

Conflict Studies Research Centre



**The Collective Security
Treaty Organization**

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February 2005

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The Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO) is an organization that is determined to play an important role in European and Central Asian security. At present, six countries hold membership in the Organization: Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Tajikistan. The CSTO has de facto been around for almost 13 years, but nevertheless it remains an entity that is not well known in the West. The main objective of this paper is to correct this oversight. The article will start with exercise Rubezh-2004, the Organization's biggest accomplishment so far, and will subsequently give a basic overview of the organisation's historic background, its current status and its future potential as a (regional) participant in the field of Euro-Atlantic Security.

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Rubezh 2004

In August 2004, the CSTO conducted an extensive military anti-terrorism exercise entitled Rubezh-2004 (Border 2004). The purpose of this exercise, held in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, was to test the CSTO's Rapid Deployment Force in action for the first time ever. Previous exercises were mostly conducted by units and regiments of the national armies of the member-states that were assigned to a joint command for a short period of time. The units of the CSTO's Rapid Deployment Force are permanently assigned and are already part of one entity, which should contribute to more efficient and increased anti-terrorism capabilities. Another new aspect of this exercise was the fact that it was also the first exercise organised on the premise of the concept of pre-emptive strikes, whereas previous CSTO exercises were always of a responsive and defensive nature. The new strategy should allow for a greater flexibility and efficiency, because it foresees pre-emptive measures to prevent terrorist groups causing distress and chaos in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).¹

Rubezh-2004 consisted of two separate stages: first a command-post exercise about the preparation and conduct of joint operations to stabilise the situation in the Central Asian region. This part of the exercise was held in Almaty, Kazakhstan. Its purpose was to test the capability of the participating countries to agree on military priorities in order to secure the safety of the region. The command-post exercise also focused on the procedures to jointly take political and military decisions to react to threats posed by illegally armed formations to the CSTO member-states. In addition to the military institutions of the member-states, other participants were: the CSTO ministries of foreign affairs, ministries for the interior, as well as their special services and border guards. Several parties had received invitations to act as observers during this stage of the exercise: representatives of the General Staffs of the Armed Forces of the CIS member-countries, representatives from the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation² and also from the CIS Anti-terrorism Centre.³

The second, operational stage of exercise Rubezh-2004 took place in Kyrgyzstan at the military training facility "Edelweiss" located in the Issyk-Kulsk province in the south-western part of the country. According to the scenario of the exercise, approximately 120 terrorists attempted to take hostage some nearby villages. In a matter of minutes, units of the armed forces of the Kyrgyz republic and the Collective Rapid Deployment Forces that were stationed nearby were alerted. Detachments of the Special Forces began the hunt for the terrorists, while groups of the ministries for emergencies and the interior evacuated civilians from this region. The terrorists proved to be very determined not to withdraw and it required a lot of efforts to overcome them. The front line of the terrorists was subjected to a fierce artillery bombardment, followed by an air force offensive. Subsequently,

paratroopers launched search operations to apprehend the rebels that got away. The result of the exercise was the complete annihilation of the rebel groups.

In total, approximately 2000 people participated in exercise Rubezh-2004. In addition to the CSTO's Rapid Deployment Force, the member-states provided key capabilities: Kyrgyzstan was represented by a unit of special forces and also supplied tanks, armoured personnel carriers and armed infantry combat vehicles as well as various types of fire-arms; Kazakhstan participated with an airborne storm brigade of the air-mobility forces, and also with a flight of Mi-8 helicopters and SU-27 fighter planes; Russia provided special forces from the Volga-Urals Military District and Tajikistan was represented by a company of a battalion of the Collective Rapid Deployment Forces. The operational part of the exercise was witnessed by Vladimir Mikhaylov, the commander of the Russian Air Force, Nikolay Bordyuzha, the Secretary-General of the CSTO, Vasiliy Zavgorodnyy, the Deputy Chairman of the Council of Defence Ministers and head of the Joint Staff of the CSTO and also by the Ministers of Defence of Kazakhstan, Russia and Tajikistan, and by delegations from Armenia and Belarus. Other observers were representatives of the Chinese ministry of defence and defence attachés of embassies in Kyrgyzstan.

From an operational point of view the objectives of exercise Rubezh 2004 were first and foremost the further perfection of tactics to hinder the movement of illegally armed formations; the landing of paratroopers behind enemy lines; the evacuation of citizens; the liberation of hostages and improving artillery targeting. The exercise devoted special attention to the air force in all its manifestations: transport aircraft, fighter planes and bombers, all of which played an important role in this exercise. The presumption was that in mountainous areas the air force is the best suited force to conduct battle with terrorists with minimal casualties among the troops.

The scenario was based on real security concerns that the CSTO member-states face. The political-military situation in this region - and more specifically in Central Asia - is not very stable and there is a real possibility of the emergence of armed conflicts between the states in Central Asia and separatist movements. Furthermore, terrorist organizations remain active in the region and their training camps are still functioning. With this in mind exercise Rubezh-2004 aimed at improving procedures to stop terrorist organizations' attempts to establish a radical Islamic state in the Ferghana valley, a highly undesirable development that would affect all states in the region.

The purpose of the exercise was to give the soldiers a chance to practise the skills that may one day be needed in real life and to gain valuable insights about the actual conduct of operations and potential weaknesses. The participating parties were very positive in their appraisal of the exercise and drew some valuable lessons from this experience for future CSTO operations. The conclusions of the participating states were formulated in clear and decisive proposals to the Council on Collective Security for the use of its military contingent.

Rubezh-2004 has demonstrated clearly that the CSTO is an organisation that is determined to play a long-term future role in the national and regional security of its member-states.

Origin & Development

The Collective Security Treaty (CST) was signed in Tashkent, Uzbekistan on 15 May 1992, less than half a year after the break-up of the Soviet Union, by the following six CIS states: Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. The number of treaty states grew to nine when Azerbaijan, Georgia and Belarus also adhered to the treaty. The treaty entered into force on 20 April 1994 for a period of 5 years with a possible extension. It was registered at the United Nations on 1 November 1995.

At first glance it may seem odd that a large number of Former Soviet Republics, shortly after gaining their independence, signed a treaty that bonded them once more closely together in the important field of security. However, the conduct of the newly independent states was perfectly understandable at the time. The break-up of the Soviet Union resulted, despite efforts by the leadership of the general staff of the Soviet Armed Forces to retain the status quo, in the division of the collective armed forces. The now independent republics all undertook efforts to set up national armies and were not interested in retaining elements of the old infrastructure that was beyond their control. Nevertheless, the break-up sparked a number of regional conflicts⁴ that had shimmered under the surface for a long time, but that were always suppressed by Moscow. Most republics came to the conclusion that while their national defence infrastructures were still in the process of formation it would be wise to become part of some sort of collective security and defence structure that could guarantee their security in case this was needed. The Treaty specifically states that if one of the member-states is threatened by aggression that the other states will consider this as an act of aggression against all.⁵ However, some observers have pointed out that while this may have been true for a number of treaty-participants it was not what motivated all of them. Several countries were said to have been forced to adhere to the treaty by a Russia that supposedly found it difficult to come to terms with the loss of its status as a super-power. In order to retain its direct influence among as many republics as possible Russia, so it is said, set up the CST. All the same, nine countries adhered to the Treaty, which made it a significant regional entity in the Former Soviet Republics.

In practice, however, it soon became apparent that despite the language used by the member-states, the Treaty did not live up to the status of a collective security structure: two of the member-states - Armenia and Azerbaijan - used force to decide their conflict over Nagornyy Karabakh, while yet another member - Russia - secretly supported Armenia. At best, the treaty was a loose structure aimed at threats from afar. It gradually became clear that problems within the CST member-states had a tendency to be decided first and foremost in Russia's favour. In Tajikistan the pro-Russian regime of President Rakhmonov was established, which was a development that was not welcomed by Uzbekistan. In Nagornyy Karabakh, Russia helped Armenia to gain the upper hand and Georgia proved to be unable to regain control over Abkhazia. In both Tajikistan and Abkhazia, peacekeepers from the CIS were present, largely provided by Russia. It was this sort of experience that made a few member-countries doubt the merit of membership in what they perceived to be a pro-Russian Organization. In 1999, when the treaty was up for prolongation, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Uzbekistan decided they would not adhere for a second period and withdrew from the treaty. Eduard Shevarnadze, then president of Georgia, stated at the time that "Georgia refuses to participate in the Treaty on Collective Security in the CIS, because it only exists on paper and there are no real practical results whatsoever".⁶

By the end of the 1990s, however, interest in the CST increased significantly as a result of both the expansion of Taliban activity in Afghanistan and the terrorist attacks in Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan. The result was a number of initiatives intended to increase the efficiency of the CST. At a meeting in Minsk, Belarus, in May 2000, the Council on Collective Security decided to establish three distinct security regions: the European, the Caucasus and the Central Asian. In October 2000, in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, the Council also agreed on the creation of a system of collective security forces. In May 2001, in Yerevan, Armenia, the Council agreed to create collective security rapid response forces for the Central Asian region. In 2001, the treaty member-states also decided to set up rapid deployment forces and to expand the rapid response forces. The latter was enlarged with Kazakh, Kyrgyz, Russian and Tajik battalions and was given adequate air capabilities, such as transport and combat aircraft as well as helicopters.

Financial difficulties encountered by all member-states, including Russia, the largest CST partner, in combination with the great number of other internal and international, problems, made it difficult for the CST to live up to all expectations. Russia could not finance regular training of foreign armed forces, nor could it purchase new equipment to replace old and out-dated equipment for the other CST member-states. It was this lack of financial clout that caused some of the CST member-states to look elsewhere, namely towards NATO and in particular the US, for more financial support.

It goes without saying that the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 had a major impact on the situation in the region. The Central Asian states were of strategic importance to the United States in the fight against the Taliban regime of Afghanistan that harboured Osama bin Laden. Within a short time frame, several US and NATO bases appeared in the Central Asian region. For example, in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, the US and its partners set up the Gansi airbase with a staff of approximately 1600 servicemen and women from different NATO countries as well as 30 aircraft. It has been reported that Kyrgyzstan receives up to 7000 USD per aircraft that takes off from Gansi. In the framework of the war on terrorism, the US also actively supports the development of the military in a number of strategically important CIS member-states.

From Treaty to Regional Organization

Despite, or more likely as a result of - the close interaction between Washington and the Collective Security Treaty member-states, after 11 September 2001, Russia tried to increase cooperation among the CST-countries. On 15 May 2002, the 10th anniversary of the CST, at a session of the Treaty Council, the members agreed that new initiatives were required to bring CST activities and procedures to a higher level. It was this shared concern in combination with fears over an unstable situation in Afghanistan that triggered the CST member-states to transform the Treaty and set up a Collective Security Treaty Organization based on the Treaty, capable of becoming an important organization in the field of regional security.

One of the main incentives for reform was the countries' desire to establish a joint command structure for the military forces of the CSTO member-states so the organization could effectively protect the individual and collective security of its members. Following their decision to transform the structures and procedures of the CST, the presidents of the Treaty member-states instructed their governments to form a working-group at the level of deputy ministers of foreign affairs and

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defense by 1 July 2002 and to prepare draft agreements to regulate the activities of the Organization and its elements by 1 November 2002. The member-states also agreed to register the CSTO with the United Nations as a regional organization.

Moscow believed it could use the CSTO to solve several problems at the same time: the CSTO was to become an organization able to effectively oppose threats to the security of the member-states, as, for instance, the one posed by the remnants of the Taliban regime. However, despite Putin's statement on the eve of the CST's 10th anniversary that "the CSTO states cooperate (...) not against somebody, but against threats that we face," it seemed rather obvious that Russia also perceived the organization as a possible answer to NATO's eastward expansion. In 1999, three former Communist States (Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland) had already joined the Alliance and at its Prague Summit in 2002, the North Atlantic Alliance invited 7 countries to start membership negotiations, including the three Baltic Republics. Furthermore, NATO had taken an interest in the Caucasus and in Central Asia, where some states were also interested in membership. Despite the fact that cooperation between NATO and Russia under Putin reached a new level which in May 2002 resulted in the establishment of the NATO-Russia Council, an organ in which the NATO members and Russia are cooperating as equals, Russia was not thrilled by the prospect that NATO would expand eastwards even further.

Moscow understood from the onset that promises and paper declarations would not be enough to keep the other CSTO member states interested in cooperation. In a political situation in which the US and other NATO countries - in the framework of the war on terrorism - provided the Central Asian states with broad financial support, Moscow had to make the deal interesting for the other five member countries. Russian initiatives that can be interpreted to have been aimed directly at this issue are, firstly, Russia's preparedness to sell military equipment developed by Russian manufacturers to its CSTO-partners at Russian, rather than export, prices. Furthermore, Russia has declared that cadets and junior officers from the CSTO states can be eligible for education in military academies at special - reduced - prices. Obviously this imposes somewhat of a burden on Russia's military budget, but at present Russia is still by far the most prosperous member of the organization, with a military budget that equals the total annual budget of some of the other participants in the organization.

After the transformation of the CST into a proper political-military organization, political-technological cooperation among the CSTO member-states picked up significantly. A good example of this increased interaction was the opening of a Russian airbase in Kant, Kyrgyzstan in October 2003. The base hosts a number of SU-24 and SU-27 aircraft as well as several military trainer aircraft and transport planes. Russia does not pay rent for the base, but intends to spend up to 4 million USD a year for the base's day-to-day operations. The base forms an integral part of the Ural district air force and has its staff in Yekaterinburg, Russia.

The Organization's Infrastructure

The Organization's Charter (see annex) provides an overall picture of the infrastructure of the organization. The important bodies that deal with political and military issues of concern to the CSTO member-states are the Council on Collective Security, the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs, the Council of Ministers of Defence and the Committee of Secretaries of the Security Councils. The day-to-day

management of the Organization is the responsibility of its Secretary-General, who is assisted by the Secretariat.

The most important decision-making body of the organization is the Council on Collective Security, that consists of the heads of state of the member states. However, if so required, sessions of the Council may also be attended by the ministers of foreign affairs, the ministers of defence, the secretaries of the security councils of the member-states, the organization's Secretary-General and other invited parties. The Council reviews important issues with regard to the activities of the CSTO and it decides what needs to be done to accomplish the tasks that face the organization. The chairman of the Council is the head of state of the country on whose territory the Council is meeting, although the Council can decide otherwise. The Chairman remains in office until the next session takes place, but if he is not able to fulfil his duties, a new Chairman will be elected for the remaining period until the next meeting. In the period between Council sessions, the Permanent Council with the organization is responsible for the coordination of interaction between the member states with regard to the implementation of decisions taken by the Organization.

The Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs, the Council of Ministers of Defence and the Council of Secretaries of Security Councils are respectively responsible for consultation between the member-states and implementation of decisions taken with regard to foreign and defence policies, as well as on issues of importance to their national security interests.

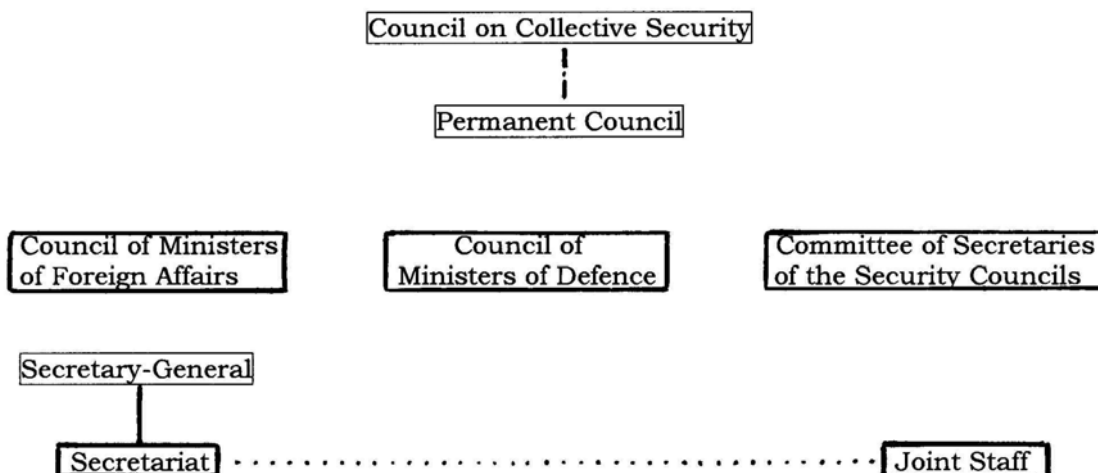
All decisions taken in the framework of the Council on Collective Security, the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs, the Council of Ministers of Defence and the Committee of Secretaries of Security Councils, are - with the exception of procedural issues - taken on the basis of consensus. These bodies hold regular meetings to discuss issues of interest to the CSTO or to one of the member states.

The day-to-day management of the Organization is (as has already been mentioned) done by the Secretary-General of the Organization with help of a Secretariat. The Secretary-General is a national of one of the CSTO member states and is appointed for a period of three years on recommendation of the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs. The current Secretary-General is Nikolay Bordyuzha, a former KGB officer and at one time Russian envoy to Denmark, who was appointed at a session of the Council on Collective Security on 28 April 2003. The Secretary-General is the head of the Secretariat of the Organization that consists of personnel seconded from their national administrations or directly hired by the organization on the basis of contracts.

In April 2003, the Council of Defence Ministers decided that the more active role the Organization was pursuing in the field of foreign policy in combination with the existing situation in the region called for the establishment of a military body, that would function permanently and that would coordinate the entire military component of the Organization. It was decided that this body would be called the Joint Staff and it has been operational since 1 January 2004. Its main responsibilities are: monitoring of the forces and resources of collective security, the development - in cooperation with the Defence Ministers and the commanders of the regional troop formations - of proposals to conduct joint activities with regard to the combat readiness in the interest of collective defence.

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This provides the following basic outline of the most important elements of the Organization:



Present Situation & Future Prospects

It has already been mentioned that the Organization is very ambitious and strives to expand its focus and capabilities.

In January 2004, the Joint Staff of the Collective Security Treaty Organization became operational in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan. The exact responsibilities of the Staff have been set as well as those of the military units that take their orders from the Staff. In late 2003, at its session in Moscow, the Council of Defence Ministers had already decided to double the size of these Forces - from 1500 to 3000 - by the beginning of January 2004. These changes result in an effective brigade with reinforcement measures, such as tanks, artillery, helicopters and fighter aircraft stationed at the Russian airbase in Kant. The Secretary-General of the Organization, Nikolay Bordyuzha, has stated that the increase in manpower was not caused by specific military plans in the Central Asian region, but that it was a result of the concept for development of the military component of the collective security system of the member-states.

However, Bordyuzha pointed out that the situation in the region has been very tense. Obviously, narco-trafficking is a problem for the region, but what is even worse - according to the Secretary-General - is the fact that the Taliban in Afghanistan are gradually regrouping and are regaining strength. NATO's effort to control and stabilize the situation in Afghanistan can only be felt in the capital and its suburbs and have little influence beyond Kabul. International terrorism has not been defeated here. It has only relocated itself and is currently preparing new terrorists and specialists for a wide variety of tasks, including suicide-bombers. The "new generation of terrorists" is already active within Afghanistan, Iraq and Israel. These terrorists are also looking towards Central Asia as a potential target, or they see it as a bridge to reach Russia. In order to prevent these terrorists accomplishing their goal, Bordyuzha mentioned that military cooperation with NATO had to be significantly improved, but stressed that until the Council on Collective Security so decides, the Organization is not permitted to directly approach NATO HQ. The Secretary-General also said that further efforts were

underway in the CSTO framework to improve the cooperation, structures and procedures of the Organization.⁷

In an interview he gave to the Russian newspaper *Krasnaya Zvezda* in June 2004, Bordyuzha defined the three areas that are most important for the CSTO. The first is the field of foreign policy. It is important that the member states have a coordinated position on important regional and international developments, in order to make sure that they share the same assessment of events. The second important direction is opposing threats and challenges. Bordyuzha pointed out that this means the coordination of efforts by the law enforcement agencies and militaries of the member states to oppose such threats as terrorism, extremism, narco-trafficking, organized crime, etc. Finally, the third priority area is the Organization's military component. First and foremost, this means the forming and improvement of the troops in the Western direction (Russia-Belarus), in the Caucasus (Russia-Armenia) and also of the Collective Rapid Deployment Forces (in the Central Asian region).⁸

In June 2004, important sessions of the Council on Collective Security and of the Council of Defence Ministers took place at which the members laid out their plans for the military component of the Organization up to 2010. The CSTO member states have agreed on the need to establish a joint air defence system, to improve communications, to increase intelligence gathering capabilities and intelligence sharing. The states have also decided to further improve the existing regional troop formations and to enlarge the Rapid Deployment Collective Security Forces. It has also been agreed that technological interoperability is a priority area for improvement and that it is extremely important that there is a broad supply of necessary resources for the collective forces. In order to continue development of military-technological cooperation, the states have decided to adopt one single standard for training and to equip the forces with specific types of armaments and military equipment.

In addition to the activities of a military nature, the CSTO member states have also agreed to decide on political-military issues. For example, how can the experience of individual CSTO member-states in peacekeeping operations be used to improve the peacekeeping capabilities of the CSTO? It is not unthinkable that the organization will decide to set up collective peacekeeping forces. These forces could - depending on decisions taken by the UN Security Council - be deployed on peacekeeping missions in the CSTO region of interest, or even beyond this region. It goes without saying that these initiatives are all aimed at the short to long range and that they will require time to implement, but they give a good understanding of the ambitions of the CSTO.

Points of View

Some observers have erroneously compared the CSTO with NATO and its antagonist from the era of the Cold War, the Warsaw Treaty Organisation. In reality however, the CSTO is neither and there are many arguments to prove this point. The Organization has different objectives from NATO; it lacks the Alliance's financial resources and thirdly it launches its activities first and foremost for and on behalf of its members, whereas NATO goes to great efforts to reach out to non-member countries. Neither can the CSTO be compared to the Warsaw Treaty Organization. Firstly, the Warsaw Pact was not a voluntary organization and countries were not at liberty to withdraw, and secondly the Warsaw Pact geographically incorporated

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nearly all of Eastern Europe, while the CSTO is confined to the territory of the Former Soviet Union. In fact it does not even cover the entire Union, since at present membership comprises just six countries.

The CSTO is an organization that has triggered some discussion among analysts and observers in the region about its value and (past) effectiveness. Most observers are inclined to believe that in the time that the CSTO has been functioning it has not managed to accomplish anything significant. It was not able to put a stop to the civil war in Tajikistan, nor was it able to prevent the armed conflicts in Abkhazia and Karabakh. In fact, some analysts have said that the CSTO, just as the CST that preceded it, is a complete non-entity: a desperate attempt to try to retain some elements of the Soviet era security infrastructure.

It was supposedly the lack of tangible results that caused some of the founding states to withdraw from the organization. The perceived low effectiveness of the CSTO combined with its limited resources are apparently also the reason that no other state in the region is lining up to join. However, some observers have stated that the CSTO has chosen not to pursue an active membership policy; these analysts blame the fact that states in the region seem to prefer NATO membership on aggressive expansion techniques by the North Atlantic Alliance.

It seems however more likely that states simply see the CSTO as something that has yet to prove its use, whereas NATO has a long and mostly successful history. Despite initiatives to address the matter, the CSTO remains primarily a regional organization that helps its member states to defend its southern borders, rather than a collective security body in the full meaning of that term, that implies an organization that is capable of addressing both external threats and problems within the member-states, such as terrorism, Islamic fundamentalism, drugs and human trafficking.

In an interview to *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* given shortly after the ratification of the CSTO Charter by the State Duma of the Russian Federation, Andrey Kokoshin, head of the Duma Committee for CIS affairs, presented another point of view. He pointed out that the CSTO is an organization that has been established in order to oppose current threats to the security of its member states and one that can potentially become a strong regional security organization. However, in order for it to live up to these expectations it should work on those issues that are mentioned in its Charter and not become distracted by matters with which it should not concern itself.⁹

Conclusions

The CSTO has a very ambitious agenda for the time-frame between 2005 and 2010. However, there are serious obstacles - internal and external - on the way to these goals and some of these problems may prove to be too difficult to solve. Obviously a very important issue is the financial situation of the Organization and some of the planned initiatives may simply prove to be too costly. However, there are also other concerns. In his interview referred to above, Bordyuzha identified two distinct sets of problems. First of all, there are problems of a political nature. The Secretary-General stated that Russia's passive attitude throughout the past decade had given the US and western European states the opportunity to drive a wedge between Russia and other CSTO states. He added that clearly some parties were displeased with the positive developments within the organization and that they were trying to

hinder further progress, which makes it difficult at times to come to a shared point of view among the members.¹⁰ Although this is somewhat exaggerated, it is true that the US and European Union countries have become more active in the region. For example, in the same month that Rubezh-2004 was conducted, Kazakhstan was also the scene of exercise "Steppe Eagle", in which Kazakhstan cooperated with the US and the UK. Some of the heads of the CSTO member states almost seem to try to use their cooperation with Russia as an instrument to force the US to pay up if it wants to retain its influence in the region, and vice-versa. The second set of problems concerns the entire CIS and the vast differences that now exist between its member countries. It is important to understand where cooperation in the Commonwealth is going, because that could become an important factor for the CSTO. Recent events in Ukraine have shown that the CIS is still an unpredictable region and it is virtually impossible to make accurate across-the-board assessments for 12 different states.

In addition to problems that face the Organization, there is another matter, caused by what appears to be Cold War thinking that could potentially have negative consequences for security in the CIS region. The heads of state of the CSTO member countries have pointed out time and again that the organization cooperates with a great number of organizations, such as the CIS, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, the anti-terrorist committee of the UN Security Council, the UN directorate against organized crime and narco-trafficking, as well as with other UN structures, and also with the OSCE. It is strange that the CSTO - despite the fact that its Secretary-General has advocated such a step - has yet to establish direct working relations with NATO, the most successful and important entity in the field of Euro-Atlantic security. From time to time, the CSTO makes statements that it is interested in cooperation with NATO and that this is an important discussion point at its sessions, but there are no real steps towards cooperation. NATO cooperates with individual CSTO members that are either PFP members (Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan) or that have special relations with the Alliance (Russia), but not with the CSTO as a separate entity. This is more than just an oversight from the side of the CSTO and it seems to be a conscious - but erroneous - decision.

In 2000, the Council on Collective Security established three separate regions: the European, the Caucasus and the Central Asian region. Recent CSTO documents and statements by officials clearly put the emphasis on the Central Asian region and little or nothing is said about the other two regions. It therefore is almost an ironic coincidence that the tragic events that took place in Beslan (Caucasus, Russian Federation) in early September 2004 are almost identical to the training scenario of Rubezh-2004.

Some observers have referred to the Organization as a nonentity that will never amount to anything, simply because it is based on all the wrong assumptions. Others have called the CSTO the only guarantee of security in the CIS region, while yet others have completely overstretched the truth by claiming that India and even China were keen on joining. In reality it has to be said that the Organization has not had a very successful past, but it seems to be making changes for the better. The CSTO's Charter clearly defines a number of threats and challenges on which the Organization is to focus. Small successes have been accomplished in this area. A flaw of the CSTO seems to be the fact that it continuously seeks to expand its areas of interests, instead of focusing on the problems at hand, which is something that hinders progress. Whether the CSTO will evolve into a permanent and important organization in Euro-Atlantic security therefore depends on the ability to

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focus on those points mentioned in the charter, however more than anything it depends on whether or not the CSTO member states are genuine in their desire to cooperate, with each other as well as with other organizations.

ENDNOTES

¹ In December 1991, the CIS was set up as a loose consultative body and as a tool to interact on cross-border issues for the newly independent Soviet Republics. The creation of the Commonwealth accelerated the break up of the USSR, because the formal establishment of a new organization with the backing of the republics made the USSR completely redundant as a state. CIS-member states are: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan.

² The declaration officially establishing the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) was signed on 15 June 2001. SCO member-states are: China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. Key priorities for the Organisation are the global situation and major regional problems.

³ The CIS Anti-Terrorism Centre was set up on 20 June 2000 and officially started operations on 1 December 2000. It coordinates the anti-terrorism activities of the special services of the CIS-member states and it conducts anti-terrorism exercises. The Centre also conducts meetings with foreign anti-terrorism experts to exchange experience and knowledge.

⁴ In particular: the civil war in Tajikistan, Georgian efforts to regain control over Abkhazia and the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan over Nagornyy Karabakh.

⁵ The formulation used here is almost word-for-word identical to that used in the Washington Treaty of April 1949: NATO's founding document.

⁶ Upon their withdrawal from the CST, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Uzbekistan joined forces with Ukraine and Moldova to form "GUUAM". A cooperative organisation in a number of fields (Economy, Security etc.) that strives to closer inter-action with the West. Russia is not a partner in this organisation. Shevarnadze quoted from:

⁷ <http://kurg.rtcomm.ru/publ.shtml?cmd=sch&cat=527&vip=13>.

⁸ <http://www.mideast.ru/new/ar.php?showme=33&base=rus&rbshowme=3&action=show>

⁹ http://www.redstar.ru/2004/06/17_06/1_01.html.

¹⁰ <http://www.centrasia.ru/newsA.php4?st=1053418380>.

¹¹ http://www.redstar.ru/2004/06/17_06/1_01.html.

Annex

Charter of the Collective Security Treaty Organization¹

The State-Parties of the Treaty on Collective Security of 15 May 1992 (henceforth referred to as Treaty),

acting in strict accordance with its obligations under the Charter of the United Nations (UN) and the decisions of the Security Council of the UN, and based upon the universally acknowledged principles of international law;

striving to create favourable and stable conditions for the overall development of the Treaty State-Parties and guaranteeing their security, sovereignty as well as territorial integrity; confirming their adherence to the goals and principles of the Treaty and to international agreements and decisions that are taken in its framework;

determined to develop and deepen military-political cooperation in the interests of guaranteeing and strengthening national, regional and international security;

put before themselves the goal to continue and enhance tight and broad friendly relations in the fields of foreign policy, the military and military-technological issues, and also in the sphere of opposing trans-national challenges and threats to the security of nations and people;

acting upon the intent to increase the effectiveness of the activities in the framework of the Treaty

have agreed on the following:

Chapter I

Establishment Of The Collective Security Treaty Organization

Article 1

The State-Parties of the Treaty establish the international regional Collective Security Treaty Organization (henceforth referred to as Organization).

Article 2

The provisions of the Treaty and international agreements as well as decisions of the Council on Collective Security that have been taken in the development of the Treaty are obligations for the member-states of the Organization (henceforth, referred to as member-states) and for the Organization itself.

¹ Russian text from:
http://www.infoyar.ru/bp.php?show=/Docum/DocumShow_DocumID_89255.html.
Author's translation.

Chapter II**Goals & Principles****Article 3**

The goals of the Organization are the strengthening of peace, international and regional security and stability, protection - on a collective basis - of the independence and the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the member-states. In order to accomplish these goals the member-states give priority to political resources.

Article 4

In its activities the Organization cooperates with states which are not members of the Organization and maintains relations with international intergovernmental organizations active in the field of security. The Organization contributes to the formation of a just, democratic world-order, based on the universal principles of international law.

Article 5

The Organization operates based upon deep respect for the independence, the voluntary participation and the equality of rights and obligations of the member-states. It also acts on the basis of non-interference in affairs that are subject to the national jurisdiction of the member-states.

Article 6

This Charter does not affect the rights and obligations of the member-states with respect to other international agreements in which the member-states participate.

Chapter III**Direction Of Activities****Article 7**

In order to accomplish the goals of the Organization, the member-states take joint measures to establish - within its framework - an effective system of collective security, to set up coalition (regional) armed troops (forces) and organs to control these, to develop the military infrastructure, preparation of military personnel and specialists for the armed forces and to supply them with the necessary armaments and military technological equipment.

The State-Parties take decisions on the deployment on its territories of armed troops (forces), objects of the military infrastructure of states, who are not members of the Organization after the conduct of immediate consultation (agreement) with the other member-states.

Article 8

The State-Parties coordinate and unite their efforts in the struggle against international terrorism and extremism, against illegal trade in narcotics, psychotropic substances or arms, against organized trans-national crime, illegal migration and other threats to the security of member-states.

The State-Parties will implement their activities in these directions – also - in close cooperation with all interested states and international inter-governmental organizations under the aegis of the UN.

Article 9

The State-Parties will agree and coordinate their foreign-policy on international and regional security problems – also - by making use of the consultative mechanisms and procedures of the Organization.

Article 10

The State-Parties take measures to develop the Treaty's legal base, that provides the regulations for the functioning of the collective security system and to harmonize national legislation on issues, such as defence, military development and security.

Chapter IV**The Bodies Of The Organization****Article 11**

The bodies of the Organization are:

- a: the Council on Collective Security (henceforth referred to as Council)
- b: the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs (henceforth referred to as CMFA)
- c: the Council of Ministers of Defence (henceforth referred to as CMD)
- d: the Committee of Secretaries of the Security Councils (henceforth referred to as CSSC)

The Secretariat of the Organization (henceforth referred to as Secretariat) is the Organization's body that is permanently operational.

The functions and order of work of the above mentioned bodies is regulated by this Charter and also by individual Provisions that are confirmed by the Council.

Article 12

The decisions of the Council, the CMFA, the CMD and the CSSC on issues, with the exception of procedural matters, are taken on the basis of consensus.

Any of the member-states has one vote during voting. The order of voting, including on procedural issues, is regulated by the Rules of procedure of the bodies of the Organization, that are confirmed by the Council.

The Collective Security Treaty Organization

Decisions of the Council and decisions taken in its implementation by the CMFA, the CMD, and the CSSC are obligations for the member-states and will be implanted in the order established by national legislation.

Article 13

The Council is the highest body of the Organization.

The Council reviews principal issues concerning the activities of the Organization and takes decisions aimed at the accomplishment of its goals and tasks. It also guarantees the coordination and joint action of member-states to accomplish these objectives.

The Council consists of the heads of the member-states.

Sessions of the Council may be attended by ministers of foreign affairs, ministers of defence, the secretaries of the security councils of the member-states, the Secretary-General of the Organization and invited parties.

The Council has the right to set up permanent or ad hoc working groups or subsidiary bodies of the Organization.

The Chairman of the Council (henceforth referred to as Chairman) is the head of state of the country on whose territory the given session of the Council is taking place, unless the Council decides otherwise. The powers and obligations of the Chairman remain in place until the next session of the Council takes place.

If the Chairman is not able to fulfil his functions, a new Chairman will be elected for the remaining period.

In the period in between Council sessions, the Permanent Council with the Organization (henceforth referred to as Permanent Council) deals with the coordination of interaction between the member-states, during the implementation of decisions taken by the bodies of the Organization.

The Permanent Council consists of Authorized Representatives (henceforth referred to as AUR) that are assigned by the member-states in correspondence with the Provision confirmed by the Council.

Article 14

The CMFA is the consultative and executive body of the Organization on issues dealing with the coordination of interaction between the member-states in the field of foreign policy.

Article 15

The CMD is the consultative and executive body of the Organization on issues dealing with the coordination of interaction between the member-states in the field of defence policy, military development and military-technological cooperation.

Article 16

The CSSC is the consultative and executive body of the Organization on issues dealing with the coordination of interaction between the member-states in the field of their national security interests.

Chapter V**Secretariat**

The Secretariat is responsible for the organizational, information, analytical and consultative actions necessary for the activities of the bodies of the Organization. The Secretariat - in interaction with the Permanent Council - prepares drafts of the decisions and other documents of the Organization.

The Secretariat consists of citizens of the member-states on the basis of quota (functionaries) that are proportionate to the size of the contribution of the member-states to the budget of the Organization and also of citizens, who are hired on the basis of an employment contract (co-worker).

The functions, the order of formation and work of the Secretariat are defined by the corresponding Provision confirmed by the Council.

The Secretariat is located in the city of Moscow, Russian Federation. The conditions of the presence of the Secretariat on the territory of the Russian Federation are regulated on the basis of a corresponding international agreement.

Article 18

The Secretary-General of the Organization (henceforth referred to as Secretary-General) is the highest administrative functionary of the Organization and is the head of the Secretariat.

The Secretary-General is appointed by decision of the Council for the duration of three years from among citizens of the member-states on the proposal of the CMFA.

The Secretary-General is accountable to the Council and participates in the sessions of the Council, of the CMFA, of the CMD, the CSSC and the Permanent Council.

The Secretary-General, in accordance with decisions of the Council, coordinates the compilation of drafts of corresponding proposals and documents of the bodies of the Organization. The Secretary-General also establishes working relations with other international intergovernmental organizations and states that are not members of the Organization.

The Secretary-General is the Depositary with regard to this Charter and other international agreements and documents that were reached in the framework of the Organization.

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Chapter VI**Membership**

Membership of the Organization is open to any state that shares its goals and principles and that is willing to take upon itself the obligations contained in this Charter and in other valid agreements and decisions that exist in the framework of the Organization.

The decision on admittance to the Organization is taken by the Council.

Each member-state has the right to withdraw from the Organization. After it has dealt with its obligations in the framework of the Organization, such a state will submit an official notification on its withdrawal to the Depositary of the Charter, not later than 6 months before the date of withdrawal.

The order of admittance and withdrawal from the Organization is defined by the corresponding Provision, confirmed by the Council.

Article 20

In case of non-fulfilment by a member-state of the provisions of this Charter, the decisions of the Council and of other bodies of the Organization, the Council can suspend its participation in the activities of the bodies of the Organization.

In case of continued non-fulfilment by the member-state with regard to the stated obligations, the Council may decide on its expulsion from the Organization.

Decisions on these issues in relation to a given member-state are taken without regard for its vote.

The order of suspension of participating of a member-state in the activities of the Organization or its expulsion from the Organization is defined by the corresponding Provision that has been confirmed by the Council.

Chapter VII**Observers****Article 21**

The status of observer with the Organization can be granted to a state that is not a member of the Organization and also to an international organization, in reaction to an official written request sent to the Secretary-General. The Council decides on the allocation, the suspension or the annulment of the status of observer.

The participation of observers in the sessions and meetings of the bodies of the Organization is regulated by the Rules of procedure of the bodies of the Organization.

Chapter VIII**Legal Capacity, Privileges & Immunities****Article 22**

The Organization has on the territory of each member-state the legal capacity necessary for the accomplishment of its goals and tasks.

The Organization can cooperate with non-member states and uphold relations with international intergovernmental organizations that are active in the field of security. It can come to international agreements with these parties, aimed at the establishment and development of such a cooperation.

The Organization has the legal rights of a juridical person.

Article 23

The privileges and the immunities of the Organization are defined by the corresponding international agreement.

Chapter IX**Financing****Article 24**

The financing of the activities of the Secretariat is done at the expense of the budget of the Organization.

The budget of the Organization is based upon the individual contributions of the state-members that have been confirmed by the Council.

The budget of the Organization does not have a deficit.

The draft budget of the Organization for each budget year is compiled by the Secretariat in agreement with the member-states and in accordance with the Provision on the Order of formation and implantation of the budget of the Organization. The budget of the Organization is confirmed by the Council.

The member-states are independently responsible for the expenses incurred with the participation of its representatives and experts in meetings and sessions of the bodies of the Organization and other events that are conducted in the framework of the Organization, and also for the expenses related with the activities of the AUR.

Article 25

If a state-member does not comply with its obligation to pay its debts with regard to the budget of the Organization within two years, the Council will decide on the suspension of the rights of citizens of that state to apply for quota vacancies in the framework of the Organization and also on the deprivation of the rights to vote in the bodies of the Organization until the debt has been fully paid off.

Chapter X**Concluding Provisions**

This Charter is subject to ratification and will enter into force on the date that the Depositary will receive the last written notification on ratification from the states that have signed.

The Charter can - with the agreement of all member states - be updated with changes and annexes, which will be contained in separate Protocols.

The Protocols of changes and annexes to the Charter will be an integral part of the Charter and will enter into force according to the order established by Article 27 of this Charter.

Reservations to the Charter are not admissible.

Any discussions regarding the interpretation and the application of the provisions of this Charter will be decided by consultation and negotiations between the interested state-members. In case it proves to be impossible to come to agreement on this issue, the matter will be referred to the Council for review.

Article 28

The official and working language of the Organization is Russian.

Article 29

This Charter will be registered with the Secretariat of the UN in correspondence with the provisions of article 102 of the United Nations Charter. Completed in Kishinev [Moldova] on 7 October 2002, in one authentic copy in Russian. The original is kept by the Depositary, who will send a certified copy to all states that have signed this Charter.

NOTES:

The Charter entered into force on 18 September 2003.

The CSTO was registered with the UN on 26 December 2003 on the rights of a regional international organization.

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See: Jonson, Lena; Allison, Roy, "Central Asian security: internal and external dynamics", *Central Asia security: the new international context*, 2001, Royal Institute of International Affairs.

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ISBN 1-905058-06-3

Published By:

Defence Academy of the
United Kingdom

Conflict Studies Research Centre

Haig Road
Camberley
Surrey
GU15 4PQ
England

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ISBN 1-905058-06-3