

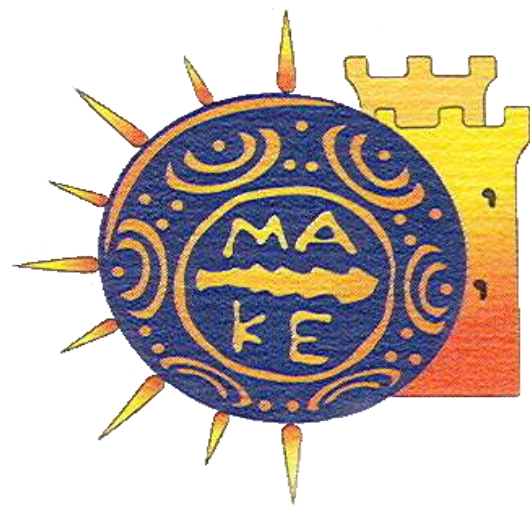
# NATO & the evolving relationship with Russia

## Dissertation

19/11/2012  
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## **Abstract**

This paper is an overview and also a specification of the evolving relationship between NATO and the Russian Federation after the dissolution of the Soviet Union. It is based on the information provided by NATO, the NATO-Russia Council, United Nations the European Union and other organizations. The relations of both sides over the years from opponents to cooperators, from Afghan operations to intervention to Georgia and finally to further planning of common directions.

## **Introduction**

Relations between NATO and Russia begun right after the fall of the Soviet Union, and the formation of modern Russia in 1991. Since then, co-operation between the two has advanced and reached a high level in many fields. Co-operation between NATO and Russia begun in 1991, within the framework of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council. Later on, in 1994 Russia joined the Partnership for Peace programme. On 27 May 1997, at the NATO Summit in Paris, the two sides signed a Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security, outlining the plans for future policies.

The perhaps greatest step towards co-operation between the two happened in 2002, when during the NATO Summit in Rome, the NATO-Russia Council (NRC) was created, having as main goals "consensus building, consultations, joint decisions and joint actions." Furthermore, NATO's new Strategic Concept, approved at the Lisbon Summit in November 2010, emphasizes on the importance of developing "a true strategic partnership between NATO and Russia" in order to "enhance political consultation and practical cooperation with Russia in areas of shared interests" and to "use the full potential of the NRC for dialogue and joint action".<sup>1</sup>

Although NATO and Russia have had their disagreements on important policy issues, such as the admission of Georgia in the Alliance, over the recent years they have been able to put their differences aside and co-operate in a number of issues, many of which concern Asia. One of the current issues of co-operation between the two in Asia has been Afghanistan. The Russian Federation has agreed to provide assistance to the NATO-led ISAF operations in the country. Together with other countries in the area, it has agreed to allow the land transit of non-military equipment for ISAF through its territory, thus greatly facilitating ISAF's operations in the country.

In addition, Russia is enjoying a close and fruitful co-operation with NATO in the field of counternarcotics training. The whole operation is organized by the NRC and United Nations Office for Drugs and Crime (UNODC). It provides high-level education for government officials from Afghanistan,

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<sup>1</sup> Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security between NATO and the Russian Federation Paris, 27 May 1997

Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan and most recently Pakistan. The goal is to address the problem of Afghan narcotics trafficking in the region.

Other than that co-operation between the two has proceeded in other fields as well. More specifically, co-operation has expanded in the field of counter-terrorism, via information and data exchange, civil emergency planning, scientific and technical cooperation and in-depth analysis of terrorist threats. To that end, Russian ships have been deployed in support of Operation Active Endeavour (OAE), NATO's maritime counterterrorist operation in the Mediterranean, in 2006, 2007 and 2008, whereas progress has been made through the Co-operative Airspace Initiative (CAI), which also aims to the fight against terrorism. Relations between NATO and Asia have had their crises, but generally co-operation and further engagement is sought by both sides, and is expected to happen in the next years.

### **Three Pillars**

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization's (1949-2012) fundamental principle is to safeguard the freedom and security of its members through political and military means. NATO brings together 28 member countries from Europe and North America, consulting and cooperating in the fields of security and defence. In this respect, NATO provides a unique transatlantic link for political and security cooperation.<sup>2</sup>

The NATO-Russia Council was established at the NATO-Russia Summit in Rome on 28 May 2002. It replaced the Permanent Joint Council, a forum for consultation and cooperation created by the 1997 NATO-Russia Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security, which remains the formal basis for NATO-Russia relations. The NRC is a mechanism for consultation, consensus-building, cooperation, joint decision and joint action, in which the individual NATO member states and Russia work as equal partners on a wide spectrum of security issues of common interest. The spirit of meetings has dramatically changed under the NRC, in which Russia and NATO member states meet as equals "at 29" in areas of common interest - instead of in the bilateral "NATO+1" format under the PJC.<sup>3</sup>

The Russian Federation (Russia 1992-2012), a federal semi-presidential republic, is the largest country in the world, has the largest reserves of mineral and energy resources and holds the first place on producing oil and natural gas globally. Russia is the world's top army supplier, 30% of the worldwide weapon sales, has one of the biggest armies, including one of the top five expenditures 2006-2015.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> NATO official website

<sup>3</sup> NATO-Russia Council official website

<sup>4</sup> Russian Federation official website

NATO's 2010 Strategic Concept stresses the importance to the Allies of developing "*a true strategic partnership between NATO and Russia*" and their determination to "*enhance political consultation and practical cooperation with Russia in areas of shared interests*" and to "*use the full potential of the NRC for dialogue and joint action*".

At the Chicago Summit in May 2012, Allied leaders welcomed the important progress in cooperation over the years and reiterated their desire to see a true strategic partnership between NATO and Russia, as agreed at the NRC Summit in Lisbon in 2010.<sup>5</sup>

At Lisbon, the 29 NRC leaders pledged to "*work towards achieving a true strategic and modernized partnership based on the principles of reciprocal confidence, transparency, and predictability, with the aim of contributing to the creation of a common space of peace, security and stability.*" They endorsed a Joint Review of 21st Century Common Security Challenges, which include Afghanistan, terrorism, piracy, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery, as well as natural and man-made disasters. Important progress has been made in a number of these areas, since then.

Recognizing that differences remain on specific issues, the Allies have underlined the need to improve trust, reciprocal transparency and predictability. NRC nations agree that the NRC is a valuable instrument for building practical cooperation and for political dialogue on all issues – where they agree and disagree. The driving force behind the NRC's pragmatic spirit of cooperation is the realization that NATO and Russia share strategic priorities and face common challenges. Further developing practical cooperation – including on missile defence – will help increase mutual trust.<sup>6</sup>

## **Framework for cooperation**

Cooperation between Russia and NATO member states is directed by the NRC and developed through various subordinate working groups and committees. Every year, NRC member countries agree on an annual work programme.

Key areas of cooperation include the fight against terrorism, defence reform, military-to-military cooperation, counter-narcotics training of Afghan, Central Asian and Pakistani personnel, theatre missile defence/missile defence, counter-piracy, crisis management, non-proliferation, airspace management, civil emergency planning, scientific cooperation and environmental security.

The NRC has provided a forum for the development of a continuous political dialogue on current security issues, which has expanded steadily to include frank and constructive exchanges on topical and

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<sup>5</sup> NATO's Chicago Summit 2012

<sup>6</sup> NATO-Russia Council Lisbon Summit 2010

sometimes controversial issues. Discussions have been held on subjects such as the situation in the Balkans, Afghanistan, Georgia, Ukraine, Belarus, Central Asia, the Middle East, Iraq and Libya, as well as exchanges on issues such as NATO's transformation, energy security, missile defence and the Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) Treaty. Dialogue also generates ideas for practical cooperation to help address shared security challenges.

To facilitate cooperation, Russia has established a diplomatic mission to NATO and Russian Military Branch Offices have been set up at NATO's two top military command headquarters. In Moscow, a NATO Information Office seeks to explain NATO and promote the benefits of the NATO-Russia partnership, and a Military Liaison Mission is helping improve transparency and coordination on the military side.<sup>7</sup>

## **Key areas of cooperation**

### **Support for ISAF and the Afghan Armed Forces**

In spring 2008, Russia offered to facilitate the land transit of non-military equipment for ISAF contributors across Russian territory in support of the NATO-led, UN-mandated International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan. Similar arrangements have been concluded with the other transit states, opening up this important supply route for ISAF in 2010. At the Lisbon Summit, NRC leaders agreed amendments to the arrangements agreed in 2008 with a view to allowing land transit both to and from Afghanistan of non-lethal cargo. At Chicago, Allied leaders welcomed the progress on developing arrangements with Central Asian partners and Russia, which will allow multi-modal reverse transit, using a mix of rail and air transit for ISAF equipment through Russian territory.<sup>8</sup>

NRC leaders agreed at Lisbon to establish an NRC Helicopter Maintenance Trust Fund to help the Afghan Armed Forces to operate their helicopter fleet. The project was officially launched in March

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<sup>7</sup> NATO official website

<sup>8</sup> ISAF(website)

2011, aimed at providing a much-needed maintenance and repair capacity, including spare parts and technical training. Germany is acting as the lead nation for the project and the NATO Maintenance and Supply Agency (NAMSA) serving as executing agent. Ten donor nations (Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Russia, Turkey and United States) have contributed a total of around seven million US dollars in financial contributions and 15 million US dollars worth of in-kind contributions to the Trust Fund project. Tailored training for Afghan Air Force helicopter maintenance staff started in April 2012 at the OAO Novosibirsk Aircraft Repair Plant in Russia.<sup>9</sup>

Underlining the shared commitment to securing Afghanistan's future, Russia was invited to participate in the expanded ISAF meeting at the Chicago Summit.

### **Counter-narcotics training of Afghan and Central Asian personnel**

The NRC pilot project for counter-narcotics training of Afghan and Central Asian personnel was launched by NRC foreign ministers in December 2005 to help address the threats posed by the trafficking in Afghan narcotics. It seeks to build local capacity and to promote regional networking and cooperation by sharing the combined expertise of NRC member states with mid-level officers from Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. Pakistan became the seventh participating country in 2010.<sup>10</sup>

The project is being implemented in cooperation with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). It is a joint endeavour of many NRC nations – Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Latvia, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Romania, Russia, Slovenia, Spain, Turkey, the United Kingdom and the United States – and Finland (since 2007) together with the project's beneficiary countries. Ukraine will shortly become the second, non-NRC contributing nation.

Fixed training takes place in one of four institutes either in Turkey, Russia or the United States and mobile courses is being conducted in each of the six participating countries. At the Lisbon Summit, NRC leaders agreed to expand the scope of the project to provide further direct assistance to institutional capacity building in the future. By April 2012, some 2000 officers had been trained under the NRC project.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> NATO-Russia Council Lisbon Summit 2010

<sup>10</sup> NRC Brussels 2005

<sup>11</sup> NATO-Russia Council Lisbon Summit 2010

## **Combating terrorism**

An NRC Action Plan on Terrorism was launched by NRC foreign ministers in December 2004 to improve overall coordination and provide strategic direction for cooperation in this area. NRC leaders underlined the continued importance of cooperation in the fight against terrorism at Lisbon in November 2010 and an updated Action Plan on Terrorism was approved by NRC foreign ministers at their meeting in April 2011 in Berlin. A first civilian-military counter-terrorism table top exercise was conducted in the framework of the NRC at NATO Headquarters in March 2012.<sup>12</sup>

Regular exchanges of information and in-depth consultations take place within the NRC on various aspects of combating terrorism. Under the Cooperative Airspace Initiative an information exchange system has been developed to provide air-traffic transparency and early notification of suspicious air activities to help prevent terrorist attacks such as the 9/11 attacks on the United States. In the scientific and technical field, work is ongoing on the STANDEX project, which aims to develop technology that will enable the stand-off detection of explosive devices in mass transport environments. Trials are due to take place in 2013. Countering improvised explosive devices is another important focus of ongoing work.

Over the years, several Russian ships have been deployed in support of Operation Active Endeavour, NATO's maritime operation against terrorism in the Mediterranean.<sup>13</sup>

## **Cooperative Airspace Initiative**

The Cooperative Airspace Initiative (CAI) – aimed at preventing terrorists from using aircraft to launch attacks similar to those of 9/11 – is now operational. The CAI information exchange provides air traffic transparency and early notification of suspicious air activities. This facilitates transparency, predictability and interoperability in airspace management.

Based on a feasibility study completed in 2005, detailed system requirements and a project plan were agreed for the system to enable the reciprocal exchange of air traffic data between centres in NATO countries and in Russia. Implementation started in 2006. The system reached its operational capability in December 2011 and the CAI operational phase is expected to be formally launched by mid-2012, once national procedures regarding the reciprocal coordination of air-traffic situations for countering air

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<sup>12</sup> NATO-Russia Council Official website

<sup>13</sup> NATO Official website

terrorist threats have been completed in participating countries, allowing entry into force of the legal agreement concerning CAI.

The operational readiness of the CAI system was demonstrated during the first live-flying, real-time counter-terrorism exercise, “Vigilant Skies 2011”, which took place in June 2011.

A total of around 10 million Euros have been invested in the CAI project. Nations that have contributed financially include Canada, France, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Luxembourg, Norway, Poland, Russia, Turkey, the United Kingdom and the United States. The system is open for participation by other nations. So far, Finland and Ukraine have indicated an interest in joining the initiative.

The NATO Consultation, Command and Control Agency (NC3A) have led the implementation of the NATO part of the CAI system, and the software was procured from EUROCONTROL. Implementation of the Russian part of the system was led by the State Air Traffic Management Corporation, under the guidance of the Federal Air Navigation Authority. The Russian segment of the system was developed and supplied by the “Almaz-Antey” Concern.

The CAI system consists of two coordination centres, in Moscow and in Warsaw, and local coordination sites in Russia (Murmansk, Kaliningrad, Rostov-on-Don) and in NATO member countries (Bodø, Norway; Warsaw, Poland; and Ankara, Turkey).<sup>14</sup>



### **Theatre missile defence/ ballistic missile defence**

Cooperation in the area of theatre missile defence (TMD) has been underway for a number of years to address the unprecedented danger posed to deployed forces by the increasing availability of ever more accurate ballistic missiles. A study was launched in 2003 to assess the possible levels of interoperability among the theatre missile defence systems of NATO Allies and Russia.

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<sup>14</sup> NATO Official website



Three command post exercises have been held – the first in the United States in March 2004, the second in the Netherlands in March 2005, and the third in Russia in October 2006. Computer-assisted exercises have taken place in Germany in January 2008 and March 2012. Together with the interoperability study, these exercises are intended to provide the basis for future improvements to interoperability and to develop mechanisms and procedures for joint operations in the area of theatre missile defence.

In December 2009, an NRC Missile Defence Working Group was established. It was tasked to build on the lessons learned from the previous TMD cooperation and to exchange views on possible mutually beneficial cooperation on ballistic missile defence, based on a joint assessment of missile threats.<sup>15</sup>

At the Lisbon Summit, NRC leaders approved the joint ballistic missile threat assessment and agreed to discuss pursuing missile defence cooperation. They decided to resume TMD cooperation and to develop a joint analysis of the future framework for missile defence cooperation.<sup>16</sup>

While differences remain on the subject of ballistic missile defence, discussions continue. At Chicago, NATO leaders stressed that NATO's planned missile defence capability is not directed against Russia, nor will it undermine Russia's strategic deterrent. It is intended to defend against potential threats from beyond the Euro-Atlantic area. While regretting recurrent Russian statements and measures directed against NATO's missile defence system, the Allies welcome Russia's willingness to continue dialogue on finding a way to develop future cooperation on missile defence.<sup>17</sup>

NATO is determined to work through the NRC to see how independent NATO and Russian missile defence systems could work together to enhance European security. The Allies look forward to the establishment of the proposed NATO-Russia Missile Data Fusion Centre and the joint Planning Operations Centre. They also propose to develop a new transparency regime based on a regular exchange of information about the current respective missile defence capabilities of NATO and Russia.

## **Non-proliferation and arms control**

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<sup>15</sup> "Q&A: US missile defence". BBC News. 20 September 2009. Retrieved 20 May 2010.

<sup>16</sup> NRC Lisbon Summit 2010

<sup>17</sup> NATO Chicago Summit 2012

Dialogue on a growing range of issues related to the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) has developed under the NRC. Concrete recommendations have been made to strengthen existing non-proliferation arrangements. A number of in-depth discussions and expert seminars have been held to explore opportunities for practical cooperation in the protection against nuclear, biological and chemical weapons. Since under the NRC, work has been underway to assess global trends in WMD proliferation and their means of delivery, and to review areas in which NRC nations could work together politically to promote effective multilateral arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation efforts.

The NRC has also provided a forum for frank discussions on issues related to conventional arms control, such as the CFE Treaty, the Open Skies Treaty and confidence-and-security-building measures. A key priority for all NRC nations is to work towards the ratification of the Adapted Treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe. The Allies have expressed concern over Russia's unilateral "suspension" of its participation in the treaty in December 2007. While differences remain on this issue, it is important to note that the Allies remain committed to ratifying the Adapted Treaty. Discussions are ongoing with Russia, both in the framework of the NRC and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe on how to make this possible.<sup>18</sup>

At the Lisbon Summit, NRC leaders emphasized their strong support for the revitalisation and modernisation of the conventional arms control regime in Europe and their readiness to continue dialogue on arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation issues of interest to the NRC. A Joint NRC Statement was agreed for the 7th Review Conference of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention in December 2011.<sup>19</sup>

### **Nuclear weapons issues**

In the nuclear field, experts have developed a glossary of terms and definitions and organized exchanges on nuclear doctrines and strategy.

Experts and representatives from Russia and NATO member countries have also observed four nuclear-weapon-accident-response field exercises in Russia in 2004, the United Kingdom in 2005, the United States in 2006, and France in 2007. As follow-on to these four exercises, in June 2011 Russia and NATO member countries also participated in a table top exercise dealing with emergency response to a nuclear weapon incident. Inviting experts to attend such exercises increases transparency, develops common understanding of nuclear-weapon-accident-response procedures, and builds full confidence that

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<sup>18</sup> NRC Official website

<sup>19</sup> NATO-Russia Council Lisbon Summit 2010

the nuclear weapon states of NATO (France, the United Kingdom and United States) and Russia are fully capable to respond effectively to any emergency involving nuclear weapons. Expert seminars have also been held to discuss nuclear doctrine and strategy (2005, 2009 and 2011), lessons learned from nuclear weapons incidents and accidents (2007) and potential responses to the detection of improvised nuclear or radiological devices (2010).<sup>20</sup>

### **Military-to-military cooperation**

Since the NRC was established, military liaison arrangements have been enhanced, at the Allied Commands for Operations and for Transformation, as well as in Moscow. A key objective of military-to-military cooperation is to build trust, confidence and transparency, and to improve the ability of NATO and Russian forces to work together in preparation for possible future joint military operations.<sup>21</sup>

Military-to-military cooperation has resumed, following a temporary suspension in the wake of the August 2008 Georgia crisis. The military work plan for 2011 focuses on several agreed areas of cooperation – logistics, combating terrorism, search-and-rescue at sea, counter-piracy, theatre missile defence and military academic exchanges – and related military activities.

A “Political-Military Guidance towards Enhanced Interoperability between Forces of Russia and NATO Nations” was approved by NRC defence ministers in June 2005.<sup>22</sup>

Another key document is the Partnership for Peace Status of Forces Agreement (signed by Russia in 2004 and ratified by the Russian parliament in May 2007), aimed at facilitating military-to-military and other practical cooperation, in particular the deployment of forces participating in joint operations and exercises.<sup>23</sup>

### **Countering piracy**

Countering piracy is one of the key areas of common interest and concern identified in the Joint Review of 21st Century Common Security Challenges approved at Lisbon in November 2010. Cooperation at the tactical level has been developing between Allied ships and Russian vessels since late 2008.

NATO and Russia have agreed to explore ways to strengthen cooperation to counter piracy under the NATO-Russia Council (NRC) Work Programme for 2012. Building on ongoing military tactical

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<sup>20</sup> NATO Official website, United Nations Official website

<sup>21</sup> NRC Official website

<sup>22</sup> NRC Defence Ministers Brussels 2005

<sup>23</sup> Russian Parliament

cooperation off the Horn of Africa, they are seeking to strengthen information exchange and coordination and considering possible mutual support, such as refueling and medical assistance, for ships involved in counter-piracy operations.<sup>24</sup>

### **Submarine-crew search and rescue**

Work in the area of submarine-crew search and rescue at sea intensified following the signing of a framework agreement on cooperation in this area in February 2003.

A Russian navy submarine was fully integrated into a NATO-led exercise for the first time during search-and-rescue exercise “Bold Monarch 2011” off the coast of southern Spain, from 30 May to 10 June 2011. The Alrosa submarine was supported by three other Russian ships – a submarine-rescue vessel, a salvage vessel and a heavy-lifting vessel.

Prior to this, Russia took part in NATO’s exercise “Sorbet Royal”, in June 2005. The experience and networks developed during the exercise contributed to the success of an actual rescue operation in August 2005 off the coast of Russian Kamchatka peninsula. Russia also participated in exercise “Bold Monarch 2008”.<sup>25</sup>

### **Crisis management**

NATO and Russia have a long history of cooperation in crisis management. In fact, between 1996 and 2003, Russia was the largest non-NATO troop contributor to NATO-led peacekeeping operations. Close cooperation in the Balkans has been critical in improving relations and building trust between the Russian and Allied militaries.

Since 2002, the NRC has taken steps to prepare for possible future cooperation in this area, notably through the approval in September 2002 of “Political Aspects for a Generic Concept for Joint NATO-Russia Peacekeeping Operations”. This paper explores common approaches, establishes a framework for consultation, planning and decision-making during an emerging crisis, and defines issues related to joint training and exercises. These were tested in a procedural exercise, conducted in three phases between May 2003 and September 2004.<sup>26</sup>

### **Defence transparency, strategy and reform**

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<sup>24</sup> NRC Lisbon Summit 2010

<sup>25</sup> NATO Official website

<sup>26</sup> NRC Official website

With a view to building mutual confidence and transparency, dialogue is ongoing on doctrinal issues, strategy and policy, including their relation to defence reform, nuclear weapons issues, force development and posture.

Past initiatives launched in the area of defence reform have focused on the evolution of the military, management of human and financial resources, reform of defence industries, managing the consequences of defence reform, and defence-related aspects of combating terrorism. NATO and Russian linguists have also produced a terminological glossary to support practical cooperation and contribute to understanding within the NRC, which was completed in 2011.

From 2002 to 2008, a NATO-Russia Resettlement Centre helped facilitate the integration of former Russian military personnel into civilian life by providing information regarding job-search and resettlement, professional courses for trainees, job-placement services, and English-language and management courses for small and medium-sized enterprises. Set up in Moscow in July 2002, its operations were gradually expanded into the regions. Over the project's lifetime, around 2820 former military personnel from the Russian armed forces were retrained and over 80 per cent of found civilian employment as a result of the retraining or the help of the Centre's job placement unit.<sup>27</sup>

### **Defence industrial cooperation**

A broad-based "Study on NATO-Russia Defence Industrial and Research and Technological Cooperation", launched in January 2005 and completed in 2007, concluded that there is potential in combining scientific and technological capabilities to address global threats.<sup>28</sup>

### **Logistics**

Logistics form the backbone of any military operation and in today's security environment, the need for more mobile forces and multinational operations calls for improved coordination and the pooling of resources, wherever possible. Various initiatives are pursuing logistic cooperation on both the civilian and the military side.

Meetings and seminars have focused on establishing a sound foundation of mutual understanding in the field of logistics by promoting information sharing in areas such as logistic policies, doctrine,

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<sup>27</sup> NRC Official website

<sup>28</sup> NRC Official website

structures and lessons learned. Opportunities for practical cooperation are being explored in areas such as air transport, air-to-air refueling, medical services, and water purification. Cooperation is being extended to explore potential capabilities and enhance interoperability to support future operations, particularly in Afghanistan.<sup>29</sup>

### **Civil emergencies**

NATO and Russia have been cooperating since 1996 to develop a capacity for joint action in response to civil emergencies, such as earthquakes and floods, and to coordinate detection and prevention of disasters before they occur. Moreover, it was a Russian proposal that led to the establishment in 1998 of the Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre, which coordinates responses to disasters among all countries of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (the 28 NATO members and 22 Partner countries).

Under the NRC, a key focus of cooperation in this area has been to develop capabilities to manage the consequences of terrorist attacks. Two disaster-response exercises held in Russia Bogorodsk 2002 and Kaliningrad 2004 and another in Italy, in 2006, have resulted in concrete recommendations for consequence management. Another table top consequence-management exercise was hosted by Norway in 2010. Current work is focused on risk reduction, capacity building and cooperation in the area of civil preparedness and consequence management related to high visibility events.<sup>30</sup>

### **New threats and challenges**

Scientific and technological cooperation between NATO and Russia dates back to 1998. Over the years, NATO's science programmes, which foster collaboration and research between scientists in NATO and Partner countries, have awarded more grants to scientists from Russia than any other country.

Under the NRC Science for Peace and Security Committee, promising work is taking place on confronting new threats and challenges through scientific and environmental cooperation. Key areas include explosives detection (such as the STANDEX project mentioned above), protection from chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear agents, cyber security, psychosocial consequences of terrorism, transport security, defence-related environmental issues, environmental security and eco-terrorism, and the forecast and prevention of catastrophes.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> NATO Official website

<sup>30</sup> NRC Official website

<sup>31</sup> NATO Official website

## **Raising public awareness of the NRC**

An NRC web site was launched in June 2007 to increase public awareness of NRC activities. All NRC nations have stated their commitment to explaining the merits of NATO-Russia cooperation to the public.

## **Evolution of relations**

NATO-Russia relations formally began in 1991, when Russia joined the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (renamed the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council in 1997), a forum created to foster transparency and dialogue with the countries after the end of the Cold War. Russia joined the Partnership for Peace in 1994, paving the way for more practical cooperation and, in 1996, Russia deployed a major contingent to the NATO-led peacekeeping force in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The 1997 NATO-Russia Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security provided the formal basis for NATO-Russia relations and led to the development of a bilateral programme of consultation and cooperation under the Permanent Joint Council (PJC). However, lingering Cold War prejudices prevented the PJC from achieving its potential. Differences over the Kosovo air campaign also impacted on relations. However, Russia played a notable diplomatic role in resolving the Kosovo crisis and deployed peacekeepers to support the Kosovo Force in June 1999.

In 2002, the relationship was given new impetus and substance with the establishment of the NATO-Russia Council. The decision to establish the NRC was taken in the wake of the September 2001 terrorist attacks, which reinforced the need for coordinated action to respond to common threats. It demonstrated the shared resolve of NATO member states and Russia to work more closely together towards the common goal of building a lasting and inclusive peace in the Euro-Atlantic Area – a goal which was first expressed in the 1997 NATO-Russia Founding Act.

Following Russia's disproportionate military action in Georgia in early August 2008, the Alliance suspended formal meetings of the NRC and cooperation in some areas, while it considered the implications of Russia's actions for the NATO-Russia relationship.

A decision to resume formal meetings and practical cooperation was taken in 2009 and the first formal ministerial-level meeting of the NRC since the Georgia crisis took place in December 2009. Ministers

agreed to improve the working methods of the NRC itself, to make it more result-oriented and politically relevant, and to launch a Joint Review of 21st Century Common Security Challenges.<sup>32</sup>

The Joint Review was endorsed by NRC leaders at the Lisbon Summit in November 2010, where they also agreed on practical cooperation to address some of the security challenges identified. Moreover, they agreed to discuss pursuing broader missile defence cooperation.<sup>33</sup>

## **Cooperation in Afghanistan after 2014**

Cooperation between Russia and NATO in Afghanistan after 2014 should be based on appropriate decisions of the UN Security Council, which has not taken any decisions in this respect for the time being, Russia's Deputy Foreign Minister Alexander Grushko told a group of Russian reporters at the UN headquarters.

"At present, this cooperation is based on a UN Security Council resolution and we proceed from the assumption that if NATO continues experiencing a need for Russia's assistance after 2014, then it will also be based on a decision, which the Security Council will have to pass," he said.<sup>34</sup>

At the moment, Russia and NATO have a number of agreements on cooperation concerning Afghanistan. First and foremost among them is a program for deliveries of non-military cargoes to and from Afghanistan via the Russian territory.

The program is vital for the U.S.-led international forces in Afghanistan in view of permanent problems with the delivery of cargoes via Pakistan. Also, Russian technical experts do the maintenance of helicopters purchased for the Afghan Army in the U.S.

The Russian Interior Ministry helps with the training of officers for Afghan security units that are supposed to fight with the production and trafficking of drugs.

According to Alexander Grushko, Russia is ready to expand its joint projects with NATO concerning Afghanistan and "bring other players into them, too," but this will require a resolution of the UN Security Council.

He recalled the North-Atlantic Pact is currently designing a new strategy for Afghanistan after 2014 when ISAF's last combat units pull out of the country. NATO plans suggest that control over the situation in the landlocked impoverished country will be handed over to the 228,000-strong Afghan Army, the upkeep of which will cost \$ 4.1 billion over a period of ten years.

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<sup>32</sup> NRC Official website

<sup>33</sup> NRC Lisbon Summit 2010

<sup>34</sup> United Nations Official website



Along with this, Russia has questions over the North-Atlantic pact's plans to keep military bases in Afghanistan after 2014, allegedly for antiterrorist operations and for support to Afghan security forces. "One may suppose NATO will be turning to the Security Council for permissions to train the /Afghan/ cadres for the Interior agencies and the Armed Forces, Grushko said.

"There should be no other military functions and everything that spreads beyond the task of facilitating the Afghan stabilization will undermine regional security and generate an even greater uncertainty," he added.<sup>35</sup>

## **The Other Side of the Coin**

Further existence of the Russia-NATO Council is meaningless. There no longer is any kind of real Council as an advisory structure designed for a dialogue with Moscow. Prior to the beginning of the latest Council ministerial meeting in Brussels, which opens on Thursday, RF Permanent Representative to NATO Dmitry Rogozin asserted: "The Council has become a screen for the Alliance to make its decisions in advance and then announce them to the Russian side."

On the eve of the Brussels meeting the French foreign policy department addressed its participants with an unusual request - to conduct the event "in a constructive and conciliatory manner." In other words, the French partners were asking Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov not to angrily slam the door and to wait until everything changes for the better in Alliance policy, although hardly any hope remains for such a happy outcome.

The changes taking place in NATO appear to be on such a large scale and their anti-Russian direction so obvious that they no longer can be hidden behind the bloc leaders' benevolent smiles and peacemaking speeches.

The positive agenda in relations between Moscow and the Alliance is constantly being abbreviated and presents a set of tactical and often secondary issues. Meanwhile, the dialogue on strategic problems proceeds with difficulty and its results look unsatisfactory.

There is no hope the sides will arrive at compromise decisions in the course of the session coming up on Thursday. Lavrov flew to Brussels to hold a kind of audit of what Russia and the Alliance leadership had arrived at in the past year. The list of problems that had arisen looks so serious that it does not allow perceiving NATO as a partner. When the Alliance demonstratively fails to take into account our country's interests in drawing up its plans, a dialogue with it becomes one about nothing and without

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<sup>35</sup> United Nations Official website

reason. "I believe that in its present form the Russia-NATO Council is unsuitable for more open cooperation," Permanent Representative Rogozin explains.

The head of the RF MID (Foreign Ministry) has seen US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton three times in the last three days: first at the conference on Afghanistan in Bonn, then at a meeting of the OSCE in Vilnius, and now the latest "rendezvous" at the Russia-NATO Council in Brussels. In Bonn Mrs. Clinton criticized Moscow for the conduct of elections, but did so delicately behind the scenes. In Vilnius she criticized publicly as if tuning up in advance for the upcoming tough confrontation in Brussels. The RF Foreign Ministry already called her statements on the elections unacceptable.

The Secretary of State obviously will be the chief defender of Alliance interests at Thursday's Russia-NATO Council. At this meeting its participants are to analyse results of the Libyan campaign, where bloc troops acted openly on the side of enemies of Muammar al-Qadhafi in the internal Libyan conflict. Moscow considers this a NATO move beyond the concept of a defensive alliance about which its leaders so love to talk. There will be talk at the Council about stationing elements of the PRO [missile defence] in Europe, a project in whose implementation Washington refused to take Russia's position into account yet another time.

Information agencies cite details of the dialogue which took place between the US secretary of state and Lithuanian President Dalia Grybauskaite on the sidelines of the OSCE conference in Vilnius. The talk was about preparing for the future NATO summit in Chicago. The head of Lithuania in particular considered it important for the defensive systems such as PRO which are being created to be independent of systems of other states or alliances. The American missile umbrella leaves no doubt about what states must be protected. After such an explicit instruction one hardly can expect that Clinton and "copartners" will change views on missile defence at the Russia-NATO Council in Brussels.

The speech of the US permanent representative to the Alliance, made a few days before the Brussels meeting of ministers, looks no less demonstrative, since Daalder directly stated that no matter what kind of guarantees Russia receives on PRO today, in the future Washington will reject the treaty with ease should it interfere with implementation of its plans.

The work of the Russia-NATO Council loses meaning if only because its conduct means that the sides are taking each other's interests into account and making changes in their policy. But NATO is not planning to change let alone reform, and the militant rhetoric of Alliance members is only intensifying.

Successes in Russia and NATO cooperation on certain "tracks" - countering terrorism, piracy, and natural and technogenic disasters - and the successful dialogue on Afghanistan do not relieve the tension between Moscow and the Alliance on fundamental issues. If these problems fail to be resolved "in

a conciliatory manner" within the Council framework, the time possibly has come to make a fundamental decision and replace the format of negotiations with a more constructive one.<sup>36</sup>

### **Georgia (South Ossetia)**

The relations between NATO and Georgia have been an issue of great interest, during the last years. After its independence from the Soviet Union, Georgia has made many steps towards its integration in the world community and the co-operation with NATO. Georgia joined the North Atlantic Cooperation Council in North Atlantic Council in 1992 and later on, the Partnership for Peace. In 1996, Georgia signed its first Individual Partnership Plan, and in 1997 ratified the Status of Forces Agreement. Georgia opened official relations with NATO in 1998 with its own diplomatic mission. Following more discussions, the first joint military exercises occurred in Poti in 2001, with more in 2002. Moreover, Georgia has actively co-operated with NATO in ISAF.<sup>37</sup>

NATO's relations with Georgia were complicated during the 2008 South Ossetia War, and the intervention of Russia in the country. The Allies agreed to support Georgia, upon its request, in a number of areas. These include assessing the damage to civil infrastructure and the state of the ministry of defence and armed forces; supporting the re-establishment of the air traffic system; and advising on cyber defence issues. Russia has continually expressed its skepticism for a future acceptance of the country in the Alliance. On the other hand, nonbinding referendum in 2008 in Georgia resulted in 77% of voters supporting NATO accession.

On August 7, 2008, Georgia called for a unilateral ceasefire following days of exchanged gunfire between Georgian forces and South Ossetian separatists. Five and a half hours after Georgia's declared ceasefire, Georgia's Foreign Ministry sent troops into South Ossetia "to restore constitutional order in the entire region". The South Ossetian capital Tskhinvali became the site for a prolonged battle.<sup>38</sup>

Russia responded with a larger assault that quickly moved beyond South Ossetia in Georgia and included the other breakaway region of Abkhazia. This ongoing dispute complicates NATO's relation with Russia, which has peacekeeping troops in both regions, internationally recognized as Georgian territory. The South Ossetia war further diminished the likelihood of Georgian accession to NATO in the

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<sup>36</sup> NCR Defence Ministers Council Brussels 2011

<sup>37</sup> "Russia's 2008 war with Georgia prevented NATO growth – Medvedev | Russia | RIA Novosti". En.ria.ru. 2011-11-21. Retrieved 2011-12-04.

<sup>38</sup> "Nato-Russia relations plummet amid spying, Georgia rows". Retrieved 2009-05-01.

near future according to several analysts. Others however see it as a justification for Georgian membership in NATO.<sup>39</sup>

### **Nikolay Korchunov Russian ambassador to NATO has stated:**

Russia and NATO achieved a high level of cooperation thanks to the Russia-NATO Council. The recent examples of a joint work included the training of the anti-terrorist units which involved 141 people from respective agencies, and the Standex project on remote detection of explosives. The diplomat praised a high level of scientific and technical cooperation demonstrated in assisting the international military operation in Afghanistan, Russian news agency Interfax quoted Korchunov as saying on 12 July

"The training of the Afghan aviation technicians continues at the Novosibirsk aviation repair base. We are considering options to supply helicopter spare parts to the Afghan National Army," Korchunov said.<sup>40</sup>

He confirmed that close cooperation on Afghanistan remained high on the 2012 agenda which included extra work on the trust fund set to provide technical maintenance of the Afghan helicopters, and the Russia-NATO Council's anti-narcotics project. "The Council also plans to a seminar on safety at mass public events, part of the anti-terrorist effort," Korchunov added.

He recalled that as implied by a respective UN Security Council resolution, Russia allowed NATO military ground transit to Afghanistan through its territory, which was recently extended to the combined transit assisting NATO-lead International Security Force. "For a number of years, this assistance has been provided in accordance with the 1386 Resolution of the UN Security Council that called upon all members to provide assistance to the International Military Force allowing military transit and air traffic," said Korchunov.

Korchunov advocated stronger ties between NATO and the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) which "could become an important element in ensuring international and regional security". "Partnership with the CSTO could become ever more important in light of the upcoming pull-out of the international military forces from Afghanistan which could likely worsen a security situation in Central Asia," Korchunov said.

Russian envoy also touched the topic of the missile defence system stating that Russia insists on receiving legal guarantees of the political statements that claimed the system bears no threat to Russia.

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<sup>39</sup> Ryskya Gazeta

<sup>40</sup> Interfax, Korchunov, 12 July 2011

"Regrettably, declaring their willingness to find a compromise, our partners in reality is not ready to address the Russian concerns. We need legal guarantees based on the military-technical criteria that demonstrate the new system's inability to destroy Russian nuclear weapons," said Korchunov.

The situation could be significantly improved if the Russian proposal to "make Russia, the USA and Europe equal partners in the system" was accepted. "In other words, we could create the system together, together identify threats and manage the response," Korchunov said.

"This would greatly improve the global security. The computerized command post exercise organized in Germany in March 2012 proved to both Russian and NATO experts that a collectively managed system is more efficient in responding to a missile threat. Along this path, we have a unique chance to open a brand new page of the Russia-NATO relations and practically implement the indivisibility of security concept," he said.

Korchunov described the current version of the European agreement on conventional arms as outdated. "We call for specific result-oriented talks on the future of the conventional arms control without any prerequisite conditions and bindings. A new version of the agreement should account for the current state of affairs on the continent and reflect the balance of interest minimizing military dominance of a single party or a group of countries."<sup>41</sup>

Commenting on attempts to make redeployment of the Russian military bases from the territory of South Ossetia and Abkhazia as well as removal of arms depot in Moldova's breakaway Dniester region as a prerequisite for revision of the conventional arms agreement, Korchunov said that "the Russian position is crystal clear and independent of political conjuncture". "Republics of Abkhazia and South Ossetia are regarded as independent states and allies of the Russian Federation. Our military units are deployed in these countries in agreement with their governments and in accordance with the inter-state agreements," he said. "As for the issue of Dniester region, I recall that in 2003, when the talks were intensified, more than half of the ammunition stored in region was removed. The process was suspended by Dniester region's leadership because of delays in the talks. We assume that once the talks demonstrate certain progress, the arms removal will resume."<sup>42</sup>

## **Dmitry Medvedev**

"The Lisbon summit last November opened a unique window of opportunity. The decisions made on that occasion were, overall, very positive indeed in our view, because it is precisely these sorts of

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<sup>41</sup> Interfax, Korchunov, 12 July 2011

<sup>42</sup> NATO Official website , Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Interfax, Korchunov, 12 July 2011

decisions that give us the base we need for building a strategic partnership on the principles of indivisible security, mutual trust, transparency, and predictability. This will boost global security and it is in the interests and hopes of everyone in our countries.”

“At its Lisbon summit, NATO approved its new strategic concept, which emphasizes the development of partnership relations with other countries and organizations around the world. We think this is important in order to build a more solid, stable, and secure world. We discussed just now with President Zuma one of the complicated issues before us at the moment - the situation in Libya. I think this is precisely the kind of situation in which we can make efforts together to achieve results and work as partners to discuss the most difficult questions and look for solutions”.<sup>43</sup>

## **Conclusion**

At first blush, the NATO summit held in Chicago had an ambitious and exhaustive agenda, which includes everything from the effects of government financial crises on defense budgets, to lessons from the successful action in Libya. You name it - exit strategies from Afghanistan, relations with Asia in a global NATO, cyber security - and its there. Yet one issue that is fundamental to the future of the alliance is conspicuously missing: the NATO-Russia relationship.

In late March, NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen announced the cancellation of the NATO-Russia Council Summit, slated to be held in conjunction with the NATO Summit. The official statement explained that the "timing is difficult...because Russia has a very busy domestic political calendar." And just last week President Vladimir Putin canceled his trip to the G8 Summit at Camp David.

Whatever the reason, it is no secret that the relationship between Russia and NATO remains troubled. This is unfortunate. In spite of recent tensions, the historically fractured Russia-NATO relationship is the most ripe for transformation.

Since 1997, when NATO and Russia laid the foundation for future cooperation and security, the connection has been nothing but fragile. Of course, the first rupture came when NATO offered membership to Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia - all countries sharing borders with Russia - as well as the Czech Republic and Slovakia.

At a time of great vulnerability, Russia felt the affront deeply; it had peacefully backed down from the superpower struggle, only to have its erstwhile enemy incorporate former Soviet states into the US-dominated alliance. Hardliners in Russia were ready to lash out with a military response, but

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<sup>43</sup> President of Russian Federation Official website

President Boris Yeltsin and others committed to transforming the country prevailed, instead focusing inward on domestic problems.

And the problems were many. In the 1990s, observers worried that Russia itself would be fragmented by ethnic strife and civil war. They aired concerns that the transition from a command to a market economy would leave many without employment and in dire poverty, and that the humiliation of a defeated Russia would give rise to hyper-nationalist leaders who might be even worse than communist bureaucrats. And they feared that some 40,000 nuclear weapons from poorly guarded and unsecured sites would leak out across the world.

Experts talked of four simultaneous revolutions in Russia: in the economic system; in domestic political institutions; in foreign relations, and in the psychology of the Russian people. It was anybody's guess whether a country could survive such wholesale challenges to its institutions, habits of thought, national identity, and to its social fabric.

The country's positive developments over the past 20 years are nothing short of a miracle - and they indeed offer the basis for putting Russian relations with NATO on a new footing. Due to the reasoned response of Mikhail Gorbachev, Yeltsin, and others, the cold war ended peacefully. Though still struggling to structure its economic institutions, Russia has reformed sufficiently to gain membership in the World Trade Organization and to support a rising middle class that is showing a taste for democratic action.

With the aid of the Cooperative Threat Reduction program, Russia has deactivated more than 7,500 nuclear weapons and secured some 24 nuclear weapons sites. Even more important for future collaboration, the United States and Russia have dismantled nuclear weapons side by side, in transparent operations observers could never have dreamed of, even at Reykjavik, where Ronald Reagan and Gorbachev talked of nuclear weapons abolition.

No one should overlook Russia's political corruption, its intimidation of journalists, and its belligerence toward countries on its borders. But if NATO could incorporate former enemies West Germany and Italy into the alliance after World War II, there is no reason that Russia should not join NATO now, two decades after the end of the cold war.

Two major obstacles stand in the way of Russia's full NATO membership: a lack of strategic agreement with the US on missile defense, and a failure to reconcile with former Eastern European

countries that once were Soviet client states. Neither obstacle is easily overcome; the countries involved have long histories - and even longer memories. Yet there are signs that accommodation is possible.<sup>44</sup>

The essential disagreement over missile defense is this: The US and NATO want to deploy an anti-ballistic missile system in Europe to destroy any potential Iranian nuclear-tipped missiles aimed at Europe or the US. Russia is concerned that the deployment of this anti-missile system in Europe is actually aimed at their nuclear arsenals, making their own defenses vulnerable, even though the US contends that this system is aimed at Iran and not Russia.

In fact, Russia is so worried about the destabilizing effects of this new system that last week the Russian General Staff chief General Nikolai Makarov remarked that Russia would consider pre-emptively destroying the European missile defense system if it were deployed, because it would threaten Russia's nuclear deterrent.

They see the plans as threatening, even though the US approach to missile defense - placing around 500 sea- and land-based interceptors throughout Europe over the upcoming years - is still not able to distinguish nuclear warheads from decoys or other debris. According to a September 2011 Defense Science Board report, as well as a recent US National Academy report, this failure of the European system renders the US defense so deeply flawed as to be useless.

Discussions in March between the US and Russian missile defense experts focused on a more limited but possibly more effective missile defense system, the Forward Active Defense, proposed by Ted Postol, a missile expert at MIT. Whatever the outcome developing this particular system, US-Russian technical collaboration is precisely the kind of cooperation that will help overcome the missile defense obstacle to Russian-NATO integration.

On the second obstacle, Eastern European memories of Soviet domination are beginning to fade as new generations are born into a world free of the cold war. As Poland, Slovakia, the Czech Republic, and the Baltic states develop economically and become more integrated into the world economy, memories of the humiliation and hostility associated with Soviet domination have been blunted.

In addition, cooperation on energy sources, including nuclear power, is likely to grow and to produce a new sense of partnership in the region. Transforming those commercial partnerships into the kind of trust required for formal Russian NATO membership will not be easy, but the alternative is

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<sup>44</sup> "Военные считают ПРО в Европе прямой угрозой России – Мир – Правда.Ру". Pravda.ru. 2007-08-22. Retrieved 2011-12-04.



continued political tension that distracts the region from the long-term and very real problems of nuclear weapons proliferation, energy insecurity, and economic stagnation.<sup>45</sup>

As NATO continues to expand its reach globally, it makes sense to invite the alliance's most prominent and able neighbor as a member. Russia possesses sophisticated military technology and already engages in military-to-military exchanges with the US. Russia also has a military-industrial infrastructure that could contribute capabilities that NATO currently lacks, and that the US has sought from its European partners for at least 20 years.

It is time to recognize how much Russia has accomplished in less than a generation, how much it could contribute to the military capacity of NATO, and how much its full cooperation could enhance global security if it were rewarded, finally, **with membership in NATO.**

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<sup>45</sup> Formal NATO-Russia Relations website

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