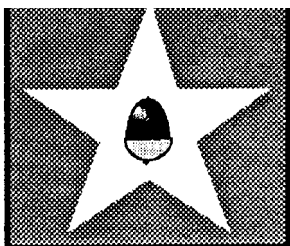


Conflict Studies Research Centre

Professor Stephen Blank

**Rethinking the Nordic-Baltic
Security Agenda:
A Proposal**

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Neither NATO nor EU enlargement will ease the tensions in Russo-Baltic relations, but those are not the most urgent issues in the area. In any case EU enlargement will continue. As the main dangers are environmental, efforts should be made to broaden cooperative measures at regional, economic and soft security levels to encourage reconciliation, not competition.

Introduction

NATO's next round of enlargement will be discussed in 2002, placing the Baltic states' candidacy at the forefront of international awareness. Simultaneously those states are undergoing the EU's lengthy and complicated membership process. And the EU is forming its own European Security and Defence Identity (ESDI). As momentous changes emerge in Europe and the Baltic we should begin implementing a new security agenda beyond military defence and security to truly stabilize the Baltic region. Although that security agenda has emerged, Baltic membership in NATO and the EU still enjoy preeminence above all other issues, including some that urgently need resolution now. Arguably we need new approaches to advance Baltic and European security.¹

While NATO is becoming a crisis management and collective security agency, East-West rivalry still blocks new approaches to Baltic security issues. Consequently the Baltic security dialogue occurs largely above the Baltic states' heads and revolves around Russia's determined opposition to NATO and EU enlargement. Although Russia remains too weak to accept vitally needed foreign cooperation or propose new initiatives, it cannot simply be excluded in the Baltic. While the Baltic states and Europe agree upon engaging Russia, Moscow's terms of engagement remain unacceptable to Europe. As the Finnish Institute of International Affairs' Russia 2010 report stated:

In the realm of foreign and security policy, Russia is not committed to the principles of democratic peace and common values. Its chosen line of multipolarity implies that Russia is entitled to its own sphere of influence and the unilateral use of military force within it. Russia refuses to countenance any unipolar hegemonic aspirations, in particular it will not accept security arrangements in which the United States seems to have a leading role. As a solution, Russia proposes a Europe without dividing boundaries which will, however, require a buffer zone of militarily non-aligned countries between Russia and NATO. Russia's idea of Europe's new security architecture is therefore based on an equal partnership of great powers and supportive geopolitical solutions - not on common values accepted by all, nor on the right of every small state to define their

*own security policy. The above summary of recent Russian developments is, in every aspect, practically in opposition to Finland's and the EU's fairly optimistic goals.*² (emphasis author)

Since enlargement issues block progress on regional and European security, we must expand the regional security agenda to forestall further impediments to European security. We already have little reason for optimism concerning progress on regional or continental security. As Raimo Vayrynen observes:

*Stalemate is perhaps the best way to describe the current Baltic-Russian relationship; both parties consider major concessions impossible while Russia as the bigger power is unwilling, and possibly unable to use force to break the political logjam. This stalemate is, however, dynamic in the sense that political and legal talks between the states continue and thus their relationship may be gradually redefined.*³

This stalemate even shows signs of hardening. Russian elites regularly attack the Baltic states for dubious or nonexistent charges and they are increasingly unwilling even to pretend to listen to Moscow.⁴

THE RUSSO-BALTIC STALEMATE

Pursuing security and a Western identity and opting for membership in NATO and the EU, the Baltic states concede that they cannot obtain true security either together or individually.⁵ Therefore they seek support and security from stronger Western organizations against Russia, their only security threat. Their choice reflects abiding dilemmas present in other areas where Russia has vital or important interests. In those areas - and Europe also remains one of them - no regional counterweight exists to Russia which rejects the European status quo and remains a revisionist power. Therefore "an offshore balancer" must redress the balance and maintain a permanent interest in regional security developments lest they affect Europe's overall security balance. And this balancer must act firmly and resolutely to sustain that balance against all threats to it.

The Baltic states' quest for security from Russia duly limits their freedom of manoeuvre in international affairs. Because they reject Russian influence in their security policies and totally identify with Western Europe, the Baltic states to a significant degree lack a Russian policy. "Instead, they try to manage mutual problems in larger contexts, and especially through the United States."⁶ Lithuanian Parliamentarian Vytautas Landsbergis confirmed this by recently observing that once Lithuania joins NATO it will have a very positive policy towards Russia.⁷ While they regard the EU and NATO as strategic choices and options, at best they characterize policy towards Russia as attempts at good-neighbourly relations.⁸

Russia mainly has itself to blame for this tension. Paradoxically, its elites benefit from the tension that perpetuates their hold over an incompletely reformed society, economy, and polity. National security policy and "state nationalism" or neo-imperialism have remained the anti-democrats' major weapons since Gorbachev. And as Olav Knudsen observed, "it was characteristic of Russian policy behaviour during most of the 1990s that it was devoid of any perception that Russia's neighbours needed to be reassured." Even though Moscow recently excluded using force to resist Baltic membership in NATO, Russian policy and strategy oppose any regional or continental consolidation of Europe until Russia can unilaterally define

Rethinking The Nordic-Baltic Security Agenda: A Proposal

and consolidate its own uncontested and exclusive sphere of influence including the Baltic states.⁹ That opposition to European consolidation also entails consolidating not Russian democracy but rather a quasi-authoritarian state power under President Vladimir Putin. This policy and strategy find expression in Russian diplomacy's concrete daily manifestations, and in official formulations of defence and security policy like the January 2000 National Security Concept, the April 2000 Defence Doctrine, and the July 2000 Foreign Policy Concept.¹⁰

These documents charge that NATO's unilateral action in Kosovo and prospective further enlargement threaten Russia's vital interests and the global strategic equation. Russian alarm at "the possible presence of foreign military bases and large military contingents in the immediate vicinity of Russian borders", shows that Russia views the Baltic not as a region but in a global, almost bipolar, context. As Finnish scholar Henrikki Heikka observes:

What is worth noting at this point is that the present formulation ties the Baltic region into the logic of multipolar balancing in a tighter way than earlier formulations. If the unipolar ambitions of the US are seen as the main threat to the stability of the international system, then the attempts of Russia's Baltic neighbours to gain formal security guarantees from NATO are not perceived by Moscow primarily as a regional security problem, but as an integral part of the most important threat to Russia's national security.¹¹

Therefore compromise is impossible unless NATO forgoes enlargement, leaving the Baltic littoral as a "gray area" in Europe. And to ensure that outcome Russia must raise its military potential, level and posture to the highest level. Many Russian political and military figures regularly invoke threats along these lines.¹²

This means not only militarizing the question of NATO enlargement, demanding "compensations" for EU's expansion, and making these questions issues of multipolar if not bipolar contestation, it also means nuclearizing Baltic and European security agendas. In Russia's 1999 Zapad-99 exercise NATO attacked Kaliningrad, Belarus, and Northwest Russia from Poland and the Baltic states, impelling Russia to initiate a nuclear strike that effectively forced negotiations. Allegedly this demonstrated how intra-war escalation through a first-strike with tactical nuclear weapons (TNW) actually strengthened intra-war deterrence, an assertion contrary to forty years of Soviet writing on nuclear weapons.¹³

Three conclusions immediately suggest themselves. First, nuclear deterrence with the threat of initiating a first strike, probably but not necessarily exclusively using TNW, is Russia's ultimate argument concerning *regional* security issues, and not only in the Baltic. Second, an excessively militarized economy and polity will continue to impoverish Russia's citizens, its overall economy, and the state, perpetuating the severe deformations of Russia's economy, politics, society, and environment that are already the region's most pressing and urgent issue. And third, since Moscow regards itself as the former Soviet Union's exclusive hegemon, it rejects any foreign involvement that it deems inimical to its expansive revisionism.¹⁴

Accordingly Russia can and will exploit regional issues and controversies over EU and NATO enlargement to obstruct Baltic and European progress at little or no cost. This outcome suits Russia but it also has other effects. It freezes the discussion of European security east of Poland in the old military agenda. It perpetuates tension

and insecurity that hardens domestic coalitions based on truculent security positions. And it spills over from defence into normally less contested fields like economics or ecology, thereby impeding regional cooperation.

Since this strategy perpetuates excessive centralism and structural impediments to reform in Russian politics it also imposes added local costs. The regional stalemate prevents Russian regions adjoining the Baltic states from realizing their economic potential and mutually beneficial cooperation with them and Europe. Their resentment of such treatment and aspirations for greater freedom of manoeuvre aggravate Russia's tense center-peripheral relations, underscoring Russia's political instability. Moscow's "red lines" and militarizing of Baltic security blocks many avenues to domestic economic reform and democratization by devolving power to provinces and regions. Indeed, Putin is curtailing those regions' freedom of action in foreign policy to centralize power in Moscow.¹⁵

This strategy has other dangerous implications. Russian diplomats in the Baltic regularly tell their opposite numbers that they are returning to rule the region and that the West does not want them.¹⁶ Plans for regional development in Russia's northwest are regularly presented, whatever their merits, in the context of anti-Baltic economic warfare.¹⁷ Often these plans' merits are dubious indeed.¹⁸ Thus Moscow regularly repudiates macro-level economic cooperation, a foundation of cooperative security. And around this repudiation elite factions and coalitions arise on both sides, each having vested interests in perpetuating this situation for their factional benefit. Finally Russian strategy also consolidates an ideological-political "value gap" between Russian and Western concepts of regional and pan-European security.¹⁹

Russian diplomats likewise regularly charge Estonia and Latvia with anti-Russian discrimination just to gain domestic support although they know these charges are groundless.²⁰ This too only encourages the hard-liners' obduracy on Baltic issues. And to the extent that anyone believes these charges - which the OSCE's High Commissioner for National Minorities, Max Van Der Stoel, has long since dismissed as groundless - their negative feelings about the Baltic governments' policies furthers Russia's obstructionist strategy.²¹ These Russian pressures harden the Baltic states' fears and resolve to avoid dealing with Russia. Or else it stimulates nationalist politicians to play to their constituencies by provoking Russia, as did Lithuania's Parliament under Landsbergis' influence when it demanded reparations for the Soviet occupation in 2000, nine years after Moscow recognized Lithuania's independence. Even though President Adamkus rejected this law, it naturally infuriated Moscow and gained nothing. But it reflected the sense that Lithuania had nothing to lose since Moscow would not deal seriously with it or other Baltic states. It also exemplified the prevailing regional political psychology and atmosphere that aggravates public and elite sentiment against resident Russians, thereby playing or at least seeming to play into Moscow's hands.²² Thus Estonia and Latvia have announced that they will not listen to or take Russia seriously until its policy changes.²³

Accordingly we might expect the long-standing impasses over NATO and EU enlargement to force everyone to rethink the agenda of continental and regional or sub-regional security. Yet that has not happened. US calls for Russia to see the Baltic primarily in terms of the Hanseatic league rather than a military theatre went unheeded, supposedly confirming Washington's hostile intentions.²⁴ Thus everyone interested in Baltic security risks losing a potentially irretrievable opportunity.

Since security today comprises internal security, state stability, and transnational issues like the environment, crime, and drugs, any Baltic security system must embrace those issues. The failure to address them adequately underscores the stagnation of the Baltic security dialogue. While European security organizations will expand again, the Baltic littoral remains trapped in older agendas.

BALTIC AND WESTERN PERSPECTIVES

Notwithstanding the Baltic states' fears of Russia, their quest for "Europeaness" pushed or pulled them, or enabled the West to compel them, even if often reluctantly, to adopt integrationist policies internally and internationally.²⁵ Despite anti-Russian feeling, Baltic governments recognize the need for solid relations with Russia, seek improved ties, especially in economics, and realize they must follow Western "suggestions" concerning their Russian minorities.²⁶ Western pressure, plus Baltic learning, is paying the expected dividends. Russian businessmen in Estonia have petitioned the government to restrict unfair competition from Russia and the younger generation of Russians evidently supports Tallinn's ambition to join NATO.²⁷

Formally speaking, the NATO-Russian Founding Act of 1997 formally accepted the indivisibility of European security.²⁸ NATO's and the EU's parallel enlargements also represent commitments to gradually construct such a system. By enlarging to include Poland, and creating the Partnership for Peace (PfP) NATO has already erased many barriers dividing Baltic from European security. Officials like US ex-Secretary of Defence William Perry stated that the PfP's purpose was to reduce differences between non-member and NATO forces. NATO and others could then cooperate in Article IV or Article V contingencies, reduce the difference between Article V and non-Article V capabilities, and let NATO finesse the membership issue by giving a "virtual" security guarantee.²⁹

The EU's accession talks with Poland and Estonia also facilitate European integration and allegedly show resistance to Russian attempts to prevent Baltic membership. Similarly, by leading NATO enlargement and championing the Baltic states' right to future membership there the United States has become a major player in Baltic security with major interests and programmes that transcend classical security agendas.³⁰ Indeed, the United States is probably Poland's main ally in NATO and Poland's enlightened Ostpolitik likewise conforms to American interests.³¹ Foreign observers see Washington's and smaller Central European states' interest in forging a loose coalition to check German or French efforts at challenging American leadership in NATO.³² Consequently neither East-West polarization, nor Nordic-Baltic divisions now weigh as heavily as during the Cold War. As nobody expects major war, opportunities for genuine progress on many regional issues should have been realized by now.

Yet further NATO enlargement faces serious obstacles. NATO's Kosovo operation heightened Russian and Baltic fears of a renewed division of Europe that places the Baltic states squarely in the firing line between Washington and Moscow. Thus Richmond's observations apply to Russia and its neighbours as much as to the states he explicitly cited.

Currently there seems to be emerging a new and more comprehensive security framework pertaining to states and non-state and individual actors, based on interdependence within a region and global economic, social, and political

framework. This framework utilizes liberal and functional institutions to coordinate transactions which take place at such levels. However, in the cases of Cyprus, Israel, and the Palestinians, the Kurds in Turkey, Kosovo and various movements in the Near East, Egypt, and Algeria, it can be seen that if the integrity of the state is threatened, then insecurity is perceived and strategic considerations at the state level are immediately brought to the forefront of the threatened state's priorities. Such priorities, as shown by the UK and Northern Ireland (before the Good Friday Agreement) surpass linkages with EU [or NATO - author] institutions or the forces of regional integration.³³

Under such circumstances Russia - and not surprisingly the Baltic states - define security narrowly to defend against perceived threats, an inherently self-perpetuating, self-fulfilling, and nationalizing security perspective. This is the process by which the spiral of mutual suspicion called the security dilemma takes shape.³⁴ While small states emerging from the trauma of Soviet rule might understandably feel and act this way - as even Lenin came to understand - the Baltic states have instead adopted the agenda of cooperative security, integration, and the renunciation of some state sovereignty, normally associated with secure states. However, Russia seeks status, not responsibility for fostering European security.³⁵

Nor are Moscow's demands for preferential status confined to military issues. Moscow has moved from accepting Baltic membership in the EU to demanding compensations from Brussels as a condition of its acceptance of EU enlargement, since enlargement will hurt Russian economic-political interests. Russia has thus issued an ultimatum demanding compensation as the price of support for enlargement while seeking to obstruct Baltic membership in the EU by raising alleged violations of minority rights.³⁶

Much Russian writing regards the Baltic states as territory Russia could overwhelm any time it wanted to, or as parasitic economies that survive by exploiting Russia.³⁷ Analysts also represent a continuing Russian inability to see the area in terms other than imperialism and an atavistic Realpolitik. Aleksandr Pikayev³⁸ draws five lessons concerning Russo-Baltic relations and regional security. First, when the Baltic states are under Western influence, their territory invariably becomes a pathway to attack Russia. Peace only comes when the Baltic states "enjoy de facto or de jure independence from the outside world." Second, if Russia is blocked from Baltic ports, it will strive to shatter that geopolitical barrier. Pikayev here threatens revisionism and war. Third, Baltic security is unthinkable without Russia. While Russia must participate in any regional system for the area and Europe to be truly secure, such thinking not only demands precedence and unequal security but also opposes any consolidation of European security until Moscow regains strength.

Fourth, Russian democracy guarantees Baltic security. Accordingly Yel'tsin's and Putin's failure to make a real democracy should enhance regional instability and insecurity. Fifth, any break in Baltic-Russian economic cooperation injures them more than Russia. This supposedly justifies Russian attempts at economic warfare against them, for example suspending gas supplies.³⁹ Sadly, Foreign Minister, Igor Ivanov and Putin also espouse this view.⁴⁰

Despite other unofficial views, officially Moscow still denies the illegality of the 1940 annexation of the Baltic states.⁴¹ Moscow can thus deny these states' interwar independence to force concessions from them.⁴² Such hostile and outdated policies preclude a regional dialogue on key issues of hard security. Russia has also

alternately threatened or tried to divide these states by offering preferential terms, or proclaimed ambiguous and unsatisfying security guarantees but it has frustrated any efforts to create a viable Baltic security system and still offers those terms that even non-aligned states like Sweden rejected.⁴³

Consequently while Baltic states pursue NATO and EU memberships, their relations with Russia are limited to “good-neighbourly relations” with Russia based on Baltic Sea cooperation, arms control, and confidence-building measures.⁴⁴ These mainly revolve around the adapted CFE treaty of 1999 which is an all-European treaty, not in itself a viable basis for regional balance.⁴⁵ And since the major players have not ratified it, it is not legally binding and cannot prevent a regional military buildup.⁴⁶

If progress in the Baltic is a litmus test of progress in European security, the short-term prognosis is bleak, especially if we continue focusing on enlarging European security institutions.⁴⁷ While NATO and the EU are indispensable to European security, neither provides total security.⁴⁸ Yet despite Baltic perceptions of Russian threats, Europe cannot or will not fashion alternatives that offer them solid defence guarantees, such as NATO membership or other kinds of assurances. European governments also have several arguments besides consideration for Russian interests why any future NATO enlargement should not include Baltic membership.⁴⁹ Even in the unlikely event that NATO took only one state, Lithuania, Moscow’s explosive reaction would preclude Latvian and Estonian membership and make the security situation of the third state unenviable.⁵⁰ Therefore NATO still privileges Russian security over Baltic security and will not confront Moscow on this issue.⁵¹

Therefore, to prevent rising tensions that could again bifurcate Europe we must find alternatives which can implement a European and Baltic security agenda and maximize whatever benefits EU and NATO provide without forcing them to offer security benefits that are beyond their capabilities. Those alternatives are available and feasible only through sustained multilateral dialogue. Otherwise any one major party can be a spoiler and others who wish not to offend it will help derail the process rather than pursue their own interest until the spoiler reconsiders. Ideally too this counsel should apply to NATO and EU enlargement, but sadly that seems unlikely even if the Baltic states reassure everyone that they will make the necessary military contribution.

THE AMERICAN RESPONSIBILITY

Russian opposition to European enlargement is not the only obstacle to fully integrating the Baltic littoral into Europe. Although Washington supports the Baltic states’ *future* membership in NATO; US discussions of Baltic security have several flaws. First, the overemphasis on NATO enlargement unwittingly fuels Russia’s opposition that freezes the regional security agenda. Second, US pressure for the NATO-centered agenda despite European opposition, precludes alternative approaches to build regional confidence and security and generates divisions among NATO members that impede joint programmes to deal effectively with other regional problems. Third, these US discussions remain disengaged from broader European security processes and new concepts of security. Fourth, the struggle for enlargement was so divisive in the Senate that European governments believe that the next President or Congress will obstruct NATO enlargement.

Many discussions of regional security arrangements remain confined to NATO

enlargement without thinking through the consequences of the US position that the door remains open to the Baltic states although it will not soon let them walk through it into membership. Nor do we sufficiently consider other important regional issues. For example, as Stuart Kaufman wrote in 1997-98:

What is worse, the current NATO policy of leaving the door open to northward expansion undermines any incentive on the part either of the Baltic states or of Russia to compose their differences. For Russia, a conciliatory policy toward the Baltic states would be its own punishment, as settlement of outstanding disputes with those states would according to recent US rhetoric [and this is still the case in 2000 - author], help pave the way for their inclusion in NATO. Thus for Russia intransigence on all outstanding matters is the course more likely to deter NATO expansion to the region. The Balts, meanwhile, have an incentive to work toward meeting other NATO membership requirements - increasing their defence budgets and so on - while blaming Russian intransigence for the continuing deadlock in their relations with their eastern neighbours, thereby supporting their claim that NATO membership is necessary for their security.⁵²

Furthermore, in the United States little connection exists between regional or sub-regional solutions and their implication for Europe's overall security.⁵³ Similarly the impacts of the EMU (European Monetary Unit) or the ESDI on Nordic-Baltic security have been essentially ignored. Neither is there much interest in the impact of further conventional arms limitations treaties on the Baltic littoral states and their security policies.⁵⁴ Nor do American writings often mention the security significance of EU enlargement in the Baltic on broader issues of European security. These lacuna in our thinking reflect the deep-rooted Western tendency to postulate Europe as Western Europe and European security as West European security which should be reinforced first before dealing with Eastern Europe.⁵⁵

But equally importantly this failure in US policymaking shows that fear of estranging Russia and an overall preoccupation with Russia excessively dominates Western policymaking. We and Europe approach Baltic security from the standpoint of not alienating Russia rather than consolidating or expanding regional security. That approach virtually guarantees stasis, not creative dynamism.⁵⁶ Perhaps the West should insist that Russia first accept the European and regional status quo. Otherwise they should proceed with what they believe ought to be done despite that refusal.

Yet despite its misplaced emphasis on NATO enlargement as the only major regional issue, at least the US government and the Pentagon understand that building Baltic military security demands a tangible presence and commitment. Thus the US Army and other NATO allies help finance the Baltic Defence College to promote the interoperability of Baltic militaries with NATO and regularly prod Baltic governments to spend more on defence and undertake military policies resembling NATO's programmes. Nevertheless, US concern for Baltic security focuses too narrowly on military security and capability. Although the United States proclaimed a Northern European Initiative in late 1997 to energize efforts at economic and environmental security, little is heard of it today.⁵⁷ Since Baltic security issues and their connection to Europe's wider security agenda receive insufficient analysis, few, if any, analysts and policymakers seem to grasp what may be the region's most urgent security challenges.

RUSSIA'S REGIONAL SECURITY CHALLENGE

Those challenges comprise the real possibility of a Russian nuclear accident, catastrophe, or a major environmental disaster that will also engulf the Baltic littoral. The Kursk submarine disaster only begins to outline the inherent possibilities of northern and northwestern Russia's energy and environmental crises. Not only must these ecological threats concern us: a sufficiently large-scale event could ignite a regional or general breakdown in Russia and surrounding territories.⁵⁸

A second Chernobyl or another ecological cataclysm remains quite possible as Russia assumes more atomic energy and nuclear waste projects.⁵⁹ Conditions in Russia's north are worse than reported and are insufficiently reported.⁶⁰ Particular, though hardly exclusive, significance attaches to problems with decommissioning the Northern Fleet's nuclear submarines. Although there is international collaboration towards this end since Russia cannot afford the costs involved, it does not suffice. Meanwhile the incompetence, secrecy and mendacity of the Russian military and political administration - eg in the Kursk tragedy - particularly in the Navy which is determined to suppress dissenters - obstructs progress in cleaning up Russia's North.⁶¹ Russia's descent into Pristina and launching of a second war in Chechnya in 1999 remind us of the coherence of Russian defence and security policy making.⁶²

The lacunae in Western discussions of Baltic security issues strongly suggest that if disaster strikes - with probably no advance warning time - it could quickly become an enormous catastrophe for which nobody is prepared.⁶³ Furthermore Russian opposition to Western and especially American initiatives - which are essential since Russia cannot fulfil its obligations to Russian society - creates an uncooperative security environment. Moscow's current suspicions of US and Western foreign policy inevitably include new US and Western initiatives requiring substantial intrusiveness into Russian affairs even as the need for assuming these responsibilities from a failing Russian government grows. Therefore nobody should expect easy cooperation with Russia.⁶⁴

Still, given this urgent situation all these states must comprehensively address decommissioning of nuclear submarines in the North, attacking pollution from nuclear materials, reducing nuclear weapons through the Cooperative Threat Reduction (CTR) Programme, and stemming the tide of other non-nuclear forms of pollution, particularly those that most threaten Northern Europe. Only parts of such programmes now exist, namely the CTR programme and the Anglo-American-Norwegian programme to help decommission submarines in the North. Worse, as a 1999 conference of the NATO and Swedish Defence Colleges revealed:

*The environmental legacy of the former Soviet Union is one that presents problems for the entire region and is beyond regional capacity to respond effectively with any hope of success. There is no overall assessment of the risk, and consequently no set of priorities with regard to how the many environmental problems should be solved. Progress will be slow and is likely to span generations, but the region needs assistance from Western nations in combating its environmental problems.*⁶⁵

But current programmes are underfunded relative to the challenges involved and under constant political assault. And it is unclear if foreign governments and research centres have even developed a shared information base that is an essential

first step towards illuminating the scope of regional environmental problems.

But systematizing the data is only the beginning. Private and public programmes must be developed, funds allocated on a multilateral and cooperative basis, tasks assigned and maintained over time. Or else existing local private and/or governmental Russian structures must receive more impetus and empowerment to act than before. Multilateral regional programmes are the only option for sustainable progress. But they must be activated or, where existing, stimulated by large-scale governmental support. Perhaps such ecological regionalism (or subregionalism) might provide a basis for advancing Baltic integration with Europe.⁶⁶ Economic and environmental organizations in the Baltic littoral are already active, but strengthening their capabilities for action could prevent a ghastly catastrophe.

The second major urgent threat is linked to the first threat. Massive environmental degradation in Russia can accompany or trigger a breakdown in the regional social order. Epidemics, mass migration, and a collapsing local economy and state as people flee the debacle could easily overwhelm many states' societal infrastructure. A general breakdown of social order in part or all of Russia is hardly inconceivable. For instance, signs of social anomie like drug addiction are noticeably rising. Russia's Minister of Interior, Vladimir Rushaylo, stated that criminal gangs had become so powerful that they could influence entire regions. This fusion of criminal and ruling elites was visible by 1995, if not earlier and also applies to Russia's military.⁶⁷

While the scope of the problem far exceeds any individual state's resources, a comprehensive programme, perhaps on the scale of Herbert Hoover's 1921-23 relief efforts, might build bulwarks against the collapse of the region's social infrastructure.⁶⁸ Agents of the governments involved, the UN, and the many NGOs with experience in providing food and health care, environmental cleanup, and repair of basic infrastructure would probably have to administer these programmes to prevent corrupt Russian central and local governments from eviscerating them. Russian objections will be strong but perhaps there are ways to circumvent those problems or reach compromises that involve Russian civil organizations and NGOs and tie them to international networks. A welcome byproduct of such programmes would be to strengthen these embattled organizations and help rebuild Russian civil society.⁶⁹

The objectives would be to provide basic health care and supplies, train medical personnel, build medical infrastructure, provide immediate food relief and help with developing sustaining programmes to allow afflicted regions to become more self-supporting and prosperous. But a comprehensive picture of the extent of the crisis and public support for large-scale action must precede programme activities. Accurate informational bases or analytical assessments of the scope of regional security challenges are essential to galvanize the requisite level of state and public action.

A sustainable programme to reconstruct social infrastructure entails a corresponding economic programme to make enduring, irreversible changes, and provide a basis for self-sustaining development. Because more Baltic-Russian issues are becoming economic ones or economic issues are obtaining a higher priority, there may be opportunities for bilateral and/or multilateral economic projects where the Baltic states can make their voices heard. Programmes fostering interdependence may reduce Moscow's desire and capacity for economic warfare

against the Baltic states which also costs Russia a great deal, and impart a more rational economic priority to Russia's foreign policy.⁷⁰

Russia plans a major expansion of its Baltic infrastructure, presenting it as a form of economic competition, or warfare, with the Baltic states. Many already charge that this programme was implemented without due attention to its ecological consequences. As Putin's disregard for environmental considerations is already obvious, the danger is acute and the urgency high.⁷¹ If Putin's centralization and disregard for environmental security succeed, that would undermine chances for broader regional cooperation while not increasing security sufficiently to overcome existing tensions and security deficits. Infrastructural expansion in northern and northwestern Russia would benefit everyone much more if it was part of an integrative and multilateral enhancement of the entire region. Otherwise an unhealthy competition in economics and socio-ecological issues would soon accompany Russia's security rivalry with NATO.

Finland, as EU president, developed a Northern Dimension for the EU. Helsinki proposed to use the EU's economic power to alleviate the Russian North's harsh economic situation, thereby furthering Russia's economic integration with Europe.⁷² Although Finland's presidency is over, the EU should more actively explore mutually beneficial economic projects relating to transport, infrastructure, and revived commerce.⁷³

Undoubtedly these programmes could help repair relations between Baltic and Russian regions. While these regions' interest in Western economic ventures cannot be wholly suppressed, Putin's centralization policy could substantially diminish their impact. An international and multilateral focus to restore the Baltic region's economy and social infrastructure that sees military security as the product, and not the rival, of socio-economic security would ease tensions and encourage trans-border cooperation.

New players and elites with more cooperative agendas and outlooks may then emerge. Based upon their previous experience of trust and mutual benefit, they might produce a new, broader agenda that facilitates regional integration. Certainly that would weaken criminals' hold upon Baltic port traffic and inside Russia and permit wider regional initiatives. New coalitions and factions with more pacific or at least basically commercial interests might then gain regional preeminence. If both regions and centre in Russia benefit from such integration, threats and economic warfare against the Baltic states will diminish over time. Similarly the mutual mistrust between Russia and other littoral states like Poland will also diminish. Then the entire region can discuss political and military issues knowing that a viable institutional and elite base of support for new approaches exists. Likewise NATO and EU enlargement can be addressed more objectively and in a substantially changed bilateral policy framework.

KALININGRAD

Such programmes must strike at the most urgent security challenges to succeed, eg Kaliningrad. In many ways a pilot programme there would send the right signal and is manageable in size. Kaliningrad faces potential threats of environmental and socio-economic collapse which would quickly trigger an international crisis since any crisis immediately and directly affects Lithuania, Poland, Germany, Belarus and Russia, if not other states and Europe's security agencies.⁷⁴

Kaliningrad is a neuralgic point in Europe whose condition is steadily worsening. Its previous governor almost established de facto self-rule in 1998 when Russia's economy collapsed. As the headquarters of the Baltic Fleet, the leading element in Russia's Northwestern Group of Forces, it possesses major security responsibilities for the approaches to St Petersburg and the Leningrad Military District. Thus the last two Commanders of those forces, Admirals Gromov and (the current governor) Yegorov have often displayed apprehension about NATO in the Baltic. On the other hand, Lithuania recently concluded a major agreement concerning 15 projects in environment, transport, education, cross-border cooperation, etc, showing how mutual cooperation enhances every side's prospects.⁷⁵ The presence of a large number of underfed and underpaid troops under conditions of economic decay creates a constant danger that could spread into neighbouring countries. Thus Kaliningrad races against time.

Russia's determination to retain Kaliningrad, make it a military centre, and enforce centralized control generates suspicion about its objectives. Russia constantly suspects Poland, Lithuania, and/or Germany of designs upon Kaliningrad. Polish demands to demilitarize it or the incautious remarks of Lithuanian politicians about Kaliningrad's future only stoke those fears. Yet Russia cannot satisfy Kaliningrad's real needs and Russian policy remains heavy-handed and provocative. Although demands for a "corridor" through Poland to Kaliningrad evoke baleful memories and inflame Polish-Lithuanian suspicions, Moscow's anxieties about supplying and securing Kaliningrad are legitimate and understandable, and can only grow if Russia's crisis deepens.⁷⁶ Then local unrest could easily trigger a secessionist movement and foreign interest in Kaliningrad. Already some Russian and foreign politicians have flirted with making it a fourth Baltic state or attenuating its dependence upon Moscow.⁷⁷

Certainly Russia's inability to provide for Kaliningrad has potentially dangerous repercussions for international security. Kaliningrad could degenerate into a rebellious province with a strong criminalized elite who seek autonomy due to intolerable conditions and experience repression, social collapse and so on.⁷⁸ While this is not currently likely, beneath Northern Europe's relative placidity lie truly destabilizing factors whose impact could be arrested, minimized, or even reversed by timely, proactive, and preventive action now.

For example the EU's impending enlargement to Poland and the Baltic states and the Baltic states' desire to join the Euro bloc threaten Kaliningrad's economic future, since those actions will subject cross-border trade and migration to the EU's Schengen rules and currency. This will make trade and migration harder between those states and Kaliningrad and Russia, and will sever many connections between Kaliningrad and Russia.⁷⁹ Action to stabilize Kaliningrad and the North need not be obtrusive. But it must be effective and begin soon lest Kaliningrad become the setting for a major international crisis.

Essentially these recommendations constitute something resembling preventive diplomacy and conflict resolution and could provide a basis for transforming the regional hard security agenda.⁸⁰ To the extent that progress on soft security issues and peace continues along with continued military stability, the demonstrated goodwill and the transformed situation may promote resolution of complicated hard security issues. Since soft security cannot flourish in an atmosphere of vulnerability to threats, any successful soft security agenda must be based on enhancing all states' ability to defend themselves against threats to their hard security.⁸¹ But multilateral agreements on softer security issues might actually

enhance that capacity. Therefore the real task becomes finding mechanisms that simultaneously promote individual states' interests, regional security, and pan-European integration.

NATO ENLARGEMENT AND THE BALTIC

Some American initiatives aim to match or transcend Poland's stated intention of being an advocate for NATO's further expansion into the Baltic. In 1998 the Council on Foreign Relations urged Lithuania's admission into NATO.⁸² Although Vilnius has relatively good relations with Moscow, that would breach Moscow's "red lines" with NATO for little corresponding gain. Furthermore, key NATO allies will not support it. Neither is this Washington's official position despite support for the open door principle for all states. Nor would Estonia and Latvia welcome it. They maintain NATO is their sole alternative, since their geographic position rules out neutrality. Yet that decision would ratify the divisibility of European security, contravening allied agreements and the foundation of the Baltic states' overall approach. Latvia and Estonia would then also have more reason to fear exclusion from NATO and greater vulnerability to Russian pressure.⁸³ Finally, this recommendation was advanced without seriously considering its impact upon Kaliningrad and its security.⁸⁴ Baltic and Balkan aspirants to NATO membership publicly urged instead simultaneous admission of all candidates in 2002, the so called "big bang approach."⁸⁵ However, they also carefully preserved the option of individual entry into NATO should states fulfil the membership action plans and criteria for membership at varying speeds, a more likely outcome.⁸⁶

We must honestly confront the dilemmas that NATO would face by admitting any Baltic states, even if it becomes primarily a crisis management or collective security organization. Specifically:

Since the only meaningful threat faced by the Baltic states is Russia, NATO guarantees would require - unless they were to remain hollow, a folly for the alliance - explicit and conspicuous anti-Russian military planning and force deployments, this time at Russia's very border.⁸⁷

No serious public discussion concerning whether any or all of the Baltic states can be defended purely conventionally has occurred. While it is possible and desirable to advance a non-provocative NATO membership, like Norway's, that yet retains a robust self-defence option, this question still awaits candid discussion.⁸⁸ Most Western military-political establishments evidently think that the Baltic states can only be defended by nuclear weapons and will not confront Russia on that issue.⁸⁹ However, this view is contested, leaving the debate inconclusive, something that naturally inclines governments to inaction.⁹⁰

Simultaneously many NATO allies suspect that the Baltic states are either uninterested in or unable to contribute to NATO's activities to promote security. Until and unless these states raise their military capability for mutual cooperation, a true self-defence capability, and interoperability with NATO through greater spending and more serious attention to defence issues, these suspicions will remain. Even as NATO turns more to crisis management and collective security, it cannot and will not renounce collective and individual self-defence.⁹¹ Only a robust Baltic self-defence allows NATO take a less exposed military position while fulfilling its treaty obligations to the Baltic states as future members. The construction of such a defence among the three Baltic states remains in its early stages. The Baltic

battalion (BALTBAT), a battalion composed of soldiers from all three states, for example, is adapted for peace operations abroad, not domestic defence. Only when that and naval and air analogues demonstrate that they have the potential, buttressed no doubt by graduates from the Baltic Defence College, for such defensive operations, should NATO reconsider its position.

Therefore regional alternatives must emerge concerning defence and military security. Already substantial programmes of defence cooperation exist between the Nordic and Baltic states, but they remain confined to strictly defined compartments beyond which only Denmark, who openly supports Baltic states' membership in NATO, will go. Copenhagen's reasons may originate in its greater distance from Russian threats and its proximity to Germany that leads it to seek a broader Baltic balance against Germany's tendency to subsume Denmark in its policy and see the Baltic as a closed *Mare Nostrum*.⁹²

However, efforts to forge a viable regional defence and security system encounter several serious problems. First, neither Stockholm nor Helsinki accepts Bonn's 1996 proposals made through the Rand Corporation that they organize a Nordic-Baltic bloc to support the Baltic states vis-a-vis Russia. Anyone familiar with Swedish and Finnish policy knows that proposals that contrapose them to Moscow without a solid alliance behind them are non-starters.⁹³ Neither state will pull Washington's or Bonn's chestnuts out of the fire or lead efforts to forge a subregional security system lest they end up confronting Moscow alone or be left out of NATO because of their membership in a different system. They repeatedly insist that European security is indivisible and that a partial, specifically Baltic, solution to security issues is unacceptable.⁹⁴

Meanwhile everyone accepts that there is no immediate danger of an invasion and that the real threats are socio-economic in nature. Therefore a subregional approach was offered in the belief that providing security through deterrence must be supplemented by a more cooperative process of confidence-building that avoids the agenda of hard security and purely military processes.⁹⁵ Still, that approach has no easily imaginable outcome. Some littoral states are in NATO, some are non-aligned but in the EU and some hope to join either or both these organizations while Russia cannot contemplate joining either any time soon. Existing sub-regional organizations, the Council of Baltic Sea States and the Barents Euro-Arctic Council have functioned well, but Russia has sometimes tried to use them to attack the Baltic states' policies. The failure of the OSCE or of these organs to act constructively concerning Chechnya, Yugoslavia, and the Baltic states' "hard security gap" invalidates them as NATO surrogates in the Baltic states' and probably Washington's eyes.⁹⁶ While Russian policies oscillate between reconciliation and coercion, Moscow's 1997 Baltic security proposals that Nordic and Baltic states rejected do give sub-regional organizations greater visibility.

Other states have also suggested comparable proposals for such activities. The Nordic states are gradually but steadily widening bilateral and multilateral defence cooperation with the Baltic states who also fully participate in PfP exercises that upgrade their quality and provide a basis for their military integration with other European armed forces. These activities demonstrate that subregional approaches can also encompass military understandings. Absent meaningful military threats, this is not a bad basis for near and long-term regimes of mutual confidence. But it is hardly sufficient, especially after Kosovo raised fears for European security. Therefore we must again clarify the interests of all the littoral governments and the United States to determine whether a defence mechanism somewhere between

Rethinking The Nordic-Baltic Security Agenda: A Proposal

NATO and nothing is possible, whether it can and will satisfy all the players, and if it can be truly cooperative, thus enhancing everyone's security. We must also do so to prevent a regression to policies of closed seas and blocs.

That process must also include multilateral and bilateral initiatives to create joint and interoperable forces that can perform peace operations elsewhere in Europe, or even beyond. Since the new European Atlantic Political Community (EAPC) as well as the OSCE explicitly discuss sub-regional options, it may be possible to devise workable mechanisms or at least investigate the interests of all concerned to determine the utility of various possible military mechanisms. Peace operations are one of many possible examples, especially if we can build on earlier shared cooperation in urgent socio-economic and environmental issues. Thus Russo-Baltic participation with the EU in the ESDI might become possible.⁹⁷

Russo-Baltic cooperation in security should not be confined to purely military questions, or detached from broader European trends. Indeed, if states' freedom to choose their own policies remains accepted in practice and not just a declaratory formula, it would be a major step forward for this region and Europe to resolve security problems on the subsidiarity principle of dealing with problems at the lowest possible level while maintaining robust ties to pan-European agendas. Progress in that direction might actually reduce inter-state tensions and the overloading of their security agendas.

EU ENLARGEMENT

A successful sub-regional model for tackling socio-economic and environmental issues should also help resolve subregional economic issues and strengthen regional integration with Europe. If EU enlargement into the Baltic littoral paralleled such programmes, it would provide an even stronger future basis for regional and pan-European defence integration despite Russian demands for compensation. Indeed, the beginning of the EU's enlargement process was advertised as rebuffing Russian claims that the Baltic states were undemocratic, and could easily extend to their need for security against Moscow.⁹⁸

Undoubtedly this is a long-term process that depends on success and mutual cooperation at each step. But forcing the issue by using NATO enlargement to galvanize the EU from outside, as appears to be Washington's policy, is not a viable option. Even though the Clinton Administration favoured parallel enlargement of both organizations, that cannot happen any time soon in the Baltic.⁹⁹ Europe hesitates to accelerate that enlargement pace and most key actors oppose NATO membership for these states. Likewise negotiating the EU's *acquis communautaire* takes years. Third, enlargement will force the EU to undergo its own wrenching internal reform which will be a winding and long process.¹⁰⁰

Meanwhile Europe's security agenda will not remain frozen. Should economic cooperation and development flourish based on mutual trust by all the interested parties, prospects for a smoother EU enlargement to the Baltic and the possibility of using the ESDI to provide military security will grow. As the ESDI takes shape it becomes more urgent to devise a regional defence mechanism in which local states, not yet members of NATO and/or EU, can participate.

Enormous questions surround the ESDI. First, it remains uncertain whether European governments will financially support the ESDI's headline goals of 60,000

men to conduct Petersberg missions by 2003 or if that force could have performed the Kosovo operation or one like it.¹⁰¹ Simultaneously since every European state is apparently downsizing its military, their focus will be on the ESDI not NATO. Indeed Germany's new military reform allegedly took place without reference to the missions that Germany must conduct in NATO.¹⁰² Nor is it clear if leading EU members like France will give aspirant EU members like Poland a voice in determining how their forces are used or how their interests may be defended. France clearly sees ESDI as an alternative to NATO, telling Warsaw, and presumably other littoral states, that they must choose between it and Washington.¹⁰³

Nor is Moscow's relationship with the ESDI clear. Moscow provisionally welcomes it for it supposedly weakens and divides NATO even as it solicits Russian participation. But there is much concern and uncertainty in Moscow concerning the ESDI's future direction. Hence Moscow wishes to be kept rigorously informed of ESDI developments at all times.¹⁰⁴ But will Moscow accept a force that is supposed to act from the Baltic to the Transcaucasus? Therefore it is not inconceivable that the ESDI will be too weak to succeed, drain resources away from NATO, become the mechanism by which the NATO alliance is corroded from within, and fail to bring security or reliable defence to states who most need it.

Similarly, if there is no mechanism for hard security in Europe other than NATO what will Finland and Sweden do? Will they remain non-aligned, committed to some form of regional defence cooperation above and beyond independent self-defence? Will they form a bloc with the Baltic states and/or a regional bloc with other littoral states who are NATO members? Or can Russia split the cohesion of Finland, Sweden, and other states and somehow establish a local hegemony over at least part of the littoral? On the other hand, if peace in Europe is truly indivisible then the ESDI must act quickly wherever crises happen. Naturally that possibility worries Moscow because the new ESDI force might imitate NATO and bypass the UN.¹⁰⁵

Until the issues raised by the ESDI are successfully confronted and resolved, much Eastern European scepticism about it and a continued East European preference for NATO and the American connection will exist.¹⁰⁶ But if those issues are satisfactorily resolved and ESDI strengthens both NATO and European integration, then it might appear a more flexible option for enhancing Baltic security against lower-level military threats.

Therefore EU enlargement has potentially beneficial security qualities. After all, it imposes reforms upon new members that strengthen them against future Russian economic warfare. Therefore the US should press the EU to accelerate enlargement as far as is practical and possible and expedite the resolution of questions surrounding the development of the ESDI. EU enlargement must not only be an economic-political arrangement for Western European states or similarly inclined states but must include regional and European defence issues.

Moreover, the ESDI's utility must be one of the principal foci of any investigation into regional and European security. Until it takes shape there will be no defence organization for Austria, Sweden, and Finland to join other than NATO, and Austria may be moving towards membership in NATO - further transforming Europe's security landscape.¹⁰⁷ Until then NATO must assume the burdens of all European military operations. Does that solution enhance the littoral states' security in today's Europe, especially as some of them cannot see a clear path to NATO?

Rethinking The Nordic-Baltic Security Agenda: A Proposal

Today the question of EU enlargement is tangled in contradictions. It is unclear that the EU really wants to include any or all of the three Baltic states in the near future. It voted to include Estonia, the most economically advanced, in its next round of accession talks, but pressure, including from Nordic governments, forced it to include Latvia and Lithuania in those talks. Germany says it supports the Baltic states' inclusion but it remains unclear if Germany wishes to expand the EU without forcing major reforms upon it that may impede the enlargement process.¹⁰⁸ Thus it remains unclear whether EU enlargement's potential for security integration will be sufficiently comprehensive or inclusive to surmount all the hurdles to viable regional security.

Kaliningrad and Finland's Northern Dimension can also create problems here. If Lithuania follows Poland into EU, then Kaliningrad will be surrounded by EU members and have a distinctly unfavourable economic profile relative to them. Moreover the Schengen agreements will create obstacles to free trade between it and them. Moscow will probably reject Kaliningrad's economic autonomy yet cannot afford to subsidize it. And Kaliningrad's problems are only a small part of the enormous issues facing Russia if it confronts an economically unified Europe.¹⁰⁹

Thus EU enlargement will aggravate the Kaliningrad issue unless a sound Russian economic policy emerges. As the pressure for EU enlargement coincides with efforts to resolve hard security issues, both issues will probably become increasingly intertwined, making it harder to resolve issues like Kaliningrad. Mutual mistrust on security issues will heighten regional polarization. Moscow's support for EU enlargement is conditional; it wants to be in on every step of the programme lest its interests suffer from the consequences of the Schengen agreements' strict border controls.¹¹⁰ So Kaliningrad's symbolic and political importance to regional stability will grow commensurately.

The idea of reorienting EU priorities toward a massive transformation of the European north and the Finno-Russian borderlands remains somewhat undefined. Finland clearly contemplated major economic programmes that Russia supports. But Moscow's demands for consultations at every step of the way and that its interests not be hurt appear unrealizable absent a rational Russian economic policy, for without it nobody can ascertain how any EU programme affects Russian interests. Meanwhile, no real reform plan has occurred other than lower and more graduated tax rates. Until and unless reform happens foreign governments and private capital will not invest there, causing the soft and hard security agendas to break down with predictable consequences.

Harmonizing the EU's requirements, the interests of existing and potential members and Russia and broader European strategic perspectives is an urgent task. But if such integration proves infeasible, it is unlikely that any other regional system will succeed, leaving the Baltic vulnerable to socio-economic challenges that impede future progress.

THE CFE & ARMS CONTROL IN THE REGION

In November 1999 European governments, including Russia and the United States signed a second, or new, CFE treaty. In 1995 the West allowed Russia a special dispensation in the Leningrad Military District against the Baltic states' wishes. Nothing happened, but a precedent was set. Since then Russia's galloping military crisis has forced a demobilization of about 40% of those forces, as Yeltsin promised

in 1997.¹¹¹ This treaty - still unratified by any major player - to relieve regional tensions, must ensure a balance between forces making Russia and its neighbours secure and offering legitimate scope for continued military modernization.

Although the Baltic states did not sign either treaty, certain provisions of the new one clearly had them in mind.¹¹² To join NATO they will have to ratify this treaty as a condition of membership. Adherence to the CFE treaty is important because it reinforces trends to demilitarize European security and forces Russian reciprocity. Moreover, if they sign, the potential legal obstacles stated in the 1999 treaty to their entry into NATO or even the ESDI will diminish.¹¹³

While Russia is quite satisfied with the new treaty, even proclaiming that it served to contain NATO's alleged military ambitions for Europe, the Baltic littoral still remains a place of serious political controversy.¹¹⁴ If anything, Russia's right to maintain troops in the Leningrad Military District adjoining the Baltic expanded. The new treaty let Russia maintain in the Leningrad and the North Caucasus districts 1,300 tanks, 2,140 ACVs, and 1,680 artillery pieces in the regular troop formations.¹¹⁵ Baltic adherence might force further Russian demilitarization rather than let it hide behind the fictions of the Zapad-99 scenario.

Extending the European security agencies' remit to the Baltic states obliges both sides to demilitarize, for if Russia were to remilitarize the Baltic, especially as the Baltic states will gradually join the EU, that would lead Europe to remilitarize against it. Continuing demilitarization in the Baltic serves everyone's real interests except for Russian generals, as it reduces further the already quite distant threat of Russian military pressure against the Baltic states. It will have positive repercussions at the level of inter-state relations and within Russia by further circumscribing the Russian military's atavistic policy preferences.

To the best of our knowledge Russian models of a successful defence in Europe remain strongly overmilitarized and assume an insupportable burden that contradicts Moscow's military reform programme.¹¹⁶ Likewise there are disturbing trends in thinking about preemptive first-strike use of nuclear weapons, probably TNW from Kaliningrad or near the Baltic states.¹¹⁷ The Zapad-99 exercises and Russia's new doctrinal documents all contribute to this tension.¹¹⁸ These strategic uncertainties could undermine arms control's broader cooperative purposes and Russia's uncertain domestic situation heightens the general unease. Any attempt to prolong the life of nuclear weapons whose usability is running out also increases the danger of accidents, massive pollution, etc.

CONCLUSION

Obviously little progress will occur until and unless the parties surmount the impasse over NATO enlargement. Therefore we must alter the framework wherein this issue is presented by restoring confidence, mutual trust and through programmes having high mutual payoffs. Changing the Baltic security landscape rather than European relations of power is a safer way to advance Baltic security than forcing enlargement upon reluctant players. That process also alleviates some of the most urgent threats to Russian and European security whether or not Russia is viewed in classical or "post-modern" terms. It also provides a surer basis for influencing Russian society, and creating new, more interdependent relationships that make atavistic perspectives on international and national security even more unprofitable than they now are. Or as Bertil Heurlin proposes, "as national security

Rethinking The Nordic-Baltic Security Agenda: A Proposal

(affiliated with military means) is temporarily solved, one must necessarily politicize what really matters: the soft security."¹¹⁹ That means subjecting soft security issues to a truly political process of reconciling disparate, if not clashing, interests.

If the overarching objectives are to enhance security throughout the Baltic littoral, then alternative approaches must be evaluated as to how they will alleviate tensions and improve conditions in all regional states and societies. The value of the approach outlined above is that even if Moscow adamantly rejects participation in any of its dimensions, constructive progress at the regional level or in the other states which must confront the "spillover" from Russia's security deficits can still proceed. That would widen the gap between Russia and its Baltic neighbours but can also galvanize Russia into action. During the Soviet empire reforms in the peripheries stimulated internal reform and ultimately helped generate overwhelming forces and pressures for the collapse of the inner empire.¹²⁰

A flourishing Baltic security system is essential to a Europe whole and free which must include Russia. But if Russia again refuses the opportunities before it, nothing is lost and much is gained by broadening and even accelerating Baltic integration into Europe. The Council of Foreign Relations' study rightly argues that nothing guarantees the failure of neo-imperial and anti-reform projects in Russia more than the progress of the "near abroad", including the Baltic states and Ukraine, towards enduring integration with Europe. While we want Russia to exploit the processes suggested here or better alternatives if they exist, it is equally true that Europe cannot and will not wait for Russia to change its mind concerning European security. Not only is waiting for Russia actually impossible, it is counterproductive, for in the Baltic and elsewhere it only invites the resurgence of those elements most opposed to genuine democratic integration with Europe and another catastrophe in Central and Eastern Europe.

ENDNOTES

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¹⁵ *Russian Federation Report*, II, No 15, April 19 2000, Moscow, *ITAR-TASS*, in English, February 29 2000, *FBIS SOV*, February 29 2000.

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⁴⁴ Bajarunas, p52-53.

⁴⁵ See the forthcoming work by Klaus Bolving of the Danish Institute of International Affairs, *Baltic CFE-Membership*.

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⁴⁷ Ambassador Robert Hunter, "An Expanded Alliance vis-a-vis the European Union: A Stock-Taking on the Dawn of a New Century", Sabina Crisen, Ed, *NATO and Europe in the 21st Century: New Roles for a Changing Partnership*, Conference Proceedings, Woodrow Wilson Center, Washington DC, April 19 2000, *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty* Newline, January 26 2000, referring to Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott who also used the "litmus test" formulation while speaking in Estonia.

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⁴⁹ *The Monitor*, July 17 2000.

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⁵¹ Bajarunas, p52-53, Christopher Lockwood, "NATO Plans for Eastern Enlargement Put on Hold", *London Daily Telegraph*, April 3 2000, Moscow, *Interfax*, in English, May 25 and May 26 2000, *FBIS SOV*, May 25 and 26 2000.

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⁵⁴ Bolving.

⁵⁵ The endless controversy between widening and deepening the EU where the former means constantly reforming the internal structure of the present organization before taking in new members reflects this tendency and finds expression in widespread fears in Central and Eastern Europe that the EU does not really want to expand in the near future.

⁵⁶ Kaufman, p62.

⁵⁷ *CFR Report*, Tatiana C Gfoeller, "Diplomatic Initiatives: An overview of the Northern European Initiative", *European Security*, IX, No 1, Spring 2000, p98-104.

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⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

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⁶² Stephen Blank, "From Kosovo to Kursk", Paper Presented to the American Political Science Association's annual convention, Washington DC, September 2000; Douglas Barrie, "Nordic Security Concerns Focus on Moscow", *Defence News*, March 20 2000, p10, 16.

⁶³ Air Chief Marshal Sir John Cheshire KCB, "Strategic Security issues in the Nordic/Baltic Security Region", Aaro Toivonen, Ed, "The Present and Near Future of Nordic Defence", Helsinki National Defence College, Department of Strategic and Defence Studies, 1998, p52-55.

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⁷² *The Northern Dimension: A Subregional Contribution*: Report by the BSSSC ad-hoc Working Group on Northern Dimension, October 1999, www.bsssc.com/publ/nd/body_northern_dimension.html

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⁷⁵ Kaliningrad, *Strazhe Baltiki*, in Russian, November 30 1999, *FBIS SOV*, December 16 1999, Admiral F N Gromov, "Znachenije Kaliningradskogo Osobogo Raiona dlya Oboronosposobnosti Rossiyskoy Federatsii", *Voyennaya Mysl'*, No 5, September-October 1995, p13; Speech by Vygaudas Usackas, at the Conference on Baltic Sea Security and cooperation, Stockholm, Folkets Hus, October 19 1998, www.usis.usemb.se/bsconf/2000/usacka.html

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⁷⁷ *Ibid*; Fedorov, p38; Ingmar Oldberg, "The Emergence of a Regional identity in the Kaliningrad Oblast", *Cooperation and Conflict*, XXXV, No 3, p274-275.

⁷⁸ Patrick E Tyler, "In a Russian Region Apart, Corruption Is King", *New York Times*, April 5 2000; for a Russian source on the extent of official criminality in Kaliningrad see, Moscow, *Profil, Electronic Version*, in Russian, June 12 2000, *FBIS SOV*, June 20 2000.

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⁸² *CFR Report*.

⁸³ Bajarunas, p48-51, Conversations with Estonian officials, Tallinn, May 2000.

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Rethinking The Nordic-Baltic Security Agenda: A Proposal

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