**Power, structures, and norms: determinants and patterns
of NATO-Russia relations since 1997**

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Abstract

This dissertation examines the institutionalized relationship between NATO and Russia since 1997; focussing on the outcomes of the 1997 Permanent Joint Council (PJC) and the 2002 NATO-Russia Council (NRC).

The legacy of Cold War structures has continued to influence the way NATO and Russia interact; most notably during the Kosovo crisis and in the aftermath of the attacks of September 11 that rang in the "post-post-Cold War era".

The bulk of the research consists of an empirical analysis of policy fields covered by the PJC and the NRC. Particular attention is given to NATO-Russia interaction in the Balkans, as well as to the fight against terrorism.

The case study assesses NATO-Russia interaction in Central Asia, taking into consideration geopolitical trends that will shape both actors' actions in the future.

Tracing events that have shaped NATO-Russia relations, this dissertation analyzes the quality of NATO-Russia relations and explains why certain patterns keep reoccurring.

Key words: NATO, Russia, Permanent Joint Council, NATO-Russia Council, Central Asia, the Balkans, 9/11

Zusammenfassung

Die vorliegende Arbeit beschäftigt sich mit der Untersuchung der institutionalisierten Beziehungen zwischen der NATO und Russland seit 1997 und konzentriert sich dabei besonders auf die Ergebnisse des „Permanent Council" (PJC, 1997) und des „NATO-Russia Council" (NRC, 2002).

Das Vermächtnis von Strukturen, die während des kalten Krieges entstanden, beeinflusst weiterhin die Interaktionen zwischen der NATO und Russland. Dies wurde insbesondere während der Kosovo-Krise und nach dem 11. September 2001, welcher die „post-post-Cold War era" einläutete, sichtbar.

Das zentrale Kapitel der Dissertation beinhaltet eine empirische Analyse der Policy-Felder, denen sich der PJC und der NRC widmen. Hier wird vor allem auf die Zusammenarbeit von der NATO und Russland auf dem Balkan und auf den Kampf gegen den Terrorismus eingegangen.

Die Fallstudie untersucht NATO-Russland Interaktionen in Zentralasien; besonders im Hinblick auf geopolitische Trends, die für beide Akteure und ihre zukünftigen Beziehungen wichtige Auswirkungen haben werden.

Diese Arbeit untersucht die Qualität der Beziehungen zwischen der NATO und Russland anhand von Ereignissen, welche diese Beziehungen geprägt haben und erklärt, warum manche Verhaltensmuster sich kontinuierlich wiederholen.

Schlagwörter: NATO, Russland, Permanent Joint Council, NATO-Russia Council, Zentralasien, Balkan, 11. September

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1. Introduction

The relationship between NATO and Russia constitutes a prominent feature of the post-Cold War world. Hostility between NATO and Russia has given way to reluctant rapprochement and cooperation: the cooperation was initiated with the Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security between NATO and the Russian Federation[1], signed on 27 May 1997 in Paris. This agreement was born out of the immediate response to the end of the Cold War, namely the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC) of 1991 and its successor organization the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) of 1997, as well as the Partnership for Peace (PfP) program, which Russia joined in June 1994. The emerging partnership was further strengthened by the establishment of the NATO-Russia Council (NRC)[2] on 28 May 2002 at the Rome Summit. NATO and Russia declared themselves to be "equal partners" within areas of mutual interest such as the fight against terrorism, crisis management, arms control, missile defense, military-to-military cooperation and civil emergencies. The forward-looking nature of this Council is expressed in its declaration: "NATO-Russian Relations: A New Quality."

This dissertation will assess how much of this ambitious agenda has actually materialized. It will furthermore analyze if this outcome is consistent with the hypothesis that a fruitful institutionalization of the relations between NATO and Russia has taken place. The euphoria that surrounded the signing of the cited documents has somewhat dissipated, and the question remains as to whether it has really created a new quality to cooperation. The qualitative outcome of the Founding Act, as well as the NRC, needs to be analyzed in order to assess trends of interaction that have led to either conflict or cooperation between the two actors. The period since 1997 can be seen as one of formal institutionalization of the relationship between NATO and Russia; therefore, the dissertation timeframe is 1997 to 2005[3]. Among post-1997 events, two stand out for the way they have shaped international relations generally, and the relationship between NATO and Russia in particular. The first was Operation Allied Forces (OAF), or the war in Kosovo in 1999. A turning point in the way NATO

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[1] Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security between NATO and the Russian Federation, Paris, 27th May 1997, NATO Basic Texts: www.nato.int/docu/basictxt/fndact-a.htm [last accessed on 13 January 2006].
[2] NATO-Russia Council: NRC Statement, http://www.nato.int/docu/basictxt/b020528e.htm, [last accessed on 7 February 2006].
[3] 1997-2005 thus constitutes the timeframe of this dissertation, however, where needed, reference will be made to events taking place outside this timeframe; though only in a complementary fashion.

understands its *raison d'être*, OAF came as a great shock to Russia, as its worst fears seemed to have been confirmed. The second event was the 11th of September 2001: arguably, the NRC was created as a result of the events of 9/11, as the fight against terrorism is a main focus of the new relation between Russia and NATO.[4] These two events are generally seen as being exemplary of the opposites that this dissertation is seeking to analyze. However, a closer look reveals that the commonly-held belief about the impact these two events had needs to be analyzed more thoroughly. That Kosovo did have an impact on relations between Russia and NATO, and more generally, between Russia and "the West" is undeniably true. Nevertheless, looking at the actual NATO–Russia institutional structures that were in place before Kosovo, the question arises as to whether or not Kosovo was as crucial to NATO–Russia relations as is generally believed. It is possible that the pattern of conflict and cooperation presents itself differently from what general assumptions tell us. Tracing and analyzing these patterns – and establishing what this means in a more general context – is what this dissertation seeks to do.

The first chapter of this dissertation will introduce the research interest, namely what patterns of either conflict or cooperation are evident in NATO-Russia interaction since 1997. Specifically with regard to NATO and Russia, the systemic, as well as normative environment the two actors find themselves in has to be included in an analysis seeking answers to questions related to the material outcomes and developments of a given interaction. In order to do so, I will first provide an overview of the existing literature on NATO and Russia to identify current trends and focal points of interest to my dissertation. I will also put the existing relationship between the two actors within the historical context of the immediate post-Cold War era, outlining some basic foundations established during that time that continue to shape present-day interaction between NATO and Russia. I will then introduce the dissertation's research questions, hypotheses and theoretical interest.

1.1. Whither NATO?

The plethora of literature that concerns itself with issues in International Relations (IR) is an indicator of the dynamics of the field. Universally acknowledged truths of the Cold

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[4] According to most sources, a second reason for the establishment of the NRC was the upcoming second wave of NATO enlargement in March 2004 that opened up the alliance to seven Central and East European countries. In return for a Russian policy of no obstruction to this enlargement, a bilateral and exclusive relationship was offered.

War were subject to new scrutiny after the fall of the Berlin Wall. Pawns on the "Grand Chessboard" of international politics, an image evoked by former US National Security Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski,[5] were once again set in motion, triggering a realignment of worldwide proportions. Among these realignments, the strategic positions assumed after 1990 by the former adversaries of the Cold War turned out to be quite different from what could have been expected. Russia, which emerged as the successor state of the Soviet Union, was left with the legacy of a lost war, and was weakened economically, politically and morally. More astonishingly, contrary to expectations and tenets of theories in IR, the "winner" of the Cold War did not disband. NATO not only survived the end of the Cold War – and with it, its raison d'être – but is today considered an effective alliance, if not *the* most effective.

An alliance is considered to be a largely utilitarian institution, or, in other words, an institution that is assessed according to its effectiveness. Different theories on alliance-formation and alliance–maintenance will be discussed in chapter 2. Suffice it to say here that an alleged axiom ("alliances do not outlive their purpose") was disproven by the continued existence of NATO.[6] This, in turn, prompted scholars to engage in a fresh debate on the nature and purpose of alliances. More specifically, attempts have been made to assess why NATO was different from previous alliances. The majority view on NATO during the 1990s is summarized in statement:

The governments of the United States, Canada, and the European members of NATO believe that continuation of the transatlantic alliance will serve their vital interests. But there is no consensus among or within NATO member states concerning the missions that the alliance should pursue in the period of history that follows the Cold War. There consequently is no consensus on how the North Atlantic Treaty Organization – the structure created to implement the Treaty's goals under very different circumstances than those that obtain today – should be reformed to serve their interests in the future.[7]

This statement illustrates an important point: it touches upon the topical issue of the fate of an alliance that has outlived its purpose due to unforeseen developments in

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[5] Brzezinski, Zbigniew: "The grand chessboard", New York: Basic Books, 1997.
[6] It is of course debatable whether the statement "alliances do not outlive their purpose" is empirically true or not. Arguably, the UN has outlived its purpose as well, yet it still exists. However, alliances created for the purpose of collective defense are indeed sparse. The collapse of the Warsaw Pact made NATO's survival all the more extraordinary.
[7] Sloan, Stanley: "NATO's future: beyond collective defense", Washington DC: Congressional Research Report Service, Foreword, 1995, Foreword.

international relations. The past 15 years have aptly been referred to in IR literature as a "time of transition". For NATO, this transition time was mainly characterized by three events: enlargement, the war in Kosovo and the aftermath of September 11th. All three events can be understood as being a result of transition, which is in itself a time where established patterns are questioned and redefined:

Instead of being confronted with a well-known and defined threat of a global conflict of the two competing social systems, the "new" NATO faces today a multiplicity of risks stemming from systemic transformation, national and ethnic revival and, last but not least, disappearance of the Soviet Union. Being confronted with the new realities NATO had to find new responses to the new challenges.[8]

These new challenges were partly met with – or, depending on personal assessments, aggravated by – two rounds of enlargement, in 1999 and in 2004.[9] There is an abundance of literature dealing with the immediate challenges of the two rounds of enlargement, as well as potential long-term strategic shifts.[10] While a study by Helga Haftendorn views NATO enlargement in a generally positive light[11], others such as Jutta Koch examine the cost of enlargement and the possible strain that this might put on an already fragile Atlantic Alliance, where burden-sharing is often not defined in equal terms, reaching the conclusion that there still exists no price tag with regard to the two rounds of enlargement.[12]

The second event that shaped NATO's phase of transition was the war in Kosovo, Operation Allied Forces, in 1999. Timothy Garton Ash notes that the "war in Kosovo was the last European war of the twentieth century, and NATO's first."[13] Not only did NATO decide for the first time in its history to use force against a sovereign state for humanitarian reasons, but it also redefined the concept of NATO "out-of-area" missions, setting a precedent for future operations. NATO involvement in Kosovo was

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[8] Stryken, Christian-Marius: "NATO enlargement – promoting social stability or strategic balance?", Oslo: Norwegian Institute of International Affairs, Report # 223, 1997, pp. 1-28, p.8.

[9] In the first round of enlargement, Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary joined NATO on March 12, 1999. NATO admitted Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia on March 29, 2004.

[10] E.g. Asmus, Ronald, Kruger, Richard and Larrabee, F. Stephen: "What will NATO enlargement cost?", in: Survival, vol. 38, #3, 1997, pp. 5-26.

[11] Haftendorn, Helga: "Eine neue NATO?", Berlin: Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, 2004.

[12] Koch, Jutta: "Kosten der NATO-Osterweiterung: Nur eine amerikanische Debatte?", in: Wissenschaft und Frieden, vol. 2, Münster University, 1997.

[13] Garton Ash, Timothy "Kosovo: was it worth it?", in: New York Review of Books, #47, 14.-21. September, 2000, pp. 50-60, p.50.

met with staunch opposition from the Yugoslav government, and was therefore generally perceived to set an example for an intervention undertaken by a third party against a sovereign state. This triggered responses, especially on the part of the Russians, that were an indicator of the fragile state of affairs in international relations after the end of the Cold War.[14]

Arguably, both Kosovo and the two rounds of enlargement were events that illustrated the state of international politics within the parameters of the post-Cold War era. The event that has largely been assessed as the definitive end to the 15 year period since the fall of the Berlin wall, and the third defining event for NATO after enlargement and Kosovo, was the attacks of 9/11 and the ensuing war on terror. The conflict with global terrorism made it evident that existing structures and modes of conflict resolution were inadequate and had to be rethought. Ironically, it was the very action undertaken by NATO as a reaction to the new challenge that openly demonstrated that the tools at NATO's disposition had become inadequate. Article V was invoked for the first time in history[15] on 12 September 2001, and was then almost immediately sidelined by the US in the ensuing war in Afghanistan, thereby questioning NATO's traditional modus operandi. Instead of calling upon NATO's capabilities, the US opted for a pick-and-choose approach, taking on board equipment or troops from member states most suitable for fighting Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF).[16] Opinion about what this means specifically for the future of NATO, and "Western cooperation" generally, differs widely. Tom Landsford concludes that 9/11 was an opportunity and a wake-up call for NATO to measure up to its commitments in a post-Cold War world by

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[14] Reports by decision-makers of the war in Kosovo include Clark, Wesley: "Waging modern war", New York: Public Affairs, 2001. Analyses regarding the conflict are plentiful: e.g. Booth, Ken (ed.): "The Kosovo tragedy: the human rights dimensions", London: Frank Cass, 2001, or Reuter, Jens and Clewig, Konrad (ed.): "Der Kosovo Konflikt: Ursachen, Verlauf und Perspektiven", Klagenfurt: Wieser Verlag, 2000, as well as Wheeler, Nicolas: "Saving strangers: humanitarian intervention in international society", Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000. The predecessor to the Kosovo war, namely the war in Bosnia has been analyzed thoroughly by Holbrooke, Richard: "To end a war", New York: Random House, 1998.
[15] Article V of the North Atlantic Treaty states that "The Parties agree that an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all and consequently they agree that, if such an armed attack occurs, each of them, in exercise of the right of individual or collective self-defence recognised by Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations, will assist the Party or Parties so attacked by taking forthwith, individually and in concert with the other Parties, such action as it deems necessary, including the use of armed force, to restore and maintain the security of the North Atlantic area. Any such armed attack and all measures taken as a result thereof shall immediately be reported to the Security Council. Such measures shall be terminated when the Security Council has taken the measures necessary to restore and maintain international peace and security.", http://www.nato.int/docu/basictxt/treaty.htm, [last accessed on 13 September 2005].
[16] Operation Enduring Freedom is the US-led invasion of Afghanistan that started in October 2001 as a response to the terrorist attacks of 9/11.

streamlining its capabilities in order to be better equipped for global challenges.[17] Others, like Klaus Wiesmann, contend that it might already be too late for this, and that the US, as the only remaining superpower, has already made up its mind to "go it alone" for the sake of efficiency.[18] It is, however, generally agreed upon that the NATO's modus operandi cannot be the same as it was during the Cold War, lending new credibility – albeit in a limited way – to the premise that "no alliance has ever survived victory."[19]

A partial answer to the question of NATO's future was given by events that occurred in the aftermath of 9/11. As has already been mentioned, the US did not call upon NATO after the Alliance had invoked Article V. At the time, this was interpreted by some analysts as proof that NATO had indeed become an obsolete organization. However, the events following 9/11 should be interpreted in a less fatalistic way as far as NATO's existence is concerned. One could argue that the US' decision to not call upon the Alliance was the hour of birth of the "new NATO". Simply expanding "old NATO" in order to catch up with international developments would no longer suffice, especially since enlargement creates unnecessary friction with third states, in particular Russia:

If NATO cannot be restructured as an organization dedicated to conflict resolution, then it is still important to recognize the dangers of limited expansion. The threat that this alliance would pose to the international system greatly outweighs any benefits [of limited expansion.]. Alliance research would suggest, then, that any pacifying role for NATO has long since passed unless major changes are implemented.[20]

Arguably, the "major changes" Douglas Gibler refers to became visible – though they had been worked on for some time before – with the war on terror. The need for structural change within NATO, though already evident after the end of the Cold War, suddenly became even more urgent with the challenges that the fight against terror would pose.

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[17] See Landsford, Tom: "All for one: Terrorism, NATO and the US", London: Ashgate, 2002.
[18] Wiesmann, Klaus: "Die vielleicht letzte Chance der NATO", Berlin: Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, 2003.
[19] Landsford, 2002.
[20] Gibler, Douglas: "East or further east?", in: Journal of Peace Research, vol. 36, #6, 1999, pp. 627-637, p. 636.

One might even argue that compared to other institutions, NATO adapted rather well to the structural changes of the 1990s.[21] John Duffield contends that "Although born of the Cold War, the alliance has been adapted to address many of the new security challenges faced by its member states."[22] In order to be able to deal with new threats and the security challenges of the post Cold-War world, such as terrorism, more flexible and streamlined capabilities were needed than those designed to fight a nuclear war between two superpowers. This process of reform began as early as 1993 with the launch of the Combined Joint Task Force (CJTF), which was designed as a multinational and multi-service task force, task-organised and formed for the full range of the Alliance's military missions.[23] Furthermore, the launch of the Defense Capabilities Initiative (DCI) at the 1999 Washington Summit represented one of the most concerted efforts to transform an international organization ever: "the Alliance has examined areas where improvements in capabilities would make a significant contribution towards meeting the challenges of the future. The aim has been to develop a common assessment of requirements for the full range of Alliance missions."[24] The DCI was refocused at the 2002 Prague Summit, adopting a three-pronged approach to improving its defense capabilities: first, the launch of the Prague Capabilities Commitment (PCC)[25], second, the creation of the NATO Response Force (NRF)[26] and third, the streamlining of the military command structure.[27] NATO also adopted a military concept for defense against terrorism and initiated a new missile defense feasibility study.

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[21] See for example Haftendorn, Helga: "Das Ende der alten NATO", in: Internationale Politik, vol. 57, #4, pp. 49-54.
[22] Duffield, John: Power rules: the evolution of NATO's conventional force posture", Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995.
[23] The Combined Joint Task Force (CJTF) Concept, NATO Handbook, http://www.nato.int/docu/ handbook/2001/hb1204.htm, [last accessed on 12 April 2006].
[24] Improving NATO's operational capabilities, http://www.nato.int/issues/capabilities/index.html, [last accessed on 27 April 2006].
[25] The PCC is an "effort to improve and develop new military capabilities for modern warfare in a high threat environment. Individual Allies have made firm and specific political commitments to improve their capabilities in the areas of chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear defence; intelligence, surveillance, and target acquisition; air-to-ground surveillance; command, control and communications; combat effectiveness, including precision guided munitions and suppression of enemy air defences; strategic air and sea lift; air-to-air refuelling; and deployable combat support and combat service support units", Prague Summit Declaration, 21 November 2002, http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/2002/p02-127e.htm, [last accessed on 27 April 2006]. The PCC also advocates greater interoperability with EU forces.
[26] NRF builds on the concept of the CJTF: "a permanently available multinational joint force at very high readiness, consisting of land, air and sea components, as well as various specialist functions", Prague Summit Declaration, 21 November 2002, http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/2002/p02-127e.htm, [last accessed on 27 April 2006].
[27] A commitment to establishing "leaner, more efficient, effective and deployable command structure, with a view to meeting the operational requirements for the full range of Alliance missions." Command posts were reduced to two: one central strategic command for operations, Allied Command Operations (ACO) in Mons, Belgium; and one strategic command for transformation, Allied Command

The general need seen by NATO to transform the Alliance after the end of the Cold War gained absolute prominence after the attacks on 9/11: here, the outcome of the Prague Summit is testimony to this fact. Thus, it would be incorrect to state that NATO has not undergone structural changes in an effort to adapt to the changed international environment. The pertinent question, then, is whether these changes are adequate. Some developments, such as the refusal of individual member states to actually commit to the Prague Capabilities Commitment, might suggest that the changes are of a cosmetic nature. Others, such as the increasing number of missions that NATO is taking on, are sending more positive signals. Acknowledging NATO's important transformation, the question is if and how this transformation has influenced the way the Alliance interacts with Russia and vice-versa.

1.2. Russia and its position vis-à-vis NATO

No other country has been more affected by NATO than Russia, on a political, military, and psychological level. Even before the start of the Cold War, Russia's very own self-definition and self-understanding had been rooted in the fact that it is not a part of the Western community. Moves to integrate Russia into western European structures are plentiful, and extend from efforts of Peter the First and Catherine the Great in the 18th century[28], to foreign policy orientations under Boris Yeltsin and Vladimir Putin. A puzzling ambivalence can be observed between the desire to be considered a part of that Western community and value system on the one hand and a proud self-depiction of Russia as a country apart in the community of nations on the other. This ambiguity lies at the heart of many issues that need to be taken into consideration when analyzing the peculiar relationship between Russia and the West in the form of individual states or organizations.

The extraordinary and unique situation of the Soviet Union during the Cold War further exacerbated the "Russian problem". On the one hand, the Soviet Union assumed the role of one of the world's two superpowers, whose actions, along with those of the United States determined much of the fate of the planet. On the other hand, Russia's marginalization within the international system was further solidified. The Soviet

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Transformation (ACT), in Norfolk, USA, Prague Summit Declaration, 21 November 2002, http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/2002/p02-127e.htm, [last accessed on 27 April 2006].
[28] Figes, Orlando: "Natasha's dance. A cultural history of Russia", New York: Picador, 2002, chapter 1. For a comprehensive overview of Russian history see Stökl, Günther: "Russische Geschichte", Stuttgart: Kröner, 1983.

empire, which consisted of its component republics as well as satellite states turned out to not be a stable system. Being put on the defensive – whether by historic trends or intentionally by the West – is a Russian perception of events whose importance should not be underestimated. This marginalization was obscured by perceptions of power and bipolarity during the Cold War, but became all the more visible with the end of the Cold War, when the successor state of the Soviet empire found itself with few allies and a legacy of having been on the "wrong" side of the ideological divide for 40 years. The disintegration of the Soviet system continues to lie at the heart of many problems and challenges that shape Russian internal and foreign politics until this day.

Russia's marginalization in the post-Cold War international system has been exacerbated by the psychological and political shock of losing "empire" status. This has been observed by many experts on Russia, among them Heinz Timmermann, who speaks of a "phantom pain" Russia feels as a result of the disintegration of the Soviet Union [29]. Adding to that pain, as well as causing humiliation, is the perception of having lost the Cold War and the ensuing loss of importance in international politics. Only a few people perceived the end of the Soviet Union to be an inevitable consequence of historical developments and a chance for a better future for Russia. A notable proponent of this view is Sergei Medvedev who calls the 1990s a "catastrophe that wasn't" for Russia. Medvedev concedes that Russia was indeed deprived of its geopolitical importance when the bipolar system collapsed. However, he puts forward the notion that Russia significantly advanced its cooperation efforts with the West during the 1990s, which resulted in "Russia [remaining] anchored in a cooperative framework at the margin of Western institutions."[30] Conversely, according to Timmermann, this further aggravated the views of sections of the Russian population because some perceived the relative loss of power and status of the Russian Federation as a transitional status quo that would subside when more appropriate leaders were once again in power. Largely a consequence of "leftover" imperial thinking, this mindset played an important role in the years following the collapse of the Soviet Union. [31]

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[29] Timmermann, Heinz: "Die Verarbeitung des Ende des Sowjetimperiums im heutigen russischen Bewusstsein", paper presented at the conference "Transformationen der Erinnerungskulturen?", Forschungsinstitut Arbeit, Bildung, Partizipation (FIAB)/ Stiftung zur Aufarbeitung der SED-Diktatur, Recklinghausen, 23 February 2005.
[30] Medvedev, Sergei (ed.): "Russia and the West at the millennium: global imperatives and domestic policies", Garmisch-Partenkirchen: George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies, 2003.
[31] Ibid.

The state of the Russian Federation in the years immediately after the disintegration of the Soviet Union could be summed up with the following words: decline – economically as well as politically; instability; lack of direction, to the point of national trauma. Whereas some other states emerged from the post-Soviet disorder with a clear orientation towards the future, there was no concept of realignment in order to adjust to the new political environment for the Russian Federation. While the former Soviet satellite states immediately began orienting themselves to Europe and the transatlantic Alliance, the status of Russia as the "loser" of the Cold War could not be defined so quickly. Even though the late Soviet leadership under Mikhail Gorbachev, as well as the Yeltsin administration made frequent use of a vocabulary that suggested that Russia would from now on be part of the European concert of nations, in reality Russia found itself marginalized and with few remaining allies, as mentioned above. Whereas Central and Eastern Europe quickly and without hesitation turned away from the former Soviet empire, euphoric hopes for the close integration of Russia into Euro-Atlantic structures were not only voiced by Russia's leaders, but also by leaders of western European states and by the US leadership.

It is important to note that the sense of euphoria present in the interactions between Russia and the West immediately after the collapse of the Soviet Union, which continued well into the early 1990s was soon replaced by a more somber, and some say, more realistic attitude as far as relations between Russia and "the West" were concerned. According to Stephen White,

[t]he Russian president and his government moved from a 'naïve Westernism' that had assumed a basic community of interests to a vigorous defence of what they took to be the Russian national interest … But if Russia still 'mattered', there was no disguising the fact that it had lost almost a quarter of the territory …, and almost half the population … This meant, unavoidably, that Russia's place in the world order was a very different one from that of its Soviet predecessor: weaker, and often marginal.[32]

The idea of "naïve Westernism" on the Russian side is picked up in many analyses related to Russia and the West's "relationship" dilemma after the end of the bipolar stand-off. In a very thorough analysis of three important documents published by the Russian government – the Foreign Policy Concept of 1993, the National Security

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[32] White, Stephen: "Russia's new politics: the management of a post-communist society", Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press, 2002, p. 250.

Concept of 1997 and the Foreign Policy Concept of 2000 – Alla Kassianova traces the change in attitude toward foreign policy and Russia's place in the world over the course of seven years.[33] The most poignant observation concerns the sense of Russian disillusionment over the way that the much-heralded Russian arrival in the European political, cultural and security community had in fact failed to materialize. Whereas the 1993 document uncompromisingly sees Russia's future as being with the West in every aspect, the 2000 document reflects a change of assessment of the possibility of that happening, and a return to the traditional way of viewing Russia as a country apart from the rest of the world resurfaced, complete with a new threat assessment to the security of the Russian Federation.[34]

As of the mid-1990s, a foreign and defence policy realignment in Russia away from pro-Westernism, and back to a more traditional view of Russia's place in the world took place. This has resulted in a positioning of Russia against the "West" that is much more multi-layered, and more difficult to understand and assess. The outcome of Russia's realignment in international relations is two-fold: first, it put an end to the rhetoric of the years immediately after the end of the Cold War, which was limited to viewing relations between Russia and the West in light of what the desired outcome was, rather than in light of what the actual components of this inherently difficult relationship were and how they affected politics in the early 1990s. The hope that decades of conflict would transform into seamless cooperation turned out to be unrealistic. Second, predictability and stability in terms of planning significantly decreased as Russia transformed itself from an ally to an unpredictable force to be reckoned with.[35] Conversely, in the late 90s it was not uncommon to call for Russian admittance to western political and security structures such as NATO and the EU. James Baker for instance openly rallied support for a NATO enlargement that would extend through

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[33] Kassianova, Alla: "Ist Russland noch westorientiert? Die Entwicklung der Staatsidentität in den Diskursen über die Außen- und Sicherheitspolitik", in: Osteuropa: Zeitschrift für Gegenwartsfragen des Ostens, 2001, pp.1199-1218.

[34] Ibid.

[35] It is largely axiomatic to consider Russian foreign policy in the 1990s "unpredictable". An author who differs from this majority viewpoint is Toft, Peter: "The stability of Russia's grand strategy", Kopenhagen: Kobenhavns Universitet, Institut for Statskundskab, 2004. In his paper, Toft argues that contrary to the majority of research conducted in the field of Russian foreign policy of the 1990s, Russia's foreign policy is by no means incoherent or unpredictable, but on the contrary in fact displays a number of durable patterns that add up to a coherent policy whose main objective is to salvage as much as possible in terms of Russian influence on world politics. According to Toft, the seemingly incoherent Russian approach to foreign policy stem from variations in the security dilemma after the end of the Cold War. Western powers can assess Russian behavior by asking the question: "How is a declining great power likely to respond to its strategic situation?"

Eastern Europe all the way to Russia, interestingly arguing that if Russia were to not join the North Atlantic Alliance then the alliance would risk becoming obsolete and "the most successful alliance in history is destined to follow the threat that created it into the dustbin of history."[36] Implicitly, Baker suggested that the Cold War would only truly end when Russia joined the organization that was set up to out of the need to defend the West from it. Arguably, this assessment of the international order after the end of the Cold War in itself explains why Russia did not in fact join NATO, as the inevitable message to Russians was that they had indeed lost the Cold War and therefore had no choice but to join the winners.

This is picked up in an article by Ivan Safranchuk, who states that by 1993-1994 it had become obvious to the Russians that the West was "taking advantage of Russia's weakness", while at the same time neglecting President Yeltsin's "world leader ambitions."[37] While clearly stating that Russia's self-perception as a superpower creates problems, Safranchuk's article nevertheless stresses the fact that, however unjustified Russian dreams of superpower might have been they nevertheless continue to be firmly lodged in the minds of the Russians themselves. As Safranchuk points out, "NATO's survival beyond the Cold War was regarded in Russia as the major factor of imbalance and inequality in its relation with the individual members of NATO, the United States in particular."[38] Clearly, the fact that NATO in itself triggers a more emotional response from the Russian side than any other Western institution or individual country also plays a big role in this dilemma. This is an issue that will be discussed in greater detail later on, as there clearly is a hierarchy of importance of "Western institutions and countries" as far as Russian perceptions are concerned.

Even so, many observers have subsequently noted a general trend towards a new orientation of Russia, which can best be described as wanting to finish the "post-Cold War era". A key aspect of this new Russian foreign policy orientation, coinciding with the Putin presidency, is that Russia has begun to realistically assess its power potential in international relations. This assessment centers on the premise that Russia views the United States as the only remaining superpower and that at present it is not able to act as

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[36] Baker, James A.: "Russia in NATO?", The Washington Quarterly, vol. 4, 2002, pp. 95–103.
[37] Safranchuk, Ivan: "Russia and NATO: Looking beyond expansion", in: Valasek, Thomas and Hitchens, Theresa (eds.): "Growing pains: the debate on the next round of NATO enlargement", Washington DC: CDI, 2002, pp. 77-88.
[38] Ibid, p. 78.

a counterweight to the United States. In other words, "Russia accepts the dominance of the United States because it is believed that there is no opportunity of shaking off America's hegemony at the moment. For this reason, Vladimir Putin continues to pursue his pragmatic policy of 'strategic partnership with Washington…"[39] It is important to understand that Russia's place in the world is seen differently by Russia itself than it is in the West, and that debates around the subject differ in content and style. Though this might seem simplistic, it can not be reiterated often enough, as Western scholarship – in the tradition of Cold War-research – very often analyzes Russia from an outsider's perspective; the distinction between Western perception of events in Russia and the actual events that take place often gets blurred.

This is especially true when the unit of analysis concerns the relation between Russia and the West itself. Andrei Tsygankov and Pavel Tsygankov provide insightful feedback, pointing out that

[f]or a long time, international relations have been developing as an excessively West-centric and pro-Western branch of research. As many scholars pointed out, IR theory all too often reflects political, ideological, and epistemological biases of Western, particularly American, civilization. As a result, a perception has arisen throughout the world that Western International Relations theory – and Western social science in general – is nothing but a sophisticated ideology and a set of conceptual tools that serve to justify Western global hegemony.[40]

According to the authors, this is especially true in the area of IR, which in Russia has been understudied, in part due to the ideological confines that the communist dictatorship put on the subject, as well as on social sciences in general. Whether Western influence over the field of IR is as prominent as Tsygankov and Tsygankov suggest is of course open for discussion. Their allegation, if proven to be correct, would indeed challenge commonly-held beliefs in international theory and call for a re-evaluation taking into consideration non-Western points of view. Such an undertaking is, however, beyond the scope of this dissertation. The argument presented by

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[39] Manutscharjan, Aschot: "Die Putin-Doktrin; Eine Neuausrichtung der russischen Sicherheitspolitik", in: KAS Auslandsinformationen vol. 2, #4, Berlin: Kondrad Adenauer Stiftung, 2004, pp. 4-34, p. 5.
[40] Tsygankov, Andrei and Tsygankov, Pavel: "New directions in Russian international studies: pluralization, westernization, and isolationism", in: Communist and post-communist studies, vol. 37, March 2004, pp.1-17, http://www.sciencedirect.com/science?_ob=MImg&_imagekey=B6VGF-4BJ20KY-3-1&_cdi=6037&_user=964000&_orig=browse&_coverDate=03%2F31%2F2004&_sk=999629998&view=c&wchp=dGLbVlbzSkWb&md5=7478e0b5f93ca05be2cc11e8f03c06ad&ie=/sdarticle.pdf [last accessed on 20 July 2005].

Tsygankov and Tsygankov should not be viewed as an invitation to call into question the basis of IR theory. It should, however, remind scholars that the same event can be evaluated very differently by different actors. Keeping this in mind can provide scholars with an understanding of seemingly paradoxical actions on the part of the Russians.

Useful insights into the debate on IR and the part Russia has played in it since the collapse of the Soviet Union can be found in Tatyana Shakleyina's and Aleksei Boguratov's article "The Russian realist school of international relations."[41] In their article, they discuss the different branches of realist theory that are used in the debate on international relations scholarship. The realist school takes a prominent place in Russian political theory and has served as the basis for policy implementation ever since the mid-1990s. The main difference between the realist school and the liberal school in Russian political theory, according to Shakleyina and Boguratov, is that "while Russian liberals view democratic institutions and norms as the pillar of the world order, realists put emphasis on power centers, poles, using this perspective to describe the forming international system."[42] While this statement is valid in the wider theoretical IR context, the term "pole" is of particular importance. The concept of a uni-, bi- or indeed multipolar world continues to shape the way international relations are assessed in Russia, and consequently, how Russia should position itself in the international system. Views expressed by scholars in the realist tradition differ widely. They range from advocating a Sino-Russian axis against the US to supporting an alliance with Western countries, which would include relationships with both the US and Western Europe.[43] However, most realists agree that "foreign policy strategy must be based upon national interests and on the state's resolution in defending Russia's national interests in relations with the outside world."[44] Furthermore, according to the authors, most realists do not trust the US and point at incidences when the US has violated the concepts of multilateral action and of national sovereignty, relying instead on an excessive use of force in order to further their interests.

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[41] Shakleyina, Tatyana and Bogaturov, Aleksei: "The Russian realist school of international relations", in: communist and post-communist studies, vol. 37, March 2004, pp. 37-51, 2004, http://www.sciencedirect.com/science?_ob=MImg&_imagekey=B6VGF-4BP3KJ2-1-1&_cdi=6037&_user=964000&_orig=browse&_coverDate=03%2F31%2F2004&_sk=999629998&view=c&wchp=dGLbVzz-zSkWb&md5=69a10cb503f050feca1ed5bd46d31f93&ie=/sdarticle.pdf [last accessed on 20 July 2005].
[42] Ibid, p.38.
[43] Ibid, p.42.
[44] Ibid.

1.3. What prospects for Russia and NATO?

The positions mentioned are important in so far as they offer an insight into the realignment of power vectors. On the "grand chessboard" of international politics and security issues, Russia has and, to a certain extent, continues to define itself *vis-à-vis* the West. This maxim now has to be broken down into its component parts in order to get to the heart of this thesis' research question. The disappearance of bipolarity as the underlying security structure caught Russia – and the rest of the world – off guard. Though it is impossible to assess with hindsight whether or not the state of bipolarity was the guarantor for peace that it was generally perceived to be, the important issue to keep in mind is that the "chessboard" of international relations turned out to be much more multi-layered and complicated when compared to security structures of the Cold War. This applies especially to the ever-important issue of balance of power, which shifted from a *perceived* equality of two superpowers to a state of gross imbalance. This new situation was perceived differently, with assessments ranging from euphoria that the world community now had a chance of uniting under democratic principles to uneasiness about the inherent danger in unchecked unipolar power – even before the US had risen from its status of Cold War winner to world hegemon.

No other symbol of this imbalance is more poignant than the continued existence of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, established in 1949 to meet the rising security threat posed by the Soviet Union. This completes the cycle with regard to the opening remarks of this chapter. The relationship that has emerged between the former adversaries of the Cold War, namely between the Russian Federation and NATO – as the most prominent symbol of the Cold War "West" – offers a plethora of insights with regard to a wider set of questions pertaining to IR. Expectations and predictions about this relationship have apparently been either validated or universally repudiated, depending on who is asked. For example, the 2002 RAND White Paper entitled "NATO and Russia: Bridge-building for the 21st century"[45], concedes that it is in both actors' mutual interest to "forge a new relationship based on a genuine partnership that can help to provide lasting security for all nations in Eurasia and can hasten Russia's integration into the family of democratic, market-oriented nations."[46] Among those goals, the authors mention the intent to fully take into consideration the interests of all European

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[45] Hunter, Robert, Rogov, Sergey and Oliker, Olga: "NATO and Russia: bridge-building for the 21st century. Report of the working group on NATO – Russia relations", Santa Monica: RAND, 2002.
[46] Ibid, p. 3.

states, including those of Central Europe, creating new mechanisms for discussion and resolution of 'inevitable' differences, and the pursuit of a practical agenda of common tasks, in Europe or beyond.[47] This bears witness to the often nurtured wish that NATO and Russia would emerge from the chaos of the immediate post-Cold War era as partners. However, this positiveness is subsequently dampened in the introductory paragraph about the group's findings on the actual state of the art with regard to the relationship of NATO and Russia. The RAND working group concedes that outcome of this relationship has, *to an extent*, been successful. However, "Russia has been disappointed at what it sees to be NATO's unwillingness sufficiently to coordinate with Russia and to take its interests into account prior to making decisions…"[48] Assessments such as these are not uncommon.

Finally, avid nay-sayers to NATO continue to represent an important force in Russia. One of the most prominent, the Chairman of the Presidium of the Council on Foreign and Defence Policy, Sergei Karaganov argued continuously throughout the 1990s that NATO was diametrically opposed to Russian interests. Concerning enlargement he wrote in 1995 that "NATO's plans for expansion mean a potential new Yalta, a potential new split of Europe, even if less severe than before. By accepting the rules of the game, which are being forced on her ... Russia will lose. And Europe will lose, too."[49] During the early 2000s, Karaganov adjusted his views on NATO–Russia relations, arguing for a transformation of NATO that would make Russian membership an option − in which case Russia and NATO might be able to work together in order to tackle new, post-Cold War threats.[50] Still, Karaganov remained sceptical about the prospects of NATO–Russia cooperation. He is also doubtful whether Russia and NATO would ever reach the financial and military capabilities that are needed for "genuine cooperation."[51] Though his recent works have shifted the focus away from NATO as a danger to Russian interests and instead point to a series of new threats that have gained in prominence, Karaganov continues to see Russian interests threatened by different sides.[52]

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[47] Ibid.
[48] Ibid.
[49] Karaganov, Sergei: "The threat of another defeat", in*: Nezavisimaya Gazeta, 3 February 1995, published by NATO, http://www.nato.int/docu/review/1995/9502-6.htm, [last accessed on 2 May 2006].
[50] Karaganov, Sergei: "Russia should form a normal relationship with the West", Interview in Nezavisimaya Gazeta, 6 March 2002, published by the Center for Defence Information, Russia Weekly, Washington DC, www.cdi.org/Russia/196-10.cfm, [last accessed on 2 May 2006].
[51] Ibid.
[52] Karaganov, Sergei: "New contours of the world order", in: Russia in Global Affairs, vol. 3, #4, Moscow, October-December 2005, http://eng.globalaffairs.ru/numbers/13/963.html [last accessed on 2 May 2006].

In summary, enthusiasm about Russia joining NATO faded around 1996-1997 and was never resurrected in the same way. Since then, a certain amount of "working pragmatism" has appeared. For example, the issue of NATO enlargement and how it might affect Russia was taken very seriously on both sides. Interestingly, many Western, and particularly US analysts cautioned against NATO enlargement during the late 1990s precisely because it was feared that this would aggravate Russia at a time that should be used as a unique opportunity to build up a lasting partnership with Russia.[53] At the other end of the spectrum there were those who strongly advocated Russian membership in NATO, albeit with one important distinction: Russian membership in NATO would be equivalent to redefining the status quo of the Atlantic Alliance. For example, Ira Straus argues in favour of NATO's expansion, not only to Eastern Europe, but ultimately, to include Russia as well. He points out that

[t]he standard argument against having Russia in NATO is that NATO is an anti-Russian alliance. Therefore, NATO plus Russia equals zero … [but] what is NATO? Is NATO essentially an anti-Russian alliance? I would argue that it is not. Certainly its main business in the first 40 years of its existence was to defend against Soviet power. NATO, however, is not just the institution formed in 1949 and defined by its functional activity up to 1989…[54]

However, this line of argumentation did not prevail. Towards the end of the 1990s, several developments such as the above-mentioned Russian foreign policy realignment and OAF[55] terminated debates about membership – instead, recognizing that Russia would not become a member of NATO, efforts were undertaken to establish partnership schemes instead – these partnership schemes represent the research interest of this dissertation.

1.4. Research questions

Using these assessments as a starting point, this dissertation will seek answers to the following research questions: firstly, regarding to developments between 1997 and 2005: can we speak of conflict or cooperation between NATO and Russia since their dialogue has officially been institutionalized? How have the players defined their

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[53] See for example Frye, Alton: "The new NATO and relations with Russia", in: The Journal of Strategic Studies, 2000, vol. 23, #3, pp. 92-111.

[54] Straus, Ira: "Russia in NATO: the fourth generation", in: Thompson, Kenneth (ed.): "NATO and the changing world order – an appraisal by scholars and policymakers", Lanham: University Press of America, 1996, pp. 139-159, p.140.

[55] See Fedorov, Yuri and Nygren, Bertil: "Russia and NATO", Stockholm: Swedish National Defence College, 2000.

political priorities and how does this affect their relationship? Are both players still following the Cold War logic of a zero-sum game or are there gains for both sides? What processes of negotiation were necessary in order for Russia to accept a Western presence in a region that Russia has considered for centuries to be its sphere of influence? Who is the proactive; who the reactive party; or is it a balanced relationship? And finally, what were the defining moments of this "strategic" partnership? Are agreements reached mostly in an ad-hoc manner or are there certain patterns that advanced or hindered cooperation?

For analytical purposes, the quality of the NATO–Russia relationship is thus considered the dependent variable; variations on the dependent variable are noticeable alterations of the relationship's quality such as joint exercises or contents of PJC/NRC meetings. Events that have influenced the relationship, or the independent variables, are fourfold: Firstly, the two basic treaties on NATO–Russia relations, the Founding Act and the NRC statement respectively, will serve as independent variables. Secondly, two key events of the late 1990s and the early 2000s will serve as additional independent variables: the war in Kosovo and 9/11, as well as their aftermath. All four variables are crucially important to the way NATO–Russia relations have developed, and therefore need to be placed at the heart of this dissertation. In order to assess the quality of relations between NATO and Russia since the implementation of the 1997 Founding Act, a specific aspect of this relationship must be examined. If areas of cooperation or conflict can be identified within this relationship, they will yield important insights regarding the independent variables. Developments within the NATO-Russia framework, such as the joint peacekeeping activities in the Balkans, as well as more recent ones, such as Russia's decision to participate in NATO's Operation Active Endeavour, will serve as points of reference for analysis. However, the main test case in chapter 4 will consist of a case study that analyzes the relationship between NATO and Russia since 1997 by focusing on an area that lies outside of the well-studied main focus of NATO-Russia cooperation.

1.5. Case study
The area to be examined is Central Asia. The influence of both actors – Russia and NATO – on this region will be examined in order to draw general conclusions about the relationship in itself. Central Asia is of particular interest as it lies at a geographical as

well as a geopolitical fault line.[56] One might argue that whereas Russia's presence and interest in the region is well defined for historical reasons, NATO's is far less defined and obvious. However, this is only party true. Even though Central Asia is geographically more removed from Europe and thus also from NATO than for instance Ukraine, the region is not excluded from partnership schemes that NATO designed with regard to the "post-Soviet space". For instance, all Central Asia states were part of the NACC and are at present members of the EAPC; moreover, diverse PfP partnerships have been extended to individual Central Asian states. This suggests that NATO is not disengaged from Central Asia. My case study consists of a dual analysis: firstly NATO's engagement in Central Asia, assessing the content of partnership schemes, and secondly, comparing those partnership schemes with Russian engagement in the region.

Bridging two continents, the region has been a point of contention for centuries. Over time, countries such as Iran, Turkey, China, as well as of course the Soviet Union and its successor state, the Russian Federation have intervened in the region. As far as "out-of-area" players are concerned, NATO, the US and the EU have demonstrated interest in Central Asia, though to varying degrees. Historically of great interest to imperial powers such as Great Britain and Russia, but also to neighboring states, Central Asia has in particular gained importance over the last 10 years – a period that roughly coincides with the focus of this research. Of particular interest is the diversified and multi-faceted interplay of politics, security, and economics in Central Asia. In line with the afore mentioned century-old habit of showing presence in this strategically important region, different players are getting involved in different ways. There is an intricate web of policy-making emanating from NATO, US and the EU; at the same time, it is also obvious that Russia still considers the region to be its "backyard" and consequently also has specific interests that do not necessarily correspond with NATO's, the US' or the EU's. Additionally, alliances that have been forged within the area itself, such as the Collective Security Treaty Organization and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization add to the multiplicity of forces that are part of the political and security landscape of Central Asia. Thus, it is necessary to distinguish between the multiple players: as mentioned above, security and policy structures emanating from NATO, Russia, the US and the EU intertwine with each other. Taking NATO's

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[56] Oliker, Olga and Sznaya, Thomas: "Faultines of Conflict in Central Asia and the South Caucasus. Implications for the US Army", Santa Monica: RAND Arroyo Center, 2003.

involvement as a starting point – and linking it to the policies of the actors mentioned before – this dissertation will seek to assess how NATO has "advanced" into a territory formerly associated with the Soviet Union, and to what extent this is a matter of concern for Russia.

Finally, the choice of case of study is also the result of a process of elimination. There is a certain linear logic with regard to the former Soviet states and their post-Cold War alignment. This alignment took place during the mid-1990s in the case of Central and Eastern Europe and the Baltic states and is therefore no longer a matter for analysis. Similarly, the more southern "fringes" of the Soviet empire, namely Ukraine and the Caucasian republics have to some extent also indicated preferences for alignment with European and transatlantic structures. Thus, Central Asia represents the last area of ambivalence where alignment preferences are concerned and is therefore well-suited as an object of analysis.

1.6. Hypotheses

The first hypothesis constitutes an answer to the main research question of the dissertation: Are NATO-Russia relations characterized by either conflict of cooperation? Hypothesis 1 states that even though the Cold War antagonism has disappeared, cooperation is not an accurate assessment either. In fact, I claim that the zero-sum concept has not entirely lost its validity as far as NATO and Russia are concerned. By tracing developments since the late 1997, a pattern of "irritation" rather than friendship and cooperation can be discerned. The term "irritation" is used to describe an interaction that is one step below conflict, but also quite removed from cooperation. Results yielded from interviews, textual analysis and secondary sources will be used to first reconstruct the main points of interaction between NATO and Russia, in order to put forward an analysis that will test Hypothesis 1. Many analysts claim that NATO-Russia interactions can be reconstructed in accordance with clearly defined developments that were intercepted by outside events such as NATO enlargement, the Kosovo crisis or 9/11. According to these analysts, NATO air strikes against Kosovo and the ensuing feud over the war accounted for an escalation of conflict between the two actors. While it is certainly not wrong to look at this incident *per se* in order to analyze the broader issue, I claim that it was not the event itself, but rather the surrounding circumstances and structures around NATO and Russia that account for their behavior. Furthermore, it is my assertion that NATO and Russia are

caught up in a dynamic situation of a perceived balance of power asymmetry that is neither about actual power nor about actual threat, but rather about residual Cold War tensions that are immanent in the way both actors perceive each other, as well as in the structures in which they interact.

Hypothesis 2 is concerned with a more theoretical aspect. Implicit in the debate about NATO's role in a post-Cold War world is the question of NATO as a "value community". The preamble of the North Atlantic Treaty states:

The Parties to this Treaty reaffirm their faith in the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and their desire to live in peace with all peoples and all governments. They are determined to safeguard the freedom, common heritage and civilisation of their peoples, founded on the principles of democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law. They seek to promote stability and well-being in the North Atlantic area. They are resolved to unite their efforts for collective defence and for the preservation of peace and security. They therefore agree to this North Atlantic Treaty…[57]

This implies that NATO, since its creation, was meant to be more than a mere defense organization. It could legitimately be referred to as an organization consisting of member states bound together by a set of shared beliefs and values. Norm convergence and the creation of a common identity have also played an important role throughout the two rounds of enlargement. This dissertation seeks to analyze, among other issues, if a convergence of norms and ideas has also taken place where NATO and Russia are concerned. Regarding this issue, my second hypothesis claims that neither realism nor constructivism per se explain why Russia and NATO interact as they do. NATO-Russia interaction is neither defined by norm convergence nor by constant vying for power; though both occur on a regular basis. Chapter 2 will analyze the merits and shortcomings of both theoretical approaches with regard to NATO-Russia interaction.

1.7. Theory and methodology

The theoretical interest of the dissertation lies in the problem of actors within the international system and their capabilities for influencing outcomes in international relations There are several theoretical branches that will be used in order to be able to

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[57] The North Atlantic Treaty, http://www.nato.int/docu/basictxt/treaty.htm, [last accessed on 13 September 2005].

draw some general conclusions. First of all, a general remark needs to be made about the choices of theory: since the research interest lies explicitly in the macro-sphere of political science (great powers, the international system, power distribution etc.), it correspondingly makes sense to employ macro-level theories.

Firstly, as the title of the dissertation indicates, power structures in international relations will be analyzed in light of the outcomes for a particular actor. Classical literature in IR suggests that power structures, or even power struggles, are the *sine qua non* of interaction between what is considered to be the main unit of analysis, namely the state. With regard to Russia, this is certainly the case, in NATO's case, the issue is somewhat more difficult, as the fact that NATO as an actor is not a nation-state, but an international institution, already precludes an orthodox application of realist theory.[58] While this has to be taken into consideration in an analysis that draws on realist theoretical thought, this project will put forward the idea that NATO, though not a nation-state, also defines its interests in a power-maximizing manner, along the lines of a realist argument. This is especially true where Russia and the issues to be discussed in the case study are concerned. Both classical realism and neo-realism and associated authors such as Richard Grieco, Stephen Walt and Kenneth Waltz focus on power in international relations.

Secondly, the effect that the end of bipolarity has had on the international system has been discussed in length in IR theory. While some authors conclude that in an environment that is still sustained by power politics, bipolarity is more conducive to peace than either unipolarity or multipolarity[59], and thus are skeptical about the viability of the post-Cold War world, others stress the importance of shared norms and values that have become increasingly more important in a world that is, as they view it, no longer defined by solely by power maximization.[60] As mentioned above, Hypothesis 2 already puts forward, or rather questions a theoretical implication that aims to deconstruct some core tenets of "classical" IR theory. The main charge leveled at the dominant school of theory, realism, is that it not only failed to predict the end of the

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[58] See chapter 2 for a solution to this methodological issue.

[59] Mearsheimer, John: "The tragedy of great power politics", New York: Norton and Company, 2001.

[60] This is a core principle of social constructivism. One of the most influential publications is Alexander Wendt's "Social theory of international politics", Cambridge, University of Cambridge Press, 1999. Other insightful publications include Finnemore, Martha: "National interests in international society", Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996 and Katzenstein, Peter: "The culture of national security: norms and identity in world politics", New York: Columbia University Press, 1996.

Cold War, but also has been unable to come up with a convincing explanation as to why the Soviet Union collapsed. It is therefore imperative to shift the focus away from power politics towards a new explanatory factor that would account for change in the international system. This factor, they argue, is a convergence of values and norms, which accounts for the possibility of circumventing the problem of stagnation in international politics. If we speak about NATO as a value community, this approach to international relations theory is indeed of importance. To what extent the constructivist approach is useful when it is applied to NATO and Russia will be discussed in detail in chapter 2.

Thus, a combined realist-constructivist theoretical approach will be used to seek to provide answers to the following questions: do Russia and NATO cooperate? Why? What are the outcomes of this cooperation? Some elements implicit in constructivism, namely the ever-increasing political as well as social ties between states and the impact of that interdependence on international politics, as put forward by Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye[61], have to be taken into consideration to a certain extent, as it is impossible to deny that IR has become much more interconnected and intricate over the past decades. However, in order for the analysis to stay within reasonable limits, I have chosen to focus mainly on the realist and the constructivist approaches.[62]

As mentioned above, this research will largely be carried out at the macro-level. First and foremost, the two basic documents that serve as a starting point for this dissertation are the above-mentioned Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security between NATO and the Russian Federation and the NRC Statement. In addition to secondary literature, special consideration will be given to the analysis of primary documents, in particular PJC and NRC meeting minutes, summits of heads of state and government, official speeches, as well as strategy papers such as the Russian Foreign Policy Concept. Also, interviews with experts and policy-makers in Moscow as well as in the NATO headquarters in Brussels serve as empirical underpinning.[63] Of particular importance for empirical research are online sources such as the NATO document archive. Newspaper articles, online news sources and conference contributions (papers and speeches), will serve as additional sources.

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[61] Keohane, Robert and Nye, Joseph: "Power and interdependence. World politics in transition", New York: Longman, 2001.
[62] See chapter 2 for a detailed argument of why institutionalism is not included in this analysis.
[63] Where appropriate, comparative interviews were held with policy-makers at the European Commission.

1.8. Dissertation structure

The dissertation will be structured as follows: chapter 2 will put the research interest within a theoretical framework. Concepts such as power-seeking, balance of power, alliance-formation on the one hand; and convergence of norms and values and the establishment of a common identity and language on the other hand, will be defined and placed in a context that can be used to prove or disprove the hypotheses. Those concepts will serve to qualify NATO-Russia cooperation, and how that cooperation has evolved in the specified timeframe. Chapter 3 will outline the main developments in Russia-NATO relations since 1997 and subsequently assess, with the help of key dates, whether outcomes indicate that cooperation or, conversely, conflict has taken place. Chapter 4 will then apply the results yielded in chapter 3 to a case study. In the final chapter the results will be summarized and perspectives offered for future interaction between NATO and Russia.

2. NATO and Russia: Macro-level theories

The main question this dissertation addresses is the nature of a relationship, and whether it is characterized by either conflict or cooperation. First and foremost, the main hypothesis proposed is that *NATO and Russia are caught up in a dynamic situation of a perceived balance of power problematic that is neither about actual power, nor about actual threat, but rather about residual Cold War tensions that are inherent in the way both actors perceive each other, as well as in the structures within which they interact. This often results in interaction that is characterized by a certain level of irritation between the two actors.* From this it follows that theoretical considerations need to take into account the importance of the concept of power, while at the same time placing the concept within a more diversified context. Neither term – cooperation or confrontation – does the research question justice. *The second hypothesis claims that neither constructivism, i.e., norm and value convergence, nor realism per se explain why Russia and NATO interact as they do*. In order to elaborate on this point, the present chapter is divided into four parts: This first section introduces some methodological considerations and troubleshooting issues that needed clarification before continuing with the actual analysis. Section 2 explains which theoretical approaches were chosen and which ones were not, as well as the reasons behind my choice. Section 3 and 4 will subsequently analyze the applicability of realism and constructivism to the hypothesis. Section 5 will offer a summary and conclusions.

Though hardly an understudied topic empirically, locating the issue of NATO–Russia interaction within a theoretical framework remains challenging. Choosing a clearly defined approach is to no small extent hindered by the fact that the two actors are different level units and therefore difficult to accommodate within the confines of one theory. By their nature, NATO and Russia are different entities. Whereas Russia is a nation-state, NATO is an international defense organization. This is important for several reasons: first and foremost, the single most important core unit used in order to explain phenomena in International Relations (IR) has changed surprisingly little over the years or turns in discussion about theoretical approaches. For the most influential thinkers in IR, analysis begins with the nation-state. Attempts at shifting the focus away from the nation-state as analytical starting point have nearly all come across the problem that there is simply no other unit that can replace the nation-state as such. Though different research designs and implementations have yielded different results with regard to topics such as the society of states, cooperation in international politics,

or the purpose of alliances to name but a few, it has proven virtually impossible to bypass the concept of the nation-state. Declaring the state to be the principal actor of course poses no problem if the analysis concerns Russia. Though a heated debate about the past and future of Russia as a traditional nation-state continues to evoke many different opinions, for the purpose of methodological clarity, Russia can be safely placed in the primary category of a state. This means that classification of concepts such as rational choice, agency-structure issues, and so forth is easier and more structured, as the core assumption behind "the state" is that it is considered a unitary actor.

This is slightly more problematic in the case of NATO. Created as a military defense organization and constituting an alliance[64], NATO originally consisted of 12 European nations, as well as the US and Canada. Through several rounds of accessions and enlargements, NATO today numbers 26 sovereign member states[65]; therefore, NATO constitutes a different unit of analysis than a nation-state. The question that arises is how to investigate a relationship between two actors that fundamentally differ in their constitutive definitions. In order to resolve this issue, two core assumptions will be introduced. First of all, the interest of this project consists of macro-level events in international relations, in turn requiring macro-level theoretical approaches. Therefore, both NATO and Russia are seen as holistic entities and not as a sum of their constituent parts.[66] This applies to areas such as policy outcomes, bureaucratic functions, outside representation, and so on. In other words, in terms of *output*, the two actors are treated as identical units. As far as the internal processes and the input processes are concerned, they will certainly also need to be looked at; this will be done, however, based on the

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[64] In its most basic form, an alliance can be defined as: "a formal agreement establishing an association or alliance between nations or other groups to achieve a particular aim", English Dictionary: wordreference.com, http://www.wordreference.com/definition/alliance, [last accessed on October 15, 2005]. The definition and purpose of an alliance will be discussed in detail later on. A good definition of alliance is put forward by Mark Webber: "A second course open to states [who do not wish to pursue a policy of military build-up] is to join with others in the form of an alliance…states recognize the necessity of temporarily pooling their capabilities in order to counteract a state or a group of states that appears to be accumulating a disproportionate amount of power", in: Webber, Mark: "The international politics of Russia and the successor states", Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996, p. 6.

[65] NATO enlargement took place over the course of six decades. The dates of accession are as follows: the original North Atlantic Treaty was signed on April 4, 1949 in Washington DC by Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Iceland, Italy, Luxemburg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, the United Kingdom and the United States. Greece and Turkey acceded on February 18, 1952; the Federal Republic of Germany on May 6, 1955, Spain on May 30, 1983; the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland on March 12, 1999; and finally Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia on March 29, 2004. In total, NATO today includes 26 member states.

[66] This applies to the methodological approach only. In terms of empirical findings, looking at NATO's internal composition – especially where the impact of US hegemony is concerned – remains an important part of this research project.

understanding that for the purposes of this study, it is the *outputs* that matter for the research question.

Secondly, the problem of dissimilarity between the two units of analysis can be solved by making a general assumption about NATO as an actor. In order to do so, it is necessary to return to the beginning of this chapter and the discussion about whom or what constitutes the main units of analysis in international politics. Here too, the dichotomy between a nation-state's actions (and the reasons behind them) and an international organizations' actions can pose methodological problems. Therefore, the second assumption holds that NATO, like a nation-state, acts in a rational, as well as in a profit-maximizing, manner. This assumption goes back to the issue of identifying a starting point for analysis in IR theory. As mentioned before, a core tenet of IR theory is that the unit of analysis tend to be the nation-state. A second tenet is that states as actors behave rationally, which, in itself leads to the pursuit of a profit-maximizing strategy. By assuming that NATO, even though it is an international organization and therefore has to deal with agency-problems in a way that nation-states do not, acts along the same lines as a nation-state, i.e. rationally, another problem potentially arising from comparing nation to organization can be circumvented.

An interpretation strongly in support of treating NATO as a unitary actor is offered by Mancur Olson and Richard Zeckhauser. In "An economic theory of alliances" they argue that since NATO's proclaimed purpose is the protection of member states from a common threat, Article 5 therefore constitutes a unifying force serving as glue binding the different states together.[67] In other words, the commonality of threat perception becomes more important than the aggregate components of NATO. In Olson and Zeckhauser's words:

Deterring aggression against any one of the members is supposed to be in the interest of all. The analogy with a nation-state is obvious. Those goods and services, such as defence, that the government provides in the common interest of the citizenry are usually called "public goods". An organization of states allied for defence similarly produces a public good, only in this case the "public" – the members of the organization – are states rather than individuals.[68]

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[67] Olson, Mancur and Zeckhauser, Richard: "An economic theory of alliances", in: The Review of Economics and Statistics, vol. 48, #3, 1966, pp. 266-279, p. 267.
[68] Ibid, p. 267.

Using these two assumptions facilitates the analysis of NATO–Russia relations and prevents charges of comparing 'apples and oranges' in the form of inherently different units. Before addressing the theoretical foundations of this project, a caveat should be noted regarding the application of a specific approach. There is an inherent risk in making a biased theoretical selection when it comes to utilizing a theoretical underpinning for a research project. Any intrinsic tendency to let ontology get in the way of analysis should be avoided, though, naturally, this is nearly impossible to do in a watertight scientific manner. On the other hand, it is equally important to avoid 'theoretical overstretch' i.e., attempts to make a theory fit in with empirical findings.[69] The goal is rather to complement theory with empirics in order to explain certain processes and outcomes. In order to avoid both pitfalls, it seems imperative to use a combined theoretical approach and to carefully test empirical evidence against the core elements of each of the theories. Furthermore, in addition to limiting theoretical bias as much as possible, a combined theoretical approach can also shed innovative light on the combined empirical findings – if an effort is made to look beyond theoretical stereotypes. Additionally, combining theories will most probably lead to a closer approximation to reality than a mono-theoretical approach.

The above also relates to the research design, which will be conducted on the macro-level. As stated in the introduction, in addition to tracing actual events and interactions between NATO and Russia, this project aims to go beyond the descriptive element in order to assess whether certain patterns of either confrontation or cooperation can be discerned that are indicative of the "bigger" picture in IR. NATO and Russia are not seen as isolated actors frozen in time, but rather as dynamic by-products of international structures more generally. For this reason analysis on the macro-level is necessary. Elements of the meso- and microlevels[70] will be taken into consideration as far as they contribute to explaining high-level outcomes. If, however, the subject is approached from the macro-level, then it will be essential to work within a high-level theoretical framework. As mentioned before, a combined theoretical approach will be applied to the phenomenon of power structures that have influenced the relationship between NATO and Russia since 1997.

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[69] Glaser, Barney and Strauss, Anselm: "The discovery of grounded theory: strategies for qualitative research", New York: de Gruyter, 1967.
[70] Such as, for example, NATO's consensus-bound policy of unanimity.

A closer look at the literature on this topic also reveals a general trend to place NATO–Russia relations within a relatively wide theoretical framework. A plethora of literature deals with the fate of NATO as an alliance; on the other hand, just as much has been written about post-Soviet Russia, with the main focus lying on the rise and fall of empires. However, theoretical literature addressing the actual relationship between the two actors is not as ample as one might expect. This is especially surprising considering the fact that, as mentioned before, NATO–Russia relations is hardly an understudied topic. One explanation for this paradox could be the difficulty in placing both actors in a methodologically sound framework (see above). For instance, some studies undertake an analysis of US–Russia relations instead of NATO–Russia relations, which facilitates research design whilst still investigating core issues pertaining to NATO and Russia. Another problem might be the result of the relatively new situation that this relationship represents. While the end of the Cold War and the "new world order" has subsequently prompted a whole new theoretical discussion about IR, this debate has tended to address the overarching concepts rather than actual actors.

By definition, NATO–Russia relations need to be placed within the context of post-Cold War theoretical literature. The great debates that have emanated from political science since the early 1990s are widely developed; the challenge is identifying the specific theory or theories useful for a particular analysis from the plethora of theories proposed. NATO–Russia relations, it seems, are characterized by a mixture of fluidity and rigidity. The basic question is whether or not the actors are still seen as relics of the Cold War and how this influences the way they are seen in theoretical terms. If they are considered relics, then rigidity prevails and few theoretical innovations can be expected. If they are seen as something else, as something that works within the new system instead of against it, then a different theoretical approach altogether might be needed. In order to investigate this issue, this dissertation will draw upon the post-Cold War theoretical debate. In the first stage, the debate about the new world order will be reconstructed with particular emphasis on its usefulness for analyzing the relationship between NATO and Russia.

Finally, literature dealing with NATO–Russia relations tends to discuss either NATO *or* Russia, but not both of them in a consistent manner. Very often, NATO–Russia relations are placed within a wider framework, such as relations between NATO and

Europe generally.[71] The wider context of geostrategic developments on the Eurasian continent will be analyzed and NATO's place within them assessed. Relations between Russia and the OSCE and Russia and the EU are discussed in addition to NATO–Russia relations, leading to a more holistic approach to Russia–Western relations after the Cold War. However, this is not the central aim of this the dissertation. While the intricate web of multi-layered interaction between the different European and Euro-Atlantic institutions can not be ignored, and will figure into the analysis as appropriate, the main focus remains on the two actors, NATO and Russia, and on discerning the pattern of interaction between them.

2.1. Choices of theory

2.1.1. General remarks

An interesting aspect of the debate about IR theory generally is its appropriateness with regard to explaining real world phenomena. Some have questioned the actual contributions of IR theory to real-world problem solving: IR theory, which for the past decades has been dominated by the neo-realism/neo-institutionalism divide, has become tangled up in a continuous back and forth between the two schools, leading to an overly narrow theoretical framework that was supposed to accommodate a myriad of actual developments. The greatest charge against traditional IR theory is that it was not able to foresee the end of the Cold War. While this is – wrongly – often associated specifically with realism's shortcomings, it has to be said that developments within all theoretical approaches during the 1970s and 1980s failed to predict the end of the Cold War, or indeed offer any logical explanations for it.

While it is always easy to point out the shortcomings of previous research designs with the benefit of hindsight, it is not without merit to approach the traditional theoretical approaches with an open mind. An interesting challenge to the core tenets of IR theory is presented by Barry Buzan and Richard Little.[72] Though this volume is perhaps somewhat overly ambitious in its scope and timeframe, the core premises that the authors put forward are interesting in terms of providing a holistic and differentiated approach to conventional IR theory. Three premises challenge a more traditional view of IR theory: First, they claim that "[n]one of the existing conceptualizations of the

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[71] E.g. Webber, Mark: "Russia and Europe: conflict or cooperation", London: Macmillan Press, 2000.
[72] Buzan, Barry and Little, Richard: "International systems in world history", Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.

international systems have emerged and evolved through the course of world history"[73], second "…the level of theoretical understanding in IR has been held up by a failure to examine international systems from a world history perspective"[74] and third "…the international system constitutes the most effective unit for developing world history as well as for helping social scientists to advance a macro-analysis of social reality.[75]

Though looking at IR through the lens of world history in order to make sense of macro-trends makes sense, it is far beyond the scope this dissertation. The interest in Buzan and Little's premises lies in the fact that they propagate a more open-minded approach to IR theory than has been employed in the past, especially when the research interest include macro-concepts such as the international structure or the international system, as is the case in this dissertation. Different theories will not be brought into question *per se*, but rather, will be used as roadmaps in order to identify useful analytical tools. Understanding NATO's and Russia's place as well as their interaction in the new world order, as presented in the previous section, already hints at two theoretical approaches that offer quite divergent insights on the subject: traditional realist paradigms and, in contrast, the more recent theoretical framework of social constructivism. Even though these two theories are ontologically diametrically opposed, having fundamentally different assumptions about IR and human nature generally, it should not be automatically assumed that the two approaches are mutually exclusive, nor that the hypotheses of one disproves the hypotheses of the other. On the contrary, it makes sense to try and identify complementary rather than contradictory elements within both theories. Whether or not this can actually be achieved will be seen throughout this chapter.

The approach employed to make theoretical sense out of my research interest, namely NATO–Russia relations, was chosen for several reasons. First, the dichotomies of post-Cold War IR seem to best be captured by choosing a combined approach. Second, I have chosen to specifically make use of realist, or neo-realist theory.[76] One hypothesis claims that the essence of the evolution of NATO-Russia relations cannot be adequately captured without some of core tenets of realism. In order to stay true the methodology

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[73] Ibid, p.3
[74] Ibid.
[75] Ibid.
[76] Realism and neo-realism are both explicitly mentioned, since elements of both will be discussed in this chapter. However, I draw mostly on neorealist theory, unless classical authors are specifically mentioned.

of a combined approach, I have chosen to develop my theoretical considerations using constructivist thought in addition to realism. In the same way that realism is necessary for understanding some aspects of NATO-Russia relations, constructivism is necessary to fill in the blanks that realism leaves unanswered. The combination of both approaches effectively captures the main issues and seeming controversies surrounding NATO–Russia relations, as well as reflecting post-Cold War events more generally.

2.1.2. Institutionalism

The approach taken in this thesis should not be seen as a deliberate attempt to circumvent the contributions that institutionalism has made to the subject.[77] In one way or another, all articles written within an institutionalist or neo-institutionalist[78] framework take realism to task for over-emphasizing the role of power, as well as the state of anarchy[79], in IR. Rather than seeing states as billiard balls on a pool table that aim to knock out of the way any other billiard ball that gets in the way of victory, institutionalism see relations between states as an intricate web of interconnectedness – or interdependence – that links the international system together by means of communication, international organizations, trade and so on.[80] Robert Keohane defines institutions as a "…persistent and connected sets of rules (formal or informal) that prescribe behavioral roles, constrain activities and shape expectations".[81] Of particular value, according to institutionalism, is the fact that states chose to forego short-sighted opportunism by deferring on important strategic decisions in order to not lose credibility in the long run, which outweighs the short-term gain of momentarily opportunistic behavior. David Lake describes it thus: "Institutions either enable actors to achieve

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[77] Examples include: Herd, Graeme and Ackerman, Ella: "Russian strategic realignment and the post-post-Cold War era?", in: Security Dialogue, vol. 33, #3, 2002, pp. 357-372; Kay, Sean: "NATO, the Kosovo war and neoliberal theory", in: Contemporary Security Policy, vol. 25, #2, 2004, pp. 252-279; Keohane, Robert and Martin, Lisa: "The promise of institutionalist theory", in: International Security, vol. 20, #1, 1995, pp. 39-51; Peters, Guy: "Institutional theory in political science: the new institutionalism", London: Cassell, 1999; Wallander, Celeste, Haftendorn Helga and Keohane, Robert: "Imperfect unions. Security institutions over time and space", Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999.

[78] In this dissertation I largely refer to liberal institutionalism, or liberalism. The subdivisions within the institutionalist school are plentiful, and include approaches as diverse as historical, international or rational-choice institutionalism. Liberalism is the subdivision that is most often applied in the "grand debate" between realism and institutionalism. Core tenets of this school include IR that are characterized by complex interdependence consisting of multiple channels of interaction, where the use of force plays a minor role. Institutions are largely seen as a "management tool" for IR, whereby relative as well as absolute gains over policy outcomes create an incentive for states to "bind themselves" to one or several international organizations or regimes.

[79] Essential terms of IR theory such as power and anarchy will be defined in detail in the next paragraph.

[80] Keohane and Nye, 2001.

[81] Keohane, Robert: "International institutions and state power: essays in International Relations theory", Boulder: Westview, 1989, p. 163.

outcomes that might otherwise be impossible or constrain actors from undertaking behaviors that would otherwise be chosen. They [institutions] are intended to channel behavior in predictable ways."[82] In other words, institutions, among other things, also have a socializing effect on their members, who choose to remain "predictable" to others in order to reap long-term benefits. Moreover, international institutions are considered to be effective with regard to addressing the problematic of a security dilemma that states can find themselves in: the logical consequence of states wishing to maximize their power may lead to an aggressive build-up in arms, whereby an increase in one's own security can result in instability as other states also strive to increase their own security and power.[83]

While the institutional approach in its different facets is undoubtedly relevant to NATO-Russia relations, it will only be drawn upon in a complementary fashion. This might seem perplexing in light of the research interest. Some would argue that any research that concerns itself with NATO should make primary use of institutionalism. However, once the two main assumptions regarding NATO as an actor – output-concerned as well as rational – are recalled, developments within NATO itself do not necessarily need to be seen through the lens of institutionalism. On the other hand, as far as Russia's relation with NATO is concerned, the compromise of seeing both as unitary actors does not preclude the possibility that institutionalism offers mainly invalid or insights that are at best of minor relevance. Also, the argument about ever-increasing interconnectedness put forward by Keohane and Nye certainly holds truths that are applicable to any dissertation that concerns itself with contemporary political science. However, since the aim of this project is precisely to investigate the actual *contents* of "interconnectedness" between NATO and Russia, this approach could run the risk of being tautological; it uses the status quo as an explanation.[84] That NATO and Russia interact in many ways and for many different reasons is obvious, otherwise there would be no point to this dissertation.

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[82] Lake, David: "Beyond anarchy: the importance of security institutions", in: International Security, vol. 26, #1, 2001, pp. 129-140, p. 136.
[83] For treatises on the security dilemma problematic see: Glaser, Charles: "The security dilemma revisited", in: World Politics, vol. 50, #1, 1997, pp. 171-201; Herz, John: "Idealist internationalism and the security dilemma", in: World Politics, vol. 2, #2, 1950, pp. 157-180; Jervis, Robert: "Was the Cold War a security dilemma?", in: Journal of Cold War Studies, vol. 3, #1, 2001, pp. 36-60; Jervis, Robert. "Cooperation under the security dilemma", in: World Politics, vol. 40, #1, 1978, pp. 167–214; Snyder, Glenn: "The security dilemma in alliance politics", in: World Politics, vol. 36, #4, 1984, pp. 461-495.
[84] For the purposes of this dissertation only; it is by no means meant as a general statement.

Moreover, David Lake observes that:

Security institutions are central to patterns of conflict and cooperation within the international system … The search for how and to what extent international institutions 'matter' has largely played out in the realm of international political economy. To the extent that scholars look for institutional effects, it is mostly at the level of universal or at least broad-based multilateral institutions in the area of trade, finance, standards and so on …[85]

Lake's observation touches upon two important issues: first, the debate about whether and to what extent "institutions matter", which is a product of the classical institutionalism-realism debate. The second, and even more important point that Lake reiterates – and takes issue with – is that international cooperation is least likely to occur in the area of security matters. Whereas areas like trade, finances or sometimes more elusive concepts such as human rights are more likely to evoke cooperation among states that are willing to consider the opportunity cost of limited sovereignty, "entangling alliances" and so on in order to reap longer-term benefits, it is generally agreed upon that security issues do not necessarily fall into this category.[86] In Lake's words, "With several noteworthy exceptions[87], analysts presume that in the "high politics" realm of security affairs, states will eschew institutions and depend on their own unilateral capabilities."[88] While several analysts, including Lake, have eloquently challenged this view, it does nevertheless represent an empirical issue that is especially important for the purposes of this dissertation.

2.2. Realism

2.2.1. Realism as status quo

The most (in)famous of all theoretical approaches, realism continues to capture the mind and imagination of analysts. No other theory has endured as long as realism has or so often been adapted to fit new realities. Moreover, no other theory has provoked such strong objections and sparked more debates. This in itself indicates that realism contains some core tenets that are difficult to completely disprove. On the other hand, the substantial criticism levelled at realism, whether in the form of institutionalism before the end of the Cold War (and still ongoing) or, particularly over the past two decades, in

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[85] Lake, 2001, p.130.
[86] See Keohane and Nye, 2001.
[87] E.g. Wallander, Celeste: "Mortal friends, best enemies: German-Russian cooperation after the Cold War", Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999; or Haftendorn, Keohane and Wallander, 1999.
[88] Lake, 2001, p. 130.

the form of social constructivism represents a serious challenge for any analyst applying realist theory to a research design. However, playing one theory off against another is not likely to yield satisfactory results; on the contrary, the two theories should not be seen as mutually exclusive, as both contain elements that are more useful or less useful, depending on where the analytical focus lies. This view is very accurately expressed by Robert Snyder in his analysis of the reasons behind Gorbachev's perestroika: "Constructivists risk reifying the concept "identity" much as they accuse neo-realists of doing with "anarchy" [in failing to see the instrumental purposes of Gorbachev's identity shift]".[89] His conclusion is that, "Although realists and constructivists have offered strong insights into understanding the end of the Cold War, this paper raises some doubts about both perspectives with respect to this case. Both fail to provide a satisfactory explanation, and they are somewhat misleading in their interpretations."[90] While this statement does not suggest that both realism and constructivism should be disregarded, it does make a strong call for a careful evaluation of both theories.

A major claim of this dissertation is that NATO-Russia relations are not fully explainable without taking into account important tenets of realist theory. Just as the relationship between NATO and Russia is a Cold War/post-Cold War story taking place within Cold War/post Cold-War structures, key elements pertaining to the way NATO and Russia interact are remnants of structures that used to be the result of an ideological, political and military divide. The confrontation/cooperation debate addressed in this dissertation cannot be developed fully without considering realism and realism's implications for IR generally. Most basically, realist theory revolves around the concept of power – realists have built their theory around notions of the definition of power, the distribution of power, or the use of power. When applying this focus to international relations, i.e. to actors and how they interact, one finds that the most prominent and enduring feature is that international relations are dominated by constant struggles for power. I would like to reiterate that for methodological reasons, I am treating both Russia and NATO as primary and singular units since realism's claims are founded on unitary actors and their use of power.

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[89] Snyder, Robert: "Bridging the realist/constructivist divide: the case of the counterrevolution in Soviet foreign policy at the end of the Cold War", in: Foreign Policy Analysis, vol. 1, #1, 2005, pp. 55-71, p. 67.
[90] Ibid, p. 68

The concept of power is key in IR. The earliest works in political theory deal with this concept, such as Thucydides' 400 BC "Melian Dialogue".[91] In this work, he addresses the issue of one-sided growth of power and the ensuing shift in the balance of power. "The strong do what they have the power to do and the weak accept what they have to accept" sums up what Thucydides believes to be the essence of politics and international relations. This idea reappears a thousand years later in the writings of Machiavelli, who deemed the survival of the state to be paramount. In his work "The Prince"[92], he addresses the issue of how to gain, maintain and expand power. In his extreme interpretation of power and state, Machiavelli states that ethics and politics are divorced from considerations of power, and that power politics is the only relevant factor. "What good is good in an evil world?" asks Machiavelli. One of the most influential authors to write about power politics, Thomas Hobbes, takes up this thought and reaffirms the necessity of a powerful centralized political authority, "the Leviathan"[93] who guards the state from the anarchy of the natural state. Anarchy is at the core of the realist school's understanding. The structures that states create (internal as well as external) are meant to guard against anarchy in a hostile environment.[94] Realism may seem dated, as events that shaped the world of Thomas Hobbes and Machiavelli do not necessarily reflect present-day issues. Indeed, the end of the Cold War in particular has given rise to hopes that the "nasty, brutish, and short" paradigm would lose some of its prominence. However, some key thoughts that realists – and neo-realists after them – have put forward still need to be considered in order to get a complete picture of the current state of IR.

Realism has five core tenets. First, the main actors in international politics are states. Second, the most defining characteristic of the international system is the state of anarchy, i.e., the absence of a world government. Third, states behave as unitary and rational agents who seek to maximize their interest. Fourth, in the absence of a world government that could protect states from others, all states are constantly preoccupied with security and power, which inherently causes conflict and confrontation. Fifth and

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[91] Thucydides: "The Melian Dialogues", in: Viotti, Paul and Kauppi, Mark (eds.): "International Relations theory – realism, pluralism, globalism", New York: Palgrave, 1993.
[92] Machiavelli: "The Prince", in Viotti, Paul and Kauppi, Mark (eds.): "International Relations theory – realism, pluralism, globalism", New York: Palgrave, 1993.
[93] Hobbes, Thomas: "The Leviathan", edited by Richard Tuck, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991.
[94] In its essence, the state of anarchy describes a state in international politics that is characterized by the absence of a world government.

finally, international institutions offer little incentive for international cooperation.[95]
These five statements broadly represent how realists have interpreted IR since the days
of Hobbes and Machiavelli. Responding to an ever increasing chorus of critics of the
"traditional" view of IR, Kenneth Waltz eventually offered an elaboration on classical
realism. In his work, "Theory of international politics"[96], Waltz goes a step further,
refuting that the inherent corruption of the human race is to blame for the persistent
state of violence in international politics.[97] However, he does not challenge the single
most important claim made by realism: the struggle for power. Waltz argues that in an
international environment that is defined by anarchy, the international system itself
explains how states interact with each other. Conversely, it is the difference in abilities
of states that defines the shape of the international structure. This means that states
always fear the comparative advantages of other states, and that therefore the status quo
in IR should not be characterized as cooperative, but rather as an enduring struggle that
leads – in the best case – to the establishment of a balance of power capable of
maintaining peace.[98] The important contribution made by Waltz to the realist tradition is
first of all the acknowledgment of an international system. By shifting the focus away
from a more anthropologically defined view of power – namely, the inherent badness of
man – he opened the field up to new analytical possibilities.[99] However, the distinction
between realism and neorealism should not obscure the fact that core tenets of realist
theory are still evident in the neorealist response.

The relevance of realism to NATO-Russia relations has already been established: the
tradition of confrontation that the two actors have come from. The most basic self-
definition of NATO is one that clearly positions itself against the Russian, or Soviet
enemy. The *raison d'être* of NATO is based on circumstances that were unequivocally

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[95] See Grieco, Richard: "Anarchy and the limits of cooperation", in: Kegley, Charles (ed.): "Controversies in IR theory – realism and the neoliberal challenge", New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995, pp. 151-172, p.153. Authors who have contributed to compiling these five core traits of realism include, amongst others: Waltz, Kenneth: "Man, the state, and war: a theoretical analysis", New York: Columbia University Press, 1959; Morgenthau, Hans: "Politics among nations: the struggle for power and peace", New York: Knopf, 1973; Gilpin, Robert: "The richness of the tradition of political realism", in Keohane, Robert (ed.): "Neorealism and its critics", New York: Columbia University Press, 1986, pp. 301-321.
[96] Waltz, Kenneth: "Theory of international politics", New York: McGraw Hill, 1979.
[97] This is a key premise of classical realism. See: Morgenthau, Hans: "Politics among nations. the struggle for power and peace", New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1948.
[98] Ibid.
[99] With "Theory of international politics", Waltz sparked a whole new debate that was to define IR over the next 30 years. The neorealist/neoliberal debate continues today. First of all, critics contend that neorealism fails to predict or describe actual phenomena in IR, and is therefore inept at coming up with relevant policy prescriptions. Also, neorealism is ill suited to account for change in IR, as well as for new developments that go beyond pure power issues (see Keohane and Nye).

in line with the realist tradition. The Cold War competition between the Soviet Union and the United States, or between their respective military alliances, the Warsaw Pact and NATO, consisted of all the elements that make up realist traditions: a prominence of power and threat, an attempt to find a way to balance power, and actors seeking to maximize their interests – though this point is already questionable with the benefit of hindsight, as bringing the world close to a nuclear war might reasonably not be viewed as acting in either of the two actor's best interests. Nevertheless, the *interaction* between NATO and the Soviet Union is a prime example of textbook realism as well as neorealism.[100] However, analyzing current NATO-Russia relations through the realist lens is not as straightforward.

Looking at IR today, John Mearsheimer notes that:

The sad fact is that international politics has always been a ruthless and dangerous business, and is likely to remain that way. Although the intensity of their competition waxes and wanes, great powers fear each other and always compete with each other for power. The overriding goal of each state is to maximize its share of world power, which means gaining power at the expense of other states.[101]

Moreover, he contends that "Great powers are rarely content with the current distribution of power; on the contrary, they face a constant incentive to change it in their favor. They almost always have revisionist intentions, and they will use force to alter the balance of power if they think it can be done at a reasonable price."[102] Mearsheimer's ideas are interesting for several reasons. First, he agrees with the above mentioned theorists who accorded primacy to the distribution of power and the struggle for power in international relations: this is the unquestioned status quo of international relations, he argues. Second, Mearsheimer does not make any concessions to different forms of power struggles. According to him, each interaction between states is defined by power maximization and any outcome of interaction is characterized by the dominant state imposing its will on the other. In a way, Mearsheimer is a pure Hobbesian as far as his pessimistic outlook on interactions in IR is concerned. Though acknowledging that

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[100] Of course, the main obstacle to reading NATO-Soviet relations as a textbook example in general is the fact that NATO is not a nation-state. In order to address this issue, I refer back to the beginning of the chapter, where this methodological issue was discussed in more detail.

[101] Mearsheimer, John: "The tragedy of great power politics", New York: Norton and Company, 2001, p. 2.

[102] Ibid.

realism in itself consists of varying degrees of power struggles[103], Mearsheimer makes a "…number of arguments about how great powers behave toward each other, emphasizing that they look for opportunities to gain power at each other's expense".[104]

This would have enormous consequences for the interaction between NATO and Russia. Keeping in mind that both are for the sake of parsimony considered unitary actors, it would follow that a dangerous race for power were indeed taking place. However, using this approach would be to oversimplify matters. NATO itself claims that

[s]ince the end of the Cold War, [NATO] has attached particular importance to the development of constructive and cooperative relations with Russia. Over the past ten years, NATO and Russia have succeeded in achieving substantial progress in developing a genuine partnership and overcoming the vestiges of earlier confrontation and competition in order to strengthen mutual trust and cooperation.[105]

Clearly, this statement does not tally with the ever-present competition that realism sees as the most enduring characteristic of interaction. Therefore, an in-depth assessment analyzing statements in light of actual outcomes needs to be undertaken.[106] However, the assumption remains that the interaction between NATO and Russia, in spite of abundant rhetoric, often revolves around old confrontational lines reminiscent of what Mearsheimer outlines in his writings. This manifests itself, *inter alia*, in residual great power thinking, including geo-strategic great power considerations, such as NATO enlargement and privileged partnerships with countries of the former Soviet Union.

A die-hard realist might even place NATO enlargement within the parameters of offensive realism. At the 1997 Madrid Summit, formal accession talks were initiated with the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland. Additionally, NATO heads of state and government indicated that the alliance would be open to talks with other countries as well:

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[103] Usually referred to as "offensive" or "defensive" realism. States that seek to preserve the status quo out of the fear that losing their comparative advantages in strength over others might endanger their survival or peace might decide to engage in bellicose activities in order to secure their position (defensive realism). Such states will not, however, seek to expand their advantage over others (e.g. through the acquisition of new territory) by acting aggressively towards other states; such behavior would be associated with offensive realism.
[104] Mearsheimer, 2001, p. 4.
[105] NATO Handbook, Brussels: NATO Office of Information and Press, 2001, p. 80.
[106] See chapters 3 and 4.

Today, we invite the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland to begin accession talks with NATO … we reaffirm that NATO remains open to new members under Article 10 of the North Atlantic Treaty. The Alliance will continue to welcome new members in a position to further the principles of the Treaty and contribute to security in the Euro-Atlantic area. The Alliance expects to extend further invitations in coming years to nations willing and able to assume the responsibilities and obligations of membership, and as NATO determines that the inclusion of these nations would serve the overall political and strategic interests of the Alliance and that the inclusion would enhance overall European security and stability.[107]

Looking at this statement through the offensive realist's lens, one could claim that NATO is trying to expand its sphere of influence at the expense of Russia. In Mearsheimer's words: "This unrelenting pursuit of power means that great powers are inclined to look for opportunities to alter the distribution of power in their favor."[108] Clearly, a redistribution of power has taken place in NATO's favor, at least from a Russian perspective.

However, the discrepancy between perceptions of power and actual power needs to be taken into consideration, especially in this very specific, post-Cold War situation. Though it is true that NATO found itself in a win-win situation after 1989, applying the Cold War logic of winners and losers to the mid-1990s could turn out to be more problematic than realist theory would suggest. The crucial point here is to distinguish between the above-mentioned perceptions and realities. Applying a purely realist-driven approach to NATO's enlargement in the mid-1990s might seem anachronistic; however, denying that "old-style"-thinking about balance of power issues have taken place – and still do – in Russia and elsewhere would again mean oversimplifying the issue. Therefore, as mentioned previously, assessing NATO- Russia relations without taking into account the issue of power – whether perceived or actual – and thus, realist assumptions, would result in an incomplete analysis. The challenge lies in identifying to what extent actual or perceived struggle for power defines an actor's choices.

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[107] Madrid Declaration on Euro-Atlantic Security and Cooperation (Articles 6 and 8), issued by the Heads of State and Government at the Madrid Summit, July 8, 1997, http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/1997/p97-081e.htm [last accessed on 9 November, 2005].
[108] Mearsheimer, 2001, p.3.

2.2.2. Balance of power vs. balance of threat

In order to assess these factors, realism offers more tools than the concepts of balance of power and power maximization. Though the concept of power should not be underestimated, as noted before, it is crucial to differentiate between different aspects of power. The struggle for power maximization is not as straightforward as offensive realists like John Mearsheimer suggest. More issues factor into the equation than a simple struggle for ever-greater comparative advantages in the international system. Taking issue with classical realism's main problem, namely the inevitability of war due to precisely the fact that human nature is not fit for maintaining a state of peace and cooperation, Kenneth Waltz introduced the concept of systemic, or structural realism. According to Waltz, war can be prevented because the tendency of states to achieve a balance of power situation is inherent in the international system, because states will always strive to counter hegemonic power.[109] Whereas Waltz shifts attention away from human nature to the international system *per se*, he still doesn't take issue with the concept of power itself. In line with realist tradition, Waltz treats the concept of power as a black box – his theory rests upon treating power as a given entity that all actors strive for.

The problem with this way of interpreting IR is, very simply, that it does not fully reflect reality. Even though there is still a certain amount of truth in the statement that conflict is the most defining aspect of IR, it is difficult to argue that there is no sort of cooperation between states. Waltz himself has acknowledged this fact in his "Theory of international politics" by introducing the concepts of balancing and bandwagoning to describe states' behavior with respect to the international cooperation that occurs within a multipolar environment. It is crucial to note, however, that even while making concessions to states interacting with each other in a non-bellicose way, Waltz's form of cooperation is still mostly defined by an important amount of competition and struggle. It is not the sort of cooperation that institutionalists or constructivists would characterize as real cooperation. The concepts of balancing and bandwagoning were picked up by Stephen Walt, whose contribution to differentiating the realist argument about power is substantial.[110] Walt, most commonly associated with alliance theory, contends that faced with an external threat, states can choose to either balance or bandwagon:

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[109] Waltz, 1979.
[110] A thorough analysis of balancing and bandwagoning is also offered by Christinsen, Thomas and Snyder, Jack: "Chain gangs and passed bucks: predicting alliance patterns in multipolarity", in:

Balancing is defined as allying with others against the prevailing threat; bandwagoning refers to alignment with the source of danger. Thus two distinct hypotheses about how states will select their alliance partners can be identified on the basis of whether the states ally against or with the principal external threat.[111]

According to Walt, bandwagoning will occur when a state recognizes its comparative disadvantage against another state. Only when states perceive that they have a realistic chance to challenge another one will they consider balancing, i.e., challenge prominence. Otherwise, a rational actor will choose to enhance its own security by seeking an alliance with someone who is perceived as stronger and able to provide protection.[112]

The balancing vs. bandwagoning issue is important as it serves as a general foundation for explaining alliances and their existence (or lack thereof). Besides explaining why alliances take place and how they work, alliance theory can also be applied to great power behavior generally, as the binding issue is the fact that a perception of threat is inevitably the driving force of actors' behavior and the choices that they make. The distinction between power and threat, or between actual threats and perceived threats is an important one, as it offers a more intricate analysis of actor behavior than a theory that relies solely on "power" as the explanatory variable. According to Stephen Walt, states choose to engage in alliances because they seek protection from threat rather than from power.[113] Walt himself sees his theory not as a replacement but as a refinement of the classical balance of power approach. Power is not substituted by another variable; rather, an explanation of the black box "power" is offered, namely, that powerful actors have greater capabilities than weaker ones.[114] Walt's thoughts offer important insights: the interest in distinguishing between balance of power and balance of threat is first and foremost due to the explanatory possibilities that arise with regard to behavioral structures. It once more fleshes out Waltz's theory about the international system with

International Organization, vol. 44, #2, 1990, pp. 137-168. They contend that Waltz's balance of power theory needs to be erweitert by adding Robert Jervis' notion of offensive (chain-ganging) or defensive (buck-passing) behavior among states. A perceived offensive can result in unconditional alliance formation, whereas a perceived defensive advantage may result in free riding with regard to the balancing efforts of other states.

[111] Walt, Stephen: "The origins of alliances", Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1987.

[112] Ibid.

[113] Walt, Stephen: "Alliance formation and the balance of world power", in: International Security, vol. 9, #4, 1985, pp. 3-43.

[114] Ibid.

more behavioral explanation: how do actors perceive what is in their interests and what are they willing to invest in their security.

Furthermore, Walt's theory precludes the possibility that actual cooperation between two equal partners occurs in international relations. Either states are of equal strength and must therefore compete with each other, or they are asymmetric in power and capabilities, in which case the weaker power seeks protection from the stronger one at the expense of equality. This "if you can't beat them, join them" issue has already been mentioned in the introductory chapter. In the case of NATO and Russia, it is Russia that would have to bandwagon with NATO, since the balance of capabilities, and thus power, are in NATO's favor. Therefore, an asymmetrical situation arises, in which Russia cannot balance against NATO out of its own force, which in itself puts Russia on the defensive end of the relationship. Additionally, rhetoric about who won and lost the Cold War has aggravated the sense of weakness felt by Russia. With the prospect of NATO enlargement, Russia felt that NATO was gaining new members at its expense. The issue of Russia itself joining NATO is precarious, so enlargement is perceived as a way to structurally further subdue Russia. As Ira Straus observes:

For a very good reason, Russia fears being isolated as the only excluded country. It fears that the Henry Kissinger scenario will come true, which is that all of the other countries will be members of NATO for the purpose of joint opposition to Russia. Russia would be conceived as the enemy that holds NATO together, and the door would be slammed shut to Russia. So Russia's objections are real, sincere and, serious.[115]

Statements about Eastern European countries being sovereign countries with the right to choose NATO membership without having to take Russian concerns into consideration, though undoubtedly true, did not alleviate Russian fears of marginalization.

Furthermore, following Walt's logic, NATO enlargement can be seen as proof of the alliance acting in a threatening way in regard to Russia. According to Walt, states with aggressive intentions are more threatening than states that only seek to preserve the

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[115] Straus, Ira: "Russia in NATO: the fourth generation of the Atlantic Alliance", in: Thompson, Kenneth (ed.) NATO and the changing world order", Lanham University: Press of America, 1996, pp. 139-159, p. 155.

status quo.[116] In the case of NATO enlargement, the balance of threat scenario was not in Russia's favor. Also, other factors that make an actor more threatening, such as overall capabilities, proximity, as well as perceived intentions[117], all point to the conclusion that NATO's actions could only be perceived as threatening by Russia. Of course, concessions must be made to the scenario of NATO extending membership to Russia itself. Not once did NATO purposely exclude Russia from its overall enlargement plans. Nevertheless, seen in a realistic light, the prospect of Russia joining NATO on the same premises as Poland or Latvia was never a viable option, and therefore Russia and NATO consequently found themselves within structures that were characterized by balancing rather than bandwagoning. The other crucial event that is seen as having defined the nature of the relationship between NATO and Russia in the late 1990s, the war in Kosovo, is also an example of an attempt to balance on the Russian side. NATO's intervention in Kosovo was perceived as being against fundamental Russian interests and therefore prompted a response that called for balancing against NATO's action.

However, in both cases, NATO enlargement and the Kosovo war, Russia had to eventually forgo balancing for reluctant bandwagoning. This was largely due to the fact that the distribution of capabilities was in the end in favor of NATO. There are some general trends to NATO and Russia's patterns of interaction: new developments that seem to advantage the position of NATO over Russia's position are first met with fierce opposition by the Russian side, regardless of how much NATO tries to refute the general (Russian) perception that NATO and Russia are mutually exclusive concepts. However, this initial opposition is then replaced by acknowledgement that little can be done about a given situation, be it enlargement or Kosovo. This in turn leads to Russia "joining" the "winners", as it did when troops were sent to participate in IFOR, SFOR and KFOR. In the case of enlargement, Russia agreed to not interfere in any way in any bilateral agreements between Eastern European states and NATO.[118]

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[116] Walt, Stephen: "Testing theories of alliance formation: the case of Southwest Asia", in: International Organization, vol. 42, #2, 1988, pp. 275-316.
[117] Ibid.
[118] Both the actual outcomes of enlargement and the war in Kosovo will be discussed in greater detail in chapter 3.

2.2.3. Cooperation and bargaining

Of course, like any interaction between two very different actors, NATO-Russia relations are much more complex than a simple back and forth dynamic between a stronger and a weaker power. Even though Russia has arguably found itself on the defensive end, it has managed to make its voice heard clearly in Brussels. Realist theory accounts for this in the form of concessions to the bargaining processes that take place between actors.[119] Likewise, realists acknowledge that international cooperation might take place, regardless of the defining status quo in international relations, i.e., anarchy. However, realism views the possibilities for international cooperation with a certain degree of caution. Whereas institutionalists would contend that cooperation is indeed not only possible, but already widely in place primarily thanks to the role that international institutions play with regard to information-sharing and reduction of transaction costs[120], realists still privilege the role of power and capability advantages. Joseph Grieco starts from the premise that in IR there are always stronger and weaker parties involved. This does not preclude cooperation, but it does shape the way the two – or however many – actors interact. He contends that "My realist-informed argument begins with the point that, for weaker partners, the rules of a collaborative arrangement will provide them with more or fewer opportunities for having effective 'voice opportunities'".[121] Furthermore, he states that

[i]f states share a common interest and undertake negotiations on rules constituting a collaborative arrangement, then the weaker but still influential partners will seek to ensure that the rules so constructed will provide for effective voice opportunities for them and will thereby prevent or at least ameliorate their domination by stronger partners.[122]

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[119] Borrowing both concepts from economics, IR theory has applied game theory to issues of interaction in order to establish rules of engagement. One of the most influential conceptualizations constitutes "tit-for-tat", a set of rules by which interaction between two players can be predicted. Tit-for-tat claims that the parameters for cooperation are defined by previous experiences. If the opponent has previously been cooperative, the actor will also be cooperative. If the opponent has been antagonistic, the actor will also be antagonistic. Tit-for-tat in political science is most commonly associated with Robert Axelrod's book "The evolution of cooperation", New York: Basic Books, 1984. Though Axelrod has usually been associated with institutionalism, the basis of his analysis – game theory – can also be associated with the tenets of realism.

[120] Keohane and Nye, 2001.

[121] Grieco, Joseph: "Understanding the problem of international cooperation: the limits of neoliberal institutionalism and the future of realist theory", in: Baldwin, David (ed.): "Neorealism and neoliberalism: the contemporary debate", New York: Columbia University Press, 1993, , pp. 301-338, p. 331

[122] Ibid.

Grieco's assumptions offer a solid basis for the analysis of NATO-Russia relations. "Common interests" have indeed be revealed, as official documents teem with affirmations of the common interest that NATO and Russia share, including first and foremost the fight against terrorism. "Effective voice opportunities" were extended to Russia with the establishment of the PJC in 1997 and the NRC in 2002. In accordance with Grieco, both the PJC and the NRC were established in exchange for Russian consent to the two rounds of enlargement. In this way, Russia obtained an institutionalized way to raise issues within NATO structures, thereby enhancing its ability to influence matters of direct concern to it. Even so, returning to the previous argument, granting Russia a voice in the PJC or the NRC implicitly means that cooperation between equals is not taking place. Rather, by implementing these structural changes, NATO was intending to solve a Cold War-issue, while at the same time being firmly committed to post-Cold War issues.[123]

2.2.4. Path Dependency

In summary, tenets of realist theory have some explanatory power with regard to interaction between actors, or, in this case, between two former superpowers confronted with a new international order. Survival of the strongest, which is the most simplified summary of realism, goes some way to offering explanations pertaining to developments since the early 1990s. Thucydides' statement that "The strong do what they have the power to do and the weak accept what they have to accept"[124] still holds some truth. Additionally, acquired habits are hard to shake off; 40 years of nuclear confrontation are a powerful constraint on how NATO and Russia interact. The same applies to the way Russia is perceived by third countries, especially the countries of the former Warsaw Pact. Path dependency[125] creates a framework that puts constraints on cooperation even when it is both rationally desired by the different actors. To this effect, Ruth and David Collier have noted that actors make contingent and consistent choices based on previous conditions, resulting in "critical juncture" laying out a path along which developments tend to occur. This "path of development" is very difficult to

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[123] Such as enlargement etc.
[124] Thucydides in: Viotti and Kauppi, 1993.
[125] Path dependency is defined as a situation in which actors make decisions based on processes that have taken place in the past, or on a set of decisions that have been taken in the past. Path dependency thus stresses the historiographical component that influences developments in the social, but also the natural sciences.

reverse or alter, even when there is a basic consensus that stepping outside of the critical juncture would be in all actors' best interest.[126]

Collier and Collier's argument supports the thesis that NATO and Russia are caught in a situation where the past still plays a role in deciding what current developments should look like. In fact, path dependency continues to influence perceptions and policy planning within NATO itself. For example, one of the main reasons for the creation of NATO, namely the containment of Germany, continues to resurface in discussions about the future of NATO. With regard to Germany's position in post-Cold War Europe, John Duffield points that

As many analysts have noted, few if any concrete reasons exist for expecting a renewal of German aggression. Nevertheless, perceptions do matter, and the profound change that has occurred in Germany's position within the European state system will inevitably raise questions about its future foreign policy orientation.[127]

The same is of course true for Russia – the second main reason why NATO exists: "Given these insecurities [about Russia's transition to democracy], the countries of Western Europe have found it desirable to maintain a counterweight to the residual military power of the former Soviet Union, especially Russia's nuclear capabilities."[128] This illustrates how in NATO's case, the past continues to shape the present.

2.2.5. Preliminary conclusions

As has been demonstrated, different components of realism, combined with the historiographical awareness that Collier and Collier have put forward explains some fundamental patterns that have occurred and continue to occur in the relationship between NATO and Russia. An analysis of the interaction between the two actors would be incomplete if core concepts of realist thought, such as power, balance of power, perception of threat and the impact of anarchy on IR were left out. Contending that Cold War confrontation has been replaced by consistent cooperation, caused by interdependence and ever closer ties between NATO and Russia necessitates neglecting solid facts. This point is implicit in the first hypothesis proposed: that NATO and Russia

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[126] Collier, Ruth and Collier, David: "Shaping the political arena: junctures, the labor movement and regime dynamics in Latin America", Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991.
[127] Duffield, John: "Why NATO persists", in: "NATO and the changing world order: an appraisal by scholars and policymakers", Lanham: University Press of America, 1996, pp. 99-118, p. 106.
[128] Ibid, p. 102.

have not progressed along a linear development of cooperation from confrontation to integration. Therefore, confrontational cleavages that have been treated as a given, such as the low point of relations between NATO and Russia during the war in Kosovo, also seem overly simplified. Also, the newly seized-upon opportunity for cooperation that arose as a consequence of the events of September 11th has not developed in such a linear and straightforward manner as is generally perceived. Due to the diverse and multiple intricacies that constitute the relationship between NATO and Russia, an "either-or" analysis seems misplaced.

This also implies that relying solely on one theoretical approach to analyze NATO-Russia relations after 1997 would risk falling into the same trap of bias. Though realism does indeed offer many explanations pertaining to questions about NATO and Russia, it certainly does not describe the full picture. The complexity of the issues mentioned before also demands a diversified theoretical approach; occurrences in the real world tend to not fit an "either-or" analysis. While realism supports observations that find more confrontation than cooperation between NATO and Russia, even using all the different arguments that I have outlined above, it does not offer a satisfactory analysis as to why NATO and Russia have chosen to not see themselves as outright enemies anymore. Die-hard realists would argue that any cooperation that has taken place up to now or that will take place in the future is a result of trade-offs between two actors that take decisions based only on their own best interest. This is a far cry from actual, benevolent cooperation. In order to challenge realists' views on NATO-Russia relations, I will now discuss what answers can be found within a different school of theory: one that largely advocates cooperation, or even convergence, rather than confrontation.

2.3. Constructivism
2.3.1. Constructivism vs. realism?

Very often, constructivism is regarded as being diametrically opposed to realism. Whereas realism uses a power-centric approach and tends to focus on a rather bleak understanding of human interaction, constructivism challenges both realism's and institutionalism's core tenets. Indeed, constructivism was born out of an attempt to overcome the impasse that the "great debate" in IR, namely the controversy between realism and institutionalism, had manoeuvred itself into. Rather than reiterating the

foundations of both "previous" approaches[129], constructivism seeks to answer a whole different set of questions pertaining to IR. The greatest charge levelled at both realism and institutionalism is that neither theory predicted the end of the Cold War and the ensuing developments that changed many commonly held assumptions in IR. According to Peter Katzenstein, realism and institutionalism (as well as their neorealist and neoliberal counterparts) fail to provide adequate analyses of the post Cold War-world because they focus only on capabilities and the structural composition of institutions.[130] Katzenstein goes on to claim that only by shifting attention away from states and institutions and by focusing on a broader range of issues, such as cultural and national identity, is it possible to account for developments in IR that have taken place over the past decades.[131] Alexander Wendt notes that "Mainstream IR theory simply had difficulty explaining the end of the Cold War, or systemic change more generally. It seemed to many that these difficulties stemmed from IR's materialist and individualist orientation, such that a more ideational and holistic way of international politics might do better."[132] Furthermore, Wendt claims that "Social theory is concerned with the fundamental assumptions of social inquiry: the nature of human agency and its relationship to social structures, the role of ideas and material forces in social life, the proper form of social explanations, and so on."[133]

Constructivism is often linked to the so-called "English School", mainly due to the emphasis on interpretive methods that echo Hedley Bull's call for reliance upon exercise of judgement rather than subjecting everything to verification and proof.[134] The English School, or rationalist approach is associated with classical thinkers such as Grotius and Vattel, and modern writers such as Wight and Bull. Most importantly, these modern writers argue that there is a third way of looking at IR that, even though overlapping with realism and idealism, takes the middle ground between them.[135]

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[129] For example, constructivists have stepped away from a state-centric view of IR. Whereas constructivists still do not contest the premises that lie at the heart of both realism and institutionalism, namely that the state is the main unit of analysis and that the most defining status quo in IR is the state of anarchy, they question whether this actually constitutes an obstacle to international cooperation.
[130] Katzenstein, Peter (ed.): "The culture of national security: norms and identity in world politics", New York: Columbia University Press, 1996.
[131] Ibid.
[132] Wendt, Alexander: "Social theory of international politics", Cambridge University Press, 1999, p. 4.
[133] Ibid, p. 5.
[134] Reus-Smith, Christian: "Constructivism", in: Viotti, Paul and Kauppi, Mark: "International Relations theory – realism, pluralism, globalism", New York: Palgrave, 1993, pp. 209-230, p. 227.
[135] Linklater, Andrew: "Rationalism", in: Viotti, Paul and Kauppi, Mark: "International Relations theory – realism, pluralism, globalism", New York: Palgrave, 1993, pp. 103-28, p. 104.

The rationalist school contends that "…the international system is not a state of war, and there is a surprisingly high level of international order given that states have an internal monopoly of control over the instruments of violence and, as sovereigns, no obligation to submit to a higher power."[136]

Rationalists put forward the notion of an "international society of states", which exists because states share a common interest in restraining the use of force by using an intricate system of accommodation and compromise.[137] In the same manner, constructivism is often described as a "third way" between realism and institutionalism/liberalism, as being a "third power" in its own right because it stresses "…the importance of normative as well as material structures, on the role of identity in shaping political action, and on the mutually constitutive relationship between agents and structures."[138] Constructivism is also born out of the tradition of critical theory, which ontologically criticizes "the image of social actors as atomistic egotists, whose interests are formed prior to social interaction, and who enter social relations solely for strategic purposes."[139] By contrast, critical theory contends that "…actors are inherently social, that their identities and interest are socially constructed, the products of intersubjective social structures."[140] Constructivists insist that ideational and normative factors are just as important as material ones. These ideational structures create a system of shared beliefs and values that in turn condition actors' identities as well as their interests and finally, actions.[141]

The constructivist approach obviously differs from the realist approach in its different facets described above. Culture, norms and values are terms missing from the realist discourse. Conversely, constructivists have avoided usage of the concept of power and "selfish" interest in IR. Looking at events from a constructivist stand point, one gets a much more optimistic picture of the possibility of international cooperation and interaction between different actors in general. Put in very simple terms, realism, institutionalism and constructivism can be aligned with international confrontation, cooperation and convergence respectively. According to constructivists, actors do not simply agree to cooperate, but rather, due to an ever-closer understanding of shared

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[136] Ibid.
[137] Ibid, p. 105.
[138] Reus-Smith, 1993, p. 209.
[139] Ibid, p. 214.
[140] Ibid.
[141] Ibid, p.216-217.

norms, they eventually become more *like* each other. While constructivism enjoys the benefit of being the most recent addition to IR theory[142], and has therefore not been exposed to as much criticism as previous IR discourses, applying some of its core principles to contemporary developments in IR is fruitful. In keeping with the opening remarks about the importance of a combined theoretical approach to NATO-Russia relations, it is imperative to look beyond the realist framework and analyze events through a different and more nuanced approach.

Generally speaking, the constructivist IR discourse does not take the concept of power struggle for granted. Writers such as Karl Deutsch have put forward the notion that the best form of international integration consists of multiple channels of communication and a move toward consensus-driven decision-making.[143] According to Ira Strauss, "NATO used that sort of ideological justification for its habits of operating by consensus over the years, and once something becomes not only a habit but an ideology, it becomes difficult to dislodge."[144] While Straus implies that many of NATO's problems are due to the fact that the NATO decision-making process works by consensus, Deutsch's thoughts about establishing consensus and increasing channels of communication in order to enable members to reach a state of unity are crucial to constructivist views of international interaction. Although chiefly an argument against federalism, Deutsch nevertheless advocates cooperation between nations that goes beyond balancing, bandwagoning or teaming up against a common threat. Deutsch believes that unanimity and consensus born out of diverse channels of communication are the best ways to achieve true international cooperation and understanding. Shared values emerge through consensus, eventually leading to convergence of norms, in accordance with constructivist theory.[145]

Clearly, a main objective of NATO has been the synchronization of interests and values of its member states, mostly through an intricate web of communication and negotiation. This, in turn, can create an atmosphere in which it is possible to overcome the most constricting status quo in IR: the maxim of national self-interest as basis for

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[143] Deutsch, Karl: "The nerves of government: models of political communication and control", New York: Free Press, 1963.
[144] Straus, 1996, p. 151.
[145] Deutsch's seminal work has served as point of reference since the 1960s. For an in-depth analysis of Deutsch's work see Katzenstein, Peter: "International interdependence: some long-term trends and recent changes", in: International Organization, vol. 29, #4, 1975, pp. 1021-1034.

interaction with others. To this effect, Alexander Siedschlag observes: "If norms and institutions (such as NATO) are based on common interpretations and communication between states, they can shape a systematically policy-oriented political force, so that the law of the strongest and the power of national self-interest disappear in favor of international legitimacy."[146] As already mentioned above, the integration of (West) Germany into the transatlantic security structures was one of the three main objectives of NATO; the process has been an unequivocal success story, also due to the fact that NATO effectively managed to propagate a unified, Western, and transatlantic security and political culture. Moreover, channelling security concerns and policies into an international alliance means that each nation effectively became a member of that family of Western security, and thus did not see its own security as separate from that of its neighbors, while at the same time underlining the voluntary decision to join NATO, hence safeguarding the principle of sovereignty. NATO states that its security tasks are based on the following:

The fundamental principal underpinning of the Alliance is a common commitment to mutual cooperation among the member states, based on the indivisibility of their security. Solidarity and cohesion within the Alliance ensure that no member country is forced to rely upon its own national efforts alone in dealing with basic security challenges. Without depriving member states of their right and duty to assume their sovereign responsibilities in the field of defense, the Alliance enables them to realise their essential national security objectives through collective effort.[147]

2.3.2. Path dependency: constructivism's critique

The flip side of established institutions functioning on the basis of a habit born out of consensus and convergence of norms is that they tend to stick to whatever modes of functioning were acquired; i.e., the emergence of path dependency and institutional stickiness can become problematic. This is considered an issue that mainly neorealists have pointed out. John Ruggie takes up this issue by reconstructing the neorealist and institutionalist/neoliberal debate and its problems: "Other neorealists, notably Krasner, have long allowed for 'stickiness' of institutional arrangements, however, whereby they continue to function along their original paths even after power relations shift, or even take new departures, so long as they do not drift too far out of the underlying power-

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[146] Siedschlag, Alexander: "Der 'kulturelle Faktor' in der Sicherheitspolitik", Bonn: Reader Sicherheitspolitik, Streitkräfteamt, Informations- und Medienzentrale der Bundeswehr, 2003, p. 91-92.
[147] NATO Handbook, Brussels: NATO Office of Information and Press, 2001, p. 30.

based structure."[148] The issue of path dependency and the problems it can create in IR have already been discussed in the previous section. Whereas realists see the possibility of an international organization not reflecting reality due to institutional stickiness and the lack of freedom to manoeuvre, constructivists take a different approach. Realists, they contend, fall into the trap of seeing path dependency as the inherent driving force of IR. Therefore, the driving force behind establishing international organizations is also power, not norms or values. If, however, the cornerstone of international organizations is indeed power, and if international organizations only reflect current power structures in IR[149], then it follows naturally that organizations will not be able to modify their institutional setup in response to changes that occur in the real world. They will continue to represent a world that used to exist at the time a particular organization was created.

Refuting this rather fatalistic way of viewing international organizations, constructivists, once again challenging the power-premise of realists, argue that change is possible and keeps on occurring in IR, and thus also in international organizations because the norms and values that shape them are themselves in transition. This point is put forward by John Ruggie who states that "Instances of institutionalization are situation-specific. That is, they are specific to given sets of actors who stand in specific relation to one another in the context of particular issues."[150] Therefore, Ruggie claims, cases of institutionalization are also inherently unstable, as

It follows that any given expression of the collective situation will not capture the individual situation of all participants equally well, and it will not conform to the individual situations of all participants equally well … Thus, any given collective situation is inherently unstable. It may change as knowledge of cause/affect relations changes, as prevailing configurations of interdependence alter and, of course, as capabilities or objectives change. Each collective situation is, therefore, subject to continued renegotiation...[151]

Thus, whereas realism sees international organizations as flawed because they tend to reflect the status quo and therefore inevitably become obsolete at some point, constructivists privilege the formation of organizations as inherently erratic, because the

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[148] Ruggie, John: "Constructing the world polity", London: Routledge, 1998, p.10.
[149] Mearsheimer, John: "The false promise of international institutions", in: International Security, vol. 19, #3 1994/1995, pp. 5-49.
[150] Ruggie, 1998, p. 57.
[151] Ibid, p. 54.

status quo itself does not exist the way realists envision it. Instead, the status quo itself is a compromise, which makes it more likely that international organizations will eventually undergo changes. Ruggie uses this line of reasoning to advocate that NATO, an international organization operating in very different circumstances from the ones for which it was created, should move forward by strengthening its European forces in particular while ushering in the end of the US preponderance in NATO, and in European security structures generally. Since the threat situation of the Cold War no longer exists, it is imperative for NATO to reconsider its focus; otherwise it runs the risk of operating under threat perceptions that no longer exist.[152] To Ruggie, international organizations are not inevitably fated to one day become obsolete. On the contrary, the ever-changing environment of IR, as well as the changing values and norms that make up IR, are the reasons why these organizations exist in the first place. Therefore, there should be no reason why NATO would cease to exist.

This links into what many see as the greatest charge laid at the standard IR debate since WWII that was born out of – amongst other issues – the pre-eminence of realism and the institutionalist challenge: the problems both theories encounter when trying to explain how change occurs in the international system. As Ruggie has pointed out, a changing international environment is not the reason *per se* why NATO should cease to exist. In order to be able to discuss change in international organizations, one should understand the structural change in IR that has brought about the need for organizational change in the first place. Realists see static conditions in IR as pre-eminent and privilege them over change because they are believed to foster conditions that are conducive to maintaining peace. In contrast, constructivists maintain that the entire modus operandi of IR consists of change and therefore the decade-old impasse of how to accommodate change in theoretical models becomes obsolete. According to Ruggie, constructivism goes beyond the confines of neorealist (and neoliberalism) by

[p]roblematizing states' identities and interests, by broadening the array of ideational factors that affect international outcomes; by introducing the logically prior constitutive rules alongside regulative rules; and by including transformation as a normal feature of international politics that systemic theory should encompass even if its empirical occurrence is episodic and moves on a different time line from everyday life.[153]

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[152] Ibid, p.229-239.
[153] Ibid, p. 27.

NATO, therefore, is not defined as a static, undefined object of IR, but rather as a living, constructed actor that itself is based on identity change that results from general movements in IR, but also from its constitutive parts themselves. Thomas Risse-Kappen reaches the same conclusion: liberal democracies form images of groups of friends and of groups of potential enemies. Through socialization, a group of states[154] can acquire a sense of community in which the role of power is minimized for the benefit of compromise and persuasion. Based on these assumptions, Risse-Kappen argues that NATO's successful existence is a consequence of the persistent "we-feeling" that NATO members share.[155] However, who is "in" and who is "out" may change over time; in fact, Risse-Kappen suggests that the "otherness" of Russia vis-à-vis NATO will subside over time due to ongoing democratic reform in Russia.[156]

2.3.3. Normative politics

By privileging the concepts of norms, values and the convergence of the two, constructivism inherently takes a normative outlook on IR: stressing the normative element of politics in general, and of international politics in particular, allows theory to move beyond the purely structural and rigid confines that were long considered to be the bases of IR. On the other hand, this also implies the normative judgement of developments in IR that neorealism, with its focus on power and structures, has shied away from. To neorealists, power is neither good nor bad, it just *is*, and therefore it shapes IR. Constructivism is much clearer on the issue, as Martha Finnemore explains, "…normative contestation is in large part what politics is all about: competing values and understandings of what is good, desirable, and appropriate in our collective, communal life."[157] Similarly, Finnemore contends that (Western) cultural norms have increasingly resulted in world-wide similarities in organizational and behavioral structures that would not have emerged if the world worked according to the power rules laid out by the neo-realist school.[158] However, even though Finnemore assumes that norms and values will transcend different societies, she does not claim that the

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[154] Risse-Kappen limits his hypothesis to liberal democracies.

[155] Risse-Kappen, Thomas: "Collective identity in a democratic community: the case of NATO", in: Katzenstein, Peter: "The culture of national security. Norms and identity in world politics", New York: Columbia University Press, 1996, pp. 357-399.

[156] Ibid.

[157] Finnemore, Martha: "National interests in international society", Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996, p. 135.

[158] Finnemore, Martha: "Norms, culture and world politics", in: International Organization, 1996, vol. 50, pp. 325-347.

world community will eventually agree on one set of values or norms: "My international society is one in which basic norms are not in complete congruence. At times, they may make claims on people or mobilize groups with opposing claims, both of which are grounded in basic, legitimate norms of society."[159] She advocates a system in which the "minority discourse" will exist alongside the "majority discourse", sometimes resulting in trade-offs, sometimes in a realignment of the majority discourse. Also, she claims that "conflicts among norms have no unique solutions. Different and shifting solutions will be tried in different places, and local context becomes important in identifying the particular solutions…"[160] In her works, Finnemore walks the narrow line between identifying a global convergence to a particular set of norms on the one hand, and acknowledging that "one size does not fit all" on the other. However, her main statement remains that states, organizations and civilizations generally are driven by norms, not power.

Finnemore's observations are certainly relevant for an analysis that deals with the relations between NATO and Russia in a changed international order. The argument for value convergence within NATO and among its member states has already been discussed. The same line of argument can be applied to Russia and its relationship with NATO. After all, NATO's present membership of 26 also happened through processes of "enlargement", implying gradual change within NATO itself as well as change within the applicant countries. Otherwise, the task of preserving the original Alliance would be assigned to the original member states of NATO, which are themselves a rather heterogeneous group of states. Thus, the actual, enticing question that constructivism raises has to do with exactly how much an international organization changes internally once it engages in external, visible change such as enlargement, in NATO's case. Does the organization itself change, or does the required change happen asymmetrically, or, in NATO's case, is it the prospect member state that actively aligns its values and norms with those of NATO? If, as Finnemore claims, a convergence of values takes place that leans towards what is considered good, desirable and appropriate, who decides what *is* and what *remains* good, desirable and appropriate? In other words, how is the discourse determined, and by whom? How much convergence towards particular norms and values actually takes place, and how much of the normative in politics remains in the everyday dealings of an international organization?

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[159] Finnemore, 1996, p. 138.
[160] Ibid, p. 139.

Applying these questions to NATO and especially NATO's relationship with Russia is challenging. The parallel often drawn between Germany and Russia as the "others" that are integrated into the "civilized" society of nations – normatively, militarily, economically and politically – does not hold up. (West) Germany joined a relatively new NATO, an organization that was created to protect the continent that (West) Germany is a part of. Russia, on the other hand, existed as NATO's "other" for 40 years. That NATO was created because of Russia is not merely a historical truism; this fact continues to shape interactions between NATO and Russia. In accordance with the main hypothesis of this dissertation, it also puts some very basic constraints on the interaction between NATO and Russia. This does not preclude that interaction, and sometimes even cooperative interaction between the two actors has occurred and continues to do so. Neither does it preclude that NATO and Russia share any values or norms, or in Finnemore's words, share a sense of what is "good, desirable and appropriate". Indeed, the following chapter will analyze in more detail what set of events led to intensified cooperation between NATO and Russia. Constructivism's assumption that the status quo in IR is a difficult concept has some very important implications. Just because actors have a history of not sharing a specific set of norms, they are not eternally condemned to live in a state of rivalry and confrontation. If that were the case, the Cold War would still being in progress – an argument that returns to the roots of constructivism itself and its qualms with the established theories in IR.

However, as Finnemore herself concedes, the so-called convergence of norms and values that takes place on an international scale is far from linear and clear cut. Different discourses coexist, and the majority discourse that emerges can itself be interpreted very differently by different actors. Therefore, the normative aspect to international relations inevitably leads to differences in perceptions as to what the majority discourse actually is. Questions concerning who has the most influence over the accepted discourse are therefore not unjustified. In order to be a member of a club, the applicant has to accept certain discursive elements that may or may not conflict with the applicant's own history or set of values. In Russia's case, this has certainly been the case. This aspect brings me back to the more "realist", power-oriented side of the discussion, which should be seen as complementary, not opposed to the debate on values and norms. Does norm convergence entail trade-offs, zero-sum logic, or an interaction between two equal partners? Based on the neo-realist considerations that I

have introduced earlier in this chapter, I would argue that in the case of NATO and Russia, the former is accurate.

Most constructivist literature remains ambivalent on the issue. The focus lies on establishing that convergence takes place and defining what exactly that means, as well as on discussing who or what is the entity that develops an identity. Rodney Hall for instance circumvents the problem of how an identity is established by focusing on the definition of a state as the primary actor – and thus the primary source for shaping identities – in IR and argues that:

… [t]he state is just the rational, bureaucratic, institutional manifestation of societal collective identity; of the nation, in the age of nationalism… Significantly, it is the legitimating principle of a given, historical, social order that privilege this rational bureaucratic manifestation of those principles as an institutional artefact of the system … Thus, I would ascribe equal ontological status to the nation (sovereign), as well as the state (institutional manifestation of sovereignty) and the system.[161]

However, even though Hall points out this discrepancy in the usage of terms, he does not privilege another form of government as the main unit of analysis. Like many other authors, his main argument is that "…change in the international system occurs with changes in the collective identity of crucial social actors who collectively constitute the units from which the system is comprised."[162]

However, Hall does not offer an explanation for the issues raised above, namely the construction of identity – neither for states nor for organizations. Some issues are simply taken for granted and accepted.[163] Finnemore points out that a tendency to treat given issues as a black box is widespread in IR theory: "Realists and liberals of various stripes have accepted and explored means of coordinating behaviour among rational actors. What actors want is treated as largely unproblematic in these analyses; norms are means to Pareto improvement by regulating behaviour in ways useful to actors[164]". Finnemore's answer to this dilemma is that actors behave according to reconfigurations

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[161] Hall, Rodney: "National collective identity: social constructs and international systems", New York: Columbia University Press, 1999, p. 27-28.
[162] Ibid, p. 28.
[163] The debate about what a 'world government' – as the answer to the issue of anarchy – should look like is one example. Whereas international institutions are largely seen as one possible answer to this issue, it remains questionable how viable the concept of 'world government' is.
[164] Finnemore, 1996, p. 128-129.

of interest; that the "norms explored here are 'constitutive' in the sense that they constitute, create, or revise the actors or interests …"[165] While this statement goes one step further towards explaining why certain actors behave a certain way, it does not ultimately resolve the inherent question of consensus-formation. Although it shifts the focus away from the perceived dead-end of power politics towards a more integrated approach that takes into consideration the social or human components of decision-making, ambivalence still remains with regard to certain processes of preference-building, and thus, policy-making.

This observation is of course not new. Opportunities for further research dealing with the above-mentioned issues have been pointed out by constructivists themselves. For example, Antje Wiener recounts constructivism's main achievements and purposes, reaching the conclusion that

[t]he social ideas station stresses the importance of interaction and change. It begins with the assumption that social ideas such as norms and social knowledge have an impact on actors' identities, they are therefore constitutive for decision-making. However, this station still sticks to a structural notion of norms; it stresses their guiding role, and underestimates their ability to change… The particular dual quality of norms bears potential problems for social scientists, as norms may be stable for a certain amount of time, however, they are also subject to change. When and how do norms change?[166]

Once again the debate returns to the issue of change in the international system; it is interesting to see that, apparently, the problem of when and how change occurs still has not been answered definitively. The main claim made by (neo)realism, namely that rigid structures make change very unlikely to occur, reappears within constructivist thought. Therefore, the necessity to see theories as complementary and not mutually exclusive seems increasingly important.

Many theorists in IR have reached the same conclusion. For example, Ole Wæver tackles the classic divide realist/liberal divide in IR by declaring the feud to be over: "Realism and liberalism are no longer incommensurable – on the contrary, they share a

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[165] Ibid, p. 129.
[166] Wiener, Antje: "Social facts in world politics – the value-added of constructivism", paper prepared for presentation at the 42nd annual convention of the International Studies Association, Chicago, 20-25 February 2001, http://www.isanet.org/archive/wiener.html [last accessed on 26 January 2006].

rationalist research program, a conception of science, a shared willingness to operate on the premise of anarchy (Waltz) and investigate the evolution of cooperation and whether institutions do matter (Keohane)."[167] Along the same line of thought, Henrikki Heikka picks up Wendt's ideas on international security systems and their mode of functioning in a complex world. Heikka, like Wendt, concludes that, depending on several factors, security systems can be competitive or cooperative. First, states do not have a set of security interests that they apply regardless of the particular situation, but rather, each situation requires a new solution, and thus, a new set of preferences. Second, Heikka contends that much depends on how states view themselves and each other when it comes to international security[168] – a statement that brings to mind the famous debate about actual vs. perceived threats that is a cornerstone of realist theory. In order to gain new insights into old problems, Ted Hopf summarizes what he believes are the main shortcomings of the different theories.[169] He sees neorealism as being too state-centred, overly focused on anarchy and the principle of self-help and material power.[170] Constructivism on the other hand does not account for progress and runs the risk of being methodologically unsound.[171]

In other words, theoretical considerations do not offer the final word on real-world issues. However, they do help to classify thoughts and concepts in the quest for new insights on different problems. Therefore, the following table serves as a summary of this chapter and is meant to give an overview of possible scenarios of NATO-Russia interaction and the theoretical implications connected to the scenarios. In this table, confrontation and cooperation are clearly associated with realism and constructivism, respectively. The scenarios chosen represent a representative situation within the relationship, oscillating between confrontation and cooperation; in accordance with the main research question that this dissertation has put forward.

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[167] Wæver, Ole: "The rise and fall of the inter-paradigm debate", in: Smith, Steve, Booth, Ken and Zalevski, Marysia (eds.): "International theory: positivism and beyond", Cambridge: Cambride University Press, 1996, pp. 149-185.

[168] Heikka, Henrikki: "Beyond neorealism and constructivism", in: Hopf, Ted (ed.): "Understandings of Russian foreign policy", University Park: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999, pp. 57-107, p. 62.

[169] Hopf, Ted (ed.): "Understandings of Russian foreign policy", University Park: University of Pennsylvania, 1999.

[170] With regard to institutionalism, Hopf contends that it does not specify where actors' preferences come from, that it does not make the distinction between individual and collective action, and that the problem of state-centrism still prevails.

[171] Hopf, 1999.

	Membership	**Partnership schemes/ Joint exercise**	**Institutionalized Dialgogue**	**Disbanding of institutional interaction**	**Hostilities**
Confrontation	Bandwagoning	Bargaining	Balance of power	Perception of threatening behavior	Actions that are threatening to vital interests of either party
Cooperation	Convergence of norms	Convergence of interests	Seeking a common language and community	Divergence in norms and values	Break-down of common norms and values

Table 1: Scenarios for NATO - Russia interaction

2.4. Connecting the threads – interim conclusions and problems to solve

2.4.1. Chapter summary

This chapter has outlined the contributions as well as the shortcomings of realism and constructivism to the analysis of NATO–Russia relations. Rapprochement vs. estrangement is well mirrored – if only superficially – in this seemingly contrasting debate. As mentioned before, the phenomenon of the collapse of the Soviet empire has found a theoretical home within constructivist theory, if only ex-post. Jeffrey Checkel, for example, credits a turn in Soviet thinking for the end of the Cold War.[172] According to Checkel, domestic institutions and international structure influence the way different countries use ideas in order to shape policy. In the case of the Soviet Union, the struggle between new and old ideas led to a softening of entrenched assumptions which in turn made it possible for new foreign policy to emerge.[173] Meanwhile, Michael Williams and Iver Neumann argue in favor of a *new* idea shaping NATO-Russia interaction: enlargement constitutes a "symbolic power" that consists of institutions, identities and narrative structures that contributes to creating a security community with which both NATO and Russia can identify themselves[174], thereby offering an explanation for NATO's continued existence. The existence of NATO after the end of the Cold War has also been advocated by analysts focusing less on normative causes such as values or security conformity, and more on military and political assets. NATO exists, and will

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[172] Checkel, Jeffrey: "Ideas and international political change. Soviet/Russian behaviour and the end of the Cold War", New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997.
[173] Ibid.
[174] Williams, Michael and Neumann, Iver: "From alliance to security community: NATO, Russia, and the power of identity", in: Millenium, vol. 29, #2, 2000, pp. 357-387.

continue to exist simply because it continues to provide security. This means that contrary to the argument often heard that NATO has lost its purpose in a post-Cold War environment, NATO has actually succeeded in carving out a new set of responsibilities for itself.[175] For example, Christian Tuschhoff argues that NATO continues to provide valuable security to its members.[176] He claims that a combination of defense planning and political discourse have brought NATO up to speed with the challenges of the 21st century, particularly the fight against international terrorism.

It is much more complicated, however, to reconcile NATO's continued existence with assumptions made by realists. Arguably, advocating NATO's ongoing existence along strict realist lines would imply that Russia continues to be seen as a potentially lethal adversary. But if this line of reasoning is to be refuted, i.e., that Russia *de facto* does not constitute a threat to NATO, then what does NATO's threat perception entail? This brings up the major dilemma that realism faces when confronted with NATO: why does NATO still exist when the Soviet threat has been eliminated? This seems like a no-win situation at best and a dead-end situation at worst. Generally speaking, placing Russia within this context in realist discussions turns out to be difficult. At the core of what this dissertation is aiming to explain, this dilemma does indeed raise several interlinked issues. Returning to the beginning of this chapter, and taking into account the overview given in the previous sections, I would like to consolidate the different issues pertaining to NATO-Russia engagement, especially in light of the hypotheses put forward in the introduction and in the beginning of this chapter. As I have pointed out, theoretical approaches do not always fully and accurately reflect actual events in IR. Therefore, the only logical consequence that can be drawn is that every theory needs to be tested against reality, and, if necessary, complimented with elements of other theories. For this dissertation specifically, the consequences are twofold: first of all, the existence of actual NATO-Russia interaction and the absence of open hostile threats challenge some tenets of realism. Second, the fickleness and reluctance that NATO–Russia interaction is characterized by puts limits on constructivism's central tenets. Of course, opinions diverge on how much NATO and Russia interact and to what extent the interaction is positive or negative; while some see reason to expect an ever-closer cooperation, others

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[175] This statement is discussed in detail in chapters 1 and 5.
[176] Tuschhoff, Christian: "Why NATO is still relevant", in: International Politics, vol. 40, #1, 2003, pp. 101-120.

contend that the two actors are drifting apart. Accordingly, both realism and constructivism are employed to explain events.

This has several implications for this thesis' hypotheses. Hypothesis 1 – that NATO and Russia interaction is characterized by residual Cold War issues that arise from a perceived balance of threat situation between the two actors – addresses an issue that often gets obfuscated in the debate about the state of the art in IR after the end of the Cold War. Whereas it is undeniable that NATO and Russia do not follow patterns of interaction that are as openly aggressive and destructive as they used to be during the Cold War, it does not necessarily follow that they find themselves engaging in an ever-closer relationship. First and foremost, NATO and Russia interact because they *must*. Geopolitical events after 1989 have made it impossible either to ignore or openly confront each other. Taken *per se*, this statement does not conflict with any of the major theoretical approaches of realism, liberalism or constructivism. It does, however, put a certain amount of constraint on the explanatory power that any of the theories offer. For example, NATO and Russia do not behave along strictly realist terms because they do not consistently try to gain absolute advantages over one another, but this does not prevent them from interacting in such a way that rivalries still exist – and therefore, it is entirely possible that both are missing out on positive outcomes that would be possible if real cooperation existed.[177]

On the other hand, the fact that NATO and Russia interact because they have no other choice does not mean that far less cooperation between them is entirely feasible. Therefore, according to the constructivist argument, the interaction that we see today between Russia and NATO is the result of progress that has already been made in terms of convergence of values and rapprochement of norms. Indeed, if the Cold War status quo is the bar that contemporary NATO-Russia interaction is measured against, then constructivism certainly does have a point. This reflects the argument made by the second hypothesis – that neither realism nor constructivism by themselves adequately explain patterns of interaction between NATO and Russia. At the same time, I would like to put a caveat on the idea of an ever-closer convergence of norms and values that paves the way for ever-closer cooperation between NATO and Russia. As stated in Hypothesis 1, and reverting back to the notion of path dependency and its importance

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[177] See chapter 5.

for NATO–Russia relations, patterns of confrontation resulting from the structural imbalance that is created when NATO interacts with Russia still continue to shape the way both sides perceive each other, which in turn affects policy outcomes. Closely related to this is the problem of discourse and agenda-setting, an issue that I have discussed at length in this chapter. Who decides what the discourse should look like is also heavily influenced by certain power structures. These are what I refer to as "residual Cold War" patterns. These residues that align more with a realist worldview should not be underestimated in their importance, even though this might seem inopportune given the criticism that has been levelled at the realist school, especially since the end of the Cold War.

2.4.2. Methodolody

The theoretical approach chosen ties in with the methods used in order to be able to put forward a solid analysis of NATO–Russia relations since 1997. This analysis rests to a large extent on three research methods: first and foremost the analysis of primary documents relating to the NATO–Russia institutional framework, second, the complementary analysis of secondary literature, and third, the gathering of empirical information in the form of interviews with experts and policy makers.[178] This dissertation is therefore employing qualitative methods, which, according to King, Keohane and Verba, are characterized by not relying "on numerical measurements. Such work [qualitative research] has tended to focus on one or a small number of cases, to use intensive interviews or depth analysis of historical materials, to be discursive in method, and to be concerned with a rounded or comprehensive account of some event or unit."[179] One main component of this qualitative method is what Stephen van Evera refers to as "process tracing": "In process tracing, the investigator explores the chain of events or the decision-making process by which initial case conditions are translated into case outcomes."[180] In order to establish what the initial case conditions are, I base the majority of my research on primary documents such as speeches, summits, meeting minutes, etc. Here the main caveat concerns the risk of letting one's own ontology interfere with unbiased textual analysis. Also, the analysis of primary documents such as speeches, treaties and policy papers is by definition a normative endeavor, as it is

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[178] For a thorough analysis of the advantages and pitfalls of using qualitative interviews see: Froschauer, Ulrike and Lueger, Manfred: "Das qualitative Interview", Weinheim: UTB, 2003.
[179] King, Gary, Keohane, Robert and Verba, Sidney: "Designing social inquiry: scientific inference in qualitative research", Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994.
[180] Van Evera, Stephen: "Guide to methods for students of political science", Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997.

difficult to distinguish between official language and actual outcome. The same problem applies to the analysis of data gathered in interviews: it is impossible to be sure of the interviewee's own ontology or of particular organizational discipline as far as communication with outsiders is concerned. In order to receive answers that are as unbiased as possible, all interviewees employed by an international organization were granted anonymity.

As far as the choice of interviewees is concerned, I have sought to select a diverse group of experts and policy-makers. Naturally, employees of both the International Staff and the International Military Staff at the NATO Headquarters in Brussels were of prime importance. In order to be able to make complementary observations as far as institutional preferences are concerned, I also interviewed staff at the External Relations Directorate General of the European Commission in Brussels: interviewees were in charge of the EU's political portfolio concerning Russia, Ukraine, Central Asia, as well as the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP).[181] A round of interviews was also conducted in Moscow; here, I opted for a mixture of experts and policy-makers: first, NATO's Military Liaison Mission (MLM) and Information Office (NIO) were of vital importance as far as the gathering of empirical evidence was concerned. Second, interviews at both Russian and foreign think-tanks were conducted. Finally, the list of interviewees included staff of the German embassy and Russian journalists. In a third round of interviews I focused on staff of the German Foreign Ministry in Berlin. The analysis of interviews thus constitutes an indispensable tool for this research project. Nevertheless, official discourses such as speeches and primary documents served as the empirical underpinning of this dissertation. Of particular importance are the two basic treaties: The Founding Act and the Statement of the NATO-Russia Council. In addition, the NATO handbook that is freely available on NATO's website turned out to be of great value, as was the NATO emailing service that updates interested parties on recent speeches held by the Secretary General of NATO, of official visits, as well as news regarding joint exercises etc. Meeting minutes of PJC and NRC sessions gathered by the NATO Parliamentary Assembly were a very useful tool for process tracing.

However, as I have already pointed out, the discursive method also runs the risk of being overly normative, which is something that I am keen to avoid. Therefore,

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[181] Data gathered from European Commission officials only served as secondary and complementary information. Interviews held at NATO were of primary interest.

considering secondary sources such as books, articles, conference papers and cutting-edge analyses that deal with the relationship between NATO and Russia is just as indispensable. Here, I paid particular attention to avoid taking on a specifically pro-Russia or pro-NATO view; a concern that is also reflected in my choice of interview partners, as well as in the effort to include both Russian and NATO sources in this project. I have already alluded to the potential problematic of bias in mainstream IR theory, and it is certainly an issue that Russian academics are keenly aware of. It is also a fact that most textbooks and articles that are considered the cornerstones of present-day political science emanate from the US or from Europe. Thus, throughout this dissertation, I have tried to avoid certain truisms that provide simple answers to complex questions, keeping in mind that the Russian perception differs quite significantly from NATO's perception or the perception of the West in general. Simplistic answers to current issues in NATO–Russia relations such as "Russia has to accept the fact that it is no longer a superpower and needs to start acting accordingly" are not satisfactory in my opinion. Of course, statements like these may contain more than a grain of truth and thus need to be analyzed with care. However, my aim is to treat them as only one side of the coin, and not as axiomatic. Whereas discourses can wield great explanatory power, they can also solidify existing prejudices – this is something that holds particular truth as far as NATO and Russia are concerned.

The following two chapters will take a close look at actual events that have shaped NATO-Russia interaction since 1997. Particular attention will be given to developments that are established as proof for either "cooperation" or "confrontation"[182], as well as to the patterns that can be established from them. This will set the framwork for the actual case study that is expected to shed a fresh look at what NATO–Russia interaction: both actors' involvement and professed interests in Central Asia. Assumptions and claims put forward in this theory chapter will continue to be referred to throughout the dissertation in order to enable a holistic conclusion that picks up where this chapter ends. I will therefore now turn to tracing and analyzing events that have been "agenda-setters" since 1997.

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[182] For example, the war in Kosovo and 9/11, respectively.

3. NATO and Russia: What kind of partnership in what kind of international environment?

The previous chapter has offered some theoretical considerations pertaining to the nature of the relationship between NATO and Russia by putting forward the notion of a combined realist-constructivist approach. Concepts of power and norms intertwine to explain the complex interaction between the two players, while at the same time putting this relationship within a wider framework of "rules" in IR. This chapter's aim is to break down the term "relationship" that constitutes the object of analysis of this dissertation into its component parts. The phrase "NATO-Russia relations" in fact contains a myriad of interactions on different levels: summits, strategy papers, treaties, as well as committee meetings, bargaining processes and – on both sides – consensus building. Some events stand out, such as the implementation of the Permanent Joint Council (PJC) in 1997 or the creation of the NATO-Russia Council (NRC) in 2002. Other events have been more subtle, but nonetheless important. This chapter is structured in the following way: firstly, an overview will be provided of events that have marked NATO-Russia relations since 1997. These events will be put within the context of their implications, and sometimes, of misconceptions about them. Secondly, specific policy outcomes that have arisen from NATO-Russia cooperation will be discussed, as well as their meaning for geopolitical developments. Thirdly, I will return to the theoretical considerations presented in chapter 2 to assess their validity.

How does NATO itself view Russia? The chapter on NATO-Russia cooperation in NATO's 2001 handbook starts out by stating that "Since the end of the Cold War, NATO has attached particular importance to the development of constructive and cooperative relations with Russia. Over the past ten years, NATO and Russia have succeeded in achieving substantial progress in developing a genuine partnership and overcoming the vestiges of earlier confrontation and competition in order to strengthen mutual trust and cooperation."[183] Future prospects are also mentioned: "[NATO and Russia] also face numerous common security challenges in other areas.[184] Working together to address these challenges is in the interest of both sides and contributes to the further strengthening of the basis of mutual trust which is essential in the Euro-Atlantic

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[183] Cooperation between NATO and Russia, NATO Handbook, Brussels: NATO Office of Information and Press, 2001, p. 80.
[184] "Other areas" refers to areas outside of cooperation in KFOR and SFOR.

area."[185] Key notions in this text are security challenges, mutual trust, genuine partnership and "overcoming earlier confrontation". In the words of the current Secretary General of NATO, Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, "The strategic environment in the Euro-Atlantic area has changed dramatically over the past several years and the NATO-Russia relationship has changed with it. We have left old Cold War threat perceptions behind us".[186] According to de Hoop Scheffer, the nuclear threat of the Cold War has been replaced by so-called "new threats" that affect the entire international community:

…terrorism, which can strike anywhere at any time … the proliferation of chemical, biological and nuclear weapons and materials … the multitude of challenges posed by failed states and regional conflicts, violence inspired by ethnic and religious hatred, trafficking in arms, in human being, in narcotics. These are the challenges of the twenty-first century, and no single state or military Alliance, no matter how powerful, can face them alone.[187]

This, according to de Hoop Scheffer, is the context within which present-day NATO-Russia relations should be seen:

This was the spirit in which our head of state and government took the courageous step three years ago to create the NATO-Russia Council. Their goal was a bold one: to achieve a qualitatively new relationship between NATO and the Russian Federation, aimed at 'achieving a lasting and inclusive peace in the Euro-Atlantic area on the principles of democracy and cooperative security'.[188]

This assessment had been reciprocated by the Russian side, with a statement from President Vladimir Putin, who claimed that "'in just a very short time, we have taken a gigantic step' away from past confrontations and stereotypes … NATO-Russia relations have 'become a real factor in ensuring international stability'."[189]

De Hoop Scheffer's statement is an accurate summary of what is generally referred to as the essence of present NATO-Russia relations: a catalogue of joint interests now characterizes the interaction between the two former adversaries, rather than a state of

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[185] NATO Handbook, 2001, p. 86.
[186] Speech by NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer in Moscow on 24 June, 2005, Brussels: NATO public data service [natopress@listserv.cc.kuleuven.ac.be], on behalf of NATO Integrated Data Service [natodoc@hq.nato.int].
[187] Ibid.
[188] Ibid.
[189] Ibid, quoted by Jaap de Hoop Scheffer.

bipolar antagonism. Institutionalized NATO-Russia relations of course preceded the NRC. The implementation of the PJC took place in 1997 in the spirit that produced much of the same rhetoric again 5 years later over the NRC Treaty. The Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security between NATO and the Russian Federation sounds very similar to the NRC Treaty in its basic message of enmity turning into friendship; a transformation that positively affects the shape of the Euro-Atlantic landscape:

NATO and Russia do not consider each other as adversaries. They share the goal of overcoming the vestiges of earlier confrontation and competition and of strengthening mutual trust and cooperation. The present Act reaffirms the determination of NATO and Russia to give concrete substance to their shared commitment to build a stable, peaceful and undivided Europe, whole and free, to the benefit of all its peoples.[190]

The rapprochement of NATO and Russia might at first sight seem logical and self-explanatory: since the Cold War is over, there is no reason for the two actors to oppose each other. Therefore it is only logical that they overcome "earlier confrontation and competition" in order to cooperate for a greater goal − namely, the future security of Europe.

However, this assessment needs to be analyzed with care. By no means a foregone conclusion, NATO-Russia interaction is the result of developments that have occurred since the collapse of the Soviet bloc as well as events that arguably even predate 1989. Both NATO and Russia have approached their relations − or rather, East-West relations before the end of the Cold War − in a holistic manner; i.e., taking into account not only defense and military issues but also political issues that need to be considered within a wider context than "just" the next looming crisis. Actions by one actor inevitably triggered a reaction from the other due to the structural realities of the Cold War. For example, it has been argued that the 1955 creation of the Warsaw Pact was a direct result of the successful creation of NATO. Vojtech Mastny refers to the Warsaw Pact as "NATO's mirror image"; created as an offer to negotiate away in return for the

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[190] Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security between NATO and the Russian Federation, Paris, 27th May 1997, NATO Basic Texts, www.nato.int/docu/basictxt/fndact-a.htm [last accessed 13 January, 2006].

dissolution of NATO should a convenient situation arise.[191] Mastny claims that such a situation never arose and that the Warsaw Pact remained "[h]aunted by the images of its Western counterpart"[192], which eventually led to its demise. Instead of emerging as an alliance in its own right, the Warsaw Pact, in its efforts to remodel itself along NATO's lines, was plagued by structural and political impediments that precipitated its final disintegration in 1991. These obstacles resulted largely from the fact that the Warsaw Pact, unlike NATO, was an involuntary organization created under the hegemonic leadership of Moscow.[193]

It is therefore obvious that the actions of one actor have always influenced the actions of the other. Another important issue to keep in mind is the fact that during the Cold War, NATO's actions were largely determined by US policy. NATO remains a US idea[194], albeit never as rigidly under US control as the Warsaw Pact was under Soviet control. This seems logical, as international relations generally were largely determined by the state of affairs between the two main powers during the Cold War. One very important doctrine that NATO endorsed in the 1960s was also the result of political developments between the US and the USSR. The Harmel Report, submitted to the US by Belgian foreign minister Pierre Harmel in 1967 and subsequently endorsed by NATO as official doctrine, remains an important document even today. The Harmel Report can be seen as the first doctrinal effort to put the strictly military confrontation between East and West into a political context arguing that the dead-end hostility should be overcome. With the Harmel Report, NATO for the first time endorsed a document that laid out a specific strategy vis-à-vis the countries of the Eastern bloc. This remains important for NATO – and Russia – today because elements of the Harmel Report continue to play a role in NATO's strategy towards partner countries. The Harmel Report should also be seen in connection with Article 10 of the North Atlantic Treaty which states that "the Parties may, by unanimous agreement, invite any other European State in a position to further the principles of this Treaty and to contribute to the security of the North Atlantic area

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[191] Mastny, Vojtech: "Learning from the enemy. NATO as model for the Warsaw Pact", in: Spillmann, Kurt and Wenger, Andreas (eds.) "Züricher Beiträge zur Sicherheitspolitik und Konfliktforschung", #58, Forschungsstelle für Sicherheitspolitik und Konfliktforschung, 2001, p. 5.
[192] Ibid.
[193] Ibid.
[194] The complex issue of US power within NATO and the shifts that have occurred since the end of the Cold War will be discussed later on in this chapter.

to accede to this Treaty".[195] Article 10 thus stipulates what is generally referred to as NATO's "open door policy", a concept that remains valid today.

While Article 10 makes a general statement about future member states, the Harmel Report was much more specific with regard to NATO's policies and attitudes towards the Eastern bloc. The Harmel Report states that while NATO should uphold a strong defence policy, it should also pursue dialogue and constructive cooperation with the Eastern bloc. Interestingly, the language used in the Harmel Report is reminiscent of language found in current documents, such as the Founding Act or the NRC. There is a particular focus on the ever-changing character of the Alliance:

The exercise [the study commissioned by Harmel which led to the Harmel Report] has shown that the Alliance is a dynamic and vigorous organization which is constantly adapting itself to changing conditions. It also has shown that its future tasks can be handled within the terms of the Treaty by building on the methods and procedures which have proved their value over many years.[196]

Concerning what specific policy NATO should pursue, the Harmel Report suggests that

[t]he Atlantic Alliance has two main functions … the Allies will maintain as necessary a suitable military capability to assure the balance of forces, thereby creating a climate of stability, security and confidence. In this climate the Alliance can carry out its second function, to pursue the search for progress towards a more stable relationship in which the underlying political issues can be solved. Military security and a policy of détente are not contradictory but complementary.[197]

The context within which the Harmel Report was commissioned, namely the initial years of détente between the Soviet Union and the United States, challenged NATO to come up with a doctrine that kept up with changes in international relations. In other words, some saw NATO's status as a useful alliance under threat.

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[195] "Other areas" refers to areas outside of cooperation in KFOR and SFOR.
[195] The North Atlantic Treaty, NATO Handbook, 2001, p. 529.
[196] The future tasks of the Alliance (Harmel Report), Report of the Council, December 14, 1967, http://www.nato.int/docu/comm/49-95/c671213b.htm [last accessed on 14 January 2006].
[197] Ibid.

It was imperative for NATO to adjust to such important shifts in East-West relations, if not materially then at least intellectually. As early as the 1960s there was already debate concerning the "future" and usefulness of NATO in a world that was no longer functioning according to the rules that made NATO possible in the first place. In light of the Harmel Report and the circumstances that made this report necessary, the current debate about NATO's future seems somewhat more relative. Indeed, the Harmel Report is the first document that proves that NATO's post-Cold War soul-searching does have a precedent. With regard to specific actions, NATO was actively involved in the preparation of the Conference for Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE)[198], which, turned out to be a crucial tool in overcoming the confrontation between East and West.

All of this is important because of two observations. Firstly, the above demonstrates that NATO was looking for a concept regarding political action towards Central and Eastern Europe as early as the mid-1960s. Post-Cold War efforts directed towards Central and Eastern Europe should also be seen in this light to some extent. Secondly, debate about NATO as an organization in transition had already occurred as far back as the 1960s. It was probably this willingness to adapt to circumstances, among other things, that made it possible for NATO – and the Western Alliance – to gain the advantage over the Soviet Union, politically as well as militarily. Therefore, NATO's ability to adapt to changing circumstances has continued and continues to play a role in international relations. However, one should not lose sight of the fact that in spite of détente and the important steps that were taken during this period to initiate a rapprochement of East and West, the Cold War was still ongoing. Indeed, after 1979, it intensified again and the threat of MAD became ever more real during the 1980s with the deployment of US Pershing II missiles to Germany in response to the stationing of Soviet SS-20 missiles in the west and the far east of the Soviet Union. Whether or not détente actually contributed to prolonging the Cold War is a matter of opinion. However, the continued

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[198] The CSCE continued to function throughout the Cold War, mainly as a series of meetings and conferences. At the Paris Summit in 1991 the OSCE became a permanent organization complete with institutional structures and operational capabilities. From the Paris Summit onwards, the CSCE was entrusted with monitoring and supervising the transformational processes that had arisen from the end of the Cold War. At the 1994 Lisbon summit, it was recognized that the CSCE was no longer a conference and the organization was renamed the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). One of the most important agreement reached under the auspices of the OSCE has been the ratification and the adoption of the CFE (Conventional Forces Europe) Treaty in 1991 and in 1999, respectively. The CFE Treaty regulated the reduction of conventional armed forces in Europe. In: http://www.osce.org/publications/sg/2004/11/13554_53_en.pdf [last accessed on 16 January 2006].

existence of NATO was never questioned, even during the most optimistic periods of détente. As important as détente was, especially with regard to later events, it does not compare to the fall of the Berlin Wall in scope and importance, as the end of the Cold War put a whole different perspective on NATO's existence. In contrast to détente, which literally means the "easing" of tensions, the fall of the Berlin Wall supposedly marked the end of tensions. It is in this light that NATO-Russia relations will be analyzed in the following sections.

3.1. Structures and treaties

3.1.1. The early years

In order to assess NATO-Russia relations after 1997, a brief overview of events since the end of the Cold War is necessary. 1997 has been chosen as the starting point because, arguably, the PJC represents the initiation of institutionalized interactions. The Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security between NATO and the Russian Federation was the first treaty of its kind between the two actors. The language used in the Founding Act points towards a new self-understanding of the relationship between the two:

NATO and Russia do not consider each other as adversaries. They share the goal of overcoming the vestiges of earlier confrontation and competition and of strengthening mutual trust and cooperation … This Act defines the goals and mechanism of consultation, cooperation, joint decision-making and joint action that will constitute the core of the mutual relations between NATO and Russia.[199]

There was a very concerted effort to portray the Founding Act as a revolutionary, forward-looking document; a formal way of ending the Cold War, so to speak. However, this process of overcoming the legacy of bipolarity has roots that go back to the 1960s, as discussed above, as well as the early 1990s. The Founding Act is a product of the immediate post-Cold War transition period and should be understood as such. As demonstrated earlier, NATO – and the West more generally – did indeed engage in an intellectual effort to provide scenarios that went beyond the mutual annihilation of the two blocs. However, the actual end of the Cold War turned out to be something different entirely. Therefore, the early 1990s can be characterized as a time of transition

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[199] Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security between NATO and the Russian Federation, Paris, 27th May 1997, NATO Basic Texts, www.nato.int/docu/basictxt/fndact-a.htm [last accessed 13 January, 2006].

when neither NATO nor Russia was entirely sure how to react to the new situation. It is by now axiomatic that the end of the Cold War caught International Relations by surprise. From this it follows that policy and decision-making processes that were undertaken during this period were also the product of a certain degree of uncertainty and did not in any way reflect a linear development of clearly charted planning.

At the July 1990 summit in London, the most "[f]ar-reaching declaration [was] issued since NATO was founded".[200] NATO heads of governments extended an offer to establish regular diplomatic liaison with NATO in order to work in a spirit of cooperation to the Soviet Union, and to Central and East European countries. The first step towards a solution to the problem that the end of the bipolar conflict created was the establishment of the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC) in 1991. The NACC provided NATO and 9 East European countries with a consultative forum as stipulated in the Rome Declaration in November 1991. The first session of the NACC took place on 20 December 1991, coinciding with the disintegration of the Soviet Union.[201] In March 1992, all members of the Commonwealth of Independent States became members of the NACC, and Albania joined in June 1992. The NACC was first and foremost an instrument of dialogue and consultation. The ensuing Yugoslav crises, as well as the strengthening of the CSCE in particular, were issues that the NACC sought to address. However, the terms "consultative" and "dialogue" already suggest that actual policy-outcomes were limited. According to one NATO official, the NACC was a first answer to the disintegration of the Eastern bloc. The need for a forum where future options could be discussed was met with the NACC; however, real decision-making was impossible with 38 member states.[202] However, in historical perspective, the NACC was indeed unprecedented, continuing and consolidating the spirit of the CSCE in terms of making an effort to overcome the legacy of the Cold War.

1994 saw the implementation of the PfP (Partnership for Peace) program. According to an official NATO publication, "[t]he Partnership for Peace (PFP) is chiefly aimed at defence cooperation and is the operational side of the Partnership framework, designed to reinforce stability and reduce the risk of conflict."[203] The main objective of PfP is

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[200] NATO Handbook, 2001, p. 38.
[201] NATO Handbook, The North Atlantic Cooperation Council, http://www.nato.int/docu/handbook/2001/ hb020201.htm, [last accessed on 21 April 2006].
[202] Interview with NATO Official #4, 27 September 2005, NATO HQ, Brussels.
[203] The Partnership for Peace, http://www.nato.int/issues/pfp/index.html, [last accessed on 21 April 2006].

interoperability between NATO and partner countries, in other words, to "increase the participants' ability to act in concert. Through various mechanisms it helps Partner countries prepare to operate jointly with NATO forces".[204] PfP has been joined by 30 countries, by and large countries of Central and Eastern Europe, as well as those of Central Asia and the Caucasus. Russia became part of PfP in the summer of 1994, thereby continuing towards integration into NATO's structures. Under the PfP Agreement, NATO and partner countries undertake joint activities and regular consultations. Specifically, PfP consists of two policies: firstly, the Individual Partnership Programme (IPP), which covers a wide range of activities, such as crisis management, military cooperation, peacekeeping or civil emergency planning.[205] Secondly, the Planning and Review Process (PARP) assesses Partners' capabilities for multinational training, exercises and operations with Alliance forces. The goal is to further interoperability between forces of NATO and partner countries.[206] It is open to individual interpretation whether the PfP program was meant to facilitate the successful integration of Eastern European countries and the Soviet Union into NATO structures or whether PfP constitutes more of an antechamber for countries whose status vis-à-vis future involvement with NATO is still uncertain. According to official NATO sources, PfP claims to do the following: "By assisting participants with reforms, the PfP helps them build a solid democratic environment, maintain political stability and improve security".[207] With regard to Central and Eastern European countries, it can be safely said that PfP did indeed serve its intended purpose. Not only did the prospect of integration into Western institutions strengthen democratic forces in Central and Eastern Europe, thus contributing to a relatively smooth transition period, but the two rounds of enlargement eventually made fully fledged NATO members out of the former PfP partners. However, in Russia's case, the verdict is a little more mixed. Lacking the perspective of membership – at least, that question was never seriously and consistently discussed – Russia found itself in a position separated from the other post-Soviet countries. According to one NATO official, PfP was seen by NATO as a "safe" way of dealing with the Russian question.[208] PfP offered a chance to manage NATO-Russia bilateral relations, in military and defense terms, while at the same time omitting political "interoperability", to use a preferred NATO term. There is an ongoing

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[204] Ibid.
[205] Ibid.
[206] Ibid.
[207] Ibid.
[208] Interview with NATO Official #4, 27 September 2005, NATO HQ, Brussels.

dichotomy between, on the one hand, Russia no longer representing a tangible threat, but on the other hand neither wanting nor being able to join Western institutions, and NATO in particular.

This lack of political dialogue – not only specifically with regard to NATO and Russia, but in general – was addressed with the establishment of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) in 1997. Whereas PfP allowed for bilateral relations between NATO and partner countries, the EAPC offered a political platform for discussion and consultation. The EAPC effectively replaced the NACC that had existed since 1991. The EAPC meets once a month at the level of ambassadors and once a year at the level of foreign and defense ministers. The EAPC is meant to complement the activities of PfP and provides a general opportunity for political negotiations on all aspects of NATO-Partner cooperation.[209] The Basic Document of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council, adopted in Sintra, Portugal on 30 May 1997 states:

The member countries of the North Atlantic Cooperation Council and participating countries of the Partnership for Peace, determined to raise to a qualitatively new level their political and military cooperation, building upon the success of NACC and PfP, have decided to establish a Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council. In doing so, they reaffirm their joint commitment to strengthen and extend peace and stability in the Euro-Atlantic area, on the basis of the shared values and principles which underlie their cooperation, notably those set out in the Framework Document of the Partnership for Peace.[210]

To this end, its main objective is that "[t]he Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council, as the successor to NACC, will provide the overarching framework for consultations among its members on a broad range of political and security-related issues, as part of a process that will develop through practice."[211]

Russia is a full member of the EAPC. The EAPC continues in its original form today and thus also continues to be the largest forum for consultation of its kind within NATO. This also means that the EAPC represents a way for Russia to have its voice heard within NATO's structures. Crucially, Russia insisted on including "European" in

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[209] The Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council, http://www.nato.int/issues/eapc/index.html [last accessed on 19 January 2006].
[210] Basic Document of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council, http://www.nato.int/docu/basictxt/b970530a.htm. [last accessed on 23 January 2006].
[211] Ibid.

addition to "Atlantic" in the name of the newly created council. This implies that an opening of the "Atlantic" concept was important to those countries not originally belonging to the Alliance. At the same time, it suggests that an eastward shift from Atlantic to European widens the chasm between NATO's original purpose and its post-Cold War intentions. Whereas Russia could arguably be excluded from an "Atlantic" Alliance, there is no reason why it should not have a future within a European one. The EAPC provided Russia with transparency regarding NATO's ambitions in Eastern Europe.[212] Instead of engaging in talks with Eastern European countries only, the EAPC was seen as a guarantee against decisions being taken without consulting Russia. The difference between the EAPC and its predecessor, the NACC, is that under the statutes of the EAPC, member countries have the right to consult with NATO both individually and in groups. However, this guarantee did not actually live up to its promises, as the EAPC, much like the NACC, never moved past its consultative forum-status towards any actual decision-making, in large part due to the fact that consensus building among 46 members is a difficult undertaking. Rather, the EAPC continued the NACC's purpose of serving as a formal way for NATO to address the political side of enlargement.

3.1.2. Current partnership programs

The 2002 Prague summit, finally, represented a breakthrough by coming up with a concept for bilateral and comprehensive relationships: the Individual Partnership Action Plans (IPAPs). The summit, while seeking to strengthen and streamline both EAPC and PfP, specifically marks a step forward in terms of bilateral relations between NATO and partner countries. According to NATO, "[t]he Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council is the overarching framework for all aspects of NATO's cooperation with its partners. Partnership for Peace is the principal mechanism for forging practical security links between the Alliance and its Partners and for enhancing interoperability between Partners and NATO."[213] NATO makes it clear that the "open door policy" that PfP advocates is still considered best practice; the opening paragraph of the "Report on the Comprehensive Review of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council and Partnership for Peace" states that EAPC and PfP exist in order to "enhance the security of all, excluding

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[212] The term "transparency" was used in an interview with NATO Official #4, 27 September 2005, NATO HQ, Brussels.
[213] Report on the Comprehensive Review of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council and Partnership for Peace, http://www.nato.int/docu/basictxt/b021121a.htm [last accessed on 21 April 2006].

nobody".[214] The spirit of openness and availability to all who are interested had been the official stance of NATO since the early 1990s. The NACC, PfP and EAPC were designed to be as inclusive as possible. The non-official modus operandi, however, encountered problems that were in some part due to exactly this inclusiveness. As mentioned above, taking decisions involving 46 countries turned out to be a hindrance to policy implementation. Having said this, the importance of PfP should not be underestimated. PfP sent an important political message to Central and Eastern European countries: NATO was to open itself up and would not remain the exclusively north American-Western European defense alliance that it was during the Cold War. In practical terms, PfP contributed to the success of military operations in the Balkans, since one of the proclaimed goals of PfP, namely interoperability, contributed to successful cooperation within the multinational Balkan task force. Furthermore, PfP and EAPC continue to "contribute to international stability by providing interested Partners with systematic advice on, and assistance in, the defence and security-related aspects of their domestic reform processes; where possible support larger policy and institutional reforms"[215]. Additionally, PfP and EAPC "contribute to international security by preparing interested Partners for, and engaging in, NATO-led operations and activities, including those related to the response of terrorism."[216] Therefore, EAPC and PfP did effectively contribute to political signals against the division of the European continent in terms of cooperation and integration.

However, the creation of IPAPs represented a quantitative step forward in NATO-partner country cooperation. As opposed to EAPC and the NACC, IPAPs are bilateral agreements. With IPAPs,

[a]llies encourage Partners to seek closer relations with NATO individually and agree on Individual Partnership Action Plans which will prioritise, harmonise and organise all aspects of NATO-Partner relationship in the EAPC and PfP frameworks, in accordance with NATO's objectives and each interested Partner's particular circumstances and interests. Through such plans, developed on a two-year basis, NATO will provide its focused, country-specific assistance and advice on reform objectives that interested Partners might wish to pursue in

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[214] Ibid.
[215] Ibid.
[216] Ibid.

consultation with the Alliance. Intensified political dialogue on relevant issues may constitute an integral part of the IPAP process.[217]

IPAPs thus constitute a comprehensive framework within which specific objectives are defined, such as defense reform, institution-building and so on.[218] Georgia was the first country to agree an IPAP with NATO on 29 October 2004. Azerbaijan followed on 27 May 2005, and Armenia on 16 December 2005.[219] Finally, in 2006, IPAPs were extended to Kazakhstan (31 January) and Moldova (19 May). Breaking with the tradition of roundtable open discussions, IPAPs are very individualized agreements between NATO and a partner country. This also resulted in Russia finding itself outside of a decision-making process that largely concerned countries considered to be of geopolitical interest to Russia. The issue of Russia signing an IPAP with NATO has not been raised, indicating that interaction under the auspices of the NRC is considered adequate, and even privileged.

Finally, the most encompassing framework that exists between NATO and partner countries is the Membership Action Plan (MAP). MAPs are agreed upon bilaterally, like IPAPs. Unlike IPAPs, however, MAPs, as the name suggests, are seen as a framework for cooperation that is extended to countries that have the prospect of membership in the not too distant future. NATO insists that

[t]he programme offers aspirants a list of activities from which they may select those they consider of most value to help them in their preparations. Active participation in PfP and EAPC mechanisms remains essential for aspiring countries who wish to further deepen their political and military involvement in the work of the Alliance. Any decision to invite an aspirant to begin accession talks with the Alliance will be made on a case-by-case basis…".[220]

MAPs are divided into 5 areas of cooperation: political and economic issues, defense/military issues, resource issues, security issues and legal issues. At present, Albania, Macedonia and Croatia have MAPs with NATO, and Ukraine and Georgia are the strongest contenders for future MAPs.

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[217] Ibid.
[218] Interview with NATO Official #5, 27 September 2005, NATO HQ, Brussels.
[219] Individual Partnership Action Plans, http://www.nato.int/issues/ipap/index.html [last accessed on 24 January 2006].
[220] Membership Action Plan, http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/1999/p99-066e.htm [last accessed on 24 January 2006].

3.2. Russia in NATO's structures

As I have outlined above, a plethora of partnership programs exist between NATO and interested partner countries, in accordance with the Harmel Report, and NATO's post-Cold War open-door policy. Even though the spirit of the open-door policy that NATO itself refers to in most official documents can be traced back to the 1960s, actual implementation of political dialogue with Central/Eastern Europe has developed in a fairly ad-hoc manner. This is not to say that NATO did not have a consistent plan regarding the "legacy" of the Soviet Union. In fact, NATO's forward-planning did include plans relating to the Soviet Union as well as the countries of the Warsaw Pact that went beyond MAD fairly early on. Even so, the years following the collapse of the Soviet Union were tumultuous and events developed with great speed. Firstly, the end of the Cold War came as a surprise to NATO as much as it did to the rest of the world. Secondly, the pull away from the Soviet Union and towards the West that ensued in much of Central and Eastern Europe confronted NATO with the difficulty of dealing with countries that could not be integrated into Western structures fast enough. Therefore, balancing between the wishes of Eastern and Central European countries on the one hand, and on Russia's on the other, turned out to be a challenge. Even though Russia itself oriented its policies towards Western structures in the early Yeltsin years, there was a pronounced difference in terms of NATO approaching Russia. In spite of the open-door policy and Russian ambitions to align itself with the West, Russia could not be accommodated by NATO in the same way that other countries were.

Therefore, NATO's immediate post-Cold War structural changes were characterized by both speediness and a certain amount of ambiguity. The "Russian question" was postponed until a clearer picture about the future of the European continent emerged. Incidentally, this exhibits some parallels with policy-making undertaken by the European Union in the same time period. This is by no means unusual, as procedures within international organizations are largely characterized by relatively long processes, and not so much by spontaneous behavior. Therefore, the creation of the NACC demonstrates initiative taken on NATO's side. However, where actions specifically pertaining to Russia are concerned, the results remain mixed. As I have established in the previous sections, although a member of the NACC and its successor, the EAPC, Russia was never mentioned in any debates pertaining to future aspirant countries and IPAPs or MAPs. This implicitly translates into Russia not joining NATO in the near or mid-term future. This also means that NATO-Russia relations should be analyzed

within a framework that is separate from the general NATO-Central and Eastern Europe picture.

Theoretically speaking, the realist-constructivist debate presented in chapter 2 is no longer as relevant to NATO's interaction with those East and Central European countries that joined NATO either in 1999 or 2003. For Russia, however, this debate continues to be of importance. Therefore, a closer consideration of the institutional setup that exists between NATO and Russia should reveal some of the particularities of NATO-Russia relations.

3.2.1. The Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security between NATO and the Russian Federation/the Permanent Joint Council (1997)

Whereas the wider framework for cooperation between NATO and the former Warsaw Pact countries started almost immediately after the collapse of the Berlin Wall, NATO-Russia relations, both formally and structurally, began in 1997 with the creation of the Permanent Joint Council (PJC). The PJC was created with the implementation of the Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security between NATO and the Russian Federation on 27 May 1997 in Paris. The Founding Act constituted a new form of privileged partnership between NATO and another country. Until then, there had been no other country that was offered the chance of a unique partnership. All the other frameworks, such as NACC, PfP and EAPC were equally applicable to all countries that expressed interest in a partnership with NATO. As mentioned previously, Moscow took part in all universal partnership programs available to it. However, with the creation of the PJC, NATO extended certain unique privileges to Russia. The document of the Founding Act employs language that is reminiscent of other post-Cold War NATO treaties with new partner countries. The focus once again is on partnership and overcoming old animosities for the benefit of the European continent at large. For the first time, it is written on paper that as far as Russia and NATO are concerned, the Cold War is over:

NATO and Russia do not consider each other as adversaries. They share the goal of overcoming the vestiges of earlier confrontation and competition and of strengthening mutual trust and cooperation. The present Act reaffirms the determination of NATO and Russia to give concrete

substance to their shared commitment to build a stable, peaceful and undivided Europe, whole and free, to the benefit of all its peoples.[221]

Cooperation between NATO and Russia actually precedes the Founding Act: Russian forces joined the Implementation Force (IFOR) which started its mission in Bosnia on 20 December 1995. Based on UN Security Council resolution 1031, IFOR, a NATO-led multinational task force was entrusted with enforcing the military aspects of General Framework Agreement for Peace (GFAP) that was negotiated in Ohio and signed in Paris in 1995.[222] After the successful 1996 elections, IFOR had completed its mission and was replaced by Operation Joint Guard/Operation Joint Forge (SFOR), which was mandated by the UN with UN Security Council Resolution 1088. SFOR was to establish a lasting atmosphere of peace in which civilian organizations could contribute to a stable environment. Also, SFOR was to deter any further possible hostilities. Several non-NATO nations such as Argentina, Bulgaria and Morocco participated in SFOR. Russia joined IFOR in January 1996 and was part of SFOR until June 2003 when Moscow took the decision to withdraw Russian soldiers from the Balkans.

This joint operation thus represents the first successful participation of Russian forces in a multinational NATO task force. Still active when the Founding Act was established, it was largely this spirit of cooperation embodied by the IFOR mission that was invoked in Paris. This spirit of cooperation is referred to in the Founding Act: "This Act defines the goals and mechanism of consultation, cooperation, joint decision-making and joint action that will constitute the core of the mutual relations between NATO and Russia."[223] To this effect, both parties made concessions. For example, NATO granted that Russia was "continuing the building of a democratic society and the realisation of its political and economic transformation."[224] Also, both the UN and the OSCE are referred to as guarantors for international cooperation and security, not least as the continued existence of the OSCE was of special concern to Russia. The OSCE was and continues to be seen as the international organization with the greatest potential for

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[221] Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security between NATO and the Russian Federation, Paris, 27th May 1997, NATO Basic Texts, www.nato.int/docu/basictxt/fndact-a.htm [last accessed 13 January, 2006].
[222] History of the NATO-led Stabilisation Force (SFOR) in Bosnia and Herzegovina, http://www.nato.int/sfor/docu/d981116a.htm [last accessed on 26 January 2006].
[223] Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security between NATO and the Russian Federation, Paris, 27th May 1997, NATO Basic Texts, www.nato.int/docu/basictxt/fndact-a.htm [last accessed 13 January, 2006].
[224] Ibid.

representing Russia's interests and for acting as a counterweight to the European Union. Even so, Russia had already demonstrated its willingness to work within NATO's military structures in SFOR. Russia and NATO committed themselves to principles of

a strong, stable and enduring and equal partnership; … [acknowledged] the vital role of democracy, political pluralism … and respect for human rights; … [to refrain] from the threat or use of force against each other; … respect for sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of all states … and support, on a case-by-case basis, of peacekeeping operations…".[225]

The Founding Act establishes the NATO-Russia Permanent Joint Council in order to "develop common approaches to European security and to political problems."[226] The declared motives behind setting up the PJC are to foster unity of purpose and habits of consultation and cooperation, as well as increasing levels of trust between NATO and Russia. Though Russia remains a member of both EAPC and PfP, the PJC is supposed to be the principal venue of consultation for NATO and Russia when peace and stability are at stake. This is can be seen as further proof for the uniqueness of the relationship between NATO and Russia. However, it is explicitly stated that consultations taking place in the PJC will not address internal matters of Russia, NATO member states, or NATO itself. The document of the Founding Act strikes a careful balance between stressing the "special" relationship that is characterized by equal partnership and interests on the one hand, while on the other being very explicit about the fact that neither party is to interfere in the internal affairs of the other. It is very specifically stipulated that the "[p]rovisions of the Act do not provide NATO or Russia, in any way, with a right of veto over the actions of the other nor do they infringe upon or restrict the rights of NATO or Russia to independent decision-making and action. They cannot be used as a means to disadvantage the interests of other states."[227] This statement can be seen as insurance against any misconceptions that domestic audiences might have; indeed, it is mentioned so frequently as to hint at the possibility that NATO-Russia relations are not quite uncomplicated and free from contention.

The Permanent Joint Council was to meet at various levels, depending on the subject for discussion and the wishes expressed by NATO or the Russian Federation. The Founding Act establishes that the PJC meets twice yearly at the level of foreign ministers and at

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[225] Ibid.
[226] Ibid.
[227] Ibid.

the level of defense ministers and on a monthly basis at the level of ambassadors/permanent representatives to the North Atlantic Council.[228] Where appropriate, the PJC also was to meet at the level of heads of state and government, and committees or working groups for individual areas of cooperation could be established. Military representatives were to meet monthly and chiefs of staff at least twice a year. This civilian-military dual structure mirrors NATO's internal structure that is divided into a military and a civilian staff. The PJC was to be chaired by a so-called "Troika": the Secretary General of NATO, a representative of one of the NATO member states on a rotational basis, and a representative of Russia. The agenda for regular session was to be established jointly. Finally, Russia was to send a representative at ambassador level to NATO, but NATO was not committed to sending a representative to Moscow.

The Founding Act turns out to be a path-leading document for identifying areas for cooperation and consultation. The areas that the Founding Act identifies are those areas that will continue to come up in future documents and plans related to NATO-Russia cooperation. The areas range from rather general to Cold War "leftovers" to more ambitious undertakings. The overarching theme is that of NATO and Russia working together in order to enhance security and stability in the Euro-Atlantic area. All other points are specific undertakings in order to achieve this goal. Specific examples for future NATO-Russia cooperation include: engagement in conflict prevention that includes preventative diplomacy; joint operations, including peacekeeping operations; the exchange of information and consultation on strategy and defence policy; the prevention of nuclear, biological and chemical weapons proliferation, the conducting of joint initiatives and exercises in civil emergency preparedness and disaster relief; improving public understanding of the changed nature of the relationship between NATO and Russia by establishing a NATO documentation and information office in Moscow.[229] Article III of the Founding Act ("Areas for Consultation and Cooperation") also explicitly stipulates that Russia continues to participate in the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council and the Partnership for Peace. This can be understood as an

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[228] The North Atlantic Council is the senior political body of NATO. It has effective decision-making powers and is made up of permanent representatives of all member countries who meet once a week. The council also meets at the level of foreign ministers, defense ministers and heads of government, as required. Decision-making at all levels is of equal importance. The NAC issues declarations and explains the Alliance's decisions to the general public. It derives its authority directly from the North Atlantic Treaty. See http://www.nato.int/docu/handbook/2001/hb070101.htm [last accessed on 27 January 2006].
[229] Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security between NATO and the Russian Federation, Paris, 27th May 1997. NATO Basic Texts, www.nato.int/docu/basictxt/fndact-a.htm [last accessed 13 January, 2006].

acknowledgement of concerns third countries might have: even though the Founding Act constitutes a special relationship that privileges Russia over other countries, it should be clear to the Russians and third countries that Russia still adheres to the "conventional" rules and structures in place since the early 1990s. Anything else would have run the risk – justified or unjustified – of fuelling fears from Eastern and Central European countries that Russia's interests and concerns would be of greater importance than their own. Of course, perceptions do matter a great deal with regard to NATO and Russia. Arguably, a viable option open to Central and East European countries, namely accession to NATO, was never seriously extended to Russia. Events that led to the creation of the Permanent Joint Council need to be seen within this context. The first round of NATO enlargement took place in 1999, and negotiations over individual membership programs were already being discussed in 1997. Therefore, perceptions about who received "preferential treatment" from NATO might differ depending on who is asked. One could argue that the Founding Act was a quid-pro-quo gesture in order to "compensate" Russia for the first round of enlargement that made Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic NATO's first Central European members; a claim which coincides with realist IR theory in terms of bargaining and tit-for-tat interaction.[230]

Returning to the text of the Founding Act, Article 4 is especially interesting. According to an official at the German Foreign Ministry[231], Article 4 was of particular interest and concern to the Russians. Article 4 states that "the member states of NATO reiterate that they have no intention, no plan and no reason to deploy nuclear weapons on the territory of new members, nor any need to change any aspect of NATO's nuclear posture or nuclear policy – and do not foresee any future need to do so".[232] Furthermore, NATO assured Russia that it has no intention of establishing new nuclear weapon storage sites or adapt old nuclear storage facilities on the territory of new member states. In addition, nearly two pages are dedicated to the Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE) Treaty. Once again, the document refers to the importance of the OSCE as a guarantor of peace in Europe. The CFE Treaty was signed during the CSCE summit in Paris on 19 November 1990 by 22 members of NATO and the former Warsaw Pact. Its goal is to

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[230] See chapter 2.
[231] Interview with German Foreign Ministry Official #2, 7 February 2005, German Foreign Ministry, Berlin.
[232] Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security between NATO and the Russian Federation, Paris, 27th May 1997. NATO Basic Texts, www.nato.int/docu/basictxt/fndact-a.htm [last accessed 13 January, 2006].

establish parity in major conventional forces and armaments between East and West from "the Atlantic to the Urals".[233] While problems with the implementation of the CFE Treaty largely emanated from the Russian side, particularly in the mid- to late-1990s, the treaty itself was seen as insurance against the presence of (obsolete) arms in Europe. To this effect, the Founding Act states that

The member states of NATO and Russia proceed on the basis that adaptation of the CFE Treaty should help to ensure equal security for all states parties irrespective of their membership of a politico-military alliance, both to preserve and strengthen stability and continue to prevent any destabilizing increase of forces in various regions of Europe and in Europe as a whole.[234]

This is an indicator that such "outdated" topics as arms control were still very much an issue when the Founding Act was drafted. This, in turn, means that even though cooperation and partnership were envisaged, careful manoeuvring with regard to issues that prompted uneasiness was still required.

The Founding Act provided Russia with a permanent body for consultation with NATO. The presence of a Russian ambassador to NATO, as well as that of committee members and staff can be seen as a step forward in NATO-Russia relations. In accordance with constructivist theory, which claims that the exchange of ideas leads to shared norms and values, this spatial rapprochement between NATO and Russian officials could be expected to be regarded as a success. In fact, responses to the Founding Act were more ambivalent. Some observers credited the Founding Act and the Permanent Joint Council with the accomplishment of a historic mission that that would be a solid foundation for future generations to build upon. In June 1998, a conference organized by the Institute of Information on the Social Sciences at the Russian Academy of Sciences (INION RAN) and the NATO Office of Information and Press was held in Moscow to commemorate the first anniversary of the NATO-Russia Founding Act. The conference was part of the 1998 working plan of the NATO-Russia Permanent Joint Council. Participants included officials from NATO HQ, the Russian government (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Defense), academics and foreign experts. During the

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[233] US Department of State, Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE) Treaty, http://www.state.gov/t/ac/rls/fs/11243.htm [last accessed on 30 January, 2006].
[234] Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security between NATO and the Russian Federation, Paris, 27th May 1997, NATO Basic Text, www.nato.int/docu/basictxt/fndact-a.htm [last accessed 13 January, 2006].

conference, the future of European security and NATO and Russia's role in it were discussed. Some saw the role of the Permanent Joint Council in a very positive light, such as Daniil Proektor, senior analyst at the Institute of World Economy and International Relations at the Russian Academy of Sciences. He claims that the Founding Act is not only a diplomatic document, but also the symbol of an epoch, arguing that though it is as yet too early to assess the exact impact of the Founding Act, it should nonetheless be seen as an element of political culture aiming at working towards a better future.[235] Ulrich Brandenburg's conclusion on the functioning of the Permanent Joint Council is that "…we have begun a useful and promising exercise … Our main message to the Russian side at this point is: 'The doors are wide open; you have a very important voice at the NATO table. But on the long run, your influence will depend on the degree to which you are willing to get involved with the Alliance'."[236] While generally viewing the Permanent Joint Council in a positive light, Brandenburg hints at criticism often levelled at the Council in particular, as well as at NATO-Russia cooperation more generally.

The underlying criticism that Brandenburg alludes to is more fully explored by Evgeniy Kogan, professor at the National Defense College in Stockholm:

It seems that, despite the signing of the NATO – Russia Founding Act over a year ago, issues which divided NATO and Russia in the past are still on the agenda … the fear of NATO expanding up to Russia's border has been neither forgotten nor lightly dismissed. The Founding Act was supposed to facilitate unresolved issues as well as to promote new joint projects for cooperation. The reality, however, has proved to be different.[237]

The difference between rhetoric, ambition, and reality is a recurring observation made by many analysts. This difference also lies at the heart of this dissertation's purpose, which seeks to establish patterns of interaction and consequently needs to distinguish between the above-mentioned rhetoric, ambition and reality. The reasons for this

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[235] Proektor, Daniil: "The Founding Act: symbol of an epoch?", in: "The first anniversary of the NATO-Russia Founding Act: appraisal and outlook", Documents from the international conference 19-20 June 1998, Moscow: INION RAN, 1998, p.48 [own translation].

[236] Brandenburg, Ulrich: "An overview of the mechanism of the Founding Act", in: "The first anniversary of the NATO-Russia Founding Act: appraisal and outlook", Documents from the international conference 19-20 June 1998, Moscow: INION RAN, 1998, p.85. Brandenburg served as Head of the Partnership and Cooperation Section in the Political Affairs Division at NATO HQ.

[237] Kogan, Evgeniy: "NATO – Russia relations: ups and downs along the road", in: "The first anniversary of the NATO-Russia Founding Act: appraisal and outlook", Documents from the international conference 19-20 June 1998, Moscow: INION RAN, 1998, p. 102.

discrepancy are plentiful. Kogan posits that one reason for the suboptimal functioning of the PJC is connected to Russia's loss of superpower status and the perceived humiliations that Russia had been subjugated to ever since the end of the Cold War. Kogan's argument is keeping in line with my first hypothesis, but where I argue that both sides find themselves confronted with the problem of shaking off the past, he argues that it is mainly Russia's attitude that stands in the way of better cooperation. He states that

[t]oday it is an established fact that Russia and NATO no longer regard each other as adversaries. The major question, however, is still are they equal partners and not simply partners…? Undoubtedly, this question, in particular, will preoccupy the Russian side in the long term. At issue is not just phraseology but status, respect and strength.[238]

The words that Kogan chose to describe what the "issue" is are very pertinent and of some importance. Status, respect and strength were – and continue to be – a leitmotif. The importance of those words and their meaning for Russian behavior can not be underestimated. Even though, as Kogan observes, cooperation now stands in lieu of confrontation as the sine qua non of interstate relations in Europe, and with them, NATO-Russia relations, status, strength and respect continue to shape behavioral patterns. Kogan goes so far as to say that "inward-looking Russia, which has to concentrate its efforts on the home front, is less preoccupied with NATO issues than with being anti-NATO, in order to pacify its domestic politicians and keep alive its vision of grandeur."[239] Therefore, "…it is important for NATO to stand firm, as well as to project the image of being united and not easily intimidated."[240] "Intimidated" certainly is not a word that one would associate with partnership and cooperation. Kogan concludes that "despite the signing of the NATO – Russia Founding Act over a year ago, issues which divided NATO and Russia in the past are still on the agenda…"[241] However, he does not exclude the possibility that more fruitful cooperation might occur in the future, since both Russia and NATO are too important for the general security structure of the European continent.

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[238] Ibid.
[239] Ibid, p. 103.
[240] Ibid.
[241] Ibid.

Other analysts have praised existing structures that have encouraged the continuous decline of "old" security issues, such as the accrual of weapons and defense industries. Gebhardt Weiss, an official at the German Foreign Ministry, notes the efforts undertaken by NATO and Russia to reduce weapon stockpiles, claiming that there has been a change in the mindset of both former Eastern bloc and Western countries with regard to what constitutes a threat.[242] NATO in particular, he contends, has made a consistent effort to reduce conventional arms. However, efforts to limit conventional weapons mainly occur within the context of the CFE Treaty, and only to a lesser extent in a purely bilateral NATO-Russia setting. Weiss advocates the replacement "of the old system with its broad strategic balance of forces … with a new one based on a higher level of conventional stability backed by firm arms control achievements, which within this framework will allow countries only predictable and appropriately limited crisis response capabilities."[243] Overall, Weiss gives a positive verdict on the developments in security policy that have taken place since the end of the Cold War. Generally speaking, opinions on the success of the PJC, and NATO-Russia relations at the time of the PJC are varied. The overwhelming majority of appraisals are usually restricted to the existence of the PJC in a historical context; i.e., the mere fact that Russia and NATO are no longer set on destroying each other. Other positive evaluations praise out-of-PJC structures, as I have shown. The vast majority of analysts consider that the existence of the PJC is indeed essential, but that there is still a lot of room for improvement. In fact, one could read an implicit call for restructuring in many articles that outwardly praise the PJC. Today, with the benefit of hindsight, the number of voices openly suggesting that the PJC did not live up to its expectations have increased. On the other hand, it has been suggested that the PJC was a product of its time and therefore overly ambitious expectations were bound to be disappointed.

According to one NATO official, there were two phases of NATO-Russia interaction in the mid-1990s[244], consisting of two different ideational approaches to what that interaction should look like. The official turning point in NATO-Russia relations in the mid- to late-1990s is generally perceived to be the war in Kosovo.[245] However, this dissertation claims that, contrary to the usual assumption that the Kosovo crisis

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[242] Weiss, Gebhardt: "Venturing more controversial stability in Europe", in: "The first anniversary of the NATO-Russia Founding Act: appraisal and outlook", Documents from the international conference 19-20 June 1998, Moscow: INION RAN, 1998, p. 159.
[243] Ibid, p.166.
[244] Interview with NATO Official #3, 16 September 2005, NATO HQ, Brussels.
[245] A brief summary of events that led to the Kosovo crisis will be provided in section 3 of this chapter.

disrupted a hitherto productive and successful relationship, NATO-Russia relations during the 1990s were never as unproblematic and productive as the language in the Founding Act suggests. The two different phases mentioned above support this claim. The first phase consisted in an effort to identify issues that needed to be addressed with regard to the legacy of the past; the establishment of a working environment of trust and transparency, as well as becoming accustomed to sitting at the same conference table in a setting where meetings were held for the sake of holding meetings.[246] The work of the PJC fell mostly within the first category. According to one NATO official, the PJC mainly served to take a "rudimentary steps forward", focusing largely on topics such as military doctrines and infrastructures. One notable exception concerned a more future-oriented issue, namely peace-keeping missions. In fact, by the time the Founding Act was signed, Russian troops were already stationed in the Balkans working alongside NATO troops. However, as the same NATO official pointed out, the debate on future joint peace-keeping missions took place on an ad-hoc basis, and not within the framework of the PJC.[247]

The second phase of NATO-Russia relations in the 1990s was characterized by philosophical and holistic considerations: a debate ensued about the future of the partnership and whether or not Russia should be seen as a long-term partner, complete with an assessment of what potential shared interests there were between NATO and Russia, and what responses to these threats could be feasible. The question about where the emphasis for future cooperation should lie was implicit in these debates.[248] However, this second phase was never fully and successfully explored. As mentioned before, the only practical application of NATO-Russia relations, namely the joint peace-keeping efforts in the Balkans, was decided upon on an ad-hoc basis, thus foregoing the opportunity to institutionalize joint partnership ventures. This, in turn, meant that "Phase I" activities, such as trust-building measures and the effort to overcome the legacy of the Cold War, took center stage in the discussion over the strategic relationship between NATO and Russia and its future. As mentioned before, some analysts have put forward the notion that "Phase I" activities in themselves constitute a positive development in NATO-Russia relations. While this is certainly not wrong, it

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[246] Interview with NATO Official #3, 16 September 2005, NATO HQ, Brussels.
[247] Ibid. Though peace-keeping missions are mentioned and referred to "as shared commitments to principles" in the opening paragraph of the Founding Act, the Act also notes that cooperation in peace-keeping missions will take place on a "case-by-case basis" (see www.nato.int/docu/basictxt/fndact-a.htm [last accessed on 13 January 2006]).
[248] Interview with NATO Official #3, 16 September 2005, NATO HQ, Brussels.

does not satisfy the expectations raised by the language of the Founding Act, or the language used more generally in relation to developments connected to the collapse of the bipolar world order. Therefore, the crisis over Kosovo that prompted the Russians to discontinue all PJC activities was not the trigger for the catastrophic rupture in relations between NATO and Russia as is generally believed. One NATO official hypothesized that Kosovo did not destroy anything that was of real value.[249] In fact, only 20 months had passed between the implementation of the Permanent Joint Council and the escalation of conflict in Kosovo. Consequently, the suspension of the PJC resulted largely in a bureaucratic crisis, rather than a full-blown political crisis, according to the same NATO official.[250] Moreover, the NATO official in question claims that neither side had been investing a lot of political effort or will into the PJC and that therefore the disbanding of the PJC did not signify a major sacrifice. Instead, he suggests that another event that took place in the late 90s energized the relationship between NATO and Russia: the resignation of Boris Yeltsin and the presidency of Vladimir Putin.[251]

In summary, the Founding Act and the Permanent Joint Council did not match the rhetoric surrounding their implementation. Even though the establishment of the PJC represented a move away from the Cold War status quo, it did not materially produce "added value" to the relationship between NATO and Russia – with the possible exception of creating a framework within which representatives could meet and familiarize themselves with each other. Some analysts have suggested that the PJC's potential was not fully used, which is correct to a certain extent. However, considering the circumstances under which it was created – only 6 years after the disintegration of the Soviet Union and the history it was faced with, it was not a complete failure either. The ambitious phrasing often used in treaties does not necessarily result in the revolutionizing of existing structures. I would argue that it is wrong to suggest that the PJC did not live up to its expectations, since structural constraints stymied the two actors' attempt at building a partnership. This was exacerbated by the relatively short amount of time that had passed since the end of the Cold War. In order to assess whether it was simply premature to proclaim successful NATO-Russia cooperation, or whether the problems encountered in the PJC were indeed more far-reaching, it is

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[249] Ibid.
[250] Ibid.
[251] Ibid. More about Russian domestic politics in section 3 of this chapter.

necessary to analyze the second treaty that has shaped NATO-Russia relations in the past 15 years: the NATO-Russia Council.

3.2.2. The NATO-Russia Council (2002)

After the suspension of the Permanent Joint Council in the spring of 1999, NATO-Russia relations did not encounter any significant changes. Even though NATO and Russia no longer had the opportunity to meet within an institutionalized setting and were thus also deprived of the opportunity to develop patterns of interaction, the material outcome of the partnership between the two actors did not change fundamentally. With the exception of some very tense moments during the Kosovo crisis, NATO and Russia did not experience complete fallout. The most difficult situation, involving the deployment of Russian soldiers at Pristina airport on 12 June 1999 in Kosovo without NATO's approval or knowledge, was diffused fairly quickly. Russian troops stayed on in Kosovo and worked alongside KFOR troops until June 2003, when the Russian government decided to end Russian participation in KFOR. Therefore, the new "ice age" that some feared would emerge after the conflict in Kosovo erupted did not materialize. On the other hand, the disbanding of the PJC did represent a setback for the effort to create solid institutions around the rather fickle relationship between NATO and Russia. Interestingly enough, the issue that was dealt with in an ad-hoc manner, joint peacekeeping operations, turned out to be the only joint venture that endured. Analysts differ in their assessments of the motivation behind Russia's continued participation in KFOR. While some see KFOR in a very positive light and credit the PJC with laying a foundation of trust between NATO and Russia that enabled KFOR, others suggest that Russia sent troops to Kosovo to retain a certain degree of influence over events. In other words, in spite of the PJC, Russia mistrusted NATO enough to send its own troops. I would argue that the second line of argument is more accurate than the first one, and that therefore the PJC did not fulfil the goals it set for itself in terms of trust-building measures. On the other hand, it is also legitimate to argue that the continued joint peace-keeping mission that NATO and Russia engaged in until 2003, almost in spite of itself, resulted in a new opportunity for improved relations. As NATO and Russia continued to clash, they also saw that avoiding each other or openly confronting each other was no longer an option. This issue has already been introduced in the theory chapter: NATO and Russia interact because they *must* – they have no choice. In the case of KFOR, the continued proximity of both actors forced them to reconsider the status of their relationship. The PJC being a thing of the past, the

focus now lay on reinventing the relationship rather than analyzing what went wrong during the first try, i.e., the PJC.

That effort was consciously made after emotions over Kosovo had subsided. The outcome of these efforts was the establishment of the NATO-Russia Council at NATO's Rome summit on 28 May 2002.[252] The language of the Statement on the NATO-Russia Council is reminiscent of that of the Founding Act, while at the same time going several important steps further. The tone is almost jubilant, and optimism sounds in every sentence:

Today we have launched a new era in NATO-Russia cooperation. We, the Heads of government of the member states of [NATO] and the Russian Federation, have today signed a Declaration, "NATO–Russia relations: A New Quality", establishing a new body, the NATO-Russia Council, which we are committed to making an effective forum for consensus-building, consultations, joint decisions, and joint actions. We enter this new level of cooperation with a great sense of responsibility and equally great resolve to forge a safer and more prosperous future for all our nations.[253]

The key word in this section is of course "new". It seems as though both sides are relieved to leave the past behind them and see an opportunity to engage in a new and improved partnership. An effort was made to identify specific issues that created problems and misunderstandings in previous settings, such as the PJC. For instance, the first page of the Statement on the NRC proclaims that "In the NATO-Russia Council, NATO member states and Russia will work as equal partners in areas of common interest".[254] The second crucial word in this statement is "equal". This is a quantum leap from the Founding Act. Whereas in 1997 it was revolutionary to proclaim that NATO and Russia were no longer enemies, in 2002 a further step forward needed to be taken towards establishing equality between the two partners. As mentioned before in section 3.2.1: in relation to the PJC, the perceived inequality between NATO and Russia that was felt acutely in Russia lay at the heart of many conflicts and confrontations that hindered the work of the PJC. Even though most Western analysts tended to dismiss this perception of inequality by the Russians as something that they would need to address

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[252] The initiative to create a new instrument for channelling NATO-Russia relations was originally taken by the British Prime Minister, Tony Blair.

[253] NATO-Russia Council: NRC Statement, http://www.nato.int/docu/basictxt/b020528e.htm, [last accessed on 7 February 2006].

[254] Ibid.

by giving up their superpower ambitions once and for all, it nevertheless needs to be taken into account as it has important explanatory power with regard to Russian behavior.

The solution to the inequality issue is included in the Statement of the NATO-Russia Council. A structural weakness of the PJC as far as the Russians were concerned was the format of meetings. The Troika format – Secretary General, Russia and one representative of one of the NATO member states on a rotation basis – of the PJC left the Russians with the impression that they were facing NATO "1 against 19", and that NATO's stance was already established before Russia had even had the opportunity to express its point of view.[255] This format was changed in favour for "joint action at 20" in the NRC; all nations sat at the negotiating table and not just an envoy who spoke on behalf of all. In the Declaration by heads of state and government of NATO Member States and the Russian Federation, it is established that

Building on the Founding Act and taking into account the initiative taken by our Foreign Ministers…, to bring together NATO member states and Russia to identify and pursue opportunities for joint action at twenty, we hereby establish the NATO-Russia Council. In the framework of the NATO-Russia Council, NATO member states and Russia will work as equal partners in areas of common interest, The NATO-Russia Council will provide a mechanism for consultation, consensus-building, cooperation, joint decision, and joint action for the member states of NATO and Russia on a wider spectrum of security issues in the Euro-Atlantic region.[256]

The structure of the NRC has similarities to that of the PJC, with the major exception of "the NRC at 20" instead of "19+1", or, as in the Russian perception, "19 against 1". The NRC is chaired by the Secretary General of NATO and meets at the level of foreign ministers and defense ministers twice a year, as well as at the level of heads of states and government as deemed appropriate. Ambassadors meet at least once a month, with a possibility of extraordinary meetings if deemed necessary by any member of the NRC or the NATO Secretary General. Permanent and ad-hoc working groups as well as preparatory committees are working to support meetings of the NRC, with Russian

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[255] Interview with German Foreign Ministry Official #3, 8 February 2005, German Foreign Ministry, Berlin.
[256] NATO-Russia Council: NRC Statement, http://www.nato.int/docu/basictxt/b020528e.htm, [last accessed on 7 February 2006].

representation in each group.[257] Mirroring the civilian structures, chiefs of staff meet twice a year and military representatives meet once a month. Extraordinary meetings can be scheduled as appropriate.[258] With these structures, the NRC effectively replaces the PJC.

NATO's official stance on the NRC had been very positive from the outset. Open hostilities are not and never have been in either NATO's or Russia's interest, and the disbanding of the PJC, although not as catastrophic as it seemed, did constitute a symbolic and psychological setback. Therefore, resuming relations in an institutionalized setting was important for both sides. NATO's official line was that

The NATO-Russia Council (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 27' – instead of in the bilateral "NATO+1" format under the PJC ... Since its establishment, the NRC has evolved into a productive mechanism for consultation, consensus-building, cooperation, joint decision and joint action. It has created several working groups and committees to develop cooperation on terrorism, proliferation, peacekeeping, theatre missile defence, airspace management, civil emergencies, defence reform, logistics, and scientific cooperation and on challenges of modern society.[259]

Two years later, the tone was no less optimistic: after the ministerial meeting of the NRC on 4 December 2003, then-NATO Secretary General Lord Robertson, just a few days before he handed over the post of Secretary General to Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, said in a meeting with the press that "[o]nce more the new spirit of NATO-Russia cooperation was crystal clear. This is one of the biggest changes NATO has brought about over the past four years of my term. As I prepare to step down, it is one of my biggest sources of satisfaction."[260] Furthermore, the emphasis lay on the general success and importance of continuing NATO-Russia relations: "Welcoming significant progress in all areas of practical cooperation, NRC Foreign Ministers expressed their

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[257] Ibid.
[258] Ibid.
[259] NATO-Russia Council: NRC Statement, http://www.nato.int/issues/nrc/index.html, [last accessed on 7 February 2006].
[260] NATO Update, http://www.nato.int/docu/update/2003/12-december/e1204c.htm, [last accessed on 13 February 2006].

commitment to an intensified and growing partnership between NATO member states and Russia."[261] These statements are reminiscent of statements made in the context of the PJC; however, the actual steps taken to strengthen that partnership differed somewhat from those of the Founding Act.

The Declaration on the NRC offers a greater amount of detail with regard to specific areas of cooperation between NATO and Russia than the Founding Act did. Whereas the Founding Act included a long list of general and abstract areas of cooperation such as the exchange of information and increasing transparency, the topics identified in the Declaration on the NRC are limited to actual policy matters. Arguably, the crisis over Kosovo contributed to both actors being able to identify these issues. The Statement on the NRC proclaims that

Building on the Founding Act and its wide range of cooperation, the NATO-Russia Council will intensity efforts in the struggle against terrorism, crisis management, non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, arms control and confidence-building measures, theatre missile defence, search and rescue at sea, military-to-military cooperation and defence reform, and civil emergencies, as well as in other areas … We have agreed to an ambitious work programme that will guide our cooperation in the coming months. We will pursue specific projects in areas important to Euro-Atlantic security…[262]

The most prominent and specific issue identified in the Declaration on the NRC is inevitably the joint struggle against terrorism. The events of 9/11 and the ensuing war on terror opened up a whole new range of opportunities for cooperation between Russia and Western institutions in general.[263] Vladimir Putin's immediate reaction in favor of supporting the US in the air strike against Afghanistan enabled a new positioning of Russia with regard to the West in general, and especially NATO.

Other areas for cooperation, such as conflict prevention, crisis management, arms control and non-proliferation, and especially civil emergency, had already been introduced in the Founding Act. The actual policy outcomes addressing these areas for cooperation were not overwhelmingly plentiful, as previously noted. The most successful area of cooperation, arms control, took place under the auspices of the

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[261] Ibid.
[262] Ibid.
[263] The impact of 9/11 on Russian foreign policy will be discussed in more detail in chapter 4.

OSCE. However, one area of cooperation introduced in the NRC was to gain prominence over the course of the years. Search and rescue at sea turned out to become one of the "flagships" of visible cooperation between NATO and Russia. In the Declaration on the NRC, NATO and Russia agreed to "monitor the implementation of the NATO-Russia Framework Document on Submarine Crew Rescue and continue to promote cooperation, transparency and confidence between NATO and Russia in the area of search and rescue at sea".[264] Traditionally a subject of secrecy and delicacy, it was far from obvious that submarines and their control systems would become the object of cooperation between NATO and Russia. The catastrophic events surrounding the sinking of the Russian submarine Kursk on 12 August 2000 certainly contributed to raising the profile of search and rescue at sea. Putin's handling of the crisis was widely criticized and prompted Western observers to decry the Cold War-way of dealing with the accident. Russia had refused help offered by Norway, the United Kingdom and the United States in favor of handling the crisis independently. However, due to lack of proper equipment, the rescue efforts failed and all 118 crew members of the Kursk died. The slow and sometimes incorrect information policy that the Kremlin chose gave rise to criticism both from within Russia and from abroad. Norwegian divers ultimately discovered the bodies of the crew members when they got to the wreckage of the Kursk over a week later.

In December 2001, NATO defense and foreign ministers met with Russian Defense Minister Igor Sergeyev and Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov. General NATO-Russia relations were discussed, as well as the peace-keeping mission in the Balkans. These were the first ministerial meetings after the initial meetings that had taken place following the disbanding of the Permanent Joint Council in the spring of 1999. On 5 December, defense ministers discussed defense reform and restructuring of the armed forces, and, crucially, defense ministers agreed to a working program that specifically advocated search and rescue at sea. Search and rescue at sea has thus become a topic that is well integrated into NATO-Russia cooperative structures. This became especially obvious in August 2005, when a situation similar to the Kursk incident arose with the sinking of a Russian submarine off the coast of Kamchatka. This time, Russia proactively requested NATO's help in the form of remote-controlled vehicles that were needed for rescuing the crew members. Rescue efforts were successful this time and

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[264] NATO-Russia Council: NRC Statement, http://www.nato.int/docu/basictxt/b020528e.htm, [last accessed on 7 February 2006].

Russia did not feel that that it was a loss of face to request help from NATO. This was also partly due to NATO's structural efforts to deal with submarine safety. Operation Sorbet Royal 2005 was a major NATO live submarine escape and rescue exercise, involving ships, aircraft and submarines.[265] It was held in the Mediterranean off the coast of Taranto, Italy from 17 – 30 June 2005 and included about 2,000 participants from 14 partner nations, including the 3 partner countries Russia, Ukraine and Israel.[266] The exercise was designed to test international submarine escape and rescue personnel, equipment and procedures in order to be able to cope with the most extreme submarine rescue missions. For three weeks, submarines with a full crew onboard from Italy, the Netherlands, Spain and Turkey were 'sunk' to the bottom. Rescue vehicles and systems from Italy, the United Kingdom and the United States of America, together with specialist divers, medical teams and support and salvage ships from Canada, France, Greece, Israel, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, and the United Kingdom, worked together to solve complex rescue and medical problems.[267] Having participated in this exercise, Russia felt comfortable asking for help when it was needed. The fact that ACT Norfolk[268] provided this kind of assistance not on an ad-hoc but a regular basis made it easier for Russia to accept it as such.[269]

Today, institutionalized NATO-Russia relations are still under the auspices of the NRC. The Rome Declaration of 28 May 2002 serves as the blueprint for NATO-Russia relations. Regular meetings are held, NATO has a presence in Moscow in the form of a Military Liaison Office and an Information Office, and Russia has sent an ambassador to NATO. The INION RAN in Moscow serves as the main source of information concerning NATO in general and NATO-Russia cooperation in particular, and NATO's office of Information and Press publishes a plethora of material concerning steps taken by NATO and Russia towards an ever-closer partnership. All relevant NATO websites offer a Russian version, and handbooks discussing the evolution of the partnerships are widely available both in Russia and in the NATO member states. The status quo of NATO-Russia relations is officially hailed by NATO as being innovative and productive relations, driven by the "new spirit" that was born out of the establishment of

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[265] Exercise Sorbet Royal (SR 05), http://www.nato.int/ims/news/2005/n050622a.htm, [last accessed on 10 February 2006].
[266] Ibid.
[267] Ibid.
[268] ACT is NATO's "Allied Command Transformation" in Norfolk, VA, previously SACLANT (Supreme Allied Command Atlantic). It is in charge of transforming the alliance so that it might react more effectively to current threats.
[269] Interview with NATO Official #2, 13 September 2005, NATO HQ, Brussels.

the NATO-Russia Council. However, voices from the Russian side have consistently been less exuberant. Even though the official position does not differ much from NATO's, Russia has often voiced concerns about its position vis-à-vis NATO in general. Generally, statements by the Russian side sound somewhat more restrained than NATO's statements. Still, compared to the thinly-veiled hostility that could sometimes be discerned at the time of PJC meetings when the Russians met NATO in what it perceived to be a "20 against 1" forum[270], statements emanating from Russia since the implementation of the NRC have been more positive.

Overall, the NRC is considered a much better institutional tool than the PJC was. Both Russia and NATO's official stances on the NRC are positive, claiming a productive and innovative modus operandi within NRC structures. Similarly, analysts largely view the NRC in a positive light. However, there are important distinctions made between the NRC in general and the specific work it is able to do. Metaphysically speaking, the NRC is a crucial tool for channelling NATO-Russia relations. Therefore, analysts like Dmitri Trenin label the NRC an "adequate instrument", a platform whose rewards are felt both by Russia and by NATO.[271] According to Trenin, the NRC is working "pretty well" and currently there is no alternative platform for NATO-Russia interaction. Trenin includes an important caveat in this positive assessment, though, maintaining that NATO has been trivialized in the last few years. This important point will be discussed in more detail in the following paragraphs, suffice it to say here that this assessment supports my hypothesis about the structural confines within which NATO and Russia find themselves. One could argue that NATO and Russia hit a glass ceiling in their efforts to cooperate; the discontinuation of the PJC made this especially obvious. Even though the topics that cause contention between the two actors change, they do not completely disappear. One might argue that this is indeed the case in any relationship in international relations. However, the question that arises with regard to NATO and Russia is whether it is possible for them to reach a point when their partnership either disappears, or becomes trivial, as Trenin has suggested.

Others see the NRC as a necessary step on the way towards Russian integration into NATO's structures. Tatiana Parkhalina, deputy director of INION RAN, describes the

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[270] With the second round of enlargement, this formula would have been 27 against 1.
[271] Interview with Dr. Dmitri Trenin, Deputy Director and Senior Analyst, Carnegie Moscow Center, 24 March 2005, Moscow.

NRC is as an adequate platform for the "present situation".[272] Parkhalina advocates not only a NATO-Russia partnership; she argues that Russia has to "join" the West, as anything else would be a catastrophe for Russia. According to Parkhalina, the work of the NRC is far from perfect and results are not always satisfactory. Nevertheless, she sees the NRC as one step within a process that will ultimately lead to Russia being a full member of the various "Western clubs"[273]. Another interpretation of the role of the NRC is that it gives Russia a platform that it doesn't enjoy to the same extent in any other international organization, with the possible exception of the G8. Fyodor Lukyanov, editor-in-chief of *Russia in International Affairs*, contends that the NRC is a very useful tool for advancing Russia's interest within NATO.[274] He alludes to the general Russian preference for a "special" platform in international organizations that provides Russia with the chance to discuss matters that affect its national interests. For example, this platform is conspicuously absent in EU-Russia relations, which is an ongoing subject of criticism by the Russians. Therefore, the NRC should have relatively good standing with Russia. However, Lukyanov also picks up on the skepticism that was already voiced by Parkhalina and Trenin, namely the trivialization of issues discussed by NATO and Russia.[275] According to Lukyanov, the question arises whether cooperation between NATO and Russia is viewed so positively because there is nothing to discuss.[276] This assessment of the current state of not only the NRC but NATO-Russia relations in general constitutes a vital foundation for this dissertation, and will be discussed in more detail in the next section of this chapter.

3.2.3. Interim conclusions

In light of the ambiguous, but overall positive responses that the NRC has evoked from many sides, it is important to realize that throughout the process of redefining NATO-Russia relations, there have always been analysts that have viewed the holistic process of NATO-Russia integration rather negatively. Dmitri Rogozin, former chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Russian State Duma, has argued that the actual outcomes of efforts to strengthen NATO-Russia relations have been flawed from the instigation of the PJC. Even though he underlines that generally speaking, it is very much in Russia's (and NATO's) interest to advance their cooperation, he is critical of

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[272] Interview with Dr. Tatiana Parkhalina, Deputy Director, INION RAN, 10 March 2005, Moscow.
[273] Parkhalina's point of view is not representative of Russian public opinion generally.
[274] Interview with Fyodor Lukyanov, Editor-in-chief, Russia in International Affairs, 5 March 2005, Moscow.
[275] Ibid.
[276] Ibid.

what has been achieved. Sharply criticizing NATO's intentions to expand eastwards, he argues that the NRC was designed as an instrument for keeping Russia quiet with regard to enlargement.[277] This, according to Rogozin, put NATO and Russia on a flawed path of interaction that would ultimately prevent real cooperation:

What is more likely to cause serious damage to the prospects of forming a workable mechanism for cooperation between Russia and NATO-Alliance than enlargement before such a mechanism is created, or a rushed plan to institute it that gives birth to immature and ineffective structures? ... We have already had a negative experience with rushed decisions in this area. In 1997 everyone was in a hurry to conclude the Founding Act and to set up the Permanent Joint Council (PJC) to dampen the negative effect of the first wave of NATO enlargement. As a result, we created a very imperfect structure without adding much mutual trust ... Rushing will result in poorly functioning cooperation structures that will undermine rather than strengthen mutual trust; NATO-Russia relations are too important for this...[278]

This was not a minority viewpoint in Russian politics in the early 2000s. Rather, it is a representative statement that is important for understanding the development of NATO-Russia relations in the late 1990s and early 2000s. The main hypothesis of this thesis, which claims that NATO and Russia are caught in structural confines that make it difficult for them to engage in cooperation free of competition, is reflected in Rogozin's statement, even though the context of enlargement is no longer topical today.

The underlying issue is that of cooperation between partners whose capabilities are unevenly distributed. After Rogozin's concerns went unheeded and the second round of enlargement had taken place, the emphasis on improved cooperation between NATO and Russia once again became paramount in official discourse, especially with the implementation of the NRC in 2002. The pendulum seemed to have moved once more towards the "cooperation" end of the spectrum of NATO-Russia relations, leaving behind the PJC years of stagnation and the Kosovo- and enlargement years of conflict. How much this assessment reflects reality, and how likely it is that the pendulum will swing back towards confrontation is once again open for discussion. Suffice to say at this point that the NRC is the foundation of NATO-Russia relations, and, for better or

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[277] Rogozin, Dmitri: "Russia and NATO at 20: should the new arrangement be rushed?", speech given at the 19th international workshop on global security: "Global security: defining and responding to the new threats", Berlin, 3-6 May 2002, http://www.csdr.org/berlin02/rogozin.htm, [last accessed on 13 February 2006].
[278] Ibid.

for worse, will continue to be in the near future. Viewing the implementation of the NRC through a realist lens, one would contend that this was NATO's way of compensating Russia for the second round of eastward enlargement. The admission of Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia to NATO on 29 March 2004 brought NATO up to Russia's borders. Russia also perceived heightened anti-Russian feeling emanating from the new NATO member states. Justified or not, this perceived threat to Russia's interests further tipped the scale in NATO's favor as far as Russia was concerned.[279] The Baltic states' admittance into NATO was Russia's greatest grievance, both on a psychological and geostrategic level due to the exclave of Kaliningrad, which is now fully surrounded by NATO territory. For all the above-mentioned reasons, the establishment of the NRC could be considered as a classic example of bargaining between two powers where one has a comparative advantage over the other.

On the other hand, an argument can also be made using a constructivist worldview. As mentioned above, the most prominent issue for the NRC was and continues to be the war against terror. With his unambivalent and speedy endorsement of the US-led invasion of Afghanistan in October 2001, President Vladimir Putin laid the foundation on which the majority of NATO – Russia cooperation has subsequently been built. The opening sentence of the Declaration on the NRC is a testament to the newly-found consensus between NATO and Russia:

At the start of the 21st century we live in a new, closely interrelated world, in which unprecedented new threats and challenges demand increasingly united responses. Consequently, we, the member states of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the Russian Federation are today opening a new page in our relations, aimed at enhancing our ability to work together in areas of common interest and to stand together against common threats and risks to our security.[280]

The "new quality" in NATO-Russia relations largely referred to the common ground both actors had found in the fight against terrorism. Therefore, those who see a

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[279] Russia's criticism of the PJC was exacerbated by the perceived Russophobia emanating from the 3 former Warsaw Pact countries - Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary. The 20 plus 1 formula of the PJC was, among other factors, also unacceptable to Russia because Russia believed that NATO's position was also influenced by the new member states' anti-Russianism.

[280] NATO-Russia Council: NRC Statement, http://www.nato.int/docu/basictxt/b020528e.htm, [last accessed on 7 February 2006].

convergence of norms and interests between NATO and Russia would point towards an ever-increasing willingness of both actors to work together and overcome old animosities.

Arguably, both enlargement and 9/11 could be regarded as two sides of the same coin. The above-mentioned "pendulum" dynamic that often characterizes NATO-Russia relations explains the near fall-out over Kosovo, the heated debates over enlargement and also the "new quality" in cooperation that the aftermath of 9/11 offered. Therefore, in spite of the PJC and the role it had played in advancing cooperation between NATO and Russia, NATO enlargement continued to be a sensitive topic for Russia. Karl-Heinz Kamp comments that

The general tone of Russia's declarations concerning NATO has differed greatly over time. While on occasions the Russian government has said that as a 'relic of the Cold War', NATO, like the Warsaw Pact, should be dissolved, on other occasions the Kremlin's position on NATO has been much more relaxed. With regard to enlargement, however, Moscow's rejection has been remarkably consistent (with only very few exceptions) since 1994. Russia has been deeply concerned that the dominant (indeed, to a great extent, the only) security organization in Europe should be an alliance of which Russia is not a member ... The prospect that more and more NATO members from the former Warsaw Pact will have a deep, historically derived anti-Russian prejudices is worrisome.[281]

With the benefit of hindsight it has become clear that NATO enlargement, worrisome as it might have been and continues to be for Russia, did not in fact provoke a new fall-out between NATO and Russia. Even though anti-Russian prejudices continue to be a matter of concern for Moscow, the NRC continues with its working agenda. It is open to interpretation whether Russia accepted enlargement because it had no way of stopping it – realism in its most basic form – or whether it seized the opportunity for creating a new, united Europe by giving its consent for enlargement – a constructivists' argument. The consensus among analysts is that the former is the case. This has several implications for NATO-Russia interaction. Firstly, it supports the hypothesis that norm convergence has not yet reached a stage where Russia is included – or wants to be included – in Western discourse about what is "good and desirable" for Europe, to use

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[281] Kamp, Karl-Heinz: "The dynamics of NATO enlargement", in: Lieven, Anatol and Trenin, Dmitri (eds.): "Ambivalent neighbors – the EU, NATO and the price of membership", Washington DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2003, pp. 185-204, p. 196.

Martha Finnemore's words.[282] Secondly, this also implies that it is feasible for new issues of contention to emerge over time. These could be disputes involving disagreements over geopolitical matters, or over specific topics, such as how to fight the war on terror. Third, this means that the "pendulum" of NATO-Russia relations, though stabilizing on the cooperation side, it will not necessarily stay there. Fourth, the label "cooperation" *per se* is open to interpretation with regard to outcome intensity. The above-mentioned glass ceiling that NATO and Russia risk of hitting when they discuss matters outside the smallest common denominator is arguably still very much in place. Keeping these four factors in mind, I will now discuss some of the areas of cooperation have already been introduced in this chapter in greater detail.

3.3. Issues of NATO-Russia interaction

3.3.1. The Balkans

As mentioned earlier, certain misconceptions exist about the history of cooperation between NATO and Russia in the late 1990s and early 2000s. Kosovo, generally considered to be the low point in NATO-Russia relations after the end of the Cold War, resulted in the temporary disbanding of the PJC, but not in Russian troops pulling out of the Balkans. According to one NATO official, interaction between Russian and NATO officials was not very different in the spring of 1999 and in the spring of 2000.[283] In other words, the Kosovo crisis exposed the underlying points of contention between NATO and Russia that existed in spite of the PJC. This is revealing, as meeting minutes of the PJC suggest that efforts were made by both sides to increase cooperation. From the onset of the PJC, possibilities for joint peacekeeping activities were discussed; for example, 4 months after the implementation of the PJC, at the ambassadorial meeting on 24 October 1997, NATO and Russia exchanged views on the situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina, including NATO-Russia cooperation in SFOR. A political-military working group of peacekeeping experts was set up.[284] At the ambassadorial meeting on 12 December, NATO and Russia again discussed the situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Furthermore, they agreed that NATO member states and Russia would continue to work together with the other OSCE states to enhance the CFE Treaty's viability and

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[282] Finnemore, Martha: "National interests in international society", Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996, p. 135.
[283] Interview with NATO Official # 3, 16 September 2005, NATO HQ, Brussels.
[284] NATO Parliamentary Assembly Archives, Special Publications: NATO-Russia Permanent Joint Council: Meetings of the PJC, www.nato-pa.int/archivedpub/special/pjc.asp,[last accessed on 17 February 2006].

effectiveness.[285] This pattern was repeated at every meeting of the PJC, whether at ambassadorial or at ministerial level. Cooperation in SFOR constituted the main topic for discussion, and other topics were added on an ad-hoc basis. The minutes for every meeting held between late 1997 until early 1999 begin by stating that NATO and Russia discussed the situation in the Balkans. An issue of "lesser importance" was then discussed, interestingly generally yielding more specific outcomes than the general discussions about the situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina. For example, on 21 January 1998, the ambassadors agreed to building upon a joint NATO-Russia workshop on the retraining of retired military officers held in early December 1997. The ambassadors discussed whether further activities within this area should be pursued as was stipulated in the PJC Work Programme for 1998.[286] Other examples of "non-Balkan" topics included the continued dialogue on disarmament and nuclear weapon control (29 April 1998), the opening of the NATO Documentation Centre for European Security Issues in February 1998 in Moscow (28 May 1998 at the military representatives' meeting in Luxemburg), and negotiations on the establishment of reciprocal Military Liaison Missions as mentioned in the Founding Act (28 May 1998). Also, a memorandum of understanding on scientific cooperation between NATO and Russia was signed at the 28 May military representatives meeting.[287]

The minutes of the PJC meetings at their different levels reveal that a dialogue between NATO and Russia was in place that sought to identify areas of common interest. The overarching topic was the situation in the Balkans. However, at the same time, this was also the topic on which the least specific statements are available. This suggests that the situation in the Balkans was a delicate topic for NATO and Russia, even though both actors had troops stationed in Bosnia-Herzegovina and were thus linked to each other beyond the institutionalized framework that the PJC offered. Of course, one could also argue that the joint peacekeeping efforts of NATO and Russia were so effective that little discussion on the matter was necessary. After all, Russian forces had been deployed in order to support NATO in Bosnia on 13 January 1996 and had been stationed there ever since. The relatively low profile of discussions held over the peacekeeping efforts in the Balkans suggests that – either due to the sensitivity of the topic or to the success of IFOR/SFOR – neither side saw the need for extended

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[285] Ibid.
[286] Ibid.
[287] Ibid.

discussions, and therefore concentrated on other matters on the PJC working agenda, such as setting up various information centers in Moscow and Brussels. The continued focus on interoperability that is a recurring theme in NATO-Russia relations also suggests that cooperation in IFOR/SFOR was a separate rather than a joint venture in terms of military action. This is hardly surprising, considering the fact that NATO and Russia's military assets were designed to fight each other, not to cooperate. However, one NATO official's assessment of the overall situation in IFOR was that it was a positive experience that laid the foundation for future cooperation.[288] According to him, cooperation between NATO and Russian forces is a long process, and cannot by any means be considered a fait accompli as yet.[289]

Therefore, the joint peacekeeping mission in Bosnia-Herzegovina – although revolutionary at the time, as NATO and Russian forces were working together less than 5 years after the disintegration of the Soviet Union – could be described as benevolent coexistence, rather than large-scale cooperation. IFOR turned into SFOR in December 1996, with no material changes to Russia's participation in the mission. The minutes of the ambassadorial meeting of 29 April 1998 reveal that it focused on the continuation of NATO-Russia cooperation in SFOR, implying that SFOR was actually considered to be one of the cornerstones of NATO-Russia interaction. Events that took place starting in the summer of 1998 put a preliminary end to this first phase of benevolent side-by-side existence between NATO and Russia. Events in Kosovo first came up in PJC meeting at the level of Defense Ministers on 12 June 1998. During this meeting, defense ministers from the NATO member states and Russia discussed the situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina – which was by then standard procedure – including SFOR operations, and, for the first time, the international community's response to the unfolding crisis in Kosovo. At this point, the ministers specifically made it a point to agree to continue NATO-Russia cooperation in SFOR, while at the same time condemning Belgrade's "massive and disproportionate" use of force as well as violent attacks by Kosovar Albanian extremists.[290] The ministers reaffirmed the determination to contribute to international efforts to resolve the crisis and to promote stability in the area.[291] This statement is fully in line with statements previously made at a PJC meeting concerning

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[288] Interviews with Official #1, NATO Military Liaison Mission, 17 and 21 March 2005, Moscow.
[289] Ibid.
[290] NATO Parliamentary Assembly Archives, Special Publications: NATO-Russia Permanent Joint Council: Meetings of the PJC, www.nato-pa.int/archivedpub/special/pjc.asp, [last accessed on 17 February 2006].
[291] Ibid.

the situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina. However, the standard phrases of joint responsibility and opportunity of NATO and Russia with regard to the Balkans were to be discontinued some months later.

Throughout the second half of 1998, events in Kosovo were discussed at every PJC meeting, both at the ambassadorial and the ministerial level. They emerged as one of the issues that took center stage in the PJC, which can be considered as a logical consequence of the handling of the crisis in Bosnia-Herzegovina. During the summer of 1998, discussions about the situation in Kosovo were very cooperative and moderate in tone. In fact, these discussions were reminiscent of the agreement which NATO and Russia had come to with regard to the situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina, which, as mentioned before, could not truly be classified as cooperation, but more as benevolent side-by-side existence. On 18 June 1998 at an extraordinary ambassadorial meeting, NATO and Russia exchanged views on the situation in Kosovo and on the international community's response to the crisis following the meeting of the President of the Russian Federation and the President of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in Moscow in early June.[292] The focus on the effort of the international community in general suggests that in the early months of the crisis, both NATO and Russia sought to assume their responsibilities within the international community, i.e., both actively pursued an internationally sanctioned, institutionalized solution to the crisis. However, initial concerns about the way the crisis was handled were voiced as early as July 1998, when the topic for discussion at the ambassadorial PJC meeting was the progress on information policy toward Russia, and the way ahead in this area.[293] This suggests that Russia did indeed feel the need for a better information policy, not only with regard to Kosovo, but more generally as well – an issue that was characteristic for NATO-Russia relations before the crisis in Kosovo. This also links to the above-mentioned problem that Russia had with the 19 plus 1 format of the PJC: there was an acute feeling of being left out of the decision-making process on the Russian side. Most analysts would claim that it is only logical that Russia does not have a say in NATO's internal matters. Nevertheless, this perceived lack of information is crucial for understanding some of the Russian reactions that emerged in the mid- to late-1990s, especially with regard to the unfolding crisis in Kosovo.

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[292] Ibid.
[293] Ibid.

Interestingly, the eventual disbanding of the PJC was not so much the result of a slow deterioration of relations – instead, it happened rather abruptly. On 17 February 1999 ambassadors discussed the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in Kosovo and expressed full support for the ongoing peace talks at Rambouillet. On 17 March, the ambassadors received a briefing on the meeting of the chiefs of staff that was held in March 1999 and continued consultations on the crisis in Kosovo.[294] The meeting on 17 March was the last time NATO and Russian officials met under the auspices of the PJC before it was temporarily suspended. The next ambassadorial meeting, scheduled for 15 April 1999, did not take place as Russia suspended its cooperation with NATO following the North Atlantic Council's decision of 23 March to authorize NATO air strikes against strategic targets in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in light of the repressions against the Kosovar Albanians.[295] The rather abrupt end to the PJC suggests that the actual decision to confront NATO was taken on another level, namely by the Kremlin itself; otherwise, there would have been indications of a fallout earlier on in 1999. However, as mentioned above, up until the last meeting of the PJC, the language used and the issues discussed remained consistent. Arguably, the PJC failed its first real test: the ability of both actors to resolve differences at the conference table.

NATO bombing was suspended on 10 June 1999, following the UN Security Council's passing of resolution 1244. The first meeting after the intervention in Kosovo had ended, and after Russia had suspended relations with NATO, took place on 23 July 1999 at the ambassadorial level. The spokesman from the Russian Foreign Ministry made it very clear that this meeting did not constitute a formal resumption of NATO-Russia relations; instead, contacts with NATO from now on were restricted to one area only: interaction within the KFOR framework. In July, Russia sent 3,615 peacekeeping troops to Kosovo. The parameters for Russian participation in KFOR were laid out in the Helsinki Agreement (Agreed Points of Russian Participation in KFOR) of 12 June 1999. Crucially, this document was a bilateral agreement between the United States and Russia, not between NATO and Russia. The Helsinki Agreement, signed by the Russian and the US ministers of defense stipulates the conditions for Russian troops deployed to Kosovo, with the technical details of deployment agreed on comprising a 9-page document. One or two Russian battalions were to participate in KFOR operating in the US sector, with a Russian officer serving as representative to the Sector Commander for

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[294] Ibid.
[295] Ibid.

Russian Forces.[296] Furthermore, it was agreed that Russian participation in KFOR should be proportional to the total KFOR forces. Russia should send no more than 2850 troops plus up to 750 troops for airfield and logistics, as well as 16 liaison officers. In the end, 3,615 Russian troops (1 brigade) were sent to Kosovo; one less than the 3,616 that Russia was entitled to in the Helsinki Agreement.[297]

After the meeting of 23 July, NATO and Russia again continued to meet on a monthly PJC-basis, just as they had before the crisis in Kosovo. The 15 September ambassadorial meeting saw discussions about the situation in Kosovo and NATO-Russia cooperation in KFOR. Furthermore, issues such as the demilitarization of the Kosovo Liberation Army were discussed.[298] Even though the Russian side had made it clear that the only reason for Russia to resume meetings with NATO was KFOR, the minutes show that after a couple of months, many of the former PJC topics were once again being discussed. In fact, a return to the "old" topics and discourses can be observed, especially after NATO Secretary General Robertson met with Russian President Vladimir Putin, Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov, and Defense Minister Igor Sergeyev on 16 February 2000, and a decision was taken to once again step up efforts to discuss issues of interest to both NATO and Russia beyond Kosovo within the formal structures of the PJC. This decision was confirmed by military staff and ambassadorial staff in June and July of 2000. As of September 2000, topics such as infrastructure development programs were once again on the agenda[299], and the meetings were also again taking place within the PJC framework. In December 2000, the "excellent cooperation" between military forces in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo, as well as the continuing progress on cooperation between NATO and Russian personnel in SHAPE[300], was once more mentioned.

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[296] Agreed Points of Russian Participation in KFOR: The Helsinki Agreement, signed on 18 June 1999, http://www.nato.int/kfor/kfor/documents/pdf/helsinki.pdf, [last accessed on 20 February 2006].
[297] Some observers claim that Russia was disappointed to not get its own sector in Kosovo. Russia sent 200 troops into the province in the famous "dash for Pristina airport" on 12 June, two days after the end of the bombings, and ahead of NATO peacekeepers. The stand-off between NATO and Russian forces lasted until early July, when Russian troops allowed their NATO counterparts into the airport.
[298] NATO Parliamentary Assembly Archives, Special Publications: NATO-Russia Permanent Joint Council: Meetings of the PJC, www.nato-pa.int/archivedpub/special/pjc.asp, [last accessed on 17 February 2006].
[299] Ibid.
[300] Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe near Mons, Belgium; seat of SACEUR (Supreme Allied Commander Europe), now ACO (Allied Command Operations).

From that moment on, the issues that were discussed at PJC meetings concentrated once more to what had been stipulated in the Founding Act: defense issues, proliferation of nuclear, biological and chemical weapons, current threats and risks, and military defense cooperation. These are issues that are still matters for discussion and cooperation today. With regard to Kosovo, the general assessment is that the overall outcome of NATO-Russia cooperation was relatively positive[301], in spite of some differences that recur both in relation to KFOR and within the discussions of the PJC.[302] One NATO official also made the point that Russian troops were not simply tolerated in KFOR, but that they were actually needed by NATO, which is constantly struggling to operate with understaffed brigades – only 25 or so in Kosovo – and that the addition of Russian troops to KFOR was therefore welcomed.[303] This does not reflect the often-held belief that Russian troops were merely tolerated in order to placate the Kremlin, which was seeking to maintain its influence in the Balkans. This argument is sometimes used to explain why Russia participated in a NATO-led operation in the first place. Thinking in geopolitical terms and protecting one's "sphere of interest" is certainly not alien to Russian foreign policy; however, explaining Russian participation in KFOR only on this basis would not be entirely accurate. Russia pulled its troops out of the Balkans in June 2003. The official reason for ending Russian involvement was that security and stability was now ensured, and therefore, there was no further need for the stationing of troops. Additionally, internal military restructuring was cited as a reason for leaving. Unofficial sources also contend that troops – and especially airborne troops – that were until this time stationed in the Balkans were actually needed for operations in Chechnya.

In summary, the majority of comments regarding cooperation between NATO and Russia in the Balkans have been positive. Of course, there are those who generally condemn NATO intervention in Kosovo. Timothy Garten Ash, for instance, takes issue with the concept of humanitarian intervention, asking:

And the consequences [of the intervention in Kosovo]? It really is too soon to tell. Kosovo today is liberated – and an almighty mess. Western leaders failed to prepare for peace, as they had failed to prepare for war. Crucially, the UN administration in Kosovo was not provided with

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[301] Interview with NATO Official #3, 16 September 2005, NATO HQ, Brussels.
[302] Ibid.
[303] Interviews with Official #1, NATO Military Liaison Mission, 17. and 21 March 2005, Moscow.

the police, judges and jailers to establish the first prerequisite of any functioning state or protectorate: an effective monopoly of legitimate violence.[304]

He concludes that "[t]he Western liberal societies that care most about stopping gross violations of human rights in other countries also have the most difficulty in willing the means best suited to achieve that end. This is our post-Kosovo dilemma."[305] Other analysts have criticized Russia's handling of the situation, such as Regina Heller, who claims that Russian policies towards Kosovo reflect internal disputes and external weaknesses.[306] Concerning the specific interaction between NATO and Russia, however, cautious praise seems to be the consensus concerning the Balkans. However, as pointed out before, it remains questionable whether IFOR/SFOR[307] and KFOR could really be defined as joint peacekeeping activities. Rather, some experts maintain that joint involvement in the Balkans mostly served to assess strengths and weaknesses for possible future joint operations. The Russian brigade that was stationed in Kosovo served in the US sector, but was not subordinate to US command. The main interfaces consisted in Russian troops working together with US troops and vice-versa. These joint activities serve as a basis for analysis for future actions, and are documented in NATO's Joint Analysis and Lessons Learned Center (JALLC)[308] in Lisbon.[309] However, the fact remains that KFOR was the last time that NATO and Russian troops were jointly involved in peacekeeping activities. This suggests that reservations about joint activities that keep resurfacing especially on the Russian side are still present and continue to shape NATO-Russia interaction. In order to assess this, the next section will take a closer look at the other event that most prominently shaped NATO-Russia relations: 9/11.

3.3.2. 9/11 and its aftermath

As mentioned in section 2, the NATO-Russia Council was to a large extent made possible by the events of September 11, 2001. Conversely, one can also argue that the NRC paved the way for the second round of enlargement that took place on 24 March

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[304] Garton Ash, Timothy, "Kosovo: was it worth it?", in: The New York Review of Books, #47, 14.-21. September 2000, pp 50-60, p. 60.
[305] Ibid.
[306] Heller, Regina: "Kontroversen – Kapriolen – Kompromisse. Russlands Rolle im Kosovo" , in: Das Parlament, #32-33, 6.-13. August, 1999, p. 9.
[307] NATO's SFOR operation ended in December 2004, when the EU took control of peacekeeping activities in Bosnia-Herzegovina with Operation Althea.
[308] Located in Lisbon, Portugal.
[309] Interview with NATO Official # 2, 13 September 2005, NATO HQ, Brussels.

2004. Russia was and continues to be much more at ease with the new formula "NATO at 20". It is safe to say that the Russians would not have agreed to interact with the new enlarged NATO with 26 members within the old PJC structures (26 versus 1). However, the negotiations surrounding the second round of NATO enlargement – which were no less delicate than the first one, especially with regard to the Baltic states and the Russian exclave of Kaliningrad – certainly occurred in a smoother institutional setting than the negotiations surrounding the first round of enlargement. As discussed in section 2, general assessments of the success of the NRC are very positive. This is not surprising, at least not on NATO's side; NATO has consistently demonstrated a disposition for positive statements as far as NATO-Russia cooperation is concerned, whereas Russia's praise has always been somewhat more subdued. In the case of the NRC, however, Russian opinion is decidedly more positive than it has been at any previous point.

One NATO official claims that in fact, the biggest turning point in NATO-Russia relations was not Kosovo, but 9/11.[310] By the early 2000s, there had been few new developments in the interaction between NATO and Russia: KFOR was still underway, and Russia was still a part of it, and the PJC continued to meet for monthly meetings. Even though the hostility that had existed during NATO's bombardment of Serbia and in the immediate aftermath had subsided, there was a certain degree of stagnation in NATO-Russia interaction. One might argue that the absence of hostility between NATO and Russia could already be seen as positive interaction, but it is hard to argue that actual cooperation in the spirit of the PJC was taking place. This changed with the events of September 11, 2001. In being the first head of state to express his condolences to President Bush after the terrorist attacks in New York and Washington, Vladimir Putin unequivocally positioned himself in line with the US, and thus NATO. At the most basic level, whereas Kosovo represented the low point in NATO-Russia relations (conflict), 9/11 presented the unique chance for unprecedented cooperation. According to one NATO official, the timing was particularly favorable, as intra-NATO discussions about "who is Putin" had finally subsided and Western leaders had a very positive impression overall of the Russian president – especially after the rather erratic and unpredictable leadership of Boris Yeltsin that had put many in the West on their guard.[311] 9/11 presented a window of opportunity for Putin to align himself with the West, and to be accepted by the West as – at the time – the most prominent ally in the

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[310] Interview with NATO Official # 3, 13 September 2005, NATO HQ, Brussels.
[311] Ibid.

war on terror. It is important to bear in mind the domestic background against which Putin decided to join the war on terror: Putin's own so-called war on Islamic terror[312], in the form of the second war in Chechnya. Dmitri Trenin argues that "Putin saw himself and his policies vindicated by what happened in New York and Washington on that fateful day. While it appeared to most outsiders that Putin was the first to join Bush in his fight on terror, for the Kremlin leader it was the reverse: America was joining, belatedly, with Russia in the fight against a common enemy."[313] According to Trenin, Putin saw the attacks of 9/11 as a continuation of the international war on Islamic terrorism that Russia had already been fighting for some time: "Since in his view [Putin's] the threat from Islamist radicalism was not limited to Russia in Chechnya, Putin was initially expecting support for Russia from Europe and America, threatened by a similar enemy."[314] Since the West had consistently criticized Russia's military intervention in Chechnya and condemned human rights abuses, Putin finally saw his chance to "join" the West over beating terrorism; or rather, as Trenin puts it, have the West join Russia in this mission.

However, the war in Chechnya was only one of the factors that influenced Russian foreign policy at the beginning of the 21st century. By the end of his first year as President of the Russian Federation, Putin had relinquished any aspirations his predecessor might have had about actually "joining" the West and its institutions. Therefore, Putin's alignment is both logical and somewhat unexpected when one takes into the account the context within which his offer to the "West" was made. One year before 9/11, Russia published a Foreign Policy Concept, which was a document meant to outline Russia's priorities and act as an indication for possible Russian foreign policy actions in the future. Similarly, there was a Russian Military Doctrine published in 2000 and a National Security Concept, also published in 2000. These concepts were published by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the President of the Russian Federation, as deemed necessary – in other words, there is no regularity to them. Moreover, these concepts establish only rough guidelines; they do not actually constitute policy. Even so, they are very insightful with regard to the "state of mind" in

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[312] The reasons behind the Chechen wars were of course not only confined to fighting Islamic terrorism, however, fighting terrorism became the most prominent justification for Russian involvement in the region.

[313] Trenin, Dmitri: "Russia's foreign and security policy under Putin", in: Mangott, Gerhard, Trenin, Dmitri, Senn, Martin and Timmermann, Heinz (eds.): "Russlands Rückkehr. Außenpolitik unter Vladimir Putin", Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2005, pp. 123-148, p. 130.

[314] Ibid, p.129.

Russia, where Russia sees priorities and where it is felt that those priorities threatened. All three concepts are published both in Russian and English and are widely available. The underlying position that the Foreign Policy Concept starts from is that the Russian Federation needs to re-evaluate the overall international situation at the beginning of the 21st century, as well as Russia's place within it.[315] The concept stipulates that "[c]ertain plans related to establishing new, equitable and mutually advantageous partnerships relations of Russia with the rest of the world … have not been justified."[316] This translates into disappointment over the relationships that Moscow has sought to deepen with the West, sometimes at a great cost to Russia as far as the Kremlin is concerned. Instead of seeking further integration with the West, Russia should once again focus on its own position – geographically, politically, and strategically – and work towards strengthening that position.

Therefore, the Foreign Policy Concept stipulates that Russia should

…ensure reliable security of the country, to preserve and strengthen its sovereignty and territorial integrity, to achieve firm and prestigious positions in the world community, most fully consistent with the interests of the Russian Federation as a great power, as one of the most influential centers of the modern world, and which are necessary for the growth of its political, intellectual and spiritual potential.[317]

The usage of concepts such as great power and firm and prestigious positions in the world community suggest that Russia was disengaging from plans that saw it as part of European security and political structures. Even though the "honeymoon period" of the mid-1990s, during which Yeltsin and Moscow-based Westerners had advocated that Russia should become an integral part of Western structures, was already decidedly over, the Foreign Policy Concept of 2000 unequivocally calls for Russia to re-orient itself and once more apply a more inward-looking approach. Moreover, Russia sees an acute danger in the ever-increasing power of the United States as the world's only remaining superpower: "There is a growing trend towards the establishment of a unipolar structure of the world with the economic and power domination of the United States … The strategy of unilateral actions can destabilize the international situation,

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[315] The Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation, approved by the President of the Russian Federation on 28 June 2000, http://www.bits.de/EURA/russia052800.pdf, [last accessed on 23 February 2006].
[316] Ibid.
[317] Ibid.

provoke tensions and the arms race, aggravate interstate contradictions, national and religious strife."[318] Therefore, "Russia shall seek to achieve a multi-polar system of international relations that really reflects the diversity of the modern world with its great variety of interests."[319]

Clearly, Russia here takes issue with the NATO bombings of Kosovo, which were carried out largely at the behest of the US administration. Interestingly, the Kosovo intervention had a negative effect on Russian perceptions of Western politics that included intervention – even though Russia had consented to the intervention and in 2000 was still actively participating in KFOR alongside NATO. First of all, this suggests that the perception of the Kremlin and the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs may differ somewhat from that of Russian envoys to NATO. Second, it suggests that Russian participation in KFOR was also, though not exclusively, motivated by the wish to serve as a counterweight to Western – US – hegemony, as has already been mentioned in the previous section. Following these lines of concern, the Foreign Policy Concept of 2000 also warns that "[i]ntegration processes, in particular, in the Euro-Atlantic region, are quite often pursued on a selective and limited basis. Attempts to belittle the role of a sovereign state as the fundamental element of international relations generate a threat of arbitrary interference in internal affairs."[320] It is of course important to keep in mind that the Foreign Policy Concept is mainly aimed at domestic audiences and therefore differs in tone from official statements on foreign policy or actual foreign policy. Nevertheless, the underlying grievances that the Foreign Policy Concept 2000 expresses are quite obvious.

This renewed inward-looking turn that the Foreign Policy Concept advocates has given rise to speculation as to whether Russia and the West had come to an impasse. In her article "Russia: Still Open to the West?", Alla Kassianova analyzes the contents of the different concepts that were published throughout the 1990s and in 2000: the Foreign Policy Concept of 1993, the National Security Concept of 1997, and both the Foreign Policy Concept and the National Security Concept of 2000.[321] Kassianova traces Russia's changing attitudes towards the West as well as its national self-understanding

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[318] Ibid.
[319] Ibid.
[320] Ibid.
[321] Kassianova, Alla: "Ist Russland noch westorientiert? Die Entwicklung der Staatsidentität in den Diskursen über die Außen- und Sicherheitspolitik", in: Osteuropa: Zeitschrift für Gegenwartsfragen des Ostens, 2001, pp.1199-1218.

and concludes that, especially between 1997 and 2000, a certain disappointment concerning the interaction between Russia and the West has led to an increasingly Russia-centric approach to foreign policy.[322] She thus comes to the somewhat negative conclusion regarding the question in the title of her article. Specifically with regard to Russian attitudes towards NATO, Kassianova observes that

[t]he [Russian] perception of NATO – which is the centrepiece of the Russia – Western contradiction – has resulted in inclusion/exclusion logic between 1993 and 2000. The 1993 state discourse with regard to NATO (which embodied in this case 'Western values') was characterized by terms like 'cooperation', 'teamwork', 'upgrading contacts', and 'exchange'. Next to the EU, the WEU, the OSCE and even the CIS, NATO was considered a tool for security management in Europe. The 1997 text is characterized by a different tone. NATO is now associated with terms like "division" and "unilaterism". These associations peak in the 2000 documents in the complaint that "western institutions and forums with limited membership options" had been created. The official discourse shows that worries exist about the lack of capability of multilateral mechanisms in terms of guarding the peace. Worries also exist with regard to NATO's new strategy that propagates the enforcement of military actions in areas outside of the Alliance's borders and without a UN mandate. There is an attempt to balance the open antagonism towards NATO enlargement by stating that Russia is open to a constructive cooperation … that is based on due recognition of all parties' interests.[323]

In her final conclusion, Kassianova mentions the dichotomy that exists between Russia's wish on the one hand to be a member of the international system, while on the other referring to the difficulties that Russia encounters in that process. It is against this background that Russia's Foreign Policy Concept of 2000 keeps on referring to the "difficult international environment". At the same time, no suggestions are made to end Russian cooperation with international Western actors, as this could only have adverse consequences for internal Russian politics.[324]

Keeping this domestic background in mind, the "new quality" in NATO-Russia relations that emerged after 9/11 is all the more important. It also reveals that the aftermath of Kosovo had a greater impact on Russian security concerns than NATO-Russia cooperation in KFOR might have suggested. Moreover, the relative weakness of

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[322] Ibid.
[323] Ibid, own translation.
[324] Ibid.

Russia compared to Western resources continued to be of concern: "The threats to these tendencies [international terrorism, transnational organized crime, illegal trafficking in drugs and weapons] are aggravated by the limited resource support for the foreign policy of the Russian Federation, making it difficult to uphold it foreign economic interests and narrowing down the framework of its informational and cultural influence abroad."[325] For all these reasons, the offer of unconditional support for the US after 9/11 is all the more poignant. In fact, tolerating the stationment of Western troops on former USSR soil[326] was a step towards building a more sustainable and active relationship, according to one NATO official.[327] Therefore, 2001 was the most important year for NATO and Russia, rather than 1999.[328] The result of 2001 was the NRC, which represented a shift in agenda to "new" areas of cooperation, referring to all areas where the fight against terrorism took center stage. The fight against terrorism can therefore be considered NATO's and Russia's leitmotif out of which the NRC was born. Sympathy for the victims of the 9/11 attacks was genuine and unambiguous: at the ambassadorial meeting of the PJC on 13 September 2001, anger and indignation was expressed at the crimes committed against the people of the United States. NATO and Russia were united in their resolve to not let this inhuman act go unpunished. Finally, NATO and Russia called upon the entire international community to unite in the struggle against terrorism.[329] Six days later, at the ambassadorial meeting on 19 September, events in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia were discussed, marking a return to the regular agenda. However, the first hint of the change in NATO-Russia relations was made when the ambassadors announced that they expected consultations at an appropriate level in order to pursue intensified NATO-Russia cooperation in combating international terrorism.[330] From this point on, the war on terror became a firmly established topic of discussion at every meeting of the PJC. At the same time, throughout the remainder of 2001 and early 2002, this consensus was to give new impetus to the institutionalized relations between NATO and Russia. This was formally announced at the ambassadorial meeting on 6 May 2002, when preparations for the PJC

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[325] The Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation, approved by the President of the Russian Federation on 28 June 2000, http://www.bits.de/EURA/russia052800.pdf, [last accessed on 23 February 2006].

[326] It is worth noticing that a legitimate claim can be made that it is not up to Russia to decide whether or not independent and sovereign states like Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan should welcome US and NATO troops on their territory. See chapter 4 for more details on this issue.

[327] Interview with NATO Official # 3, 13 September 2005, NATO HQ, Brussels.

[328] Ibid.

[329] NATO Parliamentary Assembly, Chronology of Events: NATO-Russia PJC (through 2002), http://www.nato-pa.int/Default.asp?SHORTCUT=232, [last accessed on 28 February 2006].

[330] Ibid.

meeting of the foreign ministers on 14 May and subsequent meeting of heads of state and government on 28 May were the main topics for discussion.[331] The Rome Declaration officially implemented the NATO-Russia Council, an event that, according to Tony Blair, "marks the end of the Cold War".[332]

The working program of the NRC looks surprisingly similar to that of the PJC, except for the thematic addition of the war on terror. In a way, discussing the situation in the Balkans was replaced by discussing the war on terror while other topics remained the same. At the first meeting of the NRC on 13 May 2003, ambassadors discussed terrorist threat assessments, as well as future joint peacekeeping operations. Additionally, ambassadors discussed non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, international crisis reaction, rescue operations at sea, defense reform and military cooperation, and the situation in Afghanistan.[333] Those were the core topics that – as agreed upon at the Rome Summit – constituted the cornerstone of NATO-Russia discussions in the NRC. Variations and specifications on these themes of course existed: for instance, foreign ministers discussed the implementation of the NATO-Russia Nuclear Experts Consultations Work Plan with a focus on activities related to nuclear safety and security at the 4 June 2003 meeting. Also, the focus on so-called "new threats" constitutes a new theme to the agenda of topics for discussion. These new threats include areas that were not previously included in threat assessments dating back to the Cold War confrontation between two nuclear superpowers. Environmental protection, re-use of former military lands and improving water quality adjacent to military sites were some of the new security concerns that were discussed at the NRC foreign ministers meeting.

In summary, NRC meetings in 2003 and 2004 often revolved around topics that had previously been discussed. Though the joint fight against terrorism was considered "primus inter pares" as far as importance of issues was concerned, "old" topics such as non-proliferation, interoperability and even, from time to time, the Balkans, were still on the agenda: the ambassadorial meeting of 23 July was almost entirely dedicated to developments in Bosnia-Herzegovina.[334] Throughout 2003, the situation in Afghanistan was regularly on the NRC agenda, for example at the meetings of foreign ministers on 4

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[331] Ibid.
[332] Ibid.
[333] NATO Parliamentary Assembly, Chronology of Events: NATO-Russia (2003), http://www.nato-pa.int/Default.asp?SHORTCUT=372, [last accessed on 28 February 2006].
[334] Ibid.

and 5 December 2003. On 2 April, foreign ministers met for the first time in an enlarged format of 27. However, this in itself was not a matter for discussion; rather, the Madrid train bombings and the CFE Treaty were discussed.[335] Under the auspices of the NRC, NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer met with Russian President Vladimir Putin, as well as Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov, Defense Minister Sergei Ivanov, Secretary of State of the Security Council Igor Ivanov and members of the Duma on 7 and 8 April 2004 in Moscow. Key issues were NATO-Russia relations in general, cooperation in the fight against terrorism and curbing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.[336] On 7 September 2004 the NRC met at ambassadorial level in order to condemn the terrorist attacks in Beslan. The meetings in April and September 2004 once more stressed the post-2001 common denominator between NATO and Russia: the fight against terrorism.

3.4. Outcomes of the NRC: recent fields of cooperation

As one NATO official has pointed out, the implementation of the NRC, though a big step forward, did not wipe out all mistrust between NATO and Russia.[337] It did, however, mark a greater turning point in relations between the two actors than any other event of the 1990s. The fight against terrorism has been at the top of the NATO-Russia agenda ever since the Rome summit; it constitutes the leitmotif and sets the broad themes, as well as commanding the bulk of time and political capital that both actors invest in their cooperation.[338] The same official also observed, however, that political dialogues is still difficult, and even conspicuously absent, as was the case during 2002 when the "new quality" in NATO-Russia relations had yet to be absorbed by both sides.[339] The main difficulty, according to the same NATO official, is making Russia feel that it is "a part" of NATO culture, and therefore, a foundation for practical cooperation had to be established.[340] However, for this very same reason, raising confrontational issues was difficult and more often than not avoided. Only in 2005 did this change and discussion was opened up to include topics that were previously considered too difficult[341] – certainly also a result of the Istanbul summit and the Action Plan on Terrorism. The framework for practical cooperation discussed above is

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[335] Ibid.
[336] Ibid.
[337] Interview with NATO Official #3, 16 September 2005, NATO HQ, Brussels.
[338] Ibid.
[339] Ibid.
[340] Ibid.
[341] Ibid.

characterized by a couple of especially prominent features, namely, interoperability, theatre missile defense, air transport and defense[342], and most particularly, joint operations at sea in Operation Active Endeavour.

3.4.1. Operation Active Endeavour

Operation Active Endeavour (OAE) is a direct result of NATO's resolve to fight terrorism. In the wake of the attacks of 9/11, OAE was one of eight measures with which NATO supported the United States following the invocation of Article V on 12 September 2001. The deployment, which was formally named Operation Active Endeavour on 26 October 2001, is directed by Vice Admiral Robert Cesaretti from Allied Naval Forces Southern Europe (NAVSOUTH) in Naples.[343] NATO ships patrol the Mediterranean, monitor shipping and provide escorts to non-military vessels to help detect, deter and protect against terrorist activity.[344] The extension of the mission to include non-military ships – implemented in March 2003 – is designed to help prevent terrorist attacks like those that happened off the coast of Yemen on the USS Cole in October 2000 and on the French oil tanker Limburg two years later.[345] Since 2003, NATO forces have monitored more than 75,000 vessels; some 100 suspect ships have been boarded, and over 480 ships have taken advantage of NATO escorts.[346] Initially created in order to monitor activity in the Straits of Gibraltar, which is widely recognized as a potential site of terrorist attacks, OAE was extended to the whole Mediterranean on 16 March 2004. Moreover, Mediterranean Dialogue countries[347] and EAPC/PfP partners were asked to actively support OAE. The 2004 Istanbul summit further enhanced OAE's role in the fight against terrorism, including through the support of partner countries such as Russia. OAE currently includes missions "aimed at preventing and countering terrorism coming from or conducted at sea and all illegality possibly connected with terrorism, such as human trafficking and smuggling of arms and radioactive substances, OAE eventually became more intelligence-based by sharing

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[342] One specific initiative in this area is CAI, the Cooperative Air Initiative. CAI is an initiative that promotes intelligence sharing through joint taking and viewing of aerial view photographs.
[343] Operation Active Endeavour, http://www.nato.int/issues/active_endeavour/evolution.htm, [last accessed on 1 March 2006].
[344] Operation Active Endeavour, http://www.nato.int/issues/active_endeavour/index.html, [last accessed on 1 March 2006].
[345] Operation Active Endeavour, http://www.nato.int/issues/active_endeavour/in_practice.html, [last accessed on 1 March 2006].
[346] Ibid.
[347] Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan. Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia.

intelligence and information gathered at sea with allies, to enhance their security".[348] In addition to enhancing security in the Mediterranean, OAE has also resulted in NATO having "accrued … unparalleled expertise in this field. This expertise is relevant to wider international efforts to combat terrorism and, in particular, the proliferation and smuggling of weapons of mass destruction."[349] OAE is a de facto NATO Response Force (NRF) operation. NRFs are highly specialized forces that can be deployed at great speed as soon as they are needed. According to NATO, "[t]he force gives NATO the means to respond swiftly to various types of crises anywhere in the world. It is also a driving engine of NATO's military transformation."[350] The force currently numbers about 17,000 troops, and it is set to reach full operational capability in October 2006 with some 25,000 troops. NRF will be able to start to deployment with five days' notice and sustain itself for operations lasting 30 days or longer if resupplied.[351] NRF was established after US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld put forward a proposal for NATO forces to become more flexible in order to better be prepared for non-Cold War interventions. NRF was formally launched at the Prague summit in 2002.

Ever since Russia signalled that cooperation in OAE might materialize, OAE has been considered the flagship of NATO-Russia cooperation.[352] However, Russia's participation in an operation that was initiated after NATO invoked Article V for the first time in its existence was not necessarily foreseeable. This, according to the same NATO official, was only possible because OAE figures prominently in the fight against terrorism. Since the fight against terrorism also constitutes the basis for the vast majority of NATO-Russia activities, both actual and planned, since, as previously noted, participation in OAE is politically acceptable to Russia. Interestingly, Russian participation in OAE has consistently been considered the flagship of NATO-Russia relations, even before anything material had actually happened. Of course, military cooperation takes a great deal of planning and is not achieved overnight, and a joint Russian – NATO exercise involving NATO and Russian ships did take place in November - December 2004. Also, Operation Sorbet Royal[353], which took place in

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[348] OAE, Allied Joined Force Command Naples, http://www.afsouth.nato.int/JFCN_Operations/Active Endeavour/Endeavour.htm, [last accessed on 1 March 2006].
[349] Operation Active Endeavour, http://www.nato.int/issues/active_endeavour/in_practice.html, [last accessed on 1 March 2006].
[350] The NATO Response Force, http://www.nato.int/issues/nrf/index.html, [last accessed on 2 March 2006].
[351] Ibid.
[352] Interview with NATO Official #2, 13 September 2005, NATO HQ, Brussels.
[353] See p. 31.

2005, though not specifically part of OAE, nevertheless highlights that search and rescue at sea, and cooperation at sea in general, continues to be the main area of interaction between NATO and Russia. Throughout the second part of 2004 and all of 2005, a large proportion of efforts undertaken to strengthen NATO-Russia relations focused on Russian participation in OAE. The phase of "active participation" was initiated on 17 February 2006, when NATO and Russia completed the first part of training activities preparing the Russian navy to take part in OAE.[354] For the first time, there were secure communication transmissions between NATO and Russian warships. Also for the first time, a team of NATO trainers was deployed aboard a Russian warship.[355] The training was held on board Russian cruiser Moskva, and personnel from the cruisers Putlivyi and Smetlivyi were selected to attend. The joint training consisted of classroom sessions and manoeuvres at sea, conducted by the Moskva and 2 NATO OAE ships.[356] The NATO-Russian crew members practised the boarding and inspection of a suspect vessel and transferring its cargo. The training was hailed as very successful, and NATO commander Sjoerd Both voiced optimism regarding the possibility of full Russian participation in OAE by late summer or autumn 2006.[357] Further training is planned for the coming months.

Overall, the statements made with regard to Russian participation in OAE have been positive. As with many other initiatives undertaken by Russia and NATO, an evaluation of OAE depends from what point of view one approaches the initiative. Those who see an extraordinary development in Russia joining a NATO operation that was initiated out of the invocation of Article V would contend that OAE is indeed a success. If OAE is seen as one step on the way to an institutionalized relationship between NATO and Russia that is at the same time underlined by practical outcomes, then OAE gives hope. Others are somewhat more guarded in their praise: one NATO official points out that OAE takes place on a strictly military level and that whatever actions are taken in OAE are not reflected in the political dialogue.[358] He points out that all visible outcomes of the "special partnerships" that NATO has with third countries are managed by the International Military Staff, not the International Staff. The same NATO official also pointed out that Russia was very strongly opposed to a similar operation to OAE that

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[354] NATO Update: NATO and Russia tackle terror at sea, 17 February 2006, www.nato.int/docu/update/2006/02-february/e0217b.htm, [last accessed on 2 March 2006].
[355] Ibid.
[356] Ibid.
[357] Ibid.
[358] Interview with NATO Official #2, 13 September 2005, NATO HQ, Brussels.

would take place in the Black Sea.[359] Rather, Russia continues to support the Black Sea Naval Cooperation Task Group (Blackseafor), consisting of Turkey, Russia, Ukraine, Georgia, and Bulgaria.[360]

On the other hand, another NATO official makes the point that OAE should be seen as a particularly successful enterprise because it combines two areas of special interest to NATO and Russia: interoperability and the fight against terrorism.[361] I would claim that in summary, the evolvement of OAE and Russian participation in it unfolded in a fairly typical way; while there is no question that Russian participation in OAE constitutes a step forward and therefore a represents a success, OAE also exposed the constraints within which both actors are operating. It took Russia three years to identify OAE as a possible operation for cooperation, and a further two years passed before steps were taken to make this cooperation possible. Therefore the final verdict on OAE and Russian participation in it is still open. The Russian nod to OAE can be seen as exemplifying the structural constraints that are in place for NATO and Russia: the fight against terrorism continues to be the roadmap used for any joint manoeuvres, as well as the most viable raison d'être for NATO-Russia relations.

3.4.2. NATO-Russia Action Plan on Terrorism

As mentioned earlier, the terrorist attacks on Washington and New York and the ensuing invocation of Article V for the first time in NATO's history initiated a "new era", not only in NATO-Russia relations, but for NATO's mission in general. Ironically, Article V was not invoked in a situation for which NATO was originally created, i.e. a nuclear stand-off between the two superpowers of the Cold War. Rather, the entire spectrum of "new threats" of the 21st century prompted NATO's invocation of Article V. Though there is a certain degree of irony to this scenario, it is precisely for this reason that Russia saw a window of opportunity for cooperation beyond monthly meetings of the PJC and peacekeeping missions in the Balkans, which, as I claim, were characterized more by a more or less benign side-by-side functioning than by actual cooperation. A NATO that had to adjust to a changed international environment was more acceptable to Russia than a NATO that was engaging in business as usual. It is important to keep in mind, however, is that the invigoration of NATO-Russia relations

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[359] Ibid.

[360] The agreement on Blackseafor was signed on 2 April 2001 in Istanbul, and thus predates the attacks of 9/11.

[361] Interview with NATO Official #3, 16 September 2005, NATO HQ, Brussels.

after 9/11 was largely made possible by Russian rapprochement with the US. Ten years after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Russian foreign policy was still to a great extent influenced by a great-power approach. The symmetry of Cold War with the USSR and US as equal poles, although no longer present, continued to shape Russia's interaction with the West. Russia's unequivocal solidarity with the US after 9/11 paved the way for improved NATO-Russia interaction.

The NATO-Russia Action Plan on Terrorism, signed on 9 December 2004 at the summit of heads of state and government on 8-9 December at NATO headquarters in Brussels, is one manifestation of NATO and Russia's resolve to work together in the fight against terrorism. The document closely resembles the Partnership Action Plan against Terrorism that was adopted by the member states of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) at the Prague summit of 21-22 November 2002.[362] The spirit of cooperation and the fight against a common enemy serve as the basis for both documents. The "strategic objectives" of the NATO-Russia Action Plan against Terrorism states that "[t]he NATO-Russia Council categorically rejects terrorism in all its manifestations … We stand united in support of UN Security Council Resolutions … and will spare no efforts in the NRC and other appropriate for a to protect our citizens…".[363] The Action Plan's aim is to "enhance capabilities, to act, individually and jointly, in three critical areas: preventing terrorism; combating terrorist activities; and managing the consequences of terrorist acts."[364] To this effect, NATO and Russia commit themselves to developing better mechanisms for intelligence sharing; to continuing efforts to prevent and respond to threats posed by terrorism and by the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction; to addressing threats posed by terrorists that are of a chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear nature; and to address threats to passenger and freight transport.[365] Other areas of cooperation that are specifically mentioned are the continuation of efforts under the Cooperative Airspace Initiative (CAI); the destruction of excess munitions and the controlling of transfers of man-portable air defense systems (MANPADS); the organization of a first-response conference with a special emphasis on Turkey, Russia, Spain and the US; and a

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[362] Partnership Action Plan against Terrorism, www.nato.int/docu/basictxt/b021122e.htm, [last accessed on 3 March 2006].
[363] NATO-Russia Action Plan on Terrorism, www.nato.int/docu/basictxt/b041209a-e.htm, [last accessed on 3 March 2006].
[364] Ibid.
[365] Ibid.

concerted effort to control and stabilize the situation in Afghanistan with a particular emphasis on countering the narcotics industry.[366]

In order to put these plans into action, NATO and Russia refer to cooperation within the framework of Operation Active Endeavour and increased efforts to improve the armed forces' capabilities to work together, particularly through Russia's accession to the Partnership for Peace Status of Forces Agreement (PfP SOFA). The SOFA Agreement[367], which Russia joined on 22 April 2005, provides a legal framework that regulates peacekeeping missions and anti-terrorist measures. Furthermore, areas such as civil emergency planning, interoperability of civil and military response teams, and scientific cooperation are stressed as being vital in the fight against terrorism.[368] Finally, NATO and Russia have put their own efforts in the fight against terrorism within a broader international framework:

NRC cooperation in the struggle against terrorism shall seek to complement and enhance other efforts underway in the UN and elsewhere in the international community, with a view to providing added value and avoiding duplication of efforts. The activities listed in the NRC Action Plan on Terrorism will complement other initiatives in combating terrorism that the member states of the NRC are or may be pursuing with third state in other fora. The member states of the NRC shall contribute actively to the implementation of the Partnership Action Plan on Terrorism (PAP-T), and brief the EAPC periodically on the implementation of the NRC Action Plan on Terrorism. Where appropriate, the NRC may consider opening up its own initiatives for participation by the broader EAPC community.[369]

The NATO-Russia Action Plan on Terrorism is indicative of priorities that both parties have set for themselves since the beginning of the 21st century. While the fight against terrorism on the one hand serves as a tie that binds NATO and Russia together, it may conversely also run the risk of being the smallest common denominator. As mentioned above, the NATO-Russia Action Plan on Terrorism strongly resembles in content and intention NATO's Partnership Action Plan against Terrorism, which was agreed upon by the EAPC two years earlier. How Russia – also a member of the EAPC – fits into the

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[366] Ibid.
[367] Agreement among the states parties to NATO and the other states participating in PfP regarding the status of their forces (SOFA), http://www.nato.int/docu/basictxt/b950619a.htm, [last accessed on 3 March 2006].
[368] NATO-Russia Action Plan on Terrorism, www.nato.int/docu/basictxt/b041209a-e.htm, [last accessed on 3 March 2006].
[369] Ibid.

overall structure that surrounds the fight against terrorism is therefore an interesting question. Here, too, different ways of interpreting the current situation lead to different assessments. The claim that "any news is good news" as far as interaction between NATO and Russia is concerned certainly holds some validity. Areas like confidence-building and interoperability benefit especially from guarded but steady rapprochement. However, both confidence-building and interoperability should be seen as steps on the way to a more effective cooperation. If interaction remains confined to these measures, then they eventually lose their original meaning. Other analysts would contend that 15 years after the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russia and NATO have spent enough time on confidence-building and should therefore be able to engage in ever-closer cooperation through actual joint operations. Operation Active Endeavour is one such operation, but the hype that surrounded it suggests that OAE might be the only joint operation that NATO and Russia will engage in for the time being. Both OAE and the NATO-Russia Action Plan on Terrorism are indicative of what I refer to as structural confines within which NATO and Russia operate: cooperation exists until a point is reached where either one side or the other – mostly Russia – finds it difficult to invest into further exchange. Unforeseen events, both in a negative – the Kosovo crisis – and in a positive sense – 9/11 – continue to shape NATO-Russia interaction much more than any efforts aimed at institutionalizing the relationship. There are a several other activities outside of OAE and the NATO-Russia Action Plan on Terrorism that support this claim, most of which have already been mentioned at various points in this chapter.

3.4.3. Other initiatives

"Hot topics" outside of the NATO-Russia Action Plan on Terrorism and OAE are a mixture of old and new. They range from air transport to missile defense, including both theatre missile defense and the protection of troops in combat.[370] Furthermore, NATO and Russia participate in an information exchange through the Cooperative Airspace Initiative – joint releasing of aerial view photographs – in order to prevent terrorist attacks. The single most important topic, however, remains interoperability between NATO and Russian troops. Interoperability issues range from highly specialized military-to-military interaction to rather simple everyday problems. For example, the language barriers that exist between NATO troops and Russian troops constitute a real challenge to any joint activities. Therefore, language training is offered to higher NATO

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[370] Interview with NATO Official #2, 13 September 2005, NATO HQ, Brussels.

and Russian personnel in order to overcome basic language issues. The NATO School at Oberammergau, Germany, plays an important role in providing education to NATO- and non-NATO nations. The official NATO school mission is to provide a "key training facility on the operational level. Since 1953, the NATO School trains and educates members of the Alliance as well as from Partner nations."[371] Courses such as "Multinational Crisis Management" aim at providing "a forum for staff officers from NATO, PfP partners and Mediterranean Dialogue Countries in which to introduce and extend their understanding of NATO decision making and staffing process applicable to Crisis Management."[372] According to one NATO official, institutionalizing educational efforts both ways is a declared goal for the coming year. This means that NATO procedures would become an integral part of military education in Russia. Even though this is a long-term process, initial steps towards realizing this project are undertaken at present.[373] Along similar lines, a NATO-sponsored program exists that focuses on retraining demobilized Russian military personnel and making their transition to the civilian sector easier.[374]

Furthermore, codes of procedure and conduct have to be assimilated and standardized for joint missions to be possible. In practice this largely means that Russia follows NATO procedures.[375] Other issues pertaining to interoperability include taking stock of ammunition, weapons and heavy machinery; the sharing of logistics and intelligence and joint training of troops.[376] Furthermore, an issue that NATO has consistently pushed with regard to countries in transition towards democracy is military reform. Reform efforts include areas such as civilian control over the military, disposal of old military equipment, and environmental issues pertaining to the military. Finally, observer status has been granted to both NATO and Russia in order for them to familiarize themselves with working processes of the other side.[377] In total, close to 70 such measures were taken in 2005, with a further 50 scheduled to take place in 2006.[378] One of the most valuable outcomes of all these procedures continues to be the "lessons learned"; i.e. the

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[371] About NATO School, http://www.natoschool-shape.de/internet_ns/ns_body.htm, [last accessed on 8 March 2006].
[372] NATO School Academic Course Guide, http://www.natoschool-shape.de/internet_courses/ courses_guide.htm, [last accessed on 8 March 2006].
[373] Interviews with NATO Official #1, NATO Military Liaison Mission, 17 and 21 March 2005, Moscow.
[374] Speech by the NATO Secretary General, http://www.nato.int/docu/speech/2005/s050624a.htm, [last accessed on 8 March 2006].
[375] Interview with NATO Official #2, 13 September 2005, NATO HQ, Brussels.
[376] Ibid.
[377] Ibid.
[378] Ibid.

reports on joint activities that include assessments of positive and negative features of those activities. These reports are used to plan future joint activities.

In 2005, one prestigious project had to be put on hold: in a further effort to develop interoperable troops, NATO was to pursue a program of cooperation with the Russian 15th Motorised Rifle Brigade in Samara in order to enhance interoperability and ultimately enable efficient anti-terror coalitions.[379] A NATO fact-finding delegation visited the 15th brigade from 17 to 21 March 2005. The NATO delegates inspected brigade weaponry, technology and communication equipment, observed troop drills, and also attended a brigade seminar. However, since the March 2005 visit of NATO personnel, the Samara project has officially been put on hold until 2008 – and unofficially it is not clear whether it will be resumed. One NATO official's explanation for this delay was low political commitment; as the Samara project would not have a high profile that could immediately be hailed as a great success.[380] Additionally, as with many other projects, funding is an issue, both on NATO and on Russia's side.[381] Therefore, the Samara project, unlike Operation Active Endeavour, has not reached active status as yet and it remains to be seen whether capabilities and political commitment will be mobilized in order to reactivate the project.

3.5. Chapter summary and conclusion

In his speech on 24 June 2005 in Moscow, NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer summarizes the accomplishments of the NRC:

[The goal of the NRC] was a bold one: to achieve a qualitatively new relationship between NATO and the Russian Federation, aimed at 'achieving a lasting and inclusive peace in the Euro-Atlantic area on the principles of democracy and cooperative security' … For the past three years, the NATO – Russia Council has made significant progress toward making this vision a reality. We have intensified our cooperation in preventing, combating and managing the consequences of terrorism, as evidenced by the far-reaching NATO – Russia Action Plan on Terrorism approved by our Foreign Ministers last December. Russia has offered practical support to NATO's mission in Afghanistan, and more recently, a contribution to our anti-terrorist naval patrols in the Mediterranean Sea. Cooperation among our military forces progresses very well … Efforts to enhance the levels of interoperability among our soldiers …

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[379] Speech by the NATO Secretary General, http://www.nato.int/docu/speech/2005/s050624a.htm, [last accessed on 8 March 2006].
[380] Interview with NATO Official #2, 13 September 2005, NATO HQ, Brussels.
[381] Ibid.

have made steady progress, making us more able with each passing day to translate words into concrete joint actions.[382]

De Hoop Scheffer also praises the political importance of the NRC, in addition to the achievements that have been made in technical cooperation: "… consultations on the Balkans have resulted in a joint initiative to promote improved border controls in the region … discussions of Afghanistan have led us to explore a new NRC initiative to combat illegal trafficking in narcotics …".[383]

De Hoop Scheffer's assessment is exemplary for most official analyses pertaining to NATO-Russia relations, especially since the implementation of the NRC. Praise is often lavishly bestowed on achievements of NATO-Russia cooperation; sometimes even before anything substantial has actually happened. Again, this phenomenon certainly has to be seen within the historical context. However, disappointment often follows overwhelming praise. This becomes evident in the second part of the Secretary General's speech: he warns against setbacks, or rather against the NATO-Russia partnership not being used to its full potential because of old stereotypes that get in the way of building an ever-closer cooperation. In de Hoop Scheffer's words:

[t]he bold forward-looking agenda that I have just described, as important as it is, is only part of the NATO – Russia relationship. Just as important as looking toward the challenges of the future is a frank treatment of the legacy of an often difficult past. If we are to build a true partnership, it must be based on trust. Trust between genuine partners, working to develop common solutions to shared challenges. Trust in a shared vision of a common future. NATO and Russia have made considerable progress toward building a genuine, sustainable partnership over the past four years. Yet public perception in Russia, including in much of the political elite, do not seem to reflect this reality. Too many still seem to cling to the past … During a telephone poll taken … 71% of listeners agreed with the statement 'NATO is an aggressive military bloc'. Well, not the NATO that I am in charge of.[384]

De Hoop Scheffer here touches upon a key issue that constitutes this dissertation's research interest. The NATO Secretary General himself concedes that there are two sides to NATO-Russia cooperation. One "public" side that prompts the above-

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[382] Speech by the NATO Secretary General, http://www.nato.int/docu/speech/2005/s050624a.htm, [last accessed on 8 March 2006].
[383] Ibid.
[384] Ibid.

mentioned praise when new measures of cooperation are introduced, for example the Action Plan against Terrorism or Operation Active Endeavour, and then a less agreeable side that appears every so often when points of contention emerge that prevent the two actors from finding a mutually satisfactory solution. More often than not, this is a result not so much of open conflict but rather of residual misunderstandings and tensions between NATO and Russia. In accordance with my first hypothesis, NATO and Russia have not fully managed to distance themselves from systemic constraints. Rather, these constraints continue to influence the development of their relationship. De Hoop Scheffer offers his views on why that is the case: Russian perceptions of NATO, and the persisting perception of NATO as an anti-Russian alliance. While Russian domestic politics certainly are an explanatory variable with regard to how Russia approaches NATO, it is not the only one.

Throughout this chapter I have attempted to demonstrate why and under what circumstances NATO-Russia relations developed in a positive or in a negative way. Firstly, NATO-Russia relations are not a one-way street: actions and perceptions of the other side's actions and intentions matter on both sides. Secondly, those perceptions and actions are still very much connected to the structures that were in place when NATO was created. Thirdly, and returning to the conclusions that were reached in chapter 2, theoretically speaking, neither a realist nor a constructivist approach can offer a watertight explanation for why NATO-Russia relations have developed the way that they have. Structural realism introduced by Kenneth Waltz only shifts the focus away from human nature to the structures that humans and their states interact in. The argument put forward in chapter 2, however, is that a neorealist approach does not adequately reflect NATO – Russia interaction for the simple reason that the two actors first of all do interact, and second, they are not engaged in a constant struggle to subjugate each other. On the other hand, an explanation that would privilege norm convergence over other forms of interaction also does not capture the relationship between NATO and Russia, as explained in chapter 2. I will now further elaborate on the NATO-Russia partnership using a specific case study: NATO-Russia interaction over Central Asia, as well providing an explanatory analysis of how this interaction may reflect on the overall relationship.

4. Case Study: NATO and Russian interests and politics in Central Asia

4.1. Introduction & choice of case study

As I have shown in the previous chapters, NATO-Russia interaction often entails the two actors getting involved with third parties or taking on "out-of-area" issues. Joint operations such as Operation Active Endeavour and joint action plans such as the NATO-Russia Action Plan against Terrorism are meant to ensure the security of NATO member and partner states by engaging in peace-keeping missions or by stabilizing regions that lie outside of NATO's or Russia's territory. The concept of out-of-area itself has remained in flux throughout NATO's history and is continuously redefined, taking into account developments like enlargement or different peace-keeping missions. The manifold partnerships that NATO has engaged in since the end of the Cold War further diffuses the geographical boundaries of NATO's "sphere of interest". NATO's open door concept implies that countries that are currently not members might gain membership in the future, provided they fulfil certain geographical and political requirements. In short, NATO does not exist within a vacuum, but rather is defined and re-defined with reference to the actions it undertakes concerning not only member and partner countries, but also third countries. The same is true for the relationship that NATO and Russia have engaged in: the two landmark events that have shaped this relationship, Kosovo and 9/11, both originated from outside events that primarily had nothing to do with the way NATO and Russia interact. Even so, the aftermaths of both Kosovo and 9/11 have changed the nature – and outcomes – of the NATO-Russia partnership more significantly than any internal procedures and treaties negotiated by the two actors themselves.

Therefore, assessing a certain situation or process by testing it against the effects that an outside actor has on it should give further insight into the object of analysis. Conversely, the effects that the object of analysis has on the outside event or actor yields results that are equally important. The insights provided in chapter 3 will be corroborated with one such "outside factor" in this chapter. This case study will address an issue that is current and relevant to my object of analysis, but at the same time has no immediate connection to the internal workings of institutionalized NATO-Russia relations. I have chosen to analyze the politics and interests that NATO and Russia have vis-à-vis Central Asia and how those interests shape their interaction. This by no means implies that the two actors' interests, which shape policies towards Central Asia, are

necessarily always contradictory. The convergence or divergence of interests that both NATO and Russia have towards Central Asia will be assessed in detail, taking into consideration history as well as current political and security issues. There are several reasons why I have chosen Central Asia over other possible case studies. First of all, Central Asia is a region that is steadily gaining importance in terms of geopolitics, natural resources and geography. Historically a region of "great power dispute", Central Asia has once again emerged as a place of interest to the outside world. The tectonic shifts that the dissolution of the Soviet Union had set in motion also greatly affected the five former Soviet republics that emerged as independent states. Conversely, these five states continue to affect foreign policy decisions taken by the successor state to the Soviet Union, Russia. This in turn constitutes a second reason for the choice of Central Asia as a case study: since the region is likely to increase even more in importance over the coming years, there is a significant relevance to present as well as future politics that are concerned with this particular region. The fascination that Central Asia evokes goes beyond NATO and Russia – in fact, some analysts see a new "great game" already unfolding[385]. Even though "great game" characterizations should be carefully evaluated and not taken as a foregone conclusion, there is evidence to suggest that Central Asia will continue to figure prominently on the agenda of policy-makers in the West, and also in the Far East and in Middle Eastern countries.

Thirdly, my choice to use Central Asia as a case study is also the result of a process of elimination. Events and decisions that have shaped the relationship between NATO and Russia were very often the result of geographical disputes. Points of contention of a more technical nature, such as arms limitation and reduction were often debated on a bilateral basis, such as the ABM-NMD[386] Treaty controversy that led to serious frictions between the US and Russia. With the end of the Cold War, the US considered the development and deployment of a NMD system, and began to question the ABM

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[385] See Berman, Ilan: "The new battleground: Central Asia and the Caucasus", in: Washington Quarterly, vol. 28, #1, 2004/2005, pp. 59-70; Clover, Charles: "Dreams of the Eurasian heartland. The reemergence of geopolitics", in: Foreign Affairs, vol. 78, #2, 1999, pp. 9-13; Edwards, Matthew: "The new great game and the new great gamers: disciples of Kipling and Mackinder", in: Central Asian Survey, vol. 22, #1, 2003, pp. 83-102; Halbach, Uwe, van Scherpenberg, Jens and Schmidt, Peter: "Seidenstraße und Great Game: Internationale Politik und regionale Entwicklung zwischen Kaukasus und Pamir", in: van Scherpenberg, Jens and Schmidt, Peter (eds.): "Stabilität und Kooperation: Aufgaben internationaler Ordnungspolitik", Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2000. Conversely, other analysts have argued that the geostrategic importance of the region is exaggerated, especially with regard to the existence of raw materials: see Meyers Jaffe, Amy and Manning, Robert: "The myth of the Caspian 'Great Game': the real geopolitics of energy", in: Survival vol. 40, #4, 1998, pp. 112-129.
Menon, Rajan: "The new great game in Central Asia", in: Survival, vol. 45, #2, 2003, pp. 187-204.
[386] Anti-ballistic missile; national missile defense.

Treaty's value for strategic stability, whereas Russia adhered to the treaty's importance for international security.[387] Alternatively, technical issues were discussed in a broader forum, such as the CFE Treaty which ran under the auspices of the OSCE.[388] However, the debates that touched upon fundamental issues pertaining to NATO-Russia interaction more often than not concerned geographical matters. Tensions between NATO and Russia over the war in Kosovo escalated largely because of geographical concerns: as much as some analysts claim that "great power", "great game" or "sphere of interest" considerations should be a thing of the past, it is an undeniable fact that Russia's objections to the bombings of Serbia stemmed from Russian objections to NATO interfering in what Russia considered to be its sphere of influence, especially since NATO initiated the bombings without a UN Security Council resolution – which would of course not have been possible due to Russia's objections. Throughout the 1990s, Russia consistently feared losing influence over parts of the European continent, a concern that culminated with the war in Kosovo. The two rounds of NATO enlargement represent yet another high point in NATO-Russia tensions. Once more, geographical shifts in the European political and security architecture resulted in Russian anxiety and in heated discussions between the two partners. In the end, both rounds of enlargement went ahead – whether this was with or without Russian consent remains debatable.[389]

On the other hand, geography does not always have to be a divider between NATO and Russia. For example, Russia participates in NATO's Operation Active Endeavour, which also involves joint operations taking place outside NATO territory. Therefore, this case study will analyze a current, or potential "hot spot", expected to yield some results that are indicative of the actual quality of NATO-Russia relations. As mentioned above, the actual choice of Central Asia is a logical result of considering different alternatives. There are limits to geographical areas that are of interest to both NATO and Russia. In fact, some of the most pressing issues relating to potential geographical disputes between NATO and Russia have already been resolved. The great debates that characterized the ministerial and ambassadorial meetings of the PJC are finished; NATO has taken in the new east European states. The dispute over the Baltic States and

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[387] Senn, Martin: "A submissive nuclear power? Russia and the United States' national missile defense system", in: Mangott, Gerhard, Trenin, Dmitri, Senn, Martin, Timmermann, Heinz (eds.): "Russlands Rückkehr. Außenpolitik unter Vladimir Putin", Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2005, p. 153-202, p. 153.
[388] See chapter 3.
[389] See chapter 2.

their membership in NATO and EU is settled, though the effects on Lithuanian membership in both organizations on the Kaliningrad exclave continues to be a matter of discussion especially where economical and transit issues are concerned. Ironically, it is Lithuania's membership in the EU that creates more actual problems and not NATO membership as originally feared.[390] Furthermore, the end to the bombing of Kosovo and Serbia also marked the end to geographical disputes over the Balkans. Even though Russian troops were stationed in Kosovo until 2003[391], it was widely acknowledged that the Balkans were under Euro-Atlantic supervision: first NATO and then the EU. Both enlargement and the war in Kosovo have intrinsically shaped the relationship between NATO and Russia; therefore, using them as a case study would mean running the risk of analyzing effects of events that are by now obsolete.

Current issues for discussion are located elsewhere, geographically speaking. Some of the former Soviet republics, located to the south and to the west of Russia, are following Eastern Europe's and the Baltic States' example by seeking closer cooperation with European political and security structures. The various revolutions that have taken place in those states in the past couple of years have edged them further away from Russia and more in a European direction. Ukraine in particular enjoys – and actively seeks – close ties with the EU, NATO, and Western countries on a bilateral basis, especially with the US. Also, Ukraine is the only country besides Russia that enjoys a "special partnership" with NATO. Shortly after the signature of the Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security between NATO and the Russian Federation on 27 May, 1997, the Charter on a Distinctive Partnership between NATO and Ukraine was signed. The goal of this partnership, which was initiated on 9 July 1997, was to build "an enhanced NATO-Ukraine partnership"[392] – incidentally, the principles and areas of cooperation mentioned in this document closely resemble those of the Founding Act. As far as the European Union is concerned, Ukraine is a part of the recently devised European Neighborhood Policy (ENP), developed from the individual Partnership Cooperation Agreements between the EU and several partner states. Additionally, the Caucasian states, Georgia, Azerbaijan, and Armenia are engaged in constant dialogue with European as well as Euro-Atlantic institutions to varying degrees. All three

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[390] Interview with Alexei Salmin, President, Russian Public Policy Center. 11 March 2005, Moscow.
[391] See chapter 3.
[392] The Charter on a Distinctive Partnership between NATO and Ukraine, http://www.nato.int/docu/basictxt/ukrchrt.htm [last accessed on 17 March 2006].

countries are engaged in an Individual Partnership Action Plan[393] (IPAP) with NATO, although Armenia traditionally has strong ties with Russia[394]. Both Georgia and Ukraine are the most likely candidates for NATO Membership Action Plans (MAP).[395] Additionally, Georgia has been the beneficiary of a US project since April 2002, the Georgia Train and Equip Program (GTEP). This program is responding to the government of Georgia's request for assistance to enhance its counter-terrorism capabilities and address the situation in the Pankisi Gorge. This effort is meant to complement other counter-terrorism efforts and to increase stability in the Caucasus.[396]

The above suggests that the countries of the Caucasus and Ukraine have moved further in the direction of the European and the Euro-Atlantic security and political structures. Whether or not the Caucasus and Ukraine will follow the path of Eastern Europe and the Baltic States is still not decided, especially since the European Union seems to have put a – temporary? – halt on enlargement through the implementation of the European Neighborhood Policy which, unofficially, is supposed to stand *in lieu* of enlargement.[397] Therefore, Russia's neighbors to the south and to the west – the countries of the Caucasus and Ukraine - offer an interesting view on what the stakes are in an area where the interests of the US, Europe and Russia overlap. This is my last reason for not choosing the Caucasian countries or Ukraine as my case study: the diversity of interests emanating from Western countries and institutions, in addition to Russia's continued involvement in the region is only one side of the coin. The other side is that the Caucasian countries themselves are too diverse in their own interests and political choices in order to be taken as one group. Adding Ukraine to the Caucasus makes this endeavour even more complex. Whereas Ukraine and Georgia – albeit to a lesser extent in the latter case – have continuously striven to become members of the European Union and NATO, Azerbaijan and Armenia have their own legacies to overcome before they engage in new partnerships and alliances. Additionally, Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia are geographically further removed from the EU and NATO than Ukraine is, constituting a further obstacle to any possible integration schemes.

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[393] See chapter 3. In 2006, IPAPs were extended to Moldova (19 May) and Kazakhstan (31 January), making Kazakhstan the only Central Asian country that is engaged with NATO on an IPAP-basis.
[394] Ibid.
[395] Ibid.
[396] Georgia Train and Equip Program, United States Department of Defense news release # 217-00, 29 April 2002, http://www.defenselink.mil/releases/2002/b04292002_bt217-02.html [last accessed on 17 March 2006].
[397] Interview with Commission Official #1, 16 September 2005, European Commission, Brussels.

Generally speaking, the question of integration should not be given exclusive attention. In fact, models for future cooperation with the former Soviet states are increasingly moving away from membership options to options of "other" forms of cooperation. This does not imply that the two rounds of NATO enlargement in 1999 and 2004 and EU enlargement in 2004 put an end to any future enlargement schemes. However, cooperation plans such as the European Neighborhood Policy and NATO's multi-layered partnership programs suggest that alternatives to enlargement are being actively pursued. Even though objections to further rounds of enlargement are more openly voiced in the case of the EU, NATO too has no immediate plans to take in new members. Therefore, it is important to take a closer look at the existing partnerships and the philosophy behind them. Moreover, NATO's ever-developing partnerships and Russia's involvement – or reaction – to them further elucidates the state of NATO-Russia relations. This is particularly insightful with regard to the states of Central Asia. As opposed to the other possible areas that I have discussed above, Central Asia is a region where the larger geostrategic alignments are still in flux. Unlike former Soviet states such as Ukraine or Georgia, the states of Central Asia have not pursued an explicitly pro-Western course.[398] They have, however, increased in importance to the West, especially after 9/11 and with the onset of Operation Enduring Freedom. This chapter will trace developments that have lent increased prominence to the Central Asian states: Western interests, NATO's interests, Russian interests and how these intersect with interests that the states of Central Asian themselves pursue. The goal is to determine whether or not Central Asia is in fact a "contested" region where interests of Russia and NATO – as well as third countries – intersect and compete. Alternatively, they might not; and events that take place in connection with Central Asia have no impact on NATO – Russia relations at all. Both cases would be indicative of the current state of relations between the two actors: if NATO and Russia clash over issues pertaining to the central Asian states then there is evidence to suggest that a confrontational aspect of NATO-Russia relations is still observable. On the other hand, coinciding interests and complementary policies would indicate that a cooperative approach is in place. A third possibility, of course, would be that neither cooperation nor confrontation over Central Asia can be discerned; in this case, conclusions will be drawn accordingly.

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[398] I refer here to the present governments and policies of both Ukraine and Georgia; keeping in mind that the large Russian minority population in Ukraine represents a force that is not necessarily Western-oriented.

One last caveat concerns an issue that I have already raised with regard to the Caucasus states as a potential case study, namely the allegation that the Caucasian countries are too diverse to be lumped together into one study. The same applies to Central Asia to a certain extent: different analysts caution against treating the five countries as an entity on political, historical and cultural terms. While this is certainly a legitimate claim, I will nonetheless refer to Central Asia holistically, in accordance with this dissertation's macro-level approach[399]. I will therefore briefly introduce the five countries individually, but for the purpose of this case study I will refer to Central Asia generally. Having said this, some of the republics are of greater importance to NATO and Russia than others, a fact that will also be reflected in this chapter. Finally, even though the timeframe of this dissertation – since 1997 – also mostly coincides with events that will be analyzed in this chapter, it will be necessary for completeness' sake to also refer to events that have taken place before 1997; these digressions will be kept brief.

4.1.1. Countries of Central Asia

Approaches to studying Central Asia differ widely. Some analyses concern themselves with Central Asia as a region, while others focus on individual countries[400]. Still others, seeking a comparative study, often compare and contrast the Central Asian countries with the South Caucasus. Rajan Menon notes that

The extant literature on the South Caucasus and Central Asia is vast, and its architecture has become predictable. A country-by-country coverage is the dominant motif; comparative studies that cover both regions are rare because scholars knowledgeable about both areas are rare. The result is an abundance of volumes rich in detail but weak in thematic and comparative analysis.[401]

Furthermore, Menon contends that "The eight states of Central Asia and the South Caucasus differ in size, population, ethnic composition, and political and economic

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[399] The significant amount of IR literature dealing with Central Asia as a region indicates that there exists a certain commonality with regard to the republics' history and their status as part of the former Soviet Union.

[400] For a comprehensive analysis of political and security developments in Central Asia since the break-up of the Soviet Union see: Allison, Roy and Jonson, Lena: "Central Asian security: the new international context", Stockhom: Swedish National Defence College, 2000.

[401] Menon, Rajan: "The security environment in the South Caucasus and Central Asia: concept, setting, and challenges", in: Menon, Rajan, Fedorov, Yuri and Nodia, Ghia (eds.): "Russia, the Caucasus and Central Asia – the 21st century security environment", New York: East-West Institute, 1999, pp. 3-25, p. 3.

characteristics. While the differences appear greater the closer one looks, the regions also share similarities..."[402] Though Menon's priorities diverge from this dissertation's, he makes the important claim that similarities exist between the different countries of Central Asia and the South Caucasus. Equally interesting is the fact that taking a macro-level approach to studying this region is not necessarily self-evident, as many experts of the region have focussed on analyzing the individual countries, rather than the region itself. As mentioned above, this case study will leave out the Caucasus and focus on the Central Asian states only.

The Central Asian region borders Russia to the north, Afghanistan and Iran to the south, China to the east and the Caspian Sea to the west.[403] Central Asia consists of five states: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. Central Asia, a "kaleidoscope" of nationalities[404], is inhabited by 50 million people: "The indigenous peoples … are predominantly Turkic … The Tajiks are not Turkic but are culturally and linguistically linked to Iran … Central Asia's economy reflects the region's role as a supplier of energy, cotton, and raw materials … Although there are industrial belts in northern Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, the region is not highly industrialized." Kazakhstan boasts the most ethnically diverse population, including the highest percentage of ethnic Russian inhabitants: 54% of Kazakhstan's population are Kazakhs, 30% Russians; the remaining population is a diverse mix of Ukrainians, Germans, and inhabitants of Turkic origin. The other four states, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and Tajikistan are characterized by an ethnic majority that dominates the population of their respective countries; however, a large percentage of each country's population comprises ethnic minorities. According to Menon, the high concentration of ethnic minorities living in the different Central Asian states that is characteristic of the region is a potential source of conflict. He puts forward the idea that

[The] demographic realities will not, per se, inevitably lead to ethnic conflict … Yet the risks increase when they exist alongside conceptions of nationhood that exclude, vilify, or threaten minority nationalities, or alongside hypernationalist and hegemonic regimes that invoke 'regional stability' to intervene in weaker states.[405]

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[402] Ibid, p.8.
[403] Ibid.
[404] Ibid, p.9.
[405] Ibid.

In Central Asia, there are two countries that compete for regional dominance: Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan, both of which dispose of greater power in terms of population and GNP than the other three states combined. Kazakhstan's high population of ethnic Russians is an important link that ties Kazakhstan to Russia, politically as well as economically. According to Menon, this could pose problems should Russia feel compelled to intervene on behalf of Russians in Kazakhstan, a concern that has often been voiced. However, there is no real evidence to suggest that Russia is actively engaging in a policy of intervention on behalf of the Russian minority. The other state vying for leadership in the region, Uzbekistan, could become a threat because, according to Menon, "[Uzbekistan] regards itself as the natural leader of Central Asia and has the largest population and the most highly developed sense of nationalism in the area…"[406] Martha Brill Olcott, senior associate at the Washington DC-based think tank Carnegie Endowment and expert on Central Asia, contends that the presidents of the Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, Nursultan Nazarbaev and Islam Karimov respectively, have a "highly competitive working relationship", a rivalry of sorts that Russia is incapable of diluting.[407]

The other three states do not have a realistic chance of assuming a leadership position within Central Asia. Turkmenistan is the state that is the most closed off to the outside world. This is largely due to the country's president, Saparmurad Niyazov, who has been in power since the disintegration of the Soviet Union in 1991, and his authoritarian leadership. Olcott describes Turkmenistan as being hidden behind a

…veil that shrouds political life and economic relations of the country for all but those with close ties to the country's president, Saparmurad Niyazov. While relations among Turkmenistan's political elite are said to be dominated by inter-clan rivalries, it has been difficult for outsiders to predict political shake-ups in advance… Certainly it is true that President Niyazov has little interest in tolerating any form of political opposition. Nor is Niyazov, who now prefers the name Saparmurad Turkmenbashi (or Saparmurad, the Head of the Turkmen), comfortable accepting the role of an equal among his fellow central Asian rulers.[408]

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[406] Ibid.
[407] Brill Olcott, Martha: "Central Asia's new states: independence, foreign policy, and regional security", Washington DC: United States Institute of Peace, 1996, p. 145.
[408] Ibid, p. 145-146.

Turkmenistan, or rather Niyazov, has consistently kept out of any pan-Central Asian organizations, economic of otherwise. However, relations between Turkmenistan and Russia have remained relatively good, according to Olcott.[409]

Tajikistan continues to be haunted by the 1992 civil war between government forces and various opposition forces, some Islamic, challenging the power structures that were established under Soviet rule. In June 1997, a settlement between Tajikistan's Moscow-backed government and the Islamic-led United Tajik Opposition was negotiated by the UN. However, sporadic fighting has not abated. Tajikistan continues to be heavily influenced by outside actors: Moscow, claiming to fight the Islamic threat has actively backed the Tajik government, and Uzbekistan, concerned about a spill-over effect into its own territory, also played a role in supporting the old government.[410] The current government under President Emomali Rahmonov seized power in 1992 and has been in power ever since, in spite of the unrest of the civil war. Elections in Tajikistan, including the parliamentary elections of 2005, have been repeatedly criticized for failing basic democratic standards.[411] This, in combination with the devastation that the country has suffered, continues to prevent Tajikistan from engaging in "normal" relations with other countries. Olcott concurs with this assessment and claims that "Although it retains the trappings of formal independence, Tajikistan cannot really be called a state in the full sense of the term… years of ongoing civil war have killed more than fifty thousand people and have driven thousands more into exile".[412]

Finally, Kyrgyzstan, like Tajikistan and Turkmenistan, is struggling with domestic issues that prevent it from pursuing a dominant role in the region. As opposed to Tajikistan and Turkmenistan, however, Kyrgyzstan does not have a history of violence as pronounced as Tajikistan's, nor is the political leadership as authoritarian as Turkmenistan's. However, a less than democratic regime is as much a problem of Kyrgyzstan as it is in Turkmenistan, Tajikistan or Uzbekistan. According to Olcott, "Kyrgyzstan's foreign policy is governed by two basic considerations. The first is that the country is too small and too poor to become economically viable without considerable outside assistance. The second is that it lies in a nervous and volatile

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[409] Ibid, p. 146.
[410] Globalsecurity.org: Tajikistan civil war, http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/war/tajikistan.htm, [last accessed on 21 March 2006].
[411] OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission Final Report on the parliamentary elections in Tajikistan 2005, http://www.osce.org/documents/odihr/2005/05/14852_en.pdf, [last accessed on 21 March 2006].
[412] Olcott, 1996, p. 120.

corner of the globe, vulnerable to a number of unpleasant possibilities."[413] Olcott describes Kyrgyzstan as a small, relatively resource-poor, remote nation "which is more likely to be seeking help from the world community than contributing to it."[414] Efforts were made by former president Askar Akaev to attract foreign business and investment, making his nation into "the Switzerland of Central Asia", through a combination of international finance and a special emphasis on "clean" industry, specifically electronic, in order to reduce Soviet-era industrial pollution.[415] Efforts have not produced results on a large scale, however. Kyrgyzstan's unpredictability was further highlighted when the "Tulip revolution" took place in March 2005: protests intensified surrounding parliamentary election results that supported pro-regime candidates, culminating in the storming of the White House on March 25 and in outbreaks of looting and destruction of public buildings in Bishkek. Akaev, who had fled the country on the 25th, eventually resigned and was succeeded by opposition leader Bakiev following presidential elections in July. The Tulip revolution was widely seen as a logical consequence and continuation of the 2004 orange revolution in the Ukraine and the 2003 rose revolution in Georgia. However, one year after the events in Kyrgyzstan, there is a widespread disillusionment with the new Kyrgyz government, as corruption and disregard for democratic principles remain widespread.

This very brief overview of the five Central Asian States is meant as a short introduction to the region, and as an illustration that the region actually does consist of five different states, rather than one large, homogeneous compound. Even though the five states do share certain characteristics, they each have their own history as well as their own experiences of the post-Soviet transition period – and though the verdict is still out on successful democratic transition, the region has, unexpectedly, gained in global importance.

The purpose of this case study is not the analysis of the developments that have taken place within the five countries, but rather an assessment of the outside powers shaping the region – or, more specifically, the region shaping outside powers' interests and policies. Of course, it is not possible to do this without taking into consideration events that have influenced Central Asia as a region; however, this will only be done where it

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[413] Ibid, p. 87.
[414] Ibid.
[415] Ibid.

contributes to understanding the NATO-Russia context. From this it follows naturally that not every country will be given the same amount of attention, as some countries – Uzbekistan for instance – have greater stakes in the international interest in Central Asia – than others. There are several issues that keep on gaining importance with regard to the international community's rising interest in the region. RAND experts identify the following as potential or actual destabilizing trends that may affect not only the region but the international community at large:

Ten years after independence, transitions from Soviet authoritarianism and planned economies to democracy and market economies have not been successfully completed in any of the states of Central Asia … The lack of real economic reform or sustainable development, the persistent centralized controls built on the foundation of Soviet bureaucracy, and the growing problems of corruption and public cynicism all constrain efforts to build effective and popular governance.[416]

These internal problems need to be seen within the context of problems that have the potential to further destabilize the entire region:

Conflict could result from a wide range of factors present in this part of the world. Potentially explosive ethnic tensions and irredentist border challenges, severe poverty, drug trafficking, and … the threat of Islamic insurgency and conflict across the border in Afghanistan could all separately or together led to fighting… Political, social, religious, ethnic, and economic structures are such that the risk of conflict spreading from one state to another is significant.[417]

At the same time, Charlick-Paley, Williams and Oliker concede that, given these potentially destabilizing conditions and "considering the ten years of predictions to the contrary, [Central Asia] has seen surprisingly little conflict since independence."[418] However, they continue to be a reason for concern, or at least observance, by outside powers, most notably the US and Europe. After this overview of the challenges that the states of Central Asia – and outside powers exerting influence over the region – are confronted with, I will now turn to outlining the institutional arrangements that shape

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[416] Charlick-Paley, Tanya, Williams, Phil and Oliker, Olga: "The political evolution of Central Asia and South Caucasus: implications for regional security", in: Oliker Olga and Sznaya, Thomas: "Faultlines of conflict in Central Asia and the South Caucasus: implications for the US army", Santa Monica: RAND Arroyo Center, 2003, pp. 7-40, p. 7.
[417] Ibid.
[418] Ibid, pp. 7-8.

the political landscape in Central Asia. This is of particular interest, as institutional arrangements are a reflection of how certain outside powers have influenced the area.

4.1.2. Institutional frameworks

Events in Central Asia are usually seen within a wider geopolitical context, even though experts on Central Asia repeatedly point out that doing this, in combination with treating the region as an aggregate in the first place, doesn't necessarily make sense. Rather, they refer to the individual economic, political and cultural characteristics of each country. Also, each country's individual experience with post-Soviet transition towards democracy sets the five countries further apart, rather than unifying them: the only recurring theme that has emerged is that democratic transition that has occurred is flawed and by no means completed. Still, this statement is of course not comprehensive as far as the development of the individual countries and their perspectives for the future is concerned. As I have pointed out in the previous section, an important amount of literature exists that deals with the five countries of Central Asia on a comparative basis, taking into account their similarities as well as their differences. Particularly when the analysis does not center on the Central Asian countries' experience of post-Soviet transition, the focus is often on the region as a whole and its importance internationally. For example, it is impossible to discuss political and economic events in Central Asia without taking into account the influence that Russia still has over the region. The different influences that have shaped Central Asia in its present form are also reflected in the institutional setting that has emerged since the collapse of the Soviet Union. According to Martha Brill Olcott, the Soviet legacy still determines certain aspects of Central Asian politics, foreign policy in particular: "Generally speaking, during the period prior to independence, the Central Asian republics were more acted upon than active in their international relations".[419] This resulted in some disarray when the Central Asian countries were suddenly faced with the dissolution of the Soviet Union: "The suddenness of the USSR's collapse pushed the new Central Asian states into the international arena before they had thought out what they wanted to do when they got there."[420] Olcott makes the observation that a rather haphazard process was set in place that saw the Central Asian countries seeking membership in as many organizations as possible:

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[419] Olcott, 1996, p. 18.
[420] Ibid, p. 21.

All of the Central Asian nations joined just about every international body that offered them membership. All of the Central Asian states joined the UN and the OSCE (and, in the process of joining the latter, extended the geography of 'Europe' right up to the borders of Afghanistan and China), applied for membership to the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, and began to talk of applying for membership in the EU and NATO.[421]

However, the "original" organization that has left its mark on post-Soviet Central Asia is the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) that was created by Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus on 8 December 1991 and joined by the remaining former Soviet states (except the Baltic states) following the Alma Ata declaration of 23 December 1991. The abruptness of the Soviet Union's disintegration caught the Central Asian states by surprise, as did the independence which came to their countries in December 1991. Whereas independence from the Soviet Union was actively sought by most countries of Eastern Europe, the Central Asian countries followed suit somewhat more reluctantly. One of the main reasons for this was that "All of the leaders recognized that their new states were beginning life with considerable disadvantages, not the least of which was the lack of experienced elites capable of developing domestic or international policies independent of Moscow."[422] Therefore, resistance to joining the CIS, which was seen by many other former Soviet states as an organization aimed at preserving Russian dominance, was more moderate. This might be considered a consequence of decades of submission to Moscow, which had resulted in the absence of institutionalized political decision-making structures, as well as the limitations that Moscow had put on executive responsibility.[423] Therefore, the Central Asian attitude towards Russia was somewhat ambiguous: on the one hand, the prospect of independence and sovereignty was certainly welcomed, but on the other, the necessary structures for building an independent and sovereign state were underdeveloped – underlining the fact that Moscow was still needed for economic and political matters.

Debating the role of the CIS in Central Asia is almost equal to discussing Russian influence in the region. Even though many of the former Soviet states realized that severing all ties with Russia would not be in their best interests, reservations about Russian interference have shaped and continue to shape attitudes in non-Russian CIS member states, including the Central Asian countries. The most prominent issue where

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[421] Ibid, p. 23.
[422] Ibid, p. 4.
[423] Ibid, p.4-5.

this duality of interests becomes obvious is in the area of privileged economic ties to Russia: "…none of the republic leaders understood that the end of the USSR and the old order meant the end of the old economic ties, including the Soviet-era inter-republican linkages that had benefited their particular republics by supplying, among other things, cheap grain and energy. Now each republic, and most prominently Russia, would attempt to redefine these links to maximize its own national interests."[424] This ambivalence is also reflected in the way the CIS has performed since it was created in 1991. The general verdict on the CIS is that it has not achieved a great deal. Rajan Menon argues that this is largely due to the attitudes of the CIS members that are not Russian:

The conviction is widespread that Russia has not truly reconciled itself to [the former Soviet republics'] independence and that it is plotting its return – if not as an empire that rules, then as a hegemon that defines the parameters of foreign policy. This explains, for example, the guarded view that many … states take towards the CIS, which – no matter how unsuccessful it has been – is generally seen as a means to continue Russian control.[425]

Therefore, consensus-building and decisions to move forward with joint projects mostly did not materialize. Both in economic and military terms, the CIS has no major projects to boast; rather, bilateral agreements between Russia and individual former Soviet states are the norm.

An effort to integrate the CIS countries militarily was undertaken with the plan to develop a formal alliance in the Caucasus and Central Asia through the CIS framework in the form of the Tashkent Collective Security Agreement of 15 May 1992. This agreement, officially known as Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) was originally signed by Russia, the Central Asian states minus Turkmenistan and Armenia, and was subsequently joined by Georgia, Belarus and Azerbaijan. However, the multilateral approach that the CSTO propounded did not materialize. The "grand visions" of various CIS theater commands that were developed by the CIS Joint Staff have collapsed.[426] Roy Allison summarizes the situation as follows: "Most CIS defense agreements have simply not been realized. The numerous bilateral treaties Russia has

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[424] Ibid, p.5.
[425] Menon, 1999, p. 13.
[426] Allison, Roy: "The military and political security landscape in Russia and the South", in: Menon, Rajan, Fedorov, Yuri and Nodia, Ghia (eds.): "Russia, the Caucasus and Central Asia – the 21st century security environment", New York: East-West Institute, 1999, pp. 27-59, p. 40.

signed with individual CIS states much better express common interests."[427] These common interests are expressed in bilateral agreements that were reached between Russia and Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Armenia, and Georgia.[428] Interestingly, the costs of combined programs of air defense have been borne by Russia entirely.[429] Conversely, the only peacekeeping operation in the CIS that was intended as a broad, multinational collective enterprise, and which did represent a joint military action, was the intervention in Tajikistan in 1992.[430] However, by 1998, the Russian 201st Motor Rifle Division was "effectively operating alone under the flag of the collective peacekeeping forces."[431] Russian efforts to extend this mission into an anti-Taliban coalition failed. The CSTO also underwent significant changes: at the CIS summit in April 1999, Uzbekistan, Georgia and Azerbaijan decided that they did not want to renew their membership in the Collective Security Agreement, leaving as the remaining member states Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Armenia. The CSTO continues to operate in this formation today; however, not unlike the CIS, the actual importance of the organization is questioned by many. Recent debates have been renewed with regard to a possible (second-time) membership of Uzbekistan, indicating that geostrategic realignments might be occurring; however, Uzbekistan has not yet indicated a final preference.

The presumption that the Central Asian states do indeed form an entity – while at the same time allowing for their differences – is further endorsed by the existence of yet another regional association, namely the Central Asian Cooperation Organization (CACO). In contrast to the CIS and the CSTO, the CACO originally consisted of Central Asian states only, thus deviating from the notion that all former Soviet states should be lumped together and be considered a general post-Soviet area. In 1991, the idea of a Central Asian cooperation organization under the name of Central Asian Commonwealth was initiated by the five Central Asian states. However, Turkmenistan later pursued a policy of isolation and did not become a member. As of 1994, the Central Asian Commonwealth was renamed the Central Asian Economic Union (CAEU), with Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan as its members. Tajikistan rejoined the organization, after having left it between 1994 and 1998. From 1998 on, the

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[427] Ibid.
[428] Ibid, p. 52.
[429] Ibid.
[430] Ibid, p. 40.
[431] Ibid.

organization's official name has been CACO. Finally, on 26 January 2005, CACO was merged with the Eurasian Economic Community (Eurasec), which also included Belarus. CACO has granted observation status to Turkey, Georgia and Ukraine. Most importantly, however, Russia joined CACO in 2004, thus entering an organization that was created to advance Central Asian interests. This suggests that the objections to Russian influence on Central Asian matters are less prominent than one might think.

This statement is further supported by the development of another regional organization: GUAM or GUUAM. GUAM was created in October 1997 by Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan and Moldova largely to counter Russian influence in the post-Soviet states. The organization was renamed GUUAM in April 1999 when Uzbekistan joined, only to withdraw from the organization in May 2005, effectively making GUAM a non-Central Asian organization. The absence of Central Asian countries in GUAM suggests that relations between Russia and the Central Asian states differ from those between Russia and the Caucasian states, or Russia and Ukraine. This also ties in with the opening paragraph of this chapter, where I introduced the notion that Central Asia, unlike the Caucasian countries and Ukraine, has not yet decided where their final allegiances should lie, making them a particular interesting case.

The intricate web of post-Soviet regional association further includes the Economic Cooperation Organization which includes countries like Pakistan, Turkey, and Iran, in addition to Central Asian states, and the Community of Democratic Choice (CDC), which was initiated by Ukraine and Georgia in 2005 and is made up of six post-Soviet states, some of them, such as the Baltic countries, already members of the EU and NATO. The final organization that I would like to introduce here, however, is of increasing importance to not only Central Asia, but also in larger geopolitical terms: the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), created in 2001. The SCO emerged from the Shanghai Five grouping of China, Tajikistan, Russia, Kyrgyzstan, and Kazakhstan that had been in place since 1996 and includes all five members of the Shanghai Five. Once again, Turkmenistan is the "spoiler", consistent in the refusal to join any association or organization. The SCO is the organization that currently receives the bulk of international attention. The SCO itself "is a permanent intergovernmental international organisation proclaimed in Shanghai on June 15, 2001 by six countries – People's Republic of China, Russian Federation, Republic of Kazakhstan, Republic of

Kyrgyzstan, Republic of Tajikistan and Republic of Uzbekistan."[432] The stated goals and purpose of the SCO are

[t]he strengthening [of] mutual trust and good-neighborly relations among member states; promoting their effective cooperation in political affairs, economy and trade, scientific-technical, cultural, and educational spheres as well as in energy, transportation, tourism, and environment protection fields; joint safeguarding and presenting regional peace, security and stability; striving towards creation of democratic, just, reasonable new international political and economic order.[433]

Furthermore, "As regards its internal relations, the SCO is guided by 'the Spirit of Shanghai', which is based on the principles of mutual trust and benefit, equality, mutual consultations, respect for the multifaceted cultures and aspiration to joint development, and with regard to external relations SCO is not a closed block and is not directed against any states and regions."[434] The Council of Heads of State has executive decision-making power and meets at least once a year. Annual meetings are also held at the level of foreign affairs, ministers of economy, transport, culture, defense, security, as well as general public prosecutors and heads of border authorities. The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation has two permanent bodies: the Secretariat in Beijing and the Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS) in Tashkent.[435] According to the SCO, "The Council of Heads of Governments of SCO Member States holds a regular meeting once a year to discuss strategy of multilateral cooperation and priority directions within the SCO framework; to decide on actual matters of principle regarding economic and other cooperation".[436]

Generally speaking, the SCO is built upon interests and concerns pertaining to Central Asia – both from the standpoint of the Central Asian countries themselves and from the standpoint of China and Russia. The SCO was created mainly to deal with the security issues of their members: they felt that cooperation on problems such as the rise of militant Islam, drugs trafficking, and border controls was needed. Also, creating a platform of discussion for the two hegemonic powers of the region, namely Russia and

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[432] The Shanghai Cooperation Organization, Brief introduction of the SCO, http://www.sectsco.org/html/00026.html, [last accessed on 29 March 2006].
[433] Ibid.
[434] Ibid.
[435] Ibid.
[436] Ibid.

China, was an important reason for the founding of the SCO. Indeed, Russia's and China's sometimes conflicting interests have stalled the SCO decision-making process; most notably in the wake of the attacks of 9/11 when the SCO was unable to define a joint strategy against terrorism – even though the two countries had signed the Treaty on Good-Neighborliness and Friendly Cooperation between the People's Republic of China and the Russian Federation on 16 July 2001.[437] However, since its creation, the SCO has increased its efforts to cooperate on sensitive security issues: one milestone was the creation of the anti-terrorism center established in 2003 in Shanghai; another was the first ever Sino-Russian joint military exercise, Peace Mission 2005, which began on 19 August 2005.[438] The SCO has expanded its working program to include issues that go beyond security, such as judicial and economic topics. The idea of a free trading zone has been put forward, but has not materialized thus far.

4.1.3. Interim summary

As I have shown throughout this section of the chapter, identifying trends and geopolitical shifts in Central Asia is far from easy. The dichotomy between seeing the region as a whole for geostrategic regions on the one hand, and taking into account the individual countries' differences on the other is an issue of concern for any analysis dealing with Central Asia. As mentioned before, I have chosen to approach the region as a whole, for methodological and thematic purposes; the brief introduction of the individual countries in the beginning of this chapter is meant only to give necessary basic information concerning the five states. Of much greater importance, however, is the discussion of the intricate web of alliances and interstate organizations that link the countries of Central Asia to each other and to third states. One theme that has already been introduced is the importance of Russian influence on the region – it is absolutely impossible to discuss local alliances or local politics in general without addressing the role that Russia continues to play in Central Asia, which is still much more so than in other post-Soviet states. The right to independence applies as much to the Central Asian countries as it does to any other of the former Soviet republics – a fact no longer questioned by Moscow. Still, when it comes to geopolitics and gauging national interests, a certain pattern can be discerned within the seemingly uncontrolled web of

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[437] ChinaView, http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2003-05/21/content_1482324.htm, [last accessed on 30 March 2006].

[438] Martin, Andrew: "Power politics: China, Russia and Peace Mission 2005", in: China Brief, vol. 5, #20, 27 September 2005, The Jamestown Foundation, http://www.jamestown.org/images/pdf/cb_005_020.pdf, [last accessed on 30 March 2006].

alliances and security organizations of Central Asia. Treating the region as the mere subject of great power politics would certainly not do justice to current developments. However, existing alliances and associations with certain organizations indicate that more than one foreign power is interested in getting involved in the region.

Within this context, Russia has already been mentioned throughout this chapter. Due to geography and history, Russia is in a position where it is not only an outside power getting involved in Central Asia, but rather a member of the Central Asian community due to a combination of history, economics and the ethnic Russian communities living within the borders of the five Central Asian countries. The complicated endeavors of the Central Asian states on the one hand to strive for independence and on the other to benefit from the positive aspects of Russian presence is indicative of the ambivalence that characterizes Central Asia and its interaction with outside powers and next-door neighbors. Considering the advantages that Russia has in influencing the region, it is telling that efforts undertaken by other actors have also been crowned by success. I have already mentioned China and its ever-increasing importance in the region. On the other hand, active involvement of the US has shaped the region, particularly since 9/11. Crucially, NATO has pursued a steady policy of involvement in Central Asia that is in line with its open door policy – and that has gained in importance since the attacks on Washington and New York in 2001. This constellation of intersecting interests once more raises the legitimate question as to whether or not a zero-sum scenario is currently playing out in Central Asia whereby the increased influence of one actor diminishes that of another. Once more, such an assessment runs the risk of being overly simplistic. Also, wherever there are third players involved – as it is in the case of Central Asia – zero-sum logic is harder to apply, because the interests of the outside players affect whatever interaction is taking place. Still, the interplay of involvement and interests that has been taking place in Central Asia in the past 10 years, and more especially ever since 9/11, tells us a great deal about the general positioning of those forces that have become involved. In the next section, I will first analyze how this applies to Russia and what the implications are, then I will go on to assessing NATO involvement in the region in order to establish an overarching analysis about how the roles assumed by NATO and Russia reflect on their overall relationship. I will refer to the institutional framework that I have introduced above, and elaborate on it, as appropriate.

4.2. Central Asia and Russia

Russia is, as I have outlined above, not so much an external actor, but rather a part of the region. The rather euphemistic concept of the "near abroad" elucidates certain aspects of Russian foreign policy, particularly Russia's attitude towards the CIS states, which significantly differs from its attitude towards all other countries. The concepts of near and far abroad imply that the CIS states are indeed viewed differently. Ever since the Central Asian states became independent, Russia is *de facto* and *de jure* an outside state that legally has no claims to participate in the internal decision-making of any of the five countries, no matter how important its own interests in the region might be. I have already provided an overview of the most important regional alliances as indicators as to where allegiances and strategic interests lie. Olga Oliker offers a closer assessment of the various national interests that intersect in Central Asia:

Because there is room for many states to gain from the region's potential and because regional stability is a shared goal as well, there will be high incentives to cooperate as well as compete. Strategic reasons to maintain good ties among interested third parties will also temper the likelihood of conflict. But because there is also little doubt that some will gain more than others, it is likely that competition will remain a significant factor – and may at times be fierce. Moreover, the existence of incentives for cooperation among outside powers does not imply that third parties cannot be potential sources of regional conflict in other ways, or that one or more of them will not get involved in conflict if it occurs for other reasons.[439]

The phenomenon of third parties getting involved in Central Asia, to the detriment of the Central Asian states themselves, has traditionally been associated with Russian foreign policy. Through a Western lens, the choices of post-Soviet republics are usually confined to alignment with Moscow, or alignment with another bloc, usually the West. Moreover, should a Central Asian country chose to "align" itself with Moscow, it automatically returns into the Russian sphere of influence, which leaves little room for the country to develop its own identity, politics and culture. Similarly, countries that choose alignment with the West and Western institutions are sometimes seen as "lost" to Moscow. Again, the reality is somewhat more complex. However, alignments of Central Asian states are quite impossible to define without taking into account the

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[439] Oliker, Olga: "Conflict in the Caucasus and Central Asia: implications of foreign interests and involvement", in: Oliker Olga and Sznaya, Thomas: "Faultlines of conflict in Central Asia and the South Caucasus: implications for the US army", Santa Monica: RAND Arroyo Center, 2003, pp. 145-240, p. 186.

presence of Russia in everyday situations. In the West, this is more often than not seen in a negative light. Oliker contends that

Russia, whose stakes in the region are historical, political, strategic, and economic, presents a number of complications. One is the fear among [Central Asian] states that this large neighbor, recognizing its increasing weakness and fearing a complete loss of influence in the region, will seek to reassert control while it still can, and will attempt to do so by force … Moreover, Russia's deep and fundamental interests in the region all but guarantee that if conflict erupts, for whatever reason, Russia will seek to play a role – and to have a say over the extent to which other outside powers can get involved."[440]

Interestingly, the very charge often levelled at Russia, namely that it continues to see international politics in a manner that is reminiscent of the Cold War, where the world was divided in to "our" bloc and "their" bloc, is now used to explain the larger geopolitical context in Central Asia. This suggests that looking at Central Asia as a region where larger geopolitical battles are fought is not uncommon and, moreover, that bloc-thinking patterns are widely present in international politics and not only confined to Russia mourning the loss of empire.

Oliker takes her criticism one step further: "Perhaps even more dangerous is the possibility that Russia, due either to weakness or some other factor, cannot or does not act to stem local conflict, or does so belatedly",[441] This, in turn, suggests that Russia is after all expected to play a special role in the region, and that Russia is expected to intervene should local conflict arise; when it does, however, it is very often accused of interfering in another country's internal matters. For example, the inability of the CSTO to devise joint policies and the Russian peacekeeping efforts in Tajikistan indicate that the dynamics between Russia and the Central Asian states are much more complex than Russia vying to regain control over the region. On the other hand, it is also fairly logical that Russia doesn't engage itself in the region purely out of the desire to do good deeds: "Whatever Russia's own situation, however, it has numerous strategic reasons to see [Central Asia] as crucial to its security interest. Russia's historical effort to control the region derived from its belief that this control would reap economic benefits".[442] The economic interconnectedness of the Central Asian states and Russia has already been

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[440] Ibid, p. 187.
[441] Ibid.
[442] Ibid, p. 190.

mentioned in the previous section of this chapter, and will not be elaborated upon here, as this constitutes a vast topic, requiring a whole separate chapter. Suffice to say here that economic ties between Russia and the Central Asian states are such that it is simply not possible for Central Asia to have viable economies without active Russian involvement.

Another key concern that relates to Russia and its security interests is the rise of militant Islam, as I have already briefly mentioned above. Long before the attacks of 9/11 moved the problem of militant Islam on the top of security agendas around the world, the influence of militant Islam in the southern parts of the Russian Federation was of concern to Moscow. This is especially true for the wars that Russia has fought in Chechnya: where the West saw an attempt to reinstate Moscow's control over the region by means of questionable methods, Moscow saw itself in the forefront of a war against Islamic terrorism.[443] According to Oliker,

Russia… sees a threat in the growth of radical Islamic political movements that seek to overthrow secular governments in Central Asia. With its own large Muslim population…, Russia fears that radical Islamic movements, if successful in Central Asia, will then spread to other states, including Russia itself, perhaps using Chechnya as a foothold, and that his will lead to further unrest and homeland terrorist attacks.[444]

Whereas the bulk of Russian attention has indeed been directed at the Caucasus[445], especially where rising Islamic forces are concerned, Central Asia too is considered to be a potential location for militant Islam to establish itself. This fact contributed to making Central Asia such a crucial area in the war on terror that ensued after the attacks of 9/11 – this will be discussed in greater detail later on in this chapter.

Finally, another threat to Russia's national interest, as well as to regional stability overall, is the proliferation of drug trade and crime that extends throughout the entire region. Svante Cornell argues that narcotics production and trafficking, as well as organized crime in the region were at its peak between 1995 and 2001. Since then, according to Cornell, organized crime infiltrating state institutions constitutes the

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[443] See chapter 3.
[444] Oliker, 2003, pp. 191-192.
[445] The hostage crisis that took place from 1-3 September in a school in Beslan, North Ossetia, further consolidated Moscow's tough anti-terror stance, although Russian incompetence in dealing with this crisis evoked widespread criticism abroad.

greatest threat.[446] Cornell notes that "The pervasive state weakness in Central Eurasia has enabled the gradual criminalization of state authority in the region … [this] undermines the prospects of building stable, prosperous states in Central Asia with a participatory political system."[447] This, in turn, makes for contradictions within Russia's policy toward Central Asia: "The Russians want to prevent unrest and violence, stem the flow of crime and drugs, and ensure that secular governments remain in place and in control, but these interests are at odds with their desire to maintain dominance, which requires that these states remain politically weak and dependent on Russian assistance."[448] It is largely this dichotomy that summarizes Russia's relationship with its Central Asian neighbors, as Oliker argues. Oliker's assessment is a fairly accurate example of the outside perception of Russia's role in the post-Soviet states in general, and in Central Asia in particular: that it is generally not completely to be trusted, and that Russia is just as interested in advancing its own interests as it is in promoting security and stability – sometimes even more so.

Olcott, Aslund and Garnett offer a somewhat more balanced assessment:

Russia casts a long shadow over most of its neighbors, for it has the capacity, should it desire to do so, to devote larger reserves of political, financial, or military power to an issue than could any other post-Soviet state. It is not enough, however, to measure Russia's advantage relative only to the assets of a potential rival; Russia's assets must also be measure against the demands of the country's many problems … Russia has not always treated its new neighbors with respect, but neither has it formally impinged on the sovereignty of any of them, preferring to use bluster and surrogates rather than direct force to get its way. Moreover, Russia's enthusiasm for intervention has waned as its own problems have deepened.[449]

Olcott, Aslund and Garnett claim that post-Soviet politics have largely failed and that the legacy of the Soviet Union remains: "The failure of the CIS has largely been conditioned by the fear that the states of the CIS have for one another; and which all of them have for Russia."[450] Still, that failure is not only due to Russia playing the

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[446] Cornell, Svante: "The narcotics threat in greater Central Asia: from crime-terror nexus to state infiltration?", in: China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly, vol. 4, #1, 2006, pp. 37-67.
[447] Ibid, p. 66.
[448] Oliker, 2003, pp. 191-192.
[449] Brill Olcott, Martha, Aslund, Anders and Garnett, Sherman: "Getting it wrong – regional cooperation and the Commonwealth of Independent States", Washington DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1999, p. 225.
[450] Ibid.

imperialist card, but rather to the mutual uneasiness that the states of the CIS share in each others' company. Again, this relates to the issue of interconnectedness that I have introduced earlier: the failure of the CIS, paradoxically, is also a result of the closeness of the post-Soviet countries: the wish for new politics was overshadowed by the reality of old structures – economically, militarily, politically – which thus have stood in the way of an innovative approach towards post-Soviet politics. While this problematic is often associated with Russia's inability to let go of its superpower status, it is in reality somewhat more complex, as I have demonstrated. This is not to say that Russia does not have a propensity to invoke its lost superpower status. Even so, this is only one side of the coin, the other being the above-mentioned interconnectedness, and the inability of Central Asian leaders to bring stability and democracy to their countries. Additionally, there is no real consensus among the successor states with regard to their own attitude toward Moscow, as Olcott, Aslund and Garnett explain:

The Soviet successor states have not yet resolved the question of what it was they were resolving; indeed, it is possible that there will never be consensus on the issue. The difficulty of deciding whether the Soviet Union was a colonial power or a unified state in which citizens could receive significant social mobility in exchange for ideological conformity has made the battle over how history is to be written hotly contested everywhere in the CIS.[451]

Indeed, the verdict on the Russian role in the region and in regional alliances continues to be hotly contested.

Olcott analyzes the melange of allegiances, alliances, and affiliations that is so characteristic of the post-Soviet states by differentiating between the ethnicities that are present in Central Asia. According to Olcott, ethnic affiliations were seen as a pragmatic way of advancing business interests: "With the republic's independence, the leaders of Central Asia's new states hoped to use their ethnic or national composition to attract international investment and support.[452]" Olcott identifies three main ethnic "cards" that the Central Asian states could put into play in the international arena: Turkic/Persian, Islamic, or "Asian-ness".[453] This first ethnic card is obvious because all of the Central Asian nationalities claim cultural ties with either Turkey or Iran; additionally, in four of the countries Turkic languages are spoken, while Tajikistan

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[451] Ibid, p. 226.
[452] Olcott, 1996, p. 24.
[453] Ibid, p. 25.

shares cultural attributes with Iran.[454] Secondly, according to Olcott, the Islamic card is played as a religious card rather than an ethnic card. This statement might have to be reconsidered depending on the future impact that the spread of Islam will have on the region. However, Olcott contends that the leaders of Central Asia played that card mainly for financial reasons, and to attract aid and investment from oil-rich countries. Still, in addition to these more materialistic considerations, it is a fact that all five Central Asian republics are historically and culturally Muslim, even though observance of religious rites varies widely throughout the region.[455] Thirdly, the Asian card was also played in order to attract financial investments from the economic powerhouses of Asia, in combination with the ethnic similarities that Central Asians and nationals from the Far Eastern countries share.[456] According to Olcott, the Asian card has turned out to be the least successful, mainly because of an unsentimental approach to business behavior on the part of the Asian nations who were unwilling to take ethnicity into account when agreeing on business deals.[457]

The conclusion that Olcott draws from this "card" exercise, however, is that in spite of efforts geared at using these three different ethnic allegiances in order to benefit from them, the "Russian" card is still the most prominent. Olcott contends that the realization that the Central Asian states came to after independence was that Russia was the only predictable ally in the region, especially taking into consideration security guarantees that only the Russians had so far been willing to grant them, for example in Tajikistan. She further argues that even though Central Asians are aware of the potential threat that might emanate from Russia, they also know that the individual Central Asian states may pose an even greater threat to each other, especially since violence in one state might very well spill over into another.[458] Therefore, she concludes that

Given the background and training of the region's current leadership, it seems inevitable that they would turn again to the Russians to protect them… should the need to make such a choice arise…. That fact suggests Central Asia's fourth 'identity', of a common Soviet/Russian heritage, which may well be the strongest 'ethnic card' of all. Not only did Russia shape the intellectual world and supply the technical training for all of the Central Asian elites, but it continues to remain a presence, even after the fall of the Soviet Union. Ties formed over long

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[454] Ibid.
[455] Ibid, p. 31.
[456] Ibid, p. 34.
[457] Ibid, p. 35.
[458] Ibid, pp. 36-37.

decades of shared existence do not disappear overnight, even if it took many of Central Asia's leaders the better part of a year to realize the fact.[459]

Outside assessments – in particular, Western assessments - of Russian influence in the region are not set in stone either. In fact, there seems to be a "majority opinion" that changes every so often, depending on the newest developments in the region. Since Oliker wrote her article, for instance, there has been a movement and a counter-movement with regard to opinions about Russia's ability to influence developments in Central Asia. For a fairly long time, the major debate – the one I have referred to in the previous paragraph – largely concerned itself with the negative effects of Russian intervention in the former Soviet states. In the mid- to late-1990s, when EU and NATO enlargement were in the process of being negotiated to Russia's dismay, the bulk of Western analysis focused on what was perceived to be Russia's inability to face up to the post-Cold War world, directly translating into open opposition to Western institutions interfering in Russia's "sphere of interest". The same discourse emerged during the second round of enlargement. The events in Georgia and in Ukraine, finally, also bore the marks of that same discourse – Russia unwilling to let go of the former Soviet states. Where Central Asia is concerned, this discourse is somewhat more complex, largely because the Central Asian states themselves, due to geography or history, have not opted in favour of Western institutions to the same extent that the former states located in the west of the former Soviet Union have, but retain fairly strong connections with Russia.

This of course influences the way Russian involvement in the region is seen, both from the inside and from the outside. I have mentioned before that this assessment has changed and continues to change depending largely on third power involvement in the region, as well as on developments in the Central Asian countries themselves. Throughout the 1990s, the most common assessment was that Russia acted largely as a hegemon, trying to maximize its own national interests, sometimes at the expense of the individual countries. This analysis changed drastically after the events of 9/11 and the increased presence of US and NATO in the region, only to revert again in the last year or so: recently, analysts once more see Russia as gaining in importance in the region – in combination with third powers. This brings me back to an issue that was introduced in the beginning of this chapter: in spite of calls to refrain from treating Central Asia as

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[459] Ibid, p. 36.

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a unified entity, this is precisely what has very often happened. Moreover, the recurring theme of Central Asia as region of strategic importance still prevails in IR literature. Thus far I have outlined the importance of Russia to the region. I will now turn to discussing how attention was shifted away from Russia as the main outside power that shaped events in Central Asia by analyzing how 9/11 and ensuing US and NATO deployment affected the region.

4.3. Central Asia and NATO

In the previous sections I have discussed how Central Asia might be considered logically to be following the political trajectories of Eastern Europe and the Baltic states, Ukraine, and subsequently, the Caucasian states. However, developments have occurred in a far less linear manner than this listing of individual states and regions might suggest. Also, towards what goal or along what path these countries are moving is far from obvious. Thus far, the path had been fairly clearly marked and entailed a rapprochement with Western institutions, such as the OSCE, eventually leading to membership in the NATO and in the EU. Whereas the case of Central and Eastern Europe and the Baltic states was a fairly straightforward one, progress stalled with Georgia and Ukraine. The case of the remaining Caucasian countries is still unclear, and most unclear of all is the case of Central Asia. What has become increasingly evident, though, is that extending membership to new countries will not happen automatically as it did with the Central/Eastern European countries and the Baltic States. This is not necessarily a negative development, but it does raise questions about what kind of partnership the West is pursuing with countries that are presently labelled "partner countries". For example, the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP) can be seen as an attempt to devise partnerships that don't necessarily lead to membership.[460] This is also true for NATO: there is only one country at present, Ukraine, that engages with NATO in a manner that could be seen as being part of the accession process. All the other partnerships programs that NATO engages in are not officially geared towards membership. Whereas Russia is struggling with the legacy of the Soviet Union in its dealings with the countries of Central Asia, Western institutions have approached them as complete outsiders. Geography does not permit an automatism the way it did for the western states of the former Soviet Union.

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[460] See chapter 3.

The question then is: what kind of partnerships is NATO pursuing with the Central Asian countries? Are these relationships developed to the detriment of Russia? In other words: has NATO involvement in the area lessened the importance of Russia to these states? And most importantly, what does NATO involvement in Central Asia say about its positioning, both in general terms and with regard to Russia? The fairly intricate institutional framework outlined in section 4.1.2. of this chapter indicates that extensive linkages between the Central Asian countries, as well as between the countries and Russia, are already in place. However, the quality of the different arrangements varies widely and does not necessarily adequately reflect actual cooperation. What, then, are the relationships that NATO has forged with the countries of Central Asia?

Before starting this analysis one caveat should be noted, concerning the duality of NATO involvement and US involvement in the region. I have alluded to the difficulty of making a strict distinction between NATO and the US at several points in this dissertation. On the one hand this is due to the fact that NATO's inherent structure accounts for US dominance. The ongoing debate about stronger European capabilities, including ESDP interoperability with NATO's capabilities is a testimony to this. On the other hand, NATO is very often perceived by third states as an extension of US policy and US interests, which has its roots in the Cold War and in the reasons for which NATO was created in the first place. The NATO-US duality is particularly important in the case of Central Asia because the new initiatives that have emerged recently are largely due to the US' increased interest in the region, with NATO following suit. Interaction between NATO and Central Asia had been low-key since the first wave of post Cold-War programs, in Central Asia's case, the PfPs. This phase of relative quiet ended on 9/11 and the ensuing war on terror. Since then, Central Asia has been moved to the top of the US foreign policy agenda. In order to be able to carry out Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), US airbases were established in Uzbekistan (Termez and Karsi-Khanabad, commonly known as K2) and in Kyrgyzstan (Ganci Manas). OEF began on 7 October 2001, and its initial military objectives included the destruction of terrorist training camps and infrastructure within Afghanistan, the capture of al Qaeda leaders, and the cessation of terrorist activities in Afghanistan.[461] I will return to OEF and the US's usage of NATO capabilities later on in this chapter. It is sufficient to say here that 9/11 was a defining turning point in the way Central Asia's importance to

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[461] Pike, John: "Operation Enduring Freedom", Global Security, July 2005, http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/ops/enduring-freedom.htm, [last accessed on 7 April 2006].

international relations was perceived. Therefore, NATO's involvement is also to no small extent a consequence of 9/11 and the US-led OEF.

4.3.1. NATO's partnership programs in Central Asia

NATO's diverse partnership programs that were developed throughout the 1990s have always included the countries of Central Asia. From the NACC to PfP to the EAPC[462], the five Central Asian states are considered partner countries by NATO. As outlined in chapter 3, the PfP and the EAPC constitute NATO's most important program or institutional structure for interaction with the so-called partner countries. Four out of five of the Central Asian republics signed a PfP agreement with NATO in 1994, the year PfP was launched. Tajikistan joined the rest of the Central Asian countries in signing a PfP agreement with NATO in 2002. Furthermore, the EAPC, created in 1997 as a successor to the NACC, is made up of the 26 NATO countries and 20 non-member countries that include prospective new NATO members such as Croatia, non-aligned Western European states such as Sweden and Switzerland, as well as countries formerly part of the Soviet Union, such as Georgia, and the Central Asian states. In practical terms, this means that NATO and Central Asia have a forum in which security issues are discussed. These issues include topics such as

crisis-management and peace-support operations; regional issues; arms control and issues related to the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction; international terrorism; defence issues such as planning, budgeting, policy and strategy; civil emergency planning and disaster-preparedness; armaments cooperation; nuclear safety; civil-military coordination of air traffic management; and scientific cooperation.[463]

Also, assisting partner countries with democratic reform, in particular military reform and civil-military relations, has always been one the cornerstones of NATO's engagement with partner countries. This was the case with Eastern and Central Europe in the 1990s; similarly, it continues to be on the top of the agenda of NATO's partnership working plan with regard to the countries of Central Asia.

This goes back to NATO's self-understanding as not only a military, but also a political alliance. According to some observers, it is only logical that NATO now focuses on

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[462] For a detailed description of the various partnership schemes, see chapter 3.
[463] The Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council, http://www.nato.int/issues/eapc/index.html, [last accessed on 5 April 2006].

Central Asia in an effort to encourage democratic change. Vahit Erdem, Head of the Turkish delegation to the NATO Parliamentary Assembly[464] argues that

The completion of transformation efforts in the Baltic states and in most Central and East European countries and the gradual progress in achieving a lasting stability in the Balkans have paved the way for a wider focus on the Caucasus and Central Asia … There is, then, a general understanding that the Alliance should and can do more for the Caucasus and Central Asia. The defining criterion in establishing or deepening relations with any given country in today's international relations is adherence to fundamental values, democracy and basic human rights.[465]

Moreover, Erdem observes an increasing Central Asian interest in the different Western institutions, which can be seen for instance in Kyrgyzstan's accession to the WTO in December 1998.[466] The most important fact to note, according to Erdem, is "the willingness voiced by all partners… to deepen cooperation with western institutions, among which NATO holds an important place."[467]

Whether Erdem's observations are correct is of course a matter of interpretation. I would argue that he is somewhat too enthusiastic in presupposing a unified interest in Western institutions on the part of the Central Asian countries. The important point that Erdem himself makes is that in terms of West-orientation, one has to clearly differentiate between the Caucasian countries and the countries of Central Asia, even though the two regions are usually lumped together in analyses, as well as in official documents. Thus, whereas Azerbaijan, Armenia, and Georgia have clearly indicated that their foreign policy orientation is geared towards the West, the Central Asian countries have not really committed themselves to such an orientation. Of course it is entirely justifiable to call for increased interaction between NATO and Central Asia, but that should not obscure a more realistic view. Overall, cooperation between NATO and the individual Central Asian countries does not extend much beyond PfP and the EAPC.

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[464] The NATO Parliamentary Assembly is the inter-parliamentary organisation of legislators from NATO members states and 13 associate members. The principal objective is fostering mutual understanding of key security challenges facing the transatlantic partnership among Alliance parliamentarians, About the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, http://www.nato-pa.int/Default.asp?SHORTCUT=1, [last accessed on 5 April 2006].
[465] Erdem, Vahit: "The Caucasus and Central Asia", East and West Studies, 28 January 2006, http://www.eastweststudies.org/makale_detail.php?tur=100&makale=194, [last accessed on 5 April 2006].
[466] Kyrgyzstan is until today the only Central Asian country that is a member of the WTO.
[467] Erdem, 2006.

Additionally, both Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan joined the Planning and Review Process (PARP) in 2002, a program devised to assist partner countries with the modernization of their armed forces.[468] Kyrgyzstan followed suit by joining PARP in 2004. At the same time as joining PARP, and with the encouragement of NATO, Uzbekistan considered extending its relationship with NATO to an IPAP. However, these plans were put on hold indefinitely after the events in Andijan on 13 May 2005. Uzbek security forces killed hundreds of protesters demanding the release of 23 locals who were charged by the government with being members of a banned Islamic group, sparking further protests in other parts of the country. The Andijan massacre constituted a turning point in how NATO – and the West in general – views Uzbekistan and Uzbek commitment to democracy, which in turn affects the institutional ties that are already in place or had been planned with NATO: there are currently no steps being taken towards extending an IPAP to Uzbekistan, nor is the Uzbek government actively seeking to change this.

Turkmenistan and Tajikistan have so far not indicated interest in IPAPs. Kazakhstan, on the other hand, appointed a military representative to NATO; and NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer spoke in favor of extending an IPAP to the country during a visit to the region in October 2004. The IPAP was finally signed on 31 January 2006, suggesting an affirmation of the "political will" on the part of Kazakhstan to build a relationship with NATO[469]. Nevertheless, in spite of Kazakhstan's IPAP, the status quo suggests that the institutional framework between NATO and Central Asia is presently characterized by rather low intensity and low commitment[470]. That fact does not preclude the possibility that closer ties will be forged in the future. However, at present it is most likely that rapprochement between NATO and the individual Central Asian countries will not increase much in the near future. There are several reasons for this assumption: firstly, geographical facts and the limits the US and Europe face in having an actual impact on the region. This also relates to the second point, which is the fact that NATO is likely to have reached its maximum limits in terms of members and will therefore almost certainly not extend membership to Central Asian countries. Thirdly, evidence has increased in the last year or so to suggest that any perceived pro-Western course of countries like Uzbekistan might be reversing. Fourthly, and possibly most importantly, the increasing importance of third actors in the region further

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[468] See chapter 3.
[469] Interview with NATO Official #5, 27 September 2005, NATO HQ, Brussels. According to this official, the political will is more noticeable in Kazakhstan than in the other four Central Asian states.
[470] Ibid.

suggests that European and US', and thus also NATO's powers of persuasion are waning in the region, even if concerted efforts are undertaken to extend partnerships to the Central Asian countries. Fifthly and finally, although still a manner of speculation, it might very well be possible that Russia's influence is again on the rise in Central Asia. The plethora of regional associations discussed earlier in this chapter, and most particularly, the ascendance of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, suggest that Russia continues to actively shape politics and economics in the region. What this means for NATO will be discussed in the final part of this chapter. I will now discuss the impact that NATO involvement has had in the area.

4.3.2. Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF)

As mentioned above, NATO involvement in Central Asia is closely interlinked with the US invasion of Afghanistan in October 2001 and the ensuing US-led OEF: ironically, however, OEF was not NATO-led, largely because the US chose not to call upon NATO, even though NATO had invoked Article V[471] for the first time in its existence. Instead, the US preferred to select specific partners for specific capabilities. However, claiming that OEF had nothing to do with NATO at all would be wrong: in fact, the majority of coalition forces that took part in OAE were sent from NATO member states. The United Kingdom, France, and Canada, all NATO member states actively contributed to OEF, in addition to non-NATO members Australia and New Zealand. Finally, coalition forces included the Afghan Northern Alliance, a coalition of Afghan groups opposing the Taliban regime. OEF was to serve several goals, all of them connected to preventing the spread of international terrorism, with which the Taliban regime had been widely associated. The immediate goal, the removal of the Taliban regime, was accomplished through OEF. Long-term objectives such as ending terrorism, deterring states from sponsoring international terrorism, as well as reintegrating Afghanistan into the international community[472] are still underway, and their success has recently been given mixed reviews.

NATO became actively involved in Afghanistan in the wake of OEF. Peacekeeping and reconstruction are implemented by the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) that has been under NATO command since 9 August 2003. ISAF was established in December 2001 through UN resolution 1386 and consists of roughly 9000 troops from

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[471] See Chapter 1.
[472] Pike, 2005.

35 nations, both NATO and non-NATO states.[473] Between 2001 and 2003, individual nations volunteered to lead the ISAF mission every six months. The first two ISAF mission were run by the United Kingdom and Turkey, respectively. The third ISAF mission was led by Germany and the Netherlands with support from NATO.[474] Since 2003, NATO itself has been responsible for the command, coordination and planning of the force, as well as for providing the force commander and headquarters on the ground in Afghanistan.[475] In this capacity, NATO's role is

to assist the Government of Afghanistan and the international community in maintaining security within its area of operation. ISAF supports the government of Afghanistan in expanding its authority throughout the country, and in providing a safe and secure environment conducive to free and fair elections, the spread of the rule of law, and the reconstruction of the country.[476]

Joint Force Command in Brunssum, The Netherlands, is responsible at the operational level for manning, training, deploying and sustaining ISAF.[477] ISAF has continuously expanded, both in terms of troop numbers and in geographical scope. The UN-mandated ISAF operates separately from OEF.

OEF is important in its scope and its goals. First of all, it has drastically increased Western presence in the region bordering Central Asia. Whereas the initial fighting occurred under US command, and not NATO's, NATO nevertheless became involved through its leadership in ISAF, resulting in a permanent NATO presence in the region. As far as the countries of Central Asia are concerned, however, this presence has largely been reduced to the airbases and over-flight rights that the individual countries have extended to the US and to NATO. Though the US has no base in Tajikistan, it has nevertheless negotiated an arrangement that allows US military aircraft to fly over Tajik territory and land in case of emergency, as well as to refuel on Tajik territory. Termez transit point in Uzbekistan was used by NATO forces, whereas the now-closed Karsi-Khanabad (K2) air base in Uzbekistan and Manas air base in Kyrgyzstan are components of OEF, and are thus unrelated to NATO. This suggests that NATO yields

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[473] NATO in Afghanistan Press fact sheet, http://www.nato.int/issues/afghanistan/050816-factsheet.htm#troop_contributions, [last accessed on 10 April 2006].
[474] Ibid.
[475] Ibid.
[476] Ibid.
[477] Ibid.

relatively little influence over the Central Asian countries, even though it is visibly present in a country neighboring the region, and is moreover likely to remain so for the foreseeable future. Much attention was given to Uzbekistan evicting US forces from the K2 air base in light of US criticism of president Islam Karimov's handling of the Andijan events. This move was widely seen as proof that Uzbekistan, counted upon as an ally in the war against terror, is reverting to an anti-Western, and specifically, to an anti-American course. In fact, the loss of the K2 base poses logistical problems to the US and OEF, leaving the operation with only Manas air base in Kyrgyzstan. In a parallel move, shortly after evicting US troops, Uzbekistan also asked NATO troops to leave, effectively denying NATO forces access to Termez airport. This move by Uzbekistan was also prompted by European reactions to Andijan that resulted in an EU arms embargo on Uzbekistan, as well as in the halt on the ratification of the EU's Partnership Cooperation Agreement (PCA) with Uzbekistan. These developments suggest that NATO and US presence in the region do not necessarily mean that the Central Asian countries are aligning themselves with the West. Rather, NATO and US forces continue to be seen rather suspiciously as outsiders that the region could do very well without. However, this does not necessarily mean that, according to the same zero-sum logic that has been discussed before, Russia stands to gain from this. Yet it does reaffirm the notion that to the Central Asian states, Western states and institutions are not as naturally desirable as they are to other post-Soviet states.

4.3.3. NATO's perspectives in Central Asia

Developments in Central Asia have thus occurred in a somewhat unstructured way. The prominence that the region gained in the aftermath of 9/11 is considerable, but what this ultimately means is still unclear. One should not lose sight of an important limitation to this statement, though: it is the West that "discovered" the importance of the Central Asia region in the aftermath of 9/11. Conversely, many other actors, especially Russia, did not have to "discover" Central Asia; it had always been part of its policy planning. The increased presence of US, European and NATO troops in the region is not a result of long-term strategic planning, but rather one of the short-term effects of 9/11. This presence should therefore not be overestimated, since it is by no means a guarantor of any future developments in the region. Some analysts contend that current Western involvement in Central Asia actually constitutes a second wave of involvement; the first wave being a push for democratization before 9/11. Political and diplomatic efforts pertaining to Central Asia during this first wave of involvement consisted of four

components, according to one expert: firstly, the formation of democratic political institutions; secondly, the promotion of market economic reform; thirdly, the establishment of cooperation and greater integration into the Euro-Atlantic and the international community; and finally, the advancement of responsible policies, including weapons-non-proliferation, anti-terrorism, and drug trafficking.[478]

In her latest book "Central Asia's second chance", Martha Brill Olcott claims that Western efforts – which were to a large extent US efforts at the time – to foster a climate of democracy in Central Asia during the 1990s largely failed.[479] According to Olcott, this was largely due to the fact that the US government pursued a policy of democratization that actively excluded the governments of the Central Asian countries. Instead, the US insisted on working with NGOs only, which, Olcott argues, turned out to be the wrong choice.[480] This first wave of Western engagement in Central Asia was guided by the same post-Soviet democratization movements that also swept through other countries of the former USSR and the Warsaw Pact. One difference, however, was the fact that an eventual goal of the democratization effort, namely membership in one or more of the Western institutions, was not a realistic option for Central Asia. The question that arises now is whether the second wave of Western involvement that has gained in momentum in the aftermath of 9/11 is any more effective. Olcott argues that it is not, first of all because the Central Asian leaders have gained in self-confidence, and are more reluctant to receive Western advice than they were in the 1990s.[481] Secondly, Olcott contends that the West consistently overestimates its own abilities to influence the region, while at the same time third actors – especially China – are becoming increasingly more important to the states of Central Asia.

Nevertheless, there is one very important conclusion that can be drawn from OEF concerning NATO itself, rather than its performance in Central Asia. OEF has given an answer to the question pertaining to NATO's role after the end of the Cold War: Afghanistan solidifies NATO's concept of out-of-area mission. The intense discussions about what kind of tasks NATO would face in light of the end of bipolarity, as well as the ambiguities that existed with regard to what exactly "out-of-area" means were in

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[478] Alaolmolki, Nozar: "Life after the Soviet Union", Albany: State University of New York, 2001.
[479] Brill Olcott, Martha: "Central Asia's second chance", Washington DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2005.
[480] Ibid.
[481] Ibid.

part answered by the creation of ISAF. During the mid-1990s, it was a highly contested issue whether or not the Balkans constituted out-of-area territory, until the establishment of IFOR, SFOR and KFOR missions terminated that debate. The same applied to Afghanistan some years later, and was subsequently also resolved by establishing ISAF. These developments have been viewed very positively by NATO officials and politicians of NATO member states. Former German defense minister Peter Struck addressed this issue in his speech at the 2004 Munich Conference on Security: "Whereas not so long ago a frequent question was: 'Is there a future for NATO?', the questions today are: 'What is the future of NATO', and: 'What must we do so that NATO can continue to perform its task in the future'? I believe that the 'existential crisis' of NATO which some people forecast is a thing of the past."[482] Struck here makes the important point that in 2004, the real issue is no longer *whether* NATO should exist, but rather *how* it should exist. Struck underlines the importance of that new NATO:

NATO is taking on an increased amount of international responsibility and is contributing decisively to mitigating dangers to our security in crisis regions – for instance, in the Balkans and in Afghanistan. Particularly in Afghanistan the process of stabilization and democratization would be inconceivable without the role played by NATO and the capabilities which it contributes.[483]

The common denominator that the fight against terrorism evoked after 9/11 is put into practice in the mission of ISAF, thus underlining the claim that NATO is not an obsolete organization.

Moreover, it is quite legitimate to reverse the argument that is often used to underline the weak state of NATO, namely the fact that the US chose to not call upon NATO under the provisions of Article V after the attacks of 9/11. In the words of one analyst, the US' reaction to the first-ever invocation of Article V was "Thanks, said the Pentagon: don't call us, we may call you. In practice this has meant the US has used UN Security Council Resolution 1368 as legitimation for a US riposte to the attacks it suffered. With its mainland violated for the first time, the US instinct is to confront its

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[482] Struck, Peter: "The future of NATO", speech given at the Munich Conference on Security Policy, Munich, 2 July 2005, http://www.securityconference.de/konferenzen/rede.php?id=125&sprache=en&, [last accessed on 12 April 2006].
[483] Ibid.

enemies everywhere in the world"[484] – and without NATO's help, is the implicit message. While the US decision to not call upon NATO could be labelled a unilateralist move, it can nevertheless also be interpreted as move that is actually in accordance with NATO's own post-Cold War guidelines, namely the streamlining of capabilities in order to create more flexible, and thus more efficient, operational forces. This shift was initiated with the 1993 launch of the Combined Joint Task Force (CJTF) concept, which entails "a multinational (combined) and multi-service (joint) task force, task-organised and formed for the full range of the Alliance's military missions requiring multinational and multi-service command and control."[485] This concept was further developed with the launch of the NATO Response Force (NRF) at the Prague Summit in 2002.[486] Both concepts were an attempt to adapt NATO capabilities to new the new challenges of the post Cold-War world, of which 9/11 and Afghanistan were prime examples. Therefore, the US' decision to proceed with only a few allies, even though not precisely in the spirit of CJTF or NRF, should also be seen in light of the particularity and the challenges of the Afghan operation. Therefore, as far as NATO itself is concerned, OEF and ISAF can be considered successes, as they have legitimized NATO in its post-Cold War form. This new NATO might not be enough to satisfy critics who contend that the new NATO's purpose is not clear-cut enough, or that NATO's future is still uncertain largely because of the lack of financial commitment of the member states. In spite of all these well-founded criticisms, the fact remains that NATO is still perceived to be one of the most successful organizations of all times, and is therefore often brought up in discussions about how to solve international crises, from Sudan to the Middle East.

However, OEF and its effects on the region are more limited than might have been expected. This suggests that the mere presence of US, European and NATO troops in the region has not necessarily led to any geopolitical shifts, especially since the main target of OEF has been and continues to be Afghanistan, which is not a Central Asian country. This is also reflected in the structures and frameworks that NATO has established in Central Asia: even though OEF created a new impetus for stepping up interaction, the institutional agreements between NATO and the individual Central Asian countries remained the same, with the exception of PARP in Uzbekistan,

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[484] Kirchner, Emil: "The future of NATO: transforming not withering", in: Meier-Walser, Reinhard (ed.): "Die Zukunft der NATO", in: Argumente und Materialien zum Zeitgeschehen, #34, München: Akademie für Politik und Zeitgeschehen der Hanns Seidel Stiftung, 2002.
[485] The Combined Joint Task Force (CJTF) Concept, NATO Handbook, http://www.nato.int/docu/handbook/2001/hb1204.htm, [last accessed on 12 April 2006].
[486] See Chapter 3.

Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. This, in turn suggests that in terms of progress and visible outcomes in the cooperation between NATO and the Central Asian states, the course is still in the process of being set, all the while keeping in mind earlier statements about the natural limitations of NATO and other Western institutions in the area. I will now discuss the perspectives that exist with regard to interaction or cooperation between NATO and Central Asia, as NATO has indeed committed itself to the region in the future.

4.3.4. NATO's Istanbul summit

The summit of Heads of State and Government on 28-29 June 2004 in Istanbul was seminal in its efforts to identify the Alliance's priorities for the future. The Istanbul summit was a defining moment in NATO's history as a post Cold-War organization: on the one hand, the tenets of the "new" NATO that had dared to go out of area were reviewed, while at the same time, future agenda-setting was actively pursued. The opening paragraph of the Istanbul Summit Communiqué reiterates the foundations of the "old" NATO, stating that

We, the Heads of State and Government of the member countries of the North Atlantic Alliance, reaffirmed today the enduring value of the transatlantic link and of NATO as the basis for our collective defense… Our 26 nations are united in democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law, and faithful to the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter.[487]

Subsequent paragraphs emphasize the transformation undergone by NATO through the second round of enlargement, as well as through the decision to extend NATO's mandate to out-of-area missions. The NATO-led ISAF in Afghanistan was expanded at the Istanbul Summit by several more Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) and by enhanced support for the 2004 elections. This was decided upon in a spirit of further shaping "this transformation in order to adapt NATO's structures, procedures and capabilities to 21st century challenges."[488] Other priorities include enhancing Operation Active Endeavour in order to fight international terrorism, assisting the government of Iraq with training of its security forces, transforming NATO military capabilities in order to make them more usable and deployable, reaffirming NATO's open door policy towards new members (Albania, Croatia, Macedonia), enhancing the Mediterranean

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[487] Istanbul Summit Communiqué, www.nato.int/docu/pr/2204/p04-096e.htm, [last accessed on 12 April].
[488] Ibid.

Dialogue, and offering cooperation to the broader Middle East region through the "Istanbul Cooperation Initiative".[489]

This list demonstrates that NATO's future priorities lie well outside of its traditional area of engagement. Crucially, NATO also made a commitment to strengthen to Euro-Atlantic Partnership, "in particular through a special focus on engaging with our partners in the strategically important region of the Caucasus and Central Asia."[490] This was the first time that NATO had proactively focussed on Central Asia as a region of special engagement and can be considered a direct consequence of ISAF and NATO's reconsideration of what out-of-area missions mean. The Communiqué specifies this commitment in Article 31 by stating that

In enhancing the Euro-Atlantic Partnership, we will put special focus on engaging with out partners in the strategically important regions of the Caucasus and Central Asia. Towards that end, NATO has agreed on improved liaison arrangements, including the assignment of two liaison officers, as well as a special representative for the two regions from within the International Staff. We welcome the decision by Georgia, Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan[491] to develop Individual Partnership Action Plans with NATO. This constitutes a significant step in these countries' efforts to develop closer Partnership relations with the Alliance.[492]

The Communiqué does not become more specific on the matter of NATO's commitment to greater involvement in Central Asia. Moreover, the one specific practical implementation of partnership that is mentioned, namely Uzbekistan's intention to pursue an IPAP, has been put on hold with no signs of revival. Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan and Tajikistan are not mentioned at all in the communiqué. Also, Article 31 reveals that once more, the two regions Caucasus and Central Asia are seen as an entity.

In the absence of specific plans pertaining to the shape and design of NATO's partnership with Central Asia, Article 31 of the Istanbul Communiqué should be seen as part of NATO's general positioning as a post-Cold War institution. The goals and

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[489] Ibid.
[490] Ibid.
[491] Uzbekistan's IPAP has been put on hold after the events in Andijan.
[492] Istanbul Summit Communiqué, www.nato.int/docu/pr/2204/p04-096e.htm, [last accessed on 12 April].

benchmarks of this new organization are outlined at the end of the Istanbul Communiqué (Article 45):

Today's complex strategic environment demands a broad approach to security, comprising political, economic and military elements… The Alliance is conducting challenging operations in regions of strategic importance; transforming its capabilities to meet new threats; and working ever more closely together with partner countries and other international organizations in a truly multilateral effort to address common security concerns. While NATO's transformation continues, its fundamental purpose – based on the common values of democracy, human rights and the rule of law – endures: to serve as an essential transatlantic forum for consultation and an effective instrument for Europe and North America to defend peace and stability, now and into the future.[493]

The dichotomy between "transatlantic" on the one hand, and "new threats", located in strategic regions such as Central Asia, is still not fully reconciled. However, it no longer constitutes the existential crisis that the end of the Cold War had provoked.

This fact is also reflected in the appointment of Robert Simmons by NATO's Secretary General in 2004 as his Special Representative for the Caucasus and Central Asia, indicating that NATO's areas of interests have expanded. Simmons specifies his duties: the Special Representative focuses on "going to the region and making contacts with senior officials in their capitals… to assist them in making the best use of the partnership activities… We also have agreed that we will have liaison officers, one for each region."[494] Cooperation between NATO and Central Asia consists of three parts, according to Simmons:

One is we want them to see that NATO is a place where they can consult and raise their security concerns… That focus is on Brussels. The second is defense reform. All of these countries are going through a process where they're adjusting and reforming their defense structures to make them meet the new requirements that they have. NATO has a very good experience in that with the countries that have joined the Alliance… finally, in a broad sense; we hope that these countries will become increasingly interoperable with NATO…[495]

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[493] Ibid.
[494] Interview with Robert Simmons, Deputy Assistant Secretary General for Security Cooperation and Partnership and Special Representative for the Caucasus and Central Asia, 10 September 2004, NATO HQ, Brussels, http://www.nato.int/docu/speech/2004/s040910b.htm, [last accessed on 13 April 2006].
[495] Ibid.

When asked about specific examples of programs that NATO would like to see implemented, Simmons first mentioned IPAPs, and second, NATO making "them aware of opportunities where they can practice the interoperability… Equally, [to] convey to their publics, to their leaders, the message of what NATO's role is in areas for instance like Afghanistan which is in fact near to many of these countries, and why NATO is involved in countries like that. So to explain NATO's overall message to these countries and to their people who are a bit distant from this headquarters."[496]

These priorities advocated by Simmons are reminiscent of priorities set by NATO in the early 1990s with regard to the then-prospective applicants to NATO membership: defense reform, opportunities for interoperability, explaining the concept of NATO to local publics that might still have a negative impression of the organization. Still, Simmons' answers make it perfectly clear that membership is not considered an option as far as the countries of Central Asia are concerned. Therefore, the aim pursued by NATO really boils down to politics, such as those aspects mentioned that Article 45 of the Istanbul Communiqué – and indeed the preamble to the North Atlantic Treaty of 1949: the advancement of freedom, democracy, human rights. Throughout this chapter I have argued that these aspirations might not be realized, and that NATO – indeed, Western – influence on the region is likely to decrease, not increase. One NATO official rather frankly remarked that NATO is not interested in the region, realizing that "very little can be achieved there".[497] Moreover, he contends that this is a matter of mutuality; Central Asia shows little to no real interest in NATO. Variations among the individual countries do exist. For example, Kazakhstan is the only Central Asian country that has expressed "global and European"[498] ambitions, whereas Turkmenistan, consistent with its own tradition of isolationism, has a relationship with NATO that is quasi-non existent. One reason for this, aside from geography, according to the same NATO official, is that NATO lacks sufficient funds to properly engage in the region, whereas the Central Asian countries expect NATO to foot the bill. Therefore, it is not surprising that specific projects implemented by NATO for the benefit of Central Asia are scarce; indeed, only one such project is still underway, the Virtual Silk Highway (VSH), a project that dates back to 1994. VSH was designed by the NATO Science Programme

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[496] Ibid.
[497] Interview with NATO Official #4, 27 September 2005, NATO HQ, Brussels.
[498] Ibid.

as a multi-year NATO computer networking project in order to bring cost-effective, global Internet connectivity to the Caucasus and Central Asia through state of the art satellite technology, thus creating a modern information network.[499] Throughout 2003, internet connectivity was set up in all five Central Asian states.

4.3.5. Interim summary

The implementation of VSH is certainly to be seen in a positive light, especially since the Central Asian countries are actively benefiting from a NATO-sponsored program. Still, the question arises when – and if – other projects will be started relating to Central Asia. According to one NATO official, there is a lack of political will to bring NATO to Central Asia, except on the part of the United States.[500] According to this same official, fundamental differences exist between the European countries and the US with regard to the importance of the region.[501] Whereas Europe is more interested in engaging in the Caucasus, the US focuses on Central Asia – both a result of strategic interests. Europe perceives a willingness on the part of the Caucasian countries to engage with European/Western institutions, a willingness that Central Asia lacks. The US, on the other hand, sees Central Asia as an attachment to their involvement in Afghanistan, and therefore prioritizes Central Asia over the Caucasus.[502] Putting Central Asia on the Istanbul agenda by appointing a special representative was thus a US initiative; the rest of NATO remains reluctant in terms of enhancing its efforts of engagement.[503] Jennifer Moroney argues that NATO might run "…the risk of being an ineffective multilateral engagement tool for this region, and encouraging these states to seek bilateral security assistance from the United States and other countries."[504] Still, Moroney deems that "NATO has something unique to offer to its partners: a proven forum for increasing security cooperation among actors in a given region, as well as a tested 'open door' policy."[505]

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[499] Virtual Silk Highway, www.nato.int/science/virtual_silk/info.htm, [last accessed on 13 April 2006].
[500] Interview with NATO Official #4, 27 September 2005, NATO HQ, Brussels.
[501] See Bhatty, Robin and Bronson, Rachel: "NATO's mixed signals in the Caucasus and Central Asia", in: Survival, vol. 42, #3, 2000, pp. 129-145.
[502] Interview with NATO Official #4, 27 September 2005, NATO HQ, Brussels.
[503] Ibid.
[504] Moroney, Jennifer: "Building security in Central Asia: a multilateral perspective", in: Burghart, Daniel and Sabonis-Helf, Theresa (eds.): "In the tracks of Tamerlane: Central Asia's path to the 21st century", Washington DC: National Defense University, 2004, pp. 341-360, p. 349.
[505] Ibid.

Summing up this paragraph, the hypothesis that NATO, in spite of its institutional frameworks in Central Asia and its proclaimed focus on the region, is not well positioned to have a lasting impact on the area, gains prominence. Involvement in Afghanistan is not likely to spill over into sustainable involvement in Central Asia, especially in light of the fact that the region itself has not shown any strong desire for increased NATO involvement. What then are the implications of the status quo that I have traced throughout this chapter? Underlining their importance to NATO-Russia relations, I will connect the threads in this final paragraph.

4.4. Conclusion

In this chapter, I have presented an overview of how external actors have exerted their influence over Central Asia, and how, in turn, the countries of Central Asia have positioned themselves vis-à-vis external influences. The most important results of this analysis are the following: First, the importance of Russia in the area should not be underestimated. The countries of Central Asia are not following in the footsteps of other former Soviet republics in terms of emancipating themselves from Russia, or at least not to the same degree. The established logic of post-Soviet nations turning to Western institutions does not apply in the case of Central Asia. This implies that, secondly, NATO does not have the same opportunities for influencing the region as it did in Central and Eastern Europe in the 1990s, or even in the Caucasus and in Ukraine. Even though NATO has accorded priority to Central Asia, most notably at the Istanbul Summit, both policymakers and analysts agree that there is no perspective for NATO membership as far as the Central Asian countries are concerned, nor should NATO realistically expect to exert long-term influence over the region. This will not deter NATO from engaging with Central Asia; even setbacks like the Andijan massacre will not change that. According to one NATO official, NATO is and always has been a pragmatic organization and therefore will not suspend relations with Uzbekistan.[506] The same NATO official contended that NATO's goals for the region are modest: short-term plans are largely confined to a basic training of forces, which one day might lead to involving them in NATO operations. However, the point was made that this is by no means guaranteed.[507] Other plans pertaining to Central Asia, namely a long-term commitment to reform society and to assist in maintaining a peaceful region, are not guaranteed to succeed either. NATO has overcome its post-Cold War dilemma of

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[506] Interview with NATO Official #5, 27 September 2005, NATO HQ, Brussels.
[507] Ibid.

purpose with its mission in Afghanistan. However, the limits to the "new" NATO's approach of taking the "Washington spirit" out of area are already visible in Central Asia – suggesting that NATO's future missions might have to be limited to post-conflict peacekeeping and stabilization activities.

Returning to the beginning of this chapter and the reasons for choosing Central Asia as a case study, a third conclusion that can be drawn is that the last "undecided" area of the former Soviet empire is not likely to opt for alignment with the West. In an interesting twist, one could claim that in this case, Russia has the upper hand in a game that is not precisely zero-sum, but is still characterized by different actors vying for power at the expense of other actors. The unified Russia-NATO-US front against terror is no longer as strong it was in 2001, when Russia decided to unconditionally back the US in the fight against terrorism by allowing US troops to launch OEF and later NATO's ISAF to take over. This move has often been perceived as an attempt by Vladimir Putin to use this service to the US for potential trade-offs to advance Russia's interests.[508] However, this hope turned out to be false; the US and Europe both continued to criticize the state of human rights in Russia, one important issue that Putin wanted to see as an above-mentioned trade-off. This, in turn, prompted Putin to take a step back from his commitment to the fight against terror, and to once more consider Central Asia a strategically important region where US and NATO influence through increased involvement might be exerted to the detriment of Russia.[509] As I have demonstrated, the myriad of local associations and organizations in Central Asia does suggest that Russia is indeed better positioned to influence the region. One NATO official described interaction between Russia and NATO in Central Asia as "delicate and sophisticated political game", where everyone is balancing according to their best interests.[510] For instance, recently, Russia has been arguing in favor of intensifying efforts to enhance the CSTO's status as a collective defense organization that would see eye to eye with NATO on security issues. This, in turn, would prevent NATO from pursuing bilateral contacts with the Central Asian states, a possible situation staunchly opposed by the US.[511]

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[508] Interview with Fyodor Lukyanov, Editor-in-chief, Russia in International Affairs, 5 March 2005, Moscow.
[509] Ibid.
[510] Ibid.
[511] Interview with NATO Official #4, 27 September 2005, NATO HQ, Brussels.

Fourthly, and crucially, many indicators point towards another development: the influence of other outside powers on Central Asia is increasing, and might one day eclipse the influence that either NATO or Russia wield over the region. First and foremost, China is in the process of solidifying its economic power, resulting in increased influence over the region. This economic power has already spilled over into other aspects of international relations, as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization suggests. Moreover, China's influence in the region is expected to increase, not decrease, in coming years. Therefore, observations that Russia does not see NATO as a challenge in Central Asia[512], but rather, China, are not uncommon. New fault lines are being drawn, though there is no consensus yet on what that means, although most analysts agree that in the past two years, Russia has successfully reasserted its influence on Central Asia. Irina Korbinskaya contends that "Russia faces a [political] dilemma [with regard to Central Asia]… On the one hand, it might yield to imperial temptation, jeopardize relations with Washington, and upset the whole strategic balance in the Asian-Pacific region (which involves China)."[513] Pavel Baev argues in a critical article about Russia's ultimate intentions that

…the reassertion of Russian influence in Central Asia since mid-2005 has been … impressive. Rulers who until recently preferred to assert their independence by manoeuvring between Russia, China, and the West are now according Moscow the respect it demands and are eager to discuss with it plans for strengthening their armed forces according to old Soviet templates.[514]

Yet other analysts, such as Nikolai Sokov, caution that the notion of a new "great game" shouldn't be overestimated:

This time the great game is conceptualized as the desire of Russia and China to squeeze the United States out of Central Asia and keep the region under their exclusive control… Ironically, between the fall of 2001 and the spring of 2005 the roles were reversed: Moscow accused the United States of expanding its influence into the soft underbelly of Russia. The United States denied the accusation, saying that the notion of the great game was outdated; unlike in the 19th

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[512] Ibid.

[513] Korbinskaya, Irina: "Russia – NIS relations beyond the color revolutions. Are the shifts durable?", PONARS Policy Memo # 375, December 2005, pp. 49-56, http://www.csis.org/media/csis/pubs/pm_0375.pdf, [last accessed on 14 April 2006].

[514] Baev, Pavel: "Russia's counterrevolutionary offensive in Central Asia", PONARS Policy Memo # 399, December 2005, pp. 199-204. http://www.csis.org/media/csis/pubs/pm_0399.pdf, [last accessed on 14 April 2006].

century, Central Asian states were now independent, sovereign actors that could make their own choices, it seems that frameworks and terms change with the changing of policy tides.[515]

He concludes that "Politics in the region are a great game only to the extent that great powers are prepared to frame issues in that manner. Unless both the United States and Russia assume a different attitude toward each other's positions and interests in Central Asia, a Moscow-Beijing axis is likely to form and will create a geopolitical conflict with Washington."[516]

NATO and Russia themselves do not take up any of these geopolitical issues. At the NATO-Russia Council at the level of foreign ministers held in Istanbul on 28 June 2004, issues for discussion did not diverge significantly from the regular canon of NATO-Russia issues. For example, "[the ministers] expressed their solidarity in standing against the terrorist threat and took note of the broad-based co-operation that has been developed in this area in the NRC framework, in this context, they also welcomed Russia's offer tot participate in maritime operations in the Mediterranean Sea in the framework of Operation Active Endeavour."[517] Further topics for discussion were, amongst others, TMD, the enhancement of military-to-military cooperation and the interoperability of NATO and Russian forces, the Cooperative Airspace Initiative (CAI), and joint peacekeeping operations. Throughout the NRC meetings of 2004 and 2005, these familiar topics did not change either.

It appears, then, as though NATO is in the process of being sidelined in Central Asia, whereas Russia is reaffirming its influence. This seemingly reverse zero-sum scenario supports the hypothesis that NATO and Russia have not found an optimal way of cooperating, but rather get caught up in perceived power imbalance scenarios. Also, the claim that institutional frameworks matter less than external events has once more been confirmed: the implementation of the NRC did not influence the interface of NATO and Russia as far as Central Asia is concerned. However, as I have demonstrated in this chapter, 9/11 and its aftermath has affected NATO-Russia relations, though not in an explicitly productive way. It is remarkable that "safe" schemes such as Operation

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[515] Sokov, Nikolai: "The not-so-great game in Central Asia", PONARS Policy Memo # 403, December 2005, pp. 223-228, http://www.csis.org/media/csis/pubs/pm_0399.pdf, [last accessed on 14 April 2006].
[516] Ibid.
[517] Chairman's statement, meeting of the NRC at the level of Foreign Ministers held in Istanbul, 28 June 2004, www.nato.int/docu/pr/2004/p040628e.htm, [last accessed on 14 April].

Active Endeavour, which do not impinge upon Russian interests, or traditional topics such as TMD, civil emergencies, and peacekeeping operations are time and again matters for discussion at the NRC. However, Russian commitment to engage in the war against terror did not extend to Afghanistan. Baev contends that "Indeed, Russia has never so much as hinted at the possibility of contributing something meaningful to the international efforts at rebuilding Afghanistan, preferring to criticize the shortcomings in NATO operations."[518] In other words, the "glass ceiling" that limits NATO-Russia cooperation is also in place in Central Asia.

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[518] Baev, 2005, p. 199.

5. Conclusion

5.1. Research focus and structure of results

In the three previous chapters I have traced and analyzed developments that have shaped the relationship between NATO and Russia since the relationship was officially given an exclusively bilateral institutionalized framework with the Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security between NATO and the Russian Federation. Using the key "building blocks" of this relationship, namely the PJC, the NRC, the war in Kosovo and 9/11 and its aftermath as independent variables that have crucially influenced this relationship, I have established certain patterns of interaction between the two actors, some more unexpected than others. Breaking the different stages of this relationship down chronologically as well as by form and content has yielded important results relating to my dependent variable. In this final chapter I will first briefly summarize the major findings, referring back to the research questions and hypotheses formulated in chapter 1. I will then discuss how these findings should be situated within the larger research context, as well as what their specific meaning is as far as the dependent variable is concerned. Finally, I will place the results of this dissertation within the wider framework of existing literature, and suggest areas that might be elaborated on in future research.

The objective of this dissertation has been to assess the quality of the relationship between NATO and Russia since its bilateral institutionalization in 1997. The bulk of this thesis consists of an analysis of the institutional frameworks that are in place and the visible outcomes produced. Unlike many other analyses that concern themselves with NATO-Russia interaction, I have tried to focus less on who is responsible for improvements and deteriorations in NATO-Russia relations, instead opting for an analysis of joint policy decisions and operations that serve as indicators of the quality of NATO–Russia interaction. Very often, analysts conclude that it is up to the Russians to decide whether or not NATO-Russia relations qualitatively improve. Also, the incidents in the past ten years that resulted in the deterioration of NATO-Russia relations are often seen as being due to Russian overreaction, implying that a change in Russian policy is required in order to get real results out of the partnership between NATO and Russia. I would argue that this is a one-sided viewpoint for several reasons. First, rather than analyzing internal Russian foreign policy formation *per se*, I have focused on one aspect of the outcome of this foreign policy, namely, the actual interaction between the

two players. Second, bias exists where the policy analysis of a nation-state or that of an organization is concerned. Assessments of national foreign policy take into account how history, psychology, personal leadership, and many other variables factor into the process of foreign policy-making. International organizations, however, are more seldom analyzed with consideration of these "human" factors; they are more often perceived as professionalized bodies that implement fairly rational foreign policy due to their internalized processes and standards.

Therefore, most analyses hold Russia responsible for low points in the relationship between NATO and Russia. Russia's negative attitude toward NATO, and especially NATO enlargement is the result of a "traditional self-understanding of superpower", that coexists with the reality of a painful loss of geopolitical influence in Europe.[519] In his treatise on the second round of NATO enlargement, Frank Umbach's main point is that if Russia were to give up its great power aspirations, a whole new security scenario might become possible in Europe, including Russian membership in NATO.[520] Even though Umbach's chapter is entitled "The second round of NATO enlargement from a Russian point of view" it would be more appropriate to call it "Russia's attitudes toward the second round of NATO enlargement from a Western point of view". For reasons mentioned above, NATO is usually considered to be the rational organization that seeks to enhance security in Europe, whereas Russia is considered to be a fairly emotional actor whose foreign policy goes against rational considerations. Though assessments such as Umbach's certainly also hold more than a grain of truth, it is remarkable how uneven the roles of constructive and deconstructive part are distributed among NATO and Russia in IR literature. This point was already made in the introduction with a reference to Tsygankov and Tsygankov, who caution against Western bias in IR literature.[521] I have offered one possible explanation for the imbalance in assessments that relate to the NATO-Russia relationship. However, as was pointed out in the introduction, the purpose of this dissertation is not to analyze shortcomings of IR theory

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[519] Umbach, Frank: "Die zweite Runde der NATO-Osterweiterung aus der Sicht Russlands", in: Pradetto, August (ed.): "Die zweite Runde der NATO-Osterweiterung: zwischen postbipolarem Institutionalismus und offensivem Realismus", Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang Europäischer Verlag der Wissenschaften, 2004, pp. 279-317, p. 315.

[520] Ibid, p. 316.

[521] Tsygankov, Andrei and Tsygankov, Pavel: "New directions in Russian international studies: pluralization, westernization, and isolationism", in: "Communist and post-communist studies", vol. 37, March 2004, pp.1-17, http://www.sciencedirect.com/science?_ob=MImg&_imagekey=B6VGF-4BJ20KY31&_cdi=6037&_user=964000&_orig=browse&_coverDate=03%2F31%2F2004&_sk=999629 998&view=c&wchp=dGLbVlb-zSkWb&md5=7478e0b5f93ca05be2cc11e8f03c06ad&ie=/sdarticle.pdf [last accessed on 20 July 2005].

as far as biases are concerned. Nevertheless, keeping in mind this issue, I have attempted to avoid making a normative assessment of the relationship. Instead, I have focused on treaties, meeting minutes, joint operations and joint training exercises. It is of course impossible to write a dissertation that is wholly free of normative judgements, since they serve as ontological underpinning. Still, instead of assessing the individual players' choices and preferences, I have opted for a structural or systemic approach; an approach that focuses more on the opportunities and constraints that the actors are faced with than on individual preferences.

For this reason, I have opted for an analysis that focuses, on the one hand, on outcomes and on theories that are located on the macro level on the other. In the beginning of the theory chapter I outlined some challenges that had to be addressed concerning research design and implementation. First and foremost there was the difficulty of analyzing two different units, or, in this case, actors: one a nation-state and the other an international organization. In an effort to establish symmetry between these two different units of analysis, I chose to consider both as unitary actors, which also implied that both NATO and Russia were assessed according to outputs, rather than according to internal decision-making procedures. This, in turn, enabled an analysis of the visible outcomes produced by my dependent variable: joint operations and missions such as IFOR/SFOR and KFOR, Operation Active Endeavour, the NATO-Russia Action Plan against Terrorism to name but a few. The independent variables, in turn, served as road map to facilitate interpretation of the relationship between NATO and Russia. Interestingly, the pairing of independent variables – PJC/NRC and Kosovo/9/11 – resulted in findings that were not initially expected: the influence on the dependent variable that each of the individual independent variables actually yielded had to be reassessed; a result that I will discuss in more detail in the next section.

This dissertation started from the premise that NATO itself was attached to the relationship between NATO and Russia:

Since the end of the Cold War, NATO has attached particular importance to the development of constructive and cooperative relations with Russia. Over the past ten years, NATO and Russia have succeeded in achieving substantial progress in developing a genuine partnership and

overcoming the vestiges of earlier confrontation in order to strengthen mutual trust and cooperation.[522]

This passage implies that NATO and Russia have distanced themselves from considering each other enemies and have embarked on a path towards partnership. Technically, this meant finding a common language, largely by defining common threats and common approaches to dealing with them: "Working together to address these challenges is in the interest of both sides and contributes to the further strengthening of the basis of mutual trust which is essential for peace and stability in the Euro-Atlantic area."[523] Overcoming confrontation and strengthening trust and cooperation through the identification of common threats and joint action thus constitutes the basis of the relationship between NATO and Russia.

5.2. Summary of results

The recurring theme that characterizes the findings of this dissertation is that neither cooperation nor conflict appropriately describes NATO–Russia relations, either in the past or in the present. For a better reflection of reality, I have chosen to juxtapose conflict and cooperation rather than confrontation and cooperation. Literature that concerns itself with establishing patterns of interaction often uses the dichotomous pairing of "confrontation and cooperation" as a guideline. However, the term confrontation is somewhat anachronistic as far as NATO and Russia are concerned. The relationship between NATO and Russia, or rather, between NATO and the USSR during the Cold War was what can only be described as confrontational. However, this pattern of interaction is no longer descriptive of the quality of relations between NATO and Russia. The term confrontation implies that active acts of aggression, or at least, threats of aggression, are pursued by one or another actor – a premise that is clearly not valid anymore. I have therefore opted for the term conflict, which more accurately describes current and past situations. This differentiation of terms already lies at the heart of this dissertation's research interest: conflict implies a different status quo from confrontation. At the other end of the spectrum, cooperation implies an effective pooling of interests and capacities that serves the best interests of both parties. It is

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[522] Cooperation between NATO and Russia, NATO Handbook, Brussels: NATO Office of Information and Press, 2001, p. 80.
[523] Ibid, p. 86.

largely this status quo that official texts and treaties between NATO and Russia refer to – a spirit of cooperation that has ended a history of confrontation.

My research has revealed that neither confrontation or cooperation, or even conflict and cooperation, adequately describe the relationship between NATO and Russia. First of all, I have already pointed out in various sections of this dissertation that an assessment of NATO-Russia relations also depends on one's own ontology. From a historical perspective, the fact that NATO and the successor state to the Soviet Union are no longer out to destroy one another according to the logic of Mutual Assured Destruction is proof enough that confrontation between the two actors is indeed a thing of the past – and that any conflict scenarios that might emerge should not be overemphasized. This assessment nevertheless runs the risk of significantly lowering expectations about the quality of relations between NATO and Russia. Conversely, interpreting developments in the relationship between the two actors as a series of thinly veiled antagonisms that stand in lieu of open confrontation is just as counterproductive.

5.2.1. Hypotheses, theory and case study reviewed

A major finding of this research project is that the two extremes do not fit the status quo between NATO and Russia. I would also argue that it is not enough to claim that the status quo of the relationship between the two actors is somewhere in between cooperation and confrontation – though this is certainly not untrue. In the introductory chapter I introduced the concept of a certain "irritation"[524] that continues to influence the way both actors perceive each other, and the actions that are a result of this perception. This irritation is embedded in the structural confines in which NATO and Russia find themselves. Therefore, the tenets of realism that privilege the concepts of power, perception of strength and imbalance of capabilities are still crucial for understanding NATO–Russia interaction. This, in turn, relates to the first hypothesis I proposed: that neither friendship nor cooperation, nor outright antagonism nor confrontation is characteristic of NATO–Russia relations. A zero-sum mentality can still be discerned – at least on the part of the Russian side. Western critics of Russian foreign policy and Russian attitudes in general usually put forward that less than perfect results of NATO–Russia interaction are due to a persistent Russian zero-sum approach to international politics, as noted earlier. This has two implications: first, it is indeed

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[524] See chapter 1.

true that zero-sum logic to NATO–Russia relations keeps on resurfacing periodically. In spite of the PJC and the NRC, both rounds of enlargement were viewed with extreme scepticism by Russia, in contrast to the enthusiasm shown by NATO. The two rounds of NATO enlargement are obvious indicators of incidents where realist conceptualizations of IR theory were at play from the Russian point of view. The second implication of zero-sum logic in NATO-Russia relations is somewhat more complex, as it is really a zero-sum scenario where only one actor consistently sees himself as being caught up in a zero-sum situation, and moreover, as the loser of that game.

This – perceived or actual – inequality has in the past led to frictions that have impeded closer cooperation; this is what I refer to as the structural "glass ceiling" that NATO and Russia hit in their efforts towards an ever-closer partnership. Whereas NATO has always insisted that it is committed to working with Russia as an equal partner – at least since 2002 – the existing structures have not succeeded in providing the equality and partnership originally sought. This is also a consequence of a lack of perspectives: in spite of the plethora of partnership programs that NATO has extended to partner countries, the ultimate goal for most of those partner countries has been membership. There are of course regions that are engaged in partnership schemes with NATO, but that are geographically too remote in order to be considered membership aspirants, such as the countries of the Mediterranean Dialogue (Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Mauritania, Morocco, and Tunisia). In the case of the former member states of the Soviet Union, however, membership has always been – and continues to be – the ultimate goal; a fact that has consistently been threatening to Russia. This, in turn, is also due to the fact that membership perspectives for Russia itself are non-existent, as well as being undesired by the vast majority of Russians. A fairly important segment of the Russian elite, the so-called "Westerners", has consistently argued in favor of Russian membership in western institutions, including NATO. For example, Tatiana Parkhalina, Deputy Director of INION RAN, argues that Russia has no alternative to pursuing a partnership with the West, including NATO.[525] Furthermore, Parkhalina argues that a Russian decision against "joining" the West would represent a policy failure with potentially grave consequences. Parkhalina specifically notes that this failure to adopt a more western-oriented foreign policy would have repercussions within the other CIS states, where anti-Russian sentiment is fairly wide-spread.[526]

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[525] Interview with Dr. Tatiana Parkhalina, Deputy Director INION RAN, 10 March 2005, Moscow.
[526] Ibid.

Assessments such as these are minority opinion, however, and they mostly do not figure into the Kremlin's decisions (anymore). Instead, Russia pursues a policy of "independence, non-Westernism, and of self-identification in an independent role", according to Alexei Salmin, President of the Russian Public Policy Center.[527] This naturally precludes becoming a member of NATO. At the same time, there is no precedent that could serve as a guide to approaching this problem: Russia is too large and geographically too close to Europe not to figure prominently on the agenda of western institutions. At the same time, it is questionable whether Russia in NATO would be in either actor's interest, as this "ultimate" enlargement would imply a transformation of the Alliance that goes beyond the effect that the end of the Cold War in itself has had on NATO. Furthermore, whether accepted by NATO and the West in general or not, Russia continues to claim a different status and thus more attention for itself than any other post-Soviet state. To the West, this is the cause for many problems between Russia and NATO. To Russia, it is the reason for those problems – a dichotomy that is not likely to be resolved in the near future. Alexei Salmin explains that the loss of empire experienced by Russia was not fully understood by the West on the one hand, and, on the other, it happened to quickly in order for Russians to be able to adapt to it.[528] Parkhalina adds to this statement that NATO continues to be afraid of Russia, albeit to a lesser extent than that to which Russia objects to NATO. According to Parkhalina, the crisis over Kosovo revealed not only how Russia still acts according to Cold War patterns, but also how NATO does; this situation is criticized by Parkhalina, who argues that being too cautious *vis-à-vis* Russian concerns is counter-productive for NATO, the West, and for Russia, which would better be served by seeking closer ties with the West.[529]

The mutual ambivalence that is characteristic of NATO and Russian attitudes towards each other continues to shape both actors' actions and perceptions. Additionally, the perceived imbalance of power positions from which the two actors are negotiating further complicates matters. As I have explained previously, the general attitude towards NATO-Russia cooperation, and western–Russian relations more generally, is that if Russia stopped mourning the loss of empire, then partnership schemes and

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[527] Interview with Dr. Alexei Salmin, President Russian Public Policy Center, 11 March 2005, Moscow.
[528] Ibid.
[529] Interview with Dr. Tatiana Parkhalina, Deputy Director INION RAN, 10 March 2005, Moscow.

cooperation would be easier to achieve. Conversely, Russia feels that this attitude is patronizing and that unless Russian interests are being taken into consideration, partnership and cooperation will lack substance. According to Alexei Salmin, this position is a combination of Russian cultural history and of perceived anti-Russian sentiments that are especially present in the new member states of the EU and of NATO.[530] Salmin argues that the two sides are not ready to understand each other, but that a mutual understanding needs to be established over time. This is also the reason why, according to Salmin, present institutional arrangements are less than adequate.[531] Salmin views the NRC as a tool that imitates cooperation while at the same time still reflecting the traditional situation of conflict between the two actors.[532] Salmin argues that the NRC is "necessary but not yet adequate", and that a lot remains to be done in terms of defining cooperation and partnership. This is largely due to a lack of trust, which becomes apparent when looking at the results and outcomes of the NRC. If the NRC worked properly, according to Salmin, then there would be more visible results – and this would also entail enhanced military and technical cooperation, in which, at the moment, neither side invests adequately.[533] Finally, Salmin makes the point that certain issues should not be confined to the NATO-Russia sphere, because they are really of global importance, e.g. the fight against terrorism. Salmin also makes an implicit call for multipolarity, as he argues that building local alliances will be essential for solving global problems.[534]

The second component of Hypothesis 1 stated that there is a certain misconception regarding how key dates that have influenced the way NATO and Russia interact. For the purposes of this dissertation, this has meant evaluating the independent variables and their influence on the dependent variable. In chapter 3 I demonstrated that the most important divergence from the bulk of analytical pieces that my research has identified is the impact that the Kosovo crisis has had on NATO–Russia relations. It was topical to speak of a "new ice age" between the two actors after NATO decided to engage in air strikes against Serbia without a UN mandate – which would never have been possible in the first place due to an inevitable Russian veto in the Security Council. The crisis in Kosovo and the temporary disbanding of the PJC is considered to be the nadir of

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[530] Interview with Dr. Alexei Salmin, President Russian Public Policy Center, 11 March 2005, Moscow.
[531] Ibid.
[532] Ibid.
[533] Ibid.
[534] Ibid.

NATO–Russia relations, or, to use the terminology of this research project, Kosovo is the event that stands for outright conflict. However, I concluded that this is an oversimplification of the facts and, moreover, obscures the underlying issues that were contributing to an escalation of the conflict.

One NATO official argued that "Kosovo didn't destroy anything that had been of value"[535] with regard to NATO–Russia interaction. There are several reasons why this assessment is important. First of all, it reveals that the existing institutional structures were not adequate for dealing with a crisis like Kosovo: the PJC formula of 19 plus 1, or 19 against 1 as Russia saw it, was not seen as a platform of negotiation and cooperation, but rather as an instrument to solidify existing imbalances of assets and capabilities, and therefore, of power. Hence, the eruption of the crisis over NATO intervention in Kosovo was a consequence of structures that Russia had felt uncomfortable with since the implementation of the PJC. In chapter 2 I refer to the development of NATO–Russia relations as a pendulum that swings between cooperation and conflict, never really stabilizing on either side. During the Kosovo crisis and for months after, the pendulum remained towards the conflict end of the spectrum. It did not, however, change the quality of the entire relationship. With the exception of the dash for Pristina airport[536], there were no pronounced hostilities among troops stationed in the Balkans during 1999. Moreover, the PJC resumed its meetings, and, as empirical evidence shows, the topics that were discussed at the 2000 PJC meetings did not differ significantly from those that were discussed up until April 1999. Therefore, Kosovo did not constitute the great fall-out between NATO and Russia that it is often made out to be.

Similarly, the antonymous counterpart to Kosovo in terms of representing the initiative to cooperate, namely 9/11 and its aftermath, also needs to be evaluated with more care. It is true that immediately after the attacks on New York and Washington, the Kremlin made an unprecedented move by offering unconditional support to the US. It is also true that the joint fight against terrorism is the most visibly successful endeavor that NATO and Russia have embarked upon. Cooperation in Operation Active Endeavour (OAE)[537]

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[535] Interview with NATO Official #3, 16 September 2005, NATO HQ, Brussels, see chapter 3.
[536] See chapter 3.
[537] See chapter 3.

and the NATO-Russia Action Plan on Terrorism[538] would not have been possible without the events of 9/11 and the ensuing re-evaluation of global strategies and alliances that took place. Also, there is a marked increase in the actual quality of cooperation that both OAE and the NATO-Russia Action Plan on Terrorism have generated. From the outset, OAE has been what one NATO official calls "the flagship of NATO–Russia cooperation."[539] Therefore, 9/11 and its aftermath can certainly be associated with a new spirit of cooperation between NATO and Russia, and an argument could be made that OAE and the NATO-Russia Action Plan on Terrorism are the two joint NATO-Russia ventures that resulted in the pendulum swinging further towards the cooperation side. These developments might suggest that the pendulum as an indicator of the qualitative relationship between NATO and Russia not only lingered on the cooperation side, but was even in the process of remaining there.

While the achievement that the existence of OAE and of the NATO-Russia Action Plan on Terrorism represents should not be slighted, it is not a foregone conclusion that the spirit of cooperation will prevail. In fact, this spirit has already undergone significant changes in the last few years and is no longer characterized by the unequivocal support that Russia offered to the United States in September of 2001. As I have outlined with reference to empirical evidence throughout chapter 3, there are indications that the window of opportunity for cooperation has closed and that once again the old structural confines limit the quality and quantity of cooperation between the two actors. The promise of unwavering support that Russia made after the 9/11 attacks has also become somewhat more relative, as there is a strong consensus among analysts that this decision was largely taken in order to give Russia bargaining power: a directly reciprocal scenario where Russia would promise its support in return for a western promise to reduce criticism of Russia's handling of Chechnya.[540] This bargain did not materialize, however, and Russian participation in the fight against terror – apart from its participation in OAE – remains conspicuously low-key. This, in turn, suggests that 9/11 should not exclusively be associated with cooperation, just as Kosovo should not be associated exclusively with conflict between NATO and Russia.

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[538] See chapter 3.
[539] Interview with NATO Official #2, 13 September 2005, NATO HQ, Brussels.
[540] See chapter 3.

The second hypothesis put forward in the introductory chapter was of a more theoretical nature. Hypothesis 2 stipulated that neither realism nor constructivism wield sufficient explanatory power to explain the developments in and the quality of the relationship between NATO and Russia. Whereas realism does not explain how it was possible for NATO and Russia to develop institutionalized relations in the first place, constructivism doesn't account for the difficulties that have characterized this relationship from the outset. In my theoretical chapter, I demonstrated that realism and its concept of constant struggle among actors to gain advantage over one another do not capture the status quo. However, neither does the constructivist proposition of norm convergence, according to which NATO and Russia should gradually develop a shared sense of security interests. Empirical evidence does not support the claim that the two actors have reached a state where one can really speak of a convergence of norms, ideas and interests. In chapter 2 I presented a thorough analysis of which aspects of realism and constructivism are useful in order to theoretically conceptualize the status quo of NATO–Russia relations, as well as indicating which aspects are not convincing. I explained my reasons for choosing constructivism and realism as theoretical approaches – as well as why I did not focus on institutionalism – in the beginning of chapter 2. The two poles of cooperation and conflict superficially coincide with the two theoretical approaches of constructivism and realism. The actual status quo fits neither theoretical approach – in the same way as it is not accurate to choose either cooperation or confrontation to describe the status quo.

Finally, chapter 4 tested the dependent variable in relation to developments in an external region: Central Asia. In order to test the dependent variable against a case study, it makes sense to focus on a geographically limited region, or on a particular event, so long as the choice of region is geographically and politically relevant for both actors. For the purposes of this dissertation's research interest, the potential choices of case study turned out to be fairly limited. Obvious choices such as NATO–Russia cooperation in the Balkans, or negotiations over the two rounds of enlargement are first of all already well documented. Moreover, these straightforward options also yield relatively little explanatory power over the present and future state of NATO–Russia relations. Both the Balkans and enlargement are events confined to the past and thus serve to assist understanding the history of the relationship. However, they are no longer defining parameters for the future of NATO–Russia relations. Geopolitical interests pertaining to NATO and Russia have thus far mostly been confined to a clearly defined area, the so-called post-Soviet space. The concept of the post-Soviet sphere is used for

lack of a better word, and using this term by no means implies any normative judgement. The post-Soviet space is first and foremost synonymous with the republics of the former Soviet Union, though not exclusively. According to Moscow, the post-Soviet space extends all the way to Serbia, due to cultural and linguistic commonalities between the two countries. I have referred to the concept "sphere of influence" at certain points of this dissertation; a concept that is just as normatively charged as the notion of post-Soviet space: both concepts are frowned upon in IR literature. Nevertheless, it is almost impossible to discuss NATO-Russia relations since the mid-1990s without reference to these concepts.

Points of contention between the two actors have usually arisen out of differentiating interests with regard to the post-Soviet space: the two rounds of enlargement are testimony to this, as is persistent Russian apprehension about anti-Russian sentiment in the new NATO member states. My case study set out to test if and how previous patterns of interaction of the two actors with regard to the post-Soviet area were repeating themselves in the case of Central Asia, and, if so, what those patterns said about the nature of the relationship. According to my hypotheses, NATO–Russia interaction over Central Asia should be characterized by an uncomfortable side-by-side that is neither cooperation nor open conflict, but which is still characterized by an interplay of structural habits containing the remnants of old rivalries, including a perceived imbalance of power. Empirical evidence in chapter 4 demonstrates that my case study supports this hypothesis, albeit with one important variation: there is no NATO–Russia cooperation in any form regarding policies towards Central Asia. Rather, individual priorities in relation to Central Asia differ on important issues such as democratization, security, and future alliances. Also, as outlined in chapter 4, some analysts claim that Russia's contribution to the war against terror has turned out far smaller than might have been expected; in the case of Operation Enduring Freedom for example, Russia did not involve itself at all. Certain acts of irritation that are reminiscent of "great games" that are supposedly confined to the past keep resurfacing. Instances of such irritations are for example reactions to the Andijan events of May 2005 on the West's part, or the rather open Russian support for the Uzbek decision to ask US troops to leave the Karsi-Khanabad airbase. In fact, the Andijan events continue to shape NATO's attitude towards Uzbekistan: in a statement on the first anniversary of the events of 12-13 May 2005, NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer expressed his concern:

On behalf of NATO, I express my deep disappointment that the Uzbek authorities have failed to take action on the calls by NATO and other international organizations for an independent, international inquiry into the tragic events which took place in Andijan on 12/13 May 2005. During the past year, NATO's relationship with Uzbekistan has been under close review by the Allies. It will remain under review, and the Allies will continue to expect Uzbekistan to uphold the principles of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.[541]

No such statement has emanated from the Russian side, indicating a clear divergence in norms and values as far as the Central Asian countries in general, and the Andijan massacre in particular is concerned.

Empirical evidence, theoretical approach and case study thus all support the hypotheses that I put forward in the introductory chapter of this dissertation. However, the research results that I have compiled have also yielded some initially unanticipated results. These results are possibly the most revealing ones as they are the result of the in-depth analysis of primary sources, mainly evidence that I have drawn from primary documents and interviews that were conducted with policy-makers and experts. I will underline these findings in the concluding section of this chapter. First I will place my own hypotheses, theoretical findings and research results within the larger framework in order to highlight the most important issues.

5.2.2. NATO, Russia and the larger picture

The focal points of this dissertation are two very different actors: on the one hand, an international organization that is hailed as the most efficient organization of all times, and on the other a nation-state that is still in transition and which struggles with the legacy of its own past. At the same time, the interaction between the two protagonists goes beyond a "normal" relationship in international politics: present NATO-Russia relations are the result of the past. In my introductory chapter I introduced the notion that NATO-Russia relations are to a certain extend indicative of the state of international relations after the end of the Cold War. This statement needs to be refined to a certain extent: the post-Cold War NATO-Russia constellation cannot be equated

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[541] Statement by the NATO Secretary General on the first anniversary of the events of 12/13 May 2005 in Andijan, 12 May 2006, NATO Brussels: NATO public data service [natopress@listserv.cc.kuleuven.ac.be], on behalf of NATO Integrated Data Service [natodoc@hq.nato.int].

with the Cold War NATO-Soviet Union constellation. At the same time, present-day NATO-Russia relations can not be equated with East-West relations *per se*, as the meaning of East-West relations has changed a great deal since the end of the Cold War. Instead, the current relationship between NATO and Russia is of a rather singular and unprecedented kind; a relationship that needs to be taken out of the clichéd context. The two poles of conflict and cooperation leave a lot of room for a qualitatively differentiated relationship that is by no means static and linear in its development.

Briefly taking a step back from the quality of NATO–Russia relations, I would like to return to the two actors themselves and their positioning *vis-à-vis* the other. Both of my theoretical approaches, realism and constructivism, attach a great deal of importance to the perceptions and images that one actor has of the other. When confronted with the question of NATO's present purpose in international relations, 30 percent of Russian respondents are of the opinion that NATO is an aggressive military bloc that is opposed to Russia and its allies.[542] To 23 percent, NATO is a defense organization consisting of European and North American countries entrusted with keeping international order and with the fight against international terrorism.[543] 25 percent see NATO as an organization that lost its raison d'être with the end of the Cold War. Finally, 22 percent said they did not know what NATO's present function is. A second question is concerned with the larger political shifts and alignments that have taken place in the last few years in East and Central Europe. When asked what the motivation of East and Central European countries is in seeking NATO membership, 29 percent of respondents said that this happened in accordance with the wish of the people and the governments of these countries to enhance their national security.[544] 46 percent of respondents were of the opinion that the US and other NATO member states were actively seeking to expand their own sphere of interest, and 25 percent of respondents did not know an answer to that question.[545] Question 3 asked whether the accession of some former CIS states to NATO would influence Russia's national security: 7 percent of respondents said that membership of former CIS states in NATO would enhance Russia's national security; 43 percent said that it would threaten Russia's national security; 29 percent were of the opinion that it would not significantly influence Russia's national security;

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[542] Kerneck, Barbara: "Russlands Sicht of EU und NATO – wie es die russischen Politiker mit ihren außenpolitischen Programmen halten", Berlin: Köster, 2004, p. 74. The study was conducted in January 2003 with a sample of 1600 Russian citizens.
[543] Ibid.
[544] Ibid.
[545] Ibid.

and, finally, 21 percent of respondents did not have an answer to that question.[546] The fourth question related to the accession of the Baltic states to NATO: 5 percent of respondents were of the opinion that this accession had a positive effect on Russia's national security; 46 percent said the effects were negative; 29 percent thought that it did not affect Russia's national security at all, and 20 percent had no opinion.[547] In a final question, the respondents were asked which options corresponded best with Russian national interests: 5 percent responded that Russian membership in NATO would be the best option; 43 percent were in favor of Russia working together with NATO; 14 percent advocated a creation of a rival security institution to NATO; 22 percent wanted Russia to stay away from any military bloc; and 16 percent had no opinion.[548]

These figures reflect the ambiguity that is characteristic of NATO-Russia relations. Furthermore, the numbers are a good indicator of the split within Russian society: the small percentage of respondents who advocate Russian membership in NATO corresponds with the group of the so-called Westerners who see Russia's future as lying with western institutions. On the other side of the political spectrum there are those who see Russian interests actively threatened by NATO and NATO expansion: here the numbers indicate that this fear is still very much alive within significant segments of the population. However, a growing segment of the population feels neither enthusiastic about nor threatened by NATO and thus has no objections to Russia working together with the organization. Overall, mistrust of NATO is still the most widespread attitude in Russia, an empirical fact that is important in order to understand Russia's position *vis-à-vis* NATO, as well as the foreign policy decisions that are taken by the Kremlin.

Similarly, Western perceptions regarding Russia are also paradoxical. On the one hand, there is a wide-spread consensus that Russia is not a real democracy and that efforts to modernize and democratize Russia have not only stalled but actually taken a turn for the worse, especially in the past couple of years. At the same time, however, a poll conducted by French newspaper "Le Figaro" revealed that 55 percent of respondents were of the opinion that Russia – and Ukraine – could one day be members of the European Union, provided that the accession criteria are met. In contrast, only 45

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[546] Ibid.
[547] Ibid, p. 75.
[548] Ibid.

percent of respondents advocated Turkish membership.[549] This poll once more reveals how Russia is seen as a European and a non-European country at the same time. Carnegie Moscow Center analyst Lilia Shevtsova comes to the conclusion that Russia and Europe have reached a mutual understanding concerning important issues: on the one hand they recognize their differences, and on the other they agree on the necessity of imitating a partnership.[550] The word imitate suggests with biting sarcasm that Shevtsova does not consider relations between the EU and Russia to be adequate. She argues that both sides have lost the will, or the ability, to seriously advance their interaction.

What, then, should the verdict on the relationship between NATO and Russia be – bearing in mind that Shevtsova's assessment of EU–Russia relations is also debatable? First of all, Shevtsova compares EU-Russia relations with US-Russia relations, also reaching a rather negative conclusion: she contends that relations between Moscow and Washington are characterized by a well-known triad: international terrorism, nuclear non-proliferation and the energy dialogue.[551] Shevtsova argues that a "polite smile" compensates for the lack of actual progress made in these three areas. The relationship between Russia and the United States is still characterized by an atmosphere of mistrust, even though both sides are actively trying to conceal this. Simultaneously, Russia is fairly open about its quest to squeeze the US out of the post-Soviet territory – this refers mainly to the presence of US (and NATO-led) troops stationed in Afghanistan and the corresponding air bases in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan.[552] This rather negative statement should not be extended wholesale to NATO-Russia relations, even though there is more than a grain of truth to it. NATO-Russia interaction has changed and deepened significantly since the Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security between NATO and the Russian Federation was signed in May of 1997, and an honest wish to create efficient institutional frameworks for a successful cooperation was certainly a main motivator for the implementation of the PJC and later on the NRC. Even so, as I have proved in this dissertation, existing structural confines continue to shape the successes and failures of the relationship.

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[549] N24 News, 24 March 2005, http://www.n24.de/politik/ausland/index.php/n2005032411401800002, [last accessed on 16 May 2006]. The "Le Figaro" survey was taken in Germany, France, Poland, the United Kingdom, Spain and Italy in March 2005.
[550] Shevtsova, Lilia: "Bürokratischer Autoritarismus – Fallen und Herausforderungen", in: Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte #11, Bonn: Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, 2006, pp. 6-13, p. 12.
[551] Ibid.
[552] Ibid.

Shevtsova hints at this dilemma by stating that both sides (in her case, the West and Russia, not specifically NATO and Russia) have interacted on a basis of misconceptions about each other, resulting in an attitude that privileges path-dependency over innovative solutions. According to her, both actors work with a set of illusions about the other one.[553] The West, currently occupied with problems of its own, is hoping that Russia won't cause any problems. In a case of conflict, it is hoped that Russia will give in, as it has done consistently for the past 15 years.[554] Even though Shevtsova argues forcefully against a traditional Russian great-power approach to foreign policy, she concedes that in the past interaction between Russia and the West has very often occurred according to great-power logic and zero-sum considerations, or, in other words, key realist assumptions. Moreover, Shevtsova argues that the (in)balance of power that has been characteristic of western-Russia relations ever since the end of the Cold War might be shifting in Russia's favor, largely because of the ever-increasing need of the West for natural resources. According to Shevtsova, western politicians are not paying attention to the fact that the Kremlin will find it increasingly hard to make concessions without losing face. Russia is currently under the illusion that it has ever-increasing room for manoeuvre in order to shape events in international relations in its favor because the rest of the world needs Russian energy.[555] Shevtsova also argues that it is wholly unrealistic for the Russian political elite to think that they can control events in international relations based only on the comparative advantage Russia enjoys with regard to natural resources. Still, a realist interpretation of Shevtsova's hypothesis would take into account potential geostrategic shifts that might tip the scale of NATO-Russia relations in Russia's favour. A constructivist would not contend that a shift in the actors' capabilities necessarily leads to a reconfiguration of the interaction between the two actors *per se*. As far as NATO is concerned, the energy variable obviously does not figure as prominently as it does in bilateral relations between Russia and western states, or even Russia and the EU, because NATO is first and foremost a military organization. Nevertheless, the energy variable might shape individual NATO member states' policies and attitudes toward Russia, which could potentially also affect the relationship that Russia has with NATO. In the final section I will now reiterate the main results of this research project before I turn to consider the outlook for the future of the

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[553] Ibid, p. 13.
[554] Ibid.
[555] Ibid.

relationship between NATO–Russia. I will also indicate where future research on the subject might complement the results of this research project.

5.3. Outlook

Figuring prominently among the results of this research project is an insight that was gained contrary to common sense assumptions, namely the frequently-voiced hypothesis that NATO's main problem ever since the end of the Cold War is that it is no longer useful and therefore anachronistic. This state of affairs, according to many, is the culprit for policy outcomes that are less than optimal, and it is also a reason why Russia and NATO continue to interact with each other in a state of imbalance of power and capabilities. The end of the Cold War has made NATO obsolete; NATO has lost its *raison d'être*. In fact, this statement misses half the picture. On the one hand, critics who contend that NATO has lost its place and meaning in international relations after the Cold War will always have a point. Fifteen years after the disintegration of the Soviet Union, questions may still legitimately be raised about the feasibility of the "NATO-project" and its actual cost/benefit balance sheet. It is a matter of personal opinion whether or not redesigning NATO in order to enhance the security of its members makes sense. Yet contrary to the theoretical assumption that international organizations are often plagued by inertia due to the problem of path dependency[556], today's NATO is no longer the NATO of the Cold War. In fact, today's NATO is not even the NATO of the 1990s. The two rounds of enlargement have changed the composition and purpose of the organization, as has the debate about what exactly it means for NATO to go "out of area", culminating first in the Kosovo intervention and more recently, in ISAF. Though other institutions, most notably the EU, have undergone similar changes in terms of enlargement, NATO has achieved a level of transformation that goes beyond merely taking in new members. The Washington and Prague summits, the Defence Capabilities Initiative and Prague Capabilities Commitment[557] all indicate that NATO has undergone quite significant structural changes. These changes have consistently occurred as a reaction to something and not so much as part of a master plan concerning itself with the future of NATO, therefore, there is legitimacy to the claim that NATO has been fairly reactive to change in international relations: nevertheless, reactive change is better than stagnation.

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[556] See chapter 2.
[557] See chapter 1.

Therefore, the argument that NATO is a Cold War dinosaur does not quite reflect reality. But in spite of the rather thorough transformation that NATO has undergone, it remains an Alliance that has the upper hand in a purely realist capabilities/balance of power game – at least with regard to Russia. As such, NATO continues to be seen in a negative light by a significant proportion of the Russian population and leadership, thus continuing the state of irritation between the two actors that I have referred to throughout my dissertation. My main argument is that this irritation is caused by structural confines that have their roots in a perceived imbalance of power scenario that has not been overcome yet and that is not likely to be overcome: NATO and Russia will most likely always engage differently with each other than NATO and other third countries. Paradoxically, the consistent perception of an imbalance of power has simultaneously led to a trivialization of the relationship: as I have already noted, on many levels the EU is perceived as being far more problematic with regard to Russian national interests than NATO. The constructivist argument in support of this claim would be that a norm convergence has taken place resulting in a decreasing number of contentious issues between the two actors. Conversely, a realist would argue that Russia sees that it has relatively little room for manoeuvre and therefore focuses on channelling its efforts into areas that are still within its control, instead of generally trying to reach a more balanced level of capabilities.

Again, neither explanation fits the actual situation: a convergence of norms is taking place only within the realms of the smallest common denominator. At the same time, outright hostilities over issues that define the state of comparative advantage of NATO over Russia[558] are not occurring anymore. The current state of NATO-Russia interaction is a series of small steps, taken one at a time. The milestones in this relationship, namely the establishment of institutionalized fora – the PJC and the NRC – were reached with the intention of finding a common language. While it is undeniable that both the PJC and the NRC have indeed contributed to the establishment of a political dialogue, the events that ended up having the greatest effect on the relationship between NATO and Russia have always been outside events that did not emanate from the forum of dialogue that was established for precisely this purpose. This suggests that a certain amount of unpredictability continues to figure prominently in the relationship between NATO and Russia.

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[558] Such as NATO enlargement.

Is Shevtsova right in offering a rather negative viewpoint on the future of relations between Russia and the West? I would argue that, in accordance with my hypotheses, Shevtsova's argument is too pessimistic, since it veers too much toward the conflict end of the spectrum. This is a general observation that pertains to Russia's relationship with the West, whether bilateral or institutional, but is also applies to the way that NATO and Russia interact. This dissertation should by no means be understood as a call to reconsider the entire NATO-Russia relationship, nor do I contend that the negatives outweigh the positives in this relationship. What I do advocate, however, is a more dispassionate discourse about the shortcomings of either actor in academic research on the subject. Instead of focusing on what attitudes needs to be changed for NATO-Russia cooperation to become effective, one should focus on specific areas where there is already a significant amount of cooperation in place: this might be an opportunity for further research projects. A steady process of small steps works better for NATO and Russia than any grand schemes for convergence, especially since the structural confines are such that grand schemes are not necessarily realistic, as I have pointed out previously.

At the same time, elements of Shevtsova's assessment might become increasingly relevant, especially with regard to the ever-increasing competition for natural resources – a factor that is of particular relevance in relation to the states of Central Asia. In fact, if I once again start from the premise that the Central Asian region can be considered to be an indicator with regard to future geostrategic developments, an entirely new constellation might emerge in the next ten years or so. The inevitable question that arises regarding NATO's, Russia's, and Central Asia's futures, is whether NATO will be able to reverse certain trends that have already been set in motion. The feasibility of NATO involvement in Central Asia would be very well suited for a separate research project. Moreover, there is evidence that suggests that the great games and questions of the future will not necessarily include NATO and Russia in the same constellation. It is very feasible that the rise of China as a regional power will reshape set patterns of interaction between the big global players. Therefore, one might ask the question whether NATO and Russia, in their habit of pursuing a policy of small steps, might not have foregone the opportunity for forging the close ties that would be necessary in order to engage in mutually beneficial cooperation, should the pawns on the great chessboard of international relations be rearranged in the future.

ANNEX

A.1 Bibliography

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A2. List of Abbreviations

ACO	Allied Command Operations
ACT	Allied Command Transformation
CACO	Central Asian Cooperation Organization
CAI	Cooperative Airspace Initiative
CFE	Conventional Armed Forces in Europe [Treaty]
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
CJTF	Combined Joint Task Force
CSCE	Conference for Security and Cooperation in Europe
CSTO	Collective Security Treaty Organization
DCI	Defense Capabilities Initiative
EAPC	Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council
ENP	European Neighborhood Policy
GTEP	Georgia Train and Equip Program
GU[U]AM	Georgia, Ukraine, [Uzbekistan], Azerbaijan, Moldova
IFOR	Implementation Force
IPAP	Individual Partnership Action Plan
IPP	Individual Partnership Programme
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
JALLC	Joint Analysis and Lessons Learned Center
KFOR	Kosovo Force/Operation Joint Guardian
MAD	Mutually Assured Destruction
MAP	Membership Action Plan
MLM	NATO Military Liaison Mission (Moscow)
NAC	North Atlantic Council
NACC	North Atlantic Cooperation Council
NIO	NATO Information Office (Moscow)
NRC	NATO-Russia Council
NRF	NATO Response Force

OAE	Operation Active Endeavour
OAF	Operation Allied Forces
OEF	Operation Enduring Freedom
OSCE	Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PARP	Planning and Review Process
PCC	Prague Capabilities Commitment
PfP	Partnership for Peace
PfP SOFA	Partnership for Peace Status of Forces Agreement
PJC	Permanent Joint Council
SCO	Shanghai Cooperation Organization
SFOR	Stabilization Force/ Operation Joint Guard-Operation Joint Forge
SHAPE	Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe
TMD	Theater Missile Defense
VSH	Virtual Silk Highway

A3. Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security Between NATO and the Russian Federation

Paris, May 27, 1997

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization and its member States, on the one hand, and the Russian Federation, on the other hand, hereinafter referred to as NATO and Russia, based on an enduring political commitment undertaken at the highest political level, will build together a lasting and inclusive peace in the Euro-Atlantic area on the principles of democracy and cooperative security.

NATO and Russia do not consider each other as adversaries. They share the goal of overcoming the vestiges of earlier confrontation and competition and of strengthening mutual trust and cooperation. The present Act reaffirms the determination of NATO and Russia to give concrete substance to their shared commitment to build a stable, peaceful and undivided Europe, whole and free, to the benefit of all its peoples. Making this commitment at the highest political level marks the beginning of a fundamentally new relationship between NATO and Russia. They intend to develop, on the basis of common interest, reciprocity and transparency a strong, stable and enduring partnership.

This Act defines the goals and mechanism of consultation, cooperation, joint decision-making and joint action that will constitute the core of the mutual relations between NATO and Russia.

NATO has undertaken a historic transformation—a process that will continue. In 1991 the Alliance revised its strategic doctrine to take account of the new security environment in Europe. Accordingly, NATO has radically reduced and continues the adaptation of its conventional and nuclear forces. While preserving the capability to meet the commitments undertaken in the Washington Treaty, NATO has expanded and will continue to expand its political functions, and taken on new missions of peacekeeping and crisis management in support of the United Nations (UN) and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), such as in Bosnia and Herzegovina, to address new security challenges in close association with other countries and international organizations. NATO is in the process of developing the European Security and Defence Identity (ESDI) within the Alliance. It will continue to develop a broad and dynamic pattern of cooperation with OSCE participating States in particular through the Partnership for Peace and is working with Partner countries on the initiative to establish a Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council. NATO member States have decided to examine NATO's Strategic Concept to ensure that it is fully consistent with Europe's new security situation and challenges.

Russia is continuing the building of a democratic society and the realization of its political and economic transformation. It is developing the concept of its national security and revising its military doctrine to ensure that they are fully consistent with new security realities. Russia has carried out deep reductions in its armed forces, has withdrawn its forces on an unprecedented scale from the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and the Baltic countries and withdrawn all its nuclear weapons back to its own national territory. Russia is committed to further reducing its conventional and nuclear forces. It is actively participating in peacekeeping operations in support of the UN and the OSCE, as well as in crisis management in different areas of the world. Russia is contributing to the multinational forces in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

I. PRINCIPLES

Proceeding from the principle that the security of all states in the Euro-Atlantic community is indivisible, NATO and Russia will work together to contribute to the establishment in Europe of common and comprehensive security based on the allegiance to shared values, commitments and norms of behaviour in the interests of all states.

NATO and Russia will help to strengthen the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, including developing further its role as a primary instrument in preventive diplomacy, conflict prevention, crisis management, post-conflict rehabilitation and regional security cooperation, as well as in enhancing its operational capabilities to carry out these tasks. The OSCE, as the only pan-European security Organization, has a key role in European peace and stability. In strengthening the OSCE, NATO and Russia will cooperate to prevent any possibility of returning to a Europe of division and confrontation, or the isolation of any state.

Consistent with the OSCE's work on a Common and Comprehensive Security Model for Europe for the Twenty-First Century, and taking into account the decisions of the Lisbon Summit concerning a Charter on European security, NATO and Russia will seek the widest possible cooperation among participating States of the OSCE with the aim of creating in Europe a common space of security and stability, without dividing lines or spheres of influence limiting the sovereignty of any state.

NATO and Russia start from the premise that the shared objective of strengthening security and stability in the Euro-Atlantic area for the benefit of all countries requires a response to new risks and challenges, such as aggressive nationalism, proliferation of nuclear, biological and chemical weapons, terrorism, persistent abuse of human rights and of the rights of persons belonging to national minorities and unresolved territorial disputes, which pose a threat to common peace, prosperity and stability.

This Act does not affect, and cannot be regarded as affecting, the primary responsibility of the UN Security Council for maintaining international peace and security, or the role of the OSCE as the inclusive and comprehensive Organization for consultation, decision-making and cooperation in its area and as a regional arrangement under Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter.

In implementing the provisions in this Act, NATO and Russia will observe in good faith their obligations under international law and international instruments, including the obligations of the United Nations Charter and the provisions of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights as well as their commitments under the Helsinki Final Act and subsequent OSCE documents, including the Charter of Paris and the documents adopted at the Lisbon OSCE Summit.

To achieve the aims of this Act, NATO and Russia will base their relations on a shared commitment to the following principles:

- development, on the basis of transparency, of a strong, stable, enduring and equal partnership and of cooperation to strengthen security and stability in the Euro-Atlantic area;
- acknowledgement of the vital role that democracy, political pluralism, the rule of law, and respect for human rights and civil liberties and the development of free market economies play in the development of common prosperity and comprehensive security;
- refraining from the threat or use of force against each other as well as against any other state, its sovereignty, territorial integrity or political independence in any manner inconsistent with the United Nations Charter and with the Declaration of Principles Guiding Relations Between Participating States contained in the Helsinki Final Act;

- respect for sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of all states and their inherent right to choose the means to ensure their own security, the inviolability of borders and peoples' right of self-determination as enshrined in the Helsinki Final Act and other OSCE documents;
- mutual transparency in creating and implementing defence policy and military doctrines;
- prevention of conflicts and settlement of disputes by peaceful means in accordance with UN and OSCE principles;
- support, on a case-by-case basis, of peacekeeping operations carried out under the authority of the UN Security Council or the responsibility of the OSCE.

II. MECHANISM FOR CONSULTATION AND COOPERATION, THE NATO-RUSSIA PERMANENT JOINT COUNCIL

To carry out the activities and aims provided for by this Act and to develop common approaches to European security and to political problems, NATO and Russia will create the NATO-RUSSIA Permanent Joint Council. The central objective of this Permanent Joint Council will be to build increasing levels of trust, unity of purpose and habits of consultation and cooperation between NATO and Russia, in order to enhance each other's security and that of all nations in the Euro-Atlantic area and diminish the security of none. If disagreements arise, NATO and Russia will endeavour to settle them on the basis of goodwill and mutual respect within the framework of political consultations.

The Permanent Joint Council will provide a mechanism for consultations, coordination and, to the maximum extent possible, where appropriate, for joint decisions and joint action with respect to security issues of common concern. The consultations will not extend to internal matters of either NATO, NATO member States or Russia.

The shared objective of NATO and Russia is to identify and pursue as many opportunities for joint action as possible. As the relationship develops, they expect that additional opportunities for joint action will emerge.

The Permanent Joint Council will be the principal venue of consultation between NATO and Russia in times of crisis or for any other situation affecting peace and stability. Extraordinary meetings of the Council will take place in addition to its regular meetings to allow for prompt consultations in case of emergencies. In this context, NATO and Russia will promptly consult within the Permanent Joint Council in case one of the Council members perceives a threat to its territorial integrity, political independence or security.

The activities of the Permanent Joint Council will be built upon the principles of reciprocity and transparency. In the course of their consultations and cooperation, NATO and Russia will inform each other regarding the respective security-related challenges they face and the measures that each intends to take to address them.

Provisions of this Act do not provide NATO or Russia, in any way, with a right of veto over the actions of the other nor do they infringe upon or restrict the rights of NATO or Russia to independent decision-making and action. They cannot be used as a means to disadvantage the interests of other states.

The Permanent Joint Council will meet at various levels and in different forms, according to the subject matter and the wishes of NATO and Russia. The Permanent Joint Council will meet at

the level of Foreign Ministers and at the level of Defence Ministers twice annually, and also monthly at the level of ambassadors/permanent representatives to the North Atlantic Council.

The Permanent Joint Council may also meet, as appropriate, at the level of Heads of State and Government.

The Permanent Joint Council may establish committees or working groups for individual subjects or areas of cooperation on an ad hoc or permanent basis, as appropriate.

Under the auspices of the Permanent Joint Council, military representatives and Chiefs of Staff will also meet; meetings of Chiefs of Staff will take place no less than twice a year, and also monthly at military representatives level. Meetings of military experts may be convened, as appropriate.

The Permanent Joint Council will be chaired jointly by the Secretary General of NATO, a representative of one of the NATO member States on a rotation basis, and a representative of Russia.

To support the work of the Permanent Joint Council, NATO and Russia will establish the necessary administrative structures.

Russia will establish a Mission to NATO headed by a representative at the rank of Ambassador. A senior military representative and his staff will be part of this Mission for the purposes of the military cooperation. NATO retains the possibility of establishing an appropriate presence in Moscow, the modalities of which remain to be determined.

The agenda for regular sessions will be established jointly. Organizational arrangements and rules of procedure for the Permanent Joint Council will be worked out. These arrangements will be in place for the inaugural meeting of the Permanent Joint Council which will be held no later than four months after the signature of this Act.

The Permanent Joint Council will engage in three distinct activities:

- consulting on the topics in Section III of this Act and on any other political or security issue determined by mutual consent;
- on the basis of these consultations, developing joint initiatives on which NATO and Russia would agree to speak or act in parallel;
- once consensus has been reached in the course of consultation, making joint decisions and taking joint action on a case-by-case basis, including participation, on an equitable basis, in the planning and preparation of joint operations, including peacekeeping operations under the authority of the UN Security Council or the responsibility of the OSCE.

Any actions undertaken by NATO or Russia, together or separately, must be consistent with the United Nations Charter and the OSCE's governing principles.

Recognizing the importance of deepening contacts between the legislative bodies of the participating States to this Act, NATO and Russia will also encourage expanded dialogue and cooperation between the North Atlantic Assembly and the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation.

III. AREAS FOR CONSULTATION AND COOPERATION

In building their relationship, NATO and Russia will focus on specific areas of mutual interest. They will consult and strive to cooperate to the broadest possible degree in the following areas:

- issues of common interest related to security and stability in the Euro-Atlantic area or to concrete crises, including the contribution of NATO and Russia to security and stability in this area;
- conflict prevention, including preventive diplomacy, crisis management and conflict resolution taking into account the role and responsibility of the UN and the OSCE and the work of these organizations in these fields;
- joint operations, including peacekeeping operations, on a case-by-case basis, under the authority of the UN Security Council or the responsibility of the OSCE, and if Combined Joint Task Forces (CJTF) are used in such cases, participation in them at an early stage;
- participation of Russia in the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council and the Partnership for Peace;
- exchange of information and consultation on strategy, defence policy, the military doctrines of NATO and Russia, and budgets and infrastructure development programs;

    arms control issues;

- nuclear safety issues, across their full spectrum;
- preventing the proliferation of nuclear, biological and chemical weapons, and their delivery means, combatting nuclear trafficking and strengthening cooperation in specific arms control areas, including political and defence aspects of proliferation;
- possible cooperation in Theater Missile Defence;
- enhanced regional air traffic safety, increased air traffic capacity and reciprocal exchanges, as appropriate, to promote confidence through increased measures of transparency and exchanges of information in relation to air defence and related aspects of airspace management/control. This will include exploring possible cooperation on appropriate air defence related matters;
- increasing transparency, predictability and mutual confidence regarding the size and roles of the conventional forces of member States of NATO and Russia;
- reciprocal exchanges, as appropriate, on nuclear weapons issues, including doctrines and strategy of NATO and Russia;
- coordinating a program of expanded cooperation between respective military establishments, as further detailed below;
- pursuing possible armaments-related cooperation through association of Russia with NATO's Conference of National Armaments Directors;
- conversion of defence industries;
- developing mutually agreed cooperative projects in defence-related economic, environmental and scientific fields;
- conducting joint initiatives and exercises in civil emergency preparedness and disaster relief;
- combatting terrorism and drug trafficking;
- improving public understanding of evolving relations between NATO and Russia, including the establishment of a NATO documentation centre or information office in Moscow.

Other areas can be added by mutual agreement.

IV. POLITICAL-MILITARY MATTERS

NATO and Russia affirm their shared desire to achieve greater stability and security in the Euro-Atlantic area.

The member States of NATO reiterate that they have no intention, no plan and no reason to deploy nuclear weapons on the territory of new members, nor any need to change any aspect of NATO's nuclear posture or nuclear policy and do not foresee any future need to do so. This subsumes the fact that NATO has decided that it has no intention, no plan, and no reason to establish nuclear weapon storage sites on the territory of those members, whether through the construction of new nuclear storage facilities or the adaptation of old nuclear storage facilities. Nuclear storage sites are understood to be facilities specifically designed for the stationing of nuclear weapons, and include all types of hardened above or below ground facilities (storage bunkers or vaults) designed for storing nuclear weapons.

Recognizing the importance of the adaptation of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE) for the broader context of security in the OSCE area and the work on a Common and Comprehensive Security Model for Europe for the Twenty-First Century, the member States of NATO and Russia will work together in Vienna with the other States Parties to adapt the CFE Treaty to enhance its viability and effectiveness, taking into account Europe's changing security environment and the legitimate security interests of all OSCE participating States. They share the objective of concluding an adaptation agreement as expeditiously as possible and, as a first step in this process, they will, together with other States Parties to the CFE Treaty, seek to conclude as soon as possible a framework agreement setting forth the basic elements of an adapted CFE Treaty, consistent with the objectives and principles of the Document on Scope and Parameters agreed at Lisbon in December 1996.

NATO and Russia believe that an important goal of CFE Treaty adaptation should be a significant lowering in the total amount of Treaty-Limited Equipment permitted in the Treaty's area of application compatible with the legitimate defence requirements of each State Party. NATO and Russia encourage all States Parties to the CFE Treaty to consider reductions in their CFE equipment entitlements, as part of an overall effort to achieve lower equipment levels that are consistent with the transformation of Europe's security environment.

The member States of NATO and Russia commit themselves to exercise restraint during the period of negotiations, as foreseen in the Document on Scope and Parameters, in relation to the current postures and capabilities of their conventional armed forces in particular with respect to their levels of forces and deployments in the Treaty's area of application, in order to avoid developments in the security situation in Europe diminishing the security of any State Party. This commitment is without prejudice to possible voluntary decisions by the individual States Parties to reduce their force levels or deployments, or to their legitimate security interests.

The member States of NATO and Russia proceed on the basis that adaptation of the CFE Treaty should help to ensure equal security for all States Parties irrespective of their membership of a politico-military alliance, both to preserve and strengthen stability and continue to prevent any destabilizing increase of forces in various regions of Europe and in Europe as a whole. An adapted CFE Treaty should also further enhance military transparency by extended information exchange and verification, and permit the possible accession by new States Parties.

The member States of NATO and Russia propose to other CFE States Parties to carry out such adaptation of the CFE Treaty so as to enable States Parties to reach, through a transparent and cooperative process, conclusions regarding reductions they might be prepared to take and resulting national Treaty-Limited Equipment ceilings. These will then be codified as binding limits in the adapted Treaty to be agreed by consensus of all States Parties, and reviewed in 2001 and at five-year intervals thereafter. In doing so, the States Parties will take into account all the levels of Treaty-Limited Equipment established for the Atlantic-to-the-Urals area by the

original CFE Treaty, the substantial reductions that have been carried out since then, the changes to the situation in Europe and the need to ensure that the security of no state is diminished.

The member States of NATO and Russia reaffirm that States Parties to the CFE Treaty should maintain only such military capabilities, individually or in conjunction with others, as are commensurate with individual or collective legitimate security needs, taking into account their international obligations, including the CFE Treaty.

Each State-Party will base its agreement to the provisions of the adapted Treaty on all national ceilings of the States Parties, on its projections of the current and future security situation in Europe.

In addition, in the negotiations on the adaptation of the CFE Treaty, the member States of NATO and Russia will, together with other States Parties, seek to strengthen stability by further developing measures to prevent any potentially threatening buildup of conventional forces in agreed regions of Europe, to include Central and Eastern Europe.

NATO and Russia have clarified their intentions with regard to their conventional force postures in Europe's new security environment and are prepared to consult on the evolution of these postures in the framework of the Permanent Joint Council.

NATO reiterates that in the current and foreseeable security environment, the Alliance will carry out its collective defence and other missions by ensuring the necessary interoperability, integration, and capability for reinforcement rather than by additional permanent stationing of substantial combat forces. Accordingly, it will have to rely on adequate infrastructure commensurate with the above tasks. In this context, reinforcement may take place, when necessary, in the event of defence against a threat of aggression and missions in support of peace consistent with the United Nations Charter and the OSCE governing principles, as well as for exercises consistent with the adapted CFE Treaty, the provisions of the Vienna Document 1994 and mutually agreed transparency measures. Russia will exercise similar restraint in its conventional force deployments in Europe.

The member States of NATO and Russia will strive for greater transparency, predictability and mutual confidence with regard to their armed forces. They will comply fully with their obligations under the Vienna Document 1994 and develop cooperation with the other OSCE participating States, including negotiations in the appropriate format, inter alia within the OSCE to promote confidence and security.

The member States of NATO and Russia will use and improve existing arms control regimes and confidence-building measures to create security relations based on peaceful cooperation.

NATO and Russia, in order to develop cooperation between their military establishments, will expand POLITICAL-MILITARY consultations and cooperation through the Permanent Joint Council with an enhanced dialogue between the senior military authorities of NATO and its member States and of Russia. They will implement a program of significantly expanded military activities and practical cooperation between NATO and Russia at all levels. Consistent with the tenets of the Permanent Joint Council, this enhanced military-to-military dialogue will be built upon the principle that neither party views the other as a threat nor seeks to disadvantage the other's security. This enhanced military-to-military dialogue will include regularly-scheduled reciprocal briefings on NATO and Russian military doctrine, strategy and resultant force posture and will include the broad possibilities for joint exercises and training.

To support this enhanced dialogue and the military components of the Permanent Joint Council, NATO and Russia will establish military liaison missions at various levels on the basis of reciprocity and further mutual arrangements.

To enhance their partnership and ensure this partnership is grounded to the greatest extent possible in practical activities and direct cooperation, NATO's and Russia's respective military authorities will explore the further development of a concept for joint NATO-RUSSIA peacekeeping operations. This initiative should build upon the positive experience of working together in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the lessons learned there will be used in the establishment of Combined Joint Task Forces.

The present Act takes effect upon the date of its signature.

NATO and Russia will take the proper steps to ensure its implementation in accordance with their procedures.

The present Act is established in two originals in the French, English and Russian language.

The Secretary General of NATO and the Government of the Russian Federation will provide the Secretary General of the United Nations and the Secretary General of the OSCE with the text of this Act with the request to circulate it to all members of their Organizations.

Source: NATO website, http://www.nato.int/docu/basictxt/fndact-a.htm

A4. NATO-Russia Relations: A New Quality. Declaration by Heads of State and Government of NATO Member States and the Russian Federation

Rome, May 28, 2002

At the start of the 21st century we live in a new, closely interrelated world, in which unprecedented new threats and challenges demand increasingly united responses. Consequently, we, the member states of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the Russian Federation are today opening a new page in our relations, aimed at enhancing our ability to work together in areas of common interest and to stand together against common threats and risks to our security. As participants of the Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security, we reaffirm the goals, principles and commitments set forth therein, in particular our determination to build together a lasting and inclusive peace in the Euro-Atlantic area on the principles of democracy and cooperative security and the principle that the security of all states in the Euro-Atlantic community is indivisible. We are convinced that a qualitatively new relationship between NATO and the Russian Federation will constitute an essential contribution in achieving this goal. In this context, we will observe in good faith our obligations under international law, including the UN Charter, provisions and principles contained in the Helsinki Final Act and the OSCE Charter for European Security.

Building on the Founding Act and taking into account the initiative taken by our Foreign Ministers, as reflected in their statement of 7 December 2001, to bring together NATO member states and Russia to identify and pursue opportunities for joint action at twenty, we hereby establish the NATO-Russia Council. In the framework of the NATO-Russia Council, NATO member states and Russia will work as equal partners in areas of common interest. The NATO-Russia Council will provide a mechanism for consultation, consensus-building, cooperation, joint decision, and joint action for the member states of NATO and Russia on a wide spectrum of security issues in the Euro-Atlantic region.

The NATO-Russia Council will serve as the principal structure and venue for advancing the relationship between NATO and Russia. It will operate on the principle of consensus. It will work on the basis of a continuous political dialogue on security issues among its members with a view to early identification of emerging problems, determination of optimal common approaches and the conduct of joint actions, as appropriate. The members of the NATO-Russia Council, acting in their national capacities and in a manner consistent with their respective collective commitments and obligations, will take joint decisions and will bear equal responsibility, individually and jointly, for their implementation. Each member may raise in the NATO-Russia Council issues related to the implementation of joint decisions.

The NATO-Russia Council will be chaired by the Secretary General of NATO. It will meet at the level of Foreign Ministers and at the level of Defence Ministers twice annually, and at the level of Heads of State and Government as appropriate. Meetings of the Council at Ambassadorial level will be held at least once a month, with the possibility of more frequent meetings as needed, including extraordinary meetings, which will take place at the request of any Member or the NATO Secretary General.

To support and prepare the meetings of the Council a Preparatory Committee is established, at the level of the NATO Political Committee, with Russian representation at the appropriate level. The Preparatory Committee will meet twice monthly, or more often if necessary. The NATO-Russia Council may also establish committees or working groups for individual subjects or areas of cooperation on an ad hoc or permanent basis, as appropriate. Such committees and working groups will draw upon the resources of existing NATO committees.

Under the auspices of the Council, military representatives and Chiefs of Staff will also meet. Meetings of Chiefs of Staff will take place no less than twice a year, meetings at military

representatives level at least once a month, with the possibility of more frequent meetings as needed. Meetings of military experts may be convened as appropriate.

The NATO-Russia Council, replacing the NATO-Russia Permanent Joint Council, will focus on all areas of mutual interest identified in Section III of the Founding Act, including the provision to add other areas by mutual agreement. The work programmes for 2002 agreed in December 2001 for the PJC and its subordinate bodies will continue to be implemented under the auspices and rules of the NATO-Russia Council. NATO member states and Russia will continue to intensify their cooperation in areas including the struggle against terrorism, crisis management, non-proliferation, arms control and confidence-building measures, theatre missile defence, search and rescue at sea, military-to-military cooperation, and civil emergencies. This cooperation may complement cooperation in other fora. As initial steps in this regard, we have today agreed to pursue the following cooperative efforts:

- **Struggle Against Terrorism:** strengthen cooperation through a multi-faceted approach, including joint assessments of the terrorist threat to the Euro-Atlantic area, focused on specific threats, for example, to Russian and NATO forces, to civilian aircraft, or to critical infrastructure; an initial step will be a joint assessment of the terrorist threat to NATO, Russia and Partner peacekeeping forces in the Balkans.
- **Crisis Management:** strengthen cooperation, including through: regular exchanges of views and information on peacekeeping operations, including continuing cooperation and consultations on the situation in the Balkans; promoting interoperability between national peacekeeping contingents, including through joint or coordinated training initiatives; and further development of a generic concept for joint NATO-Russia peacekeeping operations.
- **Non-Proliferation:** broaden and strengthen cooperation against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and the means of their delivery, and contribute to strengthening existing non-proliferation arrangements through: a structured exchange of views, leading to a joint assessment of global trends in proliferation of nuclear, biological and chemical agents; and exchange of experience with the goal of exploring opportunities for intensified practical cooperation on protection from nuclear, biological and chemical agents.
- **Arms Control and Confidence-Building Measures:** recalling the contributions of arms control and confidence- and security-building measures (CSBMs) to stability in the Euro-Atlantic area and reaffirming adherence to the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE) as a cornerstone of European security, work cooperatively toward ratification by all the States Parties and entry into force of the Agreement on Adaptation of the CFE Treaty, which would permit accession by non-CFE states; continue consultations on the CFE and Open Skies Treaties; and continue the NATO-Russia nuclear experts consultations.
- **Theatre Missile Defence:** enhance consultations on theatre missile defence (TMD), in particular on TMD concepts, terminology, systems and system capabilities, to analyse and evaluate possible levels of interoperability among respective TMD systems, and explore opportunities for intensified practical cooperation, including joint training and exercises.
- **Search and Rescue at Sea:** monitor the implementation of the NATO-Russia Framework Document on Submarine Crew Rescue, and continue to promote cooperation, transparency and confidence between NATO and Russia in the area of search and rescue at sea.
- **Military-to-Military Cooperation and Defence Reform:** pursue enhanced military-to-military cooperation and interoperability through enhanced joint training and exercises and the conduct of joint demonstrations and tests; explore the possibility of establishing an integrated NATO-Russia military training centre for missions to address the challenges of the 21st century; enhance cooperation on defence reform and its economic aspects, including conversion.

- **Civil Emergencies:** pursue enhanced mechanisms for future NATO-Russia cooperation in responding to civil emergencies. Initial steps will include the exchange of information on recent disasters and the exchange of WMD consequence management information.
- **New Threats and Challenges:** In addition to the areas enumerated above, explore possibilities for confronting new challenges and threats to the Euro-Atlantic area in the framework of the activities of the NATO Committee on Challenges to Modern Society (CCMS); initiate cooperation in the field of civil and military airspace controls; and pursue enhanced scientific cooperation.

The members of the NATO-Russia Council will work with a view to identifying further areas of cooperation.

Source: NATO website, www.nato.int/docu/basictxt/b020528e.htm

Washington D.C., April 4, 1949

The Parties to this Treaty reaffirm their faith in the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and their desire to live in peace with all peoples and all governments. They are determined to safeguard the freedom, common heritage and civilisation of their peoples, founded on the principles of democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law. They seek to promote stability and well-being in the North Atlantic area. They are resolved to unite their efforts for collective defence and for the preservation of peace and security. They therefore agree to this North Atlantic Treaty:

Article 1

The Parties undertake, as set forth in the Charter of the United Nations, to settle any international dispute in which they may be involved by peaceful means in such a manner that international peace and security and justice are not endangered, and to refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force in any manner inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations.

Article 2

The Parties will contribute toward the further development of peaceful and friendly international relations by strengthening their free institutions, by bringing about a better understanding of the principles upon which these institutions are founded, and by promoting conditions of stability and well-being. They will seek to eliminate conflict in their international economic policies and will encourage economic collaboration between any or all of them.

Article 3

In order more effectively to achieve the objectives of this Treaty, the Parties, separately and jointly, by means of continuous and effective self-help and mutual aid, will maintain and develop their individual and collective capacity to resist armed attack.

Article 4

The Parties will consult together whenever, in the opinion of any of them, the territorial integrity, political independence or security of any of the Parties is threatened.

Article 5

The Parties agree that an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all and consequently they agree that, if such an armed attack occurs, each of them, in exercise of the right of individual or collective self-defence recognised by Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations, will assist the Party or Parties so attacked by taking forthwith, individually and in concert with the other Parties, such action as it deems necessary, including the use of armed force, to restore and maintain the security of the North Atlantic area.

Any such armed attack and all measures taken as a result thereof shall immediately be reported to the Security Council. Such measures shall be terminated when the Security Council has taken the measures necessary to restore and maintain international peace and security .

Article 6 (1)

For the purpose of Article 5, an armed attack on one or more of the Parties is deemed to include an armed attack:

- on the territory of any of the Parties in Europe or North America, on the Algerian Departments of France (2), on the territory of or on the Islands under the jurisdiction of any of the Parties in the North Atlantic area north of the Tropic of Cancer;
- on the forces, vessels, or aircraft of any of the Parties, when in or over these territories or any other area in Europe in which occupation forces of any of the Parties were stationed on the date when the Treaty entered into force or the Mediterranean Sea or the North Atlantic area north of the Tropic of Cancer.

Article 7

This Treaty does not affect, and shall not be interpreted as affecting in any way the rights and obligations under the Charter of the Parties which are members of the United Nations, or the primary responsibility of the Security Council for the maintenance of international peace and security.

Article 8

Each Party declares that none of the international engagements now in force between it and any other of the Parties or any third State is in conflict with the provisions of this Treaty, and undertakes not to enter into any international engagement in conflict with this Treaty.

Article 9

The Parties hereby establish a Council, on which each of them shall be represented, to consider matters concerning the implementation of this Treaty. The Council shall be so organised as to be able to meet promptly at any time. The Council shall set up such subsidiary bodies as may be necessary; in particular it shall establish immediately a defence committee which shall recommend measures for the implementation of Articles 3 and 5.

Article 10

The Parties may, by unanimous agreement, invite any other European State in a position to further the principles of this Treaty and to contribute to the security of the North Atlantic area to accede to this Treaty. Any State so invited may become a Party to the Treaty by depositing its instrument of accession with the Government of the United States of America. The Government of the United States of America will inform each of the Parties of the deposit of each such instrument of accession.

Article 11

This Treaty shall be ratified and its provisions carried out by the Parties in accordance with their respective constitutional processes. The instruments of ratification shall be deposited as soon as possible with the Government of the United States of America, which will notify all the other signatories of each deposit. The Treaty shall enter into force between the States which have ratified it as soon as the ratifications of the majority of the signatories, including the ratifications of Belgium, Canada, France, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the United States, have been deposited and shall come into effect with respect to other States on the date of the deposit of their ratifications. (3)

Article 12

After the Treaty has been in force for ten years, or at any time thereafter, the Parties shall, if any of them so requests, consult together for the purpose of reviewing the Treaty, having regard for the factors then affecting peace and security in the North Atlantic area, including the development of universal as well as regional arrangements under the Charter of the United Nations for the maintenance of international peace and security.

Article 13

After the Treaty has been in force for twenty years, any Party may cease to be a Party one year after its notice of denunciation has been given to the Government of the United States of America, which will inform the Governments of the other Parties of the deposit of each notice of denunciation.
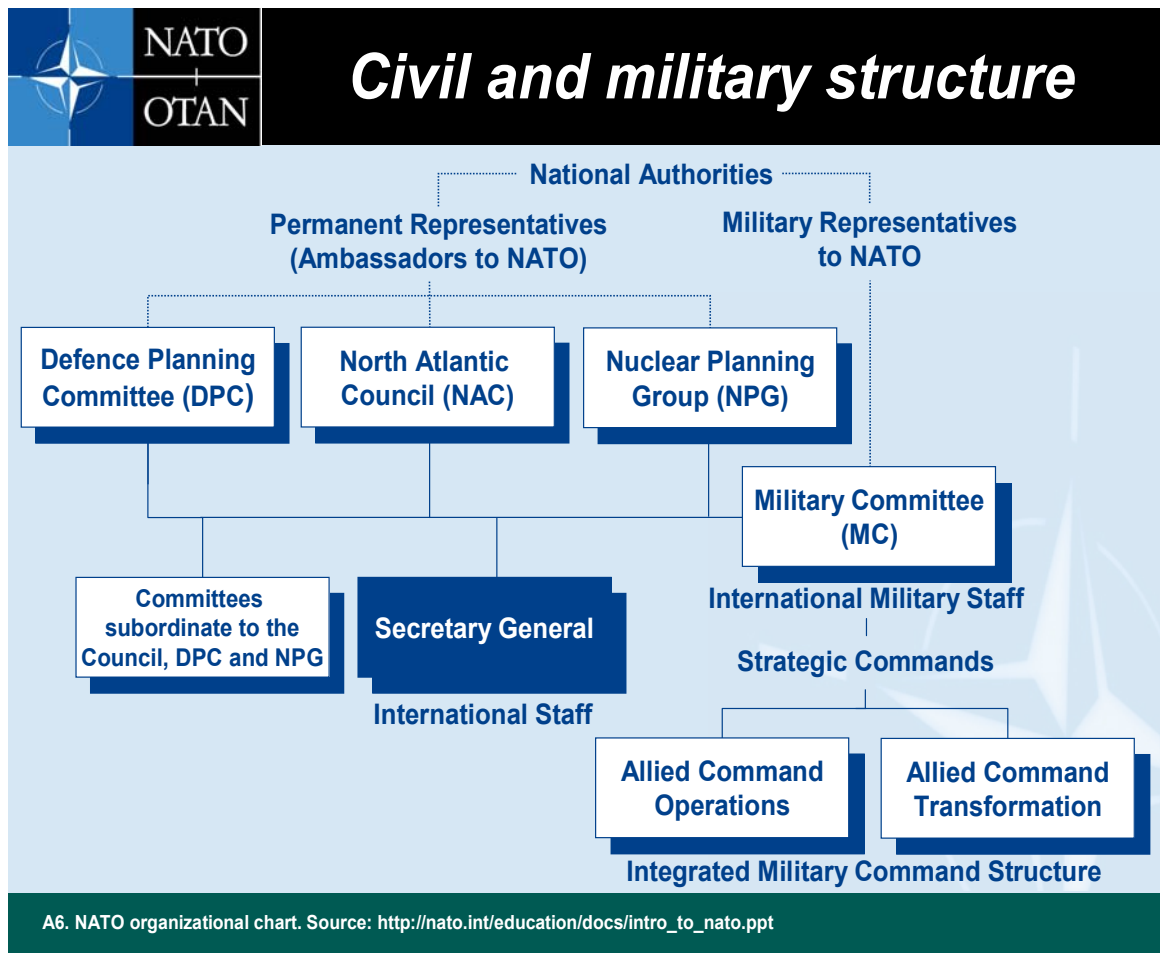
Article 14

This Treaty, of which the English and French texts are equally authentic, shall be deposited in the archives of the Government of the United States of America. Duly certified copies will be transmitted by that Government to the Governments of other signatories.

Footnotes :

1. The definition of the territories to which Article 5 applies was revised by Article 2 of the Protocol to the North Atlantic Treaty on the accession of Greece and Turkey signed on 22 October 1951.
2. On January 16, 1963, the North Atlantic Council noted that insofar as the former Algerian Departments of France were concerned, the relevant clauses of this Treaty had become inapplicable as from July 3, 1962.
3. The Treaty came into force on 24 August 1949, after the deposition of the ratifications of all signatory states.

Source: NATO website, http://www.nato.int/docu/basictxt/treaty.htm

A6. NATO organizational chart

Civil and military structure

National Authorities

Permanent Representatives (Ambassadors to NATO)

Military Representatives to NATO

Defence Planning Committee (DPC)

North Atlantic Council (NAC)

Nuclear Planning Group (NPG)

Military Committee (MC)

International Military Staff

Committees subordinate to the Council, DPC and NPG

Secretary General

International Staff

Strategic Commands

Allied Command Operations

Allied Command Transformation

Integrated Military Command Structure

A6. NATO organizational chart. Source: http://nato.int/education/docs/intro_to_nato.ppt

A7. NATO's partnership schemes

NACC (1991)   all CIS countries, Albania

PfP (1994):   Albania (February 1994), Armenia (October 1994), Austria (February 1995), Azerbaijan (May 1994), Belarus (January 1995), Croatia (May 2000), Finland (May 1994), Georgia (March 1994), Ireland (December 1999), Kazakhstan (May 1994), Kyrgyzstan (June 1994), Macedonia (November 1995), Moldova (March 1994), Russia (June 1994), Sweden (May 1994), Switzerland (December 1996), Tajikistan (February 2002), Turkmenistan (May 1994), Ukraine (February 1994), Uzbekistan (July 1994)

Formerly PfP,   Czech Republic, Bulgaria, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania
now NATO   Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia

EAPC (1997)   Albania, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Croatia, Finland, Georgia, Ireland, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Macedonia, Moldova, Russia, Sweden, Switzerland, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan

IPAP   Georgia (29 October 2004), Azerbaijan (27 May 2005), Armenia (16 December 2005), Kazakhstan (31 January 2006), Moldova (19 May 2006)

MAP   Albania, Macedonia, Croatia

A8. Statutory declaration ("Eidesstattliche Versicherung")

Hiermit versichere ich eidesstattlich, dass die von mir erstellte Dissertation mit dem Titel „Power, structures, and norms: determinants and patterns of NATO-Russia relations since 1997" auf der Grundlage der angegebenen Hilfsmittel selbstständig angefertigt worden ist.