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**CHALLENGES TO NORWEGIAN NATIONAL SECURITY  
POLICY IN A CHANGING EUROPE**

**BY**

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**CHALLENGES TO NORWEGIAN NATIONAL SECURITY POLICY IN A  
CHANGING EUROPE**

AN INDIVIDUAL STUDY PROJECT

by

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**ABSTRACT**

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As the positive political changes in continental Europe cause the central front to wither away, it becomes more apparent that the northern region faces new strategic challenges. Although there seem to be a common apprehension in the Western World that the previous threat from eastern Europe is gone, the future of the previous Soviet strategic forces is unclear as is the long term role of Russia on the world's scene. Unless this insecurity is properly addressed by the US and the NATO alliance the security environment is likely to change dramatically for Norway. The study addresses the changing Norwegian security environment and the importance of the Trans - Atlantic link to the United States and the importance of the NATO Alliance. Of particular importance is the process of enlarging the NATO Alliance. An extension of NATO should be based on the continued evaluation of the overall development in Europe and take place only in the case of serious setbacks in the relationship between Russia and the western world. In the case that NATO in the future should cease to be the forum for collective European security with full American participation, Norway may well find it her best interests to seek a bilateral agreement on friendship, support, and mutual security with the United States. The realism in this approach will be heavily dependent upon the US role in the world in a long term perspective.

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## CHALLENGES TO NORWEGIAN NATIONAL SECURITY POLICY IN A CHANGING EUROPE.

### Introduction.

During the cold war the northern region was referred to as NATO's northern flank. Now, as the traditional East - West confrontation in central Europe is disappearing, the term "flank" in a military sense may no longer be appropriate in describing the northern region. The North is still a flank in a political sense. As the positive political changes in continental Europe cause the central front to wither away, it becomes more apparent that the northern region faces new strategic challenges. Norway's security arrangements have traditionally been heavily dependent upon the US interests in the Norwegian Sea and territory. Change in US policy with regard to these areas is likely to have major consequences for Norwegian national security strategy. These post cold war security challenges might cause changes in the Norwegian security arrangements and relationships within a changing Europe.

As Henry Kissinger has stated; " Nations have permanent interests, not permanent friends".<sup>1</sup> Hopefully the US and Norway have common interests in the northern region as a fundamental basis for defense cooperation and lasting friendship.

Norway's security is shaped primarily by conditions beyond Norway's reach and dependent of developments within the central balance of nuclear deterrence and

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<sup>1</sup> Henry Kissinger. False Dreams of a New World Order". Washington Post, 26 February 1991.

relationship between the two principal military powers of the world. Although there seem to be a common apprehension in the Western World that the previous threat from eastern Europe is gone, the future of the previous Soviet strategic forces is unclear as is the long term role of Russia on the world's scene. Unless this insecurity is properly addressed by the US and the NATO alliance the security environment is likely to change dramatically for Norway.

#### Cold War US Interests in the Norwegian Sea and Territory.

As the Cold War developed and intensified, Norway, among other Nordic countries, had the misfortune of sitting astride potential Soviet lines of interdiction into the Atlantic. Accordingly it held great strategic value for both East and West. With the shift of the main Soviet fleet strength from the Baltic to the Kola peninsula, and the increasing importance of SSBNs in the Soviet strategic force posture, the Northern flank and the Norwegian Sea became more important to western planners from the 1980s onward. NATO maritime forces have since conducted a steady series of exercises in Norway's fjords and the Norwegian Sea. US and NATO planners were well aware that the north Atlantic-Norwegian Sea-Barents Sea area might well be the area of decision with respect to the success of US operations to maintain the flow of supplies to European allies and to US forces in Western Europe. The Nordic seas were of great importance, first as an avenue for the movement of US shipping and secondly as the area from which the Soviet submarines could be stopped at their source.

Thus the Soviets considered the Nordic waters just as crucial to the operations of the Northern fleet. The significance of this area derives from the two strategic imperatives which shaped Soviet naval strategy, the security of their strategic nuclear force and their need to interdict NATO's transatlantic sealines of communication.<sup>2</sup> If the Soviet fleet could deploy its attack submarine force in the Atlantic prior to hostilities or under the cover of land or carrier based aircraft deployed either in Norway or based on naval forces in the Greenland-Iceland-United Kingdom- gap ( GIUK-gap), NATO's naval forces might be unable to protect the convoys to Central- Europe.

As a consequence, the US objectives of the Cold-War Atlantic Maritime Strategy were:

- To contain and destroy the Soviet Northern fleet.
- To deny the Soviet use of airfields in northern Norway.
- To assist in the defense of northern Norway.
- To prevent the Soviet from conducting amphibious operations against Norway.

#### Norwegian Cold War Security Policy.

The Atlantic links have played a primary role in the Norwegian security arrangements and politics. The US and Canada have been the principal sources of reassurance and reinforcement and played a major role in the balance of Soviet power in the northern area.

At the same time, Norway has emphasized the need to place cooperation with the US in the defense area within a multilateral framework. This means avoiding bilateralization and

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<sup>2</sup> Sherwood S Cordier, "The Defense of NATO's Northern Front and U.S. Military Policy". University Press of America, 1989.

seeking equality in linkage to a broader framework for defense cooperation between western Europe and North America.<sup>3</sup> As a front-line state in relation to the Soviet Union, Norway had to adopt a security policy that reflected trade-offs between considerations of deterrence and reassurance.

Traditionally Norway's position has been peripheral to the "central front", which was the focus of the cold war security system in Europe. Simultaneously, Norway occupied a central position in relation to the balance of nuclear deterrence between the superpowers, sharing a common border with the Soviet Union. Norway chose alignment with the US. Increasingly, the two perspectives, peripheral and central, merged as the security of the flank became linked to the integrity of the transatlantic sea lines of communications. With the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the long term political objectives in the Russian - Norwegian relations are likely to change, but the security challenges in the short- and mid-term perspective remains the same. Norway's strategic security objectives are also in the future linked to the NATO alliance, and specifically to the US. In any escalated crisis, Norway must count upon NATO reinforcements.

### Post Cold War Norwegian Security Policy.

The security of Norway depends to a large extent on expectations concerning developments and influence in the ocean areas of the North. Armed conflict for control in

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<sup>3</sup> Paul J. Cook. Change and continuity in Europe's northern region. A conference report. Center for Strategic and International Studies. 23 October 1990.

Norway may be won or lost at sea. As a consequence security is becoming primarily a matter of international organization and Norway's place therein, rather than a matter of containing and manipulating military capabilities.

Norwegian security policy has traditionally been concerned with three interlocking and partially overlapping frameworks, the Atlantic, the European and the Nordic.<sup>4</sup> These three elements will remain important in the future but their internal relationship is likely to change as the development of east - west relations removes nonalignment and neutrality as basic determinants of national security policy.

At the same time the integration process within the European Union (EU) is gaining pace including several new countries, Norway not being one of them. The future status of security and defence issues within the EU will be a key topic at the Intergovernmental Conference later this year. Thus the future role position of the Western European Union (WEU) will be a major issue at the conference. Most of the European countries are prepared to strengthen the WEU, based on the organisation's dual role as EU's defence component and NATO's European pillar. Given the required shift in transatlantic burdensharing, and the necessity of implementing concrete measures to follow up the increased European responsibility for European and international security, these steps seem necessary.

The US, being the most important ally with regard to Norwegian security, is downscaling her troops and reducing her European presence. Within this context the basic challenge to

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<sup>4</sup> David A. Larson. "Norwegian National Security Policy in the New Europe". Naval War College. November 1991.

Norwegian security policy is one of assuring coupling and preventing isolation as well as singularity in relation to the European order at large.<sup>5</sup> Norway considers the transatlantic ties to be of fundamental importance. Norway face a special challenge in maintaining and developing its close relations to indispensable North American and European partners. The close ties with the United States and the closest possible links with our European allies are two sides of the same coin. Therefore it is also in the Norwegian interest to strengthen the transatlantic dialogue. Norway considers it crucial that expanded ties across the Atlantic include all the European and North American allies. It is essential that the European voice in a renewed transatlantic dialogue is not limited to EU member states alone.<sup>6</sup>

Norway's response to the mix of continuity and change in Northern military challenges is less a matter of containing a short-term military threat than of shaping long-term political relations. It is less a matter of countering military forces than of reducing the shadows cast by such capacities. Both short term and long-term goals must be addressed in a rapidly changing environment. Although the US and Russian nuclear relationship may undergo a fundamental change as a result of internal Russian developments, the relationship plays an important role in Nordic security. Norway's security is shaped primarily by developments within the central balance of nuclear deterrence and by global competition of the two principal military world powers. Norway's long-term security needs are to maintain US presence in northern waters preventing Russian territorialization

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<sup>5</sup> Johan J. Holst. "Toward New Security Arrangements in Europe". April 1991.

<sup>6</sup> Joergen Kosmo. "Defence and Security,- Prospects and Priorities". FD Informasjon Nr. 1/2 - Januar/Februar 96.

through Russian presence and western absence. A common US and Norwegian interest exists and is served by continued American presence. The challenge to Norwegian security policy comes from the threat of an intensive US and Russian rivalry in adjacent sea areas.

The need to maintain economical and military links to an integrated Western Europe presents Norway with a second immediate challenge. Although Norway is not a member of the European Union, she is dependent upon trade access with Western Europe she must safeguard these economical links. Norway's status as a cooperative partner, though not a member, of the EU might create risks in this situation.<sup>7</sup> The future role and development of the NATO Alliance is thus of critical importance to Norway.

## The New Strategic Environment

### ***The relationship with Russia.***

As the positive political changes in continental Europe cause the central front to wither away, however, it becomes more apparent that the northern region might still be a strategically significant area. The main reason is that the Kola peninsula remains the major basing area for important Russian forces. In spite of the fact that Russia for the moment is not playing a strategic super power role, the Kola forces, and particularly the northern fleet, are characterized by their strategic capabilities. We can assume that the Russian republic will remain one of the two principal nuclear weapon states of the international

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<sup>7</sup> Norge I dag, Nr. 189/95. Det Kgl. Utenriksdepartement, Oslo, Pressekontoret. 3 October 1995.

system. In this connection we can also expect that a considerable portion of the Russian nuclear deterrent will include submarine based strategic missiles and that the home ports of the European Russian force portion will be on the Kola peninsula. Furthermore, it is likely that the Kola peninsula will remain a primary area for forward deployment of early warning radar and interceptor systems. Russia will also be one of two principal global naval powers. Russia will conduct peacetime naval training and exercises for that fleet in northern waters. Such dispositions will also require ground and air protection. The CFE treatment will constrain the scale of fleet deployments to a marginal degree.

So far the Russians have not reduced previous Soviet forces in the northern region. To the contrary, their numerical strength has increased in contrast to the reductions taking place in central Europe. In the future hopefully Russia will make some reductions in their in the extreme north forces as well, but that will not necessarily diminish the importance of the area. The future of Russia's strategic forces are unclear as is the long term role of Russia on the world's scene. Until these contours become more focused the international community must handle this uncertainty, and Norwegian security policy must address the relationship of a strategic force close to the country's borders. Russia's rise out of the ashes of the Soviet Union marked the end of the Cold War. As long as the Soviet Union existed, the U.S. - Soviet rivalry that defined the era in fundamentally ideological terms was a prominent feature of the international system. Similarly, the post Cold War period will continue as a transition stage until Russia's revolution is complete. Until Russia defines itself and it's role in the world, we will not achieve an enduring international

equilibrium for the twenty - first century.<sup>8</sup> To a large extent the nuclear interest in the Nordic area remains intense and could increase, because the only Russian bases with access to the Arctic area, where the nuclear submarines have their staging areas, have all been Kola based. The strategic importance of the Nordic waters and Norwegian land territory still have to be regarded in the context of potential hostilities between CIS-states ( and Russia in particular) and the western countries. Although the likelihood of such a conflict is diminishing, the NATO alliance will remain the anchor of American engagement in Europe and the linchpin of transatlantic security.

Although the Soviet Union is history,- the liberation from the communist yoke need not bring democracy, it could bring nationalism, xenophobia and fascism in its wake. The breakdowns in eastern Europe could touch the vital interests of western Europeans. If this is a disturbing prognosis for eastern Europe, the future of a dissolved Russia is even more sobering. Not only might there be a civil war in the future, but an economic disaster that could bring to power a military dictatorship with expansionist ambitions is also possible. The risk that the Russian internal crisis will expand is significant. With the irreversible economic decline fueling political and social instabilities, the possibility of internal disintegration and conflict is increasing. The riskiest scenario, seen from a Norwegian point of view, is that the Russian leadership reverts to a hard-line policy, including domestic repression, a hostile attitude to the world outside the Russian Republic, and the use of military force in Europe.<sup>9</sup> In this situation, an adjacent and relatively isolated Norway becomes extremely vulnerable. This contingency requires maintaining and sustaining a classic defense capability against deliberate military pressure and aggression

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<sup>8</sup> Bill Bradley. Eurasia Letter: A Misguided Russia Policy. Foreign Policy. Winter 1995 - 96.

and has a serious impact on Norwegian national security. The west can not forget that Russia is still a militarily superpower, its present weakness notwithstanding. Although the Warsaw Pact has disappeared, it is an illusion to believe that, with the end of the Cold War, NATO has been deprived of any military mission in Europe in the short and mid term perspective. Considering the northern flank, it is still a fact that who controls the Norwegian Sea depends on who controls the north Norwegian airfields, which in turn depends on who gets there first, also who gets there first depends on who controls the Norwegian Sea. Thus the present US strategy, based on the country's interest in the Nordic area, can be summarized as:<sup>10</sup>

- Presence, to promote stability, deter and exercise forces.
- Surveillance.
- Sea control.
- Protection of sealines of communication.
- Power projection ( support the air/ land battle, reinforce existing forces ashore and establish a beachhead on hostile shores).

### *A changing NATO Alliance.*

In spite of these remaining parts of core functions from the past, Europe's security has substantially improved as a consequence of the end of the Cold War. It is of critical importance to seize this opportunity to create lasting security arrangements for the region,

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<sup>9</sup> Norge I dag, Nr. 241/95. Det Kgl. Utenriksdepartement, Oslo, Pressekontoret. 14 December 1995.

including former adversaries. Against this background, NATO's new Strategic Concept reaffirms the core functions of the Alliance including the maintenance of the transatlantic link and of an overall strategic balance in Europe. It recognizes that security is based on political, economic, social and environmental considerations as well as defense. The building blocks of the new strategy are dialog, cooperation, collective defense, crisis management and conflict prevention.

The strategy has significant implications for the structure and objectives for the military forces of the Alliance.<sup>11</sup> NATO's previous plans and commitments for specific regional military assistance are currently under revision and will most likely reduce predefined geographical areas of engagement. Together with the reduction of forces within the member countries of NATO, these factors will most likely reduce or eliminate the earmarking of NATO forces dedicated and trained to support the defense of Norway.<sup>12</sup> This trend seems to be reinforced by the development towards the Western Union (WEU) as the European pillar of NATO.<sup>13</sup>

The European Union may well become the political and economical union that was originally intended including the main forum for cooperation regarding the security of its member nations. From a Norwegian point of view this eventuality requires new security arrangements, as long as neither the union nor its individual members will have the military

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<sup>10</sup> Jimmy C. Woodard. "The U.S. maritime strategy in the North Atlantic and the Norwegian Sea: an evolving strategy in need of reassessment". Technical report distributed by Defense Technical Information Center, Cameron Station, Alexandria, Virginia. June 1991.

<sup>11</sup> NATO Handbook. NATO Office of Information and Press, Brussels. 1995.

<sup>12</sup> Norge I dag, Nr. 22/96. Det Kgl. Utenriksdepartement, Oslo, Pressekontoret. 31 January 1996.

<sup>13</sup> Strategic Assessment 1995. U.S. Security Challenges in Transition. Institute for National Strategic Studies.

capability or interest needed to adequately support the defense of Norway.<sup>14</sup> From a security perspective, increased European integration and the extension of NATO may raise regional tension if the leadership of the Russian Republic consider this development hostile and conflicting with Russian interests. As a consequence Norway runs a greater risk with respect to security arrangements by not joining the EU and it seems clear that that the transatlantic link to the US, as a part of the NATO alliance, becomes even more important in the short and mid - term perspective.

The "Study on NATO enlargement"<sup>15</sup>, states that NATO's goal is to provide increased stability and security for all in the Euro-Atlantic area without recreating dividing lines. NATO is promoted as a non threatening alliance with unique qualities to bring to the European stage. This perception might also be true seen from a western point of view, but is regarded as entirely different from Moscow. The "Study on NATO enlargement" fails to explain why and how expansion would increase European stability, especially in light of the fact that gradual enlargement has to create new dividing lines between those who are admitted to NATO membership and those who are not.<sup>16</sup> Neither the study nor the following political process has succeeded in convincing the Russians that an enlargement of the Alliance would be beneficial to bordering countries and Russia.<sup>17</sup> In this situation an expanding Alliance eastwards might be of a very provocative nature with respect to the relationship between western countries and Russia. The Russian perception is that the

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<sup>14</sup> Jeffrey Simon, "European Security Policy After The Revolutions of 1989". The National Defense University Press, Washington, D.C. 1991.

<sup>15</sup> NATO Study on Enlargement of the Alliance. September 1995.

<sup>16</sup> The Defense Monitor. Center for Defense Information - Washington, DC. November/ December 1995.

<sup>17</sup> William J. Perry. Remarks by Secretary of Defense, William J. Perry, Werkunde Conference, Munic, Germany. 4 February 1996.

NATO alliance is directed towards Russia.<sup>18</sup> Thus the determination to expand the Alliance eastwards, regardless of a very strong Russian opposition, might cause one of the most difficult and dangerous challenges to European security in the Post Cold War era.

In this situation it is of critical importance to emphasize that the progress of the expansion process is dependent upon the general development in central and eastern Europe, including Russia and the relationship between Russia and the Western countries, and not exclusively based on the status of each single applicant. Potential conflicts between states, ethnic and religious groups in central and eastern Europe not directly involving the major western countries and Russia, does not require a larger NATO to be solved. Given the perception that conflicts in Europe should be solved within the framework of a collective security arrangement, it has to include Russia. The NATO Alliance has a role to play in an interim period assisting European organizations in their effort to create the elements of the new security system for the region. In this supporting role, NATO should clearly demonstrate that it's function as an alliance directed against Russia is no longer the Alliance's main function. This position would contribute to avoid increased hostile western attitudes in Russia in a very critical phase of the country's development. Furthermore, the pace of NATO enlargement should be a question of necessity, based on the evaluation and prospect of European development and/or mutual benefits of the major parties concerned.<sup>19</sup> Such an approach would establish the necessary freedom of action to meet several potential developments within Europe without forcing Russia into a preemptive defensive position based on misinterpreted western intentions. A successful

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<sup>18</sup> FBIS-EEU-96-025. Poland: Polish - Russian Roundtable on NATO Expansion. 6 February 1996.

<sup>19</sup> FBIS-WEU-96-023. Germany: Kinkel Renews " Security Partnership" Offer to Russia. 2 Februar 1996.

development in Europe would conclude the role of NATO as an organization based on collective defense and make way for a broader security arrangement for all of Europe. The resources, processes, knowledge and experience from NATO might well find its place within this future security arrangement.

The alternative is to proceed the expansion process, including new members as soon as these states comply with the criteria for membership, regardless of the overall development in central and eastern Europe and Russia in particular. A rapid inclusion of a few states, would give a minor contribution to the security of these new members. On the other hand the insecurity for non member states is likely to increase as well as the distrust between NATO countries and those who are not. Most nations in central and eastern Europe see membership in NATO as a protection against threats derived from a unstable Russia or a situation where governing forces in Russia would make attempts to reestablish the previous empire of the Soviet Union. At the present stage it seems unlikely that all of the former central and eastern European states wanting NATO membership will be included in the Alliance. The countries with the most valid concerns regarding the possibilities of future Russian aggression are the least likely to gain NATO membership in the short run. As a consequence the minor increase in security for some states in Europe might lead to a decrease in security for others and badly hurt the process towards the overall objective, which is a stable security arrangement for the whole of Europe, including Russia.

Seen from the authors point of view, an extension of NATO should be based on the continued evaluation of the overall development in Europe. An extension of NATO should take place only in the case of serious setbacks in the relationship between Russia and the

western world or based on the acceptance of mutual benefits. This approach might encourage a positive and lasting change in Russia, and simultaneously give way for freedom of action in case of a hostile development in the relationship with Russia. As a security valve, in case of a failed development in Europe, NATO should be prepared to act in accordance with its traditional purpose. It is in the Norwegian as well as in US interest to keep the alliance strong, vital and relevant.<sup>20</sup> For the US, and its allies, NATO has always been far more than a transitory response to temporary threat. It has been a guarantor of European democracy and a force for European stability. This is why the core mission endures even though the Cold-War has receded into the past.

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<sup>20</sup> A National Security Strategy of Engagement and Enlargement. The White House. February 1995.

***The relationship with other Nordic countries.***

The end of the Cold War and Sweden and Finland's decision to join the EU, has to a major extent made the traditional elements of the Nordic contribution irrelevant with respect to military confrontation between countries in Europe. The traditional Nordic neutrality in the case of military hostilities and non-alignment during peacetime, is clearly no longer feasible within the new political framework in Europe. Both Sweden and Finland have tied themselves politically to the West but decided not to participate in the military cooperation. This approach is only relevant when the main challenges to these countries security is defined as other than military threats, and the use of military forces in a warfighting role becomes a remote alternative. In the case of a military focused security scenario, these countries emphasis on neutrality and military non-alignment is likely to be reevaluated. This anticipation is reinforced by the fact that the traditional non-alignment, aiming at neutrality in crisis and war, is relatively costly compared to participation in collective defense efforts. As a consequence the increasing pressure on defense budgets makes NATO relatively more important as a security provider for these countries as well as member countries. For Norway, the military strength of both Sweden's and Finland's armed forces are of continuous importance, although this relation is not going to have any impact on the Norwegian emphasis on the security relationship to the United States, however, it is likely to have impact on Sweden's and Finland's military relationship with WEU and NATO. EU membership for these countries will almost certainly lead to

eventual NATO membership as well, but as long as the Alliance's relationship with Russia is tense and unclear, this might slowly develop in a low profile, non - threatening way.

***The relationship with the Baltic countries and Poland.***

In contrast to our neighbors Sweden and Denmark, Norway has not played a major historical role in the Baltic Sea region. The Norwegian orientation towards this region, which today includes a variety of co-operative measures, is rather new. However, the Norwegian efforts towards increased participation and co-operation in that region is a natural consequence of the historical transformations of the early nineties, which has given the Baltic Sea region a unique opportunity to change from an area of political confrontation into an area of co-operation and political and economic development. With the absence of a dividing line in Europe, Denmark's, Sweden's and Finland's membership of the EU, and with the Baltic countries and Poland strengthening their ties to the West, a new and promising field of co-operation is apparent.

Norway's security policy is directed towards securing national interests through international co-operative mechanisms and by seeking to develop these tools. Furthermore, given Norway's limited size and resources, the focus of the national security policy in a regional context is directed towards the neighboring surroundings, which comprises the Baltic Sea region as well. The Nordic and the Nordic - Baltic perspectives are by necessity two areas of active Norwegian international participation. Stability in the

Baltic region is a prerequisite for stability in the Northern Europe as a whole and is directly linked to stable and predictable relations between the Baltic countries and Russia.

The Norwegian and Nordic involvement in the Baltic Sea region must, as a consequence, be seen in a wider European context. Other Western European countries are engaged in various forms of support, and the Scandinavian countries are not alone in having a clear responsibility to assist the Baltic countries in their development. A broader European framework is the only realistic approach to this challenge where the Nordic countries might serve as a non threatening approach also acceptable by Russia. In this context, the common platform of PFP provides a solid foundation for an extensive broadening of Nordic - Baltic security co-operation, and does not require an extension of the NATO alliance, including these countries and Poland, in the short term perspective.

#### US - Norwegian Security Relations.

The strategic importance of the Nordic waters and Norwegian land territory is relevant only in the context of potential hostilities between Russia and the western countries. If there is a common assumption that security no longer can or will be the principal unifying bond of the Atlantic nations, because there no longer exists a lasting unifying threat, Norwegian territory and the Norwegian Sea will be eliminated as an area of military interest along with the Sea Lines Of Communication (SLOC) between America and Europe. In this situation Norway might be heavily dependent upon US and NATO to assist in situations with national conflicting interests with Russia. It is a historical fact that unequal power has a tendency to result in unequal arrangements when great and small

states deal with security issues.<sup>21</sup> Norway's long-term security needs are to maintain US presence in northern waters to prevent domination of these waters through Russian territorialization efforts. Developments since the early 1970s have made Norway more exposed, and the Norwegian response has been to tie the United States more directly to an early defense of Norwegian territory. This is in line with the idea frequently heard in Norwegian politics that Norway is foremost and above all an Atlantic nation which depends primarily upon the US security guarantee, and only secondarily a European nation linked to the other European NATO members through collective self-defense. This approach seems to be overlapping with US interests in the region.

In the short and mid- term perspective Norway will most likely try to establish good and lasting economic and cultural relations with its powerful neighbor, Russia. Even if this approach will prove to be successful it is not likely that Norway in foreseeable future will weaken its bonds to its closest and most powerful ally, the US. For Norway the Russian Republic will always be a neighbor and the largest single military power in Europe. This means that Norway has to have the closest possible ties with the rest of Europe, so that Norway's position as Russia's neighbor does not become an isolated affair, but part of Russia's relations with the rest of Europe.<sup>22</sup> For Norway NATO is more or less a multinational framework around an American guarantee, even more so after 1994 when Norway refused to be a member of the European Union. The potential present and future changes in the US and NATO approach to the security arrangement in Europe, based on the assumption that there will be no threat from Russia in the future, might lead to a

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<sup>21</sup> Johan J. Holst. NATO's Sixteen Nations. May/ June 1991.

<sup>22</sup> Aftenposten. "Holst says Present Security Situation Uncertain". 9 September 1991.

situation where Norway's security problems are of minor interests to the rest of the western world. Norway is concerned about the continued US participation to ensure the security of Europe and contribution to end the division of Europe. The US is necessary to provide the leadership and cohesion among the European nations required for an enduring peace and security in Europe. Even though the US political leadership is aware of this situation, It seems to be very hard for the government to get full support and acceptance for a new and fundamentally value based definition of US security interests in Europe. As a consequence foreign security policy is more than ever vulnerable to failures. Changes in the US strategy and force structure resulting from The Bottom Up Review, combined with emerging pressure on defense spending as a consequence of domestic factors, are likely to influence the US interest and engagement abroad. Hopefully, the US will find in her best self - interest to take part in the transformation of Europe. Such participation will benefit future European security, the United States itself, and its primary ally on the "northern flank".

In the unlikely case that NATO should cease to be a forum for collective European security with full American participation, Norway may well find it in her best interests to seek a bilateral arrangement on friendship, support and mutual security with the United States.

## Summary and Conclusions.

Traditionally, the main pillars of Norwegian security policy are a relatively strong national defense and alliance cooperation. NATO has been the cornerstone of Norway's security providing a viable framework for Norwegian security policy.

NATO provides protection against external threats and enables Norway to borrow military power assuring the necessary balance to preserve peace. The alliance also contributes by positioning Norway in the pattern of international relations thus avoiding speculations concerning Norway's international course.

NATO provides a very important link between Norway and the broader European security order such reducing the vulnerability as a peripheral location and non - EU membership. The multilateral cooperation of NATO counters strategic competition pressure in an area of great interests and underlines the essential link between the US and Norway for common security in the North.

NATO also assures Norwegian access to the major political European deliberations and reduces the danger of isolation.

Looking to the future, several developments could pose increasing problems for Norwegian security. If current changes in Eastern Europe result in a major change in the role of NATO with respect to the previous commitments within the alliance, or even a reduced US commitment to the defense of Europe, Norway has few places to turn. In all probability, none of the European nations, individually or in common, would have the

interest and the capability to deter a Russian attack on Norway. Norway's security alternatives to NATO are not very promising. Looking at the present development within NATO it seems that the alliance will emerge from the current events with a new and reconfirmed role of collective European defense and security, including a firm and resolute American participation which will ensure continued stability throughout Europe. In spite of the importance of U.S. presence and leadership in Europe, Immediate NATO expansion might be a potential mistake. By advancing NATO to the borders of the former Soviet Union while simultaneously insisting on continuing disarmament, we might revive the impression of a military threat from the West in the minds of many Russians.

Rather than encouraging the new democracies to focus on NATO membership, which would provide little additional military security and would encourage a return to Cold War-type divisions, the western world should work with these democracies to facilitate their inclusion in the EU, which would lead to membership in the Western European Union. That institution has an even stronger mutual - defense guarantee than does NATO. EU membership would almost certainly lead to eventual NATO membership as well, but in a low profile, non - threatening way. In the case that NATO in the future should cease to be the forum for collective European security with full American participation, Norway may well find it her best interests to seek a bilateral agreement on friendship, support, and mutual security with the United States. The realism in this approach will be heavily dependent upon the US role in the world in a long term perspective.

In addition to the concerns above, it seems clear that the prospect of a vanishing lasting and permanent unifying threat, security no longer can or will be the principal unifying bond

of the Atlantic nations in the long term perspective. Common purpose, not common fears, must provide the cohesion in the future era in which economical and social issues will dominate. Thus cooperative partners in the western world must contribute to the common task of building for the future rather than safeguarding the status quo.