



Committee Reports

POLITICAL SUB-COMMITTEE ON CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE

REPORT NATO ENLARGEMENT

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I. INTRODUCTION: NATO ENLARGEMENT AND PRIORITIES FOR THE ALLIANCE

1. The security landscape in Europe has been radically altered since the fall of the Berlin Wall and the "velvet revolutions" of 1989 and 1990. Though the risk of an all-out confrontation between the Soviet-led Warsaw Pact and NATO no longer exists, pockets of

- instability, including military conflict, remain on the European continent. The debate on NATO enlargement has to be seen principally in the context of the transformation of NATO from a defence alliance into an organisation additionally charged with providing, or at least contributing to, comprehensive security.
2. NATO's adaptation to the changing security environment is mirrored in its opening up to the countries in Central and Eastern Europe. This has been reflected in the updating of the Strategic Concept, but also in a process that consists of developing and intensifying dialogue and co-operation with the members of the former Warsaw Pact.
 3. NATO's profound transformation was initiated at the London Summit in July 1990, when it stated that it did not consider the Soviet Union and Warsaw Pact as adversaries, and invited them to establish diplomatic contacts with NATO. At the November 1991 Rome Summit, the Alliance launched the North Atlantic Co-operation Council (NACC). NACC's primary goal was to provide its members with a platform to cope with security risks through transparency and consulting on political-military security matters. It provided for a forum to discuss civil-military relations, advancing military reform and conversion of the defence industry.
 4. Responding to the demands of neighbouring countries for collaboration, it progressively developed a strategy of inclusion to create a Europe "whole and free." The change in NATO's security doctrine also translated into a substantial reduction in its conventional and military forces. By 1999, the US had cut its troops deployed in Europe from 325,000 to approximately 100,000, while the European member states reduced their forces by more than 500,000. Overall, NATO land, air and naval units had been reduced by between 30 and 40%.
 5. Enlargement is one of the priorities of the Alliance. The Alliance's Strategic Concept, approved by the heads of State and Government at the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Washington, in April 1999 states that

"The Alliance remains open to new members under Article 10 of the Washington Treaty. It expects to extend further invitations in coming years to nations willing and able to assume the responsibilities and obligations of membership, and as NATO determines that the inclusion of these nations would serve the overall political and strategic interests of the Alliance, strengthen its effectiveness and cohesion, and enhance overall European security and stability."

The document adds that "No European democratic country whose admission would fulfil the objectives of the treaty will be excluded from consideration." Enlargement goes together with other NATO programmes and activities such as the EAPC (Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council), Partnership for Peace (PfP), NATO's distinctive partnerships with Ukraine and Russia, as well as with other organisations. such as the OSCE. but also the EU.

Enlargement to the east can promote stability and security in Europe in a number of ways: for example, the real prospect of membership of the Alliance can motivate countries to promote democracy, solve border disputes and settle ethnic problems.

6. The basic principles for further NATO enlargement apply as laid out in the 1995 *Study on NATO Enlargement*: Applicant countries should be accepted based on their democratic credentials, their ability to contribute to NATO's collective security and their membership enhancing security and stability in the Euro-Atlantic area.
7. At the 1997 Madrid summit, NATO said that it would consider further enlargement in 1999. However, at the Washington Summit member states did not make a decision, and announced that they would revisit the issue at the next summit no later than 2002. During their meeting in Brussels on June 13 this year, NATO Heads of State reconfirmed the commitment to enlargement and welcomed the success of the Membership Action Plan (MAP) in assisting aspiring members with their own preparation for membership. Summarising the discussions among the leaders of the Alliance, Lord Robertson stated that "NATO hopes and expects, based on current and anticipated progress by aspiring members, to launch the next round of enlargement at the Prague Summit in 2002". Thus a "zero round", which many in applicant countries had feared, appears to be off the table.
8. As NATO is focused on consolidating its present changes and has to deal with other key issues, including, among others the Balkans, Defence Capabilities Initiative (DCI), ESDP as well as missile defence, simultaneously, NATO enlargement appeared to be to some extent on the back burner at the beginning of 2001. However, the discussion has gathered considerable momentum in early summer of this year. In addition to the NAC Summit decision of June 13, speeches by Czech President Vaclav Havel addressing the Bratislava conference of NATO applicant countries on May 11 and US President George W. Bush's keynote speech in Warsaw have contributed to this new dynamic. President Bush stated that NATO membership should be extended to "all of Europe's democracies that seek it and are ready to share the responsibilities that NATO brings".
9. By now, numerous contributions to the emerging debate have been made by parliamentarians and government officials. In Germany, the former Defence Minister, Volker Rühle, supports a NATO invitation to Slovenia, Slovakia, Bulgaria, and possibly Romania. He also proposed that NATO should, at its 2002 Prague summit, provide the three Baltic countries with a timely perspective for membership at a later stage. The German Chancellor Gerhard Schröder went further, remarking in early August that "whoever thinks in longer historical dimensions cannot rule out NATO membership for Russia in the long term". During his visit to the three Baltic States in late July this year the French President, Mr Chirac, backed the candidacy of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania as

new members of NATO. The Turkish Prime Minister, Mr Bulent Ecevit, said that Turkey initially prefers the membership of the Balkan countries, and the Turkish President, Mr Ahmet Necdet Sezer, told reporters during a visit to Bucharest that Romania and Bulgaria should be invited to join when the Alliance decides to take in new members. The former Greek Defence Minister, Mr Apostolos Athanasios, told journalists during a Moscow visit on 8 July that Greece welcomed the admission of Romania, Bulgaria and Slovenia to NATO. In a 8 June letter to President Bush, six US senators, including the former Chairman of the US Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, Mr Jesse Helms, voiced support for the inclusion of all three Baltic countries and other nations that are ready and prepared to assume the responsibilities of NATO membership, at the Prague Summit. Senator Helms' successor as Chairman, Senator Joseph Biden, has commended the significant progress achieved by Slovenia, Slovakia, Bulgaria and Romania as well as the three Baltic States. US Senator Richard Lugar, one of the most active supporters of the previous enlargement round, has recently argued in favour of inviting Slovakia, Slovenia, Bulgaria and the three Baltic States at the 2002 Summit. Despite this, the debate is just beginning and few member governments seem to have devoted serious consideration to enlargement, let alone publicly explained considerations for an enlargement strategy. There is unfortunately no real structured debate on the continuation of the Open Door policy as of yet.

10. Enlargement is too important an issue to have on "autopilot" and only to focus on shortly before the Prague summit. There is a need for open, frank transatlantic dialogue on the issue and its ramifications. This is a prerequisite for avoiding last-minute decisions based on, or influenced by, "politicking." This dialogue must also include the national parliaments, not only because they have to ratify the decision taken by the heads of government. What is more, parliaments should be actively engaged in the development of accession policy and the underlying strategies to secure stability in the Euro-Atlantic area. Your Rapporteur strongly believes that this organisation, the NATO PA, can and should be a pro-active catalyst in providing for a comprehensive debate among parliamentarians and among member states of the Alliance, as well as the aspirants and those countries which do not - at least at present - want to join NATO. The NATO PA could be a highly valuable asset in the developing debate. A particularly useful contribution of the Assembly could be in the area of discussions on the desirability and feasibility of developing a policy package to reconfirm to Russia that the Alliance wants to include it as an active partner in Euro-Atlantic security. Early transatlantic dialogue is also necessary to agree on measures to reaffirm those countries which might not be invited in the second round.
11. Your Rapporteur also wishes to stress the need for much stronger and deeper co-operation with Russia to explain the underlying rationale of NATO enlargement and to point to the mutual interests, benefits and necessities of a truly strategic partnership.

NATO has an important task to deal with and faces a double challenge, that of inclusion and exclusion. This partnership would be directed against no-one, but would produce joint approaches to tackle the pressing current and future security challenges and results in the areas of arms control and non-proliferation, to mention only two vital areas. A real partnership with Russia allows for a more and more effective dialogue on Russia's record on human rights (Chechnya) and press freedom.

12. The NATO Parliamentary Assembly has been at the forefront of opening up the Alliance to new members. Traditionally it has strongly supported inclusion of all democratic countries in the Euro-Atlantic area in an open dialogue on security and stability. The NATO PA has also specifically endorsed NATO enlargement, most recently at the 2000 Annual Session in Berlin. This report will plead for a comprehensive political agenda on enlargement, consisting of three elements:
 - a. an invitation in Prague to all applicant countries, coupled with a clear time schedule based on implementation of existing, not additional, criteria which must be met for membership to be granted. This modified "Big Bang" should not lead to new criteria, but should specify issues of logistics, interoperability, and defence governance. Those applicants invited but not admitted immediately will receive an enhanced MAP which incorporates a time map for the specific position of the country in the inclusion process of NATO;
 - b. the setting up of a high-level group for improvements of NATO Headquarters organisation, Alliance decision mechanisms, as well as specialisation in the context of the ambitious enlargement agenda defined under a);
 - c. a political initiative for a partnership with Russia, including common approaches to peacekeeping, counter-proliferation and disarmament as well as a collaborative project of interest to Russia, including high levels of co-operation on the reorganisation and reform of their armed forces.

II. NATO'S LAST ENLARGEMENT ROUND - LESSONS LEARNED

A. CONTRIBUTION OF NEW MEMBERS TO EUROPEAN SECURITY

- The latest enlargement round, the inclusion of the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland, is viewed as a success. None of the fears of enlargement opponents materialised: NATO's military effectiveness, political cohesion and decision-making were not weakened. Neither was NATO's system for the protection of secret data and information

penetrated by a 'Trojan horse' packed with former communist military personnel and possible ex-KGB ties collaborating with powers hostile to the Alliance. The costs of enlargement have been manageable for NATO and the new members. By taking in new members, NATO has not adopted new risks, nor have the new members become assertive towards non-NATO members. Moreover, enlargement has not created a new dividing line in Europe, and Russia has - albeit grudgingly - accepted a larger Alliance.

- The new members continue to undergo profound reform processes. All three have established civilian control of the military forces, Western-style command structures, and are upgrading their military hardware as well as their training.
- What is more, they contribute considerably to European security and stability in a number of ways. The new members take part in SFOR and KFOR operations. For example, without the co-operation of Hungary, any peace mission in the Balkans would have been far more difficult and costly. Today, two Polish battalions serving in Bosnia and Kosovo are considered model peacekeepers. The last enlargement round has not only increased Central European stability; it has also resulted in perhaps the healthiest Polish-Russian relationship ever.
- Nevertheless, the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland have all experienced continuing integration difficulties. Though each country is unique and is adapting differently to the changes since 1989, all share the common experience and burden of Warsaw Pact culture. Their armed forces are too big and too heavy, they are under-funded and, in part, poorly equipped. The three countries need to develop larger non-commissioned and junior officer corps, and to phase out a surplus of high-level officers. The newcomers experience budgetary constraints, not only due to economic difficulties, but also due to a failure of political will. While this is true for a number of member states, the situation is more severe for the newcomers, as they have to develop their forces from a different starting point. Moreover, all three are preparing for membership of the European Union, which requires considerable adjustments in socio-economic, legal, financial and other structures. Other challenges that the newcomers have to overcome are planning difficulties, constitutional and legal system inadequacies, and outdated national security and defence concepts as well as military doctrines. Military reform has been slow in specific circumstances.
- It was generally understood that the new members have to undergo a transition period of several years before they meet the required level of compliance with NATO military standards, primarily interoperability with NATO weaponry and the ability to communicate in English. The record of the newcomers is mixed so far, and they have been only partially successful in progressing towards these ends. Some argue that this is in part due to the loosely defined term of "interoperability" and to insufficient assistance and training provided by NATO. Members should also provide additional assistance with equipment which is no longer necessary since their forces have been reduced in size. Military security should not replace socio-economic security in the prospective new NATO member states.

- However, even though NATO's new members continue to experience these problems, the capacities of Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic are more advanced than those of NATO's MAP partners.
- The performance of the latest NATO members is viewed as important in assessing the contribution of new members to the Alliance. When the US Senate ratified the accession of Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic, it explicitly stated that the military contribution of prospective new members should be a key consideration in the next enlargement round. As the former deputy assistant secretary of state for European Affairs, Mr Ronald Asmus, said: "The performance of the three new member countries is essential for the future of the process."
- However, when making an assessment of the last enlargement round, it is important to remember that the Open Door process has developed over time and that the criteria for evaluating the progress made by applicant countries have been fine-tuned, mainly because of the introduction of MAP. What is more, assessing the contribution of members, as well as applicants to NATO and European security, needs not only to focus on military progress, but involves a complex set of criteria. For example, the three newcomers have stressed their strong support for further enlargement. The Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland can substantially contribute to putting further enlargement on the top of the Alliance's agenda by continuing, in part also speeding up, ongoing military reforms and investments. Moreover, they play an important role as a bridge to aspirant countries as well as to non-applicant neighbouring countries, particularly Russia and Ukraine. As to applicant countries, they already provide valuable support in a number of areas to assist them to modernise their armed forces. As to non-applicants, the three newcomers have deepened bilateral and regional relations with them.
- Therefore, an assessment of the last enlargement round which includes the contributions - as well as achievements - of the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland to NATO could play an important part in preparing the next round. This assessment should be objective, and should be completed before the Prague Summit.

B. THE MEMBERSHIP ACTION PLAN (MAP)

- The MAP adopted at the 1999 Washington Summit was an important signal to the aspirant countries that the Alliance remains committed to its Open Door policy. MAP is designed to assist aspirant countries to prepare for membership. It also provides guidance to the national efforts of applicant countries and the assistance of the Allies. MAP is more specific and goes farther than the 1995 *Study on NATO Enlargement* in defining what applicant countries need to accomplish to meet the criteria for eventual membership. It draws on the experience of the last enlargement round and the Partnership for Peace (PfP). MAP is not, however, a checklist for applicant countries to fulfil, nor could participation in the programme guarantee an invitation to begin accession talks. MAP is self-differentiating, which means that it is up to the participating countries themselves whether and how to match their participation in the programme with their national priorities. Participation in MAP does not make

participation in PfP obsolete. PfP remains essential, especially in achieving interoperability with NATO forces. MAP covers a broader range of issues than PfP, as it addresses the whole gamut of preparations required for eventual membership. It thus complements the activities available under PfP.

- The MAP consists of a comprehensive set of elements. Each aspirant is invited to submit an Annual National Programme (ANP) by the end of September on its preparations for membership, including objectives and targets on all issues relevant to possible membership. These objectives and targets cover political, economic, defence and military, resource, security and legal aspects.
- Each Spring, NATO prepares individual reports for applicant countries, providing feedback and guidance focused on their progress in the areas covered by their individual national programmes. This document forms the basis for an annual spring meeting of the NAC with each individual aspirant.
- The Alliance then provides assistance through a focused feedback mechanism on progress. This occurs in a 19+1 format, i.e. with the North Atlantic Council, and other NATO bodies if requested, and with a NATO team. The mechanisms for providing this feedback include those currently in use with partners (e.g. the PfP framework), as well as 19+1 meetings and NATO team workshops. The workshops will be particularly valuable, as they enable in-depth discussions among experts on the entire spectrum of issues relevant to membership.
- So-called "clearing-house meetings" with individual aspirant countries in a 19+1 format can help to better orchestrate bilateral and multilateral assistance, both in the defence and military realms, to the country concerned. Planning targets will be elaborated with aspirant countries to cover the areas most directly relevant to nations seeking to align their force structures and capabilities with the responsibilities involved in eventual Alliance membership. These will be built on existing Partnership goals and will be subject to review, allowing for detailed feedback.
- The first annual cycle of MAP was completed last year. Applicant countries and NATO consider it "hugely successful", because it provides, among others things, more transparency and more detailed feedback to applicant countries on how they adapt to the required changes. It has laid a solid foundation for further work on preparation for membership. The MAP is a dynamic programme and has already changed, as applicant countries and NATO have concluded the first cycle and are currently in the second. The second MAP cycle, which has been completed in May 2001, has become much more specific, providing for detailed, partly direct feedback to member countries. The exchanges have become much more detailed, comparable to the dialogue between member countries. Both as a result of the motivated insistence by MAP participants and the growing awareness by Allies of the benefits of enlargement, NATO has become more actively involved in developing the future individual profile of each aspirant country as an ally-to-be.
- After the completion of the first two annual cycles, a number of observations can be made to improve the process further. For example, aspirant countries still have to make adjustments to their constitutional and

legal frameworks. Moreover, as a general observation, the military forces of applicant countries are often inadequate to meet today's and tomorrow's security risks.

- From the standpoint of applicant countries, the experiences and "lessons learned" from the first annual cycle of MAP depend on a number of factors, including previously existing military structures. For example, Bulgaria and Romania have been former Warsaw Pact members with comparatively large armed forces. Albania was an independent country, while the three Baltic states were formerly a part of the Soviet Union, though they were never recognised as such by the United States and many other states. The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, Slovakia and Slovenia did not exist as independent states before.
- Applicant countries would welcome improvements in the assessment and feedback mechanism. They would benefit from more on-site evaluation visits for the purposes of individual profiling. A more timely release of relevant Standardisation Agreements (STANAGs) and other NATO documents would be helpful. Most importantly, better harmonisation of bi- and multilateral assistance to individual aspirant countries is needed. Some aspirant countries also want a NATO assessment mechanism to help them prioritise their MAP activities and identify minimal capabilities. Moreover, they would like NATO to streamline its procedures to help co-ordinate PARP, Partnership Goals (PGs) and the ANP. MAP tools that need co-ordination are the ANP, Individual Partnership Programmes (IPPs) and security assistance. Your Rapporteur welcomes the improvements made in the MAP process and has observed the increased level of expectations of applicant countries and the link made in these countries between MAP and membership. Your Rapporteur underlines the need for member States to define the objective implementation of enlargement criteria better, in order to make this perceived link realistic.

III. STATUS OF PREPARATIONS OF THE NINE APPLICANT COUNTRIES

- Article 10 of the NATO Treaty stipulates that the Alliance "may invite any other European state in a position to further the principles of this Treaty and to contribute to the security of the North Atlantic area". While the 1995 Study on Enlargement outlines general guidelines, NATO has not established formal criteria for accepting new members. However, as an organisation of members that share common values, it has stated that only democracies with market economies and proven human rights records can join. Candidates must also have resolved all territorial disputes with neighbours, as well as domestic ethnic conflicts. Finally, states must have transparency in military matters, including civilian control of the military and transparent defence budgets. Overall, the criteria are less clear than those for EU membership. Beyond what MAP has already achieved, there is a need for a proper, neutral and objective evaluation of aspirant

countries' progress. However, to many applicant countries, the criteria are unclear and are dependent on the member states. Without adding to conditionality, your Rapporteur requests clarity on this issue from the NATO Council. It is unclear to what extent, for instance, issues like public support, corruption, the economic sustainability of a military programme, and issues like interoperability and defensibility are specifically and consistently examined. At this stage, your Rapporteur looked at the issues which deem relevant, including, among others: popular support for membership in NATO, general relations with neighbours, political stability, the rule of law and the human rights situation, economic stability and improvements, the status of the armed forces, including civilian control of army, and finally the contribution to international peace.

- The following brief overview of applicant countries that were recognised as candidates for NATO membership at the Washington Summit 1999 is not "all-inclusive". Rather, it represents a "snapshot", or merely a general sketch, of the individual countries at a given time as candidates continue their efforts to prepare for membership and participate in the MAP. Moreover, this overview cannot provide a "ranking" among applicant countries, as any attempt to compare how strongly or efficiently applicant countries contribute to strengthening NATO and the Euro-Atlantic area as a whole would likely resemble comparing apples with oranges. For example, while one could argue that country A would contribute more strongly to NATO security because it has larger armed forces than country B, drawing an automatic conclusion that country A "deserves" membership more than B would be impossible, as other factors come into play. The report includes information obtained during the visits of the Sub-Committee to applicant countries in 2000 and 2001. Thus far, the Sub-Committee has visited Bulgaria, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia. A visit to Estonia and Latvia is scheduled for November this year. Moreover, the Sub-Committee plans to visit Albania and The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in the Spring of 2002, if possible. This report does not refer to Croatia, although it is participating in NATO programmes (but not in the MAP) and has expressed a strong interest in preparing for NATO membership. Moreover, in July 2001 it joined the Vilnius Group of potential candidates. While not yet "officially recognised" as an aspirant country, in a joint meeting with Croatian Prime Minister, Mr Racan in May 2001, Lord Robertson stated that NATO would support and assist Croatia in its aspirations to become a fully-fledged member of the Euro-Atlantic area.

- As to the nine countries which have been mentioned as applicant countries in the communiqué of the 1999 Washington Summit, all are members of the OSCE and participate in the following NATO partnership programmes: EAPC, PfP, PAPP and MAP. Thus, all countries have declared membership in NATO to be a prime foreign policy goal.

A. ALBANIA

- Albania is a member of the Council of Europe and the WTO. The EU had assessed that Albania was not ready to open negotiations over participation in the Stabilisation and Association Agreements, which were set up by the EU during the Kosovo war. However, at the November 2000

EU-Balkans summit in Zagreb, the EU suggested that such negotiations could start at the end of 2001. According to the Albanian government, 95% of the Albanian population supports the country's membership of the Alliance.

- After decades of international isolation, Albania has not only achieved significant progress in establishing and improving relations with international organisations, but with its neighbours as well. Bilateral relations with Greece have considerably improved since they deteriorated over ethnic Greek issues and border skirmishes in the early 1990s. Relations with the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia have also improved: both countries are participating in numerous regional initiatives. In January 2001, Albania restored diplomatic ties with Yugoslavia, which had been severed by the Milosevic regime during the Kosovo war.
- Albania was the last country in Central and Eastern Europe to begin a process of transforming its economic and political structures towards a democratic, market-oriented society. Progress has been uneven, but Albania's human rights situation has steadily improved since the 1997 financial crisis, which had brought the country to the edge of civil war. However, significant problems remain and the US State Department's 1999 report on Human Rights Practices and the 2001 Human Rights Watch World Report cited organised crime and corruption, illegal police practices and a weak judiciary that is subject to political pressure and corruption, among the factors slowing down the country's democratic progress.
- The economic outlook is stable but at a low level. The government, headed by the Socialist Party which won a second four-year term in June 2001, has concentrated its efforts on improving ties with Western states, and attracting the investment that the country badly needs to rebuild its economic base. Over the past year, relations with Germany as well as Greece and Italy have improved, leading to increased investment and aid. The economy is expected to grow by 7% or more this year, for the third successive year, and inflation has stabilised at around 3%.
- In general terms, Albania's 1998 constitution defines the mission of the armed forces, and the parliament approved a National Security Strategy document in January 2000. As to civilian supervision of the military, Albania has made some progress in adopting fundamental documents on national security strategy and defence doctrines. Albania benefits from its participation in programmes such as PfP by obtaining expertise in civil-military relations and characteristics of the armed forces in a democratic society.
- Albania's army had largely disintegrated during the 1997 crisis. In April 2000, the government approved a ten-year plan for the comprehensive restructuring and reform of the armed forces. The first stage, from 2000 to 2004, focuses on rebuilding the army. In the second stage, from 2005 to 2010, the plan calls for improving the army's capabilities and approaching NATO standards. Army personnel will be reduced to approximately 30,000. Albania, which needs direct and indirect assistance from international organisations, has received bilateral military assistance from Alliance countries. Albania's defence budget in 2000 was US\$ 51 million, representing an increase of 19% over 1999 which amounted to US\$ 43 million, equalling 1.03 % of GDP and 3.6% of the government budget. In 1998 Albania spent US\$ 32.8 million on defence. equal to 1.1% of GDP or

3.9% of the government budget.

- A small contingent of Albanian troops has served with NATO's SFOR operations in Bosnia since 1996. The country also participates in the South-Eastern European multinational peacekeeping force (SEEBRIGG) located in Bulgaria, which the Sub-Committee visited last year. Albania's co-operation with NATO increased as a result of the 1999 Kosovo crisis. The Albanian army assisted the 7,000-strong NATO Albania Force (AFOR) in setting up refugee camps throughout the country. During the Kosovo crisis, NATO extended a limited security guarantee to Albania and other countries neighbouring the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Moreover, NATO considerably upgraded Albania's transportation and communications infrastructure and facilities. A smaller contingent of NATO forces (COMWEST) remains in Kosovo to support KFOR. The Albanian government welcomed NATO's South-Eastern Europe Initiative and has offered NATO full use of its military facilities throughout the country. During NATO's air campaign, Albania played a pivotal role and has substantially contributed to Allied efforts, accepting up to 450,000 of the nearly one million Kosovo refugees.

B. BULGARIA

- Bulgaria is a member of the Council of Europe, the WTO and is also an associate partner of the WEU. In February 2000, Bulgaria opened accession negotiations with the EU, having closed 11 of the 31 chapters under negotiations as of 27 July 2001.
- While there was no national consensus over NATO membership when the Socialist party was in power, all parliamentary groups in Bulgaria now support the country's bid for membership of the Alliance. According to the information provided to the Political Committee's Sub-Committee on Central and Eastern Europe during a visit to Sofia in 27-31 March 2000, support had dropped from between 65 and 68 percent as a result of the Kosovo war. The Sub-Committee was informed that the figures were returning to their pre-war levels, and the latest figures provided by the Bulgarian Mission to NATO to your rapporteur in July this year put public support for joining the Alliance at 58%.
- Bulgaria maintains good relations with its neighbouring states and its security situation improved as a result of the political changes in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. A dispute with the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia over language was resolved in early 1999. In Spring 2000, then-Foreign Minister Nadeschda Michailova described relations with Turkey and Greece, as well as with the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, as "excellent".
- Bulgaria's reform process after 1989 has progressed unevenly and more slowly than in the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland. Under Socialist Party-led or -supported governments, Bulgaria's economic reforms lagged behind during most of the 1990s, resulting in a deterioration in economic conditions. However, after the 1996 presidential and subsequent 1997 parliamentary elections, political and economic reforms have been consolidated, and are expected to continue after King Simeon II's victory in the 17 June 2001 parliamentary elections. Even though the US State

Department's 1999 Human Rights Practices report noted that the independent Bulgarian judiciary is continuing to struggle with corruption, lacks sufficient staffing and faces structural problems, the European Commission has assessed that Bulgaria meets the criteria set out in the 1993 Copenhagen Declaration. (A country must demonstrate that it has achieved "stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights, and respect for and protection of minorities.") The European Commission's regular 2000 report on Bulgaria stated that the political situation remained stable, but that it needed to make further progress in judicial reform and in its efforts to combat corruption. The report also noted the country's continuing progress toward becoming a market economy.

- After years of stagnation and decline, the Bulgarian economy has undergone an impressive turnaround in recent years, due also to the backing of the IMF and other financial institutions. In 2000, the Bulgarian government identified economic growth, macro-economic stability and employment as its primary economic goals. Bulgarian GDP increased by approximately 5% in 2000, and is forecast to grow by another 5% in 2001.
- In 2000, Bulgaria's armed forces comprised approximately 68,000 active personnel, of which 30,000 were conscripts. It has a reserve of some 160,000. Bulgaria's defence budget had decreased during the 1990s but began to increase again in 1999 and in 2001 it stands at US\$ 536 million, representing approximately 3.5% of GDP, and is expected to rise to 3.7% in 2002 and 2003. Based on a joint US-Bulgarian study on Bulgaria's armed forces, the Bulgarian government adopted "Plan 2004" in October 1999. It foresees a reduction of the armed forces to approximately 43,000 by 2004, i.e. half of its size in 1999. Following a visit by the NATO Secretary General, Lord Robertson, in October 2000, the Bulgarian government reportedly plans to accelerate its reforms, with a review scheduled for early Autumn 2001. A long-term "Programme 2015" is being developed in parallel, with a special focus on plans for modernisation and procurement of equipment.
- Democratic Control of the Bulgarian military is assured through the Constitution and the legislation, and is consistently implemented by the Parliament and the Executive. The President is the Supreme Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces, and since 1991 the Minister of Defence has been a civilian. A comprehensive set of fundamental documents on security and defence has been developed since 1998, including the 1998 security concept and the 1999 military doctrine. The Prime Minister submits annual reports on the status of national security, defence and the armed forces to Parliament. An interagency committee on Integration on NATO, jointly chaired by the Foreign Affairs and Defence ministers, has been established in 1997.
- Bulgaria has participated in numerous PfP training exercises, and contributes a transportation platoon to NATO's Stabilisation Force (SFOR) and an engineering platoon to KFOR. During the Kosovo war, Bulgaria granted NATO unrestricted use of its airspace, despite domestic opposition to NATO's actions in Kosovo. The government also allowed NATO troops to cross Bulgaria to deploy KFOR peacekeeping troops. NATO extended a limited security guarantee to Bulgaria during the Kosovo war. Bulgaria's support of operation "Allied Force". NATO's 1999 air campaign over

Kosovo, has been praised by both NATO and its member states. In March 2001 Bulgaria signed an agreement with NATO regarding the transit of NATO forces and NATO personnel which would facilitate the use of Bulgaria's territory for future NATO-led operations.

- Bulgaria has actively supported and sometimes led numerous regional security initiatives. It participates in the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe, and contributes to the Multinational Peace Force South Eastern Europe (MPFSEE), formed by seven countries of the region, and hosts its headquarters.

C. ESTONIA

- Estonia is a member of the Council of Europe and the WTO, and an associate partner of the WEU. Overall, the country has very good relations with its neighbours. Links between Estonia and the Nordic countries, especially Finland, are close, in particular through the Baltic Council, the Baltic Assembly and numerous inter-governmental organisations.
- NATO membership enjoys consistent support among a majority of Estonians. According to a June 2001 poll, 61 % of Estonians support joining NATO, while another poll conducted at the same period (EMOR, June 2001) indicated that 66 % of Estonians support joining NATO, compared to 54% in January 2000. According to the polls support among young people, both Estonians and non-Estonians, is above average. In September 2000, the NATO information Centre was opened at Tartu University. A non-governmental organisation with the aim of informing the public about NATO and the enlargement process, the Estonian Atlantic Treaty Association (EATA), was established in Tallinn in February 2001.
- Estonia has developed a very close partnership with the two other Baltic countries, Latvia and Lithuania, politically as well as in the areas of defence and economy. However, Estonia's relations with its largest neighbour, Russia, have sometimes been difficult. Russia has repeatedly expressed criticism of Estonia's treatment of the Russian-speaking minority (according to official Estonian figures, 6.2% of the population are citizens of the Russian Federation and 12.3% have not yet decided upon their citizenship) and has warned against Estonian membership of NATO as a threat to its security interests. A Russian-Estonian border agreement has been reached, but, owing to delays by Russia, not yet signed.
- The 1999 US State Department country report on Human Rights Practices considered that Estonia has "generally respected the human rights of its citizens and its large non-citizens community." A November 2000 report by the European Commission stated that Estonia meets the political criteria for EU membership, namely a democratic political system, the rule of law, respect for human rights and the rights of minorities. In March 2000 Estonia adopted the State Integration Programme aimed at integrating the non-Estonian part of the population. Estonia adopted legislation to allow children of non-Estonians born after 1991 to acquire citizenship under certain conditions, thus fulfilling the last of several OSCE recommendations to harmonise Estonian citizenship law with OSCE standards. Responding to criticism by Max van der Stoep, the OSCE Commissioner for National Minorities. Estonia's Parliament

modified its language law in the Spring of 2000.

- Since becoming independent, Estonia has successfully adjusted to becoming a free-market economy: almost all state-owned companies are now privatised. It has been one of the most successful countries in attracting foreign direct investment. The EU began accession talks with Estonia in March 1998, and the country has closed 19 out of 31 chapters as of 27 July 2001. According to the EU's 2000 report, Estonia is a functioning market economy and fulfils the political criteria of the EU. According to the Estonian Ministry of Finance, GDP in 2000 reached the level of US\$ 5.43 billion with an annual economic growth of 6.4%; inflation in 2001 is estimated at 4.8%.
- Estonia's National Security Concept was approved by the Riigikogu on 6 March 2001 and the National Military Strategy was approved by the Government on 28 February 2001. Civilian supervision of the military is maintained through parliamentary control of the defence budget as well as the defence policy guidelines. Moreover, Parliament approves the nomination of the commander of the armed forces. The President is commander-in-chief of the armed forces and appoints top military officers; the defence minister is a civilian. As part of the military reform of the defence structure, the Army Staff - separate from the General Staff - was created in Estonia.
- After having gained independence, Estonia, like its Baltic neighbours Latvia and Lithuania, had to build its armed forces from scratch. In peacetime, Estonia's armed forces are about 5000 strong. Estonian expenditures on defence reached approximately US\$ 79 million, or 1.6% of GDP, in 2000 and are expected to reach about 1.8% in 2001, followed by 2.0% in 2002. In 1994, the three Baltic countries agreed to form a joint peacekeeping battalion (BALTBAT) with training and equipment provided by NATO members. Parts of BALTBAT have become operational and participated in SFOR. An Estonian rapid reaction battalion (ESTBAT) was established in March 2001. The three Baltic countries founded a joint Baltic Defence College (BALTDEFCOL) in Tartu, with responsibility, among other things, for the education of staff officers.
- Estonia has continued to contribute to the UN and NATO peace operations (SFOR and KFOR) including, among others, a military police unit (ESTPATROL-3), staff officers serving at the SFOR HQ, and a new reconnaissance company that is being trained for deployment in the mission area from August 2001.
- The former US President, Bill Clinton and the Presidents of the three Baltic countries signed a "US-Baltic Charter of Partnership" in January 1998, which states that the United States has a "real, profound and enduring interest in the independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and security of the Baltic states" and "welcomes and supports" their efforts to join NATO.

D. LATVIA

- Latvia is member of the Council of Europe and the WTO, and is an associate partner of the WEU. It enjoys good relations with its neighbours and is actively co-operating with Estonia and Lithuania in the political.

security and economic fields. However, its bilateral relations with Russia have been difficult at times, owing to Russian criticism of what it considers to be Latvia's unfair treatment of the Russian-speaking minority and its application for NATO membership. Like Estonia, Latvia has "initialled" a border agreement with Russia, but the latter has not signed it.

- Several surveys in 2000 conducted by the Centre for Market and Public Opinion Surveys showed that 57% of Latvians favour Latvia's bid for NATO membership and 47.3% support increasing Latvia's defence budget. Only 10% of Russians in Latvia believed that Latvia's membership in NATO would endanger Latvia-Russia relations. Young people are most supportive of Latvia's integration into NATO (67% among respondents 18-24 years old).
- After the restoration of independence, three Saeimas (Parliament) have been elected in free and fair elections. The Head of State in Latvia is the President elected by the Saeima for a period of 4 years.
- The EU's November 2000 country report on Latvia stated that Latvia meets the political criteria for membership of the Union and, according to subsequent EU progress reports, meets the Copenhagen criteria. The 1999 US State Department report said that Latvia generally respects the rights of minorities and non-citizens. The OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities Mr van der Stoep, stated that Latvia had implemented all his recommendations in the field of citizenship and that he would not make any new recommendations in this regard. With almost 600,000, out of a total population of 2.4 million, Latvia has the largest Russian-speaking minority of all three Baltic countries. Earlier EU and OSCE criticism of parts of the Latvian citizenship law led the Latvian Parliament to adopt changes in 1998 which now make the law compliant with all requirements in both organisations.
- The European Commission's November 2000 report said that Latvia has a functioning market economy. The report added that, if necessary reforms were implemented, the country would be able to withstand competition from EU countries. Earlier, in February 2000, the EU opened membership negotiations with Latvia. By the end of July this year, Latvia had closed 16 chapters in the negotiations with the EU.
- The Latvian armed forces comprise some 5,600 men and 14,500 National Guard reserves. Latvia's 2000 defence budget amounted to an equivalent of little more than US\$ 74 million, or 1.05% of its GDP (compared to the NATO member state average of 2.4). The government has pledged to increase the budget in following years to US\$ 88,3 million (some 1.31% of GDP) and 1.75 and 2% in 2002 and 2003 respectively. Military and civil personnel is planned to increase to about 6500, relating to the development of LATBAT, the air defence battalion, the military police, the implementation of the BALNET project and the parliamentary and presidential security service.
- Civilian control of the military is exerted through the existing legislative framework which provides parliament with authority over the defence budget as well as over laws concerning national defence. During 2000, the Minister of Defence, a position held by a civilian, presented to the Parliament for the first time a report on the national defence policy and developments in the national armed forces. On the basis of this report "The

White Book", which will be prepared annually, was published .

- Latvia participates in joint initiatives such as BALTBAT and BALTRON (the Baltic Naval Squadron, a mine-sweeping unit comprising five vessels), BALTNET (the Baltic Air Surveillance Network), and BALTDEFCOL (the Baltic Defence College) with its two Baltic neighbours. On a rotating basis, Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania are contributing to SFOR through a platoon as part of the Danish battalion. Moreover, Latvia committed small units to KFOR and NATO-led forces in Albania in 1999. Within the Joint Air Surveillance Project (BALTNET), the Air Forces Information Centre (ASOC) as well as the radio relay communication equipment began to operate in 2000. Besides the existing joint projects among the Baltic states, other long-term projects are under way: the BALTLOG is focused on co-ordination of Baltic States logistics and procurement policies, and BALTMED on co-operation among Baltic states medical units.

E. LITHUANIA

- Lithuania is member of the Council of Europe, the WTO, the IMF and the World Bank, as well as being an associate partner of the WEU. The country opened accession negotiations with the EU in February 2000, having closed 18 of the 31 chapters under negotiation as of 27 June 2001. Integration with NATO enjoys unanimous support among all political parties. Public support for joining NATO among Lithuanians has increased: A December 2000 SIC Rinkos Tyrimai poll cited 48.9% support for the country's bid for NATO membership<up from 38.6% in January 2000. The recent "Vilmorus" Market and Public Opinion Research Centre figure found even 64 % of Lithuanian residents supporting the country's membership of NATO.

- Lithuania enjoys good relations with its neighbours. Trilateral co-operation among Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia in the field of defence is an important factor in the development of the Baltic states' defence capabilities within the framework of their preparation for NATO. Though historically it had a somewhat difficult relationship with Poland, both countries managed to transform bilateral relationship into a strategic partnership in 1991, including, for example, creation of the joint Lithuanian-Polish peacekeeping battalion. Poland backs membership of the Baltic states' in the Alliance, and Poland and Lithuania signed a military co-operation treaty in February 2001<the first of its kind between a NATO country and one of the three Baltic states.

- Lithuanian-Russian relations are also generally good, even though they have been rocky at times. While Lithuania has only a relatively small Russian-speaking minority (less than 9% of the population), Russia strongly opposes Lithuania's application to join NATO. Russia voices particular concern about the Kaliningrad exclave, currently hosting 25,000 troops according to official reports, which would be surrounded by NATO countries. Lithuania and Russia signed a border treaty in 1997 whose ratification is still pending in the Russian Duma. The transit of Russian military cargo through the territory of Lithuania is being carried out in accordance with the regulations set out by the Lithuanian government. Transit is by rail only and permits to pass through the territory of

Lithuania are being issued on case-by-case basis. The regulations are valid for a period of one year and may be extended annually by mutual consent.

- The European Commission's 2000 report on the country's qualifications for joining the EU stated that Lithuania fulfils the political criteria for membership. According to the 1999 US State Department report, Lithuania has held free and fair elections since becoming independent in 1991. The report concludes that the country generally respects the human rights of its citizens, including minorities.
- The Lithuanian economy grew by 2.9% in 2000, reaching US\$ 11.2 billion. In 2001 its GDP is forecast to grow by further 3.5%. Concerning the economic reforms currently under way, the latest EU report on Lithuania found that "it can be regarded as functioning market economy and should be able to compete with competitive pressure and market forces within the EU in the medium term" if it continues implementation of its structural reform programme.
- After gaining independence in 1991, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania had to build up military forces from scratch. The Lithuanian armed forces are 12,600 strong, including 2,000 professional military personnel in the National Defence Volunteer Forces. The defence budget was significantly increased from 0.8% of GDP in 1997 to the equivalent of 1.77% of GDP (US\$ 198.9 million) in 2000, according to the Lithuanian Mission to NATO. Lithuania has pledged to increase defence spending to 1.95% in 2001, and it will reach 2% in 2002-2004 according to the Defence agreement signed by the parliamentary parties.
- As regards civilian supervision of the military, the President of Lithuania is the Supreme Commander of the armed forces. The Ministry of Defence is responsible for the preparation of defence plans and the request for and implementation of the defence budget, which is adopted and controlled by the Seimas.
- The prime goal of the country's defence policy is achieving interoperability with NATO forces. At the beginning of 2000 Lithuania accepted a package of 66 Partnership Goals, which have been developed and tailored with the Alliance. The Partnership Goal covers a six-year (2001-2006) planning period and provides good indicators for practical preparedness to undertake future membership obligations and commitments. Together with its two Baltic neighbours, it created a number of joint initiatives such as BALTRON, BALTBAT and BALTNET.
- Lithuania continues to contribute to the efforts of NATO to stabilise the Balkans. Until February 2001 Lithuania has contributed troops serving as part of the Danish battalion with SFOR. Moreover, currently there are 32 Lithuanian military personnel serving in the NATO KFOR/SFOR missions in the Balkans. Lithuania has also provided a transport aircraft of the Lithuanian Air Force and its crew to the KFOR/SFOR missions. By October 2002 a battalion will be created for operations outside Lithuania with NATO forces under Article 5. By 2006 Lithuania plans to have a reaction brigade capable of operating with NATO forces under Article 5. In 1998, the previous US Administration signed a US-Baltic Charter of Partnership (see the observations on Estonia).

F. THE FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA

- Since January 2001, the police and the security forces of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia have come under attack by the so-called "National Liberation Army". The attacks intensified over subsequent weeks, spreading to Tetovo in March 2001 and several smaller towns outside the capital Skopje in June and July. The security forces counter-offensives of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia have failed to drive out the insurgents and several successive cease-fires negotiated by NATO and the EU have collapsed. As this report is being drafted, an agreement in Ohrid on August 13 which foresees, among others, increasing the proportion of ethnic Albanians in the police of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia from 5 to 25% and the use of the Albanian language in official institutions in areas where ethnic Albanians account for at least 20% of the population as well as in plenary sessions of the national parliament. Given its geographic location, namely its proximity to a country with volatile security, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia has handled the previous challenges rather successfully. In the early 1990s, its relations with its immediate neighbours, particularly Serbia, were not without problems. Relations with the Milosevic regime were strained, but improved significantly after the change in government in Belgrade. Bilateral relations with Albania were sometimes difficult because of Albanian complaints over the treatment of the Albanian minority. Because Greece did not recognise the name "Macedonia", it had introduced a unilateral embargo against the country, but lifted it one year later in 1995. Relations with Bulgaria have been rather positive though. The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia played a very important and constructive role in the 1999 Kosovo air campaign. It received about 250,000 refugees from Kosovo. As recent developments have demonstrated, it is still affected by regional instability, particularly the instability of its borders and the infiltration of radical Albanians from Kosovo.
- The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia is a multi-ethnic state with ethnic Albanians comprising the largest minority (approximately 23% of the population according to the latest census in 1994). According to a May 2001 poll by the Political Legal and Science Research Institute of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, 58,51% of Macedonians are in favour of NATO membership, despite the fact that Macedonian Slavs have displayed growing frustration with international peace efforts during the recent crisis. The 1999 State Department report on Human Rights Practices took the view that the judiciary is generally independent and that human rights are generally respected in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, even though there is some police abuse and societal discrimination against minorities. The Human Rights Watch 2001 report pointed to some cases of police brutality and deficiencies regarding the independence of the judiciary. Parties representing the Albanian minority have been included in several successive governments, including the present Administration under Prime Minister Georgievski.
- In 1999, the EU agreed to sign a Stabilisation and Accession Agreement (SAA) with the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia to improve

economic conditions in the country and foster its trade with the EU. It became the first country to sign the SAA with the EU in Luxembourg in April this year.

- The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia did not have military forces of its own when it became independent. Its army (ARM) was created in 1992 and currently has about 16,000 military personnel, of whom 8,000 are conscripts. The reserve forces number 60,000. The ARM is engaged on a profound structural reform process based on a 1998 defence strategy and a White Paper prepared by the Defence Ministry. As part of its ANP (Annual National Programme) for MAP, the Defence Ministry adjusted its restructuring plans and defence cuts in May 2000. Priorities are border security, increasing combat readiness and improving equipment, as well as improving interoperability with NATO forces. The main challenges for the country's armed forces are the lack of both trained personnel and modern equipment.
- The 1991 Constitution of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia states that the President is commander-in-chief of both the armed forces and the Security Council. The 1998 Defence Strategy states that the military are under civilian and democratic control and identifies the Parliament as an active participant in designing and overseeing defence policies. The parliament has discussed, but not yet adopted, a new law on defence, which refers to the instruments of civilian control. The Defence Ministry publicises annual White Papers to increase public awareness of defence matters. Given the current crisis, immediate membership of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in the Alliance appears unlikely at present, and will depend on peaceful and sustainable solution of the conflict. Given the state of its armed forces, NATO should set up a specific and balanced programme with the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia for the reform and integration of the army.

G. ROMANIA

- Romania is a member of the Council of Europe and the WTO, and is an Associate Partner of the WEU. It assumed the revolving chairmanship of the OSCE in January 2001. The country opened accession negotiations with the EU in February 2000, and has closed 8 out of 31 chapters as of 27 July 2001. A recent poll (Spring 2001) showed that 85% of the population and all parliamentary groups support Romania's bid for NATO membership.
- Romania has good relations with its neighbours and has signed a number of bilateral treaties and agreements with them, including one establishing a joint Romanian-Hungarian battalion. It is also actively pursuing regional co-operation with them.
- The 1999 US State Department report on human rights practices described some weaknesses concerning the independence of the judiciary in Romania, but found that the Romanian government "generally respected the rights of its citizens." However, the report pointed to some serious problems in law enforcement, violence against and trafficking in women, juvenile homelessness, and societal discrimination against religious and ethnic minorities, especially the Roma. However, the situation of the

Hungarian minority of approximately 1.6 million had significantly improved. Romania recently adopted a ten-year strategy for improving the Roma minority situation, a document that has been elaborated in co-operation with foreign experts, NGOs and representatives of this minority. Furthermore, the new Romanian government has shown that it is serious about continuing political, economic and military reform.

- Romania's economy is still suffering from decades of mismanagement and corruption under the Communist dictator, Ceaucescu. Its record of economic reforms after the 1989 revolution had been rather mixed, producing, among other things a very high inflation rate (approximately 150% in 1997) and falling GDP between 1997 and 1999. In 1996, the IMF and the EU froze credits to Romania, owing to the failure of the Romanian government to implement agreed economic reforms. The EU's November 2000 economic report on Romania assessed that it was "not yet a functioning market economy." Lately, however, there have been signs of improvement, and GDP rose by approximately 2% in 2000. The government now expects steady economic growth of around 4% per year.
- Romania's military budget amounted to some US\$ 941.1 million in 2000, or 2.56% of GDP. The 2001 defence budget voted in Parliament foresees an 18% increase to roughly US\$ 981.5 million. An additional US\$ 250 million in extra-budgetary credits is probable. The current government is investing considerable political capital to garner support for sustained efforts to prepare for membership of the Alliance. According to the 2000 "Military Strategy of Romania", released by the Defence Ministry, the armed forces will undergo a restructuring programme over the next eight years, reducing manpower from 207,000 to 112,000 between 2000 and 2003. The second phase will focus on the modernisation of equipment, including combat aircraft and naval vessels. The Romanian Intelligence Service (SRI) has undergone a thorough reform, with 85% of its staff being appointed after 1989, lowering the average age to 35 years. Furthermore, the country has enacted legislation to ensure civilian control of the military. Since 1994 the Defence Minister has been a civilian.
- Romania was the first country to subscribe to PfP and has participated in numerous PfP exercises and activities. Romanian forces participate in SFOR and KFOR. During the Kosovo war, Romania granted NATO unrestricted use of its airspace, and provided its rail system for moving cargo, troops and equipment in support of NATO operations in the Balkans. As part of NATO's South-East Europe Initiative (SEEI) Romania has assumed the task of finalising the South-East Europe Common Assessment Paper (SEECAP), a program which allows individual nations to assume the co-ordination of specific initiatives. The first participation of Yugoslavian representatives in a NATO co-ordinated activity took place at the Bucharest meeting on SEECAP in November 2000. Though it did not receive an invitation to join the Alliance at the 1997 Madrid Summit, the Romanian candidacy did receive strong support from a number of European Member countries, France among others.
- Romania continues to contribute actively to peace and stability in the region and beyond. A Romanian battalion and medical staff participated in the UN peacekeeping mission in Angola in 1995, and it sent military observers to Central Africa and the Persian Gulf.

H. SLOVAKIA

- Slovakia is a member of the Council of Europe, the WTO, the IMF, the World Bank and the OECD, as well as an associate partner of WEU. The country opened accession negotiations with the EU in February 2000, and as of June 27, 2001, closed 19 of the 31 chapters under negotiation—putting it on a par with the Czech Republic, which opened negotiations a year and a half earlier.
- In 1998, more than 50% of Slovak citizens advocated NATO membership. The figure dropped to 30% as a result of the Kosovo campaign, but the current government has devised a concept aiming at increasing public awareness of all aspects of Slovakia's accession to the Alliance. As a result, public support for NATO membership now stands at 52%, according to the most recent poll of the Slovak Institute for Public Affairs. All parliamentary parties, with the exception of the Slovak National Party, support Slovakia's entry into NATO.
- Slovakia enjoys good relations with its neighbours, particularly with all other Visegrad countries—all NATO members, who strongly support Slovakia's bid for membership in the Alliance.
- Slovakia and the Czech Republic separated in 1993, but unlike the Czech Republic, Slovakia's international standing diminished because of domestic political instability. When the EU issued its first observations about the qualifications of EU applicants, Slovakia was the only country which explicitly failed to meet the criteria. However, the situation changed significantly after the 1998 elections, when Mikulas Dzurinda's coalition government rebuilt international ties and improved the country's democratic record. The 1999 European Commission's regular progress report on accession stated that Slovakia had met the political criteria for membership. The country has scheduled general elections for September 2002, shortly before the NATO Summit in Prague.
- The EU is still worried about corruption and the ability of the legal system and the bureaucracy to enforce its rules, and has raised concern about condition of the Roma minority. Since 1998, the Party of the Hungarian Coalition has been a part of the governmental coalition, and the relations between Slovaks and Hungarians improved significantly. In June the Slovak Parliament finally ratified the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages.
- Despite political difficulties, a slow restructuring process and little foreign direct investment earlier in the 1990s, Slovakia's economy featured robust growth rates of between 4.4 and 8% from 1995 to 1998. The country's growth slowed to 1.9% and 2.2% in 1999 and 2000 respectively, but core inflation in 2000 amounted to a mere 4.6%. In 2000 the country attracted US\$ 2 billion in foreign direct investment—more than the entire stock received since 1993. The European Commission's 2000 progress report describes Slovakia as a functioning market economy.
- The security strategy of Slovakia was approved in February 2001, the defence strategy in May 2001 and the military strategy is scheduled to be approved by the end of the year 2002. The key element of the Slovak Republic's new 'Security Strategy' is membership of NATO and the EU.

- Though it did not have separate armed forces of its own after becoming an independent state, Slovakia inherited a functional army, at that time 42,000 strong. In mid-2001, Slovakia's armed forces numbered approximately 33,000 (of which 60% are conscripts), which the government plans to reduce to 24,000 by 2010. Slovakia's 2000 defence spending amounted to 1.77% of GDP, some US\$ 348 million. The current government has decided to sustain military expenditures over the next six years to at least 1.89%. The Slovak Parliament is active in developing and monitoring the country's defence policy, thereby assuring civilian control of the military. In February 2001 the Slovak National Council approved constitutional amendments which, among other things, aim to strengthen the democratic control of the armed forces and transfer relevant decision powers to the government on deployment of the Slovak armed forces abroad and presence of foreign armed forces on Slovakia's territory. The President is the supreme commander of the armed forces, the Minister of Defence and his Deputies are civilians.
- Slovakia is currently building up the following international military structures: Czech-Slovak mechanised battalion to operate within KFOR a Czech-Polish-Slovak brigade for peacekeeping missions under the auspices of NATO and the EU and a Hungarian-Romanian-Ukrainian-Slovak engineer battalion for disaster relief operations. Slovakia also contributes to NATO-led missions in the former Yugoslavia (SFOR, KFOR), UNTAES and UNPROFOR and other mainly UN peacekeeping missions, in which Slovakia currently has close to 660 military personnel. During the Kosovo air campaign, Slovakia opened its air corridors to NATO planes and territory for transport, even though NATO's intervention was not popular among a majority of the population.

I. SLOVENIA

- Slovenia is a member of the Council of Europe, the WTO, the IMF and the World Bank, and is an associate partner of the WEU. The country opened accession negotiations with the EU in 1998, and as of July 27, 2001, closed 21 out of 31 chapters under negotiation. Public support for NATO membership has been consistent over recent years, hovering around or slightly above 50%, with a slight increase to 56% according to the latest survey conducted by the Ljubljana University Public Opinion Research Centre.
- Slovenia's relations with Italy and Croatia were strained after it became independent in 1991, but Italian-Slovene disagreements over the property of Italian citizens who had left after World War II were settled in early 1995. Italy (as well as France) had strongly supported Slovene membership of NATO in 1997. Previously relations with Croatia have been clouded over a number of issues, especially over border issues concerning the Bay of Piran. However, most issues have been solved and the Slovene and Croatian governments have signed draft treaties related to the definition of the state boundary. Today, Slovenia enjoys friendly relations with all its neighbours.
- The 1999 US State Department report on Human Rights Practices states that Slovenia has held free and fair elections since its independence in

1991. In December 2000 the Prime Minister, Mr Janez Drnovsek, built a new 'Grand' coalition, filling the prime-ministerial post for the fourth consecutive term. The European Commission's November 2000 report notes that the country meets the political criteria for EU membership.

- The population of Slovenia is 90% Slovene, and Italian and Hungarian minorities have their own seats in Parliament and the right to bilingual schools and use of their own language in dealing with the authorities.
- Slovenia has achieved impressive progress in the economic field. It has the highest per capita GDP in Central and Eastern Europe, and reaches about 71% of the EU average. Privatisation is almost complete, but its foreign direct investment is comparatively modest. The EU's November 2000 progress report on Slovenia states that the country has a "functioning market economy."
- The 9,000-strong Slovene armed forces are currently undergoing a restructuring process. Slovene defence spending reached approximately US\$ 300 million, or 1.45% of GDP in 2000. In 2001 defence spending is planned to reach 1.87%. Slovene officials stress the priority to improve interoperability with NATO forces. Civilian supervision of the military is provided by Parliament's control of the defence budget, as well as supervision of military and defence programmes.
- Slovenia has contributed to stabilisation in Bosnia and Kosovo, non-militarily through the Stability Pact and militarily by participating in SFOR, KFOR, UNMIK and UNFICYP. Slovenia has offered an additional military police platoon (consisting of 23 persons) for the SFOR-MSU battalion. The country participates in the Multinational Land Force (MLF), a trilateral brigade of Italian, Hungarian and Slovenian forces, and as an observer in the South-Eastern Brigade (SEEBRIG).

IV. FURTHER NATO ENLARGEMENT AND SECURITY IN THE EURO-ATLANTIC AREA

A. RELATIONS WITH RUSSIA

- Russia had opposed the accession of the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland to the Alliance. As NATO Secretary General, Lord Robertson, stated during his most recent visit to Moscow in February 2001: "Some in Russia still perceive NATO as a predominantly military bloc, propelling its military infrastructure up to the borders of Russia. That is not the case. In the Founding Act NATO committed itself to the famous three nuclear "no's" - no intention, no plan and no reason to establish nuclear weapon storage sites on the territory of the new members - a commitment still valid. The same is true for the statement that in the foreseeable security environment NATO will carry out its missions by ensuring interoperability, integration and capability for reinforcement - rather than by additional permanent stationing of substantial combat forces."
- As to continuing NATO enlargement. Russian government officials.

with few exceptions, have voiced strong criticism, if not outright rejection, of this policy. For example, the Russian President, Mr Putin, stated that Russia "fundamentally does not accept this policy in relations with NATO". Though there have been indications that Russia may move away, albeit very slowly, from its stance, the Russian Defence Minister, Mr Sergei Ivanov, repeated Moscow's continuing opposition to NATO opening up to Eastern European members, especially the Baltic States, when he met with his German counterpart, Rudolf Scharping, in St. Petersburg in early August. Earlier this year, Mr Ivanov had maintained that further enlargement would "create a fundamentally new situation in Europe that objectively infringes on Russia's political and military interests" and that "this could lead to a serious crisis."

- In the Founding Act, Russia no longer considers the Alliance an adversary. Moreover, Russia has entered into a privileged partnership with the Alliance. Numerous OSCE documents, signed by Russia, provide every sovereign nation in Europe with the equal right to choose its security alignments freely. However, the new Russian National Security Concept describes NATO enlargement as a "threat" to Russia.
- NATO's defence spending has been significantly reduced. Both in absolute and in relative terms, military forces have been cut substantially and force structures have also been adapted to the post-Cold War world. More importantly, NATO's Strategic Concept reflects this above all, as it now focuses much more on co-operation with its partners. Overall, NATO's commitment, and that of its members, to peace and security and its structure and decision-making processes, guarantee that NATO cannot behave in an aggressive manner. At the same time, NATO member countries have - sometimes in an unjustified manner - shown significant restraint in commenting on Russia's cause and conduct in the war in Chechnya.
- The last round of enlargement has not been at the expense of Russian security interests. For example, no new obstacles were raised to close co-operation between Poland and the Kaliningrad *Oblast*. On the contrary, the Russian President, Mr Putin, stressed the good bilateral relations when President Kwasniewski visited Moscow in January 2001. There is no reason why cross-border co-operation between a new NATO member and Russia should differ from close partnership between an old NATO member, say Norway, with neighbouring Russia. When the Sub-Committee on Central and Eastern Europe visited Bulgaria, Lithuania and Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia in 2000 and 2001, all representatives of applicant states echoed their desire for good-neighbourly relations with Russia. They will continue to have strong political and economic interests in co-operating with Russia.
- While Russia continues to reject further enlargement in principle, some officials have signalled that Russia's reaction would depend on the countries which would be admitted. Russian experts spoke repeatedly of a "red line" which the Alliance would overstep if it were to invite countries which formed part of the territory of the former Soviet Union, namely Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, which have applied for NATO membership.
- NATO membership of any Baltic country is a neuralgic issue for Russia. Russia considers the Kaliningrad *Oblast*, which hosts a considerable military infrastructure, one of the most sensitive issues. Russia and

Lithuania have an agreement which gives the Russian side transit rights, including the shipment of military equipment and personnel. Russia fears that if Lithuania were to join the Alliance, the Kaliningrad district would become an enclave inside NATO territory. The sizable Russian minorities in the Baltic countries (approximately 35% in Latvia, 29% in Estonia, and 9% in Lithuania) are another sensitive issue for Russia.

- Moscow's attempt to draw "red lines" against certain applicant countries is fundamentally opposed to each sovereign state's right to choose for itself which alliance it wants to join. Moreover, the Alliance has explicitly stressed in both the 1995 Enlargement Study and the communiqué issued at the 1999 Washington Summit that the geography of an applicant country cannot in principle stand against membership of the Alliance. Russia has a voice but no veto.
- However, due regard should be given to Russian interests, including along its southern periphery. On this point, while NATO should continue to bolster the military reform and development of democratic institutions in PfP countries in the Caucasus and Central Asia, neither the Alliance nor any of its members should seize upon Russia's weakness to develop challenges in these regions that could become sources of long-term instabilities and possible conflict.
- Some critics of Russia's foreign policy maintain that Russia's ambition for superpower status translates not only into exercising greater control over what Russia calls "near abroad"; but also into using every opportunity to weaken NATO and damage Western interests. They claim that there is an expansionist mentality among Russia's ruling elite, deeply rooted in the country's past, which makes it difficult for it to consider forming a partnership with the West. Your Rapporteur does not share this view, but wants to stress that the Alliance should continue to find common ground with Russia to deepen and widen co-operation. This is not done sufficiently at present. Your Rapporteur views Russia as a strategic partner for the Alliance. New joint NATO-Russian initiatives in the areas of arms control and non-proliferation, as well as ways to combat terrorism, should be developed and pursued.
- It is indeed in NATO's interest to have a strong Russia as neighbour. Russia is an indispensable partner in securing peace and stability in the Euro-Atlantic region. However, using Russia's potential as a pivotal pillar for security requires a Russia that is strong and at peace with itself and its neighbours. As a former US Ambassador to NATO said: "The West will be far better off with a Russia that succeeds rather than fails at home, politically, socially, economically." However, Russia's internal distractions and external frustrations make it an awkward partner. The West will benefit from a Russia that can be drawn out of isolation and urged to play a constructive role in European security.
- NATO should develop its co-operation with Russia further. As Lord Robertson stated: "NATO enlargement is only one part in the far broader effort of building true European security. A strengthened OSCE, the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council and Partnership for Peace, the distinctive partnership NATO has with Ukraine and Russia's own good-neighbourly relations with the newly independent states also contribute to that. Enlargement is not - as outdated perceptions have it - a zero-sum-game where NATO wins and Russia loses. Creative security in the 21st century

for all is served through integration, constructive partnership and co-operation. We are aiming at including, not excluding, Russia. And Russia itself must define the degree of its inclusion in this emerging European security network."

- However, Russia cannot have veto power in Alliance decisions. A refusal or indefinite postponement of admission of those applicant countries which fulfil the criteria for membership generates the danger of creating a grey zone. Worse, it would be seen by Moscow as tacit recognition by the West that these countries are within Russia's exclusive sphere of influence. This would be counterproductive and allude to an atavistic Cold War concept of "grey zones".
- As the former US Ambassador to NATO, Alexander Vershbow, has rightly stated: "The enlargement of NATO is in Russia's interest, even if Russia does not yet recognise this fact." Thus, NATO countries should not abandon the enlargement process in the face of Russian attitudes that are based on Cold War assumptions instead of contemporary realities. However, NATO should define its partnership with Russia more actively than is the case at present, and offer a large programme of assistance in reforming the Russian armed forces.

B. RELATIONS WITH UKRAINE

- Ukraine does not consider NATO enlargement as a threat to European security and stability. During an international symposium in Kiev on 5 July 2001 with the participation of the NATO Secretary General, Lord Robertson, and senior Ukrainian military officials, Yevhen Marchuk, Secretary of the National Security and Defence Council, welcomed NATO's enlargement to the East and described it as an "increase in the power of united Europe".
- However, Ukraine does not want to become a "buffer state" in Europe. NATO's last enlargement round, the accession of Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary, creates a new geopolitical situation for Ukraine. As NATO continues its Open Door policy and accepts new members in Central and Eastern Europe, the question of self-identification becomes more pressing: does Ukraine consider itself a European country or something else? With neighbouring Romania and Slovakia joining the Alliance, this concern is likely to grow. Though Ukraine is interested in reintegrating into Euro-Atlantic structures, it is also interested in good-neighbourly relations with Russia.
- Some analysts had expressed concern that NATO enlargement could destabilise Ukraine by placing it between a growing Alliance and an increasingly assertive Russia. However, at least for now, Ukraine's security has actually been enhanced. Its bilateral relations with Poland have considerably improved, partly because of Poland's accession to the Alliance. Relations with Romania also improved after both sides signed a treaty recognising Ukraine's border. They also pledged to abide by international standards for ethnic minorities in each country. Enlargement has also led to improvements in ties with Russia, despite the latter's strong objections to it. Shortly before the Madrid summit in May 1997, Ukraine signed a treaty of friendship, co-operation and partnership, and an

agreement on the Black Sea fleet was concluded with Russia. In the treaty, Russia formally recognised the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine, including over Sevastopol and the rest of the Crimea. Both sides solved a number of contentious issues, including energy and border issues, as well as over ownership of the Black Sea fleet. However, in a number of areas, the co-operation agreements have to be given life. In Spring 2001, during the visit by the Russian President, Mr Putin, to Dniepropetrovsk, Ukraine and Russia signed a number of bilateral co-operation agreements, primarily on energy and economic co-operation. During another visit by Mr. Putin to Ukraine in July, Presidents Kuchma and Putin signed an agreement to increase strategic co-operation. President Putin has also appointed a former Prime Minister, Mr Viktor Chernomyrdin, to the post of Russian Ambassador to Ukraine, a move many analysts view as more than just a symbolic step to strengthen bilateral relations.

- However, Ukraine's main concern about enlargement relates to Russia's response to it. For historic and economic reasons, the country has strong links with Russia. It is economically dependent on Russia, particularly in the energy field. Ukraine also has a significant Russian-speaking population in its eastern regions. Russia has repeatedly exercised strong pressure on Ukraine to beef up military co-operation and scale down its co-operation with NATO, but Ukraine has continued its close co-operation with the Alliance. Ukraine has not joined the Pact of Collective Security for the CIS countries; rather it is searching for alternative security arrangements, as its active development of GUUAM structures demonstrates.
- Since independence, the Ukrainian government has been very interested and active in developing close links with the Alliance. It views a close partnership with NATO as a means of strengthening its own security, also partly *vis-à-vis* Russia. Ukraine has steadily improved its co-operation with NATO. It was the first country in the CIS to sign the PfP, in February 1995, and is actively participating in the programme. At the 1997 Madrid summit, NATO and Ukraine signed the Charter on a Distinctive Partnership. The charter aims at developing closer co-operation on numerous areas, particularly in economic security, conflict prevention and crisis management, military reform and democratic control of armed forces, non-proliferation and arms control technology transfers, as well as combating drugs and organised crime. Implementation at this stage follows the national programme of Ukraine's co-operation with NATO for 2001-2004. It is especially focused on the reform and restructuring of the Ukrainian armed forces. The reform was decided on in 1997 and is scheduled to be completed by 2005.
- According to the Ukrainian Defence Minister, Mr Kuzmuk, Ukraine could also contribute to the EU's rapid reaction force: "Ukraine is open to any activity aimed at strengthening security and stability in Europe." While successive Ukrainian governments have been very interested and active in widening and deepening co-operation with NATO, a majority of the Ukrainian population holds a sceptical view of the Alliance, dating back to Cold War views. The Kosovo war led to a temporary deterioration in Ukraine-NATO relations, as the Rada, then controlled by a left-wing majority, condemned NATO's "violent act" in Yugoslavia as "unjustified" and "inhumane". and the majority of the public was critical of NATO's

military intervention. However, the Ukrainian government supported NATO's actions, even if it deplored the fact that NATO did not act under the umbrella of a UN mandate.

- Ukraine has also developed close links with key countries in the Alliance, namely the United States and the United Kingdom, and close military co-operation within the "spirit of PfP" with these two countries. Between 1996 and 2000, Ukraine was the country with which the United Kingdom had the largest military programme. On average, approximately 90 activities were conducted each year, including military, border units and national guard forces. As regards Ukrainian bilateral military relations with the United States, both countries have signed annual co-operation plans since 1993. The United States organises annual "Sea Breeze" exercises in Odessa, which include approximately ten NATO and Partner countries.
- Ukraine actively contributes to securing peace and stability in the Balkans. It currently contributes to KFOR by supplying a helicopter unit and the Ukrainian component (300 personnel) of the Polish-Ukrainian battalion. Ukrainian media reported that, during the visit by the NATO Secretary General, Lord Robertson, to Kiev in early July 2001, the Ukrainian military command pledged a Ukrainian battalion to replace a German peacekeeping battalion in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.
- Ukraine is more concerned about EU enlargement than NATO enlargement. It fears that the EU is creating a "Eurocurtain" to replace the old Iron Curtain. While Ukraine also wanted to sign a partnership with the EU, the latter refused to do so at the Helsinki Summit. However, the EU adopted a "Common Strategy" on Ukraine which acknowledged Ukraine's "European aspirations" and welcomed its "pro-European choice". More importantly, the Strategy declared that the door was not closed. The Common Strategy set in motion a regular dialogue between EU institutions and Ukraine. However, Ukrainian officials regarded the Common Strategy as disappointing because their country was not included in either the fast or slow track list of future EU members. Moreover, the country fears significant negative consequences when Poland and other neighbours to its west join the Union. In particular, the implementation of the Schengen agreement would be critically viewed by Ukraine.

V. NATO ENLARGEMENT AND EU ENLARGEMENT

- NATO and the EU are Europe's two great core institutions. Enlargement of both the EU and NATO will help to reduce political tensions in Central and Eastern Europe, a region that has suffered from considerable instability in previous centuries. Enlargement of the EU and NATO is also likely to result in increased economic growth and social stability, as it will generate increased direct foreign investment because it will provide greater international confidence in the region.

- NATO and EU enlargements are closely linked both politically and strategically. However, when the Cold War ended, NATO and the EU set out from different starting points. NATO seemed to have lost its *raison d'être*, as it had been established as a necessary means to counter the Soviet military threat. For the EU, on the other hand, the end of the Cold War represented the opportunity to continue the process of building pan-European unity as envisaged by its founding fathers. When Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland signed the Visegrad Declaration in February 1991, pledging mutual support in "returning to Europe", i.e. primarily achieving membership of NATO and the EU, neither of the two organisations was prepared to define a clear position on enlargement. Western management of Central and Eastern Europe will require a truly integrated policy between them.
- The development of the EU's ESDP will further strengthen this link. The new emphasis on defence in the European Union means that membership will now bring security dimensions, and no longer just economic opportunities. During a visit to Latvia in the spring of 2000, the Commission President, Romano Prodi, went so far as to say that "any attack or aggression against an EU member nation would be an attack or aggression against the whole EU." Thus he envisaged a more complete role for the EU, bringing security together with economic prosperity and broader stability. The NATO Secretary General, Lord Robertson, has claimed that the creation by the Union of a credible defence dimension is "only logical".
- The requirements of membership and political circumstances are not always parallel. Moreover, the applicant states have different historical experiences concerning democracy and socio-economic development. This could have an important impact on the institutional frameworks, decision-making processes and policy outputs of both the EU and NATO.
- The EU has an accession process but no sufficient enlargement strategy. In particular, the EU's accession process is focused primarily on the criteria that applicant countries have to meet. Such a technocratic approach is necessary, but not sufficient. Eastern enlargement can be the EU's greatest contribution to stability and security, but it can only be achieved if there is political leadership. Political leadership is necessary, not only to forge a consensus of EU member states on an enlargement strategy, but also to "sell" EU eastward enlargement to increasingly sceptical West European populations.
- Creating truly pan-European structures will require mutually supportive efforts involving international financial institutions and leading industrial states, working in tandem with the EU and NATO.

VI. CONCLUSIONS

- As to the political aspects, NATO's needs a convincing strategy for the enlargement process. The Alliance has to balance a number of "competing

demands" as it approaches its next round of enlargement. These demands include maintaining its political cohesion, as well as military effectiveness, maintaining its credibility by continuing the Open Door process and maintaining its commitment to strengthening security and co-operation within the Euro-Atlantic area. This would include strengthening existing partnerships with all countries in (Central and Eastern) Europe, but primarily with Russia and Ukraine. As stated earlier, this report pleads for a comprehensive political agenda on enlargement, suggesting that the Alliance should:

- a. immediately obtain an enhanced MAP which incorporates a time map for the specific position of the country in the NATO inclusion process;
 - b. set up a high-level group for improvements to NATO Headquarters organisation and Alliance decision mechanisms, as well as specialisation in the context of the ambitious enlargement agenda defined under a);
 - c. start a political initiative for a partnership with Russia, including common approaches to peacekeeping, counter-proliferation and disarmament as well as a collaborative project of interest to Russia, including high levels of co-operation on the reorganisation and reform of its armed forces.
- Even though Croatia is not yet participating in MAP, NATO should extend the invitation to include it. However, Croatia will have to meet the same criteria as all other applicant countries before it can become a member of the Alliance.
 - NATO needs to continue building partnerships with both Russia and Ukraine. Especially with regard to Russia, NATO needs to engage more actively in frank dialogue about the ongoing enlargement process. The Permanent Joint Council could be a forum for a much more active debate on enlargement and its ramifications for Russian security concerns. Russia should have a voice, but no veto. Similarly, the NATO-Ukraine Council (NUC) can and should be a forum to evaluate the ramifications of further enlargement and Ukraine's security. Ukraine remains in a critical economic and political situation owing to a range of factors, including a lack of reforms in a number of areas. Nevertheless, Ukraine needs the encouragement and support of NATO and its members. Further deepening the relationship with Ukraine will only help to stabilise this great country but might also facilitate the integration of Russia into European security architectures. In a broader sense, the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) can play a constructive role in discussing the ramifications of NATO enlargement for European security with all partners participating in the EAPC.
 - The end of the Cold War has led to a diversification of regional ties in Central and Eastern Europe. NATO enlargement must avoid setting up new dividing lines through Europe. The enlargement of NATO to Central and Eastern Europe must be accompanied by the construction of soft patterns of co-operation. Efforts must focus first and foremost on the areas of political and economic reform. The European Union has a pivotal role to play in enhancing economic, but also political, stability in Central and

Eastern Europe, thus close co-operation between the EU and NATO is desirable.

- As to the military-technical considerations that need to be taken into account in a decision about enlargement, MAP provides for something like a benchmark to measure the status of the preparedness of and progress made by applicant countries. It has become a very helpful tool in assisting the applicant countries in their preparations. It can also be a valuable instrument in de-politicising the assessment of the status of preparations of applicant countries. MAP is not a static programme, but has already been adjusted to the experience drawn from the first annual cycle. Your Rapporteur welcomes the improvements made in the MAP process; it can be developed further to live up to its full potential. In particular, the applicant countries need more detailed feedback from NATO, including better help to prioritise their needs and develop realistic timetables. There is considerable room for improving co-ordination among NATO members, as well as with applicant countries, on the assistance given by individual member countries; MAP could be an important vehicle to achieve this. The Alliance and member countries should increase their help to NATO applicant countries to prepare for eventual membership by all appropriate means of co-operation, including, for example, the transfer of military equipment. An aspect of the improvements of MAP has been the increased level of expectations of applicant countries, especially a perceived link in applicant countries with participating in MAP, and thus investing heavily to approach NATO standards and membership. To many applicant countries the criteria are unclear, being dependent on the member states with respect to the consensus achieved. There is a need for member states to define the objective time period more precisely, based on specific implementation of existing enlargement criteria.

- NATO activities and programmes for aspirant countries, such as PARP, PfP and MAP, are having a partial influence that goes beyond merely technical aspects. As NATO's co-operation with applicant countries becomes ever closer through the MAP process, the Alliance is increasing its obligation to invite aspirants to fulfil the given criteria, even though NATO has always emphasised that enlargement will not be based solely on progress on military, political and economic reforms.

- It has been argued that the geographic position, including the aspect of "defensibility", of an aspirant country should be a key criterion. NATO aspirants are discussed in geo-strategic terms: for example, Slovakia and Slovenia would provide a "land bridge" to Hungary, or Bulgaria and Romania would "tie" Hungary to Greece and Turkey and would be important land bases to contain future Balkan crises or advance Alliance interests into the Caucasus. Others point out that the Baltic states could not be defended against an all-out attack, but in today's and tomorrow's security landscape non-Article 5 operations are much more plausible. Moreover, the force structures of NATO members are being adjusted to muster more mobile, flexible and lethal forces. Besides, even during the Cold War, NATO had a number of "isolated" member states, e.g. Norway and Iceland, whose defence would have required sending massive reinforcements. Thus, geostrategy will remain important, albeit in different ways.

- To move ahead with NATO enlargement will require political

leadership in the Alliance. While NATO has at first been reluctant actively to pursue the idea of eastward enlargement, for a number of reasons, it had given in to the demands of Central European countries to open itself up to new members. Enlargement did happen because of American, and German, leadership. President Bush has sent a clear signal with his Warsaw University address. However, it needs to be spelt out specifically at the Prague 2002 Summit.

- The NATO Parliamentary Assembly has traditionally been at the forefront of identifying new issues and challenges for the Alliance. It was the first NATO organisation to invite representatives of the then Warsaw Pact to address the elected representatives of NATO members. Early on it argued for opening up the Alliance to new members. Before the Madrid summit, the NATO PA had suggested extending invitations to five countries to join, namely the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland, as well as Romania and Slovenia.
- However, the political and security environment in which NATO enlargement will be discussed and decided is profoundly different from the one in Madrid. The efforts by applicant countries to prepare for membership are in themselves important contributions to Euro-Atlantic security. They should be encouraged to continue their preparations and to participate in existing programmes that help prepare to meet the necessary criteria for membership. Those applicant countries which did not receive an invitation at the Madrid summit did not face serious negative consequences. The nine applicants have continued to prepare for membership and maintained their commitments to NATO's objectives and operations, thereby making heavy financial as well as political investments. A rejection of applicant countries could generate very negative repercussions in these countries, including, in some extreme cases, pushing them off the path to democracy and market economy. By now, they are too closely integrated in our processes and NATO is simply too important for them for the Alliance simply to say "no".
- As stated above, your Rapporteur suggests that at the Prague Summit NATO should extend invitations to join the Alliance to all of the nine applicant countries. Moving from a process in "waves" to a continuous "stream" requiring applicant countries to continue their reforms has a number of advantages. It will enhance NATO's credibility, as well as strengthening the reform process in applicant countries that is under way. Moreover, by following the "regatta approach", though it might make relations more difficult in the short term, the Alliance will avoid enlargement being a continuing controversial issue that disturbs the NATO-Russia relationship. Lastly, applicant countries joining one by one as they meet the required criteria, not two or three at the same time, would make enlargement more manageable for the Alliance.
- Of course, the debate - and the decision - on enlargement does not take place in a political vacuum. As far as the relations between NATO, its respective member states and Russia is concerned, other important issues and policy areas are involved. This includes, for example, the situation in the Balkans, or how to deal with proliferation of WMD and missile technology, and also missile defence. As to the latter, your Rapporteur wishes to note that no linkages should be established on the issue of enlargement and an eventual compromise on missile defence.

- Further enlargement should actively include the Russian Federation and Ukraine, without which the creation of a stable Euro-Atlantic security is not feasible. Your Rapporteur pleads for further expansion of the existing NATO-Ukraine co-operation programme, which includes assistance to the reform of the armed forces, co-operation in peacekeeping, consultations on common approaches to conversion and restrictions of arms exports, as well as addressing human rights concerns.
 - NATO needs to engage Russia actively in a dialogue on the benefits of further enlargement for Russia as well as Euro-Atlantic security interests. In this regard, the NATO PA can play a pivotal role as, for example, the latest meeting in Moscow in April 2001 with the Duma and the Federation Council as well as senior government officials has shown. What is more, NATO should call for joint initiatives on arms control, non-proliferation and counter-terrorism, as outlined in the Founding Act. The Founding Act in particular can be a useful tool, but it should be used to its full potential. One area where NATO could further enhance co-operation with Russia and Ukraine is defence reform. Russia and Ukraine face huge reform problems in this area, and would benefit from the experience of NATO countries in the transformation of the military, especially from the lessons derived from transforming the military in East Germany and the three new member states. The Alliance should offer both countries assistance in their defence reforms.
 - Enlargement of the Alliance is and will remain an open-ended process. President George W. Bush said in his 15 June address at Warsaw University that he "believes in NATO membership for all of Europe's democracies that seek it and are ready to share the responsibilities that NATO brings". Thus, "the question of 'when' may still be up for debate within NATO; the question of 'whether' should not". This includes all states of Europe, and as Chancellor Schröder rightly pointed out, "whoever thinks in longer historical dimensions cannot rule out NATO membership for Russia in the long term" and, as your Rapporteur wishes to point out, for Ukraine.
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APPENDIX

During the Political Committee's deliberations at the Annual Session in Ottawa, 6 and 7 October, 2001, the following changes to the report were suggested, but - because of the absence of the Rapporteur - were not voted upon.

A. Suggested addition proposed by Mr. Longin Pastusiak (Poland):

After paragraph 147, add the following new paragraph:

"In this regard, the recent visit of President Putin to the NATO HQ in Brussels and his indication that Russia will, under certain conditions, not oppose further NATO enlargement to the East, is a

very positive sign. NATO should use this opportunity to explore how the partnership with Russia can be increased."

B. Suggested changes proposed by Mr. Algirdas Gričius (Lithuania):

Leave out sub-paragraph 12. a. and insert the following new sub-paragraph

"political decisions to be done at NATO Summit in Prague in 2002 have to be based on performance of respective applicant countries in the MAP process;"

After the first sentence of paragraph 108, insert the following two new sentences:

"There is no ground to believe therefore that the second round of enlargement could worsen the good neighbourly relations between the new NATO members and any third countries. On the contrary, all applicants are vigorously pursuing the good neighbourly relations policy."

At the end of paragraph 109, add the following two new sentences:

"However, these three countries were forcefully incorporated into the former Soviet Union. Not inviting the Baltic States to NATO would impede the NATO enlargement process and would give a wrong signal to Russia."

Delete paragraph 110.

In paragraph 133, leave out the first two sentences and add the following new sentence:

"As to the political aspects, the Alliance has to balance a number of "competing demands" as it approaches its next round of enlargement."

Replace sub-paragraph 133. a. by the following new sub-paragraph:

"make a political decision at the NATO Summit in Prague in 2002, based on individual merits of each applicant country;"