

# NATO Enlargement Eastwards and NATO/Russia Relations

\*Paul Gebhard

In response to the topic to be addressed, I'd like to touch on three broad areas. First, the why of NATO enlargement and the specific benefits the U.S. sees; second, a number of post-Madrid issues, or post-enlargement issues ( what are going to be the key questions that each member of the Alliance is going to have to face); and third, provide a brief overview of the NATO-Russia Founding Act and some of its key provisions.

So, first to the why of NATO enlargement as far as the U.S. is concerned. The U.S. sees the great opportunity for democratic reform in Central and Eastern Europe fomented by enlargement. The opportunity to join NATO clearly has served as an impetus for democratic change in a number of countries, specifically for greater civilian control over the military, greater parliamentary oversight, and the creation of transparent political processes. I believe this can be seen in new countries like Slovenia, where there are wonderful opportunities to build a new government from the ground up. It can be seen very clearly in countries like Poland, about which, up until three or four months ago, there were very deep concerns in the West concerning democratic control of the military. I think it's quite clear that as a direct result of western criticism over the way Poland was conducting its military affairs, the Polish government took very important steps to reform the defense bureaucracy and firmly establish civilian control over the military.

Second, it's clear that enlargement brings a stronger collective defense and ability to address new security challenges. Though it is a cliché that the Cold War is over, we also know that, as our troops in Bosnia make very clear, defense issues do remain still for Europe and the United States to address. And despite being at the far end of the

conflict spectrum, the Gulf War again demonstrated that there are also places outside of Europe where the United States and Europe can act together in defense of their interests.

The third issue is very clearly more than just on the horizon: I believe it is here today. And that is proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, which the Defense Minister Serra mentioned earlier. I think it's a very important issue for Europe partly because it is not an issue which develops over time; rather because it's an issue where the technical development can move very quickly based upon the import of technologies and the delivery of missile systems. The enlargement process here brings a larger circle of like-minded states together to make contributions on collective security and collective defense. And such cooperation can be seen elsewhere, also; for example, in Bosnia where NATO plus all of the Partnership for Peace countries are there making contributions together. These are contributions in terms of energetic forces with specialized capabilities that, in many cases, the countries developed which were not widely prevalent in NATO forces. And here I'm referring to certain kinds of civil affairs units and chemical defense units. As you can see, then, countries outside of NATO are truly bringing important contributions to NATO and the security of Europe.

Fourth, a benefit of enlargement is improved relations among states. NATO's lasting legacy for Europe, I would submit, is its role as a peace promoter and a peace manager. It has really served that function, dare I say, even better that it did in deterring outside threats. I say 'served better' because that function is, as I've said, part of the lasting legacy which still holds true today. For example, the potential for joining NATO has brought a number of countries, or spurred a number of countries, to settle disputes. Notably, Poland and Lithuania have signed an agreement clarifying their border, as have other countries as well: Hungary and Slovakia; Poland and Ukraine; Hungary and Romania. In each case, long-standing sores between nations have been given a lot of high level political attention in order to solve these issues and create acceptable decisions for these countries very much, I think, under pressure to clean up their international relations to make them more viable members of the West and, in particular, NATO.

Fifth, plenoprosperity. When these countries join NATO, they will have a more stable climate for investment and economic reform. If I were a large investor, I would certainly think about putting money into any of these countries coming into NATO, because clearly their investment risk is going to go down. Indeed, more countries and companies are going to be willing to put money into countries that are part of NATO thanks to the security guarantees that the Alliance supposes. And, clearly, those investments will be a boost to their chances for wider integration with the West.

Last, there is a great benefit to broader European stability from the enlargement of NATO. As I said before, democratic change in states, better relations with neighbors, and prosperity all equate to greater European stability. Historically, when Central and Eastern Europe were unstable, Europe had a penchant for instability. For the U.S., at

least, all of these reasons taken together add up to a very compelling argument for why the United States has been a very strong proponent for the enlargement of NATO.

I think it's also because these arguments really go across the board without reference to particular countries. There is probably nobody currently who could give you a definitive answer on who exactly is going to join or be asked to join in Madrid. But clearly, though, regardless of the specifics as to which countries are asked to join, there will be, as I've indicated, substantial benefits for Western Europe and for European security.

Now, there are going to be several issues that come up after Madrid. There are, shall we say, several challenges which will need to be addressed, whoever is invited.

First, there will be the action of parliaments and congresses. There will have to be fundamental questions asked, which I assume will be asked if not in all countries, in most. Yes, the immediate threat to European security is low (I say 'immediate' meaning today, tomorrow, and to the few years in the future); but, clearly the fundamentals of joining NATO are two-folded and linked. One question is whether the present members of NATO will have a willingness to spend and to defend these new states; that is, whether a new country is willing to join and defend the current members and all the other members who would join. The other question is whether the current members are willing to put their troops on the line for your country. The latter is basic: It brings to fore the fundamental component of NATO - the common defense of allies, which is the component which separates NATO from other security institutions in Europe. And as such it will be key issue for parliaments and congresses to decide.

Second, these new countries are going to have to be producers of security and not just consumers. Though they have (as I said before) made contributions, for example in Bosnia, clearly, these activities are going to have to be more regularized. These countries will have to make clear their willingness to join common tasks and will have to have a more thorough reform of their military structures to make them more compatible with, and more easily able to work with, the rest of NATO. There will be some costs involved in that to those countries; still, this brings up another fundamental requirement of anyone who joins NATO. And that is that members must contribute to the common good. Members do not just drain-off, if you will, security.

Third, and I think highly important for the debates leading up to Madrid and afterwards, is the fact that NATO must remain open. NATO's Article 10 makes clear that it is an open organization, and NATO has got to remain open to further accession. All of the elements I listed that were benefits from NATO enlargement rest fundamentally on the benefits that accrue from the steps states are willing to take in order to make themselves ready and attractive to join NATO. Should NATO wish to maintain that process of democratic change and economical reform, NATO has to make clear that it is willing to take in new countries after the first draw. Important to remember is that the overall goal of the enlargement and NATO security policy is an

undivided Europe. And if it is not clear that NATO remains open, I believe that goal comes into jeopardy. So, the handling of this question will be a key issue for Madrid and for the post-Madrid discussions.

The fourth challenge after Madrid is very clear (it was touched on in the introduction), and that is the relationship with Russia. I don't think that the United States puts too much emphasis on this issue given the great influence that Russia has historically (and not just since 1945) had on the development of European politics. Russia continues to be the largest player on the continent. It is a country going through profound economic and political change. It is a country which has lost much of its previous self-identity and is searching for a new self-identity. In view of this, I think any steps that NATO can take, or that countries can take bilaterally, to build a relationship with Russia will be steps towards greater development of stability in Europe.

Briefly now, let me turn to the elements of the Russia-NATO Founding Act, which was signed on May 14th by Secretary General Solana and Foreign Minister Primakov. (The full title is, by the way, the Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation, and Security between NATO and the Russian Federation.) The act contains five basic principles, plus a preamble in which it is made clear that neither NATO nor Russia considers each other an adversary; and, although this is an important point that NATO made very clear at the end of the Cold War, it is the first time that NATO and Russia have both articulated this non-adversarial position.

The first section lays out the principles governing the relationship of states based upon international norms such as the UN and the CSCE Helsinki Final Act, in which there are explicit commitments to respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of states — particularly important issues given NATO's enlargement.

The second section creates a new forum called the Permanent Joint Council. This is an extremely important group comprised of 17 countries (NATO 16 plus Russia). The Council would obviously expand after Madrid, after countries are formally brought into the alliance, which would most likely be in 1999. But, as it stands now, the Council is the permanent forum in which NATO and Russia will consult. Section three describes a very large range of issues for NATO and Russia to discuss; for example, conflict prevention, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and the development of security strategies.

Section four was probably the most controversial and the most delicate to negotiate; and, I think a lot of credit devolves to Secretary Solana for bringing about the accords. This is the military dimension of the relationship. The key provisions of it are a re-duraction of NATO's nuclear statement of December of 1996: that NATO has no intention, no plan, no reason to deploy nuclear weapons on the territory of new countries. This section contains a reference to NATO's statement on how it would intend to carry out collective defense through interoperability, integration and reinforcement. A key

provision here is that NATO does not intend to station substantial combat forces in new countries. There was a recognition in this section that NATO will require adequate infrastructure on the territory of new members as part of its strategy of reinforcement. Also mentioned is NATO's and Russia's commitment to prompt adoption of the CFE Treaty, which is an important provision because that is a legally binding instrument by which Russia and NATO can negotiate security in Europe.

Finally, there's the clear articulation that NATO retains its full prerogatives: As President Clinton said, "Russia will work with NATO, but not within NATO". In sum, the NATO-Russia relationship reflected in the Founding Act offers Russia many opportunities for consultation, rewards for constructive engagement, and even joint action should there be a consensus. Should Russia wish to take what we hope is a very constructive, a very positive approach to European security, there are many ways to pursue it through the Permanent Joint Council. But, again, the Founding Act clearly does not offer Russia a veto should it choose otherwise.