

NATO and Russia: Towards a New Paradigm?

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RICHARD ROSS, NOV 29 2010

The North Atlantic Treaty was established in 1949 amongst the wreckage and detritus of the Second World War. It attempted to fill the power vacuum in Europe created by the Second World War in order to forestall a further expansion of Soviet influence into Central Europe. By signing the Washington Treaty¹ the Western European powers co-created a hierarchic Western system tantamount to a ruled based institutional hegemonic security community. The Atlantic Alliance², although rule based was dominated from the outset by the interests of the United States. The competition with the Soviet Union further strengthened the US hold on the Alliance by the creation of NATO, the Western treaty organisation, thus turning the liberal Atlantic treaty regime into a realist collective defence organisation. NATO would become aligned to the dictum of its American driver and its Soviet nemesis.

The collapse of the Soviet Union would remove the external threat thus leaving the Western defence organisation in an existential quandary. Commentators would be divided as to NATO's future. Realist thinking would suggest that in the absence of the external Soviet threat, NATO would become obsolete and thus disintegrate³. However, a strand of realist institutionalism suggests that NATO will survive as long as it served US interest, ie the interest of the hegemon or the preponderant treaty partner⁴. Liberals assumed that NATO might survive due to the low transaction costs within the existing security regime⁵. A new security architecture might just increase the cost of the security. All that was needed is an adaption of NATO to the new uni/multipolar security environment. The predictions about the polarity differed. Liberals such as Fukuyama imagined a unipolar world⁶. Realists predicted either a US hegemony or a return to multipolarity with its enhanced insecurity and fractious relations. Few, such as Kenneth Waltz, temporarily predicted the preservation of a new bipolarity⁷. Few were even dealing with Russia, but focused on the new institutionalised Europe or the US. This thesis will (1) pursue the destiny of NATO and (2) analyse the NATO-Russia relationship in the post Cold War environment.

This paper will look at Russia's perspective on NATO's survival and transformation. It will seek to stress the rarely analysed Russian perspective on transformation and institutional development of its historic foe. The thesis thus will contrast NATO's transformation with the traditional Russian preference for a pan-European security architecture, a preference that can be traced back to the Geneva summit of 1955; a preference that forms the basis of the so-called "Medvedev plan" of 2008. This is a paper on Russia's mistrust of NATO enlargement and Russia's plea to consider a "new paradigm" of security which can finally leave behind the remnants of the past and move to a new strategic partnership of the former foes.

The thesis is divided in to three chapters. This paper will do so in three sections. **Chapter 1** will look at the immediate aftermath of the collapse of communism and struggle for a new security architecture in Europe. This chapter will mainly focus on how the attempts of the international community to devise new all-European institutional structures were strained by the conflicts within the Balkans. Chapter 1 will furthermore assess the effectiveness of the existing co-operative structures in dealing with war and conflict and will show how the grand commitments to indivisible security would be replaced by unilateral actions at times of strain. It will show the rising tensions with Russia sparked by NATO's enlargement and the temporary breakdown of Russia-NATO relations with the war in Kosovo in 1999.

Chapter 2 will show how the fractured Russia-NATO relations of the late twentieth century would improve in the aftermath of the September 11th terrorist attacks on the United States. This chapter will thus deal with the new

NATO and Russia: Towards a New Paradigm?

Written by Richard Ross

Russia-NATO co-operation in counter-terrorism and nuclear non-proliferation. The chapter will also demonstrate the impact of NATO's continued expansion into the former Soviet space, and the impact of the colour revolutions in Georgia, the Ukraine, Kyrgyzstan on the new but fragile Russia-NATO partnership. Drawing upon the psyche of the Russian elite, evidence will prove that NATO's continued expansion was perceived as a threat to Russia and thus eased the dominance of pragmatic nationalism in Moscow, pragmatists who would be willing to repel further Western infringement into Russia's area of responsibility – the post-Soviet space. Russia's actions in Georgia in 2008 would take NATO Russia relations to an all time low. The Medvedev administration, however showed a willingness to build a more equal Russia-NATO relationship of mutually beneficial strategic partnership.

Chapter 3 will analyse the Russian plan for a new security architecture. It will look beyond the Medvedev plan of 2008, and will try to analyse all options available to overcome the stalled partnership and to create a strategic one. Chapter 3 will furthermore critically assess the NATO Russian relationship per se and its development since 1991 in order to determine whether the lessons from history can signpost the format of a new beginning. With NATO's new Strategic Concept 2010 due for publication in December 2010, the analysis provided should illuminate a solution which is both current and pressing.

Notes

1. NATO was established under the North Atlantic Treaty (Washington Treaty) of 4th April 1949. Full text available at Rauchhaus "Explaining NATO Enlargement" Frank Cass Publishing 2001 at Appendix 1.
2. Previous attempts at alliance creation such as the League of Nations had proved to be highly ineffective against the Japanese government particularly in its assault on Manchuria. Fukuyama also suggests that the United Nations has to be highly ineffective in the same field. See Francis Fukuyama, "The End of History and the Last Man" Hamish Hamilton Press 1992 p281
3. Walt, S. "The Origins of Alliances" (Ithaca: Cornell University Press 1987) at pp26-27.
4. Kenneth Waltz proffers an alternate view that although NATO was an alliance, it did not behave as strictly to Walt's theory as that theory did not take account of the extent to which the United States used NATO to force through its own agenda. See Waltz, K "NATO Expansion: A Realist's View" In Rauchhaus pp 23-38.
5. Neo-liberal institutionalists would adopt the view of Fukuyama that the institution itself would prove to be effective in its transaction costs and issue linkage. See Fukuyama Supra 2
6. Fukuyama Supra 2
7. Waltz Supra 4. This view is also reflected in the work of Buzan and Waever who looked in depth at the problems caused by the transition from bipolar to multipolar system. See Buzan, B. and Waever, O. "The Structure of International Security." Cambridge University Press 2003 at p10. Mearsheimer also provides some interesting analysis of the same point suggesting that the bipolar breakdown in fact creates a "unipolar" world in which the US is dominant and at war with its European partners. See Mearsheimer, J J "Back to the Future: Instability in Europe after the Cold War." International Security. Vol 15 No.1 (Summer 1990) pp5 -56.

Chapter 1 – Cold War fallout and NATO's quest for survival

Following the collapse of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the ensuing demise of the Soviet controlled Eastern bloc, Europe and the North Atlantic Alliance would face an existential crisis as the Cold War period of political and military standoff descended into bitter internecine conflict. For realist analysts such as Waltz, the great power balancing game had behaved as the theory predicted and restrained the superpowers from mutual destruction. Waltz further predicted that the end of the Soviet Union would spell the end for NATO whose traditional Soviet adversary had been defeated¹. However, for those wedded to liberal political thought such as Fukuyama² the emergence from Cold War realpolitik provided an opportunity for institutions and trans-national co-operation to herald a new era of European security. Gheciu referred to this new institutional framework as "internal"³ security in which the institutions play a diplomatic and controlling hand on conflict as opposed to relying upon national military forces to control by coercion. And it was from a base of internal security that NATO would seek to transform the external state-centric model to one which was inclusive and more embracing.

NATO and Russia: Towards a New Paradigm?

Written by Richard Ross

For both realist and liberal analysts, both would be proven wrong as neither the predicted demise of NATO, nor a new genre of pluralism would emerge. NATO would in fact become sidelined by the interests of its dominant US hegemon to be called upon only when convenient. What would emerge would be a form of reluctant dialogue in which both sides would seemingly commit to peaceful and co-operative means, whilst implicitly attempting to undermine and sideline the other. The process of NATO enlargement would ultimately lead to naked enmity between both sides. The study of the inter-subjective interplay between NATO and Russia is one in which reading between the lines is more beneficial than reading the actual lines themselves. In order to set the comparators with some uniformity, this paper will compare the Russian Federation post Cold War as a single actor⁴, against the institution of NATO. However, although NATO is used as the unit of analysis, the study will show that in the big decisions, and the key moments of post Cold War history, the actions of NATO as an actor can be seen to be driven and led by the United States. Indeed this paper will show how the United States would use the NATO umbrella as and when it suited most, and fold it up when it didn't.

In 1990, NATO and the former Warsaw Pact countries signed the Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) agreement, binding each other to limiting the armament systems in the European area, and establishing verification and information exchange mechanisms which hinted at a future based upon co-operation. Also in 1990, at its London summit, NATO set out its stall for the post war era, stating that "changes in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe would allow NATO to help build the structure of a more united continent, supporting security and stability with the strength of our shared faith in democracy, the rights of the individual and the peaceful resolution of disputes."⁵

The "shared faith" in democracy clearly related to the principles of NATO members themselves and pays scant regard to those of the former Soviet Union. NATO's thinly veiled offer to the East was made largely to counter President Gorbachev's "New Thinking" for Europe which foresaw a "common European home"⁶ clearly without the assistance of NATO. Indeed, Gorbachev's apparent agreement to the re-unification of Germany in 1990, and thus relinquishing of Russian control, was made on the understanding that NATO would not expand its operations eastwards beyond the re-unified German border. NATO's subsequent eastward expansion would incite Russian anger during the 1992 Balkan conflict and would continue for nearly two decades beyond.

The NACC and initial strain

In 1991, the North Atlantic Co-operation Council was established as an embryonic institution to facilitate dialogue between NATO and the former Soviet Union⁷. The nascent attempts at establishing a new dialogue were to be put under early stress by conflict in the former Yugoslavia and ultimately would inject NATO with the fillip of relevance for which it had been waiting. The 1992 conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina arose after decades of suppressed ethnic division, and German acceptance of Croat and Slovene declarations of independence in 1991 would "spell the end for Yugoslavia"⁸. With Russia in political and economic turmoil, and the United States involved in combat operation in Kuwait, Europe was initially forced to deal with the crisis on its own. European consensus could not be achieved with the French and Dutch governments positing differing methods for dealing with the crisis⁹. NATO without its American driving force, was weak and peripheral. The "institutional chaos"¹⁰ which some had predicted was painfully obvious as Serbian forces fought bitterly with the Croats, before the conflict moved on to Bosnia in 1992.

Following a period of political inertia when Western Europe was seemingly more interested in the political connotations of the 1991 Maastricht Treaty¹¹, an amorphous diplomatic effort to intervene in Bosnia commenced.

Western European institutions conjoined in an attempt to grasp with the illiberal prospect of intervening on the territory of another sovereign nation and in effect act outside of area and expertise. The United States which had previously seemed intent on categorising the crisis as one of Europe's own genus, was reluctantly brought into the fight when Secretary of State James Baker grew impatient believing that the European Union was doing nothing other than waiting for the United Nations to act¹². One of the fundamental and most telling problems arising from the

Bosnian conflict was the institutional and functional difficulty experienced by all parties. The UN and EU were institutionally maladjusted to dealing with interventionist problems. Both also suffered from bureaucratic complexities which involved numerous layers of decision making.¹³ Russia for its part had established a new Security Council in order to co-ordinate all security policies which would have included the Balkan question. The decision making process in Russia was in some ways easier. Despite historical differences with the United States, the Russians

NATO and Russia: Towards a New Paradigm?

Written by Richard Ross

sought a genuine break from the unaccountable despotic policy making of the Politburo and established their Security Council largely along the same organisational structure as the American National Security Council¹⁴. In doing so, the Russians ensured that the President had supreme command of all decision making and that the three tiers of governance below the President would act simply in an advisory capacity¹⁵. In comparison with the layers of bureaucracy present within the international institutions, the Russians (as with the Americans) had a comparatively less tortuous time in securing swift decisions and actions. Unfortunately for Russia, their political and economic weakness would ensure that they would be no more than genuflectors to the international community during the initial stages of the Balkan conflict.

As the Balkan conflict moved into the Bosnian theatre the international community stepped up its attempts to deal with the developing crisis. The United Nations which had established a protection force in Croatia (UNPROFOR) widened their field of operations to include Bosnia. Russia was in agreement with the deployment of UNPROFOR troops in a manner which could be viewed as an attempt to marginalise NATO. NATO itself was sidelined and stymied. However the complex command structures of the UN would leave the troops militarily feeble as inflexible lines of communication ensured that they had no operational effectiveness¹⁶. Moreover, UNPROFOR's much vaunted "impartiality"¹⁷ would be crudely reversed on them with accusations that by helping no-one they were indeed remaining impartial. In early 1992 the UN sponsored a regime of sanctions primarily aimed at the Milosevic government in an attempt to halt the flow of weapons to the Bosnian Serbs. Russia from a position of comparative weakness, endorsed the UN sanctions measures and in doing so, cast aside their cultural attachment to the Slavic Serbs. Once again, Russia's agreement of the UN sanctions could be viewed as an attempt to endorse the UN as an alternative provider of security and in doing so, marginalising NATO.

The Vance-Owen plan

NATO would not be marginalised, and alongside the process of UN sponsored sanctions, NATO saw an opportunity to enter the fray by providing naval support to the UN backed arms embargo. In October 1992, the Vance-Owen peace plan was proposed which recommended the partition of Bosnia and ultimately the territorial intervention by Western institutions onto Yugoslav territory. The terms of the proposed agreement would give autonomy to Serb and Croat populations in exchange for a ceasefire and a process of de-militarisation. The plan had been drafted not by NATO generals but by European diplomats, and whilst the Americans may have been involved, Russia still gave its tacit support to the plan. At this juncture, Russia appears to have been at least outwardly attempting to embrace the internal mechanism of security. As a member of the Council of Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) Russia was attracted to the inclusive and co-operative principles of achieving security. Without any obvious NATO fingerprints on the Vance-Owen plan, the plan would be more acceptable to the Russians. As Beverley Crawford suggests, the outward appearance of co-operation and inclusion perhaps hid an undercurrent of subterfuge as the United States were under pressure to actually exclude Russia from any involvement in the negotiations, whilst the Europeans were lobbying to keep the Americans out¹⁸.

Crawford's analysis may indeed carry merit as the failure of the Vance-Owen plan would prove to be the end of any apparent détente between NATO and Russia and would send relations into a tailspin. In the minds of military commanders and commentators, Vance-Owen failed as the ineffective military structures of UNPROFOR provided no effective coercion for the Serbs¹⁹ which left the Vance-Owen plan "meaningless in the eyes of the belligerents."²⁰ Nevertheless, the political power brokering as suggested by Crawford could indeed have been the real cause of the collapse of the peace agreement. It would have been obvious to "allied" military commanders that the lack of effective fighting force on the ground, combined with no aerial threat would prevent any peace agreement from being taken seriously. The Russians could see that the only way to rectify this issue was for NATO to launch full scale military operations, which at first blush meant an intervention upon their Slavic cousins, but also an improved role for NATO which had the American firepower behind it. Historical analysis could even prove Russian suspicions to be correct. From early 1992 when NATO had no obvious role in the Balkan conflict, matters quickly progressed to enable NATO to provide naval support to the arms embargo and eventually to police the skies over Bosnia leading to an act of outward aggression in 1994 when NATO (US) F16 fighters shot down Serb Galeb aircraft over Banja Luka.

Pouliot²¹ provides a fascinating analysis of the relationship between NATO and Russia between 1992 until 1994 and

NATO and Russia: Towards a New Paradigm?

Written by Richard Ross

describes it as a “master-apprentice” relationship²². NATO having found itself a niche was able to establish itself as the predominant force in the relationship. By 1994 the détente had cooled and any apparent co-operation had ceased. NATO had re-asserted its dominance and Russia would be left to diplomatically contest what it saw as an inexorable NATO advance. Pouliot would characterize this as the pupil going awry²³.

As events unfolded in 1994, the increase in Serb war atrocities would provide NATO the impetus to take command of the Balkan problem and conduct a military operation long avoided by the institutions and diplomats. With NATO aircraft already in control of the skies and the exclusion zones, NATO commanders attempted to ratchet up the military effort by conducting surgical air strikes on Bosnian Serb positions. The concept of air strikes would prove anathema to the Russians who were attempting to show diplomatic strength by offering to mediate with the Serbs. The shelling by Bosnian Serb forces of Markele market place in Sarajevo on 5th February 1994 would prove to be a key turning point in the conflict. The inability of the Europeans, Russians and the international institutions to deal with the Serb military led to one of the signature atrocities of the conflict, notorious not only for the indiscriminate brutality which it exacted, but also for the ease which Bosnian Serbs experienced in occupying the hills around Sarajevo and firing at will. Europe and the UN were opposed to NATO conducting air strikes preferring instead for UNPROFOR troops to take command on the ground. Unfortunately the cumbersome “dual-key” procedures in place in order to take military decisions removed the potency of UNPROFOR troops leaving them almost “like hostages on the ground”²⁴. A very clear “mismatch of mission and capability”²⁵ was apparent with NATO’s undoubted effectiveness from the skies, seriously offset by UNPROFOR vulnerability on the ground. Only by NATO unilaterally over-riding the dual-key procedure and acting on its own mandate would the mismatch be addressed to provide a more potent force. This would be the first move by NATO in 1994 which would secure its centrality within the theatre of operation, and upset the Russians. The second and equally decisive move was a diplomatic sleight of hand. Whilst the battle was being fought for Yugoslav territory an even more important battle was beginning within the corridors of diplomacy. In 1994, NATO enriched by an increasing remit in the Bosnian conflict began a process of enlargement by creating the Partnership for Peace (PfP) aimed at creating a strategic partnership with non-NATO members from the former Eastern bloc (including Russia) to allow them to work alongside NATO in security matters. This offer of increasing the sphere of internal security mechanisms to the Eastern bloc was matched in some way by the simultaneous establishment of a Contact Group of nations who would be involved in the specific decisions on the Balkan conflict. With the United States being a key member of the Contact Group, and the apparent driving force behind NATO’s offer of partnership to the East, Russian historical suspicions as to motive were raised. For Russia, the NATO extension to the former Eastern bloc was the beginning of the feared NATO project of expansion into the East. The inclusion of Russia in the Contact Group did little to appease Russians who would still feel isolated from decisions. Former Foreign Minister Kozyrev would indeed talk of “NATO duplicity”²⁶ by including Russia in the Contact Group whilst simultaneously taking unilateral decisions such as that to circumvent the dual-key procedure in order to carry out military operations of NATO’s choice. This duplicity (although aimed at NATO) was tacitly accepted by Strobe Talbott who referred to the Contact Group as an attempt to keep “Russia in the tent..sullen but not obstructionist.”²⁷

Whilst history reflects that NATO’s unilateral decision to deploy tactical air strikes and overwhelming ground force to the Bosnian arena did indeed establish the coercion required to bring the Serbs to heel, the processes through which NATO operated ensured that Russian suspicions as to motive would be confirmed. Indeed, in December 1994 NATO foreign ministers announced that they were involved in a process “of examination inside the Alliance to determine how NATO **will** [emphasis added] enlarge”,²⁸ an announcement which enraged the Russians to the extent that the Russian delegation to the PfP walked out from the PfP signing ceremony in protest at NATO’s expansion.

The Bosnian conflict would be the first major test of the new world Order. NATO looking for a new *raison d’être* would emerge victorious. NATO did not have to struggle with the Russian military or political elite, but with the institutional dithering of the international community and the cultural differences prevalent within Western European states. NATO’s ability to cut through the red tape and seize the initiative would ensure impetus for the future. Analysts are divided as to NATO’s success. Crawford suggests that NATO’s success was “path dependent”²⁹ suggesting a degree of control and foresight on NATO’s part. Military analysts do not necessarily concur with that conclusion³⁰, hinting that NATO was rather more stumbling in its efforts, securing the advantage only with the overwhelming support of American military might. For Russia, their newly established Security Council would prove largely irrelevant and was all too easily sidelined. The suspicions of Yeltsin and Kozyrev that Russia was being ignored,

NATO and Russia: Towards a New Paradigm?

Written by Richard Ross

were well founded, however it is difficult to see what else Russia could have achieved from a position of such vulnerability. Russia although preferring the inclusive nature of the CSCE was forced to almost grovel to NATO for membership in the immediate post Cold War era. NATO realising their obvious strength was able to refute the request with disdain and continue the project of Eastern expansion. Pouliot categorises this period as the “Double Enlargement” of NATO reflecting firstly its geographical stretch to the East, and secondly its functional variation to include peacekeeping³¹. Pouliot suggests that the period of Double Enlargement was the significant period in the Russian psyche. Having been cast as the apprentice in the early stages, Russia re-discovered its “Great Power habitus”³² ensuring an end to the open co-operation with NATO. Indeed, at the OSCE/CSCE conference in Budapest in 1994, President Yeltsin spoke of a “cold peace”³³ emerging, blaming NATO expansionism for excluding Russia.

The Founding Act 1997³⁴

Moving on from the successful conclusion of the Bosnian conflict with the signing of the Dayton Accord on 1st November 1995, NATO proceeded with its process of Double Enlargement in a manner which could only be seen as an attempt to leave Russian out in the cold. Perhaps with hindsight NATO planners had reason to fear Russian inclusion. The December 1993 shelling of the “White House” in Moscow and the Russian invasion of Chechnya and its subsequent atrocities was proof to NATO that Russia was fragile and unstable. With the power of the Russian Security Council vesting in an increasingly erratic President Boris Yeltsin, NATO undoubtedly saw the map of security best drawn to the borders of the Russian Federation. With Russia’s notion of Great Power habitus restored it would revert to type and move back towards re-establishing its dominant position. With NATO’s expansion plans suggesting an encroachment upon former Soviet bloc territory, Russia would always remain wary of NATO.

There is evidence however that Russia did not completely abandon hopes of partnership. In 1994 Foreign Minister Kozyrev recorded although the Balkans showed an “initial lack of consultation and co-ordination” which risked “returning to the old benefactor-client relationship”, the real lessons learned where how “Russia and the West co-ordinated their efforts to persuade the warring parties to make peace.”³⁵ It was from this platform that NATO and Russia did indeed progress towards formalising their diplomatic relations with the signing of the Founding Act in 1997. The path to the Founding Act would be beset by intense diplomatic divergence. NATO’s desire to expand to the East and to admit new members was considered by the Russian elite as anti-Russian. NATO for its part considered Russian opinion to be of limited value. Indeed, Yevgeny Primakov reflects that in 1996 during a discussion with US Secretary of State Warren Christopher it became apparent that “our [Russian] opinion would be ignored during the expansion of NATO”³⁶ and that Russia would have to get used to the process of NATO expansion. The brinkmanship was clearly in evidence, a United States driven NATO was determined to press on with eastward expansion in apparent ignorance of Russian sentiment. NATO for its part would always see Russian ideas of its Great Power habitus as “attempting to punch well above its weight.”³⁷ The negotiations surrounding the Founding Act would involve numerous rounds of demands, concessions in which NATO would ultimately flex its muscles in Russia’s direction, conceding ground only on matters which “did not restrict the Alliance’s freedom.”³⁸

The Founding Act was signed in 1997, and the text of the document is a model of co-operation and understanding.

The Act defined “the goals and mechanisms of consultation , cooperation, joint decision-making and joint action....between NATO and Russia.”³⁹ Contained within the declaratory recitals underpinning that goal was a confirmation of NATO’s Double Expansion geographically and functionally, and a commitment to carry out the functional enlargement alongside the UN and CSCE. Working from first principle of “indivisible”⁴⁰ security amongst all Euro-Atlantic states, the Act cemented cooperation, sovereignty and the inviolability of borders. In order to facilitate the achievement of such lofty aims and principles, the Act established the NATO-Russia Permanent Joint Council with the central objective to “build increasing levels of trust, unity of purpose and habits of consultation and cooperation between NATO and Russia”⁴¹. The nomenclature of the Act is scarcely recognisable from the tone of the fractious preamble to its inceptions and demonstrates a clear division between the outward façade of cooperation and the inward flow of invective. As with the NACC in 1992, the PJC would face an almost immediate strain upon its being with another brewing conflict within the Balkans.

Kosovo

NATO and Russia: Towards a New Paradigm?

Written by Richard Ross

The Dayton Accords of November 1995 succeeded in ending hostilities between warring factions in Bosnia, and Serb controlled territories, however it did not sufficiently demilitarise, nor sanitize the nationalist tendencies of the Milosevic government. Having been thwarted in attempts to crush secession from its Western borders, the Milosevic regime turned east to crush a slow boiling insurrection in the predominantly Albanian territory of Kosovo. Unrest between Albanian descent Kosovars and ethnic Serbs had been a fixture since the thirteenth century, and the inability of the Milosevic regime to prevent the independence of Croatia, Slovenia and Bosnia, increased their efforts to quell rebellion in Kosovo. Conflict between the Kosovan Serbs and the indigenous Kosovar Albanians would lead both sides to accuse the other of ethnic cleansing and war crimes. Having learned something from the dithering and inaction of Bosnia, the international community moved rather more quickly to assess the situation. As Sean Kay highlights, the concept of intervention would “reflect a new value-laden institutional mission manifested in NATO’s principals and norm.”⁴² Viewing the conflict through its neo-liberal institutionalist lens, Kay remarked that Kosovo should have been an efficient one for NATO due to its previous experience in the Balkans, and by implication from the Founding Act, its commitment to indivisible and cooperative security. Initially, NATO and other institutions did attempt to move the escalating violence away from the battlefield to the negotiating table. Throughout the course of 1998, the United Nations Security Council approved three separate Resolutions condemning the violence and calling upon all sides to negotiate. Similar to the Vance-Owen plan of 1992, the lack of military coercion ensured that the UNSCRs were largely ignored by the Serbs and the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA). NATO threatened air strikes on the Serbs if they failed to heed international calls for an end to violence. The massacre of 45 Kosovars by Serbian paramilitaries in Racak in January 1999 would intensify NATO’s threat of air strikes. NATO’s threat brought the Serbs to the negotiating table in Rambouillet in France. The rejection by the Milosevic regime of the Rambouillet agreement resulted in NATO commencing Operation Allied Force (OAF) a bombing campaign targeting Belgrade on 24th March 1999.

From a NATO perspective, the action of moving from inclusive dialogue to unilateral military intervention meant casting aside the international community as there was no specific UN Resolution permitting such action. The military action, notably high level “precision”⁴³ bombing was a preferred tactic of the Americans who whilst anxious to ensure overwhelming military might, were not prepared to risk ground troops in the process. The confidence of NATO’s actions in bombing Serbia in March 1999 would reflect NATO’s confidence arising from what Kay describes as their “key variable”, namely “the exercise of American power channelled through the institution.”⁴⁴ As Gallis confirms OAF proved that NATO was a “two-tiered” alliance with Europe “utterly reliant upon American military resources.”⁴⁵ The Russian delegation was apoplectic at NATO’s actions and the apparent ignorance of the Founding Act principles and also the provisions of the CFE Treaty (which had been amended in 1999 to accommodate the Russians). Whilst General Leonid Ivashov’s 1998 prediction that NATO action without a UN resolution would unleash “a new Cold War”⁴⁶ did not come to immediate fruition, the Russian reaction to OAF was furious. President Yeltsin declared the actions as “nothing short of undisguised aggression” and retorted that Russia “has extreme measures that it could take but we have decided not to take them.”⁴⁷ As the bombing campaign continued on the ground, so too the diplomatic efforts continued off field. Tri-lateral talks were convened between US Assistant Secretary of State Strobe Talbott, Russian Prime Minister Victor Chernomyrdin and the Finnish President Marti Ahtisaari aimed at repairing the damage caused to relations. Almost simultaneously Russian strategists were planning a military operation intent on demonstrating their relevance to the crisis. The operation known as Trojan Horse involved a clandestine night time incursion by Russian paratroopers on the 11th June with the intention of securing the centre of Pristina and its airport before the arrival of Alliance ground forces. The sight of Russian tanks rolling in to Pristina heralded as liberators no doubt provided Russia with a necessary although temporary fillip. In the words of Lukin it showed the world that Russians were “partners, not lackeys.”⁴⁸ The action Operation Trojan Horse was ordered by Yeltsin as Pouliot suggests to prevent “a further capitulation”⁴⁹ to NATO. Although, as the title of Mark Weber’s article “Kosovo War, A Recapitulation”⁵⁰ demonstrates, any praise Yeltsin garnered from the seizure of Pristina did little in the long run to prevent the overall Kosovo conflict being viewed as a Russian defeat by NATO.

The Kosovo experience would prove pivotal in the NATO-Russia relations. It would show the Russians that NATO words were very rarely matched by deeds, and that the Cold War American hegemon was critical in the NATO machine⁵¹. For NATO, keeping diplomatic relations with NATO was adopted only when it didn’t get in the road of NATO projects. NATO was still prepared to use American domination to drive through their agenda. As Weber remarks, “OAF marked a fissure in relations between NATO and Russia which has never been fully repaired.” Weber

NATO and Russia: Towards a New Paradigm?

Written by Richard Ross

also saw that future Russian actions in Chechnya and Georgia would “have a lineage which can be traced back to Kosovo”.⁵² A study carried out by Hopf into the Russian identity concluded that Kosovo 1999 discredited any suggestion that Russian action was susceptible to Western discourse and was instead “liberal essentialist”⁵³ providing Russians with an identity of their own which they see as impenetrable by any other state. Ignoring this sense of identity driving the Great Power habitus would be NATO’s greatest mistake when a resurgent Russia would again flex its muscles in the new millennium.

Notes:

1. See Waltz, K 2001 *NATO Expansion, A Realist’s View*, In: R Rauchhaus, Explaining NATO Enlargement, Frank Cass Publishers p28.
2. See Francis Fukuyama, “The End of History and the Last Man” Hamish Hamilton Press 1992 p281
3. Gheciu discussed the normative mode of sovereignty as the central plank of international relations and how security should be achieved “internally” by institutional means rather than “externally” through state military force. See Gheciu, A (2005) *NATO in the “New Europe”: The Politics of International Socialization after the Cold War*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
4. Acknowledging that the geographical area which now comprises the Russian Federation is smaller than that of the CIS which arose following the fall of the Cold War, however this paper will not include the former Soviet bloc states within the Russian actor as clearly some of those states acted against Russian aims and values.
5. Declaration on a Transformed North Atlantic Alliance, The London Alliance, July 6, 1990.
6. From Moore R.R. 2007, *NATO’s New Mission*, Praeger Security International. p16.
7. The NACC was created as a result of the Rome Summit of 1991.
8. From Kaufman J.P., *NATO and the Former Yugoslavia*. Rowman and Littlefield 2002 at p75.
9. Norbert Both reflects that whilst the French were in favour of a European only model (the WEU), the Dutch “vehemently opposed involving the WEU in the crisis for fear of undermining NATO”, with NATO evolving to be the “full blown defense arm of the EC.” Both N, *Indifference to Entrapment: The Netherlands and the Yugoslav Crisis 1990-1995*. (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2000 p110-111)
10. From Crawford B, 2001 *The Bosnian Road to NATO Enlargement*, In: R Rauchhaus, Explaining NATO Enlargement, Frank Cass Publishers p40.
11. For a detailed analysis of the preoccupation of Western European governments with the economic implications of the Maastricht Treaty see Calleo, D “*Rethinking Europe’s Future*” (Princeton: PUP, 2001) Part III The New Europe pp187-375.
12. This argument is supported by US Defence Department official Maynard Glitman who stated that the “Bush administration was keen to demonstrate that the US would not have to continue shouldering the burden of the post Cold War era..” and that Europeans “should accept the task of stabilizing Yugoslavia”. Glitman M, “US Role in Bosnia, Rethinking of a Flawed Approach.” *Survival* 38 No.4 (Winter 1996-1997) p68
13. Most notably the dual key procedure with regard to military action which is explored later in the chapter.
14. For a more detailed analysis of the development of the Russian Security Council and its movement away from the Politburo see Vendil C, “*The Russian Security Council*” *European Security* Vol.10 No.2 (Summer 2001) pp67-94.

NATO and Russia: Towards a New Paradigm?

Written by Richard Ross

15. The three layers were meetings, apparatus and interdepartmental commissions. For further explanation of their workings, see Vendil Ibid No.12 pp70-77.

16. The dual key operation in which the UN and NATO commanders were both required to make joint decisions would undermine the effectiveness of military operations as decision making was slow and laboured and could not react to events on the ground. For further analysis see Schulte G.L "Former Yugoslavia and the New NATO" Survival 39/1 Spring 1997 pp19-42.

17. Schulte, a former Director of the Bosnia Task Force equated "impartiality" with ineffectiveness as UNPROFOR didn't act against anyone. He contrasts this with the "even-handedness" of NATO IFOR who when they had decided upon their action, took military action decisively and evenly. See Schulte Ibid No.16

18. See Crawford Ibid No. 10

19. Schulte saw the confusing UNSC mandates to UNPROFOR as "ambitious and ambiguous to the extent that they could not be translated into a clear mission." See Schulte Ibid No.16

20. Ibid Crawford No.7 p44

21. Pouliot V, *International Security in Practice. The Politics of NATO-Russia Diplomacy*. Cambridge University Press 2009.

22. Pouliot Ibid 21 p155

23. Pouliot Ibid 21 p161

24. Ibid Schulte No.16

25. The phrase has been used repeatedly, Pauline Neville-Jones for instance claimed "the failure of UNPROFOR had partly to do with a widening mismatch between mission and capability." Neville-Jones P "IFOR and Alliance Relations in Bosnia." Survival 38 No.4 (Winter 1996-1997) p46. Schulte also refers to the same phrase Ibid. No.16

26. Kozyrev A.V "The Lagging Partnership" Foreign Affairs 1994 73(3):69-71

27. Talbott, S. *The Russia Hand: A Memoir of Presidential Diplomacy*. New York: Random House. 2002 p123

28. Final Communiqué, communiqué M-NAC-2(94)116, Brussels 1 December (www.nato.int/docu/comm/49-95/c941201a) accessed 4th August 2010

29. Ibid Crawford No.10 p40

30. For example Gregory Schulte Ibid No.16

31. Ibid Pouliot No. 21 pp148-193

32. Ibid Pouliot No.21 p173. Pouliot repeatedly uses the phrase Great Power habitus which I am using to explain Russia's belief in its grandeur and importance, although I do not directly use Pouliot's phrase in the same socially constructivist framework from which he writes.

33. Yeltsin blames NATO's existential uncertainty for "risking encumbering itself with a cold peace". Extract from Pouliot Ibid 21 p168.

34. Known in full title as The Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security between NATO and the

NATO and Russia: Towards a New Paradigm?

Written by Richard Ross

Russian Federation. Full text can be accessed at http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_25468.htm
accessed 4th August 2010.

35. Ibid Kozyrev No.26 p66. Yeltsin re-affirmed this sentiment by saying "it is too early to give up on democracy in Russia." Ibid Yeltsin No.33

36. Primakov, Y "*Russian Crossroads: Toward the New Millenium*". New Haven, CT: Yale University Press 2001 p135.

37. Ibid Pouliot No.21 p187.

38. Ibid Pouliot No.21 p187.

39. Quoted directly from the text of the Founding Act. Full text Ibid No.34

40. Quoted directly from the text of the Founding Act. Full text Ibid No.34

41. Quoted directly from the text of the Founding Act. Full text Ibid No.34

42. Kay, S. "*NATO, the Kosovo War and Neoliberal Theory*". Contemporary Security Policy Vol.25 No.2 (August 2004) pp252-279.

43. The term precision bombing was used by the Americans, however numerous air strikes did not hit their target, including one which hit the Chinese embassy killing three people. The term precision airstrike would largely be a misnomer in Kosovo.

44. Ibid Kay No. 42 p260

45. Gallis P.E. "*Kosovo: lessons learned from Operation Allied Force*" (Washington DC: Congressional Research Service, 19th November 1999) p15

46. Ibid Pouliot No. 21 p196

47. "*NATO Seeks to enter the 21st Century Wearing the Uniform of World Policeman*." Rossiiskaya Gazeta March 26 translated in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press.

48. Ibid Pouliot No.21 p202. The quote is particularly interesting as Lukin as a member of the Duma was clearly misunderstanding how unilateral military action without the knowledge of NATO and with the intention of thwarting NATO could be viewed as a partnership. Perhaps Lukin was being ironic as to the nature of the partnership.

49. Ibid Pouliot No.21 p202

50. Weber M, "*The Kosovo War – A Recapitulation*". International Affairs 85:3 (2009) 447-459.

51. For a more forthright leftist opinion on the influence of the American hegemon in the Kosovo crisis see Blackburn R: *Kosovo – "The War of NATO Expansion"*. New Left Review 1/235 May-June 1999

52. Ibid Weber No.50 p459

Hopf T. "*Social Construction of International Politics: Identities and Foreign Policies*", Moscow. 1955 and 1999. Ithaca, NY Cornell University Press

NATO and Russia: Towards a New Paradigm?

Written by Richard Ross

Chapter 2

The Kosovo crisis would create within Russian minds a feeling that their historic distrust of NATO had been proven by the Alliance's military actions. As Allison suggests, for Russia, Kosovo was "the last straw"¹. It confirmed to Russia that NATO was no longer a defensive alliance, but an aggressive expansionist vehicle. For NATO, the Russian support for the Milosevic regime coupled with the secretive Operation Trojan Horse were equal proof that Russia was not a viable partner. Such strains would inevitably bear down upon the efficacy of the Partnership for Peace resulting in Russian withdrawal of co-operation in 2000. However 1999 would also witness a parallel process in which NATO published its Strategic Concept doctrine. Within the terms of the 1999 Strategic Concept², NATO listed five fundamental security tasks for future implementation³. Whilst security and deterrence/defence were relics of the Cold War, the elements of crisis management and partnership would provide evidence of the Alliance's commitment to go "out of area"⁴ and transform functionally into the field of conflict prevention/management.

The apparent sidelining of Russian opinions and interests in Kosovo do seem somewhat at odds with the concepts of "wide-ranging partnership", "co-operation", "dialogue" and "mutual confidence"⁵ within the Euro-Atlantic arena, and had events continued along the similar path, relations between Russia and NATO may well have disintegrated further. However, as the 1992 Balkan conflict would pressurise the nascent NACC, and the Kosovo crisis would strain the PfP and Founding Act, so too the events of September 11 2001 would play an important role in changing the direction of NATO/Russia relations, although this time for the better.

September 11 and the emergence of co-operation

The terrorist attacks on New York and Washington on 11th September 2001 would not only shock the conscience of the world, but would create a seismic shift in international security approach to the new threat of transnational terrorism. The neo-realist model did not predict the growth let alone the ruthless efficiency of global terror networks in attacking such a powerful sovereign state on its own territory⁶. The 9/11 attacks would cause a major re-think amongst policy makers as to how best to deal with a problem which whilst known about had been largely ignored. NATO would react to the September 11 attacks by declaring its first ever Article 5 collective defence⁷ operation deeming the attack on the United States as an attack on all members. Operation Allied Force would identify the Al Qaida stronghold of Afghanistan as the prime target for retaliation. For Russia, an opportunity had indeed been created to seek legitimacy for their already brutal conflict with Chechen separatists in their near abroad. A new spirit of co-operation would arise between Russia and NATO in an intensive effort to collectively face down the threats from global terrorism. Philip Gordon suggests that the grounding for further co-operation had already been set by NATO in the 1999 Strategic Concept which moved "acts of terrorism" to the top of the list of "other risks"⁸. NATO may have included this only with passing reference to the lower level terrorist actions pre-1999, however it would provide a springboard for further action post 9/11. The rapprochement which had begun when President Putin invited NATO Secretary-General Lord Robertson to Moscow in 2000, would continue in earnest post 9/11. Russian support for UN Resolution 1372 authorizing military action against the Taliban was not reciprocated by any military interest in Operation Allied Force other than logistical support⁹, however Putin's administration engaged with Alliance members in order to establish a joint framework in which to tackle international terrorism. The negotiations led to the Rome Declaration of 28th May 2002 which established the NATO/ Russia Council (NRC)¹⁰.

The NRC

The Rome Declaration was entitled "NATO-Russia Relations: A New Quality"¹¹ and confirmed commitments to "indivisible security"¹² hitherto recorded within the framework of the OSCE, the Helsinki Principles and the Founding Act of 1997. However the Rome Declaration was more prescriptive regarding areas of importance, and listed the "struggle against terrorism"¹³ as its top priority. In that regard, NATO and Russia decreed that they would adopt a "multi-faceted approach, including joint assessments of the terrorist threat to the Euro-Atlantic area."¹⁴ In order to facilitate this new approach, NATO and Russia created the NRC as a strategic level body populated by all levels of senior officialdom.¹⁵ The terms of the Declaration provided for the first time a real sense of co-operation which projected beyond the mere words on the page, and created a super-structure with intent, purpose and authority. The

NATO and Russia: Towards a New Paradigm?

Written by Richard Ross

NRC would herald a new stage in NATO/Russian relations and would give rise to the inevitable and previously unthinkable question can Russia be part of NATO?

Membership

Russian soundings regarding NATO membership were nothing new¹⁶, although the first and most believable occurred in the period of time post 9/11 and during the period of negotiations leading to the Rome Declaration. In the period immediately prior to the 9/11 attacks President Putin mused at the relevance of NATO¹⁷ and how Russia's membership of NATO would be no less threatening than NATO's expansionist tendencies. However, in October 2001, his stance had changed somewhat¹⁸ when Russia sidelined its objections to NATO expansion perhaps in the realisation that their greatest danger was not indeed from NATO expansion than Al Qaida support for Chechen and Ingushetian separatists. The approach adopted by Putin is notable as it reflects largely upon a changing dynamic within the Russian policy elite and the emergence of a more relevant Russia. The Russian Security Council which had been established in 1991¹⁹ placed President Putin as paramount in decision making and divested power within him. Putin himself would approach the decision making from what Allison describes as a "pragmatic nationalist" perspective, one in which Putin will always act in Russia's best interests. It is evident from Putin's changing attitudes brought about by 9/11, that if Russia's best interests were sought supporting NATO in counter-terrorism operations, then so they should cast aside distrust of NATO expansion. Equally, if NATO's actions were to change to Russia's perceived detriment then Russia should re-evaluate its position. The actions of the Russian elite would also show evidence of Hopf's liberal essentialist²⁰ mindset as Putin would act in Russia's interest rather than displaying any Western values of co-operation. Putin as President of the Russian Federation and chairman of the Russian Security Council would lead a team of largely pragmatic nationalist advisers such as Dmitry Rogozin²¹ and Sergei Markov²² who would have readily accepted Russia's shifting stance and move towards stronger counter-terrorist function.

The growing co-operation between Russia and NATO in 2002 led to the first critical analysis of Russia's membership credentials. Former US Secretary of State James Baker presented one of the most compelling studies of this issue in 2002²³ when he detailed what he saw as a new framework in which Russia could at least be amalgamated within NATO which in turn would give up its strict geographic adherence to Europe and the North Atlantic, by including aspects of the growing Asian security field. Whilst Baker's model would be supported by some, it would never transpire, however Baker provided a very reasoned and important narrative on the reasons why Russia had not been "ripe for membership"²⁴ and why it would continue to struggle in the short to medium term. Baker outlines what he suggests to be the "membership criteria"²⁵ for NATO and with regard to the dominance attached to democracy, he illustrates the fundamental difference which will forever ensure Russia is at least stymied in its efforts for full membership.²⁶ Baker would proffer a rather optimistic outlook for Russian membership, believing that although Russia has previously existed within a democratic vacuum, that the position had changed to the extent that in 2002, Russia "was more democratic than not."²⁷ Baker also stressed that the benefits of having Germany within NATO could indeed apply to Russia which in many ways can be viewed as an "alliance of former adversaries"²⁸.

Within Russian domestic politics, the position with regards to NATO membership would be hotly debated. The undoubted controlling mind of Russia was as Allison suggests, set to a pragmatic nationalist agenda²⁹. Others within the Duma, were offering differing opinions. The "liberal Westernizers"³⁰ largely represented by the Union of Right Forces (URF) party would not see NATO expansion as a threat to Russia and initially would propose Russian accession to NATO. However they too would retract from such opinions and in 2003 URF co-leader Anatoly Chubais suggested that Russia should ignore joining NATO as "there is nothing for us to do, we are not part of it either geographical or political terms."³¹ Whilst the liberal Westernizers would provide reasoned argument and objection, their influence would wane and their voices lost. The third and perhaps most vocal critics of Putin were what Allison describes the "fundamental nationalists", communists longing for the return of Soviet rule and Politburo control. Communist Party leader Gennady Zyuganov would not see Putin as a President acting for Russia's sole interest but would attack him as a "liberal fascist".³² Facing such vocal opposition from other areas of the Russian elite, it can be seen that the confidence of Russian foreign policy actions post 9/11 reflect Putin's vice like grip on authority and direction within Russian politics. Perhaps James Baker was kind in suggesting in 2002 that Russia was more

NATO and Russia: Towards a New Paradigm?

Written by Richard Ross

democratic than not!

Counter-terrorism Paradigm

It is clear that the analysis of both Russian and Western thinkers was such that the new found co-operation of 2002 would not result in Russian membership of NATO. Both parties would view the concept as alien or at best some way off. However the co-operation between Russia and the West regarding counter-terrorism provided a new opportunity for the promotion of internal security mechanisms in the Euro-Atlantic arena. With the already established NRC creating discussion at several different levels of strategic authority, NATO and Russia were able to discuss and develop their own plan for dealing with terrorism. The negotiations would be conducted against a backdrop of creeping expansionism by NATO. In 2004 seven new member states were admitted to NATO in a manner which Moscow would consider to be exclusionary³³. Nevertheless, Russia still committed itself to the 9th December 2004 NATO-Russia Action Plan on Terrorism³⁴ in which both sides drew from the “multi-faceted” capabilities enshrined under the 2002 Rome Declaration³⁵ in order to set three new critical areas of interest, namely preventing terrorism, combating terrorist activities and managing the consequences of terrorist acts. The text of the document provides a comprehensive framework which would ensure a joint determination to eradicating weapons of mass destruction (a reference to the Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts) and also set timetables for fusion of military capabilities primarily by Russia joining the PfP State of Forces Agreement by the end of 2004³⁶. The plan also sought co-operation on intelligence sharing, de-militarisation and cyber-terrorism and drug trafficking³⁷. The underlying tone of the agreement would also lay some foundation for the restoration of the START I Nuclear strategy. The plan demonstrated a significant manoeuvre towards a new paradigm based not on full Russian membership of NATO, but on a form of associate affiliation with NATO. As Russian Defence Minister Sergei Ivanov stated in October 2004, “Any NATO country is, of course, not an ally of ours, but not an adversary either. There are no strategic conflicts between Russia and NATO. Our common threats come from the South.”³⁸ As Allison remarks, combating terrorism “presented a new paradigm for Russian-NATO relations” which Allison converts into a new acronym for NATO as the “New Anti-Terrorist Organization.”³⁹

Continued NATO Expansion

The undoubted success of the NATO-Russia Action Plan on Terrorism would prove to be the zenith of relations between both factions. As the promise of previous co-operative structures had been smothered by actions and events so too co-operation on terrorism would be severely tested by a parallel and continuing process of NATO expansion. Putin’s apparent “acquiescence”⁴⁰ to NATO expansion in 2002 would be replaced a more hard line stance following on from NATO’s 2004 Istanbul summit in which NATO granted to itself the right to “address effectively the threats our territory, forces and populations face from wherever they may come.”⁴¹ The explicit tone of NATO’s intention to move beyond the current field of interest and to intervene when and where required, would no doubt have revived Russian suspicions that NATO was again striving for dominance. The statement of Istanbul 2004 can also be viewed in context with subsequent American decisions to place missile defence shields in Poland, the Czech Republic and former Soviet states to reassert Russian age old suspicions that the United States was indeed using its powerful domination of the Alliance in order to assert its own strategic goals. NATO sought the inclusion of more former Balkan states into the Alliance and in 2004 Slovenia and the Baltic states indicated their willingness to not only enter the Alliance, but also to commit to the terms of the CFE Treaty on disarmament. When the Duma ratified the amended CFE Treaty in 2004, Russia looked to the Alliance members for full implementation of the same provisions. Full Alliance implementation did not happen as many of the newest Alliance members did not commit to the CFE, with the consequence that Russia in turn failed to honour its own commitment (known as the Istanbul commitment following the OSCE Istanbul Final Act of 1999) to withdraw its own troops from Georgia and Moldova. NATO’s refusal to adopt the CFE in full, and Russia’s subsequent refusal to withdraw from Georgia would create a time bomb in the near abroad. The 2004 NATO-Ukraine memorandum provided NATO with the right to access Ukraine as and when required. The “colour revolutions” in former Soviet states, the Rose Revolution in Georgia 2003, the Orange Revolution in Ukraine 2004, and the Purple Revolution in Kyrgyzstan in 2005 would show, in Russian minds the sleight of American hand encroaching dangerously upon its former lands, with the Alliance simply a vehicle of façade. Alexei Pushkov would refer to the process as the “continuation of the West’s strategic line of staging a political takeover of the post Soviet space.”⁴² As the “colour revolutions” continued in 2005 and 2006,

NATO and Russia: Towards a New Paradigm?

Written by Richard Ross

NATO would shift up another gear of expansion by declaring in their Riga summit of November 2006 that their new mantra was that of “functional”⁴³ security, hinting strongly that the question as to NATO’s right to geographical expansion had been settled in their own minds. It surely would not be lost on Russia that a statement which effectively reduced the “Double Enlargement” of the 1990s to one of singular concern was made in a former Soviet city. The creeping nature of the narrative would be well deduced by Daalder and Goldgeier as an attempt by NATO to “go global”⁴⁴. Whilst James Baker in 2002 viewed NATO’s continuing relevance to be of a “Eurasian” security network, Daalder and Goldgeier go further in suggesting that NATO could indeed move beyond the functional restraints of security provision to include humanitarian support, peacekeeping and even disaster relief. Daalder and Goldgeier posit that NATO could reach beyond its geographical territory to include like minded democratic governments such as Japan and Australia, and to operate as a global alliance⁴⁵. In support of this view, they record the opinions of NATO Secretary-General Jaap de Hoop Schaeffer who, in 2006 stated that there is the need for “dialogue with other interested nations,” in order for NATO to become “an alliance with global partners”.⁴⁶

Daalder and Goldgeier quite correctly recognise the institutional gap between “partners”⁴⁷ and “allies” and indeed remark that certain dangers of globalisation occur, none more so than the distinct problems created by attempting to gain consensus of opinion between all members within an extended global partnership. One of the critical difficulties created by the inevitable geographical extension would be whether this would “weaken the existing collective defence commitments of the alliance”, and how would an expanded NATO react to an attack on members in newly admitted states? Would NATO act militarily in the defence of former Soviet states, and could those states rely on NATO? Daalder and Goldgeier were positive and confident in NATO’s ability to deal with such challenges; however events in Georgia in 2008 would perhaps prove otherwise.

Georgia 2008 and the Medvedev Plan

If the 2004 NATO-Russian Plan on Terrorism was the zenith in relations between the two parties, then the Georgian conflict would indeed be the nadir. NATO’s expansion and increasing self-confidence would irk a resurgent and economically aggressive Russia to the point of definitive action. The ongoing NATO expansion provoked Russian “suspension” of its CFE Treaty obligations in December 2007⁴⁸ and in 2008 the Russian Federation under the leadership of the seemingly liberal but ultimately pragmatic nationalist President Dimitry Medvedev would publish its new Foreign Policy Concept. The 2008 Foreign Policy Concept (FPC)⁴⁹ would contain the normal plethora of “buzz words” on security, but would also contain veiled reference to its perceived sins of the Western world. Russia declared with the FPC not only of its respect for international law and human rights, but would outline what it saw as the “arbitrary and politically motivated interpretation by certain countries of fundamental international legal norms and principles.”⁵⁰ The FPC would confirm elements of President Medvedev’s determination for a plan to establish a new Treaty in European security involving the indivisibility of security, inviolability of borders and an end to the zero sum of security measures. The plan of President Medvedev was to resort to the Helsinki principles and OSCE style structures in order to reconstruct an alternative “architecture” which clearly sidelined NATO in its phrasing. This sidelining of NATO was evident in what Medvedev would term a reaction that “was at least neutral.”⁵¹ Perhaps NATO officials were not impressed with the exclusionary nature of Medvedev’s offer, or as more likely to be the case, they simply balked at Russia’s self righteous statement as to its own moral and legal high ground over the West. Medvedev’s offer to create new security architecture was indeed a bold attempt to reset the direction of European security and to allow Europe itself to determine its security. However, the plan would be lacking in specific details, and did not contain anything other than concepts mentioned in the abstract. However, it is also to be noted that when President Medvedev announced his intentions to create his new architecture in June 2008, his plans to flesh out the plan were perhaps stymied by the simmering events in Georgia which would rise to an eruption of violence only two months later in August 2008.

The conflict in Georgia would erupt on 8th August 2008 against the backdrop of NATO’s muted response to Medvedev’s grand plan. Allison opines that NATO’s enlargement into previously Soviet territory was viewed by Russia as a clandestine opportunity for former Soviet states to “settle bilateral disputes with Moscow...enlisting Alliance power and authority and increasing anti-Russian sentiment.”⁵² Clearly there is an element of truth in such remarks as it is clear that the Georgian conflict did not simply arise simply over disagreements between Russia and NATO, but was the end product of decades of bilateral dispute in which the Georgian President Mikhael Saakashvili

NATO and Russia: Towards a New Paradigm?

Written by Richard Ross

seemed intent to bring to a conclusion in 2008. Russian analyst Sergei Markedonov describes the Georgian conflict as a “frozen”⁵³ conflict in which bilateral relations which had been in deep thaw for several years, would erupt into violent conflict. The decision by Saakashvili to send Georgian troops into the disputed territory of South Ossetia on 7th August 2008 showed clear intent on the Georgians’ part to quell an upstart secessionist, pro-Russian cause which had been in deep thaw. Saakashvili’s important role in the Afghan alliance⁵⁴ provided him with suitable overtures that Georgia would gain full NATO membership along with the reciprocal protection of NATO’s Article 5 doctrine. It was perhaps from this apparent although deluded position of strength that the Georgian army attacked rebel positions in the South Ossetian capital, believing perhaps that any Russian counter-activity would be thwarted by NATO support.

Russia reacted with fury, and ordered an extensive counter-attacking force into South Ossetia and then into sovereign Georgian territory where it routed the vastly inferior Georgian forces. Georgia did not receive NATO military support, nor did it receive the threat of support which could have balanced the powerful Russian military machine into acquiescence.

The events surrounding the Georgian conflict of 2008 were short but brutal. Numerous civilians were killed as both sides showed scant regard for non-military targets. For Georgia, the experience would prove to be a national humiliation and the experience will live long within their pain. NATO would react furiously against Russia using language of such non-diplomatic construction as had not been heard before. On 19th August 2008, NATO foreign ministers released a communiqué condemning Russian actions. Whilst welcoming the ceasefire, NATO officials highlighted that they were “concerned at Russian actions” and “reports of Russia’s deliberate destruction of civilian infrastructure.”⁵⁵ NATO went on to confirm their belief in the territorial sovereignty of Georgia which had clearly been breached by the Russian counter-attack. Crucially, however, they referred to Georgia as “a valued and long-standing

Partner of NATO.”⁵⁶ It would be apparent that with Georgia under the impression that they perhaps enjoyed the status of an ally whilst NATO only recognised them as a partner, that the apprehensions raised by Daalder and Goldgeier as to the institutional gap between ally and partner were in fact crucial. NATO’s Bucharest summit earlier in 2008 had acknowledged that Georgia and indeed Ukraine would become members of NATO in the future, but this did not specify when. NATO’s acceptance of Albania and Croatia as members in the Bucharest summit would be backed up by the claim that the enlargement process posed no threat to any country. Clearly this did not apply to Russia. NATO’s ultimate summation of Russia’s actions was to consider “seriously the implications...for the NATO-Russia relationship”, hinting that “we cannot continue with business as usual.”⁵⁷ NATO would go beyond this position on 27th August 2008 to openly condemn Russia’s formal recognition of South Ossetia and Abkhazia as in violation of UN Security Regulations and “inconsistent with the fundamental principles of the OSCE.”⁵⁸ The latter critique would perhaps be the most barbed suggesting that Russia was in effect breaking the only rules that it formally acknowledged. US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice increased pressure on 19th September 2008 declaring that Russia was on “a way path to self-imposed isolation and international irrelevance.”⁵⁹ Russia’s actions could also have been viewed as a breach of the provisions of the CFE Treaty, a similar yet opposite accusation which Moscow had pitched against NATO in Kosovo.

The Russian response to Western criticism would show the bullish intent of a nation economically sound and military emboldened. The actions of Russian troops in Georgia could be viewed as entirely at odds with the multi-lateralist offer of the Medvedev plan, and the co-operative intentions of the FPC, but Russian reaction would fall entirely into line with its perception (noted in the FPC) that other nations were distorting international law for their own ends. On 29th September 2008, Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov would conduct a robust defence of Russian actions⁶⁰. Lavrov would attempt on two fronts to turn the tables of international criticism. Firstly, he refused to accept that the actions of

the Russian military were aggressive, but would counter that they were acting entirely in self-defence of Russian affiliated citizens in the secessionist regions. Secondly, Lavrov would suggest that Russian actions showed weaknesses in the international security structure, weaknesses which the Medvedev plan had attempted to address.

Lavrov commented that “We have a situation whereby the security structures, most of which have been inherited from the Cold War, are fragmented and not very efficient in promoting real stability.”⁶¹ In attempting to artfully dodge the fire, Lavrov in effect echoed the growing feeling amongst Russian thinkers that the Georgian conflict was in fact an outcome of dismantling the old balance of power without replacing it with anything new. Markedonov described the same shortcoming as highlighting the West’s limited ability to influence the situation⁶². Vladimir Ovchinskiy would strengthen this analysis claiming that “the eroding criteria of the use of force was caused by the collapse of the global geopolitical balance of forces.”⁶³ Ultimately, President Medvedev would take a more reserved approach, describing

NATO and Russia: Towards a New Paradigm?

Written by Richard Ross

the NATO-Russia partnership as “illusions” and indicated with a degree of finality that “We are happy to accept any decision, including the termination of relations”⁶⁴.

The Georgian conflict would highlight a number of failings which were crucial to its inception. Not only would Georgia be blamed for conducting a military offence in the mistaken belief that they would get full NATO military support, but as George and Tiesen suggest⁶⁵, Georgia was also at fault for believing that they would not obtain full NATO membership without complete overhaul of their historical conscript army. Georgia’s decision to conduct root and branch military reform which wasn’t actually required left them militarily weak and doomed to fail⁶⁶. This fundamental miscommunication between Georgia and NATO would be fatal. Russia of course would consider itself as victorious and would not see any failings within its own system. However Russian justifications were expertly evaluated by Allison⁶⁷ who demolished all Russian pretence to legal and moral justification. In particular, Allison whole-heartedly reject Russia’s claim to “self-defence” as Russian citizens were not actually in danger, but rather Russia had engaged in a game of “passportisation”⁶⁸ in which they claimed responsibility for alleged Russian-sympathetic citizens in another state. Allison would also contrast Russia’s suggestion that their military intervention in Georgia was to counter human rights abuses within that state, with Russia’s strident objections to interventionism in the Balkans for the same reasons⁶⁹.

It is clear that the Georgian conflict would bring Russia and NATO to breaking point. Whilst relations did not completely shatter, events in the US Presidential election in November 2008 would bring about a very timely and necessary change in fortunes which would retard the tailspin in relations. The election of the liberal, multi-lateralist Barack Obama to the defeat of Republican senator John McCain whose intentions on Russia were signified by a campaign in which he remarked that “We are all Georgians now” would be welcomed by many across the world. The election of President Obama would involve a significant shift in American foreign policy. The Bush administration which had prosecuted the war on terror and single-handedly re-written international doctrine on self-defence calling it “pre-emptive defence”⁷⁰, and used the international community at times of convenience only, would be consigned to opposition. A change in American foreign policy would most definitely mirror a change in NATO policies and attitudes⁷¹.

President Obama announced the scrapping of America’s planned missile defence shield which had been planned for Eastern Europe, and the President’s ambitious nuclear abolition plans would culminate in the signing of a new nuclear Treaty with President Medvedev which would appear to open the way for further meaningful dialogue between Russia and NATO’s greatest sponsor. Indeed, the NATO response to Obama’s missile shield was one which reinforced the close causal links between NATO and the US. The corollary of the Obama “reset” mission with Russia would prove to be at least outwardly successful, and the declaration in October 2009 by Russian Assistant Secretary of Defence Alexander Vershbow that “Russia’s leaders must accept that an enlarged NATO is not a threat to Russia,”⁷² highlights in some way that the pragmatism of Russian thinking has reverted quite dramatically in the face of a more tolerant United States.

The relationship between Russia and NATO has endured a difficult and turbulent time since the Kosovo intervention in 1999. The 9/11 attacks would initially bring both sides together in common interest of unified defence against transnational terrorism. Joint plans on addressing terrorism would provide a platform for genuine discussion of the unthinkable prospect of Russia joining NATO. Ultimately, NATO expansion and Russian revival would firmly remove the possibility of Russia within NATO. The Medvedev Plan of June 2008 was treated by NATO indifference and then outrage when Russia’s intervention into the territory of a “NATO partner” would seemingly run roughshod over international norms. Buzan and Waever would indeed be proven correct in their assessment of the difficulties encountered as the international system changed from bipolar hegemony to multipolar institutionalism⁷³. In times of stress, both Russia and NATO would always revert to type and seek redress in the age old suspicions only to find that the age old balancing ability was no longer there. The question therefore remains, as to how NATO and Russia effectively resolve their differences and re-draw the architecture of Euro-Atlantic security in a manner that can better withstand the stressors of conflict. With the 2010 NATO Strategic Concept due to be published in December, chapter 3 will look to the future and ask whether it is now time to create a new paradigm for NATO and Russia

Notes

NATO and Russia: Towards a New Paradigm?

Written by Richard Ross

1. Allison, R. "Putin's Russia" p5
2. NATO Strategic Concept see www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_56626.htm accessed 29th August 2010
3. Five fundamental tasks for further implementation were, security, consultation, deterrence/defence, crisis management, partnership. Ibid No.2, also discussed by David Yost at "*NATO's evolving process and the next Strategic Concept*" International Affairs 86: 2 (2010) pp490-491.
4. Taken from the statement of Richard Lugar from Moore R.R. "*NATO's New Mission*." Praeger Security International P28.
5. Phrases taken from text of the 1999 Strategic Concept, Ibid No.2
6. This is taken from the work of Waltz and Meirshheimer referred to in chapter 1 who viewed the threat to world security only between states.
7. Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty otherwise known as the collective defence provision.
8. Gordon, P.H. "*NATO and the war on Terrorism*." The Brookings Review Summer 2002 p37.
9. The Russians would not commit ground troops to the Operation perhaps very mindful of their painful experience on Afghanistan in the 1980s. Russia would however play an important role in allowing NATO aircraft to use airfields within Soviet satellite states such as Uzbekistan in order to launch air strikes more effectively.
10. *Declaration by Heads of State and Government of NATO Member States and the Russian Federation*. 28th May 2002. www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_19572.htm. Accessed 4th August 2010
11. Ibid. No.10
12. Taken from text of No.10 although the phrase is common to numerous other publications but NATO and OSCE.
13. Taken from text of No.10.
14. Taken from text of No.10.
15. The NRC would be chaired by the NATO Secretary-General and would meet at the level of Foreign Ministers and Defence Ministers twice annually. Heads of State and Government meet as appropriate. Meetings at ambassadorial level held monthly. Other preparatory committees and sub-committees would meet more often.
16. Russia had made previous suggestions regarding NATO membership none of which were treated particularly seriously by NATO. The most erratic suggestion was from Boris Yeltsin in December 1991 which his government officials moved quickly to claim as a mistranslation.
17. Baker, P. "*Putin Offers West Reassurances and Ideas on NATO*," Washington Post, July 18th 2001 in which Baker records "Putin challenged the Western alliance to either enrol Russia or disband...calling NATO a Cold War relic." Baker would later record how Putin stated "we do not see NATO as a hostile organisation", but given the demise of the Soviet Union and Warsaw Pact [Baker's quote], "we don't see why it is needed anymore".
18. See Drozdiak, W. "*Putin Eases Stance on NATO expansion*." Washington Post, 4th October 2001, section A p1.
19. See Vendil, C. "*The Russian Security Council*."

NATO and Russia: Towards a New Paradigm?

Written by Richard Ross

20. See Hopf, T. "*Social Construction of International Politics: Identities and Foreign Policies, Moscow 1955 and 1999.*"
21. Rogozin in 2003 would request the NRC should allow for "the institutionalized possibility of evolution in the field of Russian integration into NATO political structures." From Allison Ibid No.1, Chapter 5.
22. Markov would initially call for "tight co-operation with the Alliance" before admittedly changing stance to perceiving NATO as a "dying organisation." From Allison Ibid No.1, Chapter 5.
23. Baker, J. "*Russia in NATO?*" The Washington Quarterly Vol.25 Issue1 pp95-103.
24. Ibid No. 23 at p95.
25. Baker sets five "explicit" membership criteria as, 1 established democracy, 2 respect for human rights, 3 market-based economy, 4 armed forces under civilian control, 5 good relation with neighbouring states. Baker suggests that two "implicit" criteria of, 1 being Western and 2 sharing the same security values, as additional unwritten requirements. Baker also goes on to suggest wryly that in the eyes of some, the main criterion is that members are "not Russian". Ibid. No.23
26. Certainly Baker's assertion of non-Russian membership criterion would make Russian membership exceptionally difficult. Ibid. No. 23
27. Baker believed that Russia should at least have been eligible to apply for membership and was making progress towards democracy. Ibid No.23
28. Ibid No.23 p99
29. Ibid Allison chapter 5 No.1
30. Ibid Allison chapter 5 No. 1
31. From Allison chapter 5. Ibid No.1
32. Ibid Allison No.1
33. The seven new members were Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovenia, Slovakia, Romania.
34. NATO-Russia Action Plan on Terrorism. www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_21003.htm.
- Accessed 4th August 2010
35. Ibid Rome Declaration, at No. 10
36. Taken from text of Action Plan at No.33
37. Taken from text of Action Plan at No. 33
38. Interview with Sergei Ivanov in Komsomolskaya Pravda, 26th October 2004, BBC Mon FSi FsuPol ps. This point is also referred to at length by Ekaterina Kuznetsova in "*NATO: new anti-terrorist organisation?*" International Affairs (Moscow) Vol.50 No.3 2004 pp22-26 and reflects a growing feeling amongst Russian thinkers that NATO could be a viable counter-terrorism ally.
39. Ibid Allison No.1

NATO and Russia: Towards a New Paradigm?

Written by Richard Ross

40. Ibid Gordon No. 8 p38. His reference was to Putin's apparent acquiescence to NATO expansionism, the truth may indeed have been different.

41. "The Istanbul Declaration: Our Security in a New Era". Press release 28th June 2004.
www.nato.int/docu/pr/2004/p04-097e.htm

accessed 5th August 2010

42. Pushkov, A. "*The Aim is not to Divide Ukraine, But to Break It Away from Russia.*" Full translation in Current Digest of Post-Soviet Press 56(48)

43. See www.natoint/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_37920.htm. accessed 2nd August 2010.

44. Daalder, I. and Goldgeier, J. "Global NATO" Foreign Affairs Vol 85 Issue 5: 105-113

45. Ibid No.43

46. Ibid No.43

47. An additional and interesting discussion on partnerships can be found through Colin L Powell, "*A Strategy of Partnerships*" Foreign Affairs Jan/Feb 2004 Vol.83 Issue 1 pp22-34 in which former US Army General Powell discusses the "Primacy of Partnerships". This analysis can be assessed in light of Daalder and Goldgeier's work on partners and genuine allies.

48. *NATO response to Russian announcement of intent to suspend obligations under the CFE Treaty – Press release 16th July 2007.* www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/news_46613.htm.

accessed 4th August 2010. This was followed in December by Russia carrying through its threat to suspend. *Alliance's statement on the Russian Federation's "suspension" of its CFE obligations.* www.nato.int/cps/en/SID-DF9D60B4-32FCB1AB/natolive/news_15500.htm

accessed 4th August 2010

49. "The Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation." Approved by President Dmitriy A. Medvedev 12th July 2008.

www.in.mid.ru/ns-osndoc.nsf/1e5f0de28fe77fdcc32575d900298676/869.htm

accessed 8th August 2010

50. Taken directly from the text of the Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation. Ibid. No. 48.

51. "Speech at the Meeting with Russian Ambassadors and Permanent Representatives to International Organisations." Moscow, 15th July 2008.

http://kremlin.ru/eng/text/speeches/2008/07/15/1121_type82912type84779_204144.html

This speech made 3 days after the approval of the FPC reflects Medvedev's annoyance that his Plan, backed up by written confirmation of Russia's intentions in the FPC was not taken seriously by NATO.

52. Ibid Allison chapter 5 No. 1

53. Sergei Markedonnov is Director of the Department for Problems of Ethnic Relations at the Institute of Political and

NATO and Russia: Towards a New Paradigm?

Written by Richard Ross

Military Analysis. Markedonnov, S. "Regional Conflicts Reloaded" Russia in Global Affairs No.4 October – December 2008.

<http://eng.globalaffairs.ru/numbers/25/1247.html>

accessed 8th June 2010

54. Georgia was an integral part of the GUAM mini alliance of former Soviet States, Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan and Moldova who assisted in the Afghanistan coalition.

55. *Statement – Meeting of the North Atlantic Council at the level of Foreign Ministers held at NATO Headquarters, Brussels. 19th August 2008.*

www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_29950.htm

accessed 4th August 2010

56. Ibid No.55

57. Ibid No.55

58. *Statement – by the North Atlantic Council on the Russian recognition of South Ossetia and Abkhazia regions of Georgia.*

www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/news_43517.htm

59. "Rice Criticises Isolated Russia." 19th September 2008

<http://newsvote.bbc.co.uk/mpapps/pagetools/print/news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/7623555.stm>.

Accessed 1st June 2010

60. *"Press Conference by Minister for Foreign Affairs of Russian Federation."*

www.un.org/News/briefings/docs/2008/080929_Lavrov.doc.htm

61. Ibid Lavrov No. 59

62. Ibid Markedonnov No. 52.

63. Ovchinsky, V. "The Flipside of September 11, 2001" Russia in Global Affairs. No.4 October – December 2008. Ovchinskiy would take the more extreme view in this article, comparing the Georgian attack on South Ossetia with the Al Qaida attack on New York and Washington.

<http://eng.globalaffairs.ru/numbers/25/1236.html>

64. Extract from Levy, C. J. *"Russia Adopts Blustery Tone set by Envoy."* New York Times 28th August 2008.

65. George, J.A. and Tieggen, J.M. *"NATO Enlargement and Institution Building: Military Personnel Policy Challenges in the Post-Soviet Context."*

European Security Vol.17 Nos 2-3, 339-366, June-September 2008.

NATO and Russia: Towards a New Paradigm?

Written by Richard Ross

66. George and Tiegens point to Georgia's belief that they required a professional (AVF – All Volunteer Force) as opposed to conscript army and decided to revamp their armed forces to become what they believed NATO wanted. This was mistaken. Cf with Baker's five explicit membership criteria to see that Georgia were wrong in their belief.

67. Allison, R. "*The Russian case for military intervention in Georgia: international law, norms and political calculation.*" *European Security* Vol. 18 Issue 2 173-200 June 2009.

68 Ibid No. 16

69 Ibid No. 16

70. Paul Cornish would develop this phraseology to create the term "anticipatory self-defence". See Cornish, P. "*NATO: the practice and politics of transformation.*" *International Affairs* Vol.80 Issue 1(2004) 63-74.

71. For a critique on the war on terror see Brown, D. "*The War on Terrorism would not be possible without NATO*": A Critique. *Contemporary Security Policy*, Vol.25 Issue 3 (December 2004) pp409-429.

72. Vershbow, A.R. "Crafting the new Strategic Concept: ambitions, resources, and partnerships for a 21st century alliance." Bratislava 2009

<http://nato.usmission.gov/Texts/Vershbow10222009.asp>

accessed 8th June 2010.

73. Buzan and Waever correctly predicted the problems created when the "overwhelming military superiority of the USA is no longer balanced by a rival superpower." Buzan, B and Waever, O. *The Structure of International Security*. Cambridge University Press, p10.

Chapter 3 – Towards a New Paradigm?

The difficult and often fractious NATO-Russian post Cold War relations have left a very uncertain and makeshift system of operation which is prone to oscillate between extremities at the slightest change within the international arena. The traditional balance achieved by the bilateral hegemony of the Cold War is no longer in place. As the world emerged from the Cold War into an uncertain future, analysts would be divided as to the makeup of the "new international order". The prediction from neo-realists and hopeful Russians that NATO would simply disintegrate along with the Warsaw Pact did not come to fruition. NATO's continued existence until the present day could be explained by an amalgamation of, on the one hand the determination of the US to retain its prize asset, and secondly the cost/benefit difficulties experienced in attempting to establish a new system¹.

This paper does not explicitly seek to answer the first hypothesis as to the dominance and interests of the United States although it is perfectly clear that when major decisions were made regarding NATO there was an overwhelming American hand pulling the strings. The focus of this paper has been on the second hypothesis, as to whether or not NATO and Russia should move towards a new paradigm of security relations. The rationale for focusing on the second strand is that this particular issue is often neglected by non-Russian academics. The historiography of chapters 1 and 2 confirm that from a NATO point of view, there is nothing wrong with NATO other than its own mechanisms and procedures. Chapter 1 showed how NATO commanders were more concerned with the procedural complexity of the "dual-key" command structure with the UN which, in the eyes of NATO commanders prevented effective military action. NATO were never concerned with the position of Russia during the Balkan conflicts as Russia was imploding in a manner in which its usefulness would be called into question. During the Kosovo conflict, NATO's concern was not with Russia, but in showing the rest of the Euro-Atlantic security area, that having assumed supreme control for security by virtue of its success in Bosnia, that it had indeed learned the

NATO and Russia: Towards a New Paradigm?

Written by Richard Ross

lessons of its failings in Bosnia to face aggression with overwhelming might before it had the opportunity to grip. Although NATO's actions would lead to Russian criticism that it had breached international agreements such as the CFE Treaty of 1990. Chapter 2 would show that following the 9/11 terror attacks on the United States, NATO would be initially sidelined by the United States in the war on terror before being introduced into the fray by functional extension of peacekeeping. The geographical expansion of NATO into the former Soviet bloc would provide clear evidence that NATO was growing in confidence in its own ability to deliver security, to the extent that it deemed itself suitable to extend the reach of that capability to Eastern Europe and indeed beyond. At no stage in the post Cold War rejuvenation of NATO is there any evidence of NATO searching its soul for existential answers, only for ways in which to extend its already burgeoning capability. During its Istanbul summit of 2004 NATO committed itself to global operation. Istanbul also saw the accession of new members from former Eastern European states. The Bucharest summit of 2008 would increase the pace of expansion with the accession of Albania and Croatia and the agreement for "future membership of Georgia and Moldova. The question as to whether or not the current state of NATO-Russian relations requires consideration to a new paradigm is one which has been exclusively posed by the Russians themselves. However, in order to take a balanced view of the question as to whether or not a new paradigm is required, all other options must be reviewed sequentially.

Option 1 – The Status Quo

The first option for review is in essence the preamble to the entire puzzle in testing whether or not there is anything wrong with the current relations between NATO and Russia. The answer to this can be evidently picked from the words of Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov, who in 2009 stated that "the status quo is not an option"². Lavrov's stark assessment that "I cannot agree with the contention that in the last two decades there existed some structured international relations [between Russia and NATO]"³ is perhaps evidence as to the Russian mindset on its relations with NATO. Dmitry Trenin would agree with this summation asserting that "the old paradigm is lost and it is time to start looking for a new one."⁴ Whilst it is evident that Russia remains deeply unhappy with relations with NATO it is indeed too simplistic to rely exclusively upon the commentary of (possibly) self-interested parties. Only through the analysis of the last two decades provided within chapters 1 and 2 can the real answers be gleaned. In order to categorise each of the options, this chapter will look at, firstly the degree of issue linkage created by each option, secondly, the rigidity of the option (ie its ability to withstand changing circumstances), and thirdly the likelihood of that option occurring. With the "status quo" option, there is a high degree of issue linkage, although admittedly this does fluctuate with events. The development in 1992 of the NACC, the 1997 Founding Act, and the 2004 Plan on Terrorism are examples of a very high degree of issue linkage with both sides seemingly committed to common values of peace, disarmament, promotion of good relations, and assistance in the fight against terrorism. The various structures most notably the 2004 Plan would also create a diplomatic structure whereby the linked issues could be discussed on regular intervals by representatives of authority from both sides⁵. However, the high level of issue linkage would appear to have been linked on paper only, as the actions of both parties never matched their written commitments. The unilateral NATO action in Bosnia would lay waste to the initial stages of co-operation over Bosnia in 1992, and the NATO offensive in Kosovo, and the subsequent Russian Operation Trojan Horse in 1999 would show up the grand notions of the Founding Act as mere paper commitments not matched by hard action. The pendulum of co-operation which swung dramatically back into focus with the acknowledgement that NATO and Russian faced the common threat of trans-national terrorism post 9/11 would reach its perceived zenith with the 2004 Plan on Terrorism. However the optimism of a newly discovered area of agreement, would be unravelled by the continuing expansion of NATO into eastern nations, the suspected NATO involvement in the "colour revolutions" and Russian military assertiveness in Georgia in 2008. It is entirely evident therefore, that the high levels of issue linkage created over the last two decades have always been highly vulnerable to creeping changes within the geopolitical landscape. Whilst structures are in place their rigidity is highly questionable. With the status quo, the third question is not in issue, and ultimately will be judged upon its very real vulnerability not just today but over the past twenty years.

Option 2 – Reform of the Status Quo

NATO and Russia: Towards a New Paradigm?

Written by Richard Ross

Perhaps the Russian analysts are correct in asserting that the status quo is not an option and that matters must change, but before adopting a knee jerk approach to radical reforms, there are less radical approaches which must first be tested. A common thread which appears within the post Cold War jousting is the criticism of both NATO and Russia that the other is functionally misguided and must be reformed. Both parties state that the other must reform in order for an accommodation to be possible. Is it therefore possible for the current system of co-operation to be improved by convergence of interests? For NATO, the key criticism of Russia is as Pouliot describes its Great Power Habitus⁶, particularly during the Balkan and Kosovo conflicts in which it was all too clear that Russia was not the Soviet threat it once had been. Western thinking has been vexed that Russia cannot see this principle, although when Russia became stronger in the twenty first century, this line of thinking was perhaps more of a hopeful bluff than a statement of fact. For NATO, Russia had to remain at heel. Undoubtedly, Russians would have difficulty with this suggestion, perhaps viewing its tone as one of dominance and suppression that was evident particularly strongly during times of Russian weakness in the early 1990s. For Russians, the concept of NATO's expansionist agenda provides the greatest functional challenge to Russian acceptance. In order for the status quo to be adequately reformed, Russians demand the end of NATO's expansionist tendencies and interference within the former Soviet bloc. The functional reform (and ultimately geographical) reform of the status quo would bring certain advantages.

Firstly, it would leave in place a system in which a high degree of issue linkage is already in place. Secondly, by smoothing the rough edges of disagreement, the reformed status quo could perhaps become more rigid as a number of the stressors which had caused conflict could be soothed if not eradicated altogether. The main difficulty with this option is in the third criteria, in that it is highly unlikely that both sides would agree to the level of reforms requested by the other. NATO leaders may well reflect upon the Russian request to withdraw their influence as a defeat which could ultimately bring about them going "out of business."⁷ The present Russian leadership would most certainly view this concept with the historical pragmatism⁸ which underscores so much Russian political thinking, and find it not in Russia's interests. It must therefore be concluded, that the functional reform of the status quo could bring about a system strong in its issue linkage and more rigid in the face of change, but is ultimately unlikely given present circumstances.

3. Change of System

If the view is taken that the status quo is not acceptable and that it is currently incapable of realistic reform, then consideration must be given to the more radical option of changing the system altogether. Three options for change are relevant, firstly incorporating Russia into NATO, secondly, joining Russia and NATO into a "Eurasian"⁹ network, and thirdly, establishing a brand new paradigm.

a) Russia Within NATO

The option of Russia joining NATO has been mooted on several occasions. James Baker's assertion in 2002 that Russia has never been ripe for membership¹⁰ was made by comparing Russia to the membership criteria for joining NATO. Baker's mechanism of study can still be relevant in 2010. Baker referred to the "soft"¹¹ criteria of NATO membership in terms of democracy, respect for human rights, market-based economy, and armed forces within civilian control, and concluded that the most important aspect of NATO membership was in fact the fifth criteria of "having good relations with neighbouring states."¹² Upon analysing Russia in 2002, Baker would have viewed relatively peaceful, if not frozen relations¹³ with its neighbouring states, with the barbarism of Chechnya blamed perhaps upon the separatists themselves¹⁴. However, the Georgian conflict of 2008 and the manner in which Russia crushed Saakashvili's intentions suggest a major fracture in relations with at least one of its neighbouring states. Russia's dubious legal defence of alleged human rights abuses¹⁵ in targeted civilian deaths, perhaps also highlight a fundamental lack of respect or understanding of human rights¹⁶. The assessment of Baker's membership criteria might suggest that Russia is further from acceptance into NATO than it was in 2002. Certain statements within Russia's most recent Foreign Policy Concept of 2008 would take some time attempting to realign them with NATO thinking¹⁷. It must be concluded therefore, that Russia within NATO would create a system, firstly with ultimate issue linkage, which "should" be more rigid than the status quo, although the pragmatism of Russian thinking must surely see this incorporation as highly unlikely.¹⁸

NATO and Russia: Towards a New Paradigm?

Written by Richard Ross

b) The “Eurasian Model”

In 2002, James Baker, having declared Russia not yet fit to join NATO¹⁹ posited another form of co-operative structure, one which would alter both the membership criteria and also the functionality of the system created. Baker hypothesised that with growing concerns from both NATO and Russian analysts regarding the growing threat from the Middle East, that both should pull together into a network which would allow NATO's military capabilities to match that of the Russians (and indeed Russia's geopolitical location)²⁰ to jointly advance the fight against Middle Eastern extremism. This suggestion was created in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks and during an era in which NATO and Russia were waking up to the fact that the greatest threat wasn't from East or West, but from “the South”. Russian agreement to UN Resolution 1372 in Afghanistan and the Article 5 mission, coupled with its logistical support to Allied aircraft undoubtedly provided evidence for what could be a fertile common ground. This model envisages Russia joining NATO under a revised NATO Charter with the singular responsibility for the “maintenance of peace and stability on the Eurasian continent.”²¹ Baker suggested in 2002 that the opportunity for such an arrangement would depend largely upon “the level and consistency of Russian cooperation in the war against terrorism.”²² He suggests that this test alone would show “much about how closely Moscow identifies with the West and how serious Russia is about eventual NATO membership.”²³ It is clear from Hopf's theory of the “liberal essentialist”²⁴ Russian psyche and the dominance of pragmatic thought driving the Russian elite²⁵, that in 2010, Moscow does not identify with the West and is not seemingly driven by the thought of joining NATO²⁶. The idea of American military resources having to go the aid Russia in an Article 5 operation is also largely unthinkable (not just to the Americans themselves.) The conclusion to be drawn from the Eurasian connection would be that it would inevitably create a higher degree of issue linkage as both are within the same umbrella and focused on dealing with common problems more closely defined. The rigidity would be open to question as no explanation is given as to how to deal with the former Soviet bloc and ultimately, the option as it stands is highly unlikely. However, the common issue of the threat from “the South” does provide the opportunity for discussion of the new interest based architecture of Medvedev and the new paradigm as discussed by Trenin and Polikanov.

c) The New Paradigm

The final possible outcome in the transaction “audit” would involve assessing whether or not the operational cost of the complete failure of NATO-Russian relations is such that it would benefit from a complete overhaul towards what the Russians have described as “the new paradigm”. Whilst none of the proponents have expressly designed a model for the new paradigm, the implied unease with the current relations belies a desire for something entirely new. Given current geopolitical conditions, has the time come to consider scrapping NATO and re-inventing it with a new security providing organisation with Russia at its heart? The question is deeply hypothetical and would undoubtedly be met by derision from NATO policy makers, however in order to complete the assessment of NATO-Russian relations, the much talked about new paradigm must be assessed.

The idea of a new security paradigm had been posited by the Russian elite often with quite peculiar timing²⁷, usually in conjunction with requests for Russian accession to NATO. The somewhat volatile stance taken by Russia towards NATO as demonstrated by chapters 1 and 2, perhaps highlights a melange of confusion, frustration and uncertainty at the heart of Russian governance. At times of extreme strain such as Kosovo 1999, and Georgia 2008, Russian attitudes to NATO would harden dramatically and would lead not only to a refusal to co-operate, but attempts to undermine and gain superiority over NATO. Whilst the post 9/11 period would seek a renaissance of common interest with the 2004 Plan on Terrorism. It was in 2004, that Dmitry Polikanov²⁸ conducted a study on the possibility of “a new format of relationship based on deeper cooperation.”²⁹ Polikanov based his work on the premise of four lessons which he claimed had been learned from history (until 2004). The lessons all of which are noted in chapters 1 and 2, hinge around anti-Russian sentiments within NATO, the Great Power habitus –v- NATO expansionism, Russian pragmatism and self-interest, and Russia's perceived failure of NATO as an effective organisation³⁰. Polikanov underlined the view amongst Russian minds that NATO was an organisation driven by Washington, diminishing its potential to create consensus. Polikanov's remarks were supported by Dmitry Trenin who in 2003 presented a similar argument entitled “Russia Leaves the West”³¹ in which Trenin confirms the impenetrable quality

NATO and Russia: Towards a New Paradigm?

Written by Richard Ross

of Russian society to Western values to suggest that Russia had abandoned the old paradigm and was looking for a “new Moscow centred” security paradigm³². Whilst Trenin’s suggested Sino-Russian paradigm does not appear to have become reality, it does in some way mirror the thinking of James Baker in 2002 that a new arrangement could be created which incorporated the Asian continent³³. Crucially, Baker’s plan did not envisage the sidelining of NATO within that arrangement.

The studies of Baker, Polikanov and Trenin were all conducted in times of relative calm during which the emergence of counter-terrorism co-operation was forming. As chapter 2 details, events would turn in a most deleterious fashion until the nadir of 2008. The Medvedev plan of 2008 would prove to be the next significant (Russian) discussion on creating new relations since 2004 and the tone of Medvedev’s offer perhaps highlighted a new found confidence in Russian economy and military, and a more focused Western minded agenda. Medvedev’s offer of a new beginning would factor in line with his new Foreign Policy Concept³⁴ and would be a recognition that Russia’s only acceptable institutional standard the OSCE had not worked³⁵, the EU was more complex and ineffective than NATO, and the European Security Defence Policy (ESDP) was vague. Whilst neither Medvedev in his 2008 plan, nor any of the other Russian elite have expressly called for NATO to be scrapped, they do appear to hint that NATO should at least be asset-stripped and functionally trimmed back to something more palatable to Russia. It is undoubtedly wise, that the physical assets of NATO could not be simply dismantled and left to ruin, however what if the physical assets were left in place, and the organisation was re-invented with a different name, charter and set of founding principles?

The improving US-Russian relations under the Obama administration would provide a more effective backdrop to discussion of the current security arrangements and would allow breathing space for consideration of new ideas such as that of President Medvedev³⁶. However how far would the new ideas have to go to be acceptable and viable?

Foreign Minister Lavrov stated in 2009 that “Russia is interested in co-operation but we cannot participate in international projects conceived without our involvement and intellectual contribution.”³⁷ Hinting at the historical conjecture caused by NATO expansionism, Lavrov outlines that Medvedev’s “new security architecture” would not become a bipolar directory involving spheres of influence, but would indeed be a new beginning free from the “constructive ambiguity”³⁸ of previous co-operative schemes. Lavrov quite clearly was confirming Russia’s long held desire to be central within a “new architecture” in which the text of co-operation was clearer. The latter view is countered by NATO commander Admiral di Paola who claimed that with regard to the self same co-operative schemes “if you look carefully, everything is in there including the same principles that President Medvedev has argued for – the so called, new security architecture.”³⁹ Admiral di Paola appears happy to concede that NATO is “no longer looking for expansion”⁴⁰ describing NATO as “an open but demanding club.”⁴¹ The topics of debate between Lavrov and di Paola underline past division but can indeed pinpoint the future. For Lavrov, expansionism and Russian exclusion are key. By suggesting that Russia-US relations “cannot afford another false start”⁴² it is clear that in Lavrov’s opinion the cost of failure is too high not to be taken seriously. The cost of achieving success would be persuading NATO to engage in fully inclusive dialogue which draws from the Russia’s involvement and intellect. It is true that di Paola is correct in that there is little to be added by a new set of principles as those set out in Helsinki and the 1997 Founding Act are more than sufficient. The element of Lavrov’s “constructive ambiguity” cannot be correct, as the historical analysis has shown that both sides have routinely breached perfectly acceptable and understandable principles in favour of their own ends. There is nothing ambiguous in the construction of the various interparty communiqués, and agreements, it is simply the case that neither side has abided by them. The reasons why parties have not played by their own rules are well established and by addressing those mutual concerns and by increasing the scope of issue linkage and creating a more effective theatre for dialogue, so the temptation to cheat can be diminished. It is simply not comprehensible for NATO to be eradicated as an organization, but it is perhaps possible for di Paola’s new strategic partnership with Russia to be constructed along lines of common interest. In order to do so, NATO policy makers need to be sensitive to the often missed pragmatism which drives Russian thinking and which can often turn situations into a zero-sum calculus.

A New Global Paradigm?

The concept of a new paradigm when argued entirely in the abstract is indeed difficult to pin down. However, the

NATO and Russia: Towards a New Paradigm?

Written by Richard Ross

historical analysis can highlight the strongest positions of mutual interest with which a new paradigm can be conceived. NATO's new Strategic Concept due to be published in 2010⁴³ is widely expected to announce an increasingly global agenda for the organisation, involving itself in peacekeeping and security operations in Africa, South East Asia as well as counter-terrorism operations against Al Qaida and all such other affiliates as threaten Alliance members. The common interest with Russia comes in relation to counter-terrorism and security within the European area and the threat from "the South". The strategic partnership between NATO and Russia as suggested by di Paola is entirely the most realistic suggestion. It is not immediately apparent that a new form of words is required in relation to founding principles as those are already in place from the 1997 Act and various other agreements. The importance is to create an organisation which is tied to its commitments. James Baker's 2002 suggestion of changing the voting rights within the new architecture is also entirely sensible. Whilst Russia has not made the transition which Baker had been hoping for in 2002, it has at least earned the right to be treated as an equal strategic partner, and the voting rights suggestion, similar to that in place within the EU may provide a new architecture with a system of weighted voting⁴⁴ to ensure that neither the US nor Russia can unilaterally dominate. Lesser weighted votes attached to states within the former Soviet bloc may indeed provide Russia encouragement not to transgress borders as it did in Georgia, as votes could be required for key actions. It is inherently possible that a new architecture in which NATO states and Russia are involved in a strategic partnership on Eurasian security would have the following benefits.

Firstly, the inflexible and vulnerable status quo is reformed and strengthened. Secondly, NATO is an equal partner and retains its name and assets along with its member states. Thirdly, Russia achieves equal partnership by way of weighted voting system which can lessen the threat of unilateral (US) actions. Fourthly, NATO can continue acting separately in peacekeeping and humanitarian operations in keeping with its global intentions. Fifthly, the former Soviet bloc states who have joined NATO are afforded some protection from Russia as they can collectively use their lesser weighted votes to block unilateral Russian (or indeed American) actions. Sixthly, both NATO and Russia can use the terms of the new arrangements to concentrate their efforts upon the areas in which they have previously been successful, i.e. nuclear non-proliferation and counter-terrorism which is acknowledged by both as the greatest risk to their respective security. Finally, the new arrangements will be underpinned by the principles of the Helsinki agreement and the Founding Act which despite the historical conjecture, have never wavered from being anything other than necessary and appropriate. It is not considered that President Medvedev's call for a "new architecture" is to be entirely adopted, largely because Medvedev has been unable to explain the framework through which it will operate. It is also not apparent that any new terminology or language can supercede that already in use in the Helsinki principles and the Founding Act. However, there is a lot to be gleaned from Medvedev's assertion that Russia be at the centre of a new culture of security by diplomacy and agreement in which it is for the first time an equal partner and contributor. It is indeed obvious that the introduction of a system including Russia as a strategic partner with weighted voting rights will create diplomatic horse trading and lobbying, however it is preferable that any "conflict" in this new relationship is conducted in the back corridors and board rooms of Brussels than in the regions of Georgia, the road to Pristina or the skies over Sarajevo.

Notes

1. This reflects the debate between Waltz, Meirsheimer (neo-realist) and Fukuyama and associates (liberals) as noted in the introduction.

2. Lavrov, S. "How to end finally the Cold War." *International Affairs* 2009

<http://en.intersffairs.ru/arpg.php?pg=61>

accessed on 8th August 2010

3. Ibid Lavrov No.2

4. Trenin, D. "Russia Leaves the West." *Foreign Affairs* Jul/Aug 2006. Vol.85 Issue 4 pp87-96

NATO and Russia: Towards a New Paradigm?

Written by Richard Ross

5. Supra chapter 2, regarding structure of diplomatic and ministerial interconnection contained within the 2004 Plan.
6. Supra Pouliot chapter 1
7. Supra statement of Richard Lugar chapter 2.
8. "Pragmatism" is always underscored by "nationalism" as per the commentary of Allison "Putin's Russia" Supra ch.2.
9. The Eurasian network was referred to by James Baker in "Russia in NATO" Supra ch.2
10. Ibid Baker No.9
11. Supra Baker No.9
12. Supra Baker No. 9
13. "Frozen relations" was the phrase used by Sergei Markedonov to describe the chilly although non-violent relations between Russia and Georgia leading up to August 2008 conflict and may even have complied to other former Soviet bloc states. Supra Markedonov
14. In 2002 Chechen separatists were categorised in the same vein as the Middle Eastern terrorists who had attacked the US one year earlier.
15. Supra Allison's critique of Russia's "defence" of its military conflict in Georgia. In "The Russian case for military intervention in Georgia: international law, norms and political calculations."
16. Contrast Allison's critique of Russia's Foreign Policy Concept of 2008 which criticises the "arbitrary and politically motivated interpretation by certain countries of fundamental international legal norms and principles." Supra Foreign Policy Concept of Russian Federation.
17. Ibid No.16
18. For completeness, it is unlikely that Baker's offer of "future membership" to Russia in 2002 would be any more successful in 2010.
19. Supra Baker No. 9
20. Located as it is bordering onto many Islamist states and with the geographic advantage of airfields in the Southern Caucasus which can be helpful to "Allied" forces.
21. Supra Baker No. 9
22. Supra Baker No. 9
23. Supra Baker No. 9
24. Supra Hopf "Social Construction of International Politics: Identities and Foreign Policies."
25. Such as Trenin, Polikanov and to a lesser extent Lavrov and Medvedev.
26. Supra Lavrov No.2

NATO and Russia: Towards a New Paradigm?

Written by Richard Ross

27. Putin requested this in 2002 in conjunction with a suggestion that NATO be dismantled. Supra ch.2 Yeltsin also requested NATO membership in 1991 in a manner which was quickly explained away as a mistranslation. Supra ch.1
28. Polikanov, D. "NATO-Russia Relations: Present and Future." Contemporary Security Policy. Vol. 25, No.3 (December 2004) pp 479-497.
29. Ibid Polikanov No. 28 pp480-484
30. Supra Polikanov p485
31. Supra Trenin No.4
32. Supra Trenin No. 4
33. Supra Baker No.9
34. See Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation and note that it expresses willingness to work with NATO in equal partnership, but interestingly also expressed primacy of the United Nations over NATO. See also the opinions of President Medvedev in his desire to seek partnership and closer co-operation with the US. In "Building Russian-US Bonds." *The Washington Post* 31st March 2009.
35. Lavrov supports this suggesting that the OSCE is "flabby" and the no-one appears ready for it. He also refers to Europe's current security as "patchwork." Supra Lavrov No.2
36. Supra 34, Medvedev's opinion on the Obama administration is that the new relationship "showed mutual readiness to build mature bilateral relations in a pragmatic and businesslike manner." Clearly the improvement in Russian-US relations could prove significant for NATO in the medium term.
37. Supra Lavrov No.2
38. Supra Lavrov No.2
39. "NATO's Strategic Concept, the New Security Environment, and the NATO-Russia Partnership."
- Speech by Admiral di Paola Chairman of the Military Committee and the Centre for European Security, Moscow.
- www.nato.int/ims/opinions/2010/o100773a.html
- accessed 8th August 2010
40. Ibid 39.
41. Supra 39.
- 42 Supra 2
- 43 For a more detailed discussion on the expected tone and content of NATO's 2010 Strategic Concept see "NATO's evolving purposed and the next Strategic Concept." David S. Yost. *International Affairs*. 86: 2 (2010) pp489-522
- 44 Supra Baker No. 9 at p102.

NATO and Russia: Towards a New Paradigm?

Written by Richard Ross

This would follow the model of the EU decision making process (roughly defined) in which the UK, France, Germany and Spain have weighted votes due to their size and contribution. Smaller EU states have “lesser” votes but can unite in common cause. The EU system is more complicated than that, but that is the underlying premise from which to begin the model.

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Written by Richard Ross

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Written by Richard Ross

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NATO and Russia: Towards a New Paradigm?

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