remaining superpower, the USA, has become an unassailable global security actor. It has the resources to transform flexibly and economically the current configuration of its bases abroad, and to realign foreign military installations with minimal risk of creating tension with the host countries or at home. In the United States the Department of Defense is the primary actor in determining the implementation of the US force transformation and basing scheme. The Bush Administration's approach to world affairs may have led to overemphasis on the military dimension of its relations with other states at the expense of political persuasion and diplomatic dialogue, and to a tendency to underplay local concerns and sensitivities. However, the losses of the Republican Party in the congressional elections of 2006 may affect and moderate these policies.

The new US basing policy also influences the policies of other states. Russia is no longer a global actor on the same scale as NATO and the USA, nor does it fully control its immediate neighbourhood. However, Russia has cautiously, and often indirectly, put pressure on the former Soviet republics in order to curtail US influence, and it has sought to rebuild its military posture in the post-Soviet space. Russia is the largest CSTO member and it uses that position to justify the need for its network of military bases in Central Asia. Under the guise of enhanced international cooperation to combat terrorism, this strategy has led to sometimes heavy-handed demonstrations of Russia's regional influence and significance. However, in spite of concern about a new period of rivalry and strategic conflict in Central and South-West Asia, Russia, the CSTO and the SCO have failed to demonstrate

the competence and consensus or provide the necessary resources to challenge NATO and the USA in any dimension of military strength, including basing endeavours.

Second, because the ideological East–West rivalry of the cold war period is gone, basing needs are determined by the nature of the international security environment, by shifts in regional security options and strategies, and by various situational exigencies. The short-lived rapprochement between Russia and the USA after September 2001 in order to combat terrorism has also ended. The current state of affairs is not, however, tantamount to a return to the patterns of cold war brinkmanship. Russia has chosen collaboration and accommodation—however reluctantly and inconsistently—over confrontation. Ideological conflict has not disappeared altogether and may take new forms because of the growing religious radicalism and anti-Western attitudes in South-West Asia and throughout the Middle East, thereby influencing future basing policy in the region.

Third, the basing policies and interests of the main protagonists differ. The strategic orientation of US policy has shifted from defensive containment to offensive postures, such as the pre-emption doctrine and preparation for anti-terrorist and counter-proliferation operations. Consequently, the US focus has also moved from Europe and Russia to Asia (and other non-European zones of crisis) and to such emerging threats as rogue regimes, terrorism, nuclear adventurism, endangered supplies of oil, and the rise of China and India as major new competitors for power in Asia. There is less emphasis on alliances and more on independent action. The USA seeks ad hoc relationships with partners (including members of NATO) that are unlikely to be bothered by the controversial aspects of the US use of bases instead of permanent alliances based on common programmes and consensus. The new base agreements that the USA has concluded with Bulgaria and Romania and the deal on missile defence being sought with the Czech Republic and Poland illustrate the new approach. The Bush Administration's strategic agenda in the so-called arc of instability focuses primarily on the greater Middle East. It is intended to ensure access to geographic corridors that enable the redeployment of a broad range of force elements and other tools for security and stability to conflict-ridden and crisis-prone areas.

Europe seeks equipoise, and NATO is moving away from territorial defence towards out-of-area missions. NATO as a community does not share the USA's aspirations to dominate globally and is vulnerable to potential internal political discord. It therefore strives to balance its 'soft' and 'hard' security missions in Europe and elsewhere. These missions include state-building, peacekeeping, stability- and security-enhancement tasks and the like (soft missions), and counter-insurgency and other enhanced military operations, such as those in Afghanistan (hard missions); and they determine NATO's basing efforts and arrangements. The European Union has implemented its European Security and Defence Policy by testing



its Petersburg crisis-management and peacekeeping capabilities.<sup>224</sup> Neither the EU nor NATO is ready to construct full basing strategies, so both focus on ad hoc operations and restricted actions—hence their interest in limited operational bases.

Russia is committed to countering terrorism and has created the CSTO Collective Rapid Deployment Force, although it also maintains and is establishing bases for collective security and border protection on the CSTO's perimeter. There is a symbolic element in Russia's retention of its bases in the former Soviet Central Asian republics that points to Russia's awaiting developments that will enable it to reclaim control over some former Soviet republics. Strategic competition has also begun to affect the region, and possessing bases strengthens Russia's position in relation to the other regional powers that are prepared to fill the power vacuum that will appear after a future US withdrawal from Asia. Russia cannot afford to create modern rapid reaction units soon or to become more heavily involved in Afghanistan—the source of destabilizing movements that affect Central Asia and the Caspian–Caucasus area. The Russian presence on foreign territories, which is sometimes unwelcome or legally questionable, is primarily intended to reconstruct and maintain a protective barrier around Russia, particularly on its southern perimeter. Russia hopes to prevent a military build-up close to its borders and to stave off the perceived Western intrusion into its sphere of political and economic interest and influence.

China and India may wish to develop a more assertive and competitive pattern of basing to support their capacity for regional and global intervention. Given their rapid economic development and expanding trade, at some stage they may wish to establish basing arrangements, although they may not choose the old approach of occupying bases in order to hold territory and service permanent allies.

Fourth, apart from the traditional power-projection roles, the tasks and functions of military bases have for the most part changed dramatically. The current international and domestic focus is on efforts to counter terrorism, as well as on preventing proliferation, intra-state conflict, insurgency, transnational crime, ethnic unrest, and the like. Owing to the persisting threat of piracy at sea, particularly in South-East Asia, combating this crime may also be added to the basing agenda. A significant number of bases have therefore taken on an expeditionary character and are used for active force operations, which has been facilitated by the military–technological breakthroughs of recent decades.

In the past, bases were used to assist allies and to compensate for their weaknesses. Bases with such deterrent or counterbalancing missions are now limited to areas where interstate strategic challenges are prevalent, for example US bases in North-East Asia that are near China and North Korea and those in South-West Asia close to Iran. The Russian installations being built up in Belarus are of a similar, inter-alliance, nature. Today bases assist regional militaries in working together with partners or allies and promoting compatibility in combined operations.

<sup>224</sup> The Petersburg tasks cover humanitarian and rescue tasks; peacekeeping tasks; and the tasks of combat forces in crisis management, including peacekeeping. They are an integral part of the European Security and Defence Policy.

Examples of this new approach include making the equipment of the host countries in Central Asia compatible with that of the USA and other NATO states; US cooperation with its allies to provide equipment and troop training in the Balkans; the co-location and cooperation of the US forces with Japan's national military units; the NATO military training centre that was set up in Iraq; and Russian forces' assistance to and cooperation with its CSTO allies. Bases are also increasingly used to support humanitarian aid and other civilian functions, as is the case in Central and South-West Asia.

The rationale behind the major powers' basing policies is still questioned by many observers. The USA has requested permission to build military bases and installations in Eurasia for missile defence against states of concern, such as Iran and North Korea. However, this has prompted domestic and international concerns that the US bases are inadequate for deterrence and security purposes yet expose the host countries to potential terrorist attacks. Moreover, in Central Europe the issue of basing has adversely affected political relations with Russia. Thus, US basing policy has encouraged political opposition and civil protests. Ultimately, such efforts may be counterproductive and wasteful of resources. Questions have also been raised about the adequacy and efficiency of combating terrorism with military means while, for example, drug trafficking in and from Afghanistan continues unabated. It has also been questioned whether US bases serve the military needs of US forces or whether they are designed to promote other interests. Establishing bases in oil- and gas-rich regions such as the Middle East, the Caspian Sea basin and Central Asia is easily interpreted as an attempt to protect and secure the uninterrupted supply of these raw materials to the West.

Fifth, dealing with undemocratic regimes, not least acquiring basing rights from them, is highly controversial. The growing emphasis worldwide on democratic legitimacy as the basis for security cooperation is not easy to separate from the issue of basing agreements, even when it might suit the USA to do so. The promotion of democratic values is an important part of US policy, but in practice this can be complicated, as illustrated by the US use of bases for CIA 'rendition operations', the interrogation of alleged terrorists at the detention facility at the US naval base at Guantánamo Bay and the story of US-Uzbek relations.

The democratic tradition in Central Asia is not strong; and democratization, as pursued by the USA, has collided with the strategic interests of the countries in the region. The host countries in Central Asia and the Western base holders must respect their international legal obligations and human rights and liberties. As Uzbekistan discovered, despite its contribution to combating terrorism and the associated need for bases, its undemocratic conduct led to the end of its military cooperation with the USA. (It can also be argued that Uzbekistan had lost its strategic value to some extent and had become such a liability that the value of its bases was outweighed by its conduct.) In Kyrgyzstan, the USA is willing to tolerate the regime's democratic flaws and discriminatory practices in order to retain bases in the country to serve as a counterweight to those of Russia. The democracy

stipulation seems not to be applied in other areas either, such as the Gulf region, where the USA maintains bases in several autocratic states.

Russia provides support to the authoritarian regimes in its neighbourhood as part of its strategy to preserve its influence there, and it does not require them to meet high humanitarian and democratic standards of conduct. Ironically, Russia is able to deal more successfully with its undemocratic basing partners than with those, such as Georgia and Moldova, where the process of democratization has advanced and where Russia runs the risk of being evicted from its bases.

Sixth, social, economic and environmental factors are of increasing importance in determining basing strategy and its implementation. Modifications of basing strategies are affected by political, economic and social changes in the host states. Bases provide benefits, such as jobs, but there are also disadvantages associated with them. Local opinion cannot be ignored or confidence between allies may worsen. The governments of the host states must seek domestic approval of the bases and various factors related to their presence must be addressed, including crime, noise, the proximity of bases to urban areas, pollution and other damage to the surrounding area. Finally, budgetary and other financial considerations (expenditure constraints, costs, compensation demands, etc.) must be given due attention. All these factors, separately and in combination, influence foreign basing policy and, in turn, the location of bases around the world.

The global, regional and local security factors that are the basis for the establishment and retention of military bases are more complex than ever before. A state may determine that it requires a foreign military presence for various reasons, including new threats and dangers; national, alliance or coalition strategies and interests; and the need for visibility in certain geographical areas. The current basing strategies were motivated by the global campaign against terrorism, but their long-term prospects are uncertain. The new bases are intended to be highly flexible and able to counter qualitatively new threats rather than permanent facilities to defend geographically limited interests. Post-cold war Europe is gradually assuming the character of a way station on the route to Asia, the Middle East and Africa. Asia is experiencing a combination of the old and new basing approaches in response to the volatile international situation. The policies of the Bush Administration have emphasized an exclusive, militarized focus that may lead to deepening isolation of the USA, alienation of its allies and adverse attitudes to basing in host countries. A new understanding between the USA and its partners would help to prevent the realization of this scenario and would better serve their common aims and goals.

Force realignment and basing in Asia face various challenges. In Afghanistan and Iraq the choice between strong and weak basing in wartime affects security policy. Concern about the expansion of China prevents far-reaching realignments in North-East Asia. Central Asia may be about to experience another round of the antagonistic 'Great Game', although with new actors, in which neither side is likely to win a lasting advantage. Russia is unlikely to relinquish its presence in the strategically important regions in its vicinity, but the processes of state building

and democratization in the countries adjacent to it may eventually affect its basing patterns through the cancellation of base contracts, as is the case in Georgia.

Yet another factor may play an increasingly important role in US basing policy. Like other states, the USA enthusiastically embraces military–technical advances, and developments such as sea-based platforms, better long-range air and sea transport, and other achievements in military technology are bound to have an additional impact on US foreign basing policy.

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