



The Collective Security Treaty Organization and NATO: “Never the twain shall meet”

Brynhildur Ingimarsdóttir

Lokaverkefni til MA-gráðu í alþjóðasamskiptum

Félagsvísindasvið



HÁSKÓLI ÍSLANDS

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Ritgerð þessi er lokaverkefni til MA-gráðu í alþjóðasamskiptum og er óheimilt að afrita ritgerðina á nokkurn hátt nema með leyfi réttshafa.

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Útdráttur

Tilgangur þessa lokaverkefnis er að beina athygli að svæðisbundnum öryggissamtökum, nánar tiltekið Samvarnarbandalagið (e. Collective Security Treaty Organization, CSTO) og ósk þess eftir að efla og útvíkka marghliða tengsl við önnur svæðisbundin öryggissamtök, nánar tiltekið Atlantshafsbandalaginu (North Atlantic Treaty Organization, NATO). Markmið mitt með þessari rannsókn er að draga athygli að hinu lítt þekkta og rannsakaða Samvarnarbandalagi; að finna ástæður fyrir því hvers vegna og hvernig það vill koma á marghliða tengslum við Atlantshafsbandalagið og hvers vegna ósk þess eftir stofnanabundnu samstarfi hefur verið hafnað fram til þessa; og spyrja hvort samstarf milli þessara tveggja stofnana í ákveðnum málaflokkum geti yfirhöfuð talist líklegt.

Þessar spurningar eru rannsakaðar í gegnum þrjár vel þekktar kenningar í alþjóðasamskiptum, þ.e.a.s. raunsæishyggju, stofnanahyggju og félagslegri mótunarhyggju. Kenningarnar eru notaðar til að meta styrkleika og veikleika hvorrar stofnunar fyrir sig, í hvaða ljósi þær sjá hvor aðra og einnig til að útskýra hvort samstarf milli stofnanna sé líklegt.

Í niðurstöðunum kemur fram að þrátt fyrir að til séu ýmsar hagnýtar ástæður fyrir stofnanirnar að vinna saman í ákveðnum málaflokkum, t.d. í Afganistan, þá séu of margir þættir sem koma í veg fyrir að stofnanirnar geti komið á formlegum tengslum sem myndu leiða til þýðingarmikils samstarfs til skamms og meðallangs tíma litið.

Abstract

The focus of this Master's thesis is on a collective regional security organization, namely the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), and its desire to enhance and expand multilateral ties with another regional security organization, namely the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). My aim throughout this research is to draw attention to the little-known and under-researched CSTO; to find reasons as to why and how it wants to establish multilateral ties with NATO, and why its desire to enhance institutional cooperation has been denied up until now; and to enquire whether such cooperation is possible at all.

These questions are explored through the lenses of three prominent theories of international relations, i.e. realism, neoliberal institutionalism and social constructivism, that are used to assess the institutions' respective strengths and weaknesses, their visions of each other and also to explain whether it is plausible for the organizations to cooperate.

The conclusions find that in the near to mid-term, that although there are some practical reasons for the organizations to cooperate in specific issue areas, e.g. Afghanistan, there are too many factors that prevent the organizations from establishing formal ties which would lead to meaningful cooperation.

Preface

My thesis corresponds to 30 ECTS credits and is written in the discipline of International Relations at the University of Iceland under the supervision of Alyson J. K. Bailes. I have been interested in the relationship of Russia with the West ever since I started my studies in the field of international relations. I had always felt that Russia did not receive enough attention in the literature and that when it did receive attention, it was usually viewed with suspicion and mistrust. I wanted to take a close look at Russian interests and foreign policy and decided that the Collective Security Treaty Organization would be an interesting research subject, both because of Russia's dominance within the organization and because of the simple fact that it was poorly understood in western international relations literature and had not been researched to any great extent. It has been a great experience and has provided me with great insight into the workings of both the CSTO and NATO and also of great power politics in modern times.

I would first and foremost like to thank my advisor, Ms. Alyson Bailes for the invaluable assistance and guidance that she so selflessly provided me with during the course of my research. I would also like to thank Ms. Bailes for introducing me to Pál Dunay and Andrew Cottey, who both provided me with valuable insights and information, for which I am very grateful.

Finally, I would like to thank my partner, Arnar Steinn Þorsteinsson, for his patience and insights throughout the entire process and last but not least my family.

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*Oh, East is East, and West is West, and never the twain shall meet,
Till Earth and Sky stand presently at God's great Judgment Seat;
But there is neither East nor West, Border, nor Breed, nor Birth,
When two strong men stand face to face,
tho' they come from the ends of the earth!*

(Rudyard Kipling, 1892)

Introduction

During the Cold War the Northern hemisphere was divided by two main security blocs. One of them was the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), formed in 1949. Its initial role was as a collective defence system formed by twelve western countries and led by the alliance's single superpower, the United States of America (USA), with its primary threat being posed by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). The other bloc was formed by the Warsaw Pact which was established in 1955 as a response to NATO's creation, where the Soviet Union and its allies formed a defence coalition in order to counter the West. The world system during the Cold War was therefore a bipolar one where the US and the USSR played leading roles.

With the end of the Cold War, it was hoped that the gap splitting the West from the East would be bridged with the creation of a closer relationship between former rivals. As the Warsaw Pact ceased to exist with the disintegration of the Soviet Union, it seemed logical that the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) would disappear as well; making room for the establishment of a new security structure encompassing members of NATO and other European non-members. What emerged in contrast was a unipolar world order dominated by the US, while NATO remained in being. Many viewed the US as having 'won' the Cold War, overshadowing the fact that former states of the Soviet Union had wanted independence and full sovereignty, which was even initiated and fully supported by Russia. During the first years after the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russia sought closer ties with countries in the West and placed emphasis on the fact that the country was and always had been part of Europe. Russia did not, however, gain entry at the time (or even receive a serious offer of entry) into the West-based European institutions, and before long the former imperial state began re-constructing economic and military structures with some of the former states of the Soviet Union.

“Oh, East is East, and West is West, and never the twain shall meet” – words written by Kipling in 1892 - could have been written in the 21st century, as today’s world order remains predominantly split in two halves that do not seem to be able to meet. Cultural differences might be the most significant cause of this separation rather than any measurable geographic distance. With new technologies and fast moving globalization, one might have assumed that cultural gaps would have disappeared and growing multicultural societies would lead to greater understanding between different civilizations. This is, however, easier said than done. Indeed, relations between former antagonists of the Cold War still seem to be tainted by constraint, tension and turbulence. Even though at times there have been clear openings for closer ties to be established, something has always come in the way of all actors meeting on common ground in order to construct a robust institutional relationship between equals. It is now more than twenty years after the end of the Cold War and the world is still accustomed to a planet split in halves,¹ making a divided world the rule rather than a deviation. Is it subjective mistrust and misjudgement that have conditioned and kept these divisions alive; or are deep-rooted obstacles impeding closer relationships between, notably, the eastern and the western parts of the world? The writings of Kipling suggest that the West and the East will never meet and today the suggestion still seems to hold true. What can explain such a division, and whether it is doomed to remain for the foreseeable future, are questions that this thesis will in part try to answer.

What follows is a description of two contemporary international organizations, specifically the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO)² and NATO. The thesis discusses the possibility of constructing a multilateral relationship between the two entities. For years now the idea for such a partnership has been on the table, but as yet it has not been put into action. Since the events of September 11 2001, Russia has been pushing for a closer partnership of equals with NATO, and pressing especially for building collaboration through

¹ Even though this thesis concentrates on the North-Western and Eastern parts of the world, it is to be kept in mind that many would argue that the world order is today multipolar with three or four divisions, with the rise of China and India, or ‘the South’ in general. The global center of economic and political gravity has slowly been shifting away from the North Atlantic region toward Asia and the Pacific; boosted with a growing desire of change in the global world order.

² Consisting of Russia, Belarus, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

its own regional military organization, CSTO. It has for a long time seemed logical for Russian representatives to gather all forces possible and to build a formalized mechanism between organizations in order to tackle new threats and security challenges, essentially emanating from Afghanistan.

This thesis will explore the motivations behind the CSTO wanting to cooperate with NATO and why the latter has been reluctant about the idea. The wide range of potential explanations and interpretations will be structured by applying three main theories of International Relations (IR), which are first presented in the theoretical chapter. It will be argued that relations between NATO and member states of the CSTO cannot be fully described and explained with the main IR theories of realism and liberalism. Social constructivism, a theory new to the field and still in the shaping, will therefore also be used to add some insight into these relationships. The three theories will be used first to analyse the motivation for each organization's existence (and in NATO's case, its longevity), and to explore the strengths and weaknesses of each. Then the same analytical structure will be applied to understanding the apparent disparity between the NATO view and the CSTO view of their mutual relations.

Purpose and research questions

Much research has been done on the relationship of NATO with specific states, such as Russia, which is the leading nation within the CSTO.³ There is, however, a gap in social science literature on the possible interaction between the organizations of NATO and the CSTO. My attention was first drawn to the subject during the Spring of 2010, when I was writing an essay about Russia and NATO relations since the end of the Cold War. Since then, I have been searching for reasons why a proposition by the CSTO to cooperate directly through its institutional framework with NATO has been rejected until now. The reasons do not seem to be clear-cut or even wholly justified and therefore I intend to find what has stood in the way of cooperation taking place. One of the main purposes for writing about the CSTO is therefore to shed new light on the organization and

³ e.g. Trenin, D., *Russia Redefines Itself and Its Relations with the West*, *Washington Quarterly*, 30(2), (2007), p. 95-105; s.a., *Where US and Russian Interests Overlap*, *Current History*, 107(709), (2008), p. 219-224; s.a., *Nato and Russia: Partnership or Peril?*, *Current History*, 108, (2009).

explore the reasons behind NATO's declining to collaborate multilaterally with the CSTO.

The purpose of my thesis can be summed up as follows and will be further defined as the sub-questions of the main research question are elaborated:

- To examine the roles of NATO and the CSTO since their institutionalization up until today and discuss their strengths and weaknesses.
- To question whether there is objective ground for developing cooperation between the two. Namely to examine what lies behind CSTO's wishes to cooperate multilaterally with NATO and to understand the latter's reluctance to establish such ties with the CSTO.

The research question for this thesis is thus the following:

Why has a framework of cooperation between NATO and CSTO not been established, and is such cooperation possible at all?

This research question implies several sub-questions that will be developed throughout the thesis:

What are the current roles of these organizations?

What is the role of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization? How has its role been defined since the end of the Cold War? Is it a meaningful institution in the 21st century, or an outdated body trying to find a new role since the end of the Cold War?

What is the role of the Collective Security Treaty Organization? How has it developed since its inception and what is its purpose? Is it a meaningful institution which works as a collectivity taking all member states' interests into account, or is it only a "paper organization" which Russia uses as a tool to pursue its own interests?

What are the reasons for cooperation?

Which actors want NATO and CSTO to cooperate? To what extent are their motives based on a realist quest for specific security advantages; or on a commitment to institutional methods of problem-solving; or on a subjective sense of community within the CSTO or with NATO or both? How plausible are the

alleged reasons in practical terms, especially when measured against what is known of the potential outcomes of cooperation?

What have been the obstacles to cooperation?

Do justified reasons exist for this non-cooperation? If so, what are they? Do they include realist calculations based on the nature, and experience, of past and present bilateral relations between Russia and/or other post-Soviet Union states and NATO since the end of the Cold War? And/or on the nature of relations between Russia and other post-Soviet Union states; or relations among the states of Central Asia who are members of the CSTO? Or are reasons to be found in a divergence of specific interests and/or difference in values – between or within the organizations; together with practical differences of institutional structure, governance and achievement? Can it be that parties involved are tainted by old subjective thinking about identities and communities persisting from the Cold War? Is it therefore possible that contemporary interactions in the arena of international relations between the parties concerned are characterized by misunderstandings or misjudgements?

Methodological framework

Qualitative research methods

In this thesis a qualitative research method will be used as it provides an efficient method of analysis. Qualitative research can be defined as “a research strategy that usually emphasizes words rather than quantification in the collection and analysis of data. As a research strategy, it is inductivist, constructionist, and interpretivist”.⁴ (Bryman, 2001, p. 264). The study will therefore focus primarily on understanding the chosen topic through collected data, and will use empirical theories of international relations studies in order to achieve a clear explanation of the current situation, to cast light on why a framework of cooperation between NATO and the CSTO has not been established, and to predict whether it would be beneficial for such a framework to be set in place.

⁴ Alan Bryman, *Social Research Methods*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2001, p. 264.

Gathering resources

There is a striking lack of published studies on the Collective Security Treaty Organization, or as the specialist Tevan Poghosyan correctly pointed out in early July 2011:

On the issue of the CSTO there are almost no available special substantial analytical developments or serious study works. [...] Indicative for example is that the CSTO plot is absent in the subject of the leading Think tanks of key states.⁵

Sources focusing directly on the organization per se as well as sources comparing CSTO with NATO are very few, as are sources that explore the feasibility of the two organizations working together. There are, however, some research institutes and publications that have focused on the organization in the last years and produced materials available to the public, such as the Central Asia-Caucasus Institute Analyst, the Central European Journal of International and Security Studies, the East West Review, the Norwegian Defence Research Establishment (FFI), the Russian Analytical Digest, the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) and the Valdai International Discussion Club, - to name a few. This thesis is based on numerous documents including official materials from the websites of the organizations and states under study, historical records, relevant publications in books and scientific journals, as well as materials from conferences. Media coverage was also an important source as the subject of this thesis relates to contemporary events.

Point of view

My thesis will cover both the views of the CSTO and NATO on the subject of possible collaboration. In this regard, I will focus on trying to find the real motives of the CSTO in wanting to establish multilateral ties with NATO. I will then explore the reasons for NATO's negativity on the subject. In this manner, it is hoped to obtain a viewpoint of both sides in order to establish some conclusions as to whether cooperation would be possible and if so, to what extent would it be beneficial.

⁵ Tevan Poghosyan, The CSTO is in search within strategic directions, *European dialogue*, July 4, 2011 <http://eurodialogue.org/The-CSTO-is-in-Search-within-Strategic-Directions>, accessed July 8, 2011.

Limitations

The focus of the thesis will essentially be on these two organizations and their interaction with each other. In order to avoid vagueness and the risk of becoming too broad, each historical event will be looked at in connection with the topic and may sometimes be only briefly alluded to in terms of its possible contribution to today's situation.

One of the main limitations is my inability to understand Russian. Finding relevant documents and analysis from CSTO member countries in either English or French has also proven difficult, but some have been either written or translated from Russian into the above languages. The overall objective was to avoid biased reasoning or one-sided understanding of the topic and a conscious effort was therefore made to critically analyze different documents considering the lack of balanced sources.

Structure of the thesis

The thesis is split into five different parts. Part I covers IR theories that will be applied when analyzing the chosen subject. Part II and III describe respectively the roles of NATO and the CSTO with their strengths and weaknesses, and part IV sets out the reasons why CSTO wants cooperation and why NATO has declined it up until now.

I. Theoretical approach

The discipline of international relations is young. Teaching in the field only began at the beginning of the twentieth century and most renowned schools in the field were for a long time situated either in the US or the United Kingdom.⁶ Thus, theories in international relations are still in the shaping, but more importantly, the grand majority of them have been established by western analysts. Knowing that, a special effort will be made in this thesis to research and analyse sources emanating from other parts of the world in order to avoid biased conceptions and to form a balanced analysis on the subject.

Theories are an important tool in IR analysis as they set a clear framework for developing arguments and judgements on actual phenomena. Up until today, theorists within the IR school have not, however, been able to construct a homogeneous theory that is able to explain everything about the actions and reactions of different world actors. Instead, various theories have seen the light of day; each has a different analytical approach towards a situation and, thus, different interpretations can be made on the same subject. International affairs are just too multifaceted and complex for practitioners to be able to adopt a one-dimensional methodological and theoretical approach. This thesis, therefore, builds on several theories that have been established within the study of International Relations. The theories of realism, neoliberal institutionalism and social constructivism will be used to seek explanations as to how the CSTO and NATO behave in the international arena and towards each other. The set theories will hopefully give some clarification on the organizations' actions and make possible some predictions on whether a framework of cooperation between the two would have positive effects.

⁶ Hedley Bull, "The Theory of International Politics, 1919-1969 (1972)*," in James Der Derian (ed.) *International Theory: Critical Investigations* (p. 181-211), (New York: New York University Press, 1995), p. 208; Martin Hollis & Steve Smith, *Explaining and Understanding International Relations*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), p. 18.

1.1. Realism

A realist view of the international system is rather pessimistic.⁷ Realism describes the world as being an arena where states are self-interested; trying at all costs to take advantage of others.⁸ States are power-seeking, they compete for security, and the possibility of war breaking out is always in the background.⁹ Thus, the chance that states will ever fully trust each other are rather slim and according to realists, “[g]enuine peace, or a world where states do not compete for power, is not likely”.¹⁰

Mearsheimer, a contemporary neorealist, states that the theory of realism is mainly built on five assumptions about the international system. The first is that states act as independent units that have no central authority above them and thus the international system is ruled by anarchy. The second assumption is that states are capable of offensive military interventions, a reality which keeps other states on guard. The third assumption realists make is that states can never be sure about the intentions of other states. Intentions of states are also never immutable and can quickly change which can lead to even more uncertainty. The fourth assumption is that states are driven by a basic motive which is survival, and sovereignty is what states seek to maintain at all cost. The fifth and last assumption is that states think strategically and are therefore rational.¹¹ Realism emphasizes the role of states which it views as being the primordial actors within international relations.¹² The realist school has, however, not been able to prove that its theories cannot be used on actors other than states.¹³ As realism also focuses on military power, it is only logical to use realist theories when two military organizations are being analyzed.

⁷ For further readings on the theory of realism, consider the two most influential western realist theorists of the 20th century: Hans J. Morgenthau and Kenneth N. Waltz. See Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*, 5th ed., (New York: Knopf, 1973); and Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, (New York: Random House, 1979).

⁸ John T. Mearsheimer, The False Promise of International Institutions, *International Security*, 19(3), (Winter, 1994-1995), p. 9.

⁹ *ibid.*

¹⁰ *ibid.*

¹¹ John T. Mearsheimer, p. 10.

¹² Tim Dunne & Brian C. Schmidt, “Realism,” in John Baylis & Steve Smith (ed.) *The Globalization of World Politics: An Introduction to international relations*, 3rd edition (p. 161-183), (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), p. 164.

¹³ Douglas Lemke, Power Politics and Wars without States, *American Journal of Political Science*, 52(4), (October 2008), p. 774.

Furthermore, Shakleyina and Bogaturov state that realism has been a leading theoretical approach adopted in Russia as it has helped the intellectual and political community in defining the country's interests and priorities in international relations, and provided a necessary analysis of the world order's structure and polarity.¹⁴ The Russian leadership has, since the end of the Cold War, been trying to develop an adequate strategy to adopt in foreign affairs. Many within Russia's political elite put an emphasis on world order and power centres, and have been advocating for the return of a multipolar world within which Russia would have a valuable status.¹⁵ The majority of Russian realists, unlike American realists view today's unipolarity of the world system as "problematic and harmful".¹⁶ Political scientist Yakovlev wrote about the establishment of a new bipolar world order but with a more complex polarity than in the previous system.¹⁷ According to him, only one pole – the West – is relatively stable and united whereas the rest of the world remains rather unstable:

It consists of autonomous units that lack a clear, well-articulated understanding of their goals and priorities [...] [I]t is this lack of understanding that explains why some of these units, such as Russia, China and India, do not cooperate enough with each other, despite the obvious possibility of gaining greater global influence through cooperation.¹⁸

The common position and the unity of the US and other western countries have therefore made it possible for the West "to impose itself on others and to get away with its promotion of western democratic and liberal ideals, even by means of military intervention".¹⁹ Yakovlev therefore draws the conclusion that there are two future scenarios possible: "either the West will use its power potential to rule the world unilaterally, or the non-western "periphery" will manage to unite and act cohesively in order to make itself heard".²⁰

¹⁴ Tatyana A. Shakleyina & Aleksei D. Bogaturov, The Russian Realist school of international relations, *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, 37(1), (2004), p. 37.

¹⁵ Shakleyina, T.A. & Bogaturov, A.D., *op.cit.*, p. 38.

¹⁶ *ibid.*

¹⁷ Quoted in Shakleyina, T.A. & Bogaturov, A.D., *op.cit.*, p. 46. See work of Yakovlev, A.G., I vse zhe na gorizonte dvukhpolusny mir. *Problemy Dal'nego Vostoka*, 4 (2000).

¹⁸ *ibid.*

¹⁹ *ibid.*

²⁰ *ibid.*

1.1.1. Cooperation and Institutions in a Realist World

Unlike liberals, who declare that international agreements and cooperation can be achieved through mutual work within institutions, realists point to divergences of interests among major players within world politics. Realism therefore seeks explanations for constructing institutions through the ideas of self-benefit and profit maximization, looking at the interaction of states and cooperation as a zero-sum game where someone gains and another loses, rather than absolute gains where everyone wins. Although states live in a competitive world, they do in some cases seek cooperation. The neorealist branch within the realist school, also known as structural realism, declares that powerful states essentially seek cooperation when faced with a common threat.²¹ Cooperation among states has its limits, however, because the logic of security competition always dominates and no amount of cooperation seems to be able to eliminate it.²² Two factors, according to John T. Mearsheimer, inhibit cooperation: the problem of enforcement (or the fear of cheating), and the pursuit of relative gains (or zero-sum thinking).²³ This desire to gain relatively more than others makes it therefore more appealing for states to cheat if it results in immediate gains.

Adding to this, as the international arena is anarchic there is no authority above states and breaking the rules is hardly punishable. States are therefore likely to cheat when it serves their interests, and they get away with it as there is no authority that can monitor them when they do so. This lack of international authority pushes states to live in a 'self-help' system within which everyone needs to look out for themselves.²⁴ Self-help is generally understood to mean that states will adopt unilateral competitive policies to protect their own interests.²⁵ States are also pushed to rely on themselves because it is not believed other states are altruistic, i.e. that others would risk their own security to guarantee others' survival. If states were benign by nature, all could count on some other state to come rescue them in times of need, not having to worry about their own survival.

²¹ John T. Mearsheimer, "Anarchy and the struggle for power," in Karen A. Mingst & Jack L. Snyder (ed.) *Essential Readings in World Politics* (p. 60-79), (New York & London: W.W. Norton & Company, 2005 [2001]), p. 73.

²² John T. Mearsheimer, (Winter, 1994-1995), *op.cit.*, p. 9.

²³ Joseph Grieco, Robert Powell & Duncan Snidal, The Relative-Gains Problem for International Cooperation, *The American Political Science Review*, 87(3), (September 1993), p. 729.

²⁴ On more detailed definition of 'self-help', see Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, (New York: Random House, 1979), pp. 105-107, 111-112.

²⁵ Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, *op.cit.*, p. 111.

Such a policy is however too naïve according to realists, because states can never be sure of other states' intentions and should therefore avoid depending on anyone else. This works against cooperation and makes states wary of entering into agreements with others. When states do enter into agreements (in cases of wanting to increase their ability to defend themselves for example), they always fear the possibility of others cheating.

Whereas states are the primordial actors within the international system, institutions are regarded by realists as tools of the powerful to pursue their interests and maximize their power. Thus, for realists, institutions only serve the promotion of interests of particular states. They are means for actors to obtain what they are reaching for. In that sense institutions can be useful, but they do not become "autonomous in the sense of being more than a tool of statecraft".²⁶ Therefore, in a realist view, international institutions serve national rather than international interests.²⁷ Realists do admit that alliances have advantages for states, as members get to rely on their allies' resources and joining efforts of several states is more powerful and effective than actions of only one state. But these same alliances also bring risks as members that are committed to defend an ally might be drawn into wars that they would otherwise avoid.

For Russia, "the principle of national sovereignty remains a priority [...] [it does] not want to become an object of "humanitarian intervention" led by NATO or anybody else. Russia is not ready to play the role of a junior partner and follow in the lockstep of the US"²⁸. Russia is the dominant leader within the CSTO as it is the strongest military power amongst the member states taking part in the organization. The Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) is therefore commonly viewed as the tool of Russia for promoting its interests, and it functions primarily because of Russia's wish and ability to maintain a cooperative military framework under its own leadership and control. Its role in contributing armaments to other member states is well known and some have seen it as one of the main reasons why these states have agreed to develop a multilateral relationship with Russia.

²⁶ Robert Jervis, Realism, Neoliberalism and Cooperation: Understanding the Debate, *International Security*, 24(1), (Summer 1999), p. 43.

²⁷ Kenneth N. Waltz, Structural Realism after the Cold War, *International Security*, 25(1), (Summer 2000), p. 21.

²⁸ Shakleyina, T.A. & Bogaturov, A.D., *op.cit.*, p. 49.

1.2. Neoliberal Institutionalism

Neoliberal institutionalists emphasize the function of institutions which are commonly defined as “enduring patterns of shared expectations of behavior that have received some degree of formal assent”.²⁹ In the simplest definition, institutions are rules and as such, they can shape political behavior. Some institutions are formal and institutionalized by law, while others are informal such as cultural norms, but there could be no organized politics without institutions.³⁰ In this sense, politics are structured by institutions because they define who is able to participate in the particular political arena, shape concerned actors and political strategies, and furthermore, influence what these actors believe to be both desirable and possible.³¹ Robert Keohane, the scholar most closely identified with neoliberal institutionalism, describes institutions as “persistent and connected sets of rules (formal or informal) that prescribe behavioral roles, constrain activity, and shape expectations”³². Institutionalists therefore see institutions as structures providing incentives and constraints for actors to battle over interests, ideas and power.³³

Unlike other theories within the liberal approach of IR, neoliberal institutionalism claims that the role of states is crucial. They design institutions in order to advance their joint interests which are already defined outside the institutional context.³⁴ Institutions are therefore created and survive essentially because they first and foremost serve to maximize the defined interests of their members.³⁵ This is almost the same view shared by neorealists and it is therefore not surprising to find that the theories have been called ‘step-siblings’. Keohane for example argues that

Institutionalism accepts the assumptions of realism about state motivation and lack of common enforcement power in world politics, but argues that

²⁹ Robert Jervis, *op.cit.*, p. 53.

³⁰ Sven Steinmo, “The New Institutionalism”, in Paul Barry Clark and Joe Foweraker (eds.) *The Encyclopedia of Democratic Thought*, (London: Routledge, 2001).

³¹ *ibid.*

³² Robert O. Keohane, International Institutions: Two Approaches, *International Studies Quarterly*, 32(4), (1988), p. 383.

³³ Sven Steinmo, *op. cit.*

³⁴ Cornelia Navari, “Liberalism”, in Paul D. Williams (ed.) *Security Studies: An Introduction*, (London & New York: Routledge, 2008), p. 40.

³⁵ *ibid.*

where common interests exist, realism is too pessimistic about the prospects for cooperation and the role of institutions.³⁶

Neoliberalist theory thus differs from the neorealist one insofar as it argues that states cooperate in order to maximize absolute gains; they work towards common goals when they share similar interests. Neoliberals also declare that institutions may become so beneficial to the member states - even if and when they have lost their original purpose - that states prefer to remain members of already established institutions, instead of constructing or entering new ones.³⁷

1.2.1. Cooperation and Institutions in a Neoliberal Institutional World

The structure of world politics is characterized by anarchy, but neoliberal institutionalists claim that institutions can alter the character of the international environment when the thinking and behaviour of states are influenced by their membership of an institution. Robert Axelrod, who has played a leading role in theorizing neoliberal institutionalism, posed the question in 1984 of “under what conditions will cooperation emerge in a world of egoists without central authority?”³⁸ In his influential work *The Evolution of Cooperation*, Axelrod tried to answer this question and argued that when actors traded good for good, or *tit for tat*, it initiated a potential for cooperative behavior.³⁹ When such practice was repeated, egoistic actors would start to trust each other, above all when their interests were met.⁴⁰ Axelrod also defined the ‘shadow of the future’; declaring that once cooperation is institutionalized, states hesitate to abandon it, fearing the uncertainty of what would lay ahead.⁴¹

Another line of reasoning behind neoliberal institutionalism is that states decide to cooperate through institutions in order to lower transaction costs, facilitate information sharing and improve member states’ security. When the

³⁶ Robert Keohane, “Institutionalist Theory and the Realist Challenge After the Cold War”, in Baldwin, *Neorealism and Neoinstitutionalism*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1993, p. 277.

³⁷ Robert B. McCalla, NATO’s Persistence after the Cold War, *International Organization*, 50(3), (1996), p. 462.

³⁸ In his central contribution to the theory, *The Evolution of Cooperation*, New York: Basic Books, 1984. His work is cited in Cornelia Navari, “Liberalism”, in Paul D. Williams (ed.) *Security Studies: An Introduction*, London, (New York: Routledge, 2008), p. 39.

³⁹ *ibid.*

⁴⁰ *ibid.*

⁴¹ *ibid.*

CSTO's and NATO's working methods are looked at, one can already put a question mark over their decision-making efficiency as both rely on consensus between member states. This can prove to be difficult and time-consuming, which leads to higher transaction costs and even diminution of the organizations' credibility if decisions on action are blocked by some member states.

Overall, therefore, neoliberals place high trust in institutions and see them as drivers of "changing states' motives from self-interest to altruism, instilling confidence in benign shifts in motives, or eliminating anarchy by granting tremendous control to an international authority".⁴² Neoliberal institutionalism claims that "multilateral institutions are crucial to managing the complex world that states now confront. Issues ranging from the environment to international terrorism demand multilateral cooperation"⁴³. Thus, many neoliberal institutionalists claim that international agents should promote institutionalization in order to strengthen the collective interest in global stability. Such a claim gives a logical explanation to the CSTO's wishes for closer cooperation with other international organizations, such as NATO. An explanation for the latter's reluctance about establishing such ties is to be found elsewhere, however.

1.3. Social Constructivism

Social constructivism is another theoretical perspective that provides some interesting analyses in the field of international relations. It is not a fully fledged IR theory, or as Ruggie points out, it can be seen more as a philosophically and theoretically informed perspective on and approach to the empirical study of international relations.⁴⁴ Social constructivism builds on key concepts such as identity, culture and norms. It has three basic ontological positions as posited by Christine Agius: First, normative and ideational structures are given great importance, more than material ones, and thus ideas are of central importance. Second, identities matter as they give us interests. An actor cannot act without an identity and identity can explain the action of the actor. Identity is therefore fundamental to constructivists as the basis of interests; it is not given, but

⁴² Charles L. Glaser, Realists as Optimists: Cooperation as Self-Help, *International Security*, 19(3), (Winter 1994-1995), p. 84.

⁴³ Sean Kay, "Neoliberalism: Institutions at War", in Jennifer Sterling-Folker (ed) *Making Sense of International Relations Theory*, (Boulder, London: Lynne Rienner, 2006), p. 74.

⁴⁴ John Gerard Ruggie, What Makes the World Hang Together? "Neo-utilitarianism and the Social Constructivist Challenge", *International Organization*, 52(4), (Autumn 1998), p. 856.

constituted through action. Third, agents and structures are mutually constituted. This is to say that states, as actors, affect the world, but are at the same time affected by the world. International politics are therefore not independent from us, they exist in a world that we affect and this is why different understandings of security may be possible.⁴⁵

Key analysts within this school are Alexander Wendt and Iver Neumann.⁴⁶ Wendt's central argument is that identities are not given but constructed and they endure or are transformed through interaction between different actors.⁴⁷ Or as he stated in 1992, "a world in which identities and interests are learned and sustained by intersubjectively grounded practice, by what states think and do, is one in which "anarchy is what states make of it"⁴⁸. Thus, even though the international structure is characterized by anarchy, social constructivists argue that the world system is still governed by rules which are produced and maintained by human practices.⁴⁹ These rules, "and not some unchangeable truths deduced from human nature or from international anarchy, give meaning to international practices"⁵⁰. Social constructivists therefore insist on the interdependency between social structures and agents. They refute individualism and claim that human agents' existence depends on the social environment and the "collectively shared systems of meanings ("culture" in a broad sense)".⁵¹ At the same time, these human agents can affect their environment by creating, reproducing and changing culture through daily practices.⁵² As Karin Fierke points out, "to construct something is an act which brings into being a subject or object that otherwise would not

⁴⁵ Christine Agius, "Social Constructivism", in Alan, Collins (ed.), *Contemporary Security Studies*, 2nd edition, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), p. 50-51.

⁴⁶ Alexander Wendt, Collective Identity Formation and the International State, *The American Political Science Review*, 88, (1994), p. 384-96; Neumann, I.B., Self and Other in International Relations, *European Journal of International Relations*, 2, (1996), p. 139-74; Neumann, I.B., *Uses of the Other: 'The East' in European Identity Formation*, (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1999).

⁴⁷ Alexander Wendt, "Identity and Structural Change in International Politics", in Yosef Lapid and Friedrich Kratochwil (eds.) *The Return of Culture and Identity in IR Theory* (47-64), (Boulder and London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1996), p. 48.

⁴⁸ Alexander Wendt, Levels of Analysis vs. Agents and Structures: Part III, *Review of International Studies*, 18(2), 1992, p. 183.

⁴⁹ Stefano Guzzini, A Reconstruction of Constructivism in International Relations, *European Journal of International Relations*, 6(2), 2000, p. 155.

⁵⁰ *ibid.*

⁵¹ Thomas Risse, "Let's Argue!": Communicative Action in World Politics, *International Organization*, 54(1), Winter 2000, p. 5.

⁵² *ibid.*

exist”⁵³. Or in other words, the social context gives meaning to material structures which are only defined by the interpretation of individuals. This is central to social constructivism.

Another key concept within social constructivism is the idea of norms which are vital to identity formation. Such norms can be defined as “collective expectations about proper behaviour for a given identity”⁵⁴. Their effects therefore penetrate into actors’ identities and interests instead of only regulating their behavior and as a result, norms are no longer a superstructure on a material base; rather, they help to create and define that base.⁵⁵ Actors frequently adhere to norms that have thoroughly been integrated in their attitudes and beliefs, leading them to be “taken for granted”.⁵⁶ Checkel also points out that there is a model of human and state behaviour where rule-governed action and logics of appropriateness prevail in many constructivist accounts. Under such logics, which are not about ends and means and involve reasoning by analogy and metaphor, actors will wonder about the situation they find themselves in and how to react to it, with norms helping them to find an answer. Therefore, norms constitute states or agents and provide them with understandings of their interests.⁵⁷

Neumann emphasises the ‘uses of the other’, which are representations individuals make of others, often stereotypical, in order to develop their own identity.⁵⁸ As Neumann puts it:

The use of ‘the East’ as the other is a general practice in European identity formation. ‘The East’ is indeed Europe’s other, and it is continuously being recycled in order to represent European identities. Since the ‘Eastern absence’ is a defining trait of ‘European’ identities, there is no use talking about the end of an East/West divide in European history after the end of the Cold War. The question is not *whether* the East will be used in the forging of new European identities but *how* this is being done.⁵⁹

⁵³ Karin Fierke, *Critical Approaches to International Security*, (Oxford: Polity Press, 2007), p. 56.

⁵⁴ Jepperson, R., Wendt, A. & Katzenstein, P.J., "Norms, Identity, and Culture in National Security", in Peter J. Katzenstein (ed.) *The Culture of National Security*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), p. 54.

⁵⁵ Jeffrey T. Checkel, The Constructivist Turn in International Relations Theory, *World Politics*, 50(2), (January 1998), p. 328.

⁵⁶ Thomas Risse, *op.cit.*, p. 6.

⁵⁷ Jeffrey T. Checkel, *op.cit.*, p. 326.

⁵⁸ Iver B. Neumann, *op.cit.*, (1999), p. 77.

⁵⁹ Iver B. Neumann, *op.cit.*, (1999), p. 207.

Furthermore, it is relatively easy to see that the willingness of states to engage in collective security practices hinges on where states fall on the spectrum from positive to negative identification with other states.⁶⁰ What is crucial in this context is that conceptions of self and other, and consequently security interests, develop only in interaction.⁶¹

1.3.1. Cooperation and Institutions in a Social Constructivist World

Social constructivism has not paid much attention to security issues, but the main shared assumption between constructivists about security is that it is a social construction.⁶² What social constructivism adds to the analysis of the CSTO and NATO interactions is the vision of how culture and identities are shaped and viewed by different actors. In this regard, it will be interesting to find out whether NATO's disinclination for multilateral cooperation with the CSTO is explained by concrete, 'realist', security-related motives, or whether it rests on socially/culturally constructed Western assumptions about the CSTO's nature and values, which may or may not be objectively justified. Here it will be interesting to investigate through the lens of social constructivism how Russia's foreign policy is viewed by the West, and to highlight some western analyses that regularly present it "as puzzling, unpredictable and divergent from the western norm"⁶³. Conversely, social constructivism may be used to get a more thorough understanding of Russia's vision of NATO's change of role after the end of the Cold War and its enlargement that ensued.

NATO as an organization has a long history of cooperation and interaction of states which are like-minded with shared values. Anne Clunan points out that

states form their security identity through a process of reiterated interaction with other states [...] a long process of friendly interaction may lead states to not only identify each other as allies and friends, but to view their security

⁶⁰ Maja Zehfuss, "Constructivism and Identity: A Dangerous Liason", *European Journal of International Relations*, 7, (2001), p. 318.

⁶¹ Alexander Wendt, Anarchy is What States Make of It: The Social Construction of Power Politics, *International Organization*, 46(2), 1992, p. 401.

⁶² Matt McDonald, "Social Constructivism", in Paul D. Williams (ed.) *Security Studies: An Introduction* (59-72), (London, New York: Routledge, 2008), p. 61.

⁶³ Brown, J.D.J., A Stereotype, Wrapped in a Cliché, Inside a Caricature: Russian Foreign Policy and *Orientalism*, *Politics*, 30(3), 2010, p. 154.

interests as intertwined and consequently to identify with each other as belonging to the same community.⁶⁴

From a social constructivist perspective, we can thus hypothesize two obvious problems of identity which may hinder cooperation between the CSTO and NATO: firstly that European and NATO identity is in part constructed by viewing Russia and its partners in the CSTO as ‘the others’ and *vice versa*; and secondly that the process of interaction between these particular entities has been relatively short and has not of yet been able to lead to friendly identification or the intertwining of security interests.

⁶⁴ Anne L. Clunan, “Constructing Concepts of Identity: Prospects and Pitfalls of a Sociological Approach to World Politics”, in Rudra Sil & Eileen M. Doherty (eds.) *Beyond Boundaries?: Disciplines, Paradigms, and Theoretical Integration in International Studies*, NY: State University of New York Press, (2000). p. 90.

II. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)

2.1. Brief historical background

World War II ended thanks to the joint interventions of the armed forces of both the US and the USSR in Europe. The collaboration between the two powers, however, did not continue on similar terms once Germany was defeated. The US and several western European states began to feel threatened by Stalin's strategy for expanding the Soviet Union's control notably over Central and Eastern Europe. The Soviet intelligence had also been spying on the US in order to collect several reports about "the Manhattan Project" which was a US-UK collaborative project to construct the first atomic bomb launched in 1939.⁶⁵ In fact, the Soviet Union had already been working on its own nuclear arms program since 1943 and by the end of 1946 both the United States and the Soviet Union had developed and tested their atomic bombs.⁶⁶ It was soon clear after the World War II that a nuclear arms race between the two states was starting as neither wanted to get rid of its atomic weapons programs and both continued to secretly build up their nuclear arsenal.

Fearing the onset of another war and a more dangerous one this time, the foreign ministers of twelve North American and European countries decided to build a system of collective defence leading to the signing of the founding documents of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in Washington in

⁶⁵ The work remained highly secret as it was feared Germany already was working on a similar project and if it would be first to develop such powerful weapon, it would have its tool to destroy its enemies and consequently dominate the world.

⁶⁶ Olav Njølstad, *The Development and Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons*, *Nobelprize.org*, http://www.nobelprize.org/educational/peace/nuclear_weapons/readmore.html, accessed 31 August 2011.

April 1949.⁶⁷ The original treaty on which the alliance relies stipulates that its Member States:

[A]re determined to safeguard the freedom, common heritage and civilisation of their peoples, founded on the principles of democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law. They seek to promote stability and well-being in the North Atlantic area.⁶⁸

Stalin did not remain passive in the face of these initiatives by the Western allies. In response to the creation of NATO and later integration of the Federal Republic of Germany into the organization (in 1954), the Soviet Union in 1955 orchestrated the signature of the Warsaw Pact with seven other communist states leading to the creation of a mutual-defence organization which was to act as a counterpart to NATO.⁶⁹ This meant that during the Cold War, Europe was divided by these two blocs; one led by the United States proclaiming its support for democracy and the other led by the Soviet Union praising communism. Germany was literally split up in the middle with the western part being allied with NATO while the eastern side allied with the Warsaw Pact.

2.1.1. The End of the Cold War and Transformation of NATO's Role

In the late 1980s the Cold War was coming to an end, most clearly marked by the symbolic fall of the Berlin wall in 1989. Soon after, the former East Germany withdrew from the Warsaw Pact. With the gradual dissolution of the Soviet Union from 1985 to 1991 followed by the secession of member states from the Warsaw Treaty Organization, the Cold War geopolitical architecture that had lasted over four decades had finally collapsed.⁷⁰ The threat which NATO had originally been founded to oppose had disappeared. NATO did not vanish, however, as some had expected, but its role was going to change significantly in the following years.

⁶⁷ 60 years of NATO: 1949 – 1989, *Deutsche Welle*, April 3, 2009, <http://www.dw-world.de/dw/article/0,,4144009,00.html>, accessed May 8, 2010.

⁶⁸ The North Atlantic Treaty, April 4, 1949, n.p., http://www.nato.int/nato-welcome/pdf/nato_treaty_en_light.pdf, accessed May 8, 2010.

⁶⁹ “Warsaw Pact”, in *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 2010. Accessed May 13, 2010. Available from: Encyclopædia Britannica Online: <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/636142/Warsaw-Pact>

⁷⁰ Otto Pick, The Demise of the Warsaw Pact, *Nato Review* [Web Edition], 2, n.p., April 1991, <http://www.deutsche-aussenpolitik.de/resources/seminars/gb/euracowa/document/9102-3.html>, accessed May 8, 2010.

NATO needed to redefine its purpose and began to adapt itself to a changed post-Cold War security environment.

The alliance was used soon after the end of the Cold War as a political club, celebrating and consolidating the democratization of the European Continent.⁷¹ Media and diplomatic messages were crafted to promote the message of the changing role of NATO, while themes emphasizing realism and balance of power, the hallmarks of the Cold War, were avoided.⁷² In their place, ideas of liberalism and cooperation with “partners for peace” were promoted.⁷³ Many former states of the Soviet Union wanted to liberate themselves from their former ties with Russia and join the free Europe. The idea of expanding NATO was therefore soon brought to the table. Russia that was amongst the enthusiastic after the end of the Cold War was never keen on NATO’s expansion initiative as it was seen as undermining Russia’s own security.

Major crises were also to break out in the 1990s that revealed the necessity of maintaining the transatlantic partnership. The breakup of Yugoslavia coupled with the resulting ethnic wars demonstrated the need for NATO to take the lead in stabilizing the situation, as the European Union was not built to deal with hard security issues and the United Nations had failed to independently solve the crisis.⁷⁴ NATO, therefore, took upon itself to bring order to the Balkans which led to military actions in Bosnia in 1995 and in Kosovo in 1999.⁷⁵ Russia was opposed to both of these interventions and in the case of Kosovo the UN Security Council had not sanctioned the NATO intervention which enraged Russian authorities.⁷⁶ Thus, the relationship between Russia and NATO came under significant strain quite quickly.

⁷¹ Betts, R.K., The Three Faces of NATO, *The National Interest online*, n.p., October 2009, <http://www.nationalinterest.org/Article.aspx?id=20944>, accessed May 13, 2010.

⁷² Delatte, P.M., *The Transformation of the Transatlantic Alliance and the War On Terror*, Air War College, Air University, February 2008, p. 7.

⁷³ *ibid.*

⁷⁴ Brzezinski, Z., An Agenda for NATO, *Foreign Affairs*, 88, (September/October 2009), p. 9.

⁷⁵ Karns, M.P. & Mingst, K.A., “Regional Organizations”, in *International Organizations: The Politics and Processes of Global Governance*, Colorado & London: Lynne Rienner, 2004, p. 156.

⁷⁶ *ibid.*

2.2. NATO's Eastern Policy

During the Rome Summit in November 1991, NATO adopted a new Strategic Concept that outlined a “broad approach to security based on dialogue, cooperation and maintenance of collective defence capability”.⁷⁷ That same year, NATO created the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC) as an institution for political dialogue, consultation and cooperation on issues of common concern in an attempt to develop a new relationship with Central and Eastern European countries.⁷⁸ NACC focused on multilateral dialogue, but NATO wanted each country to be able to develop individual cooperative relations within the organization. This was seen as essential in supporting the Partnership for Peace program (PfP) which was created in 1994.⁷⁹ Then, in 1997, the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) was established to replace the NACC and this organization continues in existence to this day. While it was built on the achievements of its predecessor, it furthermore paved the way for the development of an enhanced and more operational partnership where countries could collectively as well as individually pursue a dialogue with NATO.⁸⁰ Russia actively took part in the process, but it was not seen as sufficient. Russia therefore continued to ask for more specific ties with NATO.

2.2.1. The Partnership for Peace

The Partnership for Peace (PfP) programme was established by NATO in 1994 by twenty-four countries from Eastern Europe and Central Asia which had formerly been under the sway of the Soviet Union.⁸¹ It took Russia a year to join as it was pessimistic about NATO's intentions. NATO with its then sixteen members was faced with new security issues and needed cooperation with other countries to be better equipped to handle them. The organization saw the Partnership for Peace as a prime way of assuring that such cooperation could go forward. With the PfP,

⁷⁷ NATO Handbook, [Web 50th Anniversary edition], Brussels: NATO Office of Information and Press, 1998, p. 27, <http://www.nato.int/docu/handbook/1998/index.htm>, accessed November 18, 2009.

⁷⁸ “The Transformation of the Alliance”, in *NATO Handbook* [Web Edition], Brussels: NATO Office of Information and Press, 2001, p. 40, <http://www.nato.int/docu/handbook/2001/pdf/handbook.pdf>, accessed November 18, 2009.

⁷⁹ *ibid.*

⁸⁰ “The Transformation of the Alliance”, in *NATO Handbook* [Web Edition], *op.cit.*, p. 41.

⁸¹ Karns, M.P. & Mingst, K.A., “Regional Organizations”, *op.cit.*, p. 156.

military cooperation was increased between the alliance and former Warsaw Pact members, without NATO having to commit to mutual defence in case these partners were attacked as that only applied to full member countries of NATO.⁸² Another idea behind the PfP was to grant states that wanted to join NATO an opportunity to prove themselves worthy of formal membership negotiations. Thus, participating states were to be groomed for future membership to the alliance.

Russia, however, stated that before joining the PfP that “it would regard full membership in the alliance by Eastern European countries as a threat to its own security”.⁸³ Russia also claimed that NATO had promised earlier in 1990 that it would not expand its Alliance.⁸⁴ NATO on its part never admitted to having made such a promise however. Russia claimed a “special status” within the PfP based on its geographical size relative to other participating states and because of its possession of nuclear arms.⁸⁵ NATO did not want to grant Russia a special treatment within the program as it would have been badly viewed by other partner countries, but was open to making a kind of side agreement.⁸⁶ It was not until May 1995, however, that first steps towards a special relationship between the two were taken when NATO made an attractive offer to Russia based on a bilateral contract to encourage it to join the PfP.⁸⁷

Initially, the relationship improved steadily and Russia’s cooperation with NATO during the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1996 was seen as effective. Russia’s contribution was the largest non-NATO contingent in these interventions, proving its de-facto supremacy over other members of the PfP.⁸⁸

⁸² William E. Schmidt, Russia Tells NATO It Is Ready to Join Peace Partnership, *The New York Times* [Web Edition], May 25, 1994, <http://www.nytimes.com/1994/05/25/world/russia-tells-nato-it-is-ready-to-join-peace-partnership.html>, accessed May 8, 2010.

⁸³ *ibid.*

⁸⁴ Dannreuter, R. Escaping the Enlargement Trap in NATO-Russian Relations, *Survival*, 41(4), Winter 1999-2000, p. 151.

⁸⁵ William E. Schmidt, *op.cit.*, n.p.

⁸⁶ William E. Schmidt, *op.cit.*, n.p.

⁸⁷ Zwack, P.B., A NATO-Russia Contingency Command, *Parameters*, Spring 2004, p. 95, <http://www.carlisle.army.mil/usawc/parameters/Articles/04spring/zwack.pdf>, accessed May 13, 2010.

⁸⁸ Hendrickson, G.B., *The Future of NATO-Russian Relations: Or, How to Dance with a Bear and Not Get Mauled*, Washington, D.C.: The Atlantic Council of the United States, 2005, p. 3,

2.2.2. The Founding Act and the Permanent Joint Council

At the Madrid Summit in July 1997, NATO invited the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland to begin accession talks with the alliance.⁸⁹ NATO leaders knew that this would be a very sensitive issue for Russia, especially as expansion talks were for the first time formally being held with former members of the Warsaw Pact; and Russia had already made it clear that it would view NATO's expansion towards its borders as a threat to its own national security. To soothe Russia's fears, NATO decided to develop a more structured framework of cooperation and therefore the Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security was proposed.⁹⁰ This, in turn, led to the creation of the NATO-Russia Permanent Joint Council (PJC) in 1998.⁹¹ Russia was thereby granted a seat at the same table as other permanent members of the alliance and regular consultations on common security issues began to take place.⁹² The member nations would, however, meet before every meeting to coordinate their positions on particular issues and only include Russia in any talks once a consensus had been reached.⁹³

Though these taken steps were supposed to determine Russia's importance to NATO, mistrust still seemed to remain. This was made especially visible when in 1999 NATO admitted the three new member states to the alliance which Russia had difficulties with. The same year NATO also decided to initiate air strikes in Kosovo, against Russia's will and without formal support from the UN Security Council, leading to Russia's withdrawal from the PJC. At the end of the year, with the arrival of new Secretary-General Lord Robertson, a renewal of discussions with Russia was emphasized as a priority.⁹⁴ Additionally, the election of Vladimir Putin as president of Russia in the year 2000 led to a rebuilding of former relations with NATO.⁹⁵

http://www.acus.org/files/publication_pdfs/82/0512-

[Future_NATO_Russian_Relations_Gordon_Hendrickson.pdf](http://www.acus.org/files/publication_pdfs/82/0512-Future_NATO_Russian_Relations_Gordon_Hendrickson.pdf), accessed May 8, 2010.

⁸⁹ *ibid.*

⁹⁰ Hendrickson, G.B., *op.cit.*, p. 4.

⁹¹ Cottey, A., "Russia: Partner or Problem in European Security?", in *Security in the New Europe*, Hampshire & New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007, p. 109.

⁹² Hendrickson, G.B., *op.cit.*, p. 4.

⁹³ *ibid.*

⁹⁴ Hendrickson, G.B., *op.cit.*, p. 5.

⁹⁵ NATO-Russia: Forging Deeper Relations, Brussels: NATO Public Diplomacy Division, 2004, p. 7, <http://www.nato.int/docu/nato-russia/nato-russia-e.pdf>, accessed May 8, 2010.

2.2.3. The NATO-Russia Council (NRC)

The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 marked a turning point for NATO's mission in the world. For the first time since its inception, article 5 of the Washington treaty was invoked (to permit Allied support for the USA), and NATO was soon – in mid-2002 - to adopt a policy document authorizing itself for the first time to launch defence missions outside the Euro-Atlantic territory. This would also be the moment for deepening relations with Russia. Showing its commitment and sympathy to the United States, the then president of Russia, Vladimir Putin, was the first foreign leader to call the White House to offer assistance after the attacks. It was clear for both states at that point that cooperation was essential in order to be able to face new security issues. As NATO's Secretary-General Lord Robertson declared at the time:

[W]hat was lacking from the earlier NATO-Russia dialogue was a true sense of shared purpose and urgency. The events of 11 September provided that impetus – a stark reminder of the need for comprehensive and coordinated action to respond to common threats.⁹⁶

In 2002, the PJC was therefore replaced by a new NATO-Russia Council (NRC) which meant that regular military and political discussions between NATO and Russia were to take place.⁹⁷ This time, however, NATO declared that Russia and the alliance would work as “equal partners in areas of common interest”.⁹⁸ To formalize this, an ambitious plan was laid out for the NRC at a formal summit in 2002 and according to the Rome Declaration which followed:

NATO member states and Russia will continue to intensify their cooperation in areas including the struggle against terrorism, crisis management, non-proliferation, arms control and confidence-building measures, theater missile defense, search and rescue at sea, military-to-military cooperation, and civil emergencies.⁹⁹

⁹⁶ Robertson, G.L., “Introduction”, in NATO-Russia Council: Rome Summit 2002, Brussels, Belgium: NATO Office of Information and Press, 2002, p. 5, <http://www.nato.int/docu/comm/2002/0205-rome/rome-eng.pdf>, accessed May 13, 2010.

⁹⁷ *ibid.*

⁹⁸ NATO-Russia Council: Rome Summit 2002, *op.cit.*, p. 10.

⁹⁹ NATO-Russia Council: Rome Summit 2002, *op.cit.*, p. 12. See also “NATO-Russia Council”, *NATO Issues*, 30 August 2004, n.p., <http://www.nato.int/issues/nrc/index.html>, accessed May 14 2010.

It was also important for both parties to make the NRC more open and transparent than the previous PJC. Russia was now included on equal basis with the member states of the alliance, instead of the Allies meeting first before sitting down with Russian representatives.¹⁰⁰ Thus, Russia seemed to finally be granted a valuable place within NATO's structure by this arrangement.

2.2.4. NATO's expansion perceived as a threat by Russia

The Russian government was pleased with such an evolution but it did not change the perception of NATO's future enlargement being a threat. Russia felt threatened by NATO's expansion because many of the candidate countries were specifically asking to join NATO on the grounds of their need for protection against their powerful neighbor Russia.¹⁰¹ This is one of the main reasons Russian authorities have always suspected NATO's motives for expanding eastwards, thinking that maybe the organization was plotting to build up an offensive system intended to deter Russia. After centuries of invasions from the West (from the French, Poles and Germans for example – who all are NATO members now), Russians still seem to perceive a possibility of that happening again, and have tended to analyze NATO's actions from such a viewpoint.¹⁰² At the time, Russia stated that it would only find another round of enlargement of the alliance acceptable if NATO “transformed itself to a political organization”.¹⁰³ Unsurprisingly, such demands fell upon deaf ears. Russia therefore showed at the time its determination to consolidate its own security architecture which in 2003 led to the institutionalization of the Collective Security Treaty which had been in effect under the auspices of the Commonwealth of Independent States.

¹⁰⁰ Hendrickson, G.B., *op.cit.*, p. 7.

¹⁰¹ Boyer, Y. & Vilboux, N., *Vision américaine de l'OTAN, Recherches & Documents: Observatoire de la stratégie américaine*, Paris: la Fondation pour la Recherche Stratégique, 2010, p. 18, http://www.frstrategie.org/barreFRS/publications/rd/2010/RD_201001.pdf, accessed May 10 2010.

¹⁰² Hendrickson, G.B., *op.cit.*, p. 27.

¹⁰³ Smith, J., “The NATO-Russia Relationship: Defining Moment or Déjà vu?”, in *Europe, Russia, and the United States: Finding a New Balance*, Washington, D.C.: Center for Strategic & International Studies, November 2008, p. 8, http://csis.org/files/media/csis/pubs/081110_smith_natorussia_web.pdf, accessed May 10 2010.

In March 2004 seven new members entered NATO, including the three Baltic states.¹⁰⁴ NATO immediately started F-16 air patrols over Baltic territory, infuriating the Russian authorities.¹⁰⁵ Proceedings in the NRC came to a halt whereby no progress could be made on a common agenda or in producing concrete policy changes and eventually, both parties began to blame each other for the council's diminishing returns.¹⁰⁶ More mutual accusations were made in the following years and reached a peak in 2007, when the United States began formal talks with the Czech Republic and Poland on placing bases there as part of its new missile defence system. This was to become a huge issue that is yet to be settled but has moved forward with Obama's radical redrafting of the project in Autumn 2009, after Russia's recurrent statements of the system being seen as a "clear threat".¹⁰⁷ It was not until Russia's presidential election of Dmitry Medvedev in the Summer of 2008 that optimism seemed to resurface. He was willing to 're-set' Russia's relationship with the West; but Russia then entered into conflict with Georgia on August 7, 2008, freezing relations again.

2.2.5. Recent developments in NATO/US relations with Russia

On March 5, 2009 NATO's Foreign Ministers decided to resume the dialogue with Russia through the NRC.¹⁰⁸ The reason for the decision was the belief in the alliance that Russia was needed as a cooperating partner on issues of common interest, "such as Afghanistan, counterterrorism, drugs trafficking, non-proliferation, arms control and the new threat of piracy".¹⁰⁹ Finally on June 27, nearly a year after NRC's suspension resulting from the Georgian War, Sergey Lavrov attended a NRC meeting at which parties decided to restart military cooperation.¹¹⁰

The US and NATO took significant further steps to improve relations with Russia from summer 2009 onwards. Firstly, on September 17, the new US

¹⁰⁴ Smith, J., *op.cit.*, p. 8-9.

¹⁰⁵ Smith, J., *op.cit.*, p. 9.

¹⁰⁶ Smith, J., *op.cit.*, p. 9-10.

¹⁰⁷ Smith, J., *op.cit.*, p. 11.

¹⁰⁸ De Haas, M., NATO-Russia Relations after the Georgian Conflict, *Atlantisch Perspectief*, 33(7), November 2009, p. 6.

¹⁰⁹ *ibid.*

¹¹⁰ *ibid.*

President Barack Obama decided to abandon the plan for deploying missile bases in Poland and the Czech Republic, in favour of greater reliance on sea-based missiles and bases closer to the supposed target, Iran.¹¹¹ Secondly, the next day, NATO's newly appointed Secretary-General, Anders Fogh Rasmussen, held his first public speech and dedicated it to a new beginning in the relationship with Russia.¹¹² These two policy initiatives were considered as a positive step forward in Western-Russian relations, essentially since Moscow responded to them in a constructive way.¹¹³ That did not mean however that all issues had been resolved, but it definitely characterized a genuine breakthrough and again emphasized the importance of strong partnership with Russia.

Although there have been positive developments recently between Russia and NATO, many thorny issues still divide them and will remain contentious. One of the most salient issues is Obama's Ballistic Missile Defense (BMD) plan. Russia does not have a united response to the proposals, as was highlighted recently by the visit by Dmitry Rogozin, Special Envoy of the Russian President for Missile-Defense Cooperation with NATO, to the US State Department. Both Russia's foreign and defense ministries have been active in the BMD dialogue, yet put forth competing perspectives on the issue. Rogozin himself also seems to be following his own agenda. The uncertainty of who will become the next Russian president furthermore inhibits Russian bureaucrats from putting forth any bold initiatives.¹¹⁴ The ever-present lack of trust is also a major stepping stone, as many Russians believe, for reasons of pride and history, that the US's claim that the BMD is aimed at protecting America and its allies against a potential strike from Iran is false. Instead it is believed that the US is seeking BMD capabilities that can negate Russia's strategic deterrent.¹¹⁵ There are also economic concerns:

¹¹¹ U.S. Dramatically Alters Plans for European Missile Defense, *RFE/RL*, September 17, 2009, http://www.rferl.org/content/Report_US_To_Abandon_European_Missile_Defense_Plans/1824647.html, accessed May 13, 2010.

¹¹² NATO and Russia: A New Beginning, NATO, September 18, 2009, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/opinions_57640.htm, accessed May 13, 2010.

¹¹³ De Haas, M., *op.cit.*, p. 8.

¹¹⁴ Richard Weitz, Getting to 'Yes' on Missile Defense, *Project Syndicate*, 17 August 2011, <http://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/weitz9/English>, accessed 8 September 2011.

¹¹⁵ *ibid.*

Russia would much rather see a pan-European BMD system where they would provide expertise and technology rather than building their own system.¹¹⁶

Among other issues that still divide Russia and the US and NATO is Russia's continuing refusal to recognize Kosovo's independence and its full support of Serbia's stance on the matter. Russia also opposes NATO's open door policy towards Georgia and Ukraine and has instead tried to push its idea of a new European Security Treaty.¹¹⁷ As for NATO, it is obviously still concerned with Russian occupation of Georgian territory (Abkhazia and Ossetia) as well as Russia's decision to suspend participation in the Treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE).¹¹⁸ In addition, there are continued concerns about democracy and the rule of law.

2.3. Strengths and weaknesses

The world's security structure since the end of the Cold War has dramatically changed but NATO is still in place. Asking how NATO managed to stay relevant more than two decades after it lost most of its original purpose is thus an obvious point for starting to understand the alliance's strengths and weaknesses. The main IR theories have attempted explanations of NATO's persistence which might unveil interesting analyses of the real purpose of the alliance.

Neorealists had predicted the dissolution of NATO once the Cold War ended, as alliances form because of an external threat. Since the Soviet Union had collapsed, it was only a question of time until NATO would lose its significance and eventually dissolve. This neorealist prediction, made for example by Kenneth N. Waltz and John Mearsheimer, was however proved false by events.¹¹⁹ Waltz has therefore argued that institutions like NATO are first of all treaties made by states and states determine their fate.¹²⁰ Neorealists have claimed, ever since it was clear NATO would not disappear, that this reflected not a realist failure of understanding international politics, but instead an underestimation of US's aims

¹¹⁶ Nikolas K. Gvosdev, Countdown Begins on NATO-Russia BMD Deal, *America-Russia Net*, 11 July 2011, <http://www.america-russia.net/eng/security/280862885>, accessed 8 September 2011.

¹¹⁷ Russia Unveils Proposal for European Security Treaty, *RFE/RL*, 30 November 2009. http://www.rferl.org/content/Russia_Unveils_Proposal_For_European_Security_Treaty/1891161.html, accessed 8 September 2011.

¹¹⁸ *ibid.*

¹¹⁹ Robert B. McCalla, *op.cit.*, p. 469-470.

¹²⁰ Kenneth N. Waltz, (2000), *op.cit.*, p. 20.

and influence in foreign relations. That NATO remained, illustrated “not the defects but the limitations of structural explanations. [As] structures shape and shove; they do not determine the actions of states”.¹²¹ Realists, according to Waltz, instead suggest that NATO’s durability and enlargement after the end of the Cold War was mainly a power-driven decision of the United States, the strongest member within the alliance.¹²²

Neoliberal institutionalists also attempted an explanation of NATO’s survival and expansion after the end of the Cold War by claiming that institutions, once created, “may take on something of a life of their own; they may begin to act with a measure of autonomy, becoming less dependent on the wills of their sponsors and members. NATO supposedly validates these thoughts”¹²³. Its high degree of institutionalization is one of the reasons it persisted long after the threat it was constructed against had disappeared. NATO must have developed something more than only a mechanism trying to deter the Soviet Union. As Celeste A. Wallander puts it “[a]nalyse defining NATO as an alliance for coping with the Soviet threat are not incorrect, but they are incomplete”.¹²⁴ Thus, in addition to trying to deter the Soviet Union during the Cold War, the alliance was intended to build a peaceful and secure region encompassing members as democratic states.¹²⁵ NATO was built on an Article IV, promoting peace and security, as well as an article V creating collective defence.¹²⁶ NATO thus constructed itself during a time of opposing a threat but took the time to also promote trust, cooperation and stability in security relations between its members.¹²⁷ Hence, once the threat disappeared, the institutionalized networking that had slowly but steadily been put in place was not to be erased that easily.

For social constructivists, what determined the continuation of NATO was the strong sense among member states of a collective identity that had been in the shaping since its creation. Constructivists state that identities stem from states’ “interactions with different social environments, both domestic and international”

¹²¹ *ibid.*

¹²² Kenneth N. Waltz, (2000), *op.cit.*, p. 25.

¹²³ Kenneth N. Waltz, (2000), p. 19.

¹²⁴ Celeste A. Wallander, Institutional Assets and Adaptability: NATO After the Cold War, *International Organization*, 54(4), (Autumn 2000), p. 716.

¹²⁵ Celeste A. Wallander, *op.cit.*, p. 713.

¹²⁶ *ibid.*

¹²⁷ Celeste A. Wallander, *op.cit.*, p. 716.

which shape the interaction between states.¹²⁸ With its longevity NATO has been able to create shared values and a sense of common identity between member states, resulting essentially from interactions between members within the organization. The disappearance of the military institution would have also led to the member states losing an important framework linking them with each other, and they were simply not willing for that to happen.

NATO has its headquarters in Belgium with a staff of roughly 4 000 people which provides a framework of consultation and coordination between member states.¹²⁹ It also has an allied command mechanism that coordinates its military operations, which allows member states to achieve their goals efficiently.¹³⁰ NATO today has around “150 000 soldiers, sailors and airmen on three continents in active operations – engaged in Afghanistan, Libya, Iraq, the Balkans, piracy, cyber, missile defence – and is still conducting military exercises and training to maintain collective defence”.¹³¹ The organization has also proven to be able to adapt itself to new challenges and has shown to be effective in cases of emergency, the events of 9/11 proving to be the best example to prove this. It took NATO only a few hours after two meetings of the Permanent Representatives to invoke Article V for the first time in its history.¹³² These facts therefore clearly demonstrate NATO’s high level of institutionalization.

To this day, NATO has been considered as the most powerful military and political organization in the world. Following its latest enlargement in 2009 it comprises 28 member states from the north-western part of the globe that has so far maintained its status as the most productive, economically rich, socially modern, technologically advanced, and politically democratic part of the world.¹³³ The economic power of the region is a fact as its 900 million inhabitants (13 percent of the world’s population) account for nearly half of the world’s GDP.¹³⁴

¹²⁸ Peter J. Katzenstein (ed.), *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics*, (New York: Colombia University Press, 1996), p. 25.

¹²⁹ “NATO headquarters”, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_49284.htm, accessed 5 September 2011.

¹³⁰ Celeste A. Wallander, NATO’s Price: Shape Up or Ship Out, *Foreign Affairs*, 81(6), (2002), p. 3.

¹³¹ James Stavridis, “Operation Unified Protector Update”, 11 May 2011, <http://www.aco.nato.int/page76502411.aspx>, accessed 2 September 2011.

¹³² Christian Tuschhoff, Why NATO is Still Relevant, *International Politics*, 40, (2003), p. 101.

¹³³ Zbigniew Brzezinski, An Agenda for NATO, *Foreign Affairs*, 88, (September/October 2009), p. 7.

¹³⁴ *ibid.*

NATO has combined the United States' military and economic power with the European Allies' political and economic strength for over sixty years. Since the global economic crisis that hit in late 2008, the western economy has been declining however, making room for other regions in the world to rise. Western leadership in the economic field seems not to be guaranteed anymore and new major powers such as China are rising to a global role.

NATO has however been facing several problems since the end of the Cold War which has weakened its status. After the Cold War, NATO has been trying to reinvent itself and mainly because of internal disagreements it still seems unclear where NATO's role is heading. The Iraq War in 2003 showed differences of opinion between member states. The US deliberately chose not to use NATO for invading Iraq and the alliance members were so divided over the war that France and Germany adopted a common position on it with Russia.¹³⁵

The increasing military funding gap between the US and European states has also been of serious concern and even harmed the transatlantic partnership during the last decade.¹³⁶ Kurt Volker, former US Permanent Representative to NATO, stated recently that "NATO has lost the underlying consensus that holds its members together. NATO is more divided over fundamentals today than at any time in its history".¹³⁷ In this context he pointed to the negative implications of disagreements between member states over the organization's relationship with Russia, NATO's core tasks, enlargement plans, and overall meaning of collective defence.¹³⁸

More recently, Robert M. Gates, US Secretary of Defence, addressed a gathering at the Security and Defence Agenda (SDA) in Brussels on June 10 2011.¹³⁹ He highlighted NATO's two major weaknesses, notably the lack of

¹³⁵ Andrew Cottey, "Europe and America: The End of an Era?", in *Security in the New Europe*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, p. 64-65.

¹³⁶ Ivo Daalder, "The End of Atlanticism," in Tod Lindberg (ed.) *Beyond Paradise and Power: Europe, America and the Future of a Troubled Partnership*, (New York: Routledge, 2005), p. 39-60.

¹³⁷ Kurt Volker, A New Transatlantic Compact, *Atlantic Council*, 2010,

<http://www.acus.org/publication/new-transatlantic-compact>, accessed November 18, 2010.

¹³⁸ *ibid.*

¹³⁹ Robert M. Gates, "Reflections on the status and future of the transatlantic alliance" (policy speech), *Security and Defence Agenda*, 10 June 2011,

http://www.securitydefenceagenda.org/Portals/14/Documents/Publications/2011/GATES_Report_final.pdf, accessed 14 August 2011.

military capabilities and a weak political will within the alliance.¹⁴⁰ These shortcomings have been visible in Afghanistan where the US has shouldered the heaviest burdens, both militarily and financially. Gates talked about how he perceives the military deficiency of European members of NATO and warned about a diminishing investment in transatlantic relations because of the economic crisis and changing political scenery in US domestic politics.¹⁴¹ He pointed out that only five of the 28 member states, namely the United States, United Kingdom, France, Greece, and Albania currently spend more than the agreed 2 percent of total GDP on defence.¹⁴² In his speech, Gates stressed the fact that the US bears almost the entire cost of NATO stating that “the US share of NATO defence spending has now risen to more than 75%”.¹⁴³ In his view, these statistics show an unacceptable picture and if NATO is to be called a transatlantic partnership, it is about time European leaders “realise that the drift of the last 20 years cannot be allowed to continue” and they take concrete actions in sharing the financial burden in NATO.¹⁴⁴

On the flipside of this coin, European NATO members have pointed out that the US has withdrawn most of its troops from Europe and that Gates criticism rings hollow as a large segment of the US’s military budget is for US interests only, non-European ventures and non-NATO military dimensions.¹⁴⁵ Many European members are frustrated at the accusations of their lack of military capabilities at the same time as the US is not willing to share military technology with its allies, as a recent example where Turkey put purchases of military hardware from the US on hold over US reluctance to share technology illustrates

¹⁴⁰ Robert M. Gates, *op.cit.*, p. 4.

¹⁴¹ Robert M. Gates, *op.cit.*, p. 5.

¹⁴² The US dedicates 5.4 percent of its GDP on defence, while Greece spends 2.9 percent, Britain 2.7 percent and Albania and France contribute 2% - cf. Financial and Economic Data Relating to NATO Defence, NATO Public Diplomacy Division, 2011, p. 6, http://www.nato.int/nato_static/assets/pdf/pdf_2011_03/20110309_PR_CP_2011_027.pdf, accessed 9 August 2011.

¹⁴³ Robert M. Gates, *op.cit.*, p. 5

¹⁴⁴ Robert M. Gates, *op.cit.*, p. 6.

¹⁴⁵ NATO only lists the total military expenditure of each member country and does not have a breakdown of the share that is dedicated to NATO operations, thus it is not a useful tool to evaluate real contributions. For military expenditure of each member state for 2010, please see http://www.nato.int/nato_static/assets/pdf/pdf_2011_03/20110309_PR_CP_2011_027.pdf

vividly.¹⁴⁶ In addition, European member states were led into risky, costly operations in Afghanistan and Iraq that have hardly improved European security as a whole.

Another major area of frustration for European members has been the way US national interests have informed its handling of Russia, and not NATO policies, especially during the last decade. A good example is how the Bush administration pushed hard for the enlargement of NATO to include Georgia and Ukraine, which was unrealistic and antagonistic towards Russia, and was opposed by many NATO members, such as Germany, France and Spain.¹⁴⁷ Even more generally, the unilateral tendencies of the first Bush administration, which devalued existing alliances and rejected all institutional restraints had severe negative effects on NATO cooperation, as the US was seen to be creating its own coalitions determined by the mission at hand, rather than using the organizations in place, or as Rumsfeld famously put it: “[...] the mission determines the coalition; the coalition must not determine the mission”.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁶ Jorge Benitez, Turkey puts F-35 order on hold over US refusal to share technology, *NATOSource*, 24 March 2011, <http://www.acus.org/natosource/turkey-puts-f-35-order-hold-over-us-refusal-share-technology>, accessed 8 September 2011.

¹⁴⁷ 'Old' and 'New' Europe divided at NATO Summit, *EurActiv*, 2 April 2008, <http://www.euractiv.com/enlargement/old-new-europe-divided-nato-summit/article-171288>, accessed 8 September 2011.

¹⁴⁸ Donald Rumsfeld, Keeper of the Flame, *Center for Security Policy*, 6 November 2001, <http://www.defense.gov/Speeches/Speech.aspx?SpeechID=464>, accessed 8 September 2011.

III. The Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO)

The CSTO comprises, as of today, seven member states: Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Russian Federation, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. The organization was formally institutionalized in 2003, but the Collective Security Treaty (CST), on which the institution is based, has been in effect since 1992 under the auspices of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). Nevertheless, the CSTO is still hardly known in the West. One aim of this chapter is to draw due attention to the institution. It will start with a brief historical background and then offer an overview of the CSTO's current activities, before establishing its strengths and weaknesses.

3.1. Brief historical background

There was much initial optimism following the end of the Cold War. The Russian leadership and its then President, Boris Yeltsin, hoped for European integration for their country. Ideas of constructing a new world order, embracing former Cold War enemies, were quickly put forward; but the euphoric spark was to be equally quickly extinguished. The NATO alliance persisted even though its initial threat had disappeared, and there was no will on its part for integrating Russia into its coalition framework. This is one of the reasons why the Russian Federation quickly started to reanimate existing military structures that were put in place under the Warsaw Pact.

The Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) was one of the first projects initiated by Russia soon after the former states of the Soviet Union had acquired independence in 1991.¹⁴⁹ Twelve countries¹⁵⁰ (out of the total of fifteen

¹⁴⁹ Ivan Safranchuk, *The Competition for Security Roles in Central Asia, Russia in Global Affairs*, 6, (January-March 2008), p. 161.

¹⁵⁰ At first, the CIS was formed by ten states as the Baltic States (Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia) never joined the alliance and Georgia only signed in December 1993 to later withdraw from the organization in August 2009 after hostilities between Georgia and Russia escalated over the separatist regions of South Ossetia and Abkhazia in August 2008. Turkmenistan also failed to attend the first CIS summit in Almaty in December 1991. Turkmenistan did join the alliance later on but it never was an active participant. It therefore downgraded its status to that of CIS observer in 2005. For further information on the formation process of the CIS, see Alexander Nikitin, *The*

newly independent states) decided to form the alliance in order to cooperate in various fields of internal and external policies. The primary aim of the CIS was to ease the transition of newly independent states of the former Soviet Union into fully sovereign entities, even though it was also seen as a mechanism for positioning Moscow at the centre of the post-Soviet space.¹⁵¹

The Collective Security Treaty (CST) has its origins in the CIS and was signed by several of its member states on 15 May 1992.¹⁵² Presidents of six of the twelve CIS nations adhered to the treaty, notably Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, and it was signed in Tashkent, Uzbekistan.¹⁵³ Azerbaijan, Belarus and Georgia would all sign the treaty in 1993, while Turkmenistan never ratified the treaty because of its desire to acquire neutral status, which was accepted by the UN General Assembly on 12 December 1995.¹⁵⁴ Moldova and Ukraine also refused any military cooperation in the CIS framework. The treaty then entered into force on 20 April 1994 and was registered at the United Nations on 1 November 1995.¹⁵⁵ The CST was signed for a period of five years with the possibility of renewing it for another period of five years.

From the beginning, member states of the CIS had much difficulty in agreeing on how to react on various political and security issues that arose in the nineties. A clause within the CIS Charter foresaw commitments among member states to military and security cooperation, but in reality only half of the members agreed to this need, while the other half feared it as opening the way to a return of Russian hegemony.¹⁵⁶ The military mechanism of the Commonwealth was therefore ill defined and never used in serious conflicts that broke out, for example, in South Ossetia (1991-1992), Nagorno-Karabakh (1992-1994),

End of the Post-Soviet Space: The Changing Geopolitical Orientations of the Newly Independent States, *Russia and Eurasia Briefing Paper 07/01*, (London: Chatham House, February 2007).

¹⁵¹ Stephen Aris, Russia's Approach to Multilateral Cooperation in the Post-Soviet Space: CSTO, EurAsEC and SCO, *Russian Analytical Digest*, 76, (15th of April 2010), p. 2.

¹⁵² Alyson J.K. Bailes, "Regional Security cooperation in the former Soviet area", in *SIPRI Yearbook 2007: Armaments, Disarmament and International Security*, Stockholm: International Peace Research Institute, 2007, p. 174.

¹⁵³ J. H. Saat, The Collective Security Treaty Organization, *Central Asian Series 05/09*, (Surrey: Conflict Studies Research Centre, 2005), p. 3.

¹⁵⁴ Valentinas Mite, CIS: Turkmenistan Reduces Ties To "Associate Member", *Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty*, (August 29, 2005), <http://www.rferl.org/content/article/1061002.html>, accessed december 3 2010.

¹⁵⁵ J. H. Saat, *op.cit.*, p. 3.

¹⁵⁶ Karsten Jakob Møller, "Collective Security Treaty Organisation: An Entangling Alliance", in Peter Dahl Truelshen (ed.) *International Organisations: The Role in Conflict Management* (203-223), (Copenhagen: Royal Danish Defence College, 2009), p. 205.

Abkhazia (1992-1994), Transnistria (1992), nor during the civil war in Tajikistan that persisted from 1992-1997.¹⁵⁷ The treaty had a clause on mutual assistance in case of its member states being threatened by aggression, but as the above conflicts show, the treaty never lived up to its vision of collective security, or at least not when member states were fighting each other.¹⁵⁸

3.2. From CST to CSTO

By the late 1990s political extremism, terrorism, separatism, and organized crime syndicalism had grown so intensively in the post-Soviet space that they motivated political efforts of the Eurasian region to reconsider multilateral approaches to tackling these new threats emanating from non-state actors.¹⁵⁹ The Collective Security Treaty was up for prolongation in 1999, but Azerbaijan, Georgia and Uzbekistan decided to withdraw from the treaty that same year. Following armed breakouts in the Kyrgyz region in the summers of 1999 and 2000, the Russian administration took the initiative at CIS summits in Minsk and Bishkek to fortify the Collective Security Treaty.¹⁶⁰ The clashes in Kyrgyzstan demonstrated once again the need to pool efforts for enhancing the military network, but the CST in its five first years had not shown itself effective in doing so. It was therefore thought necessary to come up with a better structure.

The terrorist attacks of 9/11 and the US invasion of Afghanistan that ensued gave an important impetus for regional cooperation with states that had for a while been eager to eradicate terrorist movements in the region. Central Asian states, in particular Uzbekistan, quickly drew Washington's attention both as rear basing areas for the operations in Afghanistan, and as 'front line' states with an important role in checking transnational terrorist and criminal movements. The USA's approaches were at first well received and it started establishing logistical base facilities in Central Asian states, beginning with the Khanabad base in southern Uzbekistan and the Ganci base not far from Bishkek in Kyrgyzstan.¹⁶¹ Even though Russia was suspicious about having US military commands in its

¹⁵⁷ Karsten Jakob Møller, *op.cit.*, p. 204.

¹⁵⁸ J. H. Saat, The Collective Security Treaty Organization, *Central Asian Series*, February 2005, p. 3.

¹⁵⁹ Gregory Gleason & Marat Shaihutdinov, Collective Security and Non-State Actors in Eurasia, *International Studies Perspectives*, 6, 2005, p. 276.

¹⁶⁰ Ivan Safranchuk, The Competition for Security Roles in Central Asia, *Russia in global affairs*, 6, March 2008, p. 164.

¹⁶¹ *ibid.*

near abroad, Russian officials did not interfere in these developments. Moscow did however feel a need to make balancing moves once relations started to deteriorate with the US, essentially because of the war in Iraq launched in 2003, but also because of their differing positions on several international issues, notably on Iran, Kosovo and North Korea. Therefore Russia started stationing its troops and began with the Kant airbase in Kyrgyzstan, in close proximity (only 30 kilometres away) to Bishkek where the US base was stationed.¹⁶² Russia also strengthened its position in Tajikistan where it had been responsible for border security with Afghanistan ever since the end of the USSR, and installed a Russian airbase near Dushanbe in Tajikistan.¹⁶³ A new web of cooperativeness was in the making.

Meanwhile in May 2002, at the 10-year anniversary summit of the CST in Moscow, the remaining members¹⁶⁴ of the treaty had agreed on formally institutionalizing the CST. The institution then came into being in 2003 under the name of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO).¹⁶⁵ It included three 'regional groups of forces', with Russia as a leading member of all of them: the western group comprising Russia and Belarus; the South Caucasus group comprising Russia and Armenia; and the Central Asian group with Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan.¹⁶⁶ It took the CSTO a couple of years to establish a strategy and during its first years it concentrated on promoting the institution and seeking international recognition from already established organizations.

During a summit meeting of the CIS heads of state in June 2005, members of the CSTO announced a plan for the development of an integrated air defence system and the upgrading of rapid deployment forces in Central Asia.¹⁶⁷ It was also decided to create a commission for military-economic cooperation in order to deepen relations between the military industries of the member states.¹⁶⁸ This

¹⁶² *ibid.*

¹⁶³ *ibid.*

¹⁶⁴ e.g. The presidents of Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Tajikistan.

¹⁶⁵ Richard Weitz, The CIS is dead: long live the CSTO, *Central Asia-Caucasus Institute Analyst* (August 2 2006), <http://cacianalyst.org/?q=node/3725>, accessed October 27 2010.

¹⁶⁶ Amina Afzal, Security Cooperation in Central Asia: The Changing Role of Multilateral Organisations, *Strategic Studies*, 26(4), (Winter 2006), n.p. http://www.issi.org.pk/old-site/ss_Detail.php?dataId=408, accessed June 17 2011.

¹⁶⁷ *ibid.*

¹⁶⁸ *ibid.*

meeting confirmed the transfer of military affairs from the CIS to the CSTO and in August that same year, the CIS ceased to be a framework for military cooperation.¹⁶⁹ The priorities of the CSTO were finally outlined including cooperation in air defence, production of weapons, training of military personnel and peacekeeping activities.¹⁷⁰

Structurally speaking, the CSTO is as of today composed of several permanent organs including the Council on Collective Security (CCS), the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs (CMFA), the Council of Ministers of Defence (CMD), the Committee of Secretaries of the Security Councils (CSSC), a Russian Secretary-General, a Secretariat situated in Moscow and a Joint Staff. The highest body of the organization is the Council on Collective Security (CCS) which is composed by the countries' Heads of States.¹⁷¹ The CCS meets annually and has a rotating chairmanship.

3.2.1. The CSTO's main activities

As outlined by the CSTO's Secretary General, Nikolai Bordyuzha, the current goals and activities of the organization: "are to strengthen peace and international and regional security and stability, and to defend on a collective basis the independence, territorial integrity, and sovereignty of member states. Priority in achieving these ends is given to political means."¹⁷² The CSTO has thus defined three main goals and fields of action for its efforts to guarantee and strengthen national, regional and international security, namely (1) reinforcing stability and building confidence through political cooperation between member states as well as with non-members, (2) combating non-traditional threats to security – in particular terrorism and drug trafficking which are seen as the most dangerous challenges for the members of the CSTO – through joint efforts and (3) fighting against traditional threats to security with the development and improvement of the military dimension of member states.¹⁷³

¹⁶⁹ *ibid.*

¹⁷⁰ Marcin Kaczmarek, Russia Creates a New Security System to Replace the CIS, *EurasiaNet*, 10 January 2006, <http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/pp011106.shtml>, accessed 17 June 2011.

¹⁷¹ Nikolai Bordyuzha, *op.cit.*, p. 340-341.

¹⁷² Nikolai Bordyuzha, "The Collective Security Treaty Organization: A Brief Overview" (translated from Russian by Peter Morley), in Ursel Schlichting (ed.) *OSCE Yearbook 2010* (p. 339-350), (Munich: Nomos, 2011), p. 339.

¹⁷³ Nikolai Bordyuzha, *op.cit.*, p. 340.

Operational and military preparations for joint action by CSTO forces are carried out through joint exercises and training. Since 2004, combined-corps exercises have been held annually under the name *Rubezh*.¹⁷⁴ During such exercises, collective decision-making procedures are put to the test as well as the preparation and execution of joint operational practices by the forces of the organization's collective security system.¹⁷⁵

Joint activities in the fight against international terrorism have been undertaken and the CSTO has maintained close working contacts with the UN Security Council's Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC), the OSCE's¹⁷⁶ Action against Terrorism Unit (ATU), and the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).¹⁷⁷ The legal basis for cooperation is developing and work is still underway to create a framework for personnel training and for providing units with specialized equipment and tools.¹⁷⁸

Combating drug trafficking is another challenge the CSTO has been facing and the international anti-drug operation *Kanal* has been held on a regular basis under the command of the CSTO.¹⁷⁹ The aim is to block drug flows emanating from Afghanistan. Over a dozen such operations have been held since 2003 and over 200 tonnes of illegal substances have been seized during these.¹⁸⁰ Many non-member states have taken part in the operations as observers¹⁸¹ as well as international organizations like the OSCE, Interpol, and the Eurasian Group on Combating Money Laundering and Financing Terrorism (EAG).¹⁸² Most of the CSTO's practical efforts have involved fighting drug smuggling and it can be said that the work so far has had some positive results. Russia has been arguing for several years that the problem cannot be eradicated unless the entire international community joins efforts. 90 percent of world's heroin emanates from Afghanistan

¹⁷⁴ Nikolai Bordyuzha, *op.cit.*, p. 342.

¹⁷⁵ *ibid.*

¹⁷⁶ i.e. the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

¹⁷⁷ Nikolai Bordyuzha, *op.cit.*, p. 345.

¹⁷⁸ Nikolai Bordyuzha, *op.cit.*, p. 344.

¹⁷⁹ Nikolai Bordyuzha, *op.cit.*, p. 345.

¹⁸⁰ *ibid.*

¹⁸¹ i.e. Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, China, Colombia, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Iran, Latvia, Lithuania, Mongolia, Pakistan, Poland, Romania, Spain, Syria, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, the US, and Venezuela.

¹⁸² Nikolai Bordyuzha, *op.cit.*, p. 345.

and over 20 percent of it is consumed in Russia.¹⁸³ In Russia's opinion not enough has been done to fight this evil and if stability is to be reached in Afghanistan, the drug issue has to be settled once and for all.¹⁸⁴

Peacekeeping activities are also a focus for development within the framework of the CSTO since the signature of the Agreement on Peacekeeping Activities in October 2007, which came into force on 15 January 2009.¹⁸⁵ The agreement implies carrying out peacekeeping activities on the territory of member states after a decision taken by the CCS and on the basis of an official request from a member, or in accordance to a resolution taken by the UN Security Council.¹⁸⁶ The CSTO's Collective Peacekeeping Forces (CPF) can include military, police, and civilian personnel and are trained by CSTO's joint programmes, equipped with weapons and communication tools accordingly, and follow regular joint exercises and training sessions.¹⁸⁷ The CSTO has however been criticized for its attitude during and after the Kyrgyzstan crisis in June 2010, when interethnic clashes broke out between Kyrgyz and Uzbeks in the southern part of the state. The CSTO decided not to intervene even though an official request had been sent out by the Kyrgyz government. A year later, the CSTO's Secretary General stated that the decision not to interfere¹⁸⁸ in what was at the time qualified as the internal affairs of a member state was correct and was taken in accordance with the founding charter of the organization.¹⁸⁹ The deployment of CSTO peacekeeping forces has therefore not yet been put to the test.

The CSTO has also been working towards consolidating an efficient framework to counteract illegal migration and trafficking in human beings, and to ensure information security. The organization is establishing wider and deeper

¹⁸³ Alexander Vatutin, NATO and CSTO to unite against Afghan drug threat, *The Voice of Russia*, 30 September 2010, <http://english.ruvr.ru/2010/09/30/23190598.html>, accessed 19 January 2011.

¹⁸⁴ *ibid.*

¹⁸⁵ Nikolai Bordyuzha, *op.cit.*, p. 343.

¹⁸⁶ *ibid.*

¹⁸⁷ *ibid.*

¹⁸⁸ A. Maratov, CSTO Secretary General: Refusal from entering CSTO peacekeeping forces to Kyrgyzstan is conscious, *Trend*, 15 August 2011, <http://en.trend.az/regions/casia/kazakhstan/1918572.html>, accessed 2 September 2011.

¹⁸⁹ As article 5 of the Charter of the CSTO stipulates: "The Organization shall operate on the basis of strict respect for the independence, voluntary participation and equality of rights and obligations of the member States and **non-interference in matters falling within the national jurisdiction of the member States.**" (bolded by author), cf. http://untreaty.un.org/unts/144078_158780/5/9/13289.pdf

cooperation between member states in order to respond more effectively to emergency situations, be they man-made or natural.¹⁹⁰

3.2.2. Russia's preponderance within the CSTO

Central Asia is of great strategic importance for Russia, both in general and for combating terrorism and illegal drug trafficking, and since the installation of US airbases in the region, Moscow has sought to strengthen its presence as well. Central Asian states have simply not been able to stand on their own since independence and have had to seek assistance from military powers to secure their zone, which has led to a certain dependency. Russia has furthermore used the opportunity to increase its control over the Central Asian military establishments through the CSTO's command structure and joint staff.¹⁹¹ The Collective Rapid Reaction Force (CRRF) joint staff which was established in 2004 was in reality a matter of CSTO troops following Russian command.¹⁹² The joint staff comprised 55 officers, half of them being Russian while the other half had nationalities from the other member states.¹⁹³ Russia is also the only member state providing well established military institutions for training, and the majority of Central Asian military officers train in Russian academies.¹⁹⁴ It is therefore likely that the senior staff members of the CSTO are prone to follow a Russian military vision and culture, and as such the CRRF can be considered as to being under full Russian command. This also has implications for Central Asian states being able to construct military policies independent from Moscow. Adding to this, although the control over the CRRF seems to be multilateral as it reports to CSTO institutions such as the Council on Collective Security (CCS) or the Council of Ministers of Defence (CMD), these latter bodies only meet periodically.¹⁹⁵ In between meetings, the CRRF reports to CSTO coordination bodies like the Anti-Terror Center (ATC) in Bishkek, which is formally supervised by the Russian Federal Security Service (FSB) director or the Secretariat situated in Moscow.¹⁹⁶

¹⁹⁰ Nikolai Bordyuzha, *op.cit.*, p. 345-346.

¹⁹¹ Alexander Frost, The Collective Security Treaty Organization, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, and Russia's Strategic Goals in Central Asia, *China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly*, 7(3), 2009, p. 86.

¹⁹² *ibid.*

¹⁹³ *ibid.*

¹⁹⁴ *ibid.*

¹⁹⁵ Gregory Gleason & Marat Shaihtudinov, *op.cit.*, p. 281.

¹⁹⁶ *ibid.*

The connection to top Russian officials suggests that orders could very well be given to the CRRF by Moscow while bypassing other member states' ministries.¹⁹⁷

The CSTO's Secretariat which is located in Moscow is responsible for matters related to the organization, its administration, the budget and all advisory services.¹⁹⁸ The Secretary General, Nikolai Bordyuzha, has a crucial role within the organization. Not only is he Russian, but he is a Russian General as well, former head of the Russian National Security Council, and a close associate to Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin and President Dmitri Medvedev.¹⁹⁹ The connections between him and the Kremlin are therefore obvious. His tasks consist among others of drawing up the CSTO's annual budget and coordinating all draft proposals and documents.²⁰⁰ Bordyuzha is the public face of the organization and is an active Secretary General as he often writes in academic journals about the current role and future works of the CSTO.²⁰¹ As noted by Alexander Frost:

It is he who announces expansions of the CRRF, he who attends and observes CSTO military exercises, and he who liaises with the media about the CSTO's role in a global sense, offering his opinions on possible cooperation or confrontation with NATO. [...] As head of the secretariat it is Bordyuzha and his staff who turn directives into reality. In short, Nikolai Bordyuzha exercises a huge degree of influence within the organization and is its leading member. While technically committed to the organization rather than a single member state he is no doubt firmly committed to carrying out the wishes of the Russian leadership within the organization.²⁰²

This leads to a provocative question whether the Secretary General of the CSTO can be regarded as more important and influential – at least as regards CSTO work – than the heads of state of the other member countries of the organization. It is therefore timely to take a look at the behaviour and role of the other member states within the CSTO.

¹⁹⁷ Alexander Frost, *op.cit.*, p. 87.

¹⁹⁸ Alexander Frost, *op.cit.*, p. 88.

¹⁹⁹ *ibid.*

²⁰⁰ *ibid.*

²⁰¹ The official language of the CSTO is Russian and the writings of the Secretary General are therefore in Russian. Some of his works have been translated and I would like to specially thank Mr. Pál Dunay for sending me one translation of Bordyuzha's writings which has come in handy when outlining the current structure and role of the organization, namely Nikolai Bordyuzha, "The Collective Security Treaty Organization: A Brief Overview" (translated from Russian by Peter Morley), in Ursel Schlichting (ed.) *OSCE Yearbook 2010* (p. 339-350), (Munich: Nomos, 2011).

²⁰² Alexander Frost, *op.cit.*, p. 88-89.

3.2.3. The *balancing* and *bandwagoning* behaviour of the CSTO's member states

Russia has shown its full commitment to the CSTO but the behaviour of other member states has led to questions about whether they are equally committed with Russia. Some seem to use it as a tool to secure specific national interests, while others seem simply not to trust Russia's intentions and have been wary of depending solely on the organization for handling security issues.

Before the institutionalization of the CSTO, only Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan of the Central Asian states had remained members of the Collective Security Treaty and only Tajikistan welcomed Russian military cooperation.²⁰³ Several events at the end of the 20th century reminded states in the region however that they could not assure their own security. The bombings in Tashkent, Uzbekistan in February 1999 and the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan's (IMU) offensive in Kyrgyzstan in August 1999 proved the vulnerability of Central Asian states to transnational terrorism.²⁰⁴ As already mentioned, Afghanistan already served as a major source of instability in Central Asia and prior to the terrorist attacks on the United States in 2001, the international community had not been interested in the calls of Central Asian states who were reaching out for help in tackling the major threat from Afghanistan's Taliban rulers. This explains why initially, Central Asian states were willing to provide the US with all the help possible in order to defeat the Taliban and several US bases were constructed. Once the Taliban were removed from power, however, and Western plans for transforming Afghanistan were revealed, the US presence in the region was not equally welcomed. In fact, the so-called 'colour revolutions' in Georgia (2003), in Ukraine (2004) and Kyrgyzstan (2005) were seen as a direct consequence of the USA's strengthened position and influence in the post-Soviet periphery.²⁰⁵ All of a sudden, the US was seen as putting itself forward as an alternative hegemon devoted to democratizing the region and spreading its western values. Many at that moment saw in Russia a better partner in securing their zone, above all as it professed not to interfere in internal affairs but in practice was ready to shore up authoritarian regimes. The example of Uzbekistan's successive shifts between a

²⁰³ Michael Mihalka, Not Much of a Game: Security Dynamics in Central Asia, *China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly*, 5(2), 2007, p. 30.

²⁰⁴ *ibid.*

²⁰⁵ Michael Mihalka, *op.cit.*, p. 26.

pro-Moscow and pro-Western stance well illustrates the importance of such factors.

When Uzbekistan withdrew from the CST in 1999, it decided to join a forum set up in 1996 by those states of the ex-Soviet area that sought to align themselves most closely with the West and resist Russian domination; namely GUAM, known today as the Organization for Democracy and Economic Development²⁰⁶. It was formed initially by two members of the CST - Azerbaijan and Georgia - and two other non-members, namely Ukraine and Moldova. GUAM became GUUAM when Uzbekistan joined, but got rid of the second 'U' when in 2006 Uzbekistan decided to walk out of the partnership and join the new structure of the CSTO. Uzbekistan decided to rejoin the CSTO after a massive domestic oppression of Uzbek citizens by local authorities in 2005. The US and other western partners had turned their back against the Uzbek regime and called for an international investigation of the events. This led Uzbek officials to expel the US base at Khanabad and freeze their relations with NATO. Russia, as did China, decided on the other hand to support Uzbekistan. They condemned the Western influence in the region and political rapprochement ensued.²⁰⁷ The reintegration of Uzbekistan into the CSTO marked clearly the break with the West, and reinforced strategic partnerships with Russia.²⁰⁸

The other Central Asian states members of the CSTO seem to support further deepening and integration within the organization essentially to tackle the dangers emanating from the borders of Afghanistan. At the same time they have been active in cooperation with NATO through the Partnership for Peace and have accepted bilateral aid and advice from the USA on non-state challenges, so they keep their options open. Tajikistan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan have in fact balanced their relations quite skilfully with Russia through the CSTO on the one hand and the US through NATO on the other, as well as using the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) framework to validate their economic cooperation with China.

²⁰⁶ Organization for democracy and Economic Development – GUAM, *Global Security*, <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/int/guuam.htm>, accessed 19 November 2010.

²⁰⁷ Marlène Laruelle, Russia's Central Asia Policy and the Role of Russian Nationalism, *Central Asia-Caucasus Institute and Silk Rode Studies Program*, April 2008, p. 12, http://www.isdp.eu/images/stories/isdp-main-pdf/2008_laurelle_russias-central-asia-policy.pdf, accessed October 17 2010.

²⁰⁸ Marlène Laruelle, *op.cit.*, p. 17.

Kyrgyzstan has ‘played both ends against the middle’ in a particularly open and sometimes blunt fashion, but it is in a unique position to do so as the only state in the world having on its territory both a Russian and an American base.²⁰⁹ Kyrgyzstan has used that position to get financial contributions from each. In 2006, Russia announced that it would increase its troops based in Kant from 300 to around 750 and invest more in military equipment.²¹⁰ After this proposal, Kyrgyz officials decided to raise the rental of the US Manas base to 150 million US\$ for 2007, which was a hundred times more than what the US had been paying up until then.²¹¹ The US did not give in on the rent and continued paying 15 million dollars but that year they also launched an aid programme and a financial package worth 150 million dollars.²¹² Kyrgyzstan was therefore clearly using the balancing card to extract financial contributions from both sides.

Russia has always been very active in keeping close ties with Kazakhstan and Tajikistan. For Tajikistan, Russia has shown its importance in securing the state and this was proved when Russian troops stepped in and helped Tajikistan during the civil war from 1992 to 1996.²¹³ Tajik officials have often stated the importance of good relations with Russia distinguishing this bilateral partnership from the secondary value of the multilateral institutional frameworks emerging in the post-Soviet space. As stated by then Foreign Minister of Tajikistan Talbak Nazarov, in 2004: “Although we [Tajiks] believe that greater cooperation with neighbouring CIS countries is important to Tajikistan’s development, constructive political relations with Russia are a strategic imperative.”²¹⁴ It is interesting to make this point because were a civil war to break out in Tajikistan tomorrow, it would be unlikely Russia could intervene through the CSTO as it would be regarded as an internal matter and could well be viewed differently in various CSTO capitals. It is not known however whether Russian led troops would step in directly to protect Russian ethnic citizens living in Tajikistan and/or to secure the country’s outer border, which is especially sensitive for Moscow given its closeness to Afghanistan. It needs to be kept in mind that Tajikistan has a 1,400

²⁰⁹ Marlène Laruelle, *op.cit.*, p. 15.

²¹⁰ *ibid.*

²¹¹ *ibid.*

²¹² *ibid.*

²¹³ *ibid.*

²¹⁴ Country Risk Summary: TAJIKISTAN, *Emerging Europe Monitor: Eurasia*, 8(3), March 2004, p. 5.

kilometre-long border with Afghanistan²¹⁵, making it vulnerable to any smuggling through its state. Until the takeover of border control by the Tajik army in October 2005, Russian military troops safeguarded them.²¹⁶ The Russian army has however remained present in Tajikistan since the opening of the first permanent base and the largest one outside Russia at the end of 2004.²¹⁷

Kazakhstan and Russia both regard their bilateral relationship as a strategic partnership. As stated in former Russian Foreign Policy: “Kazakhstan is Russia’s key strategic partner and ally in the Central Asian region.”²¹⁸ Several important facts contribute to Russia’s special attention to Kazakhstan. Firstly Russia and Kazakhstan share the longest land border in the world, making Kazakhstan Russia’s natural gateway to Central Asia.²¹⁹ Secondly, Kazakhstan has large reserves of natural resources and has increased its economic status in the region last years.²²⁰ Its participation in the Customs Union with Belarus and Russia is for example of vital importance. Thirdly, 30 percent of the Kazakh population is ethnically Russian, making it the largest Russian community living in Central Asia.²²¹ For its part, Kazakhstan hopes to become “a solid bridge between countries, regions, civilizations, and cultures”²²² and has constructed multiple partnerships ranging from the European Union’s (EU) “Path to Europe” program, NATO’s PfP, its membership in the SCO, as well as its membership to several Russian initiated institutions. Astana has on several occasions stressed the importance of developing relations with the OSCE, NATO, EU and the USA, but only if not at the expense of relations with Russia.²²³ At the meeting of Foreign Ministers of the member states in Minsk, Belarus in May 2011, the Kazakh Minister of Foreign Affairs Yerzhan Kazykhanov stated that “Kazakhstan considers the CSTO as one of the important tools for interaction and coordination

²¹⁵ Marlène Laruelle, *op.cit.*, p. 14.

²¹⁶ *ibid.*

²¹⁷ *ibid.*

²¹⁸ A Survey of Russian Federation Foreign Policy, *Ministry for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation*, (March 2007), http://www.mid.ru/Brp_4.nsf/arh/89A30B3A6B65B4F2C32572D700292F74?OpenDocument, accessed 2 September 2011.

²¹⁹ Aigerim Shilibekova, Russian-Kazakh Security Relations Revisited, *Russian Analytical Digest*, 87, 19 November 2010, p. 7.

²²⁰ *ibid.*

²²¹ Fatima Kukeyeva, Developments and Trends in the Russian-Kazakh Strategic Partnership, *Russian Analytical Digest*, 87, 19 November 2010, p. 6.

²²² Fatima Kukeyeva, *op.cit.*, p. 5.

²²³ *ibid.*

[...], which rightly deserves to be seen as the centre of regional cooperation in the sphere of security”.²²⁴ The CSTO is however not only considered as a defense organization by Kazakhstan but also as an important framework for strengthening bilateral and multilateral relations with other member states of the organization.²²⁵ Kazakhstan for example has regularly promoted the idea of widening the areas of action of the CSTO, making it “more multifunctional, and capable of addressing problems of a wider spectrum”²²⁶. Kazakhstan was also the only member state to sign with Russia the CSTO Plan of Joint Actions for 2009-2010, which covered economic and trade aspects of relations within the CSTO.²²⁷ The economically booming Kazakhstan has therefore used the CSTO in a very wide sense and is certainly in the position to do so in the years to come.

Armenia has aligned with Moscow through the CSTO because it regards Russia as its security guarantor. Armenia views the CSTO as “a framework for Russian protection of Armenian territorial gains against Azerbaijan”²²⁸ following the now frozen Armenia/Azerbaijan conflict of the early 1990s when Armenia occupied Nagorno-Karabakh. Earlier this year, Armenian Defence Minister Seyran Ohanian said at a security conference in Yerevan that “[g]iven Armenia’s membership in the CSTO, we can count on an appropriate response and the support of our allies in the organization, who have specific responsibilities to each other and the ability to react adequately to potential aggression”²²⁹. Even though it would be up to the CSTO’s interpretation to decide to intervene if conflicts were to escalate in the region of Nagorno-Karabakh, Armenia does view the CSTO as an important forum to strengthen its position against Azerbaijan.

Finally, Belarus has often used its membership in the CSTO in order to pressure Russia to maintain or improve its bilateral economic privileges.²³⁰ In

²²⁴ CSTO Member States’ Foreign Ministers Review Coordinated Policies, *Astana Calling*, 160, 31 May 2011, n.p.

²²⁵ Aigerim Shilibekova, *op.cit.*, p. 9.

²²⁶ CSTO Member States’ Foreign Ministers Review Coordinated Policies, *op.cit.*, n.p.

²²⁷ Aigerim Shilibekova, *op.cit.*, p. 9.

²²⁸ Vladimir Socor, The CSTO: Missions, Capabilities, Political Ambitions, *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, 6(25), February 6, 2009, n.p., [http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews\[tt_news\]=34473](http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews[tt_news]=34473), accessed 19 January 2011.

²²⁹ Joshua Kucera, Armenia, the CSTO and Collective Security, *EurasiaNet.org*, May 23, 2011, <http://www.eurasianet.org/node/63541>, accessed 19 January 2011.

²³⁰ Fyodor Lukyanov, Uncertain World: CSTO must evolve into military alliance, *Ria Novosti*, April 28, 2011, <http://en.rian.ru/columnists/20110428/163750621.html>, accessed 23 May 2011.

2009, Belarus played the card of threatening to pull out more than once in the hope of receiving some Russian concessions. That year Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko for example boycotted a CSTO summit (in response to Russia's ban on Belarusian dairy products for a month), declined to take on the rotating chairmanship of the organization and declined the signing of the agreement on strengthening the Collective Rapid Reaction Forces.²³¹ The situation has changed since then and Belarus holds the rotating chairmanship this year. At the last CSTO summit some argued that "Belarus was one of the most enthusiastic summit participants" and Lukashenko used the occasion to state that Belarus did "not have a single CSTO document that is still not ratified".²³² In fact, the President is now actively campaigning for making the CSTO more effective through the strengthening of the Collective Rapid Reaction Forces.²³³ A plausible reason lying behind this shift of Belarusian attitude towards the CSTO may include the consolidation of the Customs Union between Russia, Kazakhstan and Belarus. The Union is in the interests of Belarus which is going through a rough financial crisis. Belarus cannot hope to get any financial aid for the time being from the West considering the evolution of the authoritarian regime of Lukashenko which has lately been much criticized in the West.²³⁴

Russia's dominance combined with other members' varying motives and degrees of enthusiasm does not mean that the latter fail to get any say within the CSTO. They do have a voice and they have used it more than once and gone against Russia's will. The refusal of some member states to support Russia in recognizing the independence of the separatist regions of South Ossetia and Abkhazia after the Georgian war in August 2008 is one example. The fact that the Central Asians in particular have constructed ties with other international partners like the US essentially through the framework of NATO, and with China through the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), has allowed them to exploit the trend of multilateral institutionalization in their own way for purposes of balance

²³¹ Matthew Frear, Friends or Foes? Developments in Relations between Russia and Belarus, *Russian Analytical Digest*, 87, 19 November 2010, p. 2.

²³² Belarus Needs CSTO, CSTO Needs Belarus, *Belarus Digest*, 13 August 2011, <http://belarusdigest.com/story/belarus-needs-csto-csto-needs-belarus-5098>, accessed 9 September 2011.

²³³ *ibid.*

²³⁴ Ilya Pitalev, President Lukashenko says West trying 'to strangle' Belarus, *Ria Novosti*, 21 April 2011, <http://en.rian.ru/world/20110421/163631123.html?id=>, accessed 9 September 2011.

against Russia. This has certainly helped the CSTO to survive in a turbulent time; but whether it points more to an abiding strength or a factor of weakness and vulnerability in the organization is a question for the next section.

3.3. Strengths and weaknesses in a theoretical perspective

The CSTO is young of age and still in the shaping. Compared to NATO that has had more than 60 years of experience, the CSTO has not yet completed a decade since its formal institutionalization. However, its formative period has coincided with the latest phase of NATO's re-invention and has seen both institutions engaged in similar challenges of security management in an unstable and conflict-torn Eurasia. It should therefore be pertinent to apply here to the CSTO some of the same tests and questions already used with NATO to explore the organization's rationale and prospects in the light of various IR theories.

The value of the CSTO is most clearly seen in a realist light when perceived from Moscow. Throughout history Russia has been acutely sensitive to threats from its borders and the risk of encirclement. Linking as many as possible of its Western and Southern neighbours through the CSTO serves the triple defensive purpose of making it harder for them to attack Russia or fight among themselves; allowing Russia to help directly or indirectly in strengthening their outer borders; and preventing or limiting the installation of another regional hegemon (USA, India or China). This explains the major efforts Moscow has made for the CSTO's success, but it does not necessarily mean that Moscow has pursued its realist interests in the most logical and successful manner. In the near term its strategy is complicated by its preference for maintaining differentiated bilateral relations with each other member state for maximum leverage, which does make it harder for the rest to gang up against Russia but also works against solidarity and convergence of strategies in the group.

In fact, Central Asian states lack natural cohesion: most of them actually have chilly mutual relations, and Russia has not helped – with its discriminatory practices and occasional divide-and-rule tactics – to restore any kind of friendly relations between them. For instance, as the economic growth of Kazakhstan has made it a leading Central Asian state, a status formerly held by Uzbekistan as the

most populous, the relationship between the two has often been hostile.²³⁵ The crisis between ethnic Uzbeks and Kyrgyz in the summer of 2010 also shows the fragility in relations between member states. Even though they may be neighbours and members of the same organization, it does not mean they have established natural friendships. Instead relations are mainly strategic and each strives to strengthen its national interests. This works against the possibility of creating a cohesive organization based on mutual interests.

In the longer term, the feature that local states do share – i.e. more-or-less authoritarian regimes – and Russia’s realist choice of policies and structures designed to prop up those regimes, may also lead to the whole security web being fragile and in some ways inefficient. Russia’s willingness to support authoritarian regimes in the region has been explained by Russian officials as a necessity for the time being as states with strong leaders are viewed as being the only tool for developing societies and leading them out of economic difficulties. The meaning of the state’s role for Russia is defined in terms of order versus chaos, or as then Russian President Putin stated in 1999:

For Russians a strong state is not an anomaly, which should be got rid of. Quite the contrary, they [Russians] see it as a source and guarantor of order and the initiator and main driving force of any change. Modern Russian society does not identify a strong and effective state with a totalitarian state.²³⁶

Further, by closing its eyes to humanitarian violations of member countries, Moscow has lured them away from closer Western partnerships, thus allowing it to build up its strategic ‘camp’ in the region to a status more equal to the Western one. As stated throughout this thesis, the main goal of Russia seems to be just this: creating a cohesive group of states that respect the principle of sovereignty and non-interference with internal matters. The trouble is that a grouping of dictatorships is inherently non-cohesive: authoritarian regimes are likely to follow their national interests above and often against the group’s common benefits. This

²³⁵ Jos Boonstra, *Russia and Central Asia: From Disinterest to Eager Leadership*, *EU-Russia Review*, October 2008, p. 72, http://www.eu-russiacentre.org/wp-content/uploads/2008/10/review_viii_final_13_10.pdf, accessed 12 November 2010.

²³⁶ Vladimir Putin, 1999, cited in “The post-Soviet space: a regional security complex around Russia, in Barry Buzan and Ole Wæver *Regions and Powers: The Structure of International Security* (p. 397-422), (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. 407.

policy seems therefore to fall short and might not lead to the construction of a stable security spectrum for the long term.

The willingness of smaller members to stay in the CSTO and of Uzbekistan to rejoin it can also be explained in realist terms. In a world system based on anarchy and self-help, states worry about the hegemonic tendencies of larger actors.²³⁷ According to the realist concept of ‘balance of power’, states may join alliances and coalitions in order to balance against a stronger state or group of states that they see as threatening.²³⁸ They will prefer to do so if possible by working with partners who are not themselves likely to dominate them,²³⁹ but in some conditions they are forced to ‘bandwagon’ with the strongest state available, hoping it will at least shield or deflect the opponent’s attention.²⁴⁰ Walt argues that:

[S]mall and weak states in close proximity to a great power are the most likely candidates for bandwagoning. Because they will be the first victims of an attack, because potential allies may be scarce or distant, and because they lack the capabilities to stand alone or alter the balance significantly, accommodating a neighboring great power may occasionally make more sense.²⁴¹

This analysis makes obvious sense in the case of the CSTO if the non-Russian members are seen as mainly concerned to protect themselves against Western political interference, and/or the intrusion of the American ‘sole superpower’ and the collective strength of NATO into their region. This may indeed be a sufficient explanation for a case like Uzbekistan on the one hand, and Belarus which directly faces an enlarged NATO on its border, on the other. On a practical point, for Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, the main attraction of being committed to the CSTO may be the Russian offer to sell military supplies to them at the same prices and terms applied to the Russian armed forces – being able to

²³⁷ Mette Eilstrup-Sangiovanni, The End of Balance-of-Power Theory? A Comment on Wohlforth et al.’s „Testing Balance-of-Power Theory in World History“, *European Journal of International Relations*, 15(2), (2009), p. 352, <http://ejt.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/15/2/347>, accessed 21 November 2009.

²³⁸ *ibid.*

²³⁹ Stephen M. Walt, Alliance Formation and the Balance of Power, *International Security*, 9(4), (Spring, 1985), p. 5.

²⁴⁰ *ibid.*

²⁴¹ Stephen M. Walt, *op.cit.*, p. 18.

arm itself is the first realist dictate for a state, and these governments have few other willing suppliers.²⁴²

States balance however against threats of which state power is only one component,²⁴³ so to the extent that the Central Asians also hope to use the CSTO against non-state and transnational opponents, their relationship with Moscow may be more subtle than traditional bandwagoning. Further, it is clear from the above that states like Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan are also using NATO and other external relationships to offset their one-sided dependence on Russia within the CSTO: so they are balancing against Russia, as well as bandwagoning with it. If that side of their strategy either became stronger or became impossible, would their realist calculations still point to maintaining the CSTO as it is?

If the CSTO is looked at through the lens of neo-liberalism, one can point to the Russian rhetoric which focuses on establishing a wider security system that would follow resolutions from the United Nations' Security Council, thus limiting the scope for unilateral decisions of specific states. The Russian leadership has over the years come up with ideas of changing and reconstructing the current framework of how world affairs should be conducted; leading to more cooperation and mutual assistance of world states in tackling global problems. This goes in line with neo-liberalism which suggests states can better handle world affairs within institutional frameworks in which all member states join efforts in order to more effectively meet current situations. These kind of ideas were present in Russian Foreign Policy in 2008,²⁴⁴ portraying the CSTO as an organization taking effective responsibility for its own region in an institutionalized multilateral mode and in line with UN and OSCE principles fits in very well with this Russian concept of world governance.

Russia's official policy has been "to strengthen the multilateral principles in world politics and to consolidate the central role of the UN in a new multipolar system of international relations".²⁴⁵ However, both Russian actions and Russia's

²⁴² Roy Allison, Regionalism, regional structures and security management in Central Asia, *International Affairs*, 80(4), (2004), p. 472.

²⁴³ Stephen M. Walt, *op.cit.*, p. 35.

²⁴⁴ The Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation, *Kremlin*, 12 July 2008, <http://archive.kremlin.ru/eng/text/docs/2008/07/204750.shtml>, accessed 14 September 2011.

²⁴⁵ Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov Meets UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon (press release), *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation* (information and press department), Moscow, 22 April 2011,

statements in other contexts raise doubts over the genuineness of Moscow's conversion to institutionalism or its prescription for changing the current world order. Russia's use of institutions and promotion of 'alternative' world views, as seen also in the SCO case, seems too obviously linked to the potential benefits for strengthening its own status in particular political avenues. Russia has for example more often than not been opposed to any suggestions emanating from other states on reforming and updating institutions where Russia already has acquired a valuable seat, when this would mean Russia itself weakening or losing an already attained status. Ideas of reforming the United Nations are one example. Russia has been amongst those opposed to widening the circle of privileged nations and this could primarily be explained by the fear of such reform leading to the loss of Russia's veto power within the Security Council.²⁴⁶

Another contradiction in Russia's rhetoric is its approach to reforming the OSCE and abolishing bloc formations within that organization inherited from the Cold War period. On the one hand, Russia's proposals for a new European Security Treaty (EST) have been criticized in the West as highlighting the politico-military, stabilizing, or status quo aspects of the OSCE *acquis* – which can be seen as protecting Moscow's and its friends' positions against further Western encroachment – while glossing over the progressive and libertarian principles that were also central to that *acquis*. Russia itself has been very critical of the OSCE and active in its demands for reforming the organization, arguing among other things that it should focus more on politico-military dialogue and cooperation and less on its 'human' dimension, which Moscow sees as a mere excuse for Western pro-democracy interference within Eastern states. Russia has also demanded to institutionalize the OSCE and grant it a legal personality and capacity in order to transform it into a full-fledged regional organization.²⁴⁷ On the other hand, while criticizing 'blocs' Russia has been active in forming and strengthening new exclusive groupings of like-minded states such as the CSTO. It falls short in explaining why this organization can be regarded as a better choice

http://www.mid.ru/bdomp/Brp_4.nsf/arh/82792914499C4BE9C325787E00213772?OpenDocument, accessed 5 September 2011.

²⁴⁶ George Bovt, Russian Foreign Policy under Dmitry Medvedev, *The EU-Russia Centre Review*, 8, (October 2008), p. 23.

²⁴⁷ Vladimir Socor, Russia-Led Bloc Emerges in OSCE, *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, 4, 16 November 2007, [http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews\[tt_news\]=33173](http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews[tt_news]=33173), accessed 6 September 2011.

for Central Asian states than NATO, simply characterizing the former as ‘good’ while the latter is seen as ‘bad’.²⁴⁸ Therefore it seems that Russia’s general attitude to institutions is to simply use them to multiply its own influence, project legitimacy and respectability. Strengthening the structure of the CSTO as the mirror-image of NATO makes it possible for Russia to counter the Western-led institution with an Eastern organization and to present the latter as somehow NATO’s equal.

For the other member states, the willingness to establish multilateral ties through the CSTO has made it possible for many to use the organization as a platform to evade more harshly asymmetrical bilateral agreements with Russia. Membership within CSTO has on several occasions benefitted the member states and they have been able to use it in order to make their voice heard, as already noted. Security cooperation within the CSTO makes it possible to attain common benefits and tackling threats from Afghanistan has shown to be more effective if jointly attempted by member states. The common interest of stabilizing the borders with Afghanistan has been an important fact, essentially gluing the member states together within the organization.

Neoliberal institutionalism also predicts that institutions contribute to the establishment of common rules and norms on how to best interact on the international field, making relations between institutional members more stable and predictive, thus halting the use of violence. The instability and frequent disputes that still characterize the Western and Southern former Soviet zones, be it with Russia or between other member states, gives reason to believe that the institutionalization and internalization of members’ security ties has not yet been achieved and it may take some time before the organization can act as a whole. Member states have joined forces in order to stabilize the region and better secure their zone but have at the same time failed on several occasions to be internally stable. Unstable states working towards global stabilization is rather contradictory. The still prevalent bilateralism between Russia and post-Soviet neighbours also weakens the neoliberal assumption of states preferring to consolidate multilateral organizations.

²⁴⁸ *ibid.*

One of the main challenges for neoliberal institutionalists is also the problem of defection from cooperation and how to avoid this in an anarchic international system.²⁴⁹ The case of Uzbekistan leaving and rejoining the CSTO has made it hard for member states to believe it will not happen again. This leads to questioning the full commitment of member states other than Russia to the organization. Of course states that seek cooperation do always risk a defecting partner but institutionalists do claim that if the benefits from cooperation are attractive, it will push states to cooperate instead. Defecting partners within the CSTO show that better options are sometimes available. This has however also happened with NATO when France decided to leave NATO's military command in 1966 and did not rejoin it until 2009.²⁵⁰ There is simply not much that leading members within organizations can do to stop the sovereign choices of other member states.

Social constructivism can add some other insights to analyze the strengths and weaknesses of the CSTO. Constructivists emphasize the role of common identity and culture, and member states of the CSTO have had ninety years of establishing some kind of habit through Soviet cooperation. They have a similar military culture and common (Russian) vocabulary, as well as a political culture sharing the same vision of a "strong leadership". This however is only an elite and military culture, and internal protests at various times in all CSTO member states raise doubts whether it represents the will of citizens at large. In that sense, even though member states' officials do share common values to a certain point, if successful internal societal revolutions were to be launched in future this factor could easily be swept away.

It is interesting to note here that after the 'Arab Spring' revolutions that have sprung out in several states (e.g. Egypt, Tunis, Libya, Syria to name a few) since the beginning of 2011, the CSTO has been showing more interest in information security than ever before. The revolutions in North Africa and the Middle East have been related to the growing role of social internet networks that have made it possible for citizens to join voices and disseminate revolutionary

²⁴⁹ Kristin Ven Bruusgaard & Morten Jeppesen, The unrealised case of NATO-CSTO cooperation: Explanations and Prospects, *Forsvarets forskningsinstitutt (FFI)*, 22 June 2007, p. 18.

²⁵⁰ Elitsa Vucheva, France signals full return to NATO, *EUobserver*, 4 April 2008, <http://euobserver.com/13/25921>, accessed 14 September 2011.

appeals to stand up and fight authoritarian rulings. At an informal summit of CSTO's heads of state in August 2011, members agreed to take up measures to fight potential threats that the information and cyber space can bring. Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev stated at the summit that an unregulated information space may pose "threats to regional security and stability in the CSTO member states, especially in the light of the latest developments in the world."²⁵¹ CSTO leaders' clear concern about civilian uprisings in their own countries, because of more open information sharing on social websites, points to an inherent weakness of their authoritarian model since the boundaries of the internet cannot easily be contained and citizens all over the world are striving for more individual liberties.

If the CSTO had been truly active and successful and created common experiences, a kind of institutional and collective 'acquis', it could have created a new regional identity that would gradually strengthen as old Soviet-based habits recede – but there is little or no evidence of this happening. Russia has proposed to create joint events and friendly competitions between military and non-military personnel since 2008.²⁵² CSTO's Secretary General even proposed the creation of "a CSTO youth development-military-sportive club" which would lead to the promotion of patriotism in younger generations as well as give the military role of the CSTO a more positive profile in the different member states.²⁵³ Such top-down and militarized efforts at 'shared culture creation' have however not yet borne fruit, and seem unlikely to do so unless something switches the attitude of Central Asian citizens towards genuine fear of the West.

²⁵¹ Joshua Kucera, With Eye To Arab Spring, CSTO Strengthens Cyber, Military Powers, *EurasiaNet*, 15 August 2011, <http://www.eurasianet.org/node/64045>, accessed 2 September 2011.

²⁵² Alexander Frost, *op.cit.*, p. 89.

²⁵³ *ibid.*

IV. To cooperate or not to cooperate

Members of the CST first invited NATO to cooperate as early as 1993 and contact was established between the coordinating military bodies in the CIS and the NATO Joint Command.²⁵⁴ The cooperation was in place for over a year but in 1995 NATO declined the invitation for further contacts.²⁵⁵ As already established in this thesis, the Partnership for Peace program and the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC) had been established in the meantime and NATO began focusing on working with partners bilaterally instead of dealing with the joint CIS structure. These mechanisms, as already mentioned, did not suffice for Russia. In the logic of things, once it had reconstructed its own military structure, Russia saw itself capable of taking a step further and started proposing new structural cooperation through its own multilateral security institution with NATO. This was in line with its ambitions to acquire an equal status with other world powers and it provides a first, straightforward explanation of why Russia should have been the primary initiator of establishing multilateral ties between the CSTO and NATO.

Some have indicated that when the CSTO was institutionalizing, in 2002 and 2003, informal requests for such a relationship were already being conveyed by Russia to NATO representatives.²⁵⁶ Former president of Russia Vladimir Putin for example hinted at the Rome Summit in 2002 when the NATO-Russia Council was created that Russia was interested in NATO as a “working instrument”, but that it was also important that the alliance granted other international organizations a deeper acknowledgement.²⁵⁷ Putin was mainly referring to the CSTO which was developing its role more seriously at the time, particularly in its

²⁵⁴ Kristin Ven Bruusgaard & Morten Jeppesen, *op.cit.*, p. 12

²⁵⁵ *ibid.*

²⁵⁶ *ibid.*

²⁵⁷ Vladimir Putin, “Address”, in NATO-Russia Council: Rome Summit 2002, *op.cit.*, p. 18.

function of combating terrorism.²⁵⁸ Then, once the CSTO was officially institutionalized, it formally proposed cooperation to NATO following a CSTO summit in Astana in June 2004, during which the organization adopted a document on fields of possible cooperation with NATO.²⁵⁹ That same summer, the CSTO Secretary-General sent a formal request to then NATO Secretary-General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, proposing to set up cooperation mechanisms between the institutions.²⁶⁰ NATO did not respond to the request and instead stayed silent.²⁶¹ A year later, Vladimir Putin brought up the issue in a meeting with de Hoop Scheffer during the latter's visit in Moscow.²⁶² No hint of a breakthrough was given after the meeting however and NATO still did not answer the request. The debate about cooperation between the CSTO and NATO receded somewhat after that, linked with the general deterioration in relations between Russia and the West. In recent years however, officials (mainly Russian) have brought up the possibility of cooperation on several occasions.

With the election in 2008 of the new Russian President Dmitry Medvedev, new discussions followed on whether to establish multilateral cooperation between the CSTO and other international organizations like NATO. Medvedev stated in Berlin on 5 June 2008 that his country wanted to put an end to a world security structure divided by bloc formations.²⁶³ Russia argues that all nations of the Euro-Atlantic area should pause and question the current security system which in the view of Russian leadership has 'destructive tendencies'.²⁶⁴ As Russia sees it, there is still no inclusive security mechanism in Europe for cooperation in the fields of "countering drug trafficking, terrorism and cybercrime, biosecurity,

²⁵⁸ Alyson J.K. Bailes, "Regional Security cooperation in the former Soviet area", in SIPRI Yearbook 2007: Armaments, Disarmament and International Security, op.cit., p. 173.

²⁵⁹ Alexander Nikitin, The End of the Post-Soviet Space: The Changing Geopolitical Orientations of the Newly Independent States, *Russia and Eurasia Briefing Paper 07/01*, (London: Chatham House, February 2007), p. 10; "CSTO Council passed document on main directions of cooperation with NATO", <http://www.panarmenian.net/eng/news/10785/>, accessed August 17 2011.

²⁶⁰ *ibid.*

²⁶¹ Gennedy Pulin, The CSTO and NATO: Allies or enemies?, *Voenna-Promyshlennyi Kurier*, 27, (July 2005), p. 2 [Translated by Pavel Pushkin], <http://www.armeniandiaspora.com/showthread.php?33704-THE-CSTO-amp-NATO-Allies-or-enemies>, accessed January 19 2011.

²⁶² *ibid.*

²⁶³ "President of Russia Dmitry Medvedev's Speech at Meeting with German Political, Parliamentary and Civic Leaders", *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation* (Information and Press Department), Berlin, 5 June 2005, http://www.mid.ru/bdcomp/Brp_4.nsf/arh/C080DC2FF8D93629C3257460003496C4?OpenDocument, accessed 5 September 2011.

²⁶⁴ *ibid.*

collective prevention and reaction to emergencies and humanitarian crises, environmental protection, and efforts to meet environmental challenges, including global climate change”.²⁶⁵ As the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, Alexander Grushko, put it: “ideologically driven stereotypes should not remain an obstacle to the highly needed cooperation between NATO, EU, CIS, OSCE and CSTO on concrete security problems, not to mention Afghanistan”.²⁶⁶ The security cooperation would in this sense make the participation of states inclusive and equal.

Even though the CSTO has for many years sought to establish a multilateral cooperative framework with NATO, the latter has done its best to avoid addressing the issue altogether. Most of the time, NATO has met the CSTO’s invitations with silence, giving the impression that the idea is considered irrelevant for the western organization. NATO would probably at least have addressed the question and answered it in a diplomatic manner were it seen to have real-world relevance. This has not been the case however. Ever since the first proposition was made and still up to today, Russian officials have expressed their discontent with the lack of response from NATO, signalling that “[t]hey have simply ignored us”.²⁶⁷

The next section will examine the reasons put forward for multilateral cooperation between the two entities, and test the logic of Western rejection of these reasons, by applying the same three IR theories that have guided the analysis up to now.

4.1. Reasons to cooperate

The emergence of new global problems has made it difficult for states to tackle them by themselves and states have therefore sought to join forces with others through alliances. Not only Russia, but other member states of the CSTO as well as must see concrete advantages in collaborating against such threats, especially in

²⁶⁵ Sergei Karaganov & Timofei Bordachev, *Russia and the U.S.: Reconfiguration, Not Resetting*, *Russian in Global Affairs*, 3, (5 September 2009), p. 13.

²⁶⁶ Alexander Grushko, “Proposals from the Russian President Dmitry Medvedev on the New European Security Treaty: Origins and Prospects”, International Conference Towards a New European Security Architecture?, The International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS), London, 9 December 2009, <http://www.iiss.org/programmes/russia-and-eurasia/events/conferences/conferences-2009/towards-a-new-european-security-architecture/keynote-address-alexander-grushko/?locale=en>, accessed 19 January 2011.

²⁶⁷ Kristin Ven Bruusgaard & Morten Jeppesen, *op.cit.*, p. 23.

the economic and security fields, as shown by the fact that since the end of the Cold War numerous regional institutions have been constituted in the post Soviet space.

For Russia, the current security regime simply does not seem to be effective enough to tackle new and complex threats with Afghanistan being the most salient example. In fact, Russian officials have pushed for multilateral cooperation between the CSTO and NATO essentially in order to handle the problems emanating from the situation in Afghanistan. This also goes in line with neoliberalism which claims that by joining forces, states seek to maximize absolute gains; since stabilizing Afghanistan is in the common interest of both NATO and the CSTO, cooperation seems to be an obvious choice. For the members of the CSTO, and especially Russia, the major concern with regards to Afghanistan is the massive increase of roughly 40,000 percent in the opium cultivation, since the coalition invaded Afghanistan in 2001, and the subsequent outflow of opium and heroin.²⁶⁸ According to a report by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) released in June 2010, hard drugs made from poppy cultivation in Afghanistan kill an estimated 100,000 people per year.²⁶⁹ Russian authorities claim that 30-40,000 of those killed are Russian citizens, and most of the addicts who have reached the number of 2 million in Russia are young people (aged between 18-39).²⁷⁰ This death toll is higher than the total casualty figure during the Soviet war in Afghanistan in the 1980s.²⁷¹

Russia has long criticized NATO's inability or even unwillingness to tackle this problem of opium production. At present, NATO's policy on eradicating poppy fields has proven to be highly ineffective. Opium poppy fields eradication operations are left in the hands of Afghan counternarcotics agencies, which use manual primitive methods, while NATO concentrates mainly on defeating the insurgency and re-establishing a stronger government in Kabul based on law and order. NATO's position on the narcotic problem is that with the rebuilding of the Afghan economy and society, Afghans will begin to earn their

²⁶⁸ Richard Weitz, Russia's dangerous fix, *The AfPak Channel*, 21 June 2010, http://afpak.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2010/06/21/russias_dangerous_fix, accessed 19 January 2011.

²⁶⁹ *ibid.*

²⁷⁰ *ibid.*

²⁷¹ *ibid.*

livings through other means than with drugs. Russia on the other hand believes that the grass-root problem needs to be handled first, namely the drug production, before Afghanistan can have any chance in succeeding in the rebuilding of its society. As mentioned earlier, one of the few areas where the CSTO has actually proven its worth is in counternarcotics operations. Therefore, this issue area could be a viable option for cooperation. However the difference of priorities on how to tackle this problem seems to stand in the way of that happening. This goes in line with traditional realist thinking which predicts that states only cooperate on the basis of shared interests and when faced with common threats. For Russia and its allies in the CSTO, one of the biggest threats emanating from Afghanistan is the increased production of drugs flowing into its territory, while for the US and its allies in NATO, the struggle in Afghanistan is part of the broader war on terror initially launched by the Bush administration.

Russia has been for a long time striving to obtain equal status with central global powers like the US or China, and one of its means of achieving it may be through the formal international legitimization of the CSTO. By legitimizing the CSTO, Russia could both enjoy standing on equal footing with the US as a dominant power within a regional security organization - similar to the US position within NATO; and also shore up its influence with the CSTO member states, possibly undermining their existing bilateral ties through the PfP or the EAPC. NATO would then have to deal with the CSTO as a whole, risking jeopardizing the effectiveness that bilateral ties can entail. As the CSTO is based on consensus between member states, like NATO, the risk of other member states vetoing decisions or operations for potentially useful cooperation may be too high. Neoliberalist institutionalism claims that institutions can lower transaction costs, but in the case of possible CSTO-NATO cooperation, it is likely that the transaction costs – in the sense of reaching agreement and consensus – would be too high and therefore inhibit cooperation. If looked at from a neorealist perspective, national interests would carry more weight than the interests of the organization as a whole, if one state saw strong reason to use its veto.

This analysis underlines that there are both practical and political reasons – some reasonable and some selfish – as to why the CSTO is seeking to cooperate with NATO. The last section will examine whether or not such cooperation is plausible.

4.2. Reasons not to cooperate

There is limited information publicly available regarding NATO's attitude towards creating formal ties with the CSTO. One of the few examples is a recommendation revealed in 2010 from a working group of experts who were preparing the ground for a new strategic concept for NATO that was released by the end of that year. It was recommended that NATO should forge more formal ties with other organizations, including the CSTO, and that: "[a]ny such relationship should be based on the principles of equality, mutual trust, and mutual benefit".²⁷² However, when the new strategic concept was released, there was no mention of the CSTO and again the focus was primarily on strengthening bilateral ties with Russia.²⁷³ This comes as no surprise, as according to several NATO officials, the alliance prefers to further develop the bilateral cooperative structures that already exist between NATO and CSTO member states.²⁷⁴

One reason why cooperation is not plausible is the fact that the CSTO is not institutionalized enough. The levels of institutional development between the two organizations are simply incompatible. While NATO is highly institutionalized after 60 years of existence, the CSTO is by comparison still in its infancy. In addition, the CSTO's smaller member states lack the commitment needed to reach a higher level of institutionalization. This is not to say that it is not possible for the CSTO to become truly institutionalized but the present situation clearly prevents the two organizations from working together.

Another theoretical perspective that can be used to analyze whether cooperation between these organizations may be plausible is social constructivism. On the one hand, cooperation could be seen as a positive way to enhance understanding between the two organizations and provide a platform to gradually form shared interests, which, as mentioned earlier, can only be developed through interaction. On the other hand, such cooperation would not be

²⁷² Madeleine K. Albright et al., *NATO 2020: Assured Security; Dynamic Engagement*, 17 May 2010, Brussels: NATO Public Diplomacy Division, p. 30.

²⁷³ NATO, "Strategic Concept For the Defence and Security of the Members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation", 19 November 2010, <http://www.nato.int/lisbon2010/strategic-concept-2010-eng.pdf>, accessed 19 November 2010.

²⁷⁴ Kristin Ven Bruusgaard & Morten Jeppesen, *op.cit.*, p. 23.

plausible at present because of two major factors: as there is no formal interaction, the values gap between the two entities is very real and perpetuates the lack of trust that is partially to blame for the lack of willingness to cooperate. This is then a vicious cycle where creating mutual understanding and shared interests, let alone a common identity, is very hard to achieve. Second, were NATO to recognize the CSTO as an equal and treat it as such, it could be seen as compromising its core values by essentially validating authoritarian rule and regional hegemony as a legitimate form, which is practically inconceivable.

In the end, however, it seems that realism provides the best explanation of why cooperation between the CSTO and NATO is not plausible, namely through its assumption that states are power seeking, and think in zero-sum terms. From that perspective, were NATO to formalize ties with the CSTO, this would result in an increase of Russian influence over other member states of the CSTO and conversely, a decrease in NATO/US influence in the region. This partly explains NATO's preference for maintaining bilateral ties with members of the CSTO. Most interestingly in support of this realist assumption is that after a US State Department cable was released by Wikileaks in early February 2011, it became relatively clear that the US was amongst those against any establishment of formal ties between NATO and the CSTO. The cable, originally sent on 10 September 2009 from an inside source in Anders Fogh Rasmussen's office who was apparently feeding US intelligence, reveals that Rasmussen was going to propose formal engagement with the CSTO in his first speech as Secretary General of NATO.²⁷⁵ The cable stated that:

NATO Secretary General Rasmussen may be planning to take improved NATO-Russia relations to a new level by proposing that NATO engage with the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO). [...] To date, the CSTO has proven ineffective in most areas of activity and has been politically divided. NATO engagement with the CSTO could enhance the legitimacy of what may be a waning organization, contributing to a bloc-on-bloc dynamic reminiscent of the Cold War. Instead, we should focus our efforts on improving the US relationship with Russia bilaterally and through NATO.²⁷⁶

²⁷⁵ Joshua Kucera, U.S. Blocking NATO-CSTO Cooperation, *European Dialogue*, 14 February 2011, <http://eurodialogue.org/osce/US-Blocking-NATO-CSTO-Cooperation>, accessed 14 February 2011.

²⁷⁶ *ibid.*

The cable furthermore stated that NATO's EAPC is the proper venue for engagement with member states of the CSTO as they are all partners in that Council. This would be preferable to validating the CSTO and thus increasing Moscow's influence over Central Asian and other member states of the CSTO.²⁷⁷ A few days later, the US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton instructed the US ambassador to NATO Ivo Daalder to raise certain points with Rasmussen before his speech. He was to strongly urge Rasmussen not to announce any new NATO-Russia initiatives that had yet to be formally discussed between members of the organization.²⁷⁸ This US intervention seemingly worked as Rasmussen made no mention of the CSTO in his speech but focused instead exclusively on enhancing and strengthening bilateral ties with Russia. From this information, it therefore becomes abundantly clear that any formal ties with the CSTO are not possible, or at least for the time being.

²⁷⁷ *ibid.*

²⁷⁸ *ibid.*

Conclusion

With new global problems threatening the entire World community, one would have assumed that it is in the common interest of all threatened parties to join forces in order to better tackle them. That has however not been the case thus far, as this thesis has illustrated. The underlying reasons behind Western unwillingness to establish some kind of a new cooperative framework between two military organizations, namely the CSTO and NATO, do not seem unjustified. In fact, they seem rather practical and clear-cut.

Interests and identities are not fixed however, but subject to challenges and interrogation and, thus, to change. As social constructivists point out, actors are not simply puppets of social structures, since they can challenge and adapt the ‘intersubjective structures of meanings’ of today’s world order. One way of doing so is through their communicative practices as noted by Jürgen Habermas.²⁷⁹ According to Habermas, in order for dialogue to be effective and lead to any kind of evolution, making it eventually possible to change a stalled situation or relations between interlocutors, several preconditions need to be met. First, interaction partners have to be able to empathize with each other, that is to see things from the interlocutor’s side.²⁸⁰ Second, agents need to share a ‘common lifeworld’, i.e. a set of common views and interpretations of the world and of themselves, which can be provided by a common history or culture.²⁸¹ Third, actors need to recognize each other as equals and have a fair access to the discourse.²⁸² This last point also implies that other actors have equal access to it, making the discourse public and visible to all. Only with these three conditions combined will relationships of power and force be absent.²⁸³

²⁷⁹ Jürgen Habermas, *Theorie des kommunikativen Handelns*, Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, p. 209. Cited in Tomas Risse, *op.cit.*, p. 10.

²⁸⁰ *ibid.*

²⁸¹ *ibid.*

²⁸² Tomas Risse, *op.cit.*, p. 11.

²⁸³ *ibid.*

Habermas' reasoning can be used when the relations, or rather the lack of them, between the CSTO and NATO are put to the test. As is clear from the analysis in this thesis, these three preconditions are far from being met at present. NATO's historic inability to grasp or respect Russia's vision of NATO's expansion being a threat to its own security is one clear example of a lack of empathy. Recently, there seems to be a tacit understanding between Russia and NATO that no new members from the post-Soviet space will be granted membership in the near term, but it is far from clear that this will ease Russian concerns to the extent of allowing any real common vision of East European security. Secondly, the CSTO and NATO member states seem to lack a common lifeworld, with differing views on how the internal affairs of particular states should be handled, with the CSTO members believing in strong leadership and sovereignty on the one hand and with NATO members promoting liberal values and democratic rule on the other. They also have a differing view on how world order should be organized and international relations conducted. Russia for example holds to the idea of the world becoming multipolar with three or four leading poles, one of them being led by itself, while the US has clung firmly to its view of a unipolar global order. There are however signs that the world is already shifting to a multipolar system and that the US will eventually have to adapt to such reality accordingly. Finally, the limited institutionalization and practical achievements of the CSTO compared to that of NATO – for instance, the lack of CSTO intervention operations – has made it difficult for the latter to acknowledge the former as its equal. The CSTO will therefore not be granted the status of an 'interlocuteur valable' with NATO in the foreseeable future.

Of these various obstacles, the more structural and subjective ones (corresponding to liberal institutionalist and social constructivist analyses) are inherently less likely to change: but how stable is the realist calculation? The underlying problem of misunderstanding and tension between Russia and the West has its ups and downs, and it is not impossible that a future period of greater relaxation could open more scope for reassessing the CSTO. During 2010 when NATO was seeking 're-set' in its own relations with Russia, Western states raised no objection to actions taken by the Kazakhstan Chairman-in-Office of OSCE that in practice gave the CSTO greater recognition and representation than before in that institution's work. A more specific and stronger realist motive for at least

tolerating a CSTO role might perhaps arise after eventual NATO withdrawal from Afghanistan, when the task of containing disorder and non-state threats from that country would fall on others. If the CSTO increased its effectiveness on the basis of a manifest joint interest of its members in meeting this challenge, its success would be in Western interests even while its methods might offend Western sensibilities.

For the present, the realization of a framework of a combined security space seems to depend too much on the relationship between the United States and Russia: they both hold a leading role in their respective organizations and have been able to use that position in getting many of their national interests across, even or especially when using institutions as ‘multipliers’ for national influence. By comparison, NATO’s handling of the SCO is interesting, as the latter is also a very young organization led by both China and Russia. Although there were misgivings in the beginning about the intentions and motives of the SCO, NATO’s attitude towards the SCO has been much more open and enthusiastic than it has been towards the CSTO. There are at least two reasons for this; firstly, the SCO is not solely dominated by Russia, but probably owes its main inspiration and dynamics to China which has not had an antagonistic relationship with NATO in the past. In addition, the SCO is not a military alliance but much rather a regional cooperation organization covering a wide range of security dimensions plus economic and energy affairs. Secondly, the SCO presents itself as a new type of regional organization, covering a space which has no shared institutional traditions from the Cold War, and is in no way trying to emulate NATO with regards to structure and operational capability. The CSTO however has always been viewed by NATO as a paper institution trying to mirror its structure and only copying its operational procedures.

It is like a story of two brothers where the elder has excelled in playing the piano and is recognized worldwide as a leading artist. The younger brother, full of admiration for his successful elder brother, has come of age and taken up the piano as well. He practices hard and wants to reach the same level of success as his older brother but the gap between them was already so great that the likelihood of catching up and being able to play alongside him is low. Incidentally, they find out that they have a half-brother in another village who also happens to play an

instrument, except that he has taken up the violin and has attracted quite some attention. The latter, corresponding to the SCO, is likely to be a more congenial partner for both the original brothers.

The fundamental question for the CSTO is thus whether it should continue to play the piano or whether it should perhaps take up another instrument. If the CSTO is not able to further institutionalize and create more harmony among its members, the latter option might be feasible. But as any musician will tell you, practice is the key to success and patience is a virtue. Staying the course and focusing on developing the CSTO as an organization that will be capable to step in and work with NATO, or even take over from it, as has been suggested in the case of Afghanistan, is probably the wisest choice at present.

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List of abbreviations (acronyms)

ATC	Anti-Terror Center
ATU	The Action against Terrorism Unit
CCS	The Council on Collective Security
CFSP	Common Foreign and Security Policy
CIS	The Commonwealth of Independent States
CMFA	The Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs
CMD	The Council of Ministers of Defence
CPF	The Collective Peacekeeping Forces
CRRF	The Collective Rapid Reaction Force
CSSC	The Committee of Secretaries of the Security Councils
CST	The Collective Security Treaty
CSTO	The Collective Security Treaty Organization
EAG	The Eurasian Group on Combating Money Laundering and Financing Terrorism
EU	The European Union
EAPC	The Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council
EST	European Security Treaty
FSB	Federal Security Service
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GUAM	The Organization for Democracy and Economic Development
IMU	The Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan
IR	International Relations
ISAF	The International Security Assistance Force
NACC	The North Atlantic Cooperation Council
NATO	The North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NRC	The NATO-Russia Council
OSCE	The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe

PfP	The Partnership for Peace
PJC	The Permanent Joint Council
SG	Secretary-General
SCO	The Shanghai Cooperation Organization
UK	The United Kingdom
UN	The United Nations
US	The United States