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THESIS

THE SECOND WAVE OF NATO ENLARGEMENT: A KEY CONTRIBUTOR TO THE TRANSATLANTIC LINK

by

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March 2005

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13. ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to determine how post-Cold War NATO allies have contributed to transatlantic relations, both in times of crisis and in times of harmony. Their contribution, although less significant when compared to long-time members' military capabilities, takes various forms. Their support in times of disagreement among allies over the Iraq 2002–2003 issue proved to be more valuable than was anticipated.

Therefore, my research is an introspective look at the events that marked NATO's evolution during the last fifteen years and their implications for NATO members as units and for traditional transatlantic relations as a whole.

Successive NATO enlargements proved that each decision to add new members reflected NATO's priorities at that particular moment. Whether it was a pre-Cold War enlargement or a post-Cold War enlargement, the decision reflected NATO's interests. Some of the decisions were predominantly military; some were in accordance with the international order established after World War II. The post-Cold War enhancements had two major characteristics: the first enlargement was more symbolic than the second because it erased the artificial lines set by Yalta, whereas the second one was much more practical.

The geo-strategic position of the NATO candidates and their willingness to join, prior to their formal invitation, were favorable factors, and the decisions made regarding membership proved to have long-term, positive consequences. New NATO members, particularly Romania, appreciated their new status and participated actively in both NATO operations and in "coalition of the willing". Their equal participation in NATO-led operations and coalitions made a palpable contribution to both NATO and to the transatlantic relations.

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THE SECOND WAVE OF NATO ENLARGEMENT: A KEY CONTRIBUTOR
TO THE TRANSATLANTIC LINK

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I.   INTRODUCTION

There were many reasons for choosing this research topic for my thesis. Some were personal; some were driven by the holistic perspective presented at the Naval Postgraduate School.

While some may consider the way a south east European country performs in the international arena less relevant, for a country in the region it is important to make periodical and realistic evaluations of the status quo, especially since 1989.

Therefore, my research evaluates the changes that NATO membership caused in the countries involved the last two NATO enlargements, 1999 and 2004. This research also considers how the new members can contribute to the development of transatlantic relations. I chose to look at the transatlantic relations only from NATO's perspective, because not all the new members are part of both NATO and the European Union. From all ten new entries: Estonia, the Czech Republic, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Poland, Slovenia and Slovakia, only Bulgaria and Romania are not yet part of both organizations.

I argue in my research that no matter what NATO's internal debates are over different issues, the end result is stronger ties within the Atlantic community. This was the direction new members were headed when they decided to support U.S. actions in Iraq. Can one imagine what the consequences would have been if all of Europe had decided not to support the United States in Iraq in 2003? As the year of this particular decision was called "annus horribilis" and transatlantic relations were close to the freezing point, is not difficult to assess the negative effects of such alternative.

As it was much criticized by the elder NATO members, the decision of the newest members to support the United States in Iraq was more significant than is generally thought. Besides the specific advantages that resulted from their

decision, the newest NATO members contributed to the maintaining and development of transatlantic relations in the interest of reciprocal security and stability.

NATO is an organization that, for more than fifty years, has managed to survive profound transformation. The keys to its success seem to be a flexible approach and appropriate adaptation mechanisms.

The general perception is that NATO was designed entirely as a military organization meant to stop the spread of the Soviet Union's expansionist policies. One might argue, however, that the reason the Alliance still exists is because its founding principles involved more than just containment. Its survival was questioned at the beginning of the 1990s, since the Cold War had ended and its purpose seemed futile. But events that followed proved its continuing necessity. The issue of NATO relevance emerged due to the fate of its counterpart, the Warsaw Pact which was established in 1955, six years after NATO. The Pact lost its importance soon after the rise of the 1989 liberation movements in the former Soviet sphere of influence, and it was expected that NATO would have the same fate. However, it did not.

The natural questions are: what are the elements that make this organization viable even though the security environment has changed dramatically? What are the bonding materials that keep the member states together? In cases of strong disagreements, why are they not going separate ways? Moreover, why are other countries enthusiastic about joining the NATO club? Why are they still knocking at NATO's door? Is it a mirage or just a necessity? Can the new entries make a difference? Can they really contribute to the well-being of the Alliance or are they just safeguarding its farthest borders?

In the early' 90s most political commentators were forecasting a gloomy future for the Alliance. The international relations "landscape" had changed so much after 1989 that a redefinition of the international order was believed necessary. The United States, as a victor of the Cold War, pursued an

institutional approach that remained consistent until the Iraq invasion in 2003, when U.S. hegemonic behavior blossomed.

Until 2003 NATO was one of the most important vehicles of the institutional international order. It was perceived as the sole guarantor of security and stability in a very dynamic environment. Article 10 of the Alliance maintains an open invitation for any European state to join the organization as long as the principles and values that define NATO are internalized and respected.

Beginning in 1991, NATO's roles and missions had been changed to make it more suitable within a constantly changing environment, by the Strategic Concept (Rome 1991 and Washington 1999) and the enlargement process (Madrid 1997 and Prague 2002). The last two waves of enlargement, the fourth and the fifth in NATO history, were the most unusual ones due to the former status of the involved countries. They can be divided into three categories: former Soviet satellite states (Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania, and Poland) new states born as a result of the disintegration of another state (Slovakia and Slovenia), and new states born as a result of gaining their independence from the former USSR (Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania).

The major question of this paper is: How do the new countries contribute to a better Alliance, especially when issues are divisive its unity?

My research is divided into three parts.

The first chapter describes the security concerns of central and southeastern European countries after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the communist system. It charts the preparations and the political arrangements that led to successive NATO enlargements and the raison d'être behind those decisions. I highlight some of the main events that not only mark the relations in southeast Europe but also had important implications for transatlantic relations. I show how in the process of accession, Poland arose as a platoon leader, a status which was later put to the test.

The second chapter focuses on the second wave of NATO enlargement and its implications on transatlantic links. A comparison among the states of the second wave enlargement reveals Romania as platoon leader, whose status was later put to the test.

The third chapter concentrates on Romania and its understanding of the actualities of transatlantic relations. More important, this chapter analyzes Romania's perception of the benefits of active participation in the war against terrorism and the implications of that for the transatlantic link.

The conclusions reached in the paper support my general hypothesis: in spite of appearances, most countries, given the opportunity, can make a contribution to the development of the transatlantic relations.

From its beginning, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization was what Henry Kissinger called it a "troubled partnership." NATO had experiened a succession of serious crises: Suez Canal Crisis (1956), French president Charles de Gaulle's challenge to U.S. leadership of the Alliance (1958–1966), the Vietnam War, United States–West European differences over détente with the Soviet Union during the1970s and the deployment of Intermediate Range Nuclear Forces in the late 70s to early 80s. Considering the pressure those crises placed on the Alliance, the predictions made in American foreign policy about an imminent transatlantic divorce do not seem so out of place. The history of repeated transatlantic disagreements reached an all-time low point during the Bush Administration between 2002 and 2003. President George W. Bush made his first move toward reconciliation at the Brussels NATO summit in February 2005.

> The interdependence of Europe and North America, the transatlantic link, was forged from the bitter experience of the first half of the 20th century that witnessed two world wars, a devastating worldwide economic depression, and the rise of Communism.
>
> The building of a strong, peaceful and prosperous Europe since World War II is one of the greatest triumphs of American diplomacy and the current success of European integration would have been

unthinkable without America's strong commitment to European security through NATO and the role of Europe's transnational institutions.

After the Second World War, since 1947 when George Marshall offered his vision for post-war reconstruction, the transatlantic partnership has helped to build a more peaceful and prosperous Europe. The great conflicts of the first half of the 20th century were followed by the Cold War competition of the century's second half, which created the divisions of that time East versus West, the Soviet Union versus the United States, the Warsaw Pact versus NATO, communism versus capitalism.

Fifteen years ago the artificial line that divided Europe, drawn at Yalta, was erased. Germany has been reunified, the EU and NATO have embraced new members from Central and Eastern Europe, and Russia stands with the United States and Europe as a partner not a rival.

The 21st century is less than five years old, but already two major events have had and will continue to have important effects on the transatlantic link. The first, of course, was the attack by al-Qaeda on September 11, 2001 and the second transforming event was the Iraq war, which plunged the Alliance for a time into a crisis of confidence.[1]

Historical examples of the crises that the Alliance encountered are also proof of NATO's potential to overcome differences, as stated in the Washington Treaty:

> They are determined to safeguard the freedom, common heritage and civilization of their peoples, founded on the principles of democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law. They seek to promote stability and well-being in the North Atlantic area. They are resolved to unite their efforts for collective defense and for the preservation of peace and security. They therefore agree to this North Atlantic Treaty.

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[1] "The U.S. international strategy and the transatlantic link," Betsy L Anderson, chief of mission of the U.S. Embassy in Sweden; remarks delivered at University of Gotland with the occasion of the Seminar on European and International Security, 15 September 2004.

The Parties agree that an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all, and consequently they agree that, if such an armed attack occurs, each of them, in exercise of the right of individual or collective self-defense recognized by Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations will assist the Party or Parties so attacked by taking forthwith, individually and in concert with the other Parties, such action as it deems necessary, including the use of armed force, to restore and maintain the security of the North Atlantic area.[2]

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[2] Excerpt from the North Atlantic Treaty, Washington, 4 April 1949.

II. POST-COLD WAR SECURITY ENVIRONMENT AND NATO ENLARGEMENT

What was called, relatively recently, the "first" NATO enlargement is only a time-related construct. The reality is that, chronologically, it was the fourth enlargement since NATO's establishment in 1949. The first such enlargement included states that were behind the Iron Curtain for almost fifty years, and re-born after the political changes of the early 1990s.

After the communist collapse, the security environment in Europe declined, especially in southeast Europe. States formerly held together by coercion or treaty provisions developed centripetal tendencies that evolved into declarations of independence. The disintegration of states, ethnic revivals, rivalries for resources, and nostalgia for the "big" and powerful state became sources of instability and conflict. On top of this instability, the Warsaw Pact, the only institutional framework that supposedly could provide security and stability in the area, was dissolved in 1991. The rapid evolution from a communist to an ex-communist country status triggered a search for an organization that could guarantee their security needs. Their efforts were oriented toward NATO as the only organization strong enough to provide security in a much-tormented region, where countries were unprepared to deter or counteract new, asymmetric threats on their own.[3]

Despite the inherent difficulties that most of the former communist states have had, NATO maintained the "open door" policy outlined in Article 10 of the North Atlantic Treaty. This policy gave central and southern European states the incentive to approach NATO as the most viable and the sole security organization that could answer their security dilemmas after the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact.

A.   SECURITY MILIEU AFTER 1990

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[3] Joseph Rothchild and Nancy Wingfield, "Return to Diversity: A political history of East Central Europe since World War II," Oxford University Press 2000.

The balance of power that characterized Cold War relations suffered a fatal blow in late 1989. Its sudden demise enabled the victor of the Cold War to assume the primary role in redesigning the new world order. Regional security, which used to be approached as an independent factor, gained much of the attention of the United States and Western European countries after 1990. This was due to the dramatic events in the former Yugoslavia and the very unstable political situation in Russia in the early 1990s. The breakdown of Yugoslavia and the coup d'état in Russia, along with its gradual process of formal "separation" from the central government, were the gravest events since World War II.

This high level of insecurity was a natural environment for arms and drug trafficking (some of the countries developed constant routes of trafficking toward Western Europe), organized crime, and corruption at the highest level. In addition, this insecurity soon became fertile terrain for the infiltration of terrorist organization elements. Despite the security umbrella provided by NATO to its members, the threats grew closer and became less conventional. To address these concerns, Western liberal democracies began to push for and speed up the democratization of the formerly communist regions.

Sometimes, evidence gathered from different sources gives the impression of a lack of authentic willingness on the part of powerful actors to succeed in these actions. After exhausting all democratic means for preventing conflicts, forcefully intervening in the name of democratic values, and imposing the terms and conditions of a peace settlement, conflict can still arise. This was the case in the former Yugoslavia, where, despite serious peacemaking efforts, war broke out when Slovenia and Croatia declared their independence in 1991. The Yugoslav National Army after engaging in two short wars with the newly independent countries lost and was forced to retreat into its own territory. Unfortunately, the declaration of independence then made by Bosnia i Herzegovina resulted in a bitter and prolonged war. From 1992 until the 1995 Dayton Peace Agreements, Europeans witnessed a re-creation of the horrors of

Nazi concentration camps, culminating with Srebrenica in 1995, where approximately 7,000 men and young boys were killed.[4]

When viewed within the larger context of the international arena, the decade of the 1990s is notable for a critical repositioning of countries according to an *imbalance of power.*

B.   THE WINNER TAKES ALL

In the early 1990s, regional issues were mainly related to the violent disintegration of the former Yugoslavia and the effects of the disintegration of the former USSR.

In the early' 90s, the United States, the indisputable winner in the Cold War, was "forced" to prove its potential as a world leader because of the increasing number of hot spots on the world map. Southeast Europe was no exception. The former Yugoslavia had an unfortunate destiny. Being the most progressive and market-oriented state from the former communist block, Yugoslavia had a special status in the Euro-Atlantic community. A change in leadership in 1980 with the death of Joseph Broz Tito corresponded to a change in the international community's perception of the Yugoslavian federation.

Traditionally, Yugoslavia represented a particular interest for the United States and, to a lesser degree, for the Western European countries. The early decoupling of Yugoslavian authorities (1948) from the Soviets was perceived by the Allies as an encouraging sign of a break in the unity of the communist block. It was also considered an opportunity to pursue an anti-Soviet policy right under their nose, in defiance of the Soviet tight surveillance. Whatever had motivated the Western Europeans countries and the United States to favor the Yugoslav regime before 1989 was no longer an issue. In 1980, after Tito's death, a much more radical leader came to power: Slobodan Milosevic. He managed to suppress every remnant of the autonomy that ethnic groups had had before the fall of communism. After 1990, people still living within the boundaries

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4 Steven L Lamy, "The Dutch in Srebenica: A noble mission fails," The Institute for the Study of Diplomacy 2001.

established by World War II regained the right to decide their own destiny under their own desired authority. The result was a centripetal trend that took over the country. A counter measure envisaged by the Belgrad central authorities was to pit ethnic groups against one another. The authorities put into practice aggressive policies by abusing on the national sentiments, instigating people to commit ethnic cleansing, reactivating their memory scars, and overvaluing the national pride of a "Great Serbia." In retrospect, Yugoslavia showed all the signs of a perfect candidate for a war theater. Now it is relatively easy to identify what went wrong, and to see that the real motives were rooted deep in an intricate system of national and international interests. A situation that results in war is generally considered a diplomatic failure. Who's to blame for this failure?

Between 1980 and 1989 ethnic clashes were noted in such regions as Kosovo, where any outside intervention was inconceivable. But after the 1989, ethnic clashes continued on the background of country disintegration. In such condition, one can not help wondering why did not the Europeans and the Americans stop this self-destructive trend before the situation became unstoppable? Prior to 1989, an intervention was simply not an option to be considered, and thus after the end of Cold War, it was just a matter of time until conflict erupted.

In response to my question, there are two alternatives to consider.

First, early warning elements were either ignored or went unnoticed. As America was unwilling to intervene, no matter the cost, the Europeans should have done more to prevent the violent outcomes. Having neighbor countries involved in an armed conflict or on the verge of conflict is a threat to the surrounding countries as well. Experience shows that nearby conflict has a tendency to spill over national boundaries. Besides, a war like situation is liable to result in external intervention and arbitrary post-war settlements. The post-WW II settlements led to the establishment of Yugoslavian federation. Their arbitrary' character was one of the causes of the post-1990 wars. The threats posed by Yugoslavia were multifaceted, not just military, but also economic and social. For

instance, consider the economic embargo imposed on Serbia, Yugoslavia's successor, which was intended to isolate and weaken the country. However, the embargo affected not only Serbia, but also neighboring countries, particularly Romania and Bulgaria, which depended on the commercial trade on the Danube Delta.

The second possible answer to my question is the lack of political willingness on the part of Western democracies to remedy the situation. They were much more concerned with savoring their victories in the Cold War, and the Gulf War which were the basis for a new configuration of the world order. The attention of the most powerful countries was focused elsewhere. According to John Ikenberry, a war and its aftermath help the victors consolidate their world position.[5] Ikenberry concludes that the history of humanity particularly registers wars that become turning points and allow the winner to shape the world order and influence politics: 1648, 1713, 1815, 1919, 1945. The type of conflict that took place in the Balkans was arguably the type that could assure primacy in world relations. However, the title of world leader is acquired not by fighting big wars, but by winning smaller conflicts. Yugoslavia's problems revealed vulnerability of both Europe and America.

Another aspect of the southeast Europe scene after 1989 was a rapid decline of the economic situation. The former communist countries had formed an economic framework that shaped their national economies. Once the framework was dissolved that is the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, COMECON, so were their economic ties.

The economy is still most negative element countries during transitional period. The collapse of the communist system had a domino effect across the entire ex-communist block and in all domains of their cooperation. The economy suffered the most because the market in which the countries usually operated suddenly disappeared. Along with this, the currency dropped in value

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[5] John Ikenberry, "After victory: institutions, strategic restraint and the rebuilding of the order after major wars," Princeton University Press, 2001.

dramatically in just a couple of years. Rapidly, lifetime savings were not worth a dime. Unemployment grew dangerously and the living standard seemed comparable to the communist period, with a few exceptions. This economic instability characterized the first two years and, in some respects, the following years of the post-Cold War development. Against the background of this economic and social turmoil financial schemes created an illusion of a better, more luxurious life with no effort.

In the international arena, the Iraq invasion of Kuwait in 1990 received prompt and undivided attention from the main actors on the both sides of the Atlantic. Within transatlantic relations there was no sign of potential disagreement. The Iraq intervention was a clear-cut situation for the allies. The intervention against Iraq was unanimously considered a legitimate response to the aggression and an immediate and, thus, forceful response faced no veto from any member of the UN Security Council. Although NATO was not formally used in the military operations, member countries sent their troops to the theater, bringing valuable experience to the intervention.

Regarding organizational changes, NATO had to reform from within due to outside changes in the early 1990s. Although NATO was originally a military organization, the political component gradually became predominant. The brisk adaptation of the organization in the face of changes seems irrefutable proof of the validity of the inner mechanisms that propel the Alliance. This kind of proof supports the assertions by those groups of political commentators who did not, and do not support the dissolution of the Alliance.

NATO changed its strategic framework in order to regulate its defining principles in keeping with its actions. The first Strategic Concept was presented early in November 1991 at the Rome summit. The document acknowledged and welcomed the "profound political changes" which were then reflected them in further definitive actions. Another challenge was the increasing prospect of multidirectional threats which are much less predictable. NATO must be prepared to face any challenge that might arise. Some threats were identified as "adverse

consequences of instability…and serious economic and political difficulties, including ethnic rivalries and territorial disputes."[6] Some concerns were raised after the 1990-1991 Gulf War by NATO strategists who drew the attention of decision makers to the importance of maintaining a constant level of security and stability at Europe's periphery. The underlying objective of the Alliance remains, however, the same: to safeguard the freedom and security of all its members. What had to change was the approach; that had to encompass a broader typology of threat. The fundamental operating principle also remained the same: "common commitment and mutual cooperation among sovereign states in support of the indivisibility of security of all its members."[7] The attributes that characterized the 1991 Strategic Concept were flexibility, mobility, improvement, adequateness, and effectiveness.

Eight years later (1999), NATO chose to again refine the Strategic Concept. What were the changes that triggered this redefinition?

In 1992 war broke out in Bosnia i Herzegovina. In fact, a state of war was the prevailing condition throughout the Yugoslavian region until the Dayton Peace Agreements in 1995. In 1993, the Republic of Slovakia declared its independence from the Czech Republic. In 1994, NATO launched an initiative called the Partnership for Peace, whose purpose was to bring non-NATO countries closer to the Alliance and also to tailor their military capabilities toward interoperability with the goal of full membership.

In the same year, the concept of Combined Joint Task Forces (CJTF) was endorsed by NATO. The concept encircled the objectives proposed in the first Strategic Concept: a more flexible multinational force able to respond adequately to a broad range of threats. In 1995 NATO had its first out-of-area operation, in Bosnia i Herzegovina. NATO air-strikes were a response to the parties' non

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[6] NATO Handbook, "The Alliance Strategic Concept"; text also available at: www.nato.int/docu/basicstxt/b911108a.html, accessed 10 January, 2005

[7] NATO Handbook, "The Alliance Strategic Concept"; text also available at: www.nato.int/docu/basicstxt/b911108a.html, accessed 10 January, 2005

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compliance with a cease-fire imposed by the United Nations. NATO acted at the specific request of the UN. Later, based on another UN request, NATO assumed a further role in implementing the military aspects of the Dayton Peace Agreements and thus contributing to the reconstruction of the state. The two missions undertaken by NATO were the Implementation Force (IFOR) followed by the Stabilization Force (SFOR). They lasted from 1995 to 2004, when the SFOR concluded its mission. SFOR was handed over to a European mission, ALTHEA, which is mainly focused on the reconstruction and the development of the economic mechanisms, while also maintaining the level of security and stability.

Signs of transatlantic disagreement began to attract public notice in the late 1990s. Lack of a common enemy, differences of opinion on a second out-of-area military operation (Kosovo in 1999), and a steady increase of U.S. domination in transatlantic relations brought traditional Allies to the brink of divorce. The first visible and undeniable sign of discord resulted from NATO's Kosovo air strikes in 1999. Allies did not share the same opinions about NATO's forceful intervention. Following the successes in Bosnia i Herzegovina by the Implementation Force and Stabilization Force the Alliance assumed the prerogative to duplicate them in Kosovo without the endorsement of a UN Security Council resolution. Not surprisingly, this created tension among allies. Most of the Western European partners raised concerns about the legitimacy of the Kosovo operations, and were visibly disturbed and frustrated by the United States' self-assumed leading role.

Although the first post-communist enlargement of NATO was a moment of joy and pride for the new entries, it was a disappointing and frustrating moment for the applicants who were still on the "outside." In the meantime, the New World Order began to take a more recognizable shape. Despite the Western allies' unwillingness to yield to any concession in friendly confrontation with the most offensive U.S. realist strategies, no strong and firm position was taken. Some Allies, especially France and Germany, openly showed and declared their

discontent with U.S. practices. However, their political statements were not backed up by definite measures, military or economic.

The first turning point in transatlantic relations was marked by the 1997/1999 NATO enlargement. In 1997, at the Madrid summit, three ex-communist countries were invited to begin accession discussions. These countries were Poland, the Czech Republic, and Hungary. The decision was politically driven rather than militarily, affirmation which down the road was confirmed by those states' behavior and attitudes.

In April 1999, NATO celebrated fifty years of existence. It was a moment of reformulation of the basic principles of the Alliance. However, the eight years following the end of the Cold War were marked by a series of events that permanently changed both the Alliance and international relations.

C.   COLD-WAR WAVES OF ENLARGEMENTS

Soon after the end of World War II the next logical and natural step was a division of power among the victors. Within five years the intentions of all sides became clear. Western Europe, which came out of the war in ruins, was vulnerable in the face of Soviet "aggression." America had to choose: either leave the Europeans to deal with the Soviets on their own, or not. The solution chosen was very pragmatic and to some degree selfish. Europe and America had positions that were mutually beneficial. Every helpful action that the United States took in the years immediately after WW II pointed in this direction.

The North Atlantic Treaty was established in 1949 with twelve founding countries: Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America.[8] Following the geographic lines of the founding states, the Alliance strengthened certain parts of Europe. On its northwestern flank were Denmark, Iceland, Norway, and the United Kingdom; on its western flank were Belgium, France, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands; on its southwestern flank were Italy and Portugal. This left the central and southeastern flanks to the Soviets. None of

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[8] NATO Handbook, NATO Office of Information and Press, 2001

those European countries played a leading role in any aspect of the post war European affairs. Therefore, in the following years, NATO pursued Article 10-type policies with the goal of increasing its effectiveness in a potential conflict with the Soviet block.

In 1952 Greece and Turkey became NATO members, although their differences over Cyprus were well known. By accepting these two countries, NATO achieved two objectives in one shot. First, Europe's south flank was reinforced. Second, the Alliance was able to implement pivotal deterrence over them. In a 1975 case, the U.S. Congress imposed an arms embargo on Turkey as a result of the Cyprus invasion,[9] in which Turkey used U.S. military equipment.

The geo-strategic positions of both countries were additional criteria considered in accepting them into the Alliance. Their acceptance served NATO-member countries' interest in controlling access to the Balkans and the Middle East and protecting trade routes. The importance of the Alliance's flanks fluctuated. The increase or decrease of their importance depended on the specifics of the environment and countries' interests. During the Cold War, for example, the importance of the southern flank declined. It was revived early in the '90s with the Gulf War, when military strategists were forced to reconsider their plans.

It is true that during the Cold War the security environment was different. However, the Alliance brought under its umbrella two countries that, historically, had fought or maintained a high level of animosity. The cold calculus of costs and benefits, which must have been the rationale behind the decision, was doubled by accomplishing a fragile balance of power. The Alliance took an "either we take them or they will" approach. The decision was largely defined by the Soviet threat

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[9] Specific UN documents did not acknowledge it as an invasion, but as an intervention.

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and its embedded competition and perpetual confrontation. Additional considerations were related to the sea openings and the economic routes from the Middle East. Statistically,

> Mediterranean countries provide 24% of the European Union member states energy imports, 32% of the imports of natural gas and 27% of oil imports. However, there is a disproportion among the EU member states who are reliant on the producers of the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean; Spain, France, Italy, Greece and Portugal derive 24% of their oil supplies from their region; Spain, Greece, France, Italy, and Portugal derive 42% of their gas supplies from the region. Europe is linked to the supply from the region via the Transmed pipeline carrying Algerian gas to Italy, via Tunisia and to the Maghreb-Europe pipeline to carry Algerian gas, via Morocco, to Spain and Portugal. An electricity interconnection has also been on stream between Morocco and Spain since 1995.[10]

By the middle of the '90s, NATO strategists considered it appropriate to redefine the importance of the region due to its recent evolution. At the 1994 summit, the Alliance made public the guidelines that would shape the Alliance's policies in the region. The U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense, Joseph Kruzel, presented them.

> Today the real threat to European Security comes not from the northern region, where much of the attention of the Alliance is focused, but in the south, where existing conflicts and potential for catastrophe are pervasive...for NATO, the Mediterranean, rather then the Elbe, has become the front line for a variety of security issues ranging from the spread of extremism and uncontrolled migration to the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction...[11]

The next NATO enlargement was even more interesting than the first. In 1955 West Germany had been accepted as a member. Negotiations had begun in 1950. In the decade since the end of war, it became more evident than ever that a Europe without Germany was weak and vulnerable to the Soviets. Besides, there were several occasions when America was not focused on

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[10] Fotios Moustakis, "The Greek-Turkish relationship and NATO", Frank Cass, 2003

[11] Ibid 9.

Europe: the establishment of Israel in 1948, followed by restlessness in the region and North Korea's 1950 attack on South Korea. These events demonstrated the necessity and importance of having a much more self-reliant Europe. West Germany had to be part of it to balance the USSR's intentions to monopolize the country. In fact, a few months after West Germany's acceptance in NATO, the USSR signed the Warsaw Treaty with the East German authorities, thus conferring state prerogatives.

Beginning in the 1950s for the first time in its history, NATO added an essential political role to its traditional military function. This new political role focused first on the integration and supervision of Federal Republic of Germany. It then broadened to include maintaining stability in postwar Europe and maintaining some balance among the European powers.

During the Cold War, enlargement decisions were based on the needs of both military strategies and foreign policies, policies that focused on Soviet containment. By the late 1960s, confrontation between the United States and the Soviets occurred throughout Europe: in 1956, the Hungarian uprising; in 1961, the Berlin crisis; in 1968, Prague spring. In the late '70s and '80s, the U.S.-Soviet confrontation migrated to unsettled areas, such as the U.S. war in Vietnam and the Soviet war in Afghanistan. Those two conflicts were perceived as indirect confrontations between two superpowers for gains in areas of influence, but also for pride and reputation. The relative "peace" of the Cold War signaled the installation of a certain comforting situation agreed to by the two blocks. East-West relations were close to the null point. In a bipolar world the distribution of power between equal parties is reduced to the "null hypothesis." Conversely, between unequal parties, power is measured by the distribution of influence.[12]

The third NATO enlargement took place in 1982, when Spain was accepted as a member. At the time, Spain was emerging from a transition period (1975-1982), a civil war (1936-1939), and the Franco dictatorship (1939-1975). This enlargement was not as spectacular as the previous ones. Spain was

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[12] T. RISSE-KAPPEN, "Cooperation among democracies" Princeton University, 1995

experiencing internal difficulties with ETA and its successive attacks. The country was also involved in international disputes with the United Kingdom and Morocco over the Gibraltar Strait.

D.   FIRST WAVE OF ENLARGEMENT AFTER THE COLD WAR

As early as 1995, NATO conducted a comprehensive study on enlargement that focused on central and southeastern European countries. The study outlined steps aspirant countries had to take in order to be eligible for membership. The steps included compliance with the basic principles of the Washington Treaty and fulfillment of certain political, economic, and military criteria. Among the multitude of criteria, a few were specifically designed for countries that had a communist legacy. The criteria included the existence of functioning democracy, a market economy, willingness to solve any dispute with neighbor countries, respect for minority rights, and willingness to contribute militarily and achieve interoperability and to create consolidated democratic civil-military relations.[13]

The first post-Cold War enlargement was a decision full of symbolic importance. The enlargement study reflects throughout the Alliance's perception on Europe. The Yalta lines that divided the continent had to be erased and a new security architecture had to be created. To some extent, this enlargement was compensation to states that had recently come out of a harsh fifty-year reality.

Let us take them separately.

Hungary's transition from communism started in the late 1980s when the Hungarian economy began to take small but steady steps toward market-regulated mechanisms. These changes were approved by the National Assembly and were favored by the Hungarian communist party. Political changes, however, came later. In 1990, free elections were held for the first time in almost fifty years. Compared to Poland and the Czech Republic, Hungary showed more political and economic stability, a circumstance that encouraged foreign investments.

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[13] "Enlargement, what does it means?" text available at:
www.nato.int/issues/enlargement/in_practice.htm

And, in a relatively short time, Hungary achieved spectacular economic growth. By early 1995, however, these gains had been diminished by differences between the socialist government led by Gyula Horn and the opposition led by Istvan Csurka (after the death of Janos Antall in 1992)[14] over the privatization issue. The national currency was rapidly devaluated. Unpopular actions taken by the Hungarian government -- including cuts in welfare programs, measures taken to reduce the foreign debt, and a budget deficit -- resulted in reduced economic growth. In early 1996, the authorities announced an austerity budget and welfare program.

One of the criteria required by NATO was the development and maintenance of good relations with neighbor countries, with whom the issue of minority rights was always on the agenda. A major step toward confidence-building and reassurance was the Hungarian-Romanian friendship treaty, which stands as a model in other cases. After negotiations, the treaty was signed in 1995 and ratified a year later.

The market economy that began to develop as early as 1980, flourished after 1989, as a result of the U.S. aid program. Between 1990 and 1995, the Hungarian economy received an influx of U.S. aid totaling more than $217 million dollars. In addition, the first foreign investor in the Hungarian economy was the United States.[15]

Czechoslovakia's transition from communism to democracy was one of the most peaceful on the European continent. Its "velvetiness" also characterized its 1993 from Slovakia. Of the entire block of communist countries, only the Czech Republic managed to design and apply such a successful economic transition, through the use of voucher system and with the help of U.S. aid, totaling $145 million dollars.[16] Its foreign policy was marked by thorny relations with its biggest northern neighbor, as a result of the expulsion of the Sudeten

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[14] Michael J. Faber, "Hungary the party system from 1963 to 2000," research paper (June-August 2000), University of Northwestern.

[15] U.S. Congressional report on Hungary

[16] U.S. Congressional report on the Czech Republic

Germans after World War II. These relations seemed to be on the path toward conciliation, as both sides signaled that they were ready to bury their historical resentment.

On an optimistic but moderate note Czech President, Vaclav Havel expressed his country's wish to join the Alliance: "while the European Union focuses on political and economic integration, NATO constitutes an irreplaceable instrument for collective defense of these values."[17]

Poland was the biggest country to enter in the first wave of enlargement in every aspect: population, territory and military capabilities. The problems to be overcome were in accordance with its size. Poland's foreign relations had been influenced by the Solidarity movement during final years of the Cold War. This increased the trust of Western democracies that Poland could develop opposition forces strong enough to overthrow the communists. The Solidarity movement's very existence offered a good chance for change.

The U.S. Department of Commerce designated Poland a "significant market" soon after 1990. Consequently, Poland received substantial U.S. aid, during the same time span as Hungary and the Czech Republic (1990-1995) that totaled $805 million dollars. In addition, in 1993 U.S. exports came close to a billion dollars. Subsequently, Poland's determination to achieve NATO's requirements was proportional with the level foreign aid. Among the foreign investors, the United States held one of the highest positions.[18]

Poland's political leaders made several declarations both before and after their invitation to join NATO that described their perception of the event. The foreign minister at the time, Bronislaw Geremek, explained publicly the reason for Poland's desire to join NATO: "is an alliance which has put its immense military

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[17] Vaclav Havel, "A Chance to Stop Exporting Wars and Violence," *Transitions,* December, 1997.

[18] The numbers used were retrieved from Congressional Report Support (text available at www.fas.org/)

might in the service of fundamental values and principles that we share. NATO can make Europe safe for democracy. No other organization can replace the Alliance in this role."19

It is fairly easy to make assessments of countries contribution based on the financial figures. They are good indicators of country's intentions and point out the direction where the country is focusing its resources. Foreign aid helped the countries to channel their efforts is certain directions. Therefore, it can be deduced that the policies of positive inducements were more productive than using coercion. This was the case of the three new NATO members, which responded better to financial incentives rather then using means of coercion.

In spite of NATO's relatively early preoccupation with the construction of a "whole and free" Europe, the Alliance's best action took place in 1994. During that year, the Partnership for Peace program was launched as a tool to carry out multiple tasks. The tasks were devoted to achieving the political goals NATO aspirants were required to attain, as well as the acquisition of a certain degree of military interoperability and the promotion of NATO's norms, practices, and values. The Partnership for Peace encouraged the growth of democratic values in central and eastern Europe. The increased importance of NATO's political role was demonstrated at the London summit in 1990, when the Alliance invited several communist countries to send military personnel as liaison officers. Gradually, the level of cooperation increased. In 1991, NATO invited all the former Warsaw Pact countries to become members of the North Atlantic Cooperation Council, later the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council. The newly formed NACC's tasks were to promote cooperation and help the democratization processes in central and Eastern Europe.

The NATO enlargement process was simultaneous with its transformation from a Cold War military organization into a leading politico-military organization in a unipolar world facing a wide range of threats. This multilateral role became

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19 Bronislaw Geremek, Address on the occasion of accession protocols to the North Atlantic Treaty, December, 16, 1997.

even more evident when, in 1994 NATO also launched the Mediterranean Dialogue, an initiative that opened lines of communications and cooperation with Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, Tunis, Alger, Mauritania, and Israel.

In this context, the Madrid summit in 1997 represented the natural and logical next step. Although the new entries -- Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic -- did not completely meet NATO's requirements, in 1999 they became full members. During the two years between NATO's invitation and the Parliaments' ratification of the treaties, the Alliance conducted periodic assessments of the new entries, the *sine qua non* condition of existence in a collective security organization.

Although the first wave of enlargement was never acknowledged as either a failure or a complete success, the general opinion of the older allies was that it was too soon and too politically dictated, rather than militarily and economically substantiated. Thus, the first NATO enlargement was accompanied by a lot of criticism; from both outside and inside. Critics went as far as calling it the "most fateful error of American foreign policy in the entire post-cold era, due to American support of the second wave of enlargement."[20] In addition, NATO's move toward the east could "inflame nationalistic, anti-Western and militaristic tendencies in Russian's public opinion."[21] To some extent the criticism was right, because Russia, the USSR successor, did not regard favorably the continuous spread of its former enemy.

Another critique of the first enlargement process, which is applicable to the second wave as well, concerns the decision process. The consensus NATO required became much more difficult to achieve when the number of members increased. There were a few proposals to reconsider the decision-making methodology; however, none of them were consistent with NATO principles.

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[20] George Kennan

[21] Bronislaw Geremek, Address on the occasion of accession protocols to the North Atlantic Treaty, December, 16 1997.

It has been said that in the 1990s NATO became the vehicle of democratization in central and east Europe. That may be so in the sense that aspirant countries had a permanent incentive to acquire the necessary membership requirements. The first three countries, for example, were committed to democracy long before the "NATO carrot was dangled before them."[22]

NATO went through several stages of self-evaluation after the end of the Cold War. The main goal was to define NATO's current role and the first wave of enlargement was one of those moments. Cold War history shows that membership, although declared so, was not embedded only in NATO's five criteria of acceptance. Greece, Turkey, Portugal, and Spain are living proof of the distinctiveness of the membership decision. Their membership was dictated by strategic interests rather than by compliance with the rules. "Greece, Turkey, Portugal and Spain all experienced periods of undemocratic rule and manifested poor human rights records subsequent to becoming NATO members."[23]

What good does NATO membership bring?

Beyond its security purposes, the Alliance has the ability through its institutional mechanisms to deter any potential conflict that may arise between members. Thus NATO's very existence and presence are guaranteed opportunity for peaceful resolutions to disputes. A good example of how NATO exerted pivotal deterrence was Greece and Turkey during the Cold War. In spite of their occasionally mishaps, the two countries managed to maintain a satisfying level of cooperation due to NATO's influence.

Post-Cold War examples of good neighborly relations are Romania and Hungary, who signed a friendship treaty in 1996 in spite of traditional thorny relations. Among many signed treaties this one stands out as a model to follow for similar situations. There have been many others benefits of the cooperative policies pursued by NATO aspirant states that can be used as models of

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[22] Dan Reiter "Why NATO Enlargement Does Not Spread Democracy," *International Security*, 2001, volume 24, issue 4.

[23] Rebecca Moore, "Europe Whole and free: NATO's political mission for the 21st Century".

cooperation in other cases. Once the treaty ratified, the countries' efforts can be channeled toward other areas. A treaty can also trigger other forms of confidence-building and reciprocal reassurance measures.

One year after the Madrid summit, the U.S. Ambassador to Poland, H.E. Daniel Fried, observed: "when Poland and Hungary became more confident of their NATO membership, they increased their outreach to their neighbors-Hungary with Romania and Poland with Lithuania." The years preceding the formal invitation from NATO were abundant in bilateral treaties. As Hungary and Romania had done Poland signed a treaty with Lithuania and Ukraine. The Czech Republic and Germany signed a common declaration acknowledging the mutual damage caused during and after World War II (Nazi crimes against the Czechs and the Czechoslovakian expulsion of 2.5 millions Sudeten Germans after the war). A political component such as a treaty that committed countries to mutual reassurance often resulted in a domino effect in other areas of bilateral cooperation, such as culture, economy, minority rights, and opens forums of discussion. Such cooperation reinforces the treaty itself in a feedback process.

Indeed, these represent the modalities of developing and enhancing transatlantic cooperation: by maintaining a high level of trust and confidence in the covered area, developing good neighborly relations with non members and maintaining a constant and consistent level of regional cooperation.

In a speech in 2001, former NATO Secretary General Lord Robertson explained the allure of NATO enlargement.

> The prospect of NATO membership serves as an incentive for the aspirants to get their houses in order. Just look at Central and Eastern Europe today. NATO's decisions to take in new members has sparked a wave of bilateral treaties and supported the resolution of border disputes. It has also encouraged many to establish proper democratic control over their militaries. Why? Because all aspirants know that if they want to join NATO they need to do their homework. In short, NATO's willingness to open its doors has brought Europe closer together—in spirit and practice.[24]

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[24] Lord Robertson, "NATO's challenges: Illusions and realities." speech at Chicago Council on Foreign Relations, 19 June 2001.

A real test of countries' reliable and irreversible commitment to NATO was the mission in Bosnia i Herzegovina, established in 1995 at the request of the United Nations following Security Council Resolution No. 1031. NATO's role was to implement the military aspects of the Dayton Peace Agreements (annexes 1 and 1-A). The Implementation Force (IFOR) acted under Chapter VII of the UN Charter and enjoyed the contribution of both NATO and non-NATO members.

Hungary participated from the beginning of the mission, deploying a unit of engineers until 2002. The general reduction of the other forces led to a subsequent Hungarian reduction, which switched to a specialized unit with a maximum of 200 troops.

The Czechoslovakian contribution was divided into two time periods: before and after Czech-Slovakian split in 1993. They operated together in the 1992 UN-led mission, UNPROFOR, a peacekeeping mission established through the UN Security Council Resolution 743. After 1993, they continued to participate, but separately. The Czech participation was battalion-sized. They withdrew from the theatre in September 2001.

The Polish contribution was, by far, the most considerable of all the new entry countries. Polish militaries also participated in the UNPROFOR mission, but they increased their contribution, forming the Nordic-Polish Battle Group (NORDPOL BG) in the IFOR NATO-led operation. Other contributing countries to the NORDPOL BG were Denmark, Sweden, and Norway with additional support from Finland.

A comparison of the three countries' contributions reveals that Poland was by far the lead country. Poland's territory (a little over 300,000 square km.) its location, its opening to the sea and its population (close to 40 millions) are all bigger than those of the other new entries. Poland's military capabilities including its human as well as its technological resources are palpable proofs of my evaluation. One helpful feed-back assessment mechanism in this regard is the

level of U.S. aid and investment in Poland since the beginning of the 1990s. In return, Poland's commitments in NATO-led operations and other coalitions are direct proportional with financial aid.

The first NATO enlargement proved to be critical both for NATO as an alliance and for the target countries. It symbolized the end of the West-East divide and the communality of countries' interests and values. It also represented an added value for the NATO club, if not so much in terms of capacities, then in terms of supporting the allies. The younger allies understood the necessity of keeping transatlantic relations alive and functional, especially since the forms of current threats are so indefinite.

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III. THE ROLE OF THE SECOND WAVE OF ENLARGEMENT IN ENHANCING TRANSATLANTIC COOPERATION

A. SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, AND ITS POLITICAL EFFECTS

The world has changed radically after the infamous day of September 11, 2001. These effects continue today. The democratic world changed its policies and strategies following the grim preview of threats illustrated by the attacks. If the United States previously showed timidity in forcefully assuming the role of world leader, after the tragic 9/11 experience, there was no such timidity. Immediately after, all its allies supported the United States, denouncing the cruelty of the attacks and the lack of any logical reasoning in the killing of innocent people.

All the crisis response mechanisms which had seemed dormant were activated. The United States, for the first time in the history of the Alliance, invoked Article 5, which states that an attack on one member is considered an attack against all members. The immediate response was prompt and appropriate: AWACS and patrol and surveillance aircrafts spent more than 3000 hours in American air space and NATO ships were deployed to the Mediterranean Sea to prevent terrorists from infiltrating Europe.[25]

The allies expressed nuanced opinions about what the intensity of response should be, but there was no serious disagreement. Indeed, the attacks were followed by a series of domestic and external measures aimed at increasing the level of security, extending stable and secure areas, and speeding up the process of designing appropriate countermeasures.

On the American side of the Atlantic, the immediate impact of the attacks was comparable to concentric circles, hitting different levels of the U.S. government and raising questions about the effectiveness of the early-warning system. The attacks triggered a thorough investigation of the intelligence

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[25] Statement by Lord Robertson, 4 October 2001, available at:
www.nato.int/docu/speech/2001/s011004b.htm

community, which brought to the surface internal deficiencies, gaps in enforcing laws, and a lack of inter agency communication. On the European side of the Atlantic, the attacks had few internal consequences, but at the supranational level countries pushed for a speedy common policy on terrorism.

The American and European responses to the 9/11 attacks were differently paced. Evidently, the American response was rapid and dynamic due to their natural perception of the events as an emergency. The European response was much more moderate, due to their perceptions of the attacks as a lower degree of emergency, which then triggered a slower setting-in-motion of response mechanisms. If there were any doubts or uncertainties before 9/11 about the nature of the threats both sides of the Atlantic faced following the end of the Cold War, after 9/11 they simply dissipated. Russia no longer represented the main concern of the allies; terrorist organizations, rogue states, and the proliferation of the weapons of mass destruction were now recognized as the major threats. As President Bush said, these acts of terrorism are "yet another grim reminder of the lengths to which terrorists will go to threaten the civilized world."[26] The reality of these threats in the international realm in the twenty-first century requires both new military and non military perspectives and responses.

B. PRAGUE AND THE SECOND ENLARGEMENT

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization has come a long way since 1949, growing from 12 member states to 26 members by 2004. NATO embodies more than fifty years of tradition between America and Europe in the area of security, an Alliance that is very difficult to annihilate by the actions of particular momentary leaders. As is stated in the North Atlantic Treaty prologue, the allies

> Are determined to safeguard the freedom, common heritage and civilization of their peoples, founded on the principles of democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law. They seek to promote stability and well-being in the North Atlantic area. They are resolved to unite their efforts for collective defense and for the preservation of peace and security.

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[26] George Bush radio address on children hostage situation of Beslan, Russia, September 7, 2004.

These are, at large, the principles that constituted the criteria applied to select and admit new members in the second round of enlargement.

Cynical remarks were dispersed in NATO inner circles regarding the reasons that motivated NATO's second wave of enlargement, the most substantial one in the Alliance's history, adding Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovenia, and Slovakia as new members. The remarks implied that the 9/11 attacks were more important than the efforts countries had been made in three Membership Action Plan (MAP) cycles and in the regular Planning and Review Process (PARP) assessments of the aspirant countries. Maybe the terrorist attacks contributed to the speedy process, but it was not fair to make such statements, which diminished and denigrated the aspirants' efforts and commitments. In fact, the Bush administration put the second enlargement in a quite different perspective. The criteria used in the first wave of enlargement was still applicable, but the United States also took into consideration the countries' willingness, readiness, and ability to contribute to a new NATO, that would address threats in a "preemptive" and "proactive" way.[27] That meant out-of-area operations, an issue that was cause for further disagreement among members, as has already occurred in the case of Kosovo.

The concerns raised by the second enlargement can be separated into two categories: those common to both enlargements and specific to the second wave. The second category refers to individual countries' specific achievements, their problematic issues, their stated foreign policy objectives, regional security and stability and strictly Alliance-related issues. In this category were also included the costs of enlargement, which means financial efforts dedicated to reduce the military gap among the members, with the intention of reaching interoperability. Another specific concern was the performance of members accepted in the first enlargement since their accession. Those were taken as lessons learned for assessing potential future members. An evaluation of the first entries' performance failed to satisfy the Alliance. The Czech Republic and

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[27] US National Security Strategy, 2002

Hungary were major disappointments for NATO in both the Kosovo operations and internally. Hungary, for example, did not reach its pledged level of military restructuring. A high European official said: "Hungary had won the prize for the most disappointing new member of NATO."[28] The first wave countries' performance affected the confidence of the second wave in their ability to rise to NATO's level of requirements, despite U.S. financial aid and investment. Some voices even claimed that acceptance of the second wave equaled a lowering of NATO standards, especially as some of the aspirants Bulgaria, Slovakia and Romania were falling behind the MAP schedule in the first three years. Those first wave experiences caused members to push for feasible countermeasures: MAP, PARP and the Defense Capability Initiative (DCI), were designed to reduce the gap in capabilities among members, unfortunately with little success.

Several options were circulated regarding the number of invitees before the 2002 Prague summit. There were at least, three options for how many new members should be accepted: seven, nine, or zero. The nine-member option was ruled out: Albania and Macedonia were not prepared to become members. An option of zero invitees at Prague would have seriously damaged Alliance credibility. But the chosen option, seven, brought countries into the Alliance that were not necessarily fully prepared according to NATO's specific requirements. They were, however, willing to participate in missions according to the new set of objectives and NATO's newly envisioned world role.

In addition, the seven new countries provided a geo-strategic length that would enable the Alliance to rapidly deploy in conflict areas at lower costs. As the U.S. ambassador to NATO affirmed,

> In the wake of the shocking events of September 11, 2001, the world changed and NATO has changed with it. We set out a year and a half ago to transform everything about NATO so that it could help us to meet the new and daunting threat of terrorism and weapons of mass destruction. At November's Prague summit, President Bush and the NATO Leadership agreed on an ambitious,

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28 Celeste Wallander, "NATO' s Price: Shape up or Shape out," *Foreign Affairs*, 81, no 6 (November/December 2002)

even revolutionary, reform agenda. We worked to pivot the new NATO from its prior inward focus on threats within Europe to a new outward spotlight on the recent challenges to peace in the arc of countries from South to Central Asia to the Middle East and North Africa.[29]

The November 2002 Prague summit had one of the most ambitious agendas of all the summits held. It brought together allies ready to redefine their position inside the organization, but also to reiterate organizational raison d'étre in an environment that required new approaches. The summit took place under a futurist logo, NEW ALLIES, NEW CAPABILITIES, NEW RELATIONS, which left little to the imagination of the envisioned Alliance transformation.

New Capabilities: Prague represents the moment when the past stopped overshadowing the present and the future. The Alliance moved from a policy of fixed, bipolar military response to a future as flexible, trained organization ready and prepared to address a wide range of threats. An improved concept of its capabilities was launched, the Prague Capabilities Commitment (PCC), which included eight areas: intelligence, surveillance, and target acquisition; air-to-ground surveillance; command, control and communications; combat effectiveness; strategic air- and sea-lift; air-to-air refueling; and deployable combat support and service support units.[30]

The boldest decision taken regarding capabilities was to create a rapid reaction force, to be operational by 2006. The allies agreed that the NATO Response Force (NRF) would include a task force of 20,000 troops with sea, air, and land elements capable of performing the full spectrum of NATO tasks.

Another forward step taken at Prague involved NATO's military command arrangements, which the allies agreed to make more efficient. Its rearrangements had a functional cause as a follow-up, based on NATO's Kosovo experience in targeting decisions and the different requirements posed by the

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[29] Nicolas Burns, "The new NATO: healing the rift", speech at the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, 2003

[30] NATO after Prague, text available at NATO library, www.nato.int/

war on terrorism. As a result, now there is a single Strategic Command for Operations in Belgium supported by two Joint Force Commands able to generate both a land-based and a sea-based Combined Joint Task Force capability and one Strategic Command for Transformation headquartered in the United States. As a countermeasure to terrorism, NATO developed concepts of combating nuclear, chemical, and biological threats. These concepts were aimed at increasing the allies' preparedness and capacity for crisis response.

New Relations: Relations between NATO and the European Union were considered strategic; its relations with Russia were on an upward trend as well. And the successes in Bosnia i Herzegovina favored a potential joining of the country in the Partnership for Peace, along with the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. In this context, the special contributions of Romania, Bulgaria, and Slovenia were mentioned as modalities to strengthen stability and security in the region.

New Allies: At the Prague summit, NATO invited seven countries ranging from the Baltic Sea to the Black Sea to join. NATO's history had never registered a more robust enlargement than this one. In spite of all the criticism that might be raised, the addition of the seven countries extended NATO's secure area and brought specific contributions as well as a general defense contribution according to each country's military capabilities. After the first enlargement, NATO specialists had launched the Membership Action Plan in 1999 as a road map for new comers and as an elaborate NATO system for candidate countries to report on their progress and to be evaluated.

> To become a member of NATO, aspirants have to demonstrate a functioning democratic, political system and market economy; respect for persons belonging to national minorities in accordance with OSCE standards; the resolution of all outstanding disputes with neighbors and a commitment to the peaceful settlement of disputes generally; the ability and willingness to make a military contribution to the Alliance and achieve interoperability with other members forces; and the proper functioning of civil-military relations in line with democratic standards.

Participation in the MAP does not guarantee future membership. It does, however, enable the interested countries to focus their preparations on the goals and priorities set out in the plan and to receive specialist help and assessments from NATO. These cover all aspects of membership, including political, economic, defense, resource, information, security and legal requirements.

Each participating country chooses the elements of the MAP which best suit its needs and establishes its own targets and schedules. Participation in the Partnership for Peace, and particularly in the PfP Planning and Review Process, is an integral part of the process, since it allows candidate countries to develop forces and force structures which are better able to operate with the Alliance forces. Regular review meetings with Allies are held to monitor progress and ensure that advice and feedback is provided. Implementation of the MAP is kept under constant review by the North Atlantic Council.[31]

The years in between the two waves proved to the military staff that the first wave of NATO enlargement caught the invitees unprepared. Efforts to sustain the new entries were time- and money-consuming. The Membership Action Plan set a multitude of objectives for the second wave to accomplish, from which the countries could choose the ones most suitable and feasible for their individual needs. The MAP process was conducted for five cycles, each of them accompanied by periodical analysis and assessment with NATO officials. In using these instruments, NATO demanded a great deal from its potential new members, much more than it had demanding of states invited to join in the past. The requirements covered political and legal aspects, including representation; administrative and judicial independence; minority and civil rights; and a strengthening of media independence: in short, the building of a functioning democracy. The requirements also stipulated the exercise of civilian control over the military, transparent military budget, the reduction of the armed forces, which must have the ability "to take on the obligations of membership." Consequently, the invitations were formulated, more or less, according to the candidates' capacity to achieve these criteria.

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[31] NATO Handbook – Membership Action Plan

According to the defined and rigorous criteria, we can distinguish, as a general rule, at least two groups of analysts: one to support the enlargement process and consider it a good decision, the other to deny the importance of the enlargement process.

The latter group concluded that the second enlargement undermined the value of NATO membership, due to the number of states added and the lack of quality control in adding them. It has served to decrease both NATO's military and its political significance. Based on the experience of the first enlargement the analysts affirmed that we couldn't expect too much from the second enlargement, due to the inadequacy of the three Central European members in fulfilling the minimal military requirements (MMRs). These MMRs were overlooked in the end, because the invitations were made under great political pressure to meet the March 12, 1999, accession deadline, which forced the Alliance to make concessions. Moreover, they continued despite their belief that the MAP partners' institutional capacities were substantially weaker than those of Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic, whose performance had been less than ideal. NATO elder members recognize that the Membership Action Plan has witnessed the evolution of a defense reform process among MAP partners since the first enlargement and that it has the potential of preparing countries for NATO membership far more effectively than before.

Let us follow their thinking. If we take all the pertinent military-related criticism, they are right. However, it is not clear on what this rigidity is based, for the organization's history has a few examples of previous enlargements, older and more recent ones, which did not follow the principles, ad literam, but were dictated by specific interests corroborated with geo-strategic reasons. Examples are Greece under the regime of Colonels, Turkey with its three military coups, and Portugal under a dictatorship regime. If the second wave added no value to the Alliance in terms of military contributions, how can anybody see Iceland as a contributor to NATO? Iceland has no armed forces and is protected by the U.S. military. It is true that the seven new members are not militarily comparable to the

leading countries, but their participation in operations such as the Implementation Force in BiH, the Stabilization Force in BiH, and the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan (ISAF), Romania and Bulgaria are proving otherwise.

A comparative analysis of new and old member countries and subsequent NATO contributors is not only in order, but also relevant. In terms of population, we find the following structure.[32] The largest member is the United States (285 million), followed by a group of seven large (40-80 million) members - Germany, Turkey, France, the United Kingdom, Italy, Spain, and Poland. There are also medium-sized (20 to 30 million) members: Canada, the Netherlands and Romania, the rest are small-sized members (up to 10 million) - Denmark, Norway, Iceland, Luxembourg, Estonia, Latvia, Belgium, Portugal, Greece, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Lithuania, Slovenia, Slovakia and Bulgaria.[33]

Romania and Bulgaria are the two largest new members that have provided substantial military support both during Kosovo and in the Global War on Terrorism. The remaining five members are very small, with limited capacities. Although relatively wealthy, Slovenia (2 million) has consistently devoted little interest, energy, or resources to defense. It also lacks popular support for NATO. Based on the lessons of the 1999 enlargement, which demonstrated that once a country join NATO all leverage is lost, there is little reason to believe that such perceptions have changed for Slovenia. The three Baltic states, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, which are also very small (with respective populations of 1.5, 2.55, and 3.6 million) have real defense interests arising from their proximity to Russia. In addition, Latvia and Estonia have considerable Russian-speaking ethnic minorities, many of whom do not have Latvian or Estonian citizenship. In regard to their political systems, they have experienced some instability over the past decade. Added together, their population just reaches 15 million.

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[32] Table complete at the end of the chapter.

[33] CIA, "The World Factbook," available at:
http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/html

The list of all the little insufficiencies could continue, but let us not forget that other Allies are doing less than the new members. In some respects, maintaining a certain and permanent level of the requirements is an incentive for the new entries to improve themselves, on the condition of their fairness applicability of the same set of criteria. Applying different standards would endanger the cohesion of the Alliance.

C.   NEW   MEMBER'S   CONTRIBUTIONS   TO   TRANSATLANTIC RELATIONS

Countries that join the Alliance not only bring their own specific difficulties into the club, but also contribute to a new and improved NATO. The current NATO area encompasses countries beyond the Cold War geography (map at the end of the chapter). As a member or a partner, every country contributes to strengthening security and promoting the same set of values. In spite of the slightly different criteria applied to different countries at different periods of time, NATO has not relinquished its basic requirements. They remain the common denominator of NATO membership through the commonalty of ideas and values.

The idea of a weak NATO after the second round of enlargement is, in this context, totally groundless. Every state is a provider, and contributing to the common budget, participating in NATO missions, and covering some of the niches in NATO's capabilities. These are the active methods of strengthening the transatlantic relationship.

The Iraq war of 2003 was an important moment in transatlantic relations. United States has encountered strong opposition on the other side of the Atlantic from France, Germany, Belgium and Luxembourg. The animosities and harsh conversations centered around the decision to invade Iraq created confusion and inconsistency and gave the new members a bad example of how founding members behave in time of crisis. The decisive actions taken by the new allies in regard to the Iraq issue may be analyzed from different perspectives. It established a pattern of behavior for the countries that formed the coalition, on which United States can rely and, despite all odds, it maintained open the lines of transatlantic communication.

Politically, NATO accession represented for both waves a long-term commitment for democratic changes. Even if some critics claim that NATO is not a vehicle of democracy, its input to the process can not be denied. For instance, the September 2002 elections in Slovakia became a source of concern for NATO officials, when, in the first round, the nationalist Vladimir Meciar seemed to be the public favorite. His anti-Western views could have hampered the accession process. The public became aware of the negative impact brought by the nationalist candidate and, in the second round, their vote reflected a pragmatic and democratic view, removing Vladimir Meciar from their preferences.

Strategically, enlargements increased security from the Baltic to the Black Sea and visibly reduced tensions with Russia. In view of its new roles and missions NATO's geographic span creates areas of strategic importance for the Alliance. Romania and Bulgaria are Black Sea littoral countries and both have significant ports and facilities on their coasts. They have already been used as refueling and departure points for missions of the U.S. Air Force in Afghanistan. For an extensive military operation against Iraq, such facilities will be valuable and are likely to be used for transport, re-supply and reconnaissance, as well as far rear area facilities. The ability to use these facilities takes on added importance, given the hesitation and even reluctance of some states i.e., Turkey bordering Iraq to allow their territory to be used in the event of war.

In terms of costs benefits, every member has to pay, using a comparable ration from their budget, and contribute to the NATO civilian and military budget and to NATO's security and investment program (NSIP). Additionally, every member has to pay the cost of their personnel posted in Alliance and of their forces that participate in NATO-led operations as well as any additional funds that result from their involvement in different NATO projects. The financial costs require the states to be more responsible and more vigilant regarding their defense expenditures. If the PfP program is covered by NATO, membership is hardly a free ride. For instance, estimates from U.S. government sources of the costs to aspiring members of reforming and reequipping their armed forces (i.e.,

for Poland, Hungary and Czech Republic) were running between $800 million to $1 billion annually, prior to their accession. After their accession considerable defense expenditure became national responsibility in order to meet NATO's minimum requirements. In case of Romania, the government has allotted around one billion dollars to defense expenditures since 2001, and there is a politically strong commitment that this figure be kept in the near future. Also, these costs have to be paid from Romania's own defense budget and do not require any other significant costs to NATO.

To countries that still have to deal with the communist economic legacy, such costs may endanger further economic development. As some of the officials from the former communist bloc admitted unofficially, the cost of NATO membership was greater than they expected. To these financial burdens extra pressure was added by competition between the American and the European defense industries. New allies faced a delicate situation when they had to choose weapons systems that do answer to country's military requirements. Often, a purchase of weapon systems is chosen for political purposes not military needs. An example of this was Hungary, whose purchase of fighter aircraft caused a crisis over civilian versus military requirements.

New members have to have very good relations with both NATO and the Unites States. For example, Romania, Bulgaria, and Slovenia participated in NATO-led multinational forces in Bosnia and Kosovo. All new members have also contributed to the U.S.-led coalition forces in Afghanistan, either equipment or units of their own, or by allowing U.S. use of their bases. These contributions to NATO and to development of the transatlantic link show commitment and reliability to fulfill the Alliance objectives.

The concept of "niche capabilities" floated before the Prague Summit could be one of Alliance' keys to success in continuing its transformation to deal with the new challenges of the twenty first century. It is notable the Czech Republic achievement in fulfilling this concept by developing a contingent in one significant area – Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear – where NATO

was deficient. From developing specific military capabilities both NATO and the country benefit. NATO avoids unnecessary duplication of capabilities, therefore it reduces the costs and the country develops specific means which can be used when required, by either NATO or the country itself. Niche capabilities concept is particular suitable to small states such as Slovenia, Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia which do not have large military forces and capabilities. This makes them perfect candidates for developing specialized capabilities, whereas countries that inherited conventional forces such as Romania and Bulgaria are more suitable to maintain adequate defense territorial forces, while developing specialized units in specific areas.

D. IRAQ, A TWENTY-FIRST-CENTURY CHALLENGE TO THE TRANSATLANTIC LINK

The relationship between the two sides of the Atlantic began to show its ugly face when the United States began in 2002 to approach the Europeans seeking support for the U.S. potential military operations in Iraq. The stubborn refusal of Paris and Berlin to reach an agreement with the United States over Iraq issue and the inflexible position adopted by Washington brought the level of the relationships close to the freezing point. The French and Germans considered that were not sufficient evidence to support the invasion, whereas the Americans were not able to yield to French and Germany economic interests in the region.

September 11 and NATO enlargements had found the allies together and committed to dealing with the new challenges of the twenty-first century. The Iraq issue constituted a point of division, causing transatlantic relations to be a major theme of commentary and analysis and the year of 2003 to be considered and remembered as an "annus horribilis", par excellence, for international relations as a whole, but particularly for transatlantic relations[34]. "Never the United States were so contested on the international scene, never were European public

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[34] Nicole Gnesotto, "Chaillot Paper," no 68, March 2004

opinions so directly expressed. The ad-hoc coalitions perhaps produced some military effects, but they did not create political dynamism or international legitimacy."[35]

Of course, we have to recognize that the transatlantic relationship as any "relation" does have problems, but if we put it in a historical and political context and avoid exaggeration, we see the "Iraq momentum" not as a profound crisis, but as just the latest in a cyclical pattern of ups and downs that has characterized transatlantic relations for fifty years.

Americans, Canadians, and Europeans are part of an alliance of democracies that share common values and, broadly, common objectives and interests. By definition, in an alliance of democracies debates and disputes are beneficial to its health, as long as do not degenerate into bitter and prolonged ones. Historical events reveal in the clearest manner that disagreements cause strains that can damage the very existence of the Western Alliance. In the 1956 Suez Crisis the allies opposed each other. Vietnam, in the late 1960s and early 1970s, was a war in which the European powers declined to participate. From the 1979 Pershing Missile crisis to the situation in Kosovo, we find that the allies have had their share of unfriendly disputes that sometimes brought people into the streets in protest.

In the past several years, genuine policy differences between the United States and its European allies have emerged over numerous issues besides Iraq: whether Cuba, Libya, and Iran should be engaged or isolated; the Israeli/Palestinian crisis; the role international institutions should play in the global arena; when is legitimate to make use of force; the Kyoto Accord; the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court (ICC); the military debate within NATO regarding burden-sharing and power-sharing; American unilateralism, etc. Was the Iraq invasion surfacing a much deeper and longer-lasting divide? Was the Old and New divide in fact a matter of perception, the Americans using

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[35] Nicole Gnesotto, "Chaillot Paper," March 2004, 33, translation from French

military to defend their security whereas the Europeans were using the shabby coat of diplomacy as an alternative to military might?

The main issue was the position that was taken by the European countries toward the American intervention in Iraq, which brought countries either wholly in favor of or very much against it. The effort of U.S. diplomacy to convince allies about the necessity for a military intervention in Iraq and to confer it the necessary legitimacy through a resolution of the UN Security Council failed because of the fierce opposition of France, supported by Germany and Russia. The result was that the United States started and won the war in Iraq without these two important allies, but supported by newly European allies.

A short analysis of this event introduces us to the historical context and creates the framework needed to describe the contribution of new NATO members to the transatlantic link. Rarely has an event offered such concentrated insights. The central concepts of "interests" and "power," more valuable than ever, influenced and determined fundamentally the behavior of international actors, whether states or institutions.

For instance, the United States strength, as compared to military weakness of any European country, was revealed by its own behavior in attracting, in a non traditional manner under its "umbrella", new allies for support and legitimacy. France and Germany's determination in pursuing an institutional approach against Iraq, through the Security Council, was an attempt to enforce diplomatic mechanisms in the absence of military ones. It also explains why relations are increasingly unraveling between American that, naturally, wants to preserve its freedom of action as much as possible and Europeans that, given their strategic weakness, want to constrain American power in multilateral institutions as much as possible.

However, the United States manifested pure political realism, showing that the power concept is very valid in twenty-first century, and suggested that it would rather pursue unilateral actions than with its traditional allies, that it would rather not even consult its allies, and partially acted in this way. This glimpse of

U.S. foreign policy was given by two officials on different occasions: Donald Rumsfeld, Secretary of Defense, shortly after the 9/11 attacks stated that "the mission will determine the coalition", "the coalition must not determine the mission"[36] and Paul Wolfowitz, deputy Secretary of Defense, stated, in the 2001 meeting of defense ministers in Brussels, that the United States is looking for "different coalitions in different parts of the world"[37] and do not intend to rely only on NATO capabilities.

This dispute between France and the United States is not something new. I recalls the anti-American attitude of France during the time of General de Gaulle, and the ambitions of France (supported by Germany) in the creation of the European Security and Defense Identity. Both countries acknowledged that it was the German-French relationship that acted as the locomotive of the European project over the past forty years and as an engine of unified Europe. However, I the Iraq crisis was a bad time for France to express and promote its ambitions, because the result showed us a dominant United States in the international system, especially in the military sphere, and that it still has a strong influence on European decisions. The Iraq issue was not just an opportunity for the United States to claim and prove its supremacy, it also created a high level of frustration and resentment that may bounce back on the United States. Using a "coalition of willing" as a proof of legitimacy and "bilateral relations" as a method or course of action, President George W. Bush (with decisive assistance from Prime Minister Tony Blair) succeeded in bringing together European heads of state and government who joined the coalition. In this way, Europe has learned a valuable lesson: it does not have the ability to have a "single voice" or maintain a "single voice" in critical matters, due to strong, individual interests.

In an attempt to fight back, Old Europe (Luxembourg, Belgium, France, and Germany) initiated a meeting at Tervuren in April 2003, to establish an EU military headquarters and bring about other improvements in the European

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36 Jeremy Bransten, "2002 in review: Seven new members end false balance of fear, available at: http://www.rferl.org/nca/features/2002/12122002184027.asp

37 Philip Gordon, "NATO after 11 September," *Survival*, 43, no 4.

security and defense field. It was another bad time for the transatlantic link and its founders. The initiative received aggressive reactions from the United States, even though the founders tried to assure that the initiative and NATO were not in competition. On the contrary, they claimed they were complementary, and did not affect Euro-Atlantic relations. It was an attempt to create a European unilateralism that has been counteracted by the United States. Unfortunately, some European countries, that had close ties with the United States and wanted to preserve NATO as the pre-eminent security organization on the continent, were not convinced by the vision of Europe as a counter-balance force to the United States, which could have shaken the foundations of transatlantic relations. Therefore, the four initiators were singled out in their endeavor.

E.   NEW MEMBERS AND THE IRAQI CRISIS

Traditional allies continued to oppose U.S. policy. The main three opposing countries - Germany, France, and Turkey - refused to give the necessary military assistance. However, the attitude of new NATO members, in this very difficult moment for transatlantic relations, contributed substantially to maintaining the transatlantic link. If these nations had not supported the United States, maybe today we would be having discussions about a very serious crisis.

In this context, the United States was justified in turning its attention and diplomatic efforts to the new entries in the Alliance and, especially, to those countries that were not yet accepted, such as Romania and Bulgaria. The political divergences were first given voice by the Secretary of Defense, Donald Rumsfeld, who, in a Munich press conference, indicated that the United States intended to move east in searching for support. The support came promptly. A few days after Rumsfeld's press conference, eight European leaders (Spain, Portugal, Italy, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Denmark and the UK) signed an open letter called "United We Stand."

The letter highlighted the common values that both sides of the Atlantic share and the impact of the 9/11 attacks against the United States, which is another reason for the Allies to stick tighter against the common threat.

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Moreover, this relationship has "stood the test of time," and both sides must prevent the transformation of NATO, and transatlantic relationships at large, into a casualty over the Iraq issue. The eight-country letter became the ten after its endorsement by two other countries, Romania and Bulgaria, which were not members at the time.

After that bold, unequivocal, and firm pledge by the two southeast European countries, President Chirac's response was blunt and totally undiplomatic: "Donc je crois qu'ils ont manqué une bonne occasion de se taire."[38]. "They missed a good opportunity to keep their mouth shut". It was for first time in half a century that two such countries had the opportunity to speak freely. For more then fifty years the Soviets had controlled their "communication" to the outside world. Now, President Chirac, a democratic leader had slipped into the red zone of dictatorship that they had experienced for so long, assuming the role of censor over the politics of independent countries. His reaction was blamed by the international community as not only undiplomatic and inappropriate, but also as undemocratic. An answer came promptly from the former prime minister of Estonia, who became the unofficial spokesman for the entire aspirant bloc and encompassed almost everything that an east Europe wanted to say to Mr. Chirac.

> So, even before Mr. Chirac's impromptu lecture, the Franco-German decision to exclude the 10 future EU members from Monday's dinner party in Brussels went down like a rock in my country. Presumably Paris and Berlin decided to snub the Eastern Europeans because they're too "pro-American." Is this how the future EU will function?
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> For similar reasons, the recent crisis at NATO raised troubling questions, too. If a member-state feels threatened, like Turkey does, and asks NATO to take necessary countermeasures, how can it be rejected (until a quiet deal, behind France's back, pulls the alliance from the brink)? Is this the great defense institution we all dreamt of joining? From the point of view of the new Europeans, U.S.-European tensions aren't to blame. The fault lies within old

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[38] "Le Monde," 18 February 2003.

Europe. Some Europeans, perhaps Mr. Chirac among them, see an American conspiracy in East European support for the U.S.; others think the new Europeans support Washington because only the U.S. can guarantee their security. Still others see a logical reaction to Franco-German attempts to keep a bigger EU under their control. It's more complicated than that. These countries, including my own, bring a different historical perspective to the EU and NATO. They experienced not only a short Nazi occupation, but a much longer Communist one. Words such as "freedom" or "democracy" have real meaning in my part of the world. To survive and overthrow dictatorship, people here had to stand by values -- even if sometimes that meant hiding them deeply inside yourself. As a result, the Central and Eastern Europe approach to foreign policy is today based more on values than that of Western Europe. They are more receptive to "moral arguments," on Iraq and a host of other issues and less understanding of "European Realpolitik." The new Europeans remember that when President Ronald Reagan issued a moral indictment of the Soviet Union by calling it what it was -- an "evil empire" -- he was heavily criticized in Western Europe. To them, the evil was self-evident; they couldn't understand why West Europeans didn't grasp this simple truth. Mr. Reagan and Margaret Thatcher are still popular in Eastern Europe and even in Russia: their decisiveness boosted the captive nations in their struggle and ultimately brought down the Soviet Union. People in Eastern Europe know appeasement does not work. They know dictatorships must be dealt with head on. But the new Europe will never turn against old Europe. To the contrary, new Europe wants to reinvigorate all of Europe through enlargement. This is not only in the interest of the new member-states. The "Letter of Eight" was signed by "old" member-states who were frustrated with German and French attempts to claim EU leadership all for themselves. And the Western world needs a united Europe; the U.S. can benefit from it too. The coming enlargement of the EU will force large-scale reforms upon Europe, whether it wants it or not. Central and Eastern European countries have some of the highest growth rates in Europe. Taxes in future member states are lower, economies more open, labor markets more reasonably regulated, social security networks less expensive. All of which means they should make a united Europe more competitive. The dramatic stand-off over Iraq is another reminder that it is time for Europe to change. It must become more dynamic, decisive, competitive, open and future-orientated. European nations can retain their unique identities, while remaining open to each other. This is the real European identity -- not some false oneness. But it will require genuine cooperation and not a division of Europe into first- and

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second-class members. It will require a Europe where countries aren't told to stay quiet but are free to speak their minds. Unfortunately, some EU members have yet to embrace this message, as Monday's summit and Mr. Chirac's great outburst showed. We all need to be proud of Europe but first we must make all Europe new.[39]

Romania and Bulgaria's pledge and support of the United States had multiple implications. Aspirant states were not only willing to become members of the NATO club, but also demonstrated both their intention to participate in the decision process and that their troops would be involved, actively in international conflicts. Their troop's commitment to remote theaters is part of the countries' efforts to captatio benevolentiae of the influential states even if they attracted a lot of criticism for their decisions. Their involvement in Iraq with the United States was not a risk-free action. Their security is at stake, since they could become targets for terrorist reactions.

F.   THE UNITED STATES OR EUROPE

In spite of momentary disagreements among the allies and the awkwardness of their position, the new members still believe in the validity of the fundamental principles that support the transatlantic relationships. Its strength comes from fifty years of historical evolution which proves that any obstacle can be an opportunity if is assessed correctly, and could reinforce the old established link.

The end of the Cold war changed the dynamics and development of the European Union, too. Just as NATO has been enlarging to embrace the Central and Eastern European countries, so is the EU. This enlargement is good for Europe, even if the construction of the EU is a laborious and touchy business. Central and Southeastern European countries' primary foreign policy goal was integration into the western European community of democracies, and NATO and the EU were their entry tickets. The mutual dependence created by

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[39] Open letter by Mart Laar, former Prime-minister of Estonia published in *The Wall Street Journal*, 19,February 2003 under the title "New Europe Won't 'Keep Quiet' Until All Europe Is New."

transatlantic realities would make it that much more difficult for the United States and Europe to go their own separate ways.

Since the end of World War II, Europe has not had the force to articulate a common defense policy. Even the European Security Defense Policy and its ambitious Helsinki Goal are not ready to protect EU member states. This European reality is based on Europe's inability to agree on significant foreign policy issues and its unwillingness to relinquish some of their sovereignty. Therefore, in matters of security, countries should not seek help at the EU, but at NATO, which has the planning capacity, the means, and the experience necessary. Europe can not ensure by its own means its peace and security without U.S. involvement. Indeed, I am skeptical whether the European states have a chance to create an autonomous capacity capable of dealing efficiently with the new twenty-first century threats in the next 10-15 years without the United States. Previous situations have plentifully demonstrated this assertion. The Yugoslav conflicts have highlighted Europe's inability to deal with problems in its own backyard, and the burden-sharing of waging war against the Taliban only serves to emphasize Europe's inability to project true military power. Besides, most European governments' attitudes show that there is no political willingness in their countries to increase defense budgets, which are kept below the NATO benchmark of 2 percent of GDP (German defense spending was 1.5 percent in 2003, Belgium 1.3, Denmark 1.6, Netherlands 1.6, and Spain 1.2). Comparatively, Europe presently spends only two-thirds of what the United States does on defense, and its deployable fighting strength is one quarter of America's. In these circumstances, without financial commitment, we can not expect much progress in reducing the discrepancy in capacity between the United States and the European countries.

Today, the EU and NATO are the two institutions responsible for Europe's future. The spring 2004 enlargements of both NATO and the EU have advanced the allies' common goal of a Europe "whole, free, and at peace". Integration into NATO and the European Union are complementary processes, not exclusionist.

The new NATO members are important U.S. allies and friends, and together contribute to the same shared vision of a Europe "whole, free, and at peace." NATO membership could be considered as another step toward full integration into Europe; in fact, many regional leaders view it as a short-cut or backdoor approach to EU membership.

A framework like NATO is considered the most appropriate step to acquire the basic elements of a democracy. For new members the value of the Alliance is incommensurable. NATO is as much democratic as any other organization and the better modality to prove is one country, one vote policy, which is the ideal arrangement for states to have a voice in decision process. NATO is the only significant organization in which every country has the same power in debating process, in other words, the Luxembourg' s vote has as same value as that of the United States, at least theoretically. We do not find the same situation in the UN (the Security Council which makes the final decisions, has only five permanent members) or the EU (seats in the European Parliament are distributed in accordance with the population of each country). On the other hand, an alliance like NATO is important for the United States, because, by and large, an alliance is not only a source of restraint, but also a resource for help. Without the active involvement of European allies and other partners in the Middle East (a predominant U.S. area of interest) the U.S. effort is doomed to failure. Without the cooperation of international peacekeepers, nation-building in Iraq would be a far more difficult endeavor to sustain.

The Iraqi crisis also constitutes a very valuable proof that the United States could depend on the new NATO members; this could serve as a guarantee for the future.

G.   DEVELOPING THE TRANSATLANTIC LINK

The new members wish to improve the transatlantic link and current premises anticipate that much more cooperation can be expected in the future. There is general agreement that for success in Iraq, reconstruction and transition are crucial; and only a concerted effort can win the war against global terrorism. Although the deployment of German or French troops in Iraq at the moment is

out of the question, they may assist in other tasks such as creating and training Iraqi forces or participation in other theaters. Germany remains committed to leading the International Security Assistance Force mission in Afghanistan and contributes with 1,836 troops. French troops are deployed in Haiti alongside U.S. forces.

For all that has changed in transatlantic relations over the past decade, the core of the relationship remains largely intact. This core consists of a commitment to a set of values, peace, democracy, and liberty that is shared by Americans and Europeans alike. As strange as it may sound, the Iraq crisis had some beneficial aspects. A U.S.-European deterioration of relations may lead to a realization on both sides of the Atlantic that a major readjustment is necessary in order to renew and update their partnership in ways appropriate to the era we now live in.

On the one hand, Europe could enhance its capacity for joint action, especially in the military field. Real partnership requires real and interoperable military capabilities. Europeans also have to demonstrate a willingness to carry more of the burden, not just in Europe, but increasingly beyond Europe as well.

On the other hand, the United States has to avoid abusing the "coalition of the willing" concept, which is detrimental to the Alliance. It has to strengthen the organization rather than abandon it or take it for granted.

The solution is partnership not competition. There is no more dangerous theory in international politics than the "necessity" to balance the power of America with other competitive powers.

Recently, efforts were made to regain the trust and to repair the harm done. As was admitted in a press conference by the U.S. President George W. Bush, "We will have differences of opinion, but there is a lot more that we agree upon, and that is the bottom line and the basis for this great Alliance."[40] Signs that the Iraq divergences were put aside are given by all twenty six allies who are

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[40] Summit meeting at the North Atlantic Council, Brussels, 22 February 2005.

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contributing to the training of Iraqi security forces under different formulas (direct on-site training, outside training, financial contributions, or donations of equipment).

As President Bush said, on the same occasion, "the most successful Alliance in world history," NATO survived the crisis, and perhaps transatlantic relations will come out stronger and, hopefully, wiser.

Fifty years of an Atlantic Alliance countered the irrefutable Soviet threat, and managed to shape a common paradigm according to which the Euro-American alliance was an existential contract linking a common destiny on both sides of the ocean. Even in crisis times, any alternative to the Alliance is inconceivable, dangerous, and impossible.
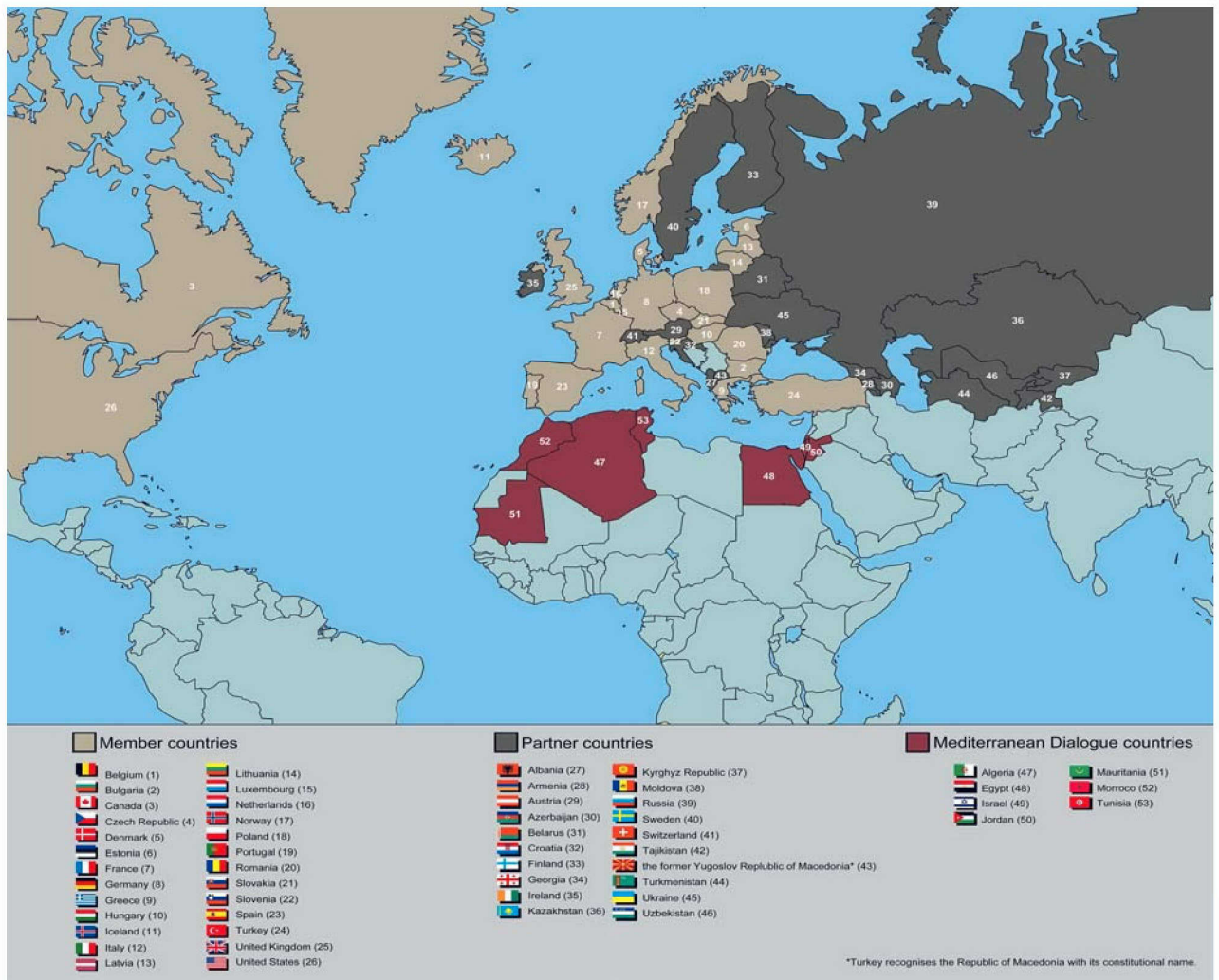
Figure 1.   Picture was retrieved from NATO Public Diplomacy
Division

State	Population	Area (sq km)	Defence expenditures (in millions of US$)	Defence expenditures as % of GDP
Belgium	10,348,276	30,528	3,999	1.3
Denmark	5,413,392	43,094	3,271.6	1.6
France	60,424,213	547,030	45,238.1	2.6
Germany	82,424,609	357,021	35,063	1.5
Greece	10,647,529	131,940	7,288.9	4.3
Iceland	293,966	103,300	0	0
Italy	58,057,477	301,230	28,182.8	1.9
Luxembourg	462,690	2,586	231.6	0.9
Netherlands	16,318,199	41,526	8,044.4	1.6
Norway	4,574,560	324,220	4,033.5	1.9
Portugal	10,524,145	92,391	3,497.8	2.3
Spain	40,280,780	504,782	9,906.5	1.2
Turkey	68,893,000	780,580	12,155	5.3
UK	60,270,708	244,820	42,836	2.4
Canada	32,507,874	9,984,670	9,801.7	1.1
USA	293,027,571	9,631,418	370,700	3.3
Poland	38,626,349	312,685	3,500	1.71
Hungary	10,032,375	93,030	1,080	1.75
Czech Rep.	10,246,178	78,866	1,190.2	2.1
Estonia	1,341,664	45,226	155	2
Latvia	2,306,306	64,589	87	1.2
Lithuania	3,607,899	65,200	230.8	1.9
Romania	22,355,551	237,500	985	2.47
Slovakia	5,423,567	48,845	406	1.89
Slovenia	2,011,473	20,273	370	1.7

Table 1.   The World Fact Book 2004

www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook, accessed between February and March 2005.

IV.   ROMANIA - THE CATALYST OF THE SECOND WAVE

A.   WHY WAS NATO THE FIRST CHOICE?

Soon after the 1989 Romanian Revolution and, concomitantly, the demise of the communist system, the main concerns of Romanian authorities were to find ways to protect the country from external threats. The instrument that ensured this protection, the Warsaw Pact, was no longer able to fulfill its tasks. Romanian inability to respond to outside threats was the primary incentive for seeking feasible alternatives. Furthermore, Romania's proximity to the USSR, later Russia and Ukraine, never constituted a motive for regional détente; Romania's history is full of unfortunate examples of territorial wrenching by different and much more powerful actors. It was, in this respect, imperative for a country such as Romania, having such neighbors, to ensure its protection with the help of powerful alliances or partners. Their simple presence as partners or allies would be a deterrent to any potential voracious or damaging attempt on Romania's integrity. Security was, therefore, the first reason for Romania's NATO accession, as President Iliescu stated in his letter of application:

> To support the continuation and strengthening of the process of internal democracy and the implementation of the economic reforms in these countries, it is essential to guarantee equal security for all states in our geographical area. It is the only way to prevent the spillover of conflicts from our vicinity and emergence of new risks to security.[41]

Most of the Southeastern European countries, after the disruptive collapse of communism, had more or less the same security dilemma. Should they worry more about their security or should they enjoy the benefits of being a security free-rider? A free-rider policy brings maximum efficiency with zero costs, but having influential neighbors it is also a risky one. Should they concentrate on

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[41] Translation from Romanian, Letter of Application to NATO membership from the President of Romania to the Secretary General of NATO, dated 18 September 1993.

economic development and put other aspects at the bottom of their list of priorities? Is the destiny of a middle-sized southeastern European country predetermined by a series of external prescriptive recipes, which the target country does not even have the opportunity to shape? Can Romania really have the power to influence its future and not be satisfied only with leftovers or scraps from the bigger actors' dinner table?

These are the questions that motivated this chapter, which is based on the premise that Romania's influence on its own future must be weighed carefully against its location, strategic importance, neighbors, and allies. A positive attitude and openness are critical to successfully resolving any differences, as are respect for the international laws and treaties and, most important, maintaining open lines of communication.

Romania is situated in southeast Europe in a region that has been repeatedly torn apart by insecurity and instability. In this highly security-challenged environment it is difficult to maintain a consistent foreign policy without losing some of the imperative attributes that make the difference between being a reliable partner and a swing one. Maintaining the country's dignity, pride, and honor, while preserving its specific characteristics, and still being able to influence the decision process requires integrity which, unfortunately, is often not an attribute of international relations. Thus, the institutional approach is more suitable and beneficial for countries such as Romania. It is the only framework that virtually assures equal voting on decisions, whereas the European Union process is rather complicated, involving each country's population and voting ratio.

Lessons learned from historical precedents, especially from relatively recent ones (e.g., 1990s' the regional security environment, Yugoslavian disintegration, and political instability in Russia are the most illustrative examples of the level of regional instability), were strong enough motives for seeking

security alternatives. NATO and the European Union were identified as the most viable ones, with one specification: NATO presented a stronger portfolio than the European Union.

NATO, initially designed as a military organization, had almost fifty years experience in the field. Compared with the European Union it had better military capabilities and a better planning capacity. The European Union is still in its kindergarten years in regard to collective security.

Romania understood relatively quickly that the country's various objectives had to be prioritized and its subsequent actions had to be channeled toward a primary goal. It also understood that, as the biggest country in the region, it had to become a model for its neighbors. The method that Romania decided would best accomplish this task was bidirectional. One direction required developing a strategic partnership with the United States, the only country willing to assist Romania's endeavors. The other direction required participation in regional military operations; this was an opportunity to become a security provider, not a free-rider.

Another benefit of NATO membership was represented by its worldwide significance. Many political analysts evaluated NATO membership as the first step toward further European Union integration. In fact, fulfilling NATO's five capital accession criteria was similar to fulfilling the EU criteria that were formulated at the1993 Copenhagen summit.[42]

By the time the NATO Study on Enlargement came out in 1995, Romania was beginning to focus on the United States and Germany as the engines of Alliance's expansion, whereas the United Kingdom and other northern countries remained hesitant to accept any southeast European entrance. In addition to the U.S. interest in expanding the Alliance toward east, closer to its former enemy,

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[42] In 1993, at the Copenhagen European Council, the Union set out the basic requirements that aspirant countries must meet: stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities; the existence of a functioning market economy as well as the capacity to cope with competitive pressure and market forces; the ability to take on the obligations of membership including adherence to the aims of political, economic and monetary union; information retrieved from the EU website; http://europa.eu.int/

Germany had its own interest in the process. It was fairly obvious that after Germans reunification, most of its efforts would be directed toward internal issues that required a peaceful neighborhood. Germany's interest in enlargement also had an ulterior motivation. It viewed enlargement as an attempt to reinvigorate the transatlantic relationship after the disputes between the United States and the United Kingdom on the one side and France and Germany on the other over the European Security Defense Identity initiative and the contribution of the latter countries to it.[43] One response to these internal disputes was NATO expansion, which erased the uncertainties about its relevance in the post-Cold War environment.

B.   MEANINGFUL CONTRIBUTION TO THE TRANSATLANTIC LINK

Central and Southeast European political-military cooperation initiatives were set off to compensate for the security vacuum left after the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact.

Romania made its debut in the political-military cooperation process in 1996, followed by a successive series of initiatives with regional and international vocation. Romanian participation in the stages preceding NATO membership should not be seen as a substitute for NATO, but as preparation and training for membership. In fact, NATO, as well as the EU, encourages regional cooperation as a modality of exercising the negotiations abilities and better understanding of participants, all of these having the role of confidence-building and, consequently, strengthening the security.

In the recent period, certain "tiredness" was noted in these regional initiatives, probably due to international commitments which asked for high levels of involvement in Afghanistan and Iraq, a quasi-stabilization of the situation in the Balkans, along with the extension of the "Euro-Atlantic" area.

Romania had reached maturity in regional cooperation in a relatively short time due to the professionalism demonstrated by its troops in all circumstances.

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[43] Roy Rempel, "German Security Policy in the New European Order," in *"Disconcerted Europe: the search for a new security architecture,"* 1994.

It was acknowledged as such on various occasions when it had the opportunity to preside, by rotation, over some of the initiatives, such as: in 2000, the Central European Nations Cooperation for Peace[44] (CENCOOP) Presidency, in 2001 the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Presidency, and between 2001 and 2003 South East Defense Ministerial (SEDM) Presidency.

Within these initiatives, member countries developed inter-national projects aimed at interoperability and readiness. Within SEDM, projects include the Multinational Peace Task Force of South East Europe (MPFSEE), whose purpose is to conduct peace support operations, except peace enforcement, led by NATO or the EU under a UN or OSCE mandate.[45] Under the same initiative, a simulation network was developed for military exercises assisted by computer; a working group was also established, Counterproliferation, Border Security, and Counterterrorism (CBSC) to address the problems related to current threats.

A specific participation for the countries from the Black Sea basin is the Black Sea Force (BLACKSEAFOR),[46] whose purposes are search and rescue and humanitarian assistance. Another initiative targeting confidence-building and reciprocal knowledge is the Romanian-Hungarian Peace Support Battalion, which was established under direct supervision of France and Germany. They also provided valuable experience and gave an example of the modality of cooperation.

Under NATO's vigilant eye, especially the United States and Germany, these regional cooperative initiatives had an important role in developing transatlantic relations. States are more conscious of problems in their backyard and the real potential to solve them. Cooperating and maintaining open lines of communication are the keys to a peaceful solution to all the problems. Assuring a comfortable level of security and stability in the region is a palpable contribution

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[44] Participant countries are: Austria, Croatia, Hungary, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia, and Switzerland.

[45] Participant countries are: Albania, Bulgaria, FYROM, Greece, Italy, Romania, and Turkey. Croatia, Slovenia and the United States have an observer status.

[46] Participant countries are: Bulgaria, Russia, Georgia, Romania, Turkey, and Ukraine.

to the real purpose of the Alliance. The win-win situation applies to all levels: the individual participants, the region, the Alliance, all are benefiting from these initiatives. The "tiredness" mentioned earlier may signal not a lack of interest, but an achievement of their initial purposes.

C.   SHARING THE BURDEN

Romania's incontestable leadership of the second wave was further proved by its consistent demonstration of its commitment. Even before the NATO invitation, Romania understood that its future decisions would be based on the current actions. In the Yugoslav crisis, Romania acted thinking of its future role, in spite of unpopularity of its decisions. Permitting NATO aircraft to have access to Romanian air space during the bombing campaign, even though the population was against it, positioned Romania according to NATO values and principles. U.S. troops were also permitted to transit Romanian territory, which gave the strategists the opportunity to consider Romania as a less costly route, in similar cases in the future.

Whether to NATO or to the United States, the Romanian commitment was not less relevant. Romanian troops were sent to Afghanistan as part of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), which was endorsed by UN Security Council Resolutions 1386/2001, 1413/2002, and 1444/2002, whose tasks were to implement the 2001 Bonn Agreement under the forceful Chapter VII of the UN Charter. At Bonn, NATO members and partners (as Romania was at the time) reached a consensus in designing the map of the future Afghanistan. Looking at it, the resemblance to the Dayton Peace Agreements is striking. The success of the Implementation Force and followed by the Stabilization Force, was applied on a much difficult case, Afghanistan. Besides the United States, other members were consistently involved in ISAF operations, including the UK, Germany, and Turkey. The command of the mission was assured under the principle of rotation among the most generous providers; the mission, nevertheless, involved 36 countries (members and non-members) with a total troop contribution of 8,000, altogether with the Enduring Freedom operation.

In addition to the ISAF mission, Romania provided troops to Operation Enduring Freedom, the US-led combat mission, which has contributions from 55 countries. According to the Romanian Minister of National Defense, Romania has 500 troops in Afghanistan in both ISAF and Enduring Freedom.[47] Even though there is still a continuous military presence in Afghan territory, the situation permitted the entry of post-conflict elements for reconstruction and state rebuilding, signaling slight but steady improvements in establishing Provincial Reconstruction Teams, training the Afghan National Army, and establishing a Constitution. Elections were one of the main steps made toward normalization and self-reliance.

Romanian troops' participation in the Afghan theater is as follows: one military police platoon; one transport aircraft C-130 (crew and technical team), and three Liaison Officers: two officers in Norfolk/Virginia and one in Kabul. Romanian participation in operation Enduring Freedom includes one infantry battalion to Kandahar; one group of liaison officers; one CIMIC group, and one unit for Afghan National Army training. According to the latest evaluation, the equipment of the deployed battalion is fully compatible with NATO's equipment for this mission with the possibility of self-sustainability for 30 days. All the personnel is professional and trained for the mission and the troop's moral is very good. Romania also participates in a much contested operation Iraqi Freedom, along with 48 other countries; the operation which represented the discord apple inside the Alliance. Romanian participation in operation Iraqi Freedom includes one infantry battalion; one liaison group, one engineering unit; one special unit, and one military police company.

This extensive participation in far-away operations does not mean that the regional military involvement is forgotten. After SFOR concluded its mission in December 2004, a smaller contingent remained on site along with the European mission, ALTHEA. In Kosovo, Romania's contribution remains unchanged: the

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[47] "Coalition Bulletin," no 18, 20 available at: www.centcom.mil/operations/Coalition/joint.htm, accessed on 8 March 2005.

KFOR mission includes two infantry companies; one traffic platoon, and one liaison group. A sizable strategic reserve of 400 troops is ready anytime to intervene if necessary.[48]

From the Romanian perspective, the decision to participate in the US-led operations represented a cross road moment: Romania had to choose between NATO and the EU. The decision was not easy, even though NATO membership in 2003 was just a formality. A country such as Romania, with a painful history that in difficult times comes back to haunt us, cannot afford to alienate either NATO or the EU, due to its legacy, location, neighbors, and perception of threats. Consequently, Romanian success depended on both, each of them contributing in different areas, security and the economy.

History, and especially recent history, showed Romania that there are no strict recipes, no rigid formulas that apply. The field of international relations is too fluid and exchangeable to offer a predictable framework. Even a state response in similar situations could not be the same, a factor that makes a country's specific behavior irrelevant and, certainly, less predictable if the incentives or benefits are below a certain level. Experiences of this type show that states that fit the above profile have no alternative but to jump on the train that has the bigger, faster, wealthier, and most influential locomotive, despite the potential criticism that this action may attract.

The tale of Buridan's donkey provides a more profane description of the situation faced by Romania. In the story a donkey came from working and was thirsty and hungry. His master let him loose in the middle of the road. On one side of the road was a stack of hay; on the other side was a bucket of water. The donkey stood in the middle looking at both sides, unable to make a decision. Consequently, the donkey died. The original medieval version told of a donkey facing two equal-sized stacks of hay. The end was the same. The moral of this old story is that, when you face a life-threatening choice, you must to make a

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48 Figures mentioned in this paragraph are retrieved from the Ministry of National Defense. Text available at: www.mapn.ro/index.ro; accessed on 9 March 2005.

decision; otherwise, you will end up dead in the middle of the road. A "middle" type of policy may prevent you from achieving your purpose.

At the moment of U.S. intervention in Iraq (March 2003), Romania had a NATO "invitee country" status. What better opportunity to prove the kind of ally that Romania could be? Its choice should have not evoked such a strong reaction from Paris, which threatened both Romania and Bulgaria for siding with the United States. It was the rational, pragmatic choice of an independent state that wanted both to show its capabilities and to reverse any residual feeling against it as a former communist state that might impede the development of U.S. – Romanian relations.

Fifty years of tradition between both sides of the Atlantic managed to encompass a strong nucleus of European and American values despite critical voices such as Robert Kagan's, who argues that our common values are growing apart, hence the difficulties to "speak the same language."[49] Our general values include democracy, commitment to the importance of the individual, respect for basic human rights and the rule of law, and tolerance and appreciation of diversity. Both sides of the Atlantic also share a strong belief in the role of free trade and competitive markets in improving the daily lives of our citizens. For new members, to consider a strategic order without reference to America is something similar to conceiving of the organization of their trade without reference to the EU. The Euro-Atlantic link, in fact, will survive and prevail, because Europe needs the United States and the United States needs Europe.

The NATO summit on 22 February 2005 in Brussels represented a perfect opportunity for American and European leaders to work toward normalization of their relations. In fact, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld paved the road for President Bush's visit. The Americans' visits to Europe, at the highest levels, indicate clearly that the U.S. agenda regarding Europe is making efforts to return to its former routine.

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[49] Robert Kagan, "Power and weakness," Policy Review no 113, June 2002.

D.   POLICY OF POSITIVE INCENTIVES

The military theatres opened after the 9/11 attacks are still conducting operations. Afghanistan and Iraq, though not as much as at the beginning, still represent the main military focus. However, their evolutions are encouraging for transition to civilian reconstruction phase, which implies a lesser military presence on the ground.

The efforts made by the allies (willingly) alongside U.S. troops were significant for their bilateral relations and beneficial for the cohesion of the Alliance. Recognition of the burdens some of the allies had to bear apparently took the form of rewards. As part of a theory of influence, positive incentives are prone to work in the case of democracies with mutual interests, rather than applying threats. Economic benefits, military advantages, and diplomatic recompense are all part of the strategy to reward allies who conduct themselves in the desired way.

Romania, through its consistent actions in the Balkans, Afghanistan, and Iraq, managed to alleviate some of the hurtful perceptions of it held by Western Europeans and the United States. Even if the political decision is critical to further developments, its relevance stops here. Meaningful actions must be taken to reinforce the political pledges that eventually will enhance the credibility of the state at the international level and change perceptions.

Some might consider a positive-incentives approach insulting, but it results in a win-win relationship, in realistic terms. What are the facts that support the above framework? For Romania, the milestones were Kosovo, Afghanistan, and Iraq. The U.S. decision to open military hostilities against Iraq proved to be counterproductive for NATO members' relations. This opened the possibility for Romania to go along with the coalition, despite threats inferred by President Chirac.

The American mass-media recently brought to the public's attention President Bush's efforts to seek funds to reward some of the coalition partners

who shared the burdens of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars.[50] Although the administration did not reveal which countries would be rewarded, except for Poland, media sources predict that Romania is a potential recipient, based on its contribution of approximately 700 troops in Iraq and 500 troops in Afghanistan.

Another initiative that seems profitable for the East Europeans is re-deployment of the American military bases from Germany. It is a long process estimated to take ten years. This initiative aims to close American bases that were designed to answer a Cold War set of threats and redeploy them in areas that are closer to potential sources of conflict or that represent a strategic stop in troop routes. Actions taken by the United States as NATO's patron are meant to credit the southern flank with much more importance, which explains U.S. interest in opening bases in Romania and Bulgaria.

This could be seen as a major incentive for the countries; it can also be read as an expansion of Romanian defense relationships with allies and the building of new partnerships. Again, it is a reciprocal beneficial situation; the Alliances' forces will improve the flexibility to contend with the increasingly uncertain nature of emerging threats to global security, and the countries' benefits are multilateral.

The U.S. military is about to secure agreements with Bulgaria and Romania that would enable troops to train at extensive bases, perhaps by the end of the year 2005. The United States was looking at up to five facilities in each country for use by Army, Air Force, and Navy/Marine units, according to Marine Gen. James L. Jones, commander of both the U.S. European Command and NATO's Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe. "This is part and parcel of the transformation of our footprint in Europe, which has been in need of surgery for some time."[51] President Bush announced in 2004 his intention to

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[50] "Bush seeks $400 million to reward Allies," text available at: www.abcnews.go.com/Politics/wireStory?id=486157, accessed on 11 February 2005.

[51] Remarks made by General James Jones after his visits in Romania (12-13 January 2005), Bulgaria, and Lithuania; breakfast meeting with reporters in Casteau, Belgium. General J. Jones is the Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR) and Commander of the United States European Command (COMUSEUCOM).

move some of the troops from Germany and South Korea. Bush also said that new, smaller bases would be established in Eastern Europe and Africa. Instead of maintaining large heavily deployable ones, it would use smaller, more austere facilities where troops would rotate in for shorter deployments. The Bulgarian and Romanian sites "are purely military sites, without family, without infrastructure changes." Over the past two years, U.S. military planners have said that a network of smaller bases spread around the world will provide more flexibility in dealing with terrorism, regional crises, and other emerging threats. Romania and Bulgaria are considered particularly well suited to host U.S. bases because of their proximity to volatile regions in the Balkans, Caucuses, and Middle East. "That has had a reassuring effect."[52]

E.   ROMANIA'S SPECIFIC CONTRIBUTION TO TRANSATLANTIC RELATIONS

"Igitur qui desiderat pacem, praeparet bellum": "if you want peace, prepare for war," is an old Latin saying that today is more accurate than ever.

Romania's geographic proximity to areas reigned over by the gods of war taught us to praise peace and security more than other countries. And since it chooses to adhere to NATO principles, it is Romania's responsibility and duty to make a fair contribution to the Alliance in any possible way. This contribution may take different forms (political, military) or may address different levels (regional or international).

The political pledge to continue promoting the values Romania shares and respects is the engine that will support further endeavors. This must be the first sustainable pillar of Euro-Atlantic mutual assurance in countering outside pressures. The fear of being vulnerable in the face of threats, without the help of a friend, drove most Europeans and Americans to credit the security community with more than empty words. Just as President Kennedy felt more than forty

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[52] Remarks made by General James Jones after his visits in Romania (12-13 January 2005), Bulgaria, and Lithuania; breakfast meeting with reporters in Casteau, Belgium. General J. Jones is the Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR) and Commander of the United States European Command (COMUSEUCOM). 51.

years ago like "ein Berliner" (1963), showing American support for the West Germans, European leaders felt like New Yorkers in 2001, showing their unconditional support. The divide over Iraq or other issues that may appear on NATO's horizons, must not and cannot erase or dilute the closeness of transatlantic relations.

Militarily, the Romanian contribution is very evident. Romanian troops are part of operations conducted in remote areas as well as in its relative vicinity, demonstrating Romania's willingness and reliability. This is the best way to protect Romanian interests and to bear some of the Alliance's burdens. NATO operations may benefit and become more effective from Romania's extensive knowledge and understanding of the region, as happened in the Balkans. Another specific contribution lies in providing support in military fields less covered by the rest of the allies. The concept of niche capabilities was launched at the Prague summit in 2002 to reduce the gaps and to augment the operational efficiency that goes hand-in-hand with the much desired interoperability. These provided the motivation for Romania to reform its military forces toward professionalization and to develop specific capabilities in which NATO is running a deficit.

The difficulties presented by the current environment require a high level of coordination between the armed forces and the post-conflict teams. That prompted Romania to prepare in fields such as military police, light infantry, engineering units, and civil and military cooperation (CIMIC).

In the context of the Iraq war, U.S. military strategists realized that Romania and its neighbor, Bulgaria, present a definite strategic relevance. Romania's infrastructure is valuable for the rapidity of the troops flux to and from Iraq, especially when the Turkish Parliament did not permit entry of the U.S. troops into its territory. Therefore, one of the alternative routes chosen was Romania, which has the necessary infrastructure. Moreover, the success in using the Romanian infrastructure led to the idea of setting American military bases on Romanian territory. Consequently, Romania changed its attribute from being a

buffer zone to being a gate to and from Europe, whose enforcement serves national interests and allies' interests as well.

F.   THE IMPLICATIONS OF EVENTS IN 2005

Romania is in the process of redefining one of its most important documents: the National Security Strategy. At the beginning of March 2005 the Supreme Council of National Defense was drafting a new Security Strategy. After NATO membership, Romanian strategic objectives have changed. From a static and reactive strategy aiming to counteract any threats, the Council[53] seriously considered a bold and dynamic approach. Then newly elected Romanian president, Traian Basescu, shared this information with the press when he emphasized the preemptive character that the new strategy might have in light of the threats our country identified.

President's Basescu's vivacity might have something to do with the more vibrant and courageous actions recently taken by Romania in foreign relations. On March 9, 2005, President Basescu visited Washington at the official invitation of President Bush. In a press conference following the meeting, President Bush took the opportunity to call Romania a "strong NATO partner"[54] and recognized the efforts it made in Afghanistan and Iraq along with other coalition forces. President Bush also appreciated President Basescu's valuable advice on Moldova, which is Romania's eastern neighbor, whose leadership is affiliated with Moscow ideals and values. The atmosphere of the press conference illustrated an evolution; the familiarity of the gestures during the press conference went beyond the protocol and gave the impression of a meeting between two old friends, indicators of the quality of current U.S.-Romania relations and their reciprocal perceptions.

One day prior to the Presidents' meeting, on March 8, the Committee for Foreign Relation of the U.S. Senate held a hearing on the importance of the Black Sea to U.S. interests. Bruce Jackson, president of the Transitional

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[53] National Defense Council

[54] "Bush praises Romania as strong NATO partner," *Wall Street Journal,* March 9 2005.

Democracies Project, presented to the committee members the arguments that supported the strategic importance of Black Sea.[55] He emphasized the importance of the Black Sea as the gate to and from the Middle East and Central Asia. "Today, the member states of the European Union import approximately 50% of their energy needs; by 2020 imports will rise to 70% of consumption. This increase will be delivered to Europe across and around the Black Sea region, on routes such as the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline. These facts so impressed the heads of state of member states of NATO that at the Istanbul Summit in July 2004 the NATO Joint Communiqué recognized that the Black Sea region was an essential part of Euro-Atlantic security."[56]

This testimony is in agreement with President Basescu's new foreign policy, which aims to boost the role of the Black Sea in conjunction with fortifying bilateral relations with the United States and the United Kingdom. His dedicated efforts and the political commitment associated with the development of these regional cooperation instruments confer a greater credibility on the common approaches and consolidate the common confidence.

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[55] Text available at: http//:foreign.senate.gov/hearings/2005/hrg050308p.html, accessed on March 10, 2005.

[56] "The future of Democracy on the Black Sea region," testimony given by Bruce Jackson before the Committee of Foreign Relations, subcommittee of European Affairs.

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V.   CONCLUSIONS

"It is our noble mission to do so."[57]

After the last fifteen years, the world is nothing like it used to be and it seems to get smaller and less predictable. The international order has changed radically. In this context, state responses to a new and violent set of threats had to speed up. The international environment became the arena for a new world system, based on more intricate relations. The only balance that states want to achieve in the current situation is between institutional and unilateral approaches, which, ultimately, seem to be the prerogative of the powerful states.

From the institutional perspective, some of the organizations managed to survive the time, some did not. I believe that the organizations that did not survive lacked a rational foundation and, therefore, their collapse was imminent. One of the survivors, NATO, seems to be a perfect example of a success story in diplomacy.

More than fifty years have passed since NATO was established and it is still relevant to its members, as well as to the international arena as a whole. Countries are still knocking at its door to enter (aspirant countries) and other international organizations ask it to enforce peace settlements (the UN invited NATO in Bosnia I Herzegovina and Kosovo). Besides these efforts NATO is also committed to the war against terrorism (Afghanistan).

One of the keys to NATO's success is its political and operational transformation. Its successive enlargements had a positive impact on both the target countries and on the Alliance. They also had an impact at the symbolic level, removing the artificial line that divided West from East Europe for more than fifty years. Not only did it close the distance between the two, it was also mutually beneficial in finding better ways to cope with the new threats and adversities that lie ahead.

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[57]"The role of new NATO allies and the future of the transatlantic security cooperation," speech delivered by the former Romanian Secretary of Defense, George Cristian Maior, at National Defense University on 10 March 2004.

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Consequently, NATO prepared itself for the enlargement process. It was the most important process not only because of its symbolic charge, but also because of its inner consequences and its radical transformation. It was the mechanism that guaranteed NATO's survival, and relevance and its adaptation to a new globalized security environment.

The multiple changes that Europe experienced in the early 1990s changed Europe's landscape. On the other side of the Atlantic, the 9/11 attacks changed U.S. foreign policy entirely. Subsequently, the U.S. perception of Europe and the European attitude towards the United States changed, too. They, however, did not change the fundamentals and goals of their relations, but the methods and modalities used to achieve them.

In this paradigm, there are multiple roles that the newest NATO members can play inside the organization. They can share their experiences; they can actively participate in operations, doing their duty as defenders of peace and democracy; and they can dissipate tensions by maintaining equilibrium in their policies with the parties involved. Their political pledges are fully demonstrated through their support and participation in military operations. Most of the new entries are participating in missions led by different entities.

For example, Romania is participating with troops in NATO-led operations (ISAF, Afghanistan), US-led operations (Iraq, Afghanistan), and EU-led operations (ALTHEA[58]) demonstrating willingness and balanced attitudes in regard to its partners. Another reason for participating in these operations is to prove that one organization/coalition/state does not exclude others; on the contrary, they reinforce one another, following complementarity principles.

Maintaining peace and security in their neighborhood is another way to fulfilling the responsibilities that come with member status. A regional vocation for most of the small and medium countries is encouraged by NATO and is reassuring for members. It is also a way of burden mitigation. In fact, the

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[58] ALTHEA is an EU-led operation, which is the continuance of the NATO-led SFOR in Bosnia i Herzegovina beginning in December 2004.

enlargement process is more than just accepting countries; it is an enhancement of the security area covered by the Alliance. In this regard, the outposts of this area have an important role in protecting the boundaries. They also have a role in sharing experiences with their neighbors, with the intent of defusing any potential tensions. This is actually the role that Romania has played in the region, even before it was invited to join the Alliance. The Balkans and the Caucasus are regions with a high potential for instability (the so-called frozen conflicts); therefore, it is in the interest of both NATO and Romania to solve the problems by any means possible, before they erupt into conflicts.

Cohesion among members was put to the test in a real-life situation. If after the 9/11 attacks the relation reached the highest degree of their unity, the Iraq war represented the lowest degree of their disagreements. In this equation of delicate balance, I can say that the new members played a sensible role in alleviating the differences through various methods. This reasoning further applies to the new allies, whose reliability and allegiance were put to the test both prior and during the Iraq 2003 war.

The two platoon leaders, Poland and Romania, demonstrated their dedication to NATO's values and principles. They made the biggest contribution to the war-fighting effort, even while in the process of a military transformation toward more flexible and versatile forces. This is the way they contribute to maintaining and developing transatlantic relations.

The further specific role that Romania will play in the region or in NATO as a whole is in the process of being defined. The latest events corroborated with its geo-strategic location prompt me to the conclusion that its specific contribution is even more important that Romanians thought it would be. The latest declarations made by Ron Asmus, Chief Executive of the George Marshall Fund, support this conclusion.

In an exclusive interview granted to a Romanian newspaper (14 March 2005), Asmus infers that Romania may play the role of leader in Black Sea security. The Black Sea region is the route of the so-called "asymmetric risks"

and "frozen conflicts." The way Romania decided to promote NATO values is to be actively involved in the region. In his interview, Ron Asmus acknowledged Romania's potential since it became part of the Alliance, and he encouraged member countries to see the Black Sea as an opportunity, not as a problem, and as a long term investment, not an expense.

The importance of the Black Sea has increased since the Iraq war when it proved useful. Hence the importance of having a route clear of threats and secure for future purposes.

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