NATO'S EASTWARD EXPANSION AND SECURITY QUESTION IN EAST EUROPE

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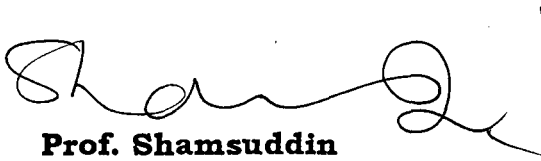
CERTIFICATE

The dissertation entitled, "**NATO'S EASTWARD EXPANSION AND SECURITY QUESTION IN EAST EUROPE**" submitted by **SANJEEV KUMAR JHA**, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of **MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY**, is his own work and has not been submitted so far, in part or full, for any other degree or diploma of any university.

We recommend that the dissertation be placed before the examiners for evaluation.

Prof. Shamsuddin

Chairperson

Dr. Shashikant Jha

Supervisor

To
My Parents

Preface

The disintegration of former Soviet Union and subsequent developments created a security vacuum in the East and Central Europe. The security link which connected the Soviet Union and its satellites in the East –central Europe during Cold War stood snapped. As a result, now the whole permutation and combination of security scenario underwent a drastic change in Europe. The countries of the former "outer empire" found themselves sandwiched between the Russian Federation and the West European nations. Any spark of unrest could destabilize the very foundation of these countries. Left alone, they found themselves insecure between United Germany and an unpredictable Russia. A host of ethnic strifes, problematic legacies of the past, weak democracies and limping economic systems, all combined to pose a threat to the stability of the region.

In the light of these security threats, the East –Central European countries moved towards NATO for their security guarantee by joining the security umbrella of NATO. NATO, being the only efficient and credible security structure was the natural choice for these countries. But joining NATO has been easier said than done. NATO's Eastward Expansion is an anathema to the Russian pride. Even the Western Europe and the US can't afford to alienate Russia on this issue beyond a point. The growing dependence of Russian economy on the west has blunted the sharpness of her opposition to NATO's expansion. Gradually, Russia finds her space in Europe shrinking under the weight of economic compulsions.

This dissertation proposes to look at the issue of NATO's eastward expansion from both perspectives i.e. Russian and East European. The whole schematic presentation has been divided into five chapters.

The first chapter introduces the theme in historical perspective and analyses the East-central European security structure in post World War -II period.

The second chapter extends the discussion of East-central European security scenario in post cold war Europe. Various potential threat perceptions are underlined from East and Central Europe's point of view. It also analyses NATO membership path.

The third chapter records the responses of Russia and East-Central Europe before and after NATO's selective expansion.

The fourth chapter deals with the new security concept of NATO and brutal implementation of "out of area operation" concept in Kosovo.

The concluding chapter summarises the whole discussion in the form of certain definitive arguments.

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Errors, if any, are mine.

SANJEEV KUMAR JHA

CONTENTS

Chapter - I

Security Scenario in Eastern Europe
After World War II

The objective of discussion here is to narrate the security scenario in the aftermath of World War II. The aim is to describe the circumstances under which the politics of two opposing blocs came into being.

The Second World War was a great historical divide not only because it settled the pressing Questions of Security viz., France Vs Germany, Poland Vs Germany etc. but also because far from solving the security questions of various countries, this war created a legacy of uncertainty on security front for many and unheard in an era known as 'Cold War era"

The term 'Cold War' was first used by Bernard Baruch, an American statesman who in a speech to South Carolina legislature on 16 April 1947 said "let us not be deceived, we are today in the midst of a Cold War".[1] It has been defined by Florence Elliot & Michael Summers kill in "A Dictionary of Politics" as "a state of tension between countries in which each one adopts policies designed to strengthen itself and weaken the other, line being short of actual hot war".

The idea of 'Cold War' was popularised by Walter Lippmann in 1947 with his little book by the same name where he described the situation that had arisen between the Western powers & the Soviet Union.

In the post Second World War period Cold War had been a predominant factor in determining the conduct of international affairs.

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[1]   Bernard Baruch, *Public Years* (New York: Halt, Rinehart & Winston, 1960).

It envisaged an era of neither peace nor war between the Soviet Union and its dozen allies on the one hand and the U.S. and a score of its allies, on the other. The Western powers and the Soviet Union had come together to fight against the Axis aggression during the Second World War. However their relations, though cordial, were suffering from an undercurrent of mutual distrust and jealousy. The Soviet Union harboured the suspicions about Anglo-American moves on account of delay in opening the second front during war to relieve German pressure on the Soviet Union, the secrecy maintained over the atom bomb, the denial of invitation to the Polish provisional government to San Francisco and laxity in implementation of "lend-lease agreement", etc. Similarly, the West had entertained the feeling that Russia had annexed considerable territory by waging war against Japan at the last moment. Thus the mutual distrust had led to sharp rivalry by the time the Second World War came to an end.

In a way the seeds of Cold War were sown in 1917 itself when in the aftermath of the success of Bolshevik revolution the Western countries attacked Russia. Within ten months, after the October revolution, Russia and the west were at war. The legacy of mutual fear, suspicion and hatred which nourished the Cold War during 1940s and 50s had actually originated in the hot war between the East and West in 1918-21. The Fulton Speech of Winston Churchill on 5 March 1946 was the formal acceptance of the beginning of Cold War.

Actually the Bolshevik resolution had not gone down well with West and it tried to subvert it. The capitalist world was especially apprehensive on account of Lenin's and Trotsky's avowed call for World Socialist System. Europe, particularly eastern and central parts was most prone as this region perceived to be easily devoured by Russian socialist system with its overt agenda of transnational expansion. This fear did not subside even when Stalin adopted the policy of consolidation of socialist system in one country i.e. Russia

instead of world socialist system through revolution. The Western leaders always feared a threat of Soviet domination over Europe that looked quite possible in view of the sheer size and potential strength of the Soviet Union. But Stalin's focus was on nation building. In the meantime, before and during war, covertly the west was inclined to destroy the Soviet Union. The delay in opening second front during second world war and laxity in lend-lease agreement made it clear to the Soviet Union that the Western System was hostile and the Soviet Union could only dominate through power play. The opportunity for power play was provided to Stalin in the East and Central Europe at the close of second world war in the form of advance of Red Army in these countries. It was this advance which changed the geo-politics of the region and helped to create a buffer zone between the West and the Soviet Union. It was this strategic advance right into the heart of Europe which made European Security a core issue between two Blocs. It was one of the principal issues that cropped up in the war of one-upmanship between John Foster Dulles and Joseph Stalin. The Security Question of Europe which concerned only a motley group of countries like France and Poland in pre-war period became the common concern of Europe as a whole.

The Soviet leaders were not ready for war. They wanted to buy time to prove beyond doubt the invincibility of their system. Stalin was waiting for the historical opportunity to turn the tide in the Soviet Union's favour. It was pure realpolitik that resulted in the German-Soviet non aggression pact of 23 August 1939 with its secret protocol providing for the partition of Poland between Germany and the Soviet Union, reserving Lithuania to the German sphere of influence and giving the Soviet Union a free hand in Estonia, Latvia, Finland and Bessarabia. Yet the first phase of war was a Soviet disaster. In June 1941 Germans Marched into the Soviet borders. But the onset of long winter threw spanner on German design of Quick and convincing victory over the Soviet Union. It was in 1944, the year of 10 blows that

sealed the fate of the German advance. These blows established the influence of Red Army in Eastern and central Europe. The first blow which came in January, freed Leningrad from encirclement. The second struck in the Ukraine in February and March, forced a German retreat to the old polish and Romanian borders. The third, in April and May resulted in the recapture of the Crimea. The fourth was directed against the Karolin Isthmus and forced the Finns out of the war. The fifth in June-July was aimed at the German Army Group centre and resulted in the capture of 30 German divisions, the seizure of Minsk and Vilnius and the clearing of the road to the Vistula and Warsaw. The Sixth hammered the German forces in Galicia and resulted in the capture of LVOV on 25 July and a March to the San and Vistula rivers and the Carpathian passes. The seventh was directed against the German and Romanian armies along the Denser river. It produced the unconditional surrender of Romania on 23 August and opened the road to Hungary and the Balkans. The eighth carried the Red Army to Yugoslavia and Hungary. The ninth cleared the Baltic states, cutting off a number of German divisions in courland. The final blow was directed against the petsamo region and Northern Norway. By January 1945 when the Red Army launched its final drive towards Berlin, it had occupied a large part of the Eastern and Central Europe which not only changed the strategic concerns of the whole area for the next 50 years but also gave Stalin an opportunity to intimidate and threaten the west.

Power Vacuum: The Rush to fill the Void

The break up of Germany after the War distorted the balance of power and created a power vacuum in Europe. The West under the United States was pitted against the East led by the Soviet Union to fill this Vacuum. The main battle front between the Soviets and the west in the post war years lay in Germany. The breakdown of cooperation over the matter of reparations, the transformation of the eastern zone of occupied Germany into a Soviet Satellite, the decision

of the western powers to unify the three western zones and their introduction of a currency reform in 1948 set the stage for the Berlin crisis of 1948-49.

Berlin had been divided into sectors by the occupying powers and it lay far within the Soviet occupied part of Germany. The Soviet blockade of west Berlin which appeared primarily designed to prevent a west German state from coming into being was answered by an Anglo-US airlift. The blockade was finally lifted in May 1949. Its direct result was the division of Germany into two 'States', the Federal Republic of Germany, aligned with the west; and the German Democratic Republic, incorporated into the Soviet Satellite System.

Stalin saw the western design in Germany as of rearmament and he unsuccessfully tried to impede it. He was under the impression that the west wanted to rejuvenate the German might to pose a challenge to the Soviet Union in future. The U.S. had already acquired the nuclear hegemony. This was a source of constant threat to the Soviet Union. In order to ward off any possible future imperialist design, the Soviet Union created a series of satellite countries between herself and the Western Europe. As a force to reckon with, the Soviet Union established both political and ideological grip over these countries. People's democracies were set up in these countries. Leaders of these countries were active in corninterm and international working class movement. Any move by the U.S. and Western countries to approach these satellite countries was seen as an imperialist design. These countries became the outer empire of the Soviet Union. While these countries were dependent upon the Soviet Union for security against any western design, the latter, in order to guarantee security to these countries, created a monolithic Eastern Block of socialist nations. Politically, economically, militarily these socialist nations of the Eastern and central Europe, looked at the Soviet Union for direction. As a leader the Soviet Union firmly dealt with any chink in the fort while the west was ever ready to make a

dent in the Eastern Bloc. When Tito refused to subordinate himself to Stalin's dictates and showed himself powerful enough to make his defiance effective, he and his party were expelled from the Cominform and denounced as counter-revolutionary agents of American imperialism. Facing the possibility of the Soviet invasion, Tito turned to the west for aid and demonstrated that a communist regime could survive without Moscow's support or approval. Tito's successful assertion of national Independence opened the first crack in the International Communist Monolith. Stalin moved in to tighten his hold over the rest of the Eastern Europe by purging some of the leading communists in Poland, Bulgaria, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia.

In an atmosphere of mutual distrust and suspicions, the Western Bloc had nourished the feeling that if strong pressure could be created on the Soviet Union, the Communist Regime would soon crumble down like a house of cards. The Western Bloc was labouring under this illusion because the US had the atom bomb monopoly and Russia lacked it. It was generally held that the US, which was militarily superior to the Soviet Union could be in a command of the world and influence her domestic affairs. America's Policy of arm twisting Russia could not be implemented because the other Partners of the American Bloc were not militarily as well equipped as the USA and the memories of the second world war were still fresh in their minds which dissuaded them not to resort to another war. The US talked about direct military action through "Truman Doctrine" of March 1947 and about economic integration of West European Powers through "Marshall" plan of June 1947. The USA pursued her foreign policy as a defender of status Quo during this period. Anti-Communist feelings of the west reached its pinnacle.

In the post World War II period, the USA abandoned her transitional policy of isolation and got more deeply involved in Europe, Asia, Africa and West Asia. It concluded a number of multilateral security arrangements with more than 40 countries. The USA decided

to deal with the threat of communism in an effective manner. The first important step in this direction was taken in the shape of "Truman Doctrine" which was propounded by the President Truman of the USA while seeking congressional approval for money for aiding Greece and Turkey. He said, "... I believe that it should be the policy of the US to support free people that are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressure".[2]

It was chiefly through the assistance extended by the USA to Greece and Turkey that these two countries escaped falling into the clutches of the communists. The USA had also realised that the crumbling economic condition of Europe made countries prone to proletarian attack. It had well understood that no nuclear power or sophisticated armoury could provide guarantee against communism onslaught unless the economy was well taken care of.

With a view to check the communist threat the USA also provided extensive economic aid to the countries of Europe under Marshall plan. The Marshall plan like the Truman Doctrine also put to check the communist infiltration and expansion. The US Secretary of state Marshall in the course of his address to the Harvard University on 5 June 1947 said, "The U.S. should do whatever it is able to do to assist in the return of normal economic health in the World without which there can be no political stability and no assured peace". Though the plan was apparently meant for all the European countries, it really sought to save western Europe from communism. The U.S.A. set up an economic cooperation Administration and distributed billions of dollars to the nations of the Europe with a view to revitalise their economy. It was thanks to the US aid that Italy and France succeeded in meeting the communist threat. The USA also played an active role in meeting the communist threat of Berlin blockade. It was

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2   *NATO; Facts and Figures* (Brussels, n.d.), no.18, p.8.

chiefly because of the massive airlift carried out by the USA that western powers succeeded in thwarting the Soviet plans.

On the other hand, during this period establishment of communism all over the world covertly or overtly was the aim of the Soviet foreign policy. After the second world war the Soviet Union emerged as one of the strongest powers and assumed the leadership of the communist countries. She successfully extended her influence to Poland, East Germany, Yugoslavia, Albania, Outer Mongolia, North Korea etc by establishing communist governments in these countries. In fact the whole of the Eastern Europe with the exception of Finland and Greece came under the Soviet influence. The Communist Governments in the various countries pursued policies subservient to the Soviet Policy and soon came to be known as the Soviet Satellites. The remarkable speed with which the Soviet Union extended her influence over the Eastern Europe and the Eastern Germany greatly alarmed the western countries and they decided to take necessary measures to check the speed of communist influence further.

In the face of these developments the Soviet Union also decided to revive the communist International by forging together all the anti-imperialist forces. In September, 1947 it set up the communist information Bureau also known as the COMINFORM, to co-ordinate the work of the communist parties of various countries. It was basically a propaganda machinery. This organisation was to take necessary steps to popularise communist ideology through periodicals etc. The Soviet Union also proceeded to conclude treaties with countries under which the signatories agreed to help each other in case of an attack by Germany or states allied to her. Russia tried to consolidate her position in the Eastern Europe through Molotov plan (a counterpart of Marshall plan) for economic reconstruction and industrialisation of the region, with a view to promoting greater economic cooperation among the communist countries.

After the second world war the Soviet Union emerged as the leader of the communist countries not only in the Eastern Europe but in the other parts of the world too. She tried to unify the communist forces by establishing the council for mutual Economic Assistance (COMECON) with Poland, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, Hungary and Romania as its members. As the leader of the communist countries she came to the rescue of other communist countries whenever their existence was threatened. Thus she took armed action in East Berlin in 1953 and Hungary in 1956 and helped countries through the instruments of economic and military assistance.

The second world war had totally changed the perceptions of the Soviet Union and the western countries vis-à-vis each other. Russians had lost around 20 Million lives and the question of opening of second front and poor implementation of lend-lease agreement created apprehensions in the Soviet Union. On the other hand in 1945, a large part of the Red Army was concentrated in the Western Europe and France, Germany were apprehensive that the Red Army under the guiding spirit of world socialist revolution could make them a part of the Soviet territory. More so because war had jeopardised the Economic and social system of the Western Europe and it was a quite favourable environment for actual military adventure or infiltration and internal rebellion. It was under these circumstances that two hostile groups came into existence and the real battle line was drawn in Europe. D.F. Flaming rightly says, "The object of a cold war is to isolate enemies and win friends."[3] The presence of John Foster Dulles (The U.S. Secretary of State) and Joseph Stalin made the situation more complicated and an ideological hardening developed on both sides.

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[3]   D.F. Fleming, *The Cold War and its Origin*, (London, 1962), p.1071.

Formation of Security Blocs

The early years of the Bolshevik Revolution and especially those of Lenin and Trotsky were those of talk of export of communism to other countries. But, at the same time, they were aware of the importance of power in international politics. They realised the importance of power in Brest – Litovsk in 1917 against Germany. But it was Stalin who implemented the reality of power in his foreign policy. He created a cordon of Satellite countries around the Soviet Union. The Eastern Europe was provided Economic, Military and Political assistance at all levels by the Soviet Union to remain in the East bloc. The political system of these countries was Sovietized to rebuff any imperialist move. On account of close proximity to the Soviet Union, the Eastern Europe was in a unique situation where its security had constant threat from the west. German threat was ever present in the minds of the East European Politicians. On the other hand refusal to ally with the Soviet Union when the Red Army had liberated these countries, would have attracted the wrath of the Soviet Union. For this purpose she could even resort to armed action as she did in Czechoslovakia. Willingly or unwillingly the East European countries fell into the lap of Soviet Union. These countries had few choices other than embracing the Soviet System.

At the same time the US and west were suspicious of the international working class movement and liberation movements in Afro-Asian countries and support of the Soviet Union to these countries. Ideological hardening and the veil of secrecy in the Eastern Bloc enhanced the apprehension of the west. The Soviet atomic explosion in 1949 stunned the western world. The speed and secrecy with which the Soviet Union had achieved nuclear party with the U.S. alarmed the west and they were now more concerned for their security.

So, it was this background against which polarisation of forces took place. Europe was sandwiched between two juggernauts who were not seeing each other eye to eye ideologically, politically and militarily. Both the U.S. and the Soviet Union roped in other countries to swell their ranks. While German and Capitalist threat pushed the Eastern Europe towards Communist Bloc, the alliance of these countries with the Soviet Union forced the West Europe to look towards their trans-atlantic big brother, the U.S.A. In this process, the Soviet Union managed to create a sphere of influence for herself which included the countries of the Central and Eastern Europe.

To check Russian supremacy and influence, the West European countries and the USA started consolidating their defence against common communist threat. This consolidation on both sides against each other developed the trends of collective security mechanism and the search for collective security led towards regionalism. Both Blocs moved towards common military and economic apparatus. This tendency gave birth to NATO, the Warsaw Pact etc.

From 1945 to 1949, faced with the pressing need for economic reconstruction, the west European countries and their North American allies viewed with concern the expansionist policies and methods of the USSR. Having fulfilled their own wartime undertakings to reduce their defence establishments and to demobilise forces, Western Governments became increasingly alarmed as it became clear that the Soviet leadership intended to maintain its own military forces at full strength.[4] Moreover, in view of the declared ideological aims of the Soviet Communist party, it was evident that appeals for respect for the U.N. Charter and for respect of the International Settlements reached at the end of the War, would not guarantee the national sovereignty or independence of the democratic status faced with the threat of outside aggression or internal subversion. The imposition of

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[4] *NATO Anniversary Handbook* (Brussels, 1998) p.26.

undemocratic forms of Government and the repression of effective opposition and of basic human and civic rights and freedom in many central and East European countries as well as elsewhere in the world added to these fears.

Between 1947 and 1949 a series of dramatic political events brought things to a head. These included direct threats to the sovereignty of Norway, Greece, Turkey and other West European countries. The June 1948 coup in Czahoslovakia and the illegal blockade of Berlin which began in April of the same year.

The Brussels Treaty of 1947 was representative of the West European Security concerns and brought into being the western Union and the Brussels Treaty organizations. It was also the first step in the process leading to the signature of the North Atlantic Treaty on 4 April 1949 and the creation of the North Atlantic Alliance. The Brussels Treaty is the Founding Document of the present day Western European Union. The Signature of the Brussels Treaty in March 1949 marked the determination of five West European countries – Belgium, France, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and the U.K. – to develop a common defence system and to strengthen the ties between them in a manner which would enable them to resist ideological, political and military threats to their security. Negotiations with the U.S. and Canada then followed on the creation of a single North Atlantic Alliance based on Security guarantees and mutual commitments between Europe and North America. Denmark, Iceland, Italy, Norway and Portugal were invited by the Brussels Treaty Powers to become participants in this process. These negotiations culminated in the signature of the Treaty of Washington in April, 1949, bringing into being a common security system based on a partnership among twelve countries. In 1952, Greece and Turkey accorded to the Treaty. The Federal Republic of Germany joined the Alliance in 1955 and in 1982 Spain also became a member of NATO.

Thus, the NATO came into being justifying the western need for security against any possible communist adventure. The search for collective security against the Eastern Bloc forced countries of different hue of the Western Bloc to forge an Alliance, as rightly said by M.V. Naidu, "Through the member countries of NATO come from different areas in terms of geography, population, resources, industry and historical and political legacy yet they came together under the leadership of the U.S. for common military bonds".[5] In other parts of world also a number of economic and military pacts were concluded. These included ANZUS, peace treaty with Japan, SEATO, MEDO etc. In short the USA concluded defence treaties with almost all the countries bordering on the Soviet territory and thus tried to encircle her.

So these were the security networks of the Western Bloc to checkmate the so-called Soviet expansionist design. On the other hand, the prevailing security scenario and the forging together of the above mentioned alliances added an element of urgency in the search of collective security for the Eastern Bloc. As NATO had not accepted the changes in the post War Central and Eastern Europe and FRG was a member of NATO, the Eastern Bloc had reasons to believe that these elaborate security mechanisms were directly aimed against it. Russians tried to counter the western moves by forming the Warsaw pact on 4 May 1955, with Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, Romania, Albania and East Germany. This pact was meant to ensure friendship, co-operation and mutual assistance among the member countries. This pact provided security umbrella to the East and Central Europe. The Soviet Union, at the same time, gave every possible encouragement to the communists forces in the other parts of the world. Thus it assisted the communists in Greece, Iran and Italy, although its attempts were foiled by the Western Powers. The Soviet

[5]   M.V. Naidu, *Alliances and Balance of Power: A Search for Conceptual* Clarity (Delhi, 1964), p.42.

Union encouraged and supported the communist regime in China. The Soviet foreign policy during this period was "characterised by growing hostility to the west, by increasing tendencies towards non-cooperation and isolation by consolidation of Soviet Orbit and by general intransigence.[6]

This mindset of mutual mistrust and suspicion towards each other, which was a legacy of post war and during war events shaped the outcome of International Politics for the next four decades. Notwithstanding the period of détente and thaw in relationship the security scenario in Europe continued to be perceived differently. While the Soviet Union considered the Eastern Europe as her fief and identified this region vital for her own security and the longevity of the socialist system.

The western countries considered the presence of Soviet Satellites in Europe a Source of constant threat to their existence and were ever ready to face the threat.

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[6]   Palmer and Perkins, *International Relations* (New Delhi: CBS Publishers and Distributors, 1985), p. 616.

Disintegration of the Warsaw Treaty Organisation and NATO's Eastward Expansion

The objective of this chapter is to discuss the nature of the so called. 'Security Vacuum' created in the aftermath of cold war. It goes on to deal with the problems that arose on account of past legacy as well as the subsequent 'security threats' to the countries of the East-Central Europe. The chapter further covers an outline of the Membership path for the East-Central European nations which culminated in the admission of three visegrad countries into NATO.

The demise of the Warsaw Treaty organisation in the post cold war era pushed the East-Central Europe towards a security vacuum. As applied to the Eastern Europe the concept of security vacuum is intended to refer to the region's lack of international structure, uncertain democracies, weak economies, ethnic strife and potentially troublesome neighbours to the east. The term was heard occasionally in late 1980's during the expiration of the Warsaw pact. But in the spring of 1991, the Czechoslovak President Vaclav Havel and the other East European leaders gave it new legitimacy by using it to refer to a wide range of uncertainties facing the Eastern Europe. The concept was then picked up and employed by journalists and members of the scholarly community.

Security Vacuum

The Term "Security Vacuum" implies that, with the soviet forces gone from the East Europe, something essential to the region's security has been removed and another powerful force will rush in to fill the space. Today, European countries possess a wholly new level of

interdependence among themselves and with the rest of the world. Moreover, popular awareness of this interdependence is widespread. As a result, the peaceful resolution of regional conflicts has a much greater degree of international support than in the past. All these developments give the East European region a far different character than it had in decades or centuries past, when cold war or great power politics lent solid meaning to the metaphor of a security system.

The disintegration of the USSR has fundamentally improved the security situation of the western neighbouring countries. The Central European countries which once belonged to the "outer empire" have been separated from Russia through now independent states of the former "inner empire" and have free access to the Western Europe, where they can now find direct support, especially from Germany.[1] Furthermore, the loss of the Ukraine, Byelorussia and the Baltic region has deprived Russia of a large part of its Military infrastructure and arms industry.

The Russian plan for a defence community within the frame of the commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) with a joint armed force supreme command and strategic forces, the Russian demand for the retention of forward military bases and the concept of troop deployment on the territory of other CIS states as specified in Moscow's Military Doctrine[2], therefore, have created the impression in Poland, the Ukraine and the Baltic States of a potential threat. This situation has taken a twist after Hungary, Poland and Czech Republic joined NATO. Now

[1]   Stanley Hoffmann "Reflections on the German Question" *Survival* (IISS, London) Vol. xxxii, No 4, July/Aug. 1990 pp 201-208.

[2]   Wording in the US official English translation of the "Basic Provision of the Military Doctrine of the Russian Federation" of 18 Nov. 1993 according to *Rossiyskaya Vesti* (Moscow), 18 Nov., 1993, in accordance with the cited presidential decree No 1833 of 2 Nov. 1993.

countries located further east find themselves pushed to the Russian side of the new line of demarcation, excluded from the west. This is why the Ukraine, Romania and Bulgaria object to a "selective" expansion of NATO. The underlying fear is that a Govt. in Moscow might try to again bind the countries which became independent in 1991, to Russia or to at least dominate these countries through military and monetary control on the basis of economic dependence. The tentative proposals under discussion are, a re-conquest of the Ukraine by the Russian army, the coerced establishment of a "defence community", the setting up of a rouble monetary Union, and finally an enlargement of the Russian Federation through at least the integration of Belarus. In the context of this concern, there is also talk of a separation of East Ukraine and the Crimea in order to "re-unite" with Russia. The Russian election campaign of 1993, its outcome and subsequent elections have heightened concern about "pan-Russian chauvinism".

From a polish, Ukrainian, Baltic, Hungarian, Czech, Slovakian and by and large, also Romanian and Bulgarian point of view the territorial status quo established in the east of Europe from the Baltic to the Black Sea in 1991 is not sustainable as long as it is not consolidated by an enlargement of NATO with the accompanying American guarantee of protection. This reflects a political factor. Despite all the changes, the constellation of power in the territory of the former Warsaw pact remains determined by a Russian pre-dominance as long as NATO is limited to "Atlantic Europe" with Germany as its eastern border country. The associated fears in the central Europe and often in the Balkan region too are to be taken all the more seriously in view of the fact that the internal conditions and economic situation of the countries in this region are still unstable. Past experience with Russia makes caution and even Mistrust expedient there.

An additional problem in case of Estonia and Latvia is the Russian sections of the population who immigrated since 1945. They question national identity, especially, since Moscow's foreign policy lays claim to the carrying out of a policing task for the entire region and attaches key importance to the 'responsibility' for the protection of compatriots living outside Russia's own borders. The Russian claim relates, in particulars, to the territory of the former USSR which, formerly referred to as "neighboring territories", has become a separate political category. This region, such is the line of argument in Moscow, is a zone of vital Russian interest–with the consequence that Russia must exercise decisive influence there with the exclusion of all other powers.[3] This expansive concept affects the security perception of the North, the central and the South East Europe.

The end of the Cold War fundamentally transformed the situation. The former threat was invalidated through the elimination of the Soviet system and the disintegration of the Soviet empire. However, new challenges emerged. To a certain extent, Gorbachev was aware of this when he met the American President Bush off Malta in December 1989. The USSR, he explained ".....accepted the American presence in Europe and was no longer in such a hurry to disband the alliances since in view of an uncertain process of change in the Eastern Europe, the two alliances would still be needed."[4]

This decision was rooted in the expectation that the two Alliances would continue to exist. As it turned out, an erroneous presumption, the Allies of the USSR, liberated from the Soviet system, no longer wanted to

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[3] Olga Alexandrova, "Russlandals Fakror Ukrainischer Sicherheitsvorstelungen" in *Aussen politik*, (Hamburg), 1/1994, pp 68-78.

[4] Heinrich Bortfeldt, Washington–Bonn-Berlin, *Die USA and die deutsche Einheit*, Bonn: Bouvier Verlag 1993, pp 88-89.

remain parts of the "outer empire". The first calls were heard in Warsaw and Budapest for NATO membership.

Even after the disintegration of the Eastern Bloc of socialist nations, Russia remains one of the world's two major nuclear powers. Although her conventional military potential has declined markedly due to losses of arms, personnel and territory, it is still much greater by far than that of any other country in Europe. Time and again, Russia has tried to assert her will on international fora, backed by her military might. Russia's siding with slovodan Milosevic on Kosovo and her Chechnya campaign ignoring all the western protests point towards still existing military audacity of Russia. By signing the Union Treaty with Belarus on 26 January 1999, Russia has inflamed the fear that she might, in future, try to rebuild the pre-1989 arrangement[5].

Nevertheless, in view of the American support, NATO does not feel that there is a threat, especially when the Russian leadership has substantial material interest in good relations with the western countries. The situation is different, however, in the perception of the former parts of the outer and inner empires. In their eyes, the more the Russian state moves along the imperialist path of revisionism the greater the military risks to their own security. So far, the western countries have hoped that this can be prevented through a cooperative relationship with Russia.

The countries of the East-central Europe also fear an increase of Russia's aggressiveness as a result of domestic development. Aggressive right wing nationalism symbolized by the statements of Zhirinovsky in Russia is a constant threat to neighbours[6] Numerous ethnic conflicts,

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[5]   *The Hindu* (Madras) 26 Jan 2000.

[6]   Rajendra Kumar Jain," Enlargement of NATO: Partnership for Peace and After," *Strategic Analysis* (IDSA , New Delhi), Vol. 18, no 1, June 95 pp 407-408.

especially on the territory of the former USSR, and a Diaspora of almost 25 Million Russians outside Russia, for whom she seeks a right of intervention, give nightmares to the former constituents of the USSR and Eastern Bloc. Russia's military adventurism in her area of influence eg. Chechnya has been perceived as having a threatening impact on neighbours. Moreover, there is always a prospect of some kind of spillover of the military action on the territory of the former USSR across the frontiers. With much less military power than at Russia's disposal, Serbia had, in an appallingly destructive manner, turned many parts of the former Yugoslavia into a theatre of aggression. There is no sign of an end to this war of destruction in Balkans and to this war expansionism. The western Governments, tend to view any further war in the East-Central Europe as a conflict which will not remain localisable and which will jeopardise general security. IT is from this point of view that the western countries justify NATO's intervention.

In the western capitals, attention mainly focuses on a different risk which has also emerged following the end of the Cold War: the threat of the proliferation of nuclear weapons and other sensitive military technology. The disintegration of the Soviet Union and the existential problems of the military-industrial complex in the successor states have created a situation in which, on the one hand, the controls of the proliferation of means of mass destruction and the required know how have become unreliable, and on the other hand, there are greater incentives for the sale of corresponding weapons or for the transfer of information and personnel to interested countries.

Also, there are numerous conflicts over rights and frontiers. So far, they have only led to armed clashes here and there – in the former Yugoslavia and at the Southern periphery of the former USSR. A further kind of problem for Europe is the migration movement on a massive

scale which emanates from the poverty stricken areas and war zones in, above all the South East Europe and the Northern Africa and which has become a latent threat to the Central and Western Europe.

The movement of greater mass of people for a long time can endanger the stability of their countries of destination. In the long term, this is also to be feared if satisfactory living conditions can't be created in the poor areas of the world. The risks to inner stability resulting from cross frontier drug trafficking, internationally organised crime, and to a certain degree-international terrorism are also becoming greater for the Eastern, the Central, and increasingly for the Western Europe too.

The rise of international Islamic fundamentalism under the likes of Osama Bin Laden and General Dudayev has added urgency to the prevailing situation.

In fact, the demise of the Soviet Union has tended to produce even more challenges to the European Security than those posed by her during Cold War era. As an imperial military power, the Soviet Union was a latent threat to both its enemy countries in the west as well as to its satellites. The threat today, on the other hand, emanates from the lack of such a concentration of power. The successor states which have emerged on the territory of the former Soviet Union and are currently linked in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) are troubled by inner crises and conflicts between individual CIS members. The Nagorno-Karabakh issue and bloody disturbances in the North Caucasus have potential to destabilize the whole region. The intra and inter-state conflicts in this region, however, represent a new and by no means less serious risk for European security.

The Soviet threat in the Shadows of the East-West confrontation has been replaced by risks connected with the unstable situation on the

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territory of the former USSR. The security of the East-Central Europe can only be guaranteed in so far as these are no wars within and between the states of the former Soviet Union and in so far as the tremendous problems there can be gradually resolved or at least mitigated.[7]

Problematic Legacies of the Past

Almost 75 years of communist rule in the East and Central Europe has left consciously and sub-consciously an indelible imprint on every facets of human life viz economic, political, ideological, cultural etc. etc. The path to shake off the past connections and legacy has been highly problematic.

The first main problem arose from the economic and environmental ruin socialism 'had' left behind. What was initially required in the successor states was a safeguarding of elementary material existence. This was to be followed by a more far-reaching economic upswing. The task which emerged was in many respect unparalleled; as increased economic performance and systemic transformation were to take place simultaneously. At the same time, there was a lack of the concepts, structures and personalities needed to change society into a functioning market economy. In many places, a coalition between the former apparatchiks, the military-industrial lobby and authoritarian nationalists was thwarting the efforts for change.

The experience on this front of these countries even after 10 years, has been highly unpleasant. The process of economic transformation has been highly tortuous. In hindsight, the social security net provided by communist regimes look like a pleasant dream. The economic

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[7]   Curt Gasteyger" The Remarking of Eastern Europe's Security", *Survival* Vol. XXXIII, no 2, March/April 1991, p 113.

transformation process has dissatisfied a large section of population at the cost of a few.

On political front too, the problem arose while attempting to move closer the political order to western ideas of democracy, liberal ethos and the rule of law. The concepts, institutions and people who could guarantee such a move were by and large missing. The social opposition especially by former beneficiaries of the old system, to the envisaged changes was even more widespeard than the opposition to the market economy. Only a small intelligentsia, which was mainly concentrated in the major urban centres of the European regions, could be considered as a social basis for change. Furthermore, a workable party-political system which could organise change did not exist.

The demise of socialistic discipline gave birth to the increasing decline in values which in turn weakened the authority of state, leading to a spreading lack of order and lawlessness. The situation was worsened by the change in the overall framework of state through the emergence of new states. A reconsolidtion of the authority of states presupposes that the citizens can be persuaded to identify with their respective new state. As a democratic and liberal awareness was not anchored in wide sections of the population, all political leaders could do was to appeal to the respective national sentiment. The question, therefore at the end of Cold War was not whether nationalism would exert a politically formative influence but rather how it would shape the political future. Complex ethnic constellations and stalin's arbitrariness when selecting the people for the USSR created the problem of legitimacy deficits and territorial controversies. Ethnically induced and exclusively anti-liberal nationalists, posed threat to the regional stability.

Also, the emotional antagonism between Russians and non-Russians in view of the disintegration of the Soviet empire, too was a challenging task.[8]. The non-Russian people felt that the new situation was a liberation from both communist suppression and from imperial hegemony. The Russians on the other hand, tended to view this dissolution as a loss-a loss of their previous imperial role. Consciously or sub-consciously Russia still considered her right to be consulted before any outside intervention in her previous space. She would be happy to make CIS and the Eastern Europe her zone of influence. This feeling was a latent source of conflict as the non-Russian people, on the other hand, wanted to realise their new state freedom as soon as possible, without the restriction of continuing links. Russia's efforts at forming a greater Union with the Slav states of Belarus and the Ukraine are seen as an attempt to re-establish old links. If Russia becomes one way or another, estranged from the other successor states, antagonisms could arise which might result to encourage centrifugal Islamic tendencies in the Russian federation and lead to an expulsion of the Russian Diaspora from the central Asian belt of the former Soviet Union. Both would represent a severe test for the Russian federation and increase the probability of armed conflicts. Already, Islamic regions of Russian federation's Northern Caucasus is burning. Chechnya, Dagestan, all are on fire.

New Security challenges in the post Cold War Eastern Europe

Serious challenges to security arose for the Central and Western Europe in the immediate aftermath of Cold War.

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[8]   Mark Kramer, "Soviet Foreign Policy after the Cold War", *current History* (Philadelphia) vol. 90, No 558, Oct. 91, pp 317-322.

The first security risk was that the East-Central European countries which border on the former Soviet Union could be militarily threatened in the event of a war there. It could not be ruled out that the momentum of belligerent action could lead to a spillover into the East-Central European regions, not protected by NATO.

A second security risk could result if unsafe nuclear power plants or irresponsibly stored dangerous materials were to lead to catastrophes in the former USSR.

A third security risk was caused by international arms trading necessitated by the existence of a hyper trophically extended and in the meantime superfluous military-industrial complex in the former Soviet space. The research, development and production capacities set up by the former regime could only be converted to civilian use in an equally lengthy and expensive process. Consequently, the existence and status of the mass of people oriented to military products could only be guaranteed for some time to come in the previous form. To a large extent, the transfers of military goods were illegal and thus uncontrolled activities. Yet even in cases in which the leadership in the Russian Federation, the Ukraine, Kazakhastan and other successor states did control activities, it was questionable whether aspects of international security and the non-proliferation were decisive when authorizations were granted. If there were war like activities in the former USSR, considerations regarding the outside world would probably be ignored altogether, since in arms trading the requirements of giving and taking would prevail without restriction.

A fourth security risk resulted from, the loss of status, income, and employment of the highly Qualified researchers and experts previously employed in the military-industrial complex.

This gave those Third world countries who cared little about international security, a basis for the recruitment of experts who had the know how on sensitive arms technology.

Another security risk was the disintegrating army. Many commanders sympathised with models of the past; there were various rivalries between the different units and branches of the armed services; elementary supply shortages were rampant, the conflict between the successor states over the sharing out of the military legacy created a further basis for insubordination and unauthorised action; some soldiers had rendered their services to the highest bidder. The armed forces were still a powerful instrument, one which was slipping away from controlled authority and which thus threatened to become a factor that could initiate violence.

A security risk resulted from the fact that the nuclear weapons in the former Soviet Union, especially the tactical systems right down to artillery ammunition, were difficult to protect against illegal appropriation if well organized and well determined groups were to systematically try to seize this material. This could directly affect the security interests of all the nearby European states. This aspect of security was troublesome for west too.

If anti-democratic forces had come to power in major successor states of the USSR, things could go for a massive change. The west and the US would again be viewed as the fundamental rival, which would mean that, after pulling through the current period of weakness, a renewed East-west antagonism would surface[9] perhaps even in the form of a military confrontation.

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[9]   Rajyasri Roy Chowdhury, "NATO's Eastward Expansion: An Institutional Challenge", *strategic Analysis*, vol. 18, no 1, April 95., p 75.

Why NATO's Eastward Expansion ?

In the light of these security threats, certainly the East European countries faced significant foreign policy challenges. Conceivably, one of these countries with restive ethnic minorities could become embroiled in an internal conflict that the Government could not keep from spilling across national borders. The principal challenge to the security of the European countries in the region has been their inability to manage effectively the transition to a market economy progress in this area was not only economically important but was also required to prevent economic emigrants.[10] Other potential threats to the security of the East European states included damage to environment, organized crime and terrorism. When combined with ethnic unrest and economic transformation, these difficulties created important security problems for the countries involved.

It is under these circumstances that the East and Central European countries have been apprehensive of possible Russian design and have thus looked towards NATO for security cover in any eventuality.

In the process of Europe drawing together, NATO is the only functioning security organization. This is a crucial reason whey the countries of the East Central Europe want to join the Alliance. They want to be on the safe side and they feel that their region will stabilize only within an Atlantic framework. Underlying this is a traditional feeling of geopolitical insecurity. The region was politically non-existent prior both to World War I, during World War II and, as a matter of practice, also in

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[10]   *The International Herald Tribune* (Paris), 13 Dec. 1990; Christopher welliscz," Soviet coup renews fears of exodus".

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the period of the Cold War. The new situation which has emerged in 1990-91, gives the East and Central Europeans a chance at last to overcome their geopolitical odds by joining the western nations including the US as their stronghold of safety.

There are basically two main reasons whey the East and Central European countries are so much interested in joining, NATO one of them is the fact that NATO is the only functioning security system in Europe today. In this day and age with prevailing uncertainties and instabilities, such an alliance represents a stability factor of high value indeed. The other reason lies in the East Europe's historic experience. Before World War I, the region did not exist in terms of statehood, since it was divided between three empires: Russia, Germany and the Austria-Hungary.

Only the demise of these three empires after their defeat in 1918 gave rise to Central and East European countries as states of their own. However, when two decades later two of the former great powers then represented by Hitler's Germany and stalin's USSR had recuperated their strength and decided to conclude a pact with each other, the East and Central Europeans lost their independence once again. At first, the region was divided between the two Empires, then conquered in total by German armies only to be taken over not long afterwards by the Soviet troops and to be added to Russia's external empire. And there they stayed for the next four and a half decades. Only after the disintegration of the Soviet Bloc were these countries between the Baltic and the Balkans given back their true independence. And this time these countries want to preserve their independence.

These countries' only or primary motive is not the fear of Russia. The Central and East Europeans' feeling of not being safe enough in the

long term is related also to many other problems such as internal, intra regional and economic conditions, already mentioned.

In other words, the prevailing feeling of latent insecurity is related to the general problem of the region's stability. The East-Central European people hope to strengthen their stability decisively by finding support from the West.

The end of the Cold War has wiped away the strategic distinction between Europe's centre and periphery. In contrast to the Cold War where the potential locus of conflict was located along the old East-West divide, Europe's new strategic challenges exist along two "Arcs of crises".

The first is the Eastern Arc where the zone of instability is running between Turkey, the Caucasus and the Middle Asia. The second is the Southern Arc, running through the Northern Africa and the Mediterranean into the Middle East and the South West Asia. Conflicts in the twin Arcs are unlikely to be isolated or contained. Conflicts could reactivate old historical rivalries: geopolitical competition between Germany and Russia along the Eastern Arc or conflict between the West and the Islam in the South. However, taking into account the various factors contributing to the new European security, it can be said that the main problem exists in the Eastern part of the continent.

But the inclusion of three Visegrad states in NATO is going to set in Motion further geostrategic security problems in the epicentre of European security. The countries located further east are also interested in accession. As they remain outside a NATO expanded in this way, they would find themselves pushed to the Russian side of the new line of demarcation thus created, excluded from the West. This is why the

Ukraine Romania and Bulgaria objected to a "selective" NATO membership of individual countries formerly linked with the USSR.[11]

The Path to NATO Membership

NATO's responses to developments in the East-first to the Soviet Union and former non-Soviet Warsaw pact members, and second to the new states emerging from the disintegrated Soviet Union -- have been both extraordinary and insufficient. NATO's responses have been extraordinary in that so many new initiatives have been taken in such a short period of time. Yet they have been insufficient because events have moved so rapidly that even these extraordinary responses have not kept pace with the East-Central European expectations. The ultimate path leading to the inclusion of three Visegrad countries in NATO has been long one and full of events.

It all began from London in July 1990. Following the revolutions of November-December 1989, NATO extended its 'first hand of friendship' at the London summit of 5-6 July 1990. NATO invited the six Warsaw pact members (Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, Romania and the Soviet Union) to visit Brussels to address the North Atlantic council (NAC- the highest authority within NATO). It also invited these Governments to establish regular diplomatic liaison with NATO to share thinking and deliberations and to intensify military contacts during that period of historic change. During the summer, new liaison ambassadors from the Warsaw Pact participated in briefings at NATO Headquarters. East Germany's absorption was the next step. East Germany's transformation from a key Warsaw pact member in November 1989 to a full member of NATO on 3 October 1990, was unexpected, rapid and

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[11]   Lothar Ruehl, "European Security and NATO's Eastward Expansion", *Aussenpolitik*, vol .44, no.2, 1994, p.115.

accomplished without a shot. The Soviet position on the security framework for a United Germany Underwent unforeseen and mercurial twists. Though Gorbachev refused to accept the 'Germany - in NATO' framework when he met president Bush on 3 June 1990, his concession to chancellor Helmut Kohl in July indicated that Gorbachev had little choice in the matter. The Soviets had effectively ceded control when the East German Government failed to stabilize its domestic situation as a reformist communist state in November 1989. De facto unification had occurred on 1 July 1990, with the economic and monetary union of the two German states. The Soviets also decoupled political unification from the security issue when they conceded that all - German elections could occur irrespective of the Two-plus Four agreement, which was signed on 12 September 1990. When formal unification occurred in October 1990, Germany's five new eastern Laender (which had formerly constituted the GDR) now enjoyed the protection of NATO's dictum that "an armed attack against one.... shall be considered an attack against them all". Thus, NATO's Eastward Expansion occurred without the need to sign a new protocol of association as was employed upon the accession of Greece and Turkey in 1951.

NATO took the next step at the Copenhagen North Atlantic council meeting in June 1991 when the Allies agreed to implement a broad set of further initiatives. Among other things, the NAC agreed to "intensify..... [NATO's] programme of military contacts at various levels"[12] with the East-Central European states. These contacts would be intensified with the NATO Headquarters, supreme Headquarters Allied powers Europe (SHAPE), and the other major NATO commands. NATO also pledged to

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[12]   Statement Issued by the North Atlantic Council Meeting in Ministerial session, copenhagen, 6-7
         June 1991", in *NATO communiqué 1991* (Brussels: NATO office of Information and press,
         1992), pp. 22-23.

invite the East-Central European military officers to the NATO training facilities for special programmes concerning civilian oversight of defense. Meetings of experts would be held to discuss security policy issues, military strategy and doctrine, arms control, and military industrial conversion to civilian purposes. NATO invited the East-Central European experts to participate in the NATO's "Third Dimension" scientific and environmental programmes and to exchange views on subjects such as air and space management. Also, the NATO information programme expanded to the Central-East European region.

Up until August 1991, NATO treated all the former Warsaw Pact countries alike. In light of the 19-22 August coup attempt in the Soviet Union, a *21August 1991,* NAC ministerial statement differentiated the Soviet Union from the other Warsaw Pact countries. Specifically, it suspended liaison with the USSR 'pending a clarification in that country'.[13] At the NAC summit held in Rome on 7-8 November 1991, NATO approved the Rome Declaration, which broadened NATO's activities with the Soviet Union and the East-Central Europe to include annual meetings with the NAC at ministerial level in what was to be called the North Atlantic cooperation council, periodic meetings with the NAC at the ambassadorial level, additional meetings as circumstances warranted, and regular meetings with NATO's subordinate committees, including the political and Economic committee, the military committee and other NATO military authorities.[14]

On 20 December 1991, the foreign ministers of all the "former adversaries" joined for the inaugural meeting of the NACC to adopt a "statement on Dialogue, partnership, and cooperation" that endorsed

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[13]   "North Atlantic Council Statement, 21 August 1991" in *NATO Press Communiqué*, 1991, pp. 24-25.

[14]   Rome Declaration on Peace and Cooperation, *NATO Press Communiqué*, S 1(91) 86, 8 November, 1991, Article 11, pp.4-5.

annual meetings of the NACC at ministerial level; bi-monthly meetings of the NAC with liaison ambassadors beginning February 1992; additional NACC meetings as circumstances warranted, and regular meetings of the political, Economic and Military committees with liaison partners. The emphasis of the consultations and cooperation was to be on security and related issues. During 1992 NATO'S activities snowballed. On 26 February NACC met at the ambassadorial level to discuss and adopt a "work plan for dialogue, partnership, and cooperation". The Extraordinary NACC meeting held on 10 March which was convened to broaden membership to 35 (to include the former Soviet republics except Georgia) endorsed a work plan which covered a wide set of activities including defence planning issues, defence conversion, economic issues, science, challenges of modern society, dissemination of information, policy planning consultations and air traffic management[15]. On 1 April 1992, the NACC defence ministers (now with Georgia) met for the first time as a so-called group of defense ministers (GDM) and decided upon a number of initiatives, including a 10 April meeting of NACC chief of defence staffs, a high-level seminar on defence policy and constitutional control of the military and workshops on defence restructuring and environmental clean up of defence installations. On 4 June, the Oslo North Atlantic council ministerial meeting supported the CSCE crisis management by "making available Alliance resources and expertise ....on a case-by-case basis".[16]

Many NACC members evidently saw this as an opportunity to broaden their cooperation with NATO and on 5 June the NACC foreign ministers attached" particular importance to enhancing the CSCE'S

[15] "Work plan for Dialogue, Partnership and Cooperation", *NATO press communiqué* M-NACC-1 (92)21, 10 March 1992.

[16] "Final communiqué issued by the North Atlantic council meeting in Ministerial session" *NATO press communiqué* M-NAC-1 (92)51, 4 June 1992, p 4.

operational and institutional capacity to contribute to conflict prevention, crisis management and the peaceful settlement of disputes [and expressed willingness]to contribute.[17]

In sum, NATO has been quite responsive to the Central and East European states in terms of the many discussions held during the short time since these states obtained their freedom from the Soviet system. But as noted earlier, the East Central European states clearly believe that meetings are not enough. On the other hand, because the NACC had rapidly broadened its membership it now suffered the danger of becoming neutralized in the manner of the United nations and the OSCE. As a result, as a credible security institution, NATO retains an essential role in the protection of European peace and stability.

The membership path to NATO goes via Associate membership. Associate membership in NATO is open to all NACC members who have committed themselves to certain norms and who have achieved certain standards of conduct. The Associate Members have limited rights. On the security side an Associate Member might exercise the right to being national security issues to the Alliance under *Article 4* of the NATO treaty. In effect, the NATO Associate Member would acquire the right to get a multilateral consultation for a security threat–not the security guarantee provided in Articles 5 and 6.

The Polish-French Treaty on Friendship and solidarity signed in April 1991 was the first treaty to move towards joint security Mechanism in post 1989 era.[18] Article 7 of the Treaty talks about bilateral Mechanism of security.[19] The Czechoslovak-French Treaty of friendship

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[17]   "Statement Issued at the North Atlantic cooperation council in Oslo, Norway", *NATO press communiqué* M-NACC-1 54, 5 June p 2.

[18]   *FBIS, Daily Report*: West Europe, 10 April 1991, from PAP, 9 April 1991.

[19]   "Text of Treaty", *FBIS, West Europe*, 18 June 1991.

and cooperation signed on 1 October 1991, was the CSFR's second such treaty signed after the 5 July 1991 treaty with Italy, which also contained a mutual consultation clause in case of emergency[20].

The Czechoslovak-German Good Neighbour Treaty was signed on 27 February 1992. Article 7 of the Treaty calls for Mutual consultation and coordination on security matters within the framework of the CSCE to develop measures to ameliorate any threatening situation[21]. The Hungarian-French Treaty of Friendship and concord was signed on 11 September 1991. The Hungarian-German good neighbour Treaty was signed on 6 February 1992.

These bi-lateral treaties have been quite instrumental in forging better relationship between the aspirants of NATO membership and NATO members. In other words, while associate membership in NATO would not fundamentally alter the alliance's obligations nor extend commitments that key continental members have not already assumed on a bilateral level, it would provide a multilateral forum for security consultations in an organisation that enjoys great prestige for security and stability. In this way, it would enhance security for Associate members.

After a five-to-ten year period of associate membership during which a state demonstrated full commitment to the criteria for association, it could become eligible to apply for full membership under Article 10 of the Treaty. Upon successful accession to full membership, the new NATO member would enjoy the guarantee provided by Article 5 of the Treaty: that an armed attack against one or more of the members

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20   "Support for CSFR in EC", *FBIS, West Europe*, 2 Oct. 1 991, from Agence France-Presse, Paris, 1 Oct. 1991.

21   "Extracts of Joint German Friendship Treaty," *FBIS, East Europe*, 10 Oct. 1991, from ADN 7 Oct. 1991.

in Europe or in North America shall be considered an attack against them all.

In fact, NATO began to develop a policy towards the East European states at the London summit (July, 1990), when the alliance invited the USSR and its Allies to establish political liaison with it. The NATO foreign Ministers' meeting in Copenhagen on 6 June 1991, sought to enhance their role vis-à-vis central and Eastern Europe. In order to reassure the East Europeans, a statement was issued declaring that 'any coercion or intimidation aimed at the nations of the Eastern and Central Europe would be treated as a matter of direct and material concern' by the Alliance members. The meeting proposed a "further development of a network of interlocking institutions and relationships with East European countries and the Soviet Union".[22] At the Rome summit (November, 1991), NATO sought to evolve a new strategic concept, and to increase the degree of consultation with the East European countries it proposed the establishment of the North Atlantic cooperation council (NACC)[23]

NATO gradually established regular political and military consultations, mutual visits and exchanges and a growing number of bilateral military cooperation agreements and programmes. North Atlantic cooperation council (NACC), partnership for peace (PFP), and membership action plan are the milestones in the path to NATO'S expansion.

After dithering for sometime, NATO'S response was to create a new institution, viz., the North Atlantic cooperation council(NACC) in

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[22] "Partnership with the countries of central and E E: statement issued by the North Atlantic council meeting in ministerial session in Copenhagen on 6th and 7th June 1991", *NATO press service ,6* June 1991.

[23] "The Alliance's New strategic concept," *NATO Review (Brussels)* Dec. 91, pp 25-32.

December 1991. NACC was primarily meant to console erstwhile adversaries for NATO'S reluctance to admit them as new members or give them security guarantees. While NACC included all of NATO'S former adversaries it excluded Europe's neutral and non-aligned countries. Moreover the inclusion of six central Asian Republics changed the character of NACC from a predominantly European institution into an European Eurasian body and increasingly a replica of the conference on security and cooperation in Europe (CSCE). NACC seems to have been initiated with two main purposes: to curb the appetites of the former Warsaw treaty organisation states for full alliance membership, and to rationalise a NATO desire for a droit de regard over the reorganisation of the Soviet military forces.[24]

With a large number of members the new organisation permitted consultations with a focus on security and related issues. NACC made no political decisions but offered non-participating states opportunities for dialogue with NATO.

Since October 1993, the discussion centered on the proposal for "partnership for peace" proposed by the then US Secretary of state, warren Christopher during his tour of the former Soviet Union. Incessant pressure by the Visegrad countries but difficulties in extending security guarantees prompted the NATO summit in January 1994 to extend an invitation for "partnership for peace" (PFP).[25] The PFP consisted of two documents: a framework document formulating the *general principles* and tasks of the programme and the second was an invitation sent to potential partners wishing to join the initiative.

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[24] Michael clarke and Jane M.O. Sharp," Defence and Security in the New Europe," in David Miliband, ed., *A More Perfect Union? Britain and the New Europe* (London 1992), pp 36-37.
[25] *NATO Review*, Feb 1994, pp 28-30.

The first document, inter alia, spoke of assurance of civilian political control over the military sphere, an expansion of transparency and openness in the process of the discussion and adoption of military budgets, cooperation in peace-keeping etc. The new initiative envisaged the development of "cooperative military relations" with NATO. "Active" PFP countries would also have the opportunity to consult with NATO if they perceived a direct threat to their territorial integrity, political independence or security. Moreover, by not excluding any one of the cooperation partners the PFP was not designed against anyone.[26] It was said to offer "a new and highly relevant opportunity for progressively closer practical cooperation" based on a deeper relationship with the countries of the East-Central Europe and the former Soviet Union.[27]

The PFP initiative has now been joined by 21 of the 27 eligibles, including Russia.

NATO is an open community. This has been evident since the very beginning of the Atlantic Alliance, as Article 10 of the Washington Treaty makes clear i.e. "The parties may, by unanimous agreement, invite any other European state in a position to further the principles of this Treaty and to contribute to the security of the North Atlantic area to accede to this Treaty....", and has been demonstrated on several occasions. NATO has admitted new members throughout its history. Greece and Turkey joined the Alliance in 1952, the Federal Republic of Germany in 1955, Spain in 1982 and most recently, the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland became full members in March 1999 increasing the number of Allies to 19. The leaders of the three newest Allies were formally welcomed into the Alliance at the Washington summit meeting on 24

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[26]   Manfred Woerner," Shaping the Alliance for the Future," *NATO Review*, Feb. 1994, p 5-6.

[27]   Sir Richard Vincent," The Brussels summit –A Military Perspective", *NATO Review*, Feb. 1994 p 11.

April 1999. At the same time, NATO Heads of state and Government reaffirmed their commitment to the openness of the Alliance and pledged that the Alliance would continue to welcome new members. They also launched a membership action plan(MAP), a programme of activities to assist aspiring countries in their preparations for possible future membership.

Allies were of the view at the end of the Cold War that future NATO members would have to undergo a period of "apprenticeship" to bring their forces up to NATO standards. In short, for enlargement to achieve its goals, a structured process was required.

The 1994 Brussels summit provided a general commitment to NATO'S Eastward Expansion. This was followed by "The Study on NATO Enlargement" in 1995, which set out the Alliance's approach in more detail. Based on the study's findings, the alliance conducted an "intensified dialogue" on Membership question with interested partners. This intensified dialogue provided Allies with valuable information on individual partners' preparations for membership and allowed participating countries aspiring for NATO membership to learn more about the workings of the Alliance and the responsibilities and obligations involved.[28] At the Madrid summit in July 1997, NATO leaders invited the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland to start accession talks with the Alliance, thereby delivering on their promise to admit countries, able and willing, to contribute to the goals of the Washington Treaty. These accession talks were followed by the signing and the subsequent ratification of accession protocols. The formal accession of the three new members took place on 12 March 1999., Also at Madrid, NATO leaders reaffirmed the openness of the Alliance to other new members in a position to further the principles of the North Atlantic Treaty and to

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[28]   *NATO Review (Anniversary Issue)* 1949-99, p. 17.

contribute to security in the North Atlantic area. They also decided to continue and broaden the intensified dialogues and to review the enlargement process at their next meeting in 1999. From then on, the dialogues with interested partner countries were conducted in two formats: a series of high level meetings (at the level of Head of state, P.M., foreign, defence minister) were held with the North Atlantic council, and a comprehensive dialogue was conducted between senior officials from partner countries and a team from the NATO international staff.

Throughout this process, interested partner countries had been asking for better practical advice and feed back to assist them in their preparations for eventual membership. The Washington summit in April 1999 provided a fitting opportunity to respond to this desire. NATO was able to draw upon the experience gained not only during the three years of intensified dialogue meetings, but also through the integration of the three newest members into the Alliance. The result was the Membership Action Plan (MAP) which provides assessment and feedback mechanisms for partners aspiring for NATO membership.

The MAP requires each aspirant to submit an annual national programme on its preparations for possible membership, covering political, economic, defence/military, resource, security and legal aspects. This programme shall set objectives and targets on all issues relevant to membership. It shall also provide specific information on, steps being taken, and where appropriate, a schedule of work on specific aspects.

MAP is clear evidence of the Alliance's commitment to continuing the enlargement process. While the MAP brings no guarantee of eventual future membership, assistance and advice given through the MAP may help aspirants to take the difficult decisions necessary to reform their

national armed forces and prepare for possible, future NATO membership.

All said and done, the road to NATO Membership has not been short and smooth. On the part of the East-Central European countries' strict adherence to the eligibility criteria for NATO membership is expected. Despite their all out efforts to join NATO, these countries are cooling their heels waiting for second round of NATO expansion after the inclusion of three new members in 1999. NATO on its part has no option but to go for selective expansion keeping in view the Russian objections to the expansion as well as the impending liabilities of the new members. But the biggest achievement during last ten years has been the engagement of all former adversaries in a regime of consultation, dialogue and assistance. As a result, the Allies may now establish a path whereby their former adversaries can potentially accede to Associate Membership in NATO and ultimately to full Membership. By establishing criteria for association, NATO can act as an instrument to encourage and nurture NACC members' norms and behaviours in a manner consistent with European security. In this way, NATO may continue to play a vital future security role in Europe, and for these reasons NATO may expand by opening its doors to the East.

Chapter - III

NATO'S Expansion: Responses from
Eastern Europe and Russia

A security vacuum developed in the region of central and Eastern Europe following the demise of the Warsaw pact and the soviet union. New security arrangements were urgently needed to fill that void. The situation had different messages for different countries and each one of them soon got down to the task of adjusting to new reality. While there was a scramble in Eastern and Central Europe to be a part of western economic and military institutions, Russia became quite apprehensive of the efforts made by her ex-inner and outer empire member countries to join extended NATO. For South-East European countries, it was a matter of the assurance of their security as they have too many flash points of conflict. Baltic countries felt it very difficult to joint NATO in the light of stiff opposition on the part of Russia. As far as NATO and west European countries are concerned, they favoured selective expansion of western security umbrella while striking a fine balance between NATO interests and Russian antagonism.

The present chapter seeks to analyse all these responses comprehensively. The expectations of East-central Europe from NATO are discussed in detail. The discussion goes on to cover NATO dilemma and Russian helplessness in the matter.

East European response: Scramble for NATO membership: For East European countries the solution to the security vacuum in Europe is the incorporation of these countries in western security and economic structure. They favour and welcome without reservation NATO'S eastward expansion. For them, NATO should enlarge its mission to

encompass the states of central and Eastern Europe. A desire for membership has been openly stated by almost all members of the former Warsaw pact members. The enthusiasm of these countries to join NATO was shown in the months leading to the Madrid summit of NATO in 1997[1]. If the new eastern democracies are not given a hope of eventual security within a broader NATO, they may come to feel rejected, to look elsewhere or to succumb to internal reactionary forces. Efforts to create liberal democracies in the central and East European area will then diminish, and much of the west's investment in the post cold war will be squandered.

East European states do not rely on the UN, the OSCE or the WEU for an outside security link. For these countries, these multilateral institutions are necessary and useful tools, but not sufficient guarantees to threats already delineated in the preceding chapter. These countries see the UN as simply too large to be an effective security guarantee. Similarly, East European countries believe that the OSCE shares many of the limitations of the UN. The WEU, being much smaller than the UN or OSCE, is potentially more effective as a security tool. Though the WEU is appropriate for some security operations, it is simply not credible for many complex European security challenges. Not only does the WEU lack political will; it also needs the US military assets to be effective. For example, while the WEU deployed task forces to the Adriatic, without NATO or the US sixth fleet, this presence would not have occurred. In addition, NATO provides the mechanism to derail misperceived actions. In any case, the principal objection to these other organizations is that they do not, as NATO does, keep the US directly engaged in European Security. Without the US presence and balancing role in Yugoslavia we would see Hungary and Germany supporting Croatia and Slovenia,

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[1]   Voice of America 24 April 1997, From John Pike [NATO-L] Dos 25 April 1997, Printed for *Sjha @ staff.uiuc.edu* (shashikant Jha).

France and Russia supporting Serbia and Greece supporting Macedonia. This scenario, with extended independent actions in Yugoslavia, could conceivably lead to a much-expanded conflict. Therefore most East European countries now look to NATO for their security concerns. All of the East European countries, as well as the members of the CIS, have established liaison offices with NATO and seek to strengthen these ties, for example, through the North Atlantic cooperation council (NACC) established in 1991 and EAPC in 1997.

The East European countries have desired closer ties with their west European neighbours but found they could not obtain them easily. NATO placed heavy requirements on the part of these countries to be eligible for its membership. The U.S. State Deptt. Spokesman Nicholas Burns stated on 29 May that "____ any new member invited into NATO ought to meet a test of effectiveness or credibility, meaning that new members ought to strengthen the Alliance, not weaken it"[2].

At the end of 1991, the demise of the USSR and the establishment of the CIS rendered concerns about soviet influence otiose. But East European leaders still faced the challenge of striking a balance in their relationship with neighbours to east and west. During 1990 and 1991, therefore the East European states began to meet that challenge by building a security network amongst themselves. Yet, even with the bilateral and multilateral relations thus constructed, some of East European leaders continued to talk about a "Vacuum" as if their

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[2] Nicholas Burns on 29 May 1997 in Sintra, Portugal, at North Atlantic Council Ministerial meeting, in Johnpike, [NATO-L] Dos @ Sintra Printed for *Sjha.uiuc.edu* (shashi kant Jha) 2 June 1997.

handiwork would not be adequate to ensure their security in time of a crisis[3].

Even after the phlegmatic response from NATO to East European countries' membership, former is still widely perceived by East European leaders as the only institution able to guarantee their countries' military security. East European elites do not place much confidence in their own military forces for true protection. Such concern is understandable given the small size of those forces. But this lack of confidence is also tied to the belief that any conflict involving military forces is likely to be too extensive to be managed by individual East European countries.

The problem of a clear demarcation of NATO area in the east, however, would remain unresolved if only three-Visegrad countries remain part of extended NATO. The other states outside NATO fear that they would fall back into the Russian sphere of influence. Baltic States expressed this view way back in mid December 1993[4]. If NATO is expanded selectively in an eastward direction, as has been the case till now, the countries located in the intermediate zone would be confronted with the threat of an Atlantic – Russian demarcation line across Europe, behind which the Russian consolidation as an aggressive power might again take shape.

An extensive enlargement of the western alliance to Russia's frontiers for its part would neither be acceptable to Moscow nor to Washington. In the post 1991 period it is there for everybody to see that Russia has tried to resist the western design in the East but economic and structural weaknesses of Russian State have blunted the edge of her

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[3] See Hungarian P.M, Jozsef Antall's Comments in RFE/RL Research Institue, *RFE/RL Report on Eastern Europe*, 10 May 1991, p. 28.

[4] Cf. Sueddeussche *Zeitung*, 17 December 1993.

opposition. The countries of central Europe and in the Balkans do not want to be treated as "intermediate zones" wedged between NATO and Russia or the CIS. However, it is also not in the interest of general security to draw an alliance border east of Poland, Hungary and Czech Republic identical to the former western border of the USSR – with the consequence that the Ukraine, Belarus and the Baltic region would fall back into the geopolitical sphere formerly occupied by the USSR. From the polish, Ukrainian, Baltic, Hungarian, Czech, Slovakian and by and large also Romanian and Bulgarian points of view, the territorial status quo established in the East of Europe from the Baltic to the Black sea in 1991 is not sustainable as long as it is not consolidated by an enlargement of NATO with accompanying American guarantee of protection. The East European countries fear that despite all the changes, the constellation of power in the territory of the former Warsaw pact would remain determined by a Russian predominance as long as NATO is limited to "Atlantic Europe" with Germany as its eastern border country.

In order to be eligible for consideration of NATO membership, the countries of East and Central Europe have sought to adapt to changes in their security environment. Firstly, they initiated a restructuring of their armed forces, which involved a purge under the pretext of reducing their strength. Secondly, they have concluded bilateral treaties or agreements with both their eastern and western neighbours. Those with the west European countries have included the exchange of military personnel and regular meetings between chiefs of staff. Politically, there was a proliferation of regional rapprochement initiatives and institutions, especially among the visegrad states[5].

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[5]   Yves Boyer, "The Impact of Changes in the Former Soviet Union on Eastern Europe", in Trevor Taylor ed, *The Challenge of the Soviet Empire: Managing the Regional Conflict* (London, 1992), pp. 113-114.

Realising that NATO membership was a long-term goal, Hungary in May 1993 proposed the introduction of the institution of associate membership of NATO to ensure representation in NATO without offending Russian Security interest[6]. Hungary opined that the Outright membership, with all the automatic defence provisions contained in Article 5 of the NATO Treaty was not really necessary immediately. A special "Associate Status" connected to Article 4 of the Treaty, which obliged member states to "consult" in times of military threats, would be sufficient to reassure the East Europeans that they would not be ignored[7].

To the East Europeans, NATO represents, above all the main pillar of western security--the only effective and functioning security organisation on the continent-to safeguard against the revival of the Russian threat and counter-balance the potential hegemonic aspirations of Russia[8].

Differences cropped up among visegrad states regarding membership of NATO. Whereas the poles felt that they should strive for NATO membership together, the Hungarians argued that the countries should do it on their own. The Czechs, too, argued that though their geo-political situation differed from that of Hungary; but should Hungary and Poland be admitted to NATO, Prague could not be left out. The Central European States, conscious of their comparatively advanced politico-economic situation, frequently stressed the principle of differentiation vis-à-vis other East European countries. There were attempts to gain greater access to NATO even if that meant weakening cooperation among the visegrad states. The relation between Czech Republic and Slovakia Worsened as it became clear that of the two, only Czech Republic was on

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[6]   Summary of World Broadcasts, *SWB, East Europe, EE/1697y,* 25 May 1993 p.A 1/1.

[7]   *FBIS-EEU-93-109,* 9 June 1993 p.10.

[8]   See, Statement of Czech president Vaclav Havel, *SWB, EE/1796,* 17 September 1993 p.A/1.

board to NATO. Mr. Vladimir Meciar, the premier of Slovakia alleged that, "there was a Secret Deal between Russia and the US to keep Slovakia out of the NATO defence alliance"[9]. There were even instances when one country tried to sabotage the chance of other. The Slovak premier Vladimir meciar complained to NATO that "the Czech Republic would be an unreliable partner because it has failed to live up to some of the conditions related to the dissolution of Czechoslovakia at the end of 1992"[10].

After four years of waiting and hoping, central and East European States were offered the partnership for peace – a compromise solution which does not meet all their expectations and needs. Nevertheless, they realise that 'a glass half full is still better than an empty one and that more can be poured into it later'[11]. The PFP programme is an attempt by the US to simultaneously resolve three problems – the Central and East European demand for enhanced Security, Russian concerns about being isolated; and the need for NATO to have a new mission to reflect the changed European Security order.

South East European Response: Caught in the Crossfire between NATO and Russia

The Security outlook of SouthEast European nations is somewhat bleaker than central Europe. Their security agenda focusses on the degree of stability in relations between the three central European Balkan Countries – Bulgaria, Greece and Turkey – and the extent to which the interactive patterns among them are vulnerable to outside influence. They are also acutely concerned about what destabilisation

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9   Voice of America, 4 April 1997 from John Pike [NATO-L] Dos, 22 April 1997 printed for *sjha@staff.uiuc.edu* (Shashikant Jha).

10   Barry wood in Voice of America from Prague, in John Pike [NATO-L] Dos, 22 April 1997 Printed for *sjha@staff.uiuc.edu* (Shashikant Jha).

11   Alfred A. Reisch, "Central Europe's Disappointments and Hopes", *RFE/RL Research Report*, 25 March 1994 p. 37.

factors could be generated by the Yugoslav conflict and how they could be neutralised, so that they would not lead to an all Balkan or all European crisis. In fact, religious differences are most pronounced in South-East Europe, across which runs the dividing line between the Islamic and Christian Worlds[12]. Like their east and Central European neighbours, the South-East European nations also consider the PFP as a small but significant step forward. The Balkan states realise that some of their interests do not really coincide with those of OSCE. For example, unlike their neighbours, they do not stress that the same rules and criteria must apply for all applicants since they fear being turned down. The South-East European Governments also suffer from a destabilizing zone of Balkan states in their vicinity. Russia opposes tooth and nail any external interference in the region inhabited by serb brethrens. This has complicated the situation for NATO and west. Russia has emotional links with Balkans and time and again it tries to assert her superpower status in the region, albeit unsuccessfully.

Despite apparent risks of "exporting" instability, the South-East Europe has considerable strategic value with respect to broader NATO interests. An all-inclusive and flexible scheme like the PFP was devised to alleviate the South-East European States' fears of being left outside the process towards greater security. Even though, Romania was the first former Warsaw pact country to sign a framework agreement with NATO regarding the PFP programme[13], it was not invited at Madrid summit in 1997. Now, South-East European countries in general and Romania in particular are looking forward to next round of NATO expansion to fulfill their cherished goal. They are more concerned as it is much easier for Russia to influence things in South-East Europe and Balkans. Romania's

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[12]   Chavdar palaveev. "Security in the Balkans and the New Pan-European Institutions", *Peace and the Sciences* (vienna), December 1991 pp. 59-62.

[13]   Dan Ionescu, "Romania Adjusting to NATO'S Partnership for Peace Programme", *RFE/RL, Research Report*, vol.3, No.9, March 1994, pp.43-47.

defence minister stated this when he warned on 29 April 1997 "_____
the longer NATO delays admitting central European nations, the greater
the risk that Russia will try to reassert influence in the region"[14]. These
states have repeatedly urged the elaboration of a specific timetable to
expand NATO'S borders in the political, legal, Organisational and
ultimately, military sense.

Baltic Response: Waiting for the Second Round of NATO Expansion–

The question of membership for former soviet republics is the
matter on which Moscow has drawn its final 'line in the sand'. Two
largest political parties in Russia – the 'communist party' and 'our home
is Russia' are die hard opponents of any NATO membership to former
soviet republics. Until recently, Moscow comfortably thought of the Baltic
Sea as its rightful sphere of influence. Even now Russia has two
remaining bases for its once huge Baltic fleet: kronstadt near St.
Petersburg and Baltiisk in Kaliningrad. Russia's sense of vulnerability
was reinforced in 1997 when all three Baltic countries applied and were
formally accepted as probable candidates for NATO membership. Early in
that year, the possibility of Estonian entry drew the first words of
warning from yeltsin and his Government. At the time of renewed
independence in August 1991, the Russian population in Latvia was
33%, in Estonia 28% and in Lithuania 8.6%. In order to protect the
interests of ethnic Russians in Baltics, Russia considers it her duty to
call shots in Baltic States.

The then Foreign minister, yevgeny primakov made Russia's
position clear when he told journalists in Copenhagen that 'it is
unacceptable to Russia for the Baltic countries to join NATO'. Although,
he did not object to the Baltic States adhering to the E.U, he claimed that

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[14]   James Morrison, *Washington Times*, 30 April 1997 in John pike [NATO-L]Dos, Printed for
        sjha@staff.uiuc.edu (Shashikant Jha).

bringing a military infrastructure created by Russians into NATO would "undermine Russia's relations with NATO as a whole"[15].

Baltic states, on the other hand, are desperate to join NATO. Yeltsin's offer to guarantee the security of the Baltic republics notwithstanding, the Helsinki meeting between Clinton and Yeltsin in March 1997 failed to achieve an agreement about limiting future NATO expansion. Yeltsin demanded at Helsinki that NATO not admit any former USSR republics[16]. But assurance was ambiguous and not concrete heightening Russian concerns and hope for Baltics.

An Anti-NATO Association organized among state Duma Deputies took aim at the Baltic States and their hope of becoming part of an 'anti-Russian alliance'. This sentiment was expressed by pravda-5 that the Baltics into the Alliance would be "every bit as provocative _____ to Russia as the placement of Soviet rockets on Cuba in 1962 was to the U.S."[17].

The possibility of a Baltic country entering NATO in the first round faded when the US insisted in June 1997 that only three new members would be invited. Undaunted, Baltic leaders said regularly that they were preparing for inclusion in the promised second wave of new NATO Membership. Russia opposed and continues to oppose Baltic countries' chance. Yeltsin's diplomatic offensive in the Baltic had suffered serious setbacks earlier in 1998. On 16 January 1998, Bill Clinton and the three Baltic presidents signed a charter of partnership, which explicitly supported eventual Baltic entry into NATO. This step was ridiculed or abhorred in Russian media. The ministry of defense's main newspaper, Krasnaia Zvezda, led the way this time in criticizing US policy in the

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[15]   *ITAR-TASS State news agency*, 26 Feb 1997.
[16]   *Interfax*, 27 March 1997.
[17]   Quoted in John Pike [NATO-L] Dos Printed for *sjha@staff.uiuc.edu* (Shashikant Jha) 23 April 1997.

Baltics[18]. Russian foreign ministry issued statement that, "with absolute certainty', Russia would revise its relationship with the alliance after Baltic admission to NATO"[19].

Primakov too said that there was 'red line' around the Baltic republics, which Russia could not allow NATO to cross[20].

Russian Response: A Limiting Factor in the Eastward Expansion

On the other hand, the Russian ideas on a "geopolitical balance" on the basis of the alliance situation in 1990s moved in a completely different direction. Russia wanted to have a say in every shift of NATO area in Europe. Also, Russia wanted to be associated with de facto recognition of a Russian sphere of influence to the east of the NATO frontier, corresponding to the former "outer empire" of the soviet union in the Warsaw pact. Yeltsin's proposal that NATO and Russia should offer a "joint security guarantee" to the central European former allies of the USSR as an alternative to NATO membership amounted to control of security in a new "intermediate Europe". This would be reinforced by the "privileged partnership" with NATO envisioned by the Russian side. That would consolidate Russia's shaken big-power status and back moscow's claims to hegemony by acknowledging a role as a policing power.

Not only in central and East European countries, but also in Russia, there is a craze among elites to join western economic and political structure. Therefore, even the Russian vodict against an eastward NATO enlargement is qualified. Russia would be able to agree to an extension of the Atlantic Alliance under two conditions: if the latter were to also include the Russian Federation and at the same time undergo a functional transformation. Duma Deputy Boris Fyodorov

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[18]   *Krasnaya Zvezda* (Moscow) 14 January 1998.
[19]   *Interfax*, 20 January 1998.
[20]   *Rossiiskaya Gazeta*, 12 May 1998.

stated on Page one of reformist Rossiyskaya Vesti (3/26), "Russia must join NATO. _____ Outside NATO, Russia only weakens collective security in the west"[21]. Russian elites believe that NATO should change from a system of collective defence into a system of collective security. In line with this logic, collective defence is invariably directed against Russia, whereas a concomitant arrangement on collective security would correspond to the need for common security for all European countries.

Sharp Russian opposition to any arrangement, which would territorially extend NATO as an alliance, is connected with a new foreign policy orientation in Russia[22].

The shift is towards power objectives in the former "inner" and "outer empire". In central Europe and in the Balkans the goal is to prevent an above all political-military integration of the states there into the west in order, in the long term, to again expose the region to Russia's military and economic clout, regardless of any aversion on the part of the states concerned. Russia is trying to employ the interest of western countries in a cooperative relationship as a lever by making it dependent on the condition that the west complies with the Russian desire for the territorial exclusion of central and South-East Europe from any Alliance considerations.

Today, Russia is incomparably worse off than at the time of Gorbachev. Therefore, a restoration of the former "outer empire" in its old form is definitely out of the question for its leaders. Rather, ties of a new kind are desired. Avoiding all integration type forms, which would create an overall Russian responsibility, the aim is to establish close bilateral

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[21]   *n.18, John Pike*, 23 April 1997.

[22]   Suzanne Crowe, Russia Asserts Its Strategic Agenda, in : *RFE/RL Research Report*, 17 December 1993 pp. 1-8.

relations in which the structural dependencies on the energy, raw materials and security resources of the Russia can be brought to bear.

The Russian line of argument tries to confront the western Governments with a real dilemma. Indeed, it can't be in the interests of NATO – nor of the applicant states themselves to pursue a course which pushes Russia into confrontation. Furthermore, the western side not only wants to avoid hostility, but also to initiate active cooperation on many issues – such as, for example, the non-proliferation of nuclear and other super destructive weapons.

Notwithstanding growing institutionalization of cooperation between Russia and NATO, the former has made it clear that NATO'S eastward expansion is not acceptable to it. Even when there was much hype and excitement after the signing of founding Act in Paris on 27 May 1997, official government Rossiiskaya Gazeta (5/27) commented emphatically, "so far, one thing is clear – Russia will approve NATO enlargement eastward neither before nor after the accord is signed"[23]. Russian objections rest on following grounds:

Firstly, Russia argues that the admission of Central European States in NATO would create a cordon Sanitaire in relation to Moscow[24]. These states should not become a new "little entente", a buffer which could be crashed at any time", but should take the role of "a connecting link"[25].

Secondly, if the countries of East Europe joined NATO, the "reactionary nationalist hard-liners" in Russia would be strengthened.

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[23]   Quoted in *John Pike*, n.18, 28 May 1997.
[24]   *SWB, EE/1697*, 25 May 1993 P.A1/1.
[25]   Interview of Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev, *SWB, EE/1777*, 26 August 1993 p. a ½.

Thirdly, the Russians argue that the "most correct way" of filling the security vacuum in the East Europe would not be by the expansion of the alliances, but by building "a single pan-European space, under which no one would feel any sense of isolation[26]. In the second half of 1993, Russia altered its previous negative attitude to the enlargement of NATO. Thus, the then president Boris Yeltsin, during a visit to Warsaw in August 1993, conceded that NATO'S expansion to central Europe did not, "run counter to the interests of other countries including the interests of Russia". However, shortly afterwards, Yeltsin cautioned against NATO'S eastward expansion as that would virtually expel Russia from Europe. Instead, he proposed that NATO and Russia should together, "jointly guarantee" the security of East Europe – a suggestion which the East Europeans rejected[27].

As of now, in the post Madrid and post kosovo period, Russia has understood that gradually its opposition to NATO'S expansion is loosing its strength, on account of inflow of foreign debt and investment. Russia has adjusted herself to the changed political reality of expanded NATO with three visegrad member countries. But now Russia does not want another round of NATO expansion as that would mean extending NATO boundary right up to the door of Russia. On the other hand, Visegrad states as well as probable members of NATO do not want Russia within NATO. They want NATO, only for the Central and East European countries, sans Russia. Czech President, Vaclav Havel said on 14 May 1997 at the UN, "while an enlarged NATO and Russia should have a special understanding and "profound relationship", Moscow should not be a full member of the Alliance"[28].

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[26] Statement by Mikhail Demurin, *SWB, EE/1785* 4 September 1993 p. B/7.
[27] Vladimir Lapsky, "Russian Federation President Urges West not to Expand NATO by Admitting E.E. countries", *Izvestia*, 2 October 1993.

[28] *Judy Aita, USIA,* UN correspondent, 14 May 1997 in John Pike, May 15 1997.

NATO'S Strategy: Selective Expansion

NATO'S decision on whether it should accept new countries as members must be carefully examined in the light of several aspects. On the one hand, alliance policy in the narrow sense is involved; on the other hand geopolitical-strategic implications are at stake. In the former case, the collective self-interest of NATO states in maintaining the well-established defence system and in the continuation of the balance of power between allies prevails. This basically means by nature conservative desire for inner consolidation and for the safeguarding of respective, single-state "assets" within NATO structures. Fear of experiments, complications and risks, such as those inevitably associated with engagements outside the current alliance area, make a mere enlargement – rather than a fundamental restructuring – seem advisable.

The geopolitical – strategic considerations, on the other hand, contain an element of dynamic momentum, which presses for change, for a proper adjustment on the part of the alliance to the developments and structural transformations set in motion in Eurasia since 1991.

NATO'S attention focuses on the situation in Russia. The integration into the North Atlantic Cooperation council of the new states which have emerged on the territory of the former USSR was intended as a stabilization measure. The most important requirement for an enlargement of NATO to central Europe and perhaps to other countries too is the willingness of the USA to extend its assurance of military assistance, including nuclear protection, to countries not previously belonging to the Alliance. At the same time, this is a crucial question of relations with the Russian Federation. Any question of Eastward expansion is not welcome for Russia as any extension of NATO frontiers to East means more risk to Russian security and sovereignty. Before

jumping on to the bandwagon of expansion, NATO quite astutely adopted the 'partnership for peace' initiative as a stabilisation-cum-water testing measure. PFP was the prelude to the final admission of three visegrad countries in 1999. Regarding other East European countries, NATO, however, though continuing to pursue closer contacts with these countries, is not immediately ready to accept them as members. A host of technical reasons come into play, including problems of standardization of force structure, weapons, and communication equipment. But the most important reasons are: first, that NATO is not yet prepared to extend to East European countries *en masse* the same sort of security guarantee as it does to its members especially in the light of Russian opposition, and, secondly, that it would find its decision making encumbered with the addition of a group of members having significantly different political, military, and force-planning traditions. The difficulty in this matter is NATO'S lack of enthusiasm about extending membership to former members of the Warsaw pact. Before the failed August 1991 coup in the Soviet Union and the USSR's disintegration at the end of that year, the reason given was that an eastward extension of membership would challenge legitimate security concerns of the Soviet Union. Today, that reason no longer applies. Notwithstanding admission of Hungary, Poland and Czech Republic to NATO in 1999, NATO'S reluctance continues, for a reason not often mentioned and hard to acknowledge publicly: many NATO members regard, the region to their east as a security nightmare – fraught with complex religious, political, economic and ethnic rivalries – for which they would prefer not to assume responsibility.

The proponents and opponents of NATO'S expansion eastwards impinge on the Clinton Administration to bring out clear pronouncements on the issue. Advocates of the first group comprise Zbigniew Brzezinski and defence expert Ronald D. Asmus. They favour

NATO'S eastward expansion. But according to Michael E. Brown, one of the staunch opponents of this eastward expansion, "the need is dubious, the risks real[29]". He feels that Russia at present does not pose any military threat to Central Europe. NATO expansion is packaged. It will involve U.S nuclear guarantee to states in Central Europe. This will be seen by many in Russia as an aggressive act and it will strengthen the hands of radical nationalists. Russian leaders would interpret NATO expansion as a delineation of spheres of influence in central Europe and they would move to establish greater control over non-NATO areas. This would in the long run encourage Russian aggression. "Four countries would be brought into NATO but eight, including the Baltic States, would be left out"[30].

German unification has added a different perspective to western approach to security vacuum in the Eastern Europe. Germany like Russia is in the midst of a sensitive and complex national redefinition. A reunited Germany has the choice of either continuing to become an increasingly European Germany or seeking a German Europe. The former is much likelier within the framework, of an expanded EU and especially a more rapidly expanding NATO with America deeply engaged in the shaping of that expansion. The latter is more likely if NATO atrophies while an insecure central Europe left unattended would transform into an arena for its powerful western and eastern neighbours. The prospect becomes particularly serious in the light of German reunification and its neighbouring countries' lingering suspicions of an economically powerful, strategically located, militarily ambitious Central European nation. Were Germany's military forces to become predominant in Europe and German military planning to become opaque

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[29]   Michael E. Brown, "NATO Expansion: The Need is Dubious the Risks Real'"", International
        Herald Tribune (Paris) 7 January 1995.
[30]   Ibid.

to its neighbours, the levels of insecurity in central and Eastern Europe would sharply rise.

Even among NATO allies there are huge differences between the US and the European members. This was exposed at 29-30 May 1997 meeting of NATO Foreign ministers in Sintra, Portugal. While US wanted to admit only Poland, Hungary and Czech Republic. France and Italy championed two additional candidates, Romania and Slovenia, since their entry might strengthen Paris' hands in its argument with Washington over a stronger European pillar within NATO[31]. All said and done, those who have been made NATO members are elated, but those left out, are looking forward to second round of NATO expansion while NATO seems to be in no hurry to expand its membership further. It is playing safe and has adopted a selective approach in this matter.

Even with the absence of a formidable threat, European Security can't do away with a military organisation like NATO in spite of its being a legacy of the cold war. But things are not easy for East European countries. Russia is a major stumbling bloc. Also, even NATO is interested in only those countries, which entail least responsibility for it. It has fixed certain criteria for democratic and market governance to judge whether a country is eligible for NATO membership or not. Gradually, but strongly, Russia finds that her options are limited and she is being pushed to the wall. The events in Kosovo and NATO'S new strategic concept go all out to show that Russia has little bargaining strength vis-à-vis NATO. NATO'S membership to ex-'outer' and 'inner' empire is now only a matter of time, considering the growing economic dependence of Russia on west. The question involving NATO expansion is when? And not what?

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[31] John Pike 5 June 1997 [NATO-L] Dos @*sintra printed for sjha* @staff. Uiuc.edu (Shashikant Jha).

Chapter - IV

NATO's New Strategic Concept and the 'Out of Area Operation' in Kosovo

NATO's 'New Strategic Concept' and its 'Out of Area Operation' were landmark events in the post Cold War World, in terms of impact on the west's relationship with Russia as well as in showing the interventionist designs of the Western Alliance. This is the basic thrust of the present chapter.

On 23 April 1999, the leaders of the expanded NATO began summit meeting in the Washington to celebrate the golden jubilee of the establishment of the Military Alliance. That day was also the completion of one month of unabated, unjustified and inhuman NATO air strikes on the Yugoslavia for the declared objective of removing the Yugoslav leader, Slobodan Milosevic, securing right of autonomy for Kosovo Albanians in the Republic of Serbia and stationing of about 28,000 NATO troops to preserve the autonomy of Kosovo. NATO's military action against brethren Slavs in the Yugoslavia predicated Moscow's apprehension that NATO's Eastward Expansion is a threat to the national security and interests of Russia. In fact NATO's barbaric military action against the Yugoslavia began merely ten days after NATO Expanded Eastward. While 24 March 1999, was the date of the beginning of air strikes against Yugoslavia, 24 April 1999 was the date when NATO's new strategic concept was adopted. Both these dates and incidents occurring there on have changed the perception of non- NATO countries especially Russia vis-à-vis NATO.

The elaborate strategic concept of the Alliance[1] goes all out to show that NATO is yet to shed its cold war tantrums and its hawkish mindset has barely undergone any change even after the disintegration of the erstwhile Soviet Bloc. Practically speaking, Russia sees no need for the existence of NATO in its present form. Russian design of things is to usher in an era where all former adversaries are placed on an equal footing. On the other hand, NATO wants to make its superiority (military and political) perpetual vis-à-vis Russia, in the light of latter's economic morass. This is in fact the underlying theme of the new Security Doctrine of NATO.

The US was main motivating force behind The Strategic Concept and was supported by the U.K. Therefore, the new NATO Doctrine is heavily tilted in favour of the US and its "poodle" the U.K. NATO is still doubtful about Russian intentions towards neighbours.[2]

Evolution of Nato's Present Strategic Doctrine

It becomes clear that right from the beginning, NATO was ready to use Nuclear Weapons first in a conflict. Even before the Soviet Union had tested a nuclear weapon in 1949, Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty which had been drafted earlier in the same year, committed the Allies to come to the defence of all members in the event of an attack. Both the Americans and the Europeans understood this commitment to be a nuclear guarantee for the Alliance against a hostile Soviet Union, which had an overwhelming advantage in conventional forces. While NATO agreed to integrate tactical nuclear weapons in December 1954, it adopted a Military Committee Document[3] that formalized the Alliance's

[1]   NATO's new Strategic Concept was released as Press Release NAC-S (99) 65 under the heading, 'The Alliance's Strategic Concept': It can be accessed at: *http/www/nato.int/docu/pr/1999/p99-65e.htm.*

[2]   V. Gangadhar, "NATO's New Strategy", *NewsTime* (Hyderabad) 18 March 1999.

[3]   *MC-14/2.*

emphasis on nuclear weapons as the key component of its defensive strategy, and by the end of 1960, it had about 2,500 US tactical nuclear weapons deployed in the Western Europe following the "Massive Retaliation" doctrine. NATO adopted "Flexible Response" as its new nuclear strategy in December 1967 after a great deal of debate during the 1960s in its Document MC-14/3, which formally abandoned the strategy of Massive Retaliation. Flexible Response committed the Alliance to respond to any aggression, short of general nuclear attack, at the level of force-conventional or nuclear- at which it was initiated. However, NATO retained the option to use nuclear weapons first if its initial response to a conventional attack did not prove adequate to containing the aggressor, and to deliberately escalate to general nuclear war, if necessary. Following this policy, NATO's tactical nuclear weapons' stockpile in Europe grew to around 7,400 in the early 1970s. In response to the Soviet efforts to modernize her intermediate range nuclear missile force with the MIRVed SS-20 in 1979, NATO adopted a Modernisation plan which involved the deployment of 572 tactical nuclear warheads on GLCMs and pershing II Ballistic Missiles. In December 1987, the Intermediate Range Nuclear Forces or INF treaty was signed between the Soviet Union and the USA which banned all ground based Nuclear Armed Ballistic and Cruise Missiles with ranges between 500 and 5000 Km.

As the security environment in Europe changed fundamentally, NATO announced in July 1990 in its London Declaration a review of its political and military strategy to reflect "a reduced reliance on nuclear weapons" which would lead to the adoption of "a new NATO Strategy making nuclear forces truly weapons of last resort".

NATO's Europe based nuclear arsenal stood at approximately 4,000 tactical warheads in early 1991. After president Bush announced a

major unilateral withdrawal of the US tactical nuclear weapons worldwide in September 1991 and Gorbachev announced reciprocal Soviet withdrawals the next month, all US ground based and sea-based tactical weapons were affected. This left around 400 Air-Delivered Gravity Bombs in NATO's Europe based nuclear arsenal[4], which is still the case at the end of the decade as France and Britain had subsequently decided to phase out their tactical nuclear weapons.

NATO's 1991 Strategic Concept noted that "the fundamental purpose of the Nuclear Forces of the Allies is political: to preserve peace and prevent coercion and any kind of war", It specifically stated that "the circumstances in which any use of nuclear weapons might have to be contemplated by it are... remote". The Allies "can, therefore, significantly reduce their sub-strategic nuclear forces"[5]. After NATO began moving towards expanding membership to countries in the Eastern and Southern Europe, it issued its Enlargement Study in September 1995 which stated explicitly that the "new members will be expected to support the concept of deterrence and the essential role nuclear weapons play in the Alliance's strategy of war prevention as set forth in the strategic concept[6]". In the May 1997 so called Founding Act, NATO Allies explicitly stated that "they have no intention, no plan and no reason to deploy nuclear weapons on the territory of new members" but indicated in the same document that they did not see "any need to change any aspect of NATO's Nuclear Posture or Nuclear Policy- and do not see any future need to do so[7].

[4] "The Unasked Question", *The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, Vol.55, no.4, July/Aug. 1999, Can be accessed at http: www.bullatomsci.org/issues/1999/ja99 cotta-ramusino.html.

[5] Paragraphs 55 and 57 of *NATO's 1991 Strategic Concept*.

[6] *Document on NATO Study on Enlargemnt*-Ch-5, paragraph45.

[7] *The Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security between NATO and the Russian Federation, Paris*, 27 May Section IV.

NATO's New Strategic Concept:

The NATO Strategic Concept adopted at the Washington summit did not adopt a 'no-first use' policy or even discuss it. However, the concept continues to point out that "the fundamental purpose of the nuclear forces of the Allies is political[8]" and acknowledges that

> "with the radical changes in the security situation, including reduced conventional force level in Europe and increased reaction times, NATO's ability to defuse a crisis through diplomatic and other means or, should it be necessary, to mount a successful conventional defence has significantly improved. The circumstances in which any use of nuclear weapons might have to be contemplated by them are extremely remote".

The statement, found in paragraph 64, goes on to point out the series of steps the Allies have taken since 1991 which reflect the post Cold War security environment, and include a reduction of the types and numbers of NATO's Sub-Strategic Forces. It adds that NATO's nuclear forces no longer target any country- an obvious reference to Russia, but that it would maintain,

> "at the minimum level consistent with the prevailing security environment adequate Sub-Strategic Force based in Europe which will provide an essential link with Strategic Nuclear Forces reinforcing the transatlantic link. These will consist of dual capable aircraft and a small number of United Kingdom Trident warheads. Sub-Strategic Nuclear Weapons will, however, not be deployed in normal circumstances on surface vessels and attack submarines".

NATO has reaffirmed the centrality of nuclear weapons in its Collective Security Strategy and Military Doctrine. Though Germany and Canada demanded a reduced reliance on nuclear weapons and ending of the traditional focus of the alliance on their first use citing the far-reaching political changes in Europe. But NATO has reiterated its

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[8]   *N.1, paragraph,62.*

commitment to nuclear weapons and the primacy of the Doctrine of Deterrence. "Besides reiterating the primacy of the nuclear weapons in its strategy and rejecting a "no-first use" NATO has proclaimed a role for Tactical or "Sub-Strategic Nuclear Forces"[9].

This Document formally recast the Alliance's Cold War era mission from one of collective defence to one that in the former NATO Secretary General Solana's words would guarantee European security and uphold democratic values "within and beyond our borders[10]. The New Strategy, particularly that of Nuclear Weapons Policy, departed little from the language found in the Strategic Concept which had been approved in 1991 at the summit meeting held in Rome on 7 and 8 November 1991, when the Soviet Union still existed. The two points of departure for the New Strategic Concept vis-à-vis that issued in 1991 are those of "Out of Area Action" and its "Open-Door Policy"[11]. While "Out of Area" is officially sanctioned – an instance is NATO's air campaign against Yugoslavia-NATO's "Open Door Policy" for new member countries was reaffirmed.

Jack Mendelsohn in his article in Arms control Today[12] points out that NATO's Nuclear First use Policy lacks both military and strategic rationale. Militarily, while the Alliance's threat during the Cold War to use nuclear weapons in response to non-nuclear aggression- though appearing contradictory and self-deteriorating-was considered helpful in reassuring Europe that some military response was available to counter the Warsaw Pact's significant quantitative advantage in conventional forces, today, NATO enjoys an even greater conventional superiority over any potential enemy. Therefore a general NATO Policy of Nuclear First

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[9]   C. RajaMohan, "NATO's Nuclear Doctrine" *The Hindu* (Madras) 28 April 1999.
[10]   Quoted in Wade Boese, "NATO Unveils Strategic Concept at 50th Anniversary Summit". *Arms Control Today*, Vol.29, no.3, April-May 1999p.40.
[11]   Ibid.

[12]   Jack Mendelsohn, "NATO's Nuclear Weapons: The Rationale for "No First use". *Arms Control Today*, July/Aug, 1999, via Internet: http:// www. Armscontrol.org/ACT/julaug99/jmja99.html.

use lacks justification. Also, Russia views this policy as directed primarily- if not solely at herself, against the spirit of the Founding Act, and it remains a major irritant as NATO Expands Eastward.

Nuclear Use Policy under the Strategic Concept of NATO runs contrary to the July 1996 International Court of Justice Advisory Opinion on the Legality of Nuclear Weapons in which ten of its fourteen judges determined that the use or threatened use of nuclear weapons is illegal in all but one possible circumstance –i.e. a threat to the very existence of the state.

NATO had an opportunity at the Washington summit to defuse its continuing tension with Russia by sending out positive signals through its Security Doctrine. As mendelsohn puts it, "the Alliance could reduce the political acceptability and military attractiveness of nuclear weapons, strengthen the nuclear non-proliferation regime, enhance the credibility of its deterrence policy and help to ease some of the tensions in the NATO Russian relationship"[13]. Otherwise, the inescapable conclusion about NATO's new strategic concept will, as pointed out by Steven Miller at the Pugwash meet on 11 October 1999 "..........be viewed by those outside the NATO Area as being offensive, out of area, unilateralist and sovereignty transgressing. It is not hard to see how some states could find this collection of attributes unattractive, if not threatening"[14].

In a nutshell, there are two main underlying themes of NATO's strategic concept 'Out of area Operation' and 'Continuation of the Right to First Use of Nukes'. This Concept endorses military intervention in Regional and ethnic conflicts beyond the territory of the Alliance. It formally proclaims the global interventionary designs of NATO that might

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[13]   Ibid.
[14]   Pugwash Meeting no.252 *"Pugwash Workshop on The Abolition of Nuclear Weapons"*, held at
         IIC, New Delhi, 11 October 1999, by Dr. Steven Miller, Director, International Security
         programme, centre for Science and International Affairs, Harvard University.

unfold in future. The Alliance which continues to subscribe to the First Use of Nuclear Weapons will now spearhead efforts to prevent the emergence of any additional centre of nuclear decision making. The United States has finally succeeded in transforming NATO into a world policeman. The events in Kosovo have given a glimpse of shape of things to come. NATO's "Out of Area" operation was at its brutal worst in Kosovo throwing out through across the window all property of civilizational norms.

Kosovo: NATO's Adventurism

To have an understanding of why situation in Kosovo came to such a pass, it is essential to go back to the Yugoslavia's early and immediate past. Kosovo, which lies in the South-West Serbia, alongwith Vojvodina, were Autonomous provinces of the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY). The province is peopled by two million ethnic Albanians, who constitute 90% of the population. Kosovo has a deep historical significance for Serbia because on 23 June 1389 the Ottoman Turks defeated the Serbs at the Battle of Kosovo polje. The 1389 battle has long been the rallying point for Serbian nationalism[15]. Besides, Kosovo has been the birthplace of the Serbian Church. With the rise of Serb nationalism from the mid-1980's tensions were exacerbated in the region. With the election of Slobodan Milosevic as the President of the Serbian State presidency in May 1989, the nationalist mood of the Serbs grew. The Yugoslav constitution of 1974 which granted the ethnic Albanians some national rights under the federal state, most notably the achievement of the status of an Autonomous Province and participation in communist Yugoslavia as a federal unit was now perceived to be

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[15]   Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States-1997 *(London: Europa, 1997)* pp.840-844.

against the Serbian interests and the new leadership sought to reduce the autonomy of both Kosovo and Vojvodina.

The 1990 Serbian constitution removed whatever vestiges remained of autonomy from the two provinces. 2 July 1990, saw a republic wide referendum on this constitution, which was largely boycotted by the Albanians, which resulted in a majority of Serbs approving the new constitution. The constitution was formally promulgated on 28 September 1990, from when Kosovo was known as Kosovo and Metohija. In response to the referendum, 114 of the 180 Deputies in the Kosovo assembly met and declared Kosovo independent of Serbia and itself a constituent republic of the SFRY. The Serbian authorities dissolved the Provincial Assembly and Government on 5 July 1990. To protest this move, the Kosovo Presidency resigned and Serbia introduced a Special Administration. By September of the same year, about 15,000 Albanian officials had been dismissed and measures limiting the number of Albanians in the education system had been implemented.[16] Ever since Kosovo lost its autonomous status, it has been fighting for independence. In recent times, the crisis in Kosovo deteriorated since Special Serbian Police Units launched an offensive on 28 February 1998 against the suspected Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) strongholds in the central *Drenica* area, which is near Pristina, the provincial capital of Kosovo.

The early 1990s saw the establishment of an armed group, the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA), which began a series of hit and run armed confrontation with the police. Independence of Kosovo was the aim of the KLA. The US certainly began to extend political and even military support, as did Germany, working through its intelligence agency, the BND. From 1996 onwards, the KLA sharply stepped up its activities. By

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[16]   Ibid, pp.874-875.

1998, large areas of the province had become No Go Areas for the Serb Police. Richard Holbrooke began to make formal political contact with the KLA leaders in Albania and even travelled illegally to the KLA occupied areas of Kosovo in 1998, to conduct secret negotiations with the Group. As the KLA's grip on the Kosovo countryside grew tighter, Milosevic decided to crackdown. He moved his army in February 1998 and soon began to engage the KLA in fierce firefights. Afraid that Milosevic was gaining the upper hand in the war against the KLA, the US stepped up its efforts to secure a 'diplomatic' settlement that would undo Belgrade's gains. The U.S. began a shrill campaign to highlight the Human Rights abuses committed by the Milosevic Government against the ethnic Albanians.

The first week of March 1998 saw fierce fighting taking place between police and the ethnic Albanians at Drenica, which claimed about 27 lives. At the same time, ministers from six major countries (the Contact Group on the Balkans, which was originally formed to tackle the civil war in Bosnia and included the USA, Russia, Britain, France, Germany and Italy) met at London to discuss the possibility of an international response to the Serbian crackdown in Kosovo. While talking to visiting Turkish foreign minister, Ismail Cem, Milosevic rejected moves to internationalize the Kosovo crisis, arguing that the matter was internal[17]. On the other hand, while the Albanians staunchly refused for two weeks to join talks without foreign mediation, they appeared to yield to foreign pressure to consider entering into talks. Foreign Governments supported the idea of discussions as a way to resolve the crisis[18]. The US and Russia reached a compromise by giving the Yugoslavia four weeks to end the bloodshed in Kosovo or face sanctions[19]. The UN Security

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[17]   *China Daily* (Hongkong) 10 March 1998.
[18]   *The Statesman* (New Delhi), 26 March 1998.

[19]   *The Statesman* 28 March 1998.

Council entered the picture when on 31 March 1998, it imposed an arms embargo on the Yugoslavia, to put pressure on Milosevic to make concessions to ethnic Albanians in Kosovo, including talks leading to substantial autonomy for the province. Addressing joint news conference with Italian prime minister Romano Prodi, the US president Bill Clinton warned the Yugoslavia that the Western Allies are ready to "substantially turn the pressure" if necessary, to stop the Kosovo crisis as, "we don't want another Bosnia"[20]. The US Special Envoy Richard Holbrooke, the main architect of the 1995 Bosnian peace accord at Dayton, when met the Kosovan leader Ibrahim Rugova and the President Milosevic on 10 May, issued veiled warnings[21].

But it was early on in the conflict that it became clear that the key defence and security institutions like NATO and the WEU had no clear military plans. Successive WEU meetings in Rhodes and Paris and discussions within NATO and between the West and Russia brought about disputes to the fore. Russia tried wherever possible to pursue her own diplomatic efforts to defuse the crisis and avert NATO intervention mainly because the Serbs are fellow Orthodox Christian Slavs. Where the West and Russia were concerned, it was about the legality of using force against Serbia without a United Nations resolution. While Russia was in favour of a UN resolution before using force, the west felt that NATO could get involved directly, if the situation warranted it. That opportunity came when NATO launched the air exercise code named "Operation Determined Falcon" over Albania and Macedonia, to demonstrate the organization's capacity to rapidly stage a show of strength aimed at halting a military crackdown in neighbouring Kosovo. The flights marked

20   *Khaleej Times* (Dubai) 13 May 1998.
21   *The Hindu* (New Delhi) 12 May 1998.

the first time in NATO history that it tried to influence a country's behaviour by flexing its muscles in the neighbouring countries[22].

Russia urged patience in giving diplomacy a chance by sending two Deputy Foreign Ministers to the Balkans on 21 June 1998 to try and resolve the crisis. On the other hand, NATO increasingly became more assertive and forthcoming in the matter. Xavier Solana said that NATO was ready to play its role. "Our military authorities are now looking at a wide range of options. And no option – I repeat no option- is being ruled out"[23].

In September 1998, the UN Security Council passed Resolution 1199, which called on the Yugoslav Government to end its hostilities and open immediate negotiations with the KLA with a view to meeting the legitimate aspirations of the Kosovans for autonomy. Although, the resolution was passed under Chapter VII of the UN Charter, it did not authorize the use of force in the event that the Yugoslavia failed to comply. Leaving aside the problematic legal nature of UNSCR 1199 (which came perilously close to violating Article 2(7) of the UN Charter on non-interference in the internal affairs of a sovereign state), the demand that the Yugoslavia negotiate with the KLA was a peculiar one. Negotiation is always a two way street but if one partner knows that the failure will produce a result more favourable to it, it has little incentive to be accommodating. This was precisely the case with the KLA. Although their goal was independence, they were being asked to sit down with Belgrade to work out a package of autonomy, at the same time, their backers in the CIA and BND were telling them that in the event that peace talks broke down, NATO would 'punish' the Yugoslavia by

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[22]   *The Hindu* 17 June 1998.

[23]   *Khaleej Times*, 23 June 1998.

launching air strikes. Naturally, the KLA did its best to sabotage the negotiations.

The deal that Mr. Holbrooke, US special Envoy to the Balkans, brokered with the President Milosevic on 13 October 1998 was in accordance with the plan drawn up by the contact Group for the Balkans in July 1998. By the terms of that deal, Belgrade agreed to abide by the UNSCR 1199, withdraw its troops from Kosovo, allowed upto 2,000 OSCE monitors to oversee an intense regime of verification and compliance as well as non-combat overflights for NATO planes and help finalise a framework agreement on future talks with the ethnic Albanians.

Armed with this agreement, Chris Hill, the Chief American Mediator, devised a scheme whereby the ethnic Albanians would enjoy internationally guaranteed autonomy for an interim period of three years, Kosovo would have its own president, representation within the Yugoslavia, and autonomy to run its own affairs, Belgrade would pull its troops out of the province and the KLA will be dismantled within three months. While the federal police would be allowed to maintain its positions in all major towns, its strength was to be reduced by a quarter to about 2,500. Most important of all, a 35,000 strong NATO force would be deployed to enforce and monitor the settlement. Even the KLA balked at these terms when it was submitted during the first round of talks at Rambouillet, France, in February 1999. When the talks broke down, both sides were arm twisted into reconvening at Paris on 15 March 1999. This time the KLA was convinced into signing, but the Serbs refused to agree on one point: the stationing of NATO troops on their territory.

Rambouillet was only a façade. The US had already made up its mind to teach Milosevic a lesson. But the US was having a tough time convincing its European Allies that force should be used against the

Yugoslavia despite the absence of a UN Security Council Resolution. On the other hand, Milosevic, who was already under pressure from the ultra nationalist figures like Vojislav Sesalj, found it very difficult to strike a conciliatory tone. In order to convince all partners of the necessity of the force, the Clinton administration encouraged the European Union, and in particular France, to try its hand at a spot of diplomacy. The understanding was that if the so-called French led effort failed, then NATO would have to step in to teach Milosevic a lesson[24].

When the negotiations opened in Rambouillet in January 1999, it was clear that the US aim was to ensure there was no agreement. Belgrade was aware of the links between some NATO member states and the KLA. It also knew the partisan role NATO had played in Bosnia. The Yugoslavs were not averse to a lightly armed UN force as well as civilian monitors of the kind the OSCE already had in Kosovo. The US, however was adamant that the 'Peace-Keeping Force' had to be a NATO led one and that the Force be given sweeping powers of operation[25].

Appendix B of the Rombouillet draft agreement, which dealt with the 'Status of Multi-National Military Implementation Force' made demands on the Yugoslavia that no sovereign country would be able to countenance[26].

In short, what the US wanted was for NATO to be able to act completely at will throughout the territory of the Yugoslavia and be answerable to no one else. With such broad terms of reference, NATO could effectively have undermined the Yugoslav sovereignty over Kosovo. Belgrade could not accept such conditions. Russian delegation protested

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[24] "Europe and US split on UN mandate over Kosovo, *Agence-France Presse*, 16 June 1998.

[25] Steven Erlanger, 'US Says it will Support NATO Strike in Kosovo', *The New York Times* (New York), 9 June 1998.

[26] Interim Agreement for Peace and Self- Government in Kosovo, 23 February 1999, otherwise known as the *'Rambouillet Accord'*. May be accessed at http://www.balkan action.org.

and said to have a broad-based UN Force but the US was insistent. Although the KLA initially vacillated about accepting the Rambouillet draft, its leaders were told by the US and British officials that if they did not sign, there would be no air strikes against the Yugoslavia. It was an offer they could not refuse.

From the standpoint of International Law, Rambouillet process was violative of Article 52 of the Vienna convention on the law of Treaties (1969) as it was sought to be procured under threat.

It also violated Article 2(4) of the UN Charter which prohibits the use of force by any state or group of states except under condition of self-defence or if authorized by the UN security council acting under its Chapter VII powers.

Since the Yugoslavia never attacked any country and no country claimed it had been the victim of the Yugoslav aggression, the question of the right to self defence does not arise. As for the UN authorization, the only UN Security Council Resolution which come close is UNSCR 1199 which stops well short of authorizing the use of force.

Article 53 of the UN Charter too was violated which require regional arrangements to seek Security Council authorization before any enforcement action. NATO had no sanction of the UN Security Council.

Even the emotional argument of 'Humanitarian Intervention put forward by the US falls flat. Article VIII of the Genocide Convention (1948) makes it clear that the decision to intervene would have to be taken by the UNSC. So, even if Serbs were perpetrating Genocide, a crime in International Law, NATO had no *locus standi* unless sanctioned by the UNSC.

So, once Rambouillet talks broke down finally, things worked according to the US plan. NATO pulled out the OSCE peace monitors and launched airstrikes on 24 March 1999. The Aim was to force Belgrade to sign the Ramboulliet peace proposals and accept NATO troops in Kosovo. NATO Secretary General Javier Solana declared that this was NATO's first offensive against a sovereign state in its 50-year history. The US rationalised its "War for Peace" attack saying it was forced to act against the Serbs who would have otherwise decimated the Albanians. Protests against the NATO attacks were heard in Russia, China and India. The continued attacks prompted President Milosevic to announce a unilateral cease-fire on 6 April 1999. However, NATO refused to accept the cease-fire, terming it as hoax, and continued with the air strike. NATO raids were followed by a massive refugee outflow from Kosovo.

On 3 June, 1999, Yugoslavia accepted the western backed peace plan for Kosovo after talks between the president Milosevic, former Russian premier Viktor Chernomydin and the Finnish president Martti Ahtisaari. Mr. Milosevic's acceptance came immediately after Serb law-makers approved the peace deal by a 136-74 vote. On 10 June 1999, the Yugoslav president Milosevic signed the Kosovo peace agreement after 78 days of intensive NATO bombing. The historic peace agreement was signed in a tent in Kumanov close to the Macedonia-Kosovo border. The agreement provides for: -

1. Withdrawal of Serb forces from Kosovo and its replacement with an International Peace Keeping Force which would have significant presence of troops from NATO countries.

2. Return of more than 8,50,000 Kosovan refuges to Kosovo.

3. Placing of the administration of Kosovo under a UN mandate till the restoration of the democratic institutions.

4. Demilitarization of the KLA, and

5. Guaranteeing of the territorial integrity of the Yugoslavia and ruling out Kosovan independence.

On 10 June 1999, the UN Security Council authorized deployment of a heavily armed International Peacekeeping Force (KFOR) comprising mostly NATO troops, in Kosovo, overruling the objections by China. A resolution, adopted by 14 votes in the 15 member security council with China abstaining, also placed the civilian administration of Kosovo under the UN making it a virtual international protectorate.

Russians were the first to rush their troops and demanded the peace zone all to themselves to look after the ethnic Serbs. The stalemate was resolved in Helsinki after 30 hours of tortuous talks on 18 June 1999. Kosovo has been divided into five sectors managed by Italy, Germany, Britain, US, France and Russia.

The UN Security Council lost all its credibility and moral authority to settle any dispute when it refused to stop the bombing on the Yugoslavia. The council condoned the aggression as it voted down on 26 March by 12 votes to 3, the Russian resolution demanding cessation of NATO's aerial aggression against the Yugoslavia.

Infact, it was in an apparent bow to Russia and China, that the US agreed to seek a UN Security Council mandate for the peacekeeping force it planned to send to Kosovo.

New Security Threats and Responses in the Post Kosovo Period

78 days of bombing left more than 20,000 people dead in Serbia including civilians as well, huge environment destruction and complete ruination of the infrastructure of the country. But these losses apart, NATO's Kosovo operation was an eye opener to the non-NATO countries in general and Russia in particular. NATO's campaign shattered the myth of Russia- NATO relationship which was supposedly dependent on

growing integration, partnership and institutionalization. NATO's air campaign against Yugoslavia precipitated the most dangerous turn in Russian western relations since the early 1980s[27]. Although tension has eased somewhat with the end of the Kosovo war, the anger and suspicions engendered on the Russian side will not easily dissipate. This has much to do with Russia's growing unease about NATO's post cold war transformation; latter's enlargement and pretensions to act beyond the territory of its members, without an explicit UN mandate. Most importantly, in the Kosovo crisis, Russia's political elites faced the strongest evidence yet of their own isolation and inability to influence NATO policies even on matters close to the Russian territory. In this context, Kosovo was a worrying watershed as it was the first time since the end of the cold war that Russia and NATO found themselves on opposite side of an armed conflict. From a Russian perspective, the Kosovo crisis yielded three important lessons.

First, even if nuclear deterrence continues to make a Russia-NATO war unlikely, the prospect that Russia and NATO will find themselves on opposite sides in other regional conflicts can't be ruled out, bringing with it worrying possibilities of escalation. Restraints on both sides have eroded. NATO no longer considers a UN mandate, to be a necessary precondition for the use of military force. Equally, Russian disillusion with the Gorbachev Era security concepts such as the 'Common European Home', together with the perception that NATO constitutes a growing political and security threat, make Russian political elites more ready to challenge the Allies despite their dependence on western loans and investments. Moreover, the race by Russian stabilisation force (SFOR) troops to seize pristina airport demonstrated that Russia is capable of bold, unpredictable actions.

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[27]   *Nezavisimaya Gazeta,*(Moscow) 16 April 1999.

A second lesson is that the much-touted institutions for confidence building and cooperation between Russia and NATO including the permanent joint council failed when tested by their first real crisis. The 1997 Russia NATO Founding Act failed not only to ensure joint decision making, but even a working mechanism for crisis management. All forms of Russia NATO cooperation supposedly institutionalized by the Founding Act were terminated immediately following the start of NATO bombing.

The third lesson is that, despite Russia's present weakness and its rupture in relations with NATO, it still retains some influence over European security. It was not the Russia-NATO council, but Russia's relations with, and membership of non-NATO institutions including the UN, the OSCE, the EU, the Contact Group and the G-8 which provided the framework for Russia's constructive engagement in resolving the Kosovo crisis. And that engagement has been judged, rightly, as a critical factor in ending the war.

These lessons suggest that the present freeze in Russia-NATO relations is likely to continue for an extended period of mutual and hopefully benign containment. Russia, of course will remain by far the weakest party to this mutual containment, but it still has some cards to play. Russia may seek to use-renewed ties with the individual European states and institutions such as the OSCE and the EU to forestall new forms of NATO interventionism. It may also renew its pressure to limit NATO enlargement.

Such a stalemate will no doubt complicate the resolution of security challenges on the European continent. It was NATO interventionism in Balkans that prompted Russia to come out with its New Military Doctrine and further adjustment to its defence policies on 9 October 1999.

The document reflects significant changes in the assessment of threats to the Russian security, shifting the balance from internal to external concerns. An earlier 'National Security Concept' of December 1997, had emphasized that the main threats derived from the internal economic crisis and local conflicts along Russia's borders, and had assessed the likelihood of large-scale war as low. The new draft doctrine, by contrast, emphasizes the threat of direct military aggression against Russia and its allies a threat that can only "be deterred by conducting active foreign policy and maintaining high readiness of conventional and nuclear forces[28]".

This doctrine admits veiled threat from NATO implicitly without naming it.

In late June 1999, the Russian armed forces conducted West-99 the largest military exercise in more than a decade to see its potential vis-à-vis the new emerging security threats.

The Kosovo crisis confirmed, in the most vivid terms, the growing gap in conventional capabilities between Russia and NATO, a gap acknowledged by Russian experts and politicians[29]. Together with economic constraints on purchases of new equipment, this reality has encouraged the Russian military to increase its reliance on nuclear weapons. Russia had already renounced its nuclear 'non-first use' policy in 1993. After Kosovo the military leadership once again emphasized its determination to use nuclear weapons it it can't mount an adequate conventional response to aggression. The 'West-99' military exercise concluded with a rehearsed launch of a nuclear missile.

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[28]   *Krasnaya Zvezda* (Moscow), 9 October 1999 pp. 4-6.
[29]   Prime Minister, Sergei Stepashin's Statement, *ITAR- TASS*, 7 August 1999.

The bonhomie and some what process of institutionalization of relationship between NATO and Russia was shattered by the mistrust created by the Strategic Doctrine of NATO and Kosovo Affair. It also caused fear in the military establishment of Russia that Kosovo might be the model of NATO intervention in conflicts within former Soviet territory or even Russia itself. These fears were further exacerbated by renewed appeals from Georgia and Azerbaijan for NATO to intervene in their own internal conflicts.

On the other hand, from NATO side efforts are on to assuage the hurt feelings of Russia. Russia was given a free hand in Chechnya seemingly as a trade off against her isolation in the Balkans. The faultlines are deep, is well understood by NATO. It was for this reason that the UN was brought into the picture formally to station KFOR in Kosovo. For NATO, it was proved beyond doubt that it could destroy cities, kill people, but could not win a war. Ultimately, NATO failed to annihilate Milosevic despite 78 days of bombing. The first 'Out of Region Operation' of NATO proved ineffective as it failed to achieve its stated goals.

Chapter - V

Conclusion

By the end of the World War II, mutual apprehensions between the soviet union and the USA had taken deep roots. The subsequent developments did not help to thaw the situation. Inevitable took place in the form of bloc politics and the cold war.

Two opposing blocs represented two divergent streams of political ideology, social system and economic philosophy. The mutual danger of each other pushed them farther and farther for enhancing their stockpiles of deadly weapons. In order to nullify the geographical extent of enemy bloc and to swell the rank of its own bloc, institutions like NATO and the Warsaw Treaty Organisation were built up. They became the main players in the game of power play. And the playground was the immediate outskirts of the soviet union i.e. the Central and Eastern Europe.

By the masterstroke of his astute military strategy, Stalin managed successfully to create a bulwork of nations in the East Europe between the Soviet Union and the west. The Red Army snatched away for Soviet Union a role in the central and Eastern Europe for years to come. At least in Europe, if not in the other parts of the globe, the Soviet Union was sitting on top at the end of the War. Behind the Veil of Iron Curtain, East Europe underwent an unmistakable change in all facets of life. Things were rosy or made to appear rosy, only as long as the Soviet Union was gaining in economic, political, technical and military strength.

The downswing of Russian juggernaut began during 1970s and by the beginning of 1980s the Soviet system had completely stagnated. The gap in development between Eastern and Western bloc countries in all

spheres of life was wide enough for every one to see. In 1980s Gorbachev declared that Soviet responsibility in East Europe would be minimised. Already, there were vigorous demands for reforms in East European countries. But, out of fear of soviet backlash, these reforms were very much within the parameters of command and control system. Gorbachev's package of 'Glasnost', 'Perestroika' and 'Democratiia' emboldened the East European members of Warsaw pact to go for reforms in full swing. Countries like Hungary, Poland and Czechoslovakia took the lead. Now the countries of East Europe openly admitted the demerits of communism and adored capitalism as a guiding principle of life. There was a craze in these countries for everything that was western. Western political institutions, economic models, social values, free and uncensored life style became the role model for these Ex Iron curtain countries.

Therefore, there was no surprise after the disintegration of the USSR when the East European countries made a beeline to join the economic-security structures of the West. For these countries, the security vacuum created by the disintegration of Soviet Security umbrella could be filled only by the US led NATO. These countries were falling over one another to join NATO. But before going for any Eastward expansion NATO had to grapple with Russian antagonism on the one hand and to preserve the cohesiveness and elitism of the alliance on the other hand. NATO took into account cost-benefit analysis, which explains its selective approach to Eastward Expansion.

NATO erected a host of platforms under various names like NACC, PFP, EAPC etc. for dialogue and consultations between West and East. These structures were preparatory to the actual NATO expansion. NATO spelt out a series of criteria in economic, social and political fields. Only after fulfilling these criteria could a country become eligible for NATO

membership. The suspense was broken only during the Madrid summit of NATO in 1997 when Hungary, Poland and Czech Republics were formally invited to join NATO. To other claimants, it was said that this was only first round of NATO'S eastwards expansion and in the future round, other probables will be admitted. Countries like Romania, Slovakia and Baltics are waiting for the second round of expansion.

As far as Russian angle is concerned, she is deadset against any NATO expansion in her ex-'inner empire'. Even the admission of ex-'outer empire' in NATO is an anathema to Russia. But Russia is in a hopeless situation today. For her economic revival she has to look upon west. There is a limit beyond which Russia can't oppose NATO'S expansion, thanks to Russian economic morass. Time and again any Russian attempt to assert her lost superpower status is armtwisted into submission by her economic dependence on western countries and multilateral institutions. The US is always in a mood to tighten the noose around the neck of Russian potential might.

In order to thwart any potential rise of Russian might in future, US has a game plan to pursue. Taking advantage of the historical weakness of Russia, the US wants to deprive her of the advantage which Stalin had gained in post War Europe. It is this hidden agenda which wants NATO to extend its frontiers right upto the doors of Russia. This is the most opportune moment for NATO to accomplish this task.

For Russia, options are limited. She has to adjust herself to the changed strategic scenario in post cold war world. Only thing that Russia can do and is doing is making maximum gains out of the compromise in a losing situation. West is reciprocating by dealing with Russia in a 'carrot and stick' manner. NATO encirclement of Russia is coming with the carrot of massive western debt. Russia was given a free hand in

chechnya in return for her tacit acceptance of NATO bombarding on Serbia.

But, at the same time, NATO and the west keep Russia reminding of her weak position. If Russian neglect in Balkans over Kosovo was not enough, the 'New Strategic concept' of NATO was far enough for Russia to read the writings on wall. Even now, NATO implicitly accepts Russia as the biggest threat to the Alliance. These steps have created suspicions in the mind of Russian political elites and have given birth to Russian attempts to have closer ties with China and India.

In January 2000, Russia offered China her space based navigation system, GLONASS. Realising that she has been pushed to the wall, Russia too wants to make the best out of the bargain. This was reflected when the US President Bill Clinton paid his fifth visit to Moscow in June 2000 to seek support of Russia on National Missile Defence (NMD) system Russian President Vladimir Putin took a very hard stand and was in no mood to allow any revision of Anti Ballistic Missile Treaty of 1972. A Joint Statement on Strategic Stability signed by the Russian and the U.S. Presidents in Moscow suggest the possibility of a compromise. It seems that decks have been cleared for a swap between Moscow's acceptance of changes in the ABM Treaty to allow a limited U.S. missile defence and Washington's readiness to sign a START-3 treaty, cutting the nuclear arsenals of the two countries to 1,000 – 1,500 warheads each.

All said and done, Russia, given her current status and despite Knowing fully well the game plan behind NATO'S eastward expansion, is in no position to check western hegemony in her own soil. In the game of NATO'S eastward expansion involving three players – Russia, NATO and the East European countries, the first one will be the sole loser.

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