

North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) **Enlargement:** **An Overview and Analysis**

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Within the United States' national security apparatus, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) is regarded as "the most important [multilateral] institution it works with, its Premier alliance."¹ While NATO's existence is inveterate and established it has also been open to change, reform and modification. NATO has "transformed dramatically from a Cold War alliance focused on deterrence and preparing for defensive Europe against the Soviet Union, to a much larger, outward looking alliance - one that is engaged in civil-military operations, aimed at tackling a new range of security threats, together with many partners, in places around the globe"²

The principal catalyst for the transformation of NATO has been its enlargement and expansion efforts over the past 60 years. This piece will provide an in-depth observation into the implications that past and future NATO enlargement have had and will have on the United States' national security policy, as well as on the global arena. This will be provided in four sections.

- I. A description of NATO: its history, its salient provisions in relation to enlargement efforts, its successive enlargements and its current makeup.
- II. An explanation of the main issues regarding NATO enlargement, chiefly its benefits as an ameliorating force in the Western Hemisphere, as well as its detriments as a costly entity which is provocative toward Russia in the national security context.
- III. An analysis of the main issues determining whether the benefits of NATO enlargement outweigh the apparent negative issues and whether the negative issues actually exist.
- IV. Recommendations as to what should happen regarding NATO enlargement moving forward.

1 Renee De Nevers, "NATO's International Security Role in the Terrorist Era." *International Security* 31.4 (2007), 36.

2 Kurt Volker, *NATO Issues*. Proc. of Committee on Senate Foreign Relations, U.S. Senate, Washington, D.C. 2009, 1.

Description

To grasp an understanding of NATO and the implications of its enlargement efforts, it is imperative to know a brief history of the institution and how it is becoming the institution it is today. Principally, it is important to gain an understanding of how “NATO provided a foundation for freedom’s victory in the Cold War,” and how it “is now evolving into its 21st century role: defending the transatlantic community against two threats and meeting challenges to our security and values that are often global in scope.”³

NATO, in its purest sense, is a product of the Cold War. The formation of NATO truly had its beginnings with the Treaty of Brussels, which was signed on March 17, 1948, by Belgium, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, France and the United Kingdom and which eventually led to the creation of the Western European Union’s defense organization.⁴ The military presence and clout of the Soviet Union was widely palpable and too vast for the current organization to hand. This climate necessitated involvement of the United States military power and, thus, necessitated talks between the United States and the organization. The result of the talks was the creation of the North Atlantic Treaty, which was signed in Washington, D. C. in 1949.

The new treaty “included the five Treaty of Brussels states, as well as the United States, Canada, Portugal, Italy, Norway, Denmark and Iceland.”⁵ President Harry S. Truman, the United States president at the time the North Atlantic Treaty was signed, explained that “by this Treaty, [the U.S. was] not only seeking to establish freedom from aggression and from the use of force in the North Atlantic community, but [was] also actively striving to promote and preserve peace throughout the world.” The new founded North Atlantic Treaty Organization acted as an opposing military presence against the Soviet Union and was used to contain any further expansion of communism and totalitarianism. Furthermore, the treaty “limited the organization’s scope [and membership] to the regions above the Tropic of Cancer,” truly making it a north Atlantic treaty organization.⁶

The next accession occurred in 1952 with Greece and Turkey joining the Alliance. Then, the year 1955 brought about the incorporation of West Germany and its extensive manpower to the organization. The accession of West Germany caused major controversy with the Soviet Union, which in turn led to the creation of the Warsaw Pact later in 1955. The Warsaw Pact included: the Soviet Union, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Bulgaria, Romania, Albania and East Germany. The event created a direct and the antithetical opposition between NATO and the Warsaw Pact members, perpetuating the Cold War struggle between the United

3 Daniel Fried, “NATO: Enlargement and Effectiveness.” *DISAM Journal* (2008). 75.

4 *North Atlantic Treaty Organization*. NATO. Web. 5 Apr. 2011. <NATO.int>.

5 NATO.int.

6 NATO.int.

States and Western Europe, and the Soviet Union.

NATO's "mission was simple: the defense of its members," and "NATO was superbly prepared to face the Soviet Army across the Fulda Gap, but never [had to] fire a shot."⁷ NATO contained the Soviet Union effectively and did not allow the country and its ideas to permeate further into Western Europe. The next accession did not occur until 1982, with the acceptance of Spain.

The Cold War seemed headed toward a close by 1989 and eventually ended with the 1991 collapse of the Soviet Union. The reason NATO banded together—to contain and fight against the Soviet Union and totalitarianism—had now evaporated with the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact. Where was NATO expected to go from there? Kurt Volker answered this question, believing "after defeating fascism and expansionist Soviet communism, the transatlantic community established NATO out of recognition that the universal human values that underpin our societies - freedom, market economy, democracy, human rights and the rule of law - remained under threat and had to be actively defended."⁸

A paradigm shift ensued with the end of the Cold War. Much like America had shifted its policy from this "fault line," as Donald Snow had coined, to a globalization and humanitarian-based effort, NATO found itself redefining its mission. Essentially, "when the Cold War ended in 1989-1991, the military *raison d'être* of NATO largely disappeared, whereas the organization's political functions (as a grouping of democratic states) still seemed relevant, especially if NATO sought to take in some of the new democracies in Europe."⁹ Indeed, NATO did just that.

Much to the chagrin of Russia and its officials in 1999, NATO extended offers of membership to the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland, all former Warsaw Pact members. Each country subsequently accepted and acceded. The twenty-eight member state makeup of NATO rounded out with the accession of Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia in 2004, followed by the accession of Albania and Croatia in 2009. Even the 2008 summit "promised future invitations to the Republic of Macedonia, Georgia and Ukraine," making a possible future total of thirty-one member states.¹⁰

The next question to posit is how did current member states that weren't among the original entrants come to accede to NATO? General stipulations for membership are made under the North Atlantic Treaty's Article X provision, which states "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." In addition, aside from "the

7 Fried, 75.

8 Volker, 2.

9 Mark Kramer. "NATO, the Baltic States and Russia: A Framework for Sustainable Enlargement." *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-)* 78.1 (2002), 736.

10 NATO.int.

general stipulation that all countries entering NATO must adhere to democratic principles and procedures, and must resolve any outstanding border disputes with their neighbors,” other qualifications and standards have been set to ease the countries’ transition into the organization, while also being thorough for the sake of the organization security and legitimacy.¹¹ This began NATO’s “open-door policy,” a term coined by NATO itself. Membership from European countries was and still is open to those states that wish to join, but certain standards and procedures need to be met prior to doing so.

The advent of the Partnership for Peace Program in 1994 was, and still is, used as “an organization intended to help former communist states develop professional militaries under firm democratic control and to prepare themselves in other ways for possible membership in NATO.”¹² This was the first step in providing uniform instruction to countries wishing to join NATO, but only militarily. In 1999 NATO created the Membership Action Plan (MAP), which made countries who wished to join “provide yearly progress reports [Annual National Programs] on their successes (or lack thereof) in meeting stringent political and military criteria” and, more specifically, their economic, security and legal aspects as well.¹³ The MAP is very exhaustive, and is seen as the last step needed to be performed by countries before they are considered for accession.

Finally, in 2002, the Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP) and the Intensified Dialogue criteria were added. The IPAP is “designed to bring together all the various cooperation mechanisms through which a partner country interacts with the Alliance, sharpening the focus of activity to better support [an aspirant country’s] domestic reform efforts.”¹⁴ Furthermore, NATO provides “focused, country-specific advice and reform objectives” that leads to Intensified Dialogue, which is right before a MAP is granted.¹⁵

Furthermore, a majority of NATO’s current policies, objectives and efforts have been focused on the global war on terrorism (GWOT). Since the attacks on September 11th, 2001, NATO has taken major roles in Afghanistan with its International Stabilization Assistance Forces (ISAF) and with invoking its Article V “collective defense” provision for the first time in its history. Article V slates:

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 agree that, if such an armed attack occurs, each of them...will assist the Party or Parties so attacked by taking

11 Kramer “Baltic States,” 736.

12 Kramer “Baltic States,” 736.

13 Kramer “Baltic States,” 737.

14 Rachel A. Epstein, “NATO Enlargement and the Spread of Democracy: Evidence and Expectations.” *Security Studies* 14.1 (2005), 68.

15 NATO.int.

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.

The possible invocation of Article V in past security events, and the actual use of it in the current international security context, contains widely felt implications in the debates on past NATO enlargements and future NATO enlargements in terms of financial costs and burden sharing, which will be discussed in a subsequent section.

With a basic understanding of what NATO is, what it stands for, how it came to be what it is today, and the necessary steps for accession, we are left with two questions. First, why is NATO's enlargement debated? Additionally, should NATO "have remained fixed in its Cold War era membership and should it have remained in its Cold War activities?"¹⁶ These questions lead to the main issues of this topic.

Explanation

The enlargement of NATO over the past sixty years has been viewed in a positive light by the United States and other member countries, with some believing "enlargement contribute[s] to the process of integration that helped stabilize Europe over the past [sixty years] and promote the development of strong new allies in the war on terrorism."¹⁷ But even with this sentiment, "different perspectives are rooted in varying assumptions about: the price the United States [and other major current members] should be willing to pay to defend its interests and promote its values internationally, the process of European integration [militarily and politically], and the future of Russia."¹⁸ Stanley Sloan had succinctly enumerated the main negative issues found with the expansion of NATO in 1995; yet, eleven years later, these issues are still debated. Sloan purports "many Americans believe that transforming NATO into a security instrument [by enlargement] will only perpetuate global U.S. security burdens," essentially stating: the larger the organization is, the harder it will be to handle.¹⁹

In the context of the Russia issue, many critics argue "NATO enlargement would damage the West's relations with Russia, empower nationalist elements within the Russian political scene, undermine the integrity of the Alliance, and ultimately prove irrelevant to democratization in Central and Eastern Europe."²⁰ The Cold War tensions between Russia and the West are still felt today, although they are somewhat muted. Moscow's envoy to NATO, Dmitry Rogozin, has even

16 Fried, 75.

17 Phillip Gordon and James Steinberg, "NATO Enlargement: Moving Forward." *Brookings Institute Review* 90 (2001), I.

18 Stanley R. Sloan, "U.S. Perspectives on NATO's Future." *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-)* 71.2 (1995), 218.

19 Sloan, 218.

20 Epstein, 64.

stated “[Russia] does not consider it necessary to make any concessions in terms of [its] sovereignty [in regards to NATO enlargement] and [it] is capable of solving all the threats in an independent way.”²¹ Moreover, Mr. Rogozin notes “what [Russia] is ready for is to create some temporary coalitions, but at the moment [it] is not happy about many things happening in NATO.”²² This statement was made in 2009, almost eighteen years after the end of the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact contentions with NATO, and almost nine years since the first expansion of NATO acceding former Soviet Union countries.

Mr. Rogozin’s attitudes perhaps stem from Russia’s “claim that the entry of former Warsaw Pact countries into NATO would violate a solemn ‘pledge’ made by the governments of West Germany and the U.S. in 1990 not to bring any former communist states into the Alliance,” and “believing the U.S. pledged never to expand NATO eastward if Moscow would agree to the unification of Germany.”²³ Although this claim has not been completely substantiated, it portrays the general distrust and suspicion Russia harbors for NATO and its enlargement efforts. Additionally, the habitual eastward movement of NATO is seen as a violation of Russia’s respect, sovereignty and sanctity in many respects.

The relationship between Russia and NATO was strained even before post-Cold War enlargement attempts. This was evidenced by “the circumstances surrounding Russia’s delayed entry in the Partnership for Peace program in 1994, contradictory interpretations of the significance of the 1997 NATO-Russia Founding Act, and Russia’s condemnation of NATO enlargement...“all of which”...created an atmosphere of increasing suspicion and distance...” between the two entities.²⁴ The ties between NATO and Russia were, understandably, strained even before attempts at post-Cold War enlargement were made, and for obvious reasons.

The two sides were in opposition for close to half a century. Some believe NATO’s eastward efforts “should be considered not just as an unfriendly step, but they should be [and were] considered preparations to aggression.”²⁵ The main issue involving the contention of the two entities lies with the intentions and interpretations of the enlargements. While NATO believes the enlargements will bring about stability and security for all of Europe, including Russia, and increased dialogue with Russia, many opponents believe the expansions are “intentional

21 Valelilina Pop, “Russia Does Not Rule out Future NATO Membership.” *EUobserver*. 1 Apr. 2009. Web. 5 Apr. 2011. <<http://euobserver.com/9n7890>>.

22 Pop, *EUobserver.com*

23 Mark Kramer, “The Myth of a No-NATO-Enlargement Pledge to Russia.” *The Washington Quarterly* 32.2 (2009), 39.

24 Stuart Croft, Jolyon Howorth, Terry Terriff, and Mark Webber, “NATO’s Triple Challenge.” *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-)* 76.3 (2000), 497.

25 Konstantin Khudoley and Dmitri Lanko, “Russia, NATO Enlargement and the Baltic States.” *Baltic Defence Review* 1.11 (2004), 120.

moves to antagonize Russia, exacerbating its lingering distrust of the West and strengthening anti-western elements in the Russian political system.”²⁶

As NATO’s apparatus becomes larger and more expansive, it may come at the cost of alienating Russia and, thus, creating an even more strained security environment. Moreover, “although expanding the security community enlarges the zone of peace and mutual trust, it may generate fear among those still on the outside,” principally Russia.²⁷ To ameliorate these differences, it is thought that the issue that must be rectified is Russia’s “apparent lack of coherence ... Russia strongly condemned NATO’s military operation [for example in Kosovo]...but in June 1999 Moscow endorsed the NATO-promoted logic of resolving the crisis in Kosovo.”²⁸ The apparent ambivalence of Russia’s stance on NATO must be resolved for reduced tensions.

Russia’s malcontent with NATO’s enlargement efforts eastward also stems from its view that “the former Soviet republics lie within its sphere of influence, in which Western countries and institutions should play little role,”²⁹ The issue NATO faces with Russia is to conduct the expansion in such a way that a form of “Neo-Cold War” does not evolve between the two entities. Russia’s power and economy has relatively risen in the past few years. With the favorable conditions increasing in Russia coupled with Mr. Rozogin’s previous hegemonic remarks. NATO needs to be careful in its expansion eastward. For example, it has been speculated that, with a possible invitation to Ukraine for NATO membership in the near future, “Russia could encourage pro-Russian groups to intensify anti-NATO campaigns and stir up conflict by pushing for use of Russian as an official language in eastern and southern Ukraine.”³⁰ The idea that Russia could intentionally bring about conflict and instability to Europe is troubling, and is an important issue which NATO must account for in its enlargement efforts.

The next salient issue related to NATO enlargement is purported to be the cost of expansion in terms of economics, military and political efficacy. Specifically, some issues involving Article V collective defense and the Article X process of accession are discussed. Opponents of NATO enlargement believe Article V collective defense will become diluted and efficacy will decrease with more members, while other opponents believe Article X’s idea of consensus for making decisions while still offering accession to new members will be severely compromised. Moreover, it is believed “the addition of more members to NATO

26 Andrew Kydd, “Trust Building, Trust Breaking: The Dilemma of NATO Enlargement.” *International Organization* 55.4 (2001). 802.

27 Kydd, 802.

28 Vladimir Baranovsky, *NATO Enlargement: Russia’s Attitudes*. Proc. of IISS/CEPS European Security Forum, Brussels. 2001, 3.

29 Paul Gallis, “Enlargement Issues at NATO’s Bucharest Summit.” *Congressional Research Service* (2008), 24.

30 Gallis, 24.

that are not also members of the European Union [EU] could exacerbate the current dilemmas unless these are resolved before the new members take their seats at the Alliance's decision-making tables."³¹

In terms of financial cost, in 1999 "analysts estimated the cost of adding new members at as low as \$1.5 billion, but also between \$ 10 billion and \$125 billion, depending upon different threat scenarios and accounting techniques."³² This range is an expansive one, but one that still clearly depicts expansion as a major investment of money and resources that is incurred by current members to incorporate a new member. This financial burden is obviously shared, but some "worry that the U.S. [along with some of the other powerful European countries] might be left to shoulder a large share of the expenditures; they question whether existing burden-sharing arrangements should continue; and suggest that more European allies should be encouraged to assume a larger financial share for security of the continent."³³

This debate over burden-sharing and the allocation of resources from current member countries to help train the new members militarily and diplomatically, and to operationalize the members with up-to-date security and equipment capabilities can cause a rift between existing members and jeopardize the solidarity that has been forged. If this breach of solidarity were the case, then conflicts between the United States and other various members could ensue and cause various security issues and strains on relationships. Even so, these opponents of NATO enlargement value isolationism in terms of domestic improvement and fiscal focus more than internationalist outreach and spending.

The other costs of enlargement are not monetary in nature, but rather drawbacks in military and political capabilities. The ramifications of adding new members may be witnessed in the organization's consensus provision of Article X:

The alliance principle of consensus means that its decision making process is cumbersome, and this awkwardness has become more evident as NATO has taken [on even more members and] even more tasks, up to and including the deployment of crisis response operations that have encompassed the use of force. Probably the most prominent example is provided by the problems of decision-making during the Kosovo military campaign (Terriff, Croft, Krahnann, Webber and Howorth 719).

31 Terry Terriff, Stuart Croft, Elke Krahnann, Mark Webber, and Joylon Howorth. "One In, All in? NATO's Next Enlargement." *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-)* 78.4 (2002), 719.

32 Gallis, 19.

33 Gallis, 19.

By adding new members to an already onerous process of unanimous consent and approval, a voting standard far above that required of democratic political institutions, the enlargement dilutes the ability of the organization to make efficient decisions with reasonable efficacy when the time and situation warrants.

The other issue stems from the military problem of having a “gap between the military capabilities of current member states and those of prospective members, and what this implies for integrating the new members’ militaries.”³⁴ Those who subscribe to the “capability-gap” argument believe the time, effort, and resources that must be afforded for training the new members’ militaries is not worth the potential security and stability the new militaries may bring to NATO. Further, the “critical issue of interoperability, the capability of all forces to work alongside other Alliance armies,” is jeopardized even further when adding more varying opinions, protocols and capabilities.³⁵

As evidenced by Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic, meeting NATO’s standards “has proved problematic, as their equipment, training standards and doctrine, and even language skills, all [fell] short of what is required for effective integration” at the time of accession.³⁶ Indeed, “it is not clear what new allies will contribute toward the common defense and deterrence.”³⁷ Bringing new allies’ militaries up to western levels is the “primary expense in enlargement.”³⁸ These pitfalls and shortcomings of new member militaries has said to create a non-cohesive “two-tier military structure within NATO, with one tier composed of the standardized military forces that are well trained, professional, deployable, interoperable and better equipped; and the other composed of the non-standardized militaries that are conscript-based, immobile, top-heavy, poorly equipped and less effective.”³⁹ That trend would seem to continue with the acquisition of many smaller, former Soviet-Union republics that do not present robust economies or militaries.

Despite the aforementioned issues regarding Russia and subsequent security concerns, and the financial, military and political costs NATO enlargement may incur, there are some major reasons as to why there are proponents for NATO enlargement and why the organization has continued to enlarge. Proponents of NATO enlargement cite various reasons as to why the process is truly a beneficial one, but the one form of logic that is most prominent is that enlargement is a tool of stabilization and unification that promotes strong multilateral action in the global arena. In a more American-focused security sense, the expansion of NATO is

34 Alan M. Stull, “A Strong NATO Is Essential to the United States National Security Strategy.” *U.S. Army War College Strategy Research* (2005), 22.

35 Terriff, Croft, Krahnmann, Webber and Howorth. 720.

36 Terriff, Croft, Krahnmann, Webber and Howorth. 720.

37 Kydd, 804.

38 Kydd, 804.

39 Terriff, Croft, Krahnmann, Webber and Howorth. 720.

seen as a necessary tool in the GWOT. In fact, “NATO sanctioned operations are looked at in more legitimate terms than U.S. unilateral operations ... Because the hegemonic U.S. is often perceived as the big bully, NATO gives it a different face and significant international recognition.”⁴⁰ By expanding an already multilateral apparatus, the scope and breadth of security policy becomes enriched in a positive context. More input, agreement and cohesion from other states may mean better policy that reflects more holistic approaches to countering certain security issues, principally terrorism.

Enlargement is seen as a stabilizing factor, helping to “build a Europe that is whole, free and at peace.”⁴¹ What is more, NATO is reviewed as “an indispensable instrument of this noble objective, and NATO is becoming a multilateral instrument of transatlantic security for the 21st century,” with the addition of more members.⁴² With the enlargement of NATO, its members’ firm commitments to democracy and values of economic and political freedom and stability “have been an affirmation of [the U.S.’s and existing members’] values as well as an instrument of diplomacy, leadership and defense against threats both military and ideological.”⁴³ Finally, it is viewed that existing members “should welcome all those European democracies whose political stability, military contributions, and commitment to NATO solidarity, would [serve as] assets to the Alliance.”⁴⁴

Analysis

Although “there have always been persuasive reasons in favor of limited enlargement; reasons linked to calculation of cost, political expediency, the danger of diluting NATO’s military effectiveness and credibility,” and the threat of a revived Russian opposition, NATO enlargement has been and is necessary, and its benefits outweigh the past and potential issues outlined in the previous section.⁴⁵ In essence, the issues raised are myopic in nature, failing to take a long-view approach for security.

Despite the concerns previously listed concerning NATO enlargement, “most existing research maintains that NATO enlargement has been a positive force for change; aspiring member states respond to requests from the Alliance to reform, both militarily and politically...” and moreover, “concludes that NATO’s ‘open door policy’ has been a success by contributing to greater European stability and democracy.”⁴⁶ Additionally, the “fault line” of the September 11th attacks has

40 Stull, 4.

41 Fried, 82.

42 Fried, 82.

43 Sloan, 220.

44 Gordon and Steinberg, 1.

45 Croft, Howorth, Terriff and Webber, 501.

46 Nathan M. Polak, Ryan C. Hendrickson, and Nathan G. D. Garrett, “NATO Membership for Albania and Croatia: Military Modernization, Geo-Strategic

essentially necessitated NATO enlargement and has placed the negative issues regarding such expansion out of the purview of many opponents.

Although in the previous section it was shown that the expansion of NATO eastward in Europe has created tensions with Russia and possible security threats for the organization, the trend of late has been almost the polar opposite, somewhat negating the issue. The terrorist attacks of September 11th, 2001 shifted Russia's opposition against NATO enlargement to the back of its agenda and moved creating a unified coalition against transnational terrorism to the forefront. In addition to this shift in policy, it had been noted "well before the events of 9/11, there were signs that Russian leaders had come to believe that, [for example], the Baltic states would be admitted into NATO and had therefore concluded...that Russia would be wise to avoid expending too much political capital on a futile quest to prevent that outcome."⁴⁷

The antithetical sentiments of NATO and Russia still exist, even after the Cold War, in some groups within each organization's apparatus, but the two have somewhat coalesced into a working partnership, making the opposition less palpable. Early signs of progress between the IWO entities started in 1994 with Russia participating in Partnership for Peace, although reluctantly at first; a role in Bosnia; and the creation of the -not fully productive- Permanent Joint Council (PJC), which led to other mediums of discourse later. More contemporary signs of productive development have been witnessed by both sides coming together in 2002 to create the NATO-Russia Council (NRC), which has served as an "official diplomatic tool for handling security issues and joint projects between NATO and Russia, involving consensus building, consultation, joint decisions and joint actions."⁴⁸ Furthermore, this includes "fighting terrorism, military cooperation, cooperation on Afghanistan, transportation by Russia of non-military freight in support of NATO's ISAF in Afghanistan and non-proliferation."⁴⁹

More steps for cohesion and stability between NATO and Russia have even been taken as recently as April 15th, 2011 with the creation of an updated NRC Action Plan on Terrorism. The Action Plan "reinforces that terrorist acts pose a direct challenge to common security, to shared democratic values and to basic human rights and freedoms," which reasserts the NRC's clear rejection of terrorism in all its manifestations.⁵⁰ Having a united front against a common "enemy", the issue of transnational terrorism, has for the most part been able to bridge the gap between the two bodies and their conflicting interests involving NATO enlargement.

Although Russia still has its reservations and suspicions, as any sovereign

Opportunities and Force Projection." *Journal of Slavic Military Studies* 22 (2009), 503.

47 Kramer "Baltic States," 747.

48 NATO.int.

49 NATO.int.

50 NATO.int.

state might have with NATO expansion possibly weakening its efforts for security, Russia also acknowledges that “differences must be set aside in a fight against a devastating transnational threat such as terrorism.”⁵¹ Russia is also viewing NATO and its enlargements as a repository for growth and stability, noting “NATO represents ... a group of countries with high standards of democracy, liberal values and civil control of the armed forces ... perceiving the Alliance itself as a meaningful forum for shaping political consensus and as an anchor for the new democracies in Europe as they prepare for membership ...”⁵² This has led some Russian officials to “introduce a new discourse of Russia coming closer to the Alliance’ in terms of democratic values and techniques of civilian control over the military, rather than ‘NATO coming closer to Russian Borders’, “ with the expansion of NATO and its ever closer proximity to Russia.⁵³

The discourse between NATO and Russia in the NRC has proven to be a huge step in improving relations and relieving some tensions involving further expansion by NATO. It is clear the differences and opposition to NATO enlargement are becoming muted with globalization and the need for cooperation in the “wake of an [also] emerging multipolar world with emerging Asian powers.”⁵⁴ Each side realizes what could be at stake with the present resurgence of power in China and other Asian markets, thus making opposition to future enlargements less of an issue in relation to those in 1999, 2004 and 2009. This is a very positive step toward sustained Russia-NATO cooperation.

In terms of the United States and other prominent members of NATO, issues with financial costs and burden-sharing cannot be debated regarding NATO expansion. Although NATO countries are supposed to spend a minimum of two percent (2%) of their gross domestic product (GDP) on defense, “only France at 2.6% and the United Kingdom at 2.4% are anywhere close to the 3.3% the U.S. spends on defense.”⁵⁵ But, there have been positive trends of late, which are evidence of the financial burden and military and political costs of expansion becoming less of an issue.

In 2009, NATO’s most recent members, Albania and Croatia, both had and still have met substantial standards. It is “first noteworthy that Albania manages to meet NATO’s suggested spending standard of 2% of its GDP on defense,” despite its small defense budget of \$233 million in 2008.⁵⁶ Croatia has now met the two percent GDP standard as well. Furthermore, Albania maintains “a 14,295 person military, and since 2006, has simultaneously procured a significant amount of modern military equipment, including naval patrol crafts and helicopters, as well as

51 Khudoley and Lanko, 121.

52 Khudoley and Lanko, 122.

53 Khudoley and Lanko, 122.

54 De Nevers, 49.

55 Stull, 4.

56 Polak, Hendrickson and Garrett, 504.

an advanced radar system.”⁵⁷ Croatia boasts an 18,600 person military with similar military equipment as Albania. Both countries also are proving themselves as vital sources in the protection and security of the Adriatic Sea. Moreover, personnel have contributed to “the defensive mission in the Mediterranean in the response to terrorist threats, and [NATO] has adopted strategies ranging from new technology development to consequence management for preventing or mitigating terrorist attacks.”⁵⁸

The dynamic of smaller countries relying upon bigger, more powerful countries to help with financial burdens and military burdens will always remain, but the trend is showing more self-sufficient activity from new members of NATO. This case study conveys that NATO’s most recent enlargement efforts “have worked in the two cases [of Albania and Croatia], in that these countries have implemented significant internal defense reforms, provided enhanced geo-strategic advantages, and have also fostered closer relationships with NATO.”⁵⁹ If these two states bear any witness for the direction of where the military and financial capability of NATO members is going, then the issue is evanescent.

In addition, the argument that the enlargement of NATO will lead to inefficiency in political dealings does not really carry any weight. NATO is described as a “political-military alliance that combines the key political function of guiding members’ foreign and security policy and providing a forum for Alliance consultation with the operational function of ensuring that members can train and develop the capabilities to cooperate militarily [and politically].”⁶⁰ With that said, the current landscape of combating terrorism has been able to foster a clear-cut consensus among NATO member states on policies against the transnational threat.

The repugnant nature of terrorism necessitates cohesion and solidarity between members of NATO, which would be sure to carry that same cohesion when expanded to new members who will be sharing the same democratic values. This has been substantiated by all the additions in 2004 and 2009 and their subsequent roles in Afghanistan under ISAF. The political inefficacy argument about NATO enlargement has lost clout due to the unifying nature in the paradigm shift to anti-terrorism and counter-terrorism efforts.

Finally, the goals of NATO enlargement outlined by NATO and its proponents are, necessarily, coming to fruition. It is evidenced by the fact that “today, over 100 million people now live in free societies that are more prosperous and fundamentally secure compared to the divided Europe of pre-1989.”⁶¹ NATO enlargement has made incredible strides in linking West Europe with the central-eastern portion, and thus has provided needed stability in these areas in light of

57 Polak, Hendrickson and Garrett, 505.

58 De Nevers, 35.

59 Polak, Hendrickson and Garrett, 514.

60 De Nevers, 36.

61 Volker, 3.

the instability in the Middle East. Indubitably, NATO enlargement is “primarily designed to foster trust and cooperation amongst the East European states” and the Western European states.⁶²

The appearance of democracy is realized with the fostering of trust and cooperation. NATO enlargement necessarily and effectively carries out the Democratic Peace Theory, which asserts that “democracies do not fight each other or are much less likely to do so than other regime types.”⁶³ With the expansion of countries exhibiting democratic values and government, it then expands the so-called “zone of peace” across the region, an area marked by stability and cooperation.⁶⁴ This ideal is clearly evidenced by the absence of conflict between current members of NATO, which is a very high achievement for any multilateral-international organization composed of sovereign states. NATO expansion has also “precluded the rise of destructive military cultures by insisting on democratic standards” in countries which would not have otherwise done so without being under the auspices of NATO.⁶⁵ This primarily occurred by NATO “promoting military subordination to elected officials, civilian expertise and respect for civil rights.”⁶⁶

Since the tensions and conflicts between NATO member states have been nearly nonexistent, it provides “an alternative explanation [for] NATO’s insistence on democracy and the resolution of disputes as criteria for membership ...”⁶⁷ The uniform values and democratic tendencies of the member states provide an environment that reduces the likelihood of conflict between new members from Eastern Europe and future members from the same region. The political stability inherent within NATO is able to elucidate to potential member states, which may only know a life of conflict and hardship, that there are more achievable diplomatic methods to solving conflicts, and that conflicts and war do not need to be the norm.

The stability and solidarity that is intended to be achieved by NATO enlargement and its proliferation of values and customs have seemed to work hitherto with its twenty-eight current members. Future enlargement would seem to only follow suit in conjunction with the decreasing opposition from Russia, the decreasing burden of economic, military and political costs, and with the increasing self-sufficiency of acceding states. A “strong and expanding NATO will aid the U.S. [and other member states] in the GWOT, be the international force used to prevent regional conflicts within Europe’s influence, and ensure the continued economic growth of Europe.”⁶⁸

62 Kydd, 807.

63 Kydd, 807.

64 Kydd, 808.

65 Epstein, 65.

66 Epstein, 65.

67 Kydd, 807.

68 Stull, 12.

Additionally NATO, indeed, “has to adapt, and is adapting, to the 21st century world by its principal efforts to enlarge, as well as its partnership efforts, its operational efforts and its shift from large heavy militaries to smaller, lighter, more expeditionary forces.”⁶⁹ NATO is adapting to the ever changing world of national security, not only through its ongoing combat against terrorism through its Operation Active Endeavor (OAE), but through its conscious efforts to expand in order to bring stability and a capacious political-military apparatus to Europe and around and near the Middle East. Yet, there is still more that could have been done, or could be done, to make the impacts of NATO enlargement and future enlargement that much more beneficial to the global arena.

Recommendations

Though recent enlargement of NATO has not come to present any major complications, it may still be performed in a more prudent manner moving forward, so that it does not agitate Russia as it has in the past. The advents of the NRC and Action Plans on Terrorism have been invaluable assets since 2002 in bringing together NATO and Russia. But, the discourse between the two entities needs to be heightened even further. There is “opportunity to renew efforts to work together on issues where NATO and Russia really do have common interests- from non-proliferation , counter-terrorism, to border controls and counter-narcotics with respect to Afghanistan... the challenge, however, is to make sure NATO takes decisions on issues on their own merits... without undue pressure from any outside actors.”⁷⁰ By creating more discourse and cohesion on salient issues such as the one above, Russia may not have to feel as threatened or suspicious towards the activities of NATO and its expansion eastward. The common goal against terrorism has eased these feelings of incredulity, but this dynamic must continue and expand. Kurt Volker states it perfectly, acknowledging “there is no zero-sum between the interests of the Euro-Atlantic Community as a whole, and Russian interests- we are part of a common space...Indeed, Russia should be a vital part of this democratic community in Europe...”⁷¹ NATO expansion is inevitable, but it can always be done in a more cooperative, more cohesive way.

It should also be considered that “rather than preserving NATO permanently as a predominantly military organization, the member states [and subsequent additional states] should increasingly emphasize its political role.”⁷² It is important for NATO to strike a balance between its “hard” and “soft” powers because “NATO’s military functions remain important and must be retained, but the Alliance should also take a greater and more explicit part in the promotion and consolidation of

69 Volker, 4-5.

70 Fried, 76.

71 Volker, 3.

72 Kramer “Baltic States,” 732.

democracy in central and Eastern Europe, including Russia.”⁷³

Substantial military capability is vital when force is absolutely needed, but diplomacy and the spread of democratic values serve equally important roles. By establishing consistent political discourse with strong military power during enlargements, it becomes clear that the United States and NATO “are most successful when [they] have the most coherent and committed transatlantic set of policies,”⁷⁴ which include major political actions. Moreover, a “small but committed investment in NATO and European security today will prevent a significant expenditure during a future conflict in Europe...[making] transatlantic strategic cooperation one reason why the second half of the 20th century was more stable than the first.”⁷⁵

By garnering a focus on political measures and by implementing more diplomatic, internationalist ties with Russia and the rest of Europe, thereby expanding transatlantic discourse, negative impulses and issues regarding NATO enlargement will be a thing of the past. Negative sentiments toward expansion will undoubtedly pass, especially in a world of globalization and converging values. Additionally, it may also be wise to ponder the potential emergence of a strong economic-military super power in China and the Far East that may become diametrically opposed to NATO and the values it represents. If this ever becomes the case, an expanded and united front from NATO will undoubtedly be necessary to counter any Far-East ambitions, whether militarily or politically.

73 Kramer “Baltic States,” 732.

74 Volker, 4.

75 Stull, 12.