

## THE DEVELOPMENT OF EUROPEAN SECURITY, 1989-1998

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May, 1998

As soon as the Berlin Wall came tumbling down towards the end of 1989, an intense discussion developed among academic and non-academic analysts about the future of the European continent and its security. This debate spawned a virtual industry: a score of experts of all stripes rushed to describe, theorize, and predict Europe's condition. While the optimists talked about the "dawn of a new era" characterized by permanent peace between the European states, the more pessimistic commentators warned that a new multipolar Europe could possibly return to its not-so-distant violent past. Nine years have passed since the end of the Cold War and, therefore, there exists empirical evidence to assess at least tentatively the fruitfulness of the hitherto debate.

The purpose of this essay is precisely this kind of assessment. Its first part will evaluate on both theoretical and empirical grounds several early works that have analyzed the new European reality. The second part will, then, try to make sense of the developments in the last nine years and present the author's own understanding of the direction European security has taken in the last nine years. The paper will argue that the early observers by and large erred in their analyses: *the pessimists were too pessimistic and the optimists were too optimistic*. On the one hand, the pessimists were wrong in expecting the return to a multipolar system and to serious interstate tensions. Europe has witnessed, save the one ambiguous exception of Nagorno-Karabakh, in the period between 1989 and 1998 an interstate peace. The incontestable military dominance of a US-led NATO alliance and the political clout and widespread influence of European institutional structures, such as the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), have been responsible for this peace. All major security decisions since 1989 have been contrived by the Americans -- *US military power* has without doubt had no equal in Europe and this state of affairs is unlikely to change soon. This phenomenon was coupled with the strength of West European *institutions*, particularly the European Union (EU). Remarkably, most former communist states promptly accepted their liberal democratic *ideas* of state behaviour both in their constitutions and their political practices (though here some of them were frequently less than perfect).

On the other hand, the optimists were wrong in discounting the political salience of ethnic tensions in some parts of Europe and expecting the emergence of collective security arrangements centred around the CSCE. There were several instances of bloody intrastate conflict, and though this violence always had entirely indigenous roots, no existing European mechanism showed any effectiveness to deal with them. The CSCE, into which so many hopes were invested, while deeply influencing interstate behaviour, proved unable to moderate the Nagorno-Karabakh confrontation, prevent various civil wars, or to stop them quickly once they had broken out. In fact, it was the US that had to intervene to end the vicious cycle of ethnic

violence, most notably in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Despite high hopes of some authors no distinctly European defence system has been devised and what is even more surprising, with the exception of France, no country has expressed a great interest in having such a system.

*Though neither the pessimists nor optimists expected it, the US-led NATO is today and will likely be long into the future the primary security body and stabilizing force in Europe.*

Compared with the Cold War, however, its function has been expanded. NATO has been in recent years steadily moving from being the collective defence alliance of the West into a wider political-military organization for security cooperation which steadfastly attempts to influence developments beyond its borders. By raising the specter of membership to qualified applicants, NATO has made, together with the EU, many states in Eastern and Central Europe adopt Western practices of domestic behaviour, constitutional democracy and free market economy being the most important ones. Its step-by-step enlargement process and, at the same time, extensive cooperation with non-member states promises the best chance of creating Europe free of not only interstate, but also intrastate, armed conflicts. It will be above all through the US-led NATO that Europe will be gradually expanding into a fuller pluralistic security community. Compared with the Cold War, however, its function has been expanded. NATO has been in recent years steadily moving from being the collective defence alliance of the West into a wider political-military organization for security cooperation which steadfastly attempts to influence developments beyond its borders. By raising the specter of membership to qualified applicants, NATO has made, together with the EU, many states in Eastern and Central Europe adopt Western practices of domestic behaviour, constitutional democracy and free market economy being the most important ones. Its step-by-step enlargement process and, at the same time, extensive cooperation with non-member states promises the best chance of creating Europe free of not only interstate, but also intrastate, armed conflicts. It will be above all through the US-led NATO that Europe will be gradually expanding into a fuller pluralistic security community.

### **Theoretical approaches to post-Cold War European security and early developments**

The first significant contribution to the theoretical debate about Europe's prospects was that of neorealist writer John Mearsheimer. In his article, pointedly titled "Back to the Future" (1990), he contended that Europe was bound to return to its fractious, balance-of-power history. Identifying himself as a structural realist and believing that the bipolar distribution of power is inherently more peaceful, Mearsheimer argued that in the emerging multipolar structure the odds of war would increase since countries would view "each other with greater fear and suspicion, as they did for centuries before the onset of the Cold War (Mearsheimer, 1990: 47)." He worried that European states, particularly those in East Central Europe, released from superpower domination and control, would at least in some cases go at each other's throats over old territorial and minority disputes. After all, East Central Europe had been in the interwar period a hub of revisionism and the beginning of the Cold War made a formal settlement of the Second World War impossible. The domestic character of post-1989 European states was for Mearsheimer irrelevant - it was the allotment and character of military power that he argued would determine peace or war. Seeing the departure of the Soviet troops from East Central Europe and the collapse of the Warsaw Treaty Organization, he assumed that the US would do the same and that NATO, facing no threat, would cease to function as an alliance. Assuming this scenario, his lengthy analysis then concluded: "the demise of the Cold War order is likely to increase the

chances that war and major crises will occur in Europe (Mearsheimer, 1990: 52).” As a policy prescription he suggested that Germany acquire nuclear weapons and thus complete a circle of major European players with nuclear weapons. Nuclear deterrence, the believed guarantor of “long peace” in the Cold War Europe, was thus to be continued, albeit in a multipolar garb.

Whatever one thinks of neorealist theory, its merits or faults were not the biggest problem of Mearsheimer's article. The essay's most serious shortcoming was that it had never explained the rationale for thinking that the US was going to abandon the continent -- and yet the whole argument was built on this premise. Put briefly, what needed to be proved was simply assumed. Though a reasonable expectation could have existed that the US would significantly reduce its military contingent (as it did, to approximately one third of its pre-1989 numbers), the US had no compelling reason to retreat from Europe or disband the NATO alliance. First, the European and America positions in the immediate post-Cold War international system were very different from those of the pre-1939 world. Whereas before 1939, with virtually all great powers being European and with outside powers only occasionally stepping in the European theater (like the US did in 1917,) one could have reasonably talked of Europe as the international system, the results of the Second World War took away that preeminent position and Europe became just a part of a truly global international system. This global system was, moreover, dominated by superpowers which were geographically either non-European (the US) or largely non-European (the USSR). Even Mearsheimer's neorealist colleague Kenneth Waltz recognized that “for the first time in modern history, the determinants of war and peace lay outside the arena of the European states (Waltz, 1979:150).” After the power position of the USSR had suddenly collapsed, the US was bound to have a significant say in European developments. *While in 1917 the US was present on the continent as an “outsider”, in 1990 it was there as the most powerful “insider”.*

Second, not only Americans did not want to leave -- West Europeans themselves strongly urged them not to go. As Steve Weber points out, NATO has never been just a mere anti-Soviet coalition, but a peculiar mixture of alliance and pluralistic security community (Weber, 1992: 366). He reminds us that the cardinal goal of the alliance - to defend its territory against external invasion from the Soviet Union - was always balanced against the security community goal - to prevent the use of force among the NATO members, and particularly to solve the Franco-German security dilemma (Weber, 1992: 366). No one was from the very beginning of the “new era” more vocal about preserving the US role in Europe than Germany. Holger May argues that:

Transatlantic relations and a special, that is, especially close, relationship with the United States represent the most important factors in determining Germany's room for maneuver in security policy globally as well as in Europe. Together with the United States, Germany can pursue its interest without making its neighbours “nervous”... A strategic alliance between the United States and Western Europe is of utmost importance (Mey, 1995: 313-4).

And third, there was no reason to think in 1990 that no threat would ever come from the weakened Soviet Union. Even if one could discount the possibility of deliberate hostile behaviour on the part of Moscow, it was reasonable to expect domestic instability in the Soviet Union and subsequent international uncertainty. In 1988, for example, a large-scale violent

conflict broke out between two republics of the USSR, Armenia and Azerbaijan, and the government in Kremlin proved unable to quell it. Despite the friendly Soviet behaviour toward the West, the US had reasons to worry in 1990 that the Soviet leadership might lose effective control of the country. All these facts were known around the time Mearsheimer was writing his article -- they did not require prediction -- and yet he chose to ignore them. However, the simple fact is that the Cold War ended when the USSR withdrew its military forces from Central Europe, including Germany, and Germany was allowed to reunify and remain in NATO. There were no plausible reasons to believe that Europe would move in the direction of multipolarity once the US had become the undisputedly strongest military power, not just in Europe, but indeed the whole world.

A much more optimistic picture of Europe's post-Cold War condition emerged from the account provided by Charles and Clifford Kupchans (1991). These authors argued that erecting a collective security structure in Europe was both viable and desirable and that this structure was to function similarly to the nineteenth-century Concert of Europe (Kupchan and Kupchan, 1991: 115). Their conviction, as that of many other optimists, was that a pan-European order predicated on the notion of all for one and one for all could best preserve peace and stability in the post-Cold War era. They advocated that the CSCE be recast to function as such a concert-based collective security organization even though they recognized that it would have to rely on a small group of major powers -- the US, the USSR, Britain, France, and Germany -- to guide its operation. In their proposal:

NATO would gradually cede more security functions to the CSCE. The eventual endpoint would involve the dismantling of NATO and the transformation of the CSCE into an effective and viable collective security structure built around a small and workable concert of the big five (Kupchan and Kupchan, 1991:161).

This optimism was supported by the fact that the CSCE, set up in Helsinki in 1975 by all European countries (with the exception of Albania) and Canada and the US, was already dealing with a multitude of issues that could serve as a basis of new relations among European countries: political-military confidence building measures; human rights, and scientific, cultural, and educational cooperation (Maresca, 1985). In 1990 these cooperative measures were strengthened when the CSCE adopted "the Charter of Paris for a New Europe". The Charter emphasized explicit connection between domestic behaviour of governments and international conflict by stating that the foundations of peace reside in democratic ideas and in domestic political and economic practices rather than in military power and its distribution among states (Holsti, 1994: 42). It thus reaffirmed the ideal expressed in the Helsinki Final Act that *collective security in Europe is not limited to relations between states, but also involves intrastate behaviour* (Zielonka, 1991:128). In the language of the Charter peace in Europe (and indeed "from Vancouver to Vladivostok") was "indivisible" and, hence, intrastate violations of the CSCE principles constituted as much a threat to European security as did interstate ones. The Paris summit declared "that security is indivisible and that the security of every state is inseparably linked to the security of all CSCE participating states (quoted in Lutz, 52)." *In other words, external security was to be inextricably intertwined with internal security.*

The Paris conference decided that there would be cooperation within the CSCE would increase and that this would be done by formal institutionalization of the Conference. It was agreed that: 1) the CSCE would become on January 1, 1995 an Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE); 2) a council of foreign ministers would be established and would meet annually and; 3) a permanent secretariat would be founded in Prague, a Conflict Prevention Center in Vienna, and an Office for Free Elections in Warsaw (Adler, 1992: 307). As well, a mechanism was created for convening security emergencies and dealing with conflict resolution. Perhaps most importantly, in the very same month that the Charter was signed the European states concluded, under the auspices of the CSCE, an arms control Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) Treaty. This treaty was significant not only because it considerably reduced conventional forces, but mainly because it created *transparency* and *compliance-verification mechanisms*. States were to have permanent access to information about other states' armed forces - their size, composition, armaments, basing and deployment, maneuver schedules, or training routines. Furthermore, stockpiles, storage depots, and manufacturing facilities were to be open for outside inspection (Ullman, 1991:142). Robert J. Jackson is right when he claims that "the CFE gave a new pan-Europeanist vision to military security and contributed to a growing commitment to reassurance, as opposed to the former Cold War deterrence philosophy (Jackson, 1992: 10)." This treaty all but eliminated the threat of Soviet or Russian conventional attack that had hung over Western Europe since 1947 (Mandelbaum, 1996: 94).

These early developments were watched with a great deal of verve in many policymaking quarters, particularly in Central Europe. In 1991 Jiri Dienstbier, the foreign minister of Czechoslovakia, expressed the same sentiments as the Kupchans had a year earlier when he argued for an OSCE-based pan-European framework that would guarantee Central Europe's security (Dienstbier, 1991). He came up with a specific proposal - the setting up of a European security committee and a military committee. The latter committee was to be placed directly under the advisory committee of foreign ministers, while the security committee was to have approximately the same competence as the UN Security Council (van den Doel, 1994: 4). This type of enthusiasm among Central Europeans was, however, short-lived. The dramatic turn of events in the former Yugoslavia and in the former Soviet republics was drastically diminishing Central European enthusiasm for the OSCE. The civil wars in Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Georgia, Moldova, Tajikistan, and Chechnya fully revealed the inability of the OSCE to function as a collective security mechanism. The utterly inadequate response that was coming from the OSCE hardly demonstrated the "indivisibility" of peace in Europe. The mood among many swiftly changed - as one book hyperbolically but pointedly put it in its title - "from euphoria to hysteria" (Haglund, 1993).

What did lie behind this ineptness of the OSCE and the astonishing speed with which the initial excitement about the potential of the OSCE evaporated? For one thing, there was the lack of determination or will on the part of the main powers to commit themselves and put a stop to certain conflicts i.e. a classic problem of collective action (Lachowski and Rotfeld, 1997:121). All armed conflicts that broke out were purely domestic wars and even the one interstate conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan was, as already indicated, a civil-conflict leftover from the late 1980s. Why should have, for instance, Great Britain forcefully intervened in the hostilities between Abkhazia and the government in Tbilisi? As James Goodby comments, "the value assigned by governments to collective security was not weighty enough to overcome claims of

national interest... Major nation-states concluded that the benefits of enforcing international norms were not equal to the costs of doing so (Goodby, 1993: 319)." Even the conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh was unable to generate anything but indifference of most states.

Secondly, the CSCE decision-making process was undermined due to its requirement of unanimity and the non-binding character of its resolutions - hardly an efficient enforcement mechanism (Duke, 1994: 377-9). Until its breakup in January, 1992 the USSR, to give an example, insisted, contrary to the spirit of the Charter of Paris, that the CSCE should prevent only conflicts *between* countries and not interfere in disputes *within* states (Weitz, 1993: 350). When fighting between Croatia and the Yugoslav National Army had commenced in earnest, the Yugoslav representative easily vetoed the CSCE endorsement of the unfavourable EC-sponsored peace plan (Weitz, 1993: 352). As a result, the Conference did little to terminate the escalating civil war - it merely kept adopting ineffectual resolutions. As for the war between Armenia and Azerbaijan, the CSCE was able to achieve only a rather unstable cease-fire. If we consider that this conflict started in 1988, cost thousands of lives and displaced another thousands of people, the shaky 1994 armistice does not appear as a very impressive accomplishment.

And thirdly, the CSCE, already a universal regional organization, was after the disintegration of the USSR in 1991 enlarged to include fifteen more member states. It is fair to say that within the newly-expanded CSCE there was a relatively little shared sense of interest and values (Van Evera, 1994: 242). Why should have Moldova looked at European affairs through the same lenses as, say, Portugal? Why should have the government in Belgrade in the summer of 1991 accepted democratic proposals to end the violence in Yugoslavia when it itself was not democratic? Collective security arrangements, as Woodrow Wilson firmly believed and as the League of Nations learned the hard way in the 1930s, necessarily require agreement on political values. The fact remains that the CSCE could not exert much leverage over states not yet ready for a security community (Weber, 1992: 382). When Richard Ullman predicted in 1991 that Europe's peace would be by and large divisible, he was right (Ullman, 1991: 144).

Despite the failure to establish anything remotely resembling the ambitious Paris plan of 1990, the fact remains that there has been a stable interstate peace on the continent. It can even be argued that *interstate security is in today's Europe established more firmly than ever*. Ken Booth was right when he predicted in early 1990 that "violence.. in Europe.. is more likely to be internal rather than taking that particular form known as war (Booth, 1990: 44)." Besides the case of Nagorno-Karabakh, the closest two states have come to war was in 1994 when Greece and Turkey, though allies in NATO, almost launched an armed conflict over the disputed islands in the Aegean sea. How does one explain this peace even though Europe has been witnessing more intrastate violence than in the preceding decades? The following pages will show that a *combination of US military and political preponderance, Wilsonian ideas; and European institutions*, though not being able to prevent the outbreak of domestic violence in some countries, *at least accounts for the absence of classic interstate wars*. However, *the current process of gradual integration of Central and Eastern Europe with Western institutions such as NATO and the EU, albeit slow and protracted, will likely eliminate the prospects of intrastate wars as well*.

### **Assessing European security after 1989**

As John Mearsheimer rightly noted, the lack of peace conference after the Second World War and the outset of the Cold War swept under the rug a myriad of potentially serious international problems. Most importantly, West Germany had to accept the division of Germany and the loss of territories given to Poland and the USSR. In addition, Poland was forced to accept giving up its parts of Lithuania and Belarus; Hungary and Bulgaria were forced to accept, respectively, the 1920 Trianon and the 1919 St. Neuilly boundaries; Czechoslovakia had to accept giving up parts of Transcarpathian Ukraine; Italy had to give up small parts of Slovenia and Croatia; Finland had to recognize that its southernmost territories conquered by the USSR in the 1939 war would remain under Soviet sovereignty; and Romania had to accede to the loss of northern Bukovina and Bessarabia. Most of these settlements were the result of either Soviet imposition or the Soviet-UK-US compromise. The maintenance of this post-war order was then to a large extent guaranteed by Soviet military power.

One of the priorities of post-war Soviet foreign policy, particularly in the 1960s, was to codify legally the territorial status-quo and thus strengthen the USSR's dominant position in East Central Europe. This effort succeeded in Helsinki in 1975 - in the Final Act of the conference European states together with the US and Canada pledged that the boundaries in Europe are inviolable and cannot be changed by force. They could have been changed, the Act stipulated, only through the consent of all parties concerned. As Kal Holsti notes, the Helsinki Act embodied at least one of Wilson's notions from 1919 - peaceful resolution of territorial disputes between states and ruling out of war (Holsti, 1994; 42). Though the USSR almost certainly did not have Wilson's ideas in mind when drafting its proposal of the Final Act, the Helsinki treaty would prove to have lasting and deep effect on the behaviour of the European states.

The Charter of Paris confirmed the principle from 1975 and, remarkably, the concrete policies of states followed it. When the Berlin Wall was dismantled and it became apparent that Germany could reunify, it was understood by everybody that the merger of Western and Eastern Germany would not reopen the question of Germany's eastern border. To give another example, listing the potential trouble-spots, Mearsheimer mentioned the possible Hungarian claims of Transylvania, a region of Romania heavily populated by ethnic Hungarians. Instead of military conflict, however, already in June, 1990, on the seventieth anniversary of the signing of the Trianon Peace Treaty, the six parties represented in Hungary's parliament issued a statement specifically reaffirming Hungary's commitment to the Helsinki Final Act (Larrabee, 1991: p. 69). Later, in what can only be described as a frenzy of bilateral treaty-signing between "problematic" countries, Germany and Russia, Germany and Poland, Germany and the Czech Republic, Hungary and Romania, Poland and Lithuania, Poland and the Ukraine, Russia and Finland, Russia and Romania, Romania and the Ukraine, the Ukraine and Hungary, the Ukraine and Slovakia, and Hungary and Slovakia, again using the language of and referring directly to the provisions of Helsinki and Paris, affirmed their borders and vowed to solve their disputes by peaceful means alone. *The developments after 1989 have demonstrated that there is no revisionist state in Europe.* This, of course, reduces significantly any chances of interstate war.

Of special significance is the interstate stability that followed the breakup of the Soviet Union. While there are some disputes between the successor states, especially when it comes to the treatment of the Russians living outside Russia, these states mutually recognized each other's existence and borders. Even the buffer dispute over the Crimean peninsula and the Black Sea

fleet was settled peacefully -- the Ukraine and Russia signed in 1994 a basic treaty of friendship that confirmed the borders between the two countries, declared Ukrainian sovereignty over Crimea and divided the fleet. Furthermore, in some cases *the externalization of previously internal problems (i.e. declaration of independence by a constituent part) seemed to stamp out the prospects of future violence*. While there was a military crackdown against Lithuania in January, 1991, once Lithuania's independence was internationally recognized and Lithuania became a member of the CSCE, no violent incidents between Lithuania and Russia would be repeated. Similarly, once Slovenia and Croatia were recognized as independent states, the military conflict between them and the Yugoslav government came to a swift end. Both countries later signed border-affirming treaties of mutual recognition with the new, smaller Yugoslavia. Both Slovenia and Croatia were also able to settle old disputes with Italy - Rome recognized both the territorial status-quo and the existence of both states. It thus gave up its claims from 1945-7.

However, *the externalization of previously internal problems in most cases worsened the domestic conflict even more*. The recognition of Croatian independence only heightened the resolve of Croatian Serbs to fight the Zagreb government and, hence, intensified the civil strife in Croatia. The Serb hopes of uniting their "Republic of Krajina" with Serbia were quashed by the recognition of Croatia and afterwards they perceived their battle with the Croatian government as a life-and-death struggle. The same can be said about the reaction of the Bosnian Croats and Serbs to the recognition of Bosnian independence (their secessionist territories were respectively called "the Croat Republic of Herceg-Bosna" and "the Republic of Srpska"). There were also other cases. After Moldova had become sovereign, its Russian minority proclaimed a "Transdnester Republic" and tried to separate. After Russia had become sovereign, the Chechen Republic proclaimed independence and tried to secede from Russia. After Georgia had become sovereign, the Abchazians also declared their own republic and tried to leave Georgia. Most recently, the Serbian province of Kosovo demonstrated its determination to achieve independence from the already diminished Yugoslavia. The unwillingness of the international society of states to recognize independence of these secessionist entities led on the one hand to a greater assertiveness of the established states to use of force against secessionists and, on the other, to sometimes desperate acts of resistance by secessionists. In all the cases the result was escalation of violence.

This essay by no means wants to suggest that the way to solve all the above mentioned civil wars was to recognize each secessionist entity as sovereign. But, as already indicated with respect to the CSCE, no other way was devised either and, as a consequence, some states felt that their *external security* was endangered. *Ad hoc* solutions of various institutions (European and non-European, such as the UN) proved to be mostly feckless and did not inspire the confidence of countries potentially endangered by civil unrest in the Balkans and the former Soviet Union. More broadly, they revealed how underdeveloped are the international norms dealing with civil wars. Especially countries of Central Europe began to fear that conflict from the east and southeast of Europe may threaten their security -- by, for instance, creating an enormous wave of refugees. Instead of pressing the initial concepts of a pan-European collective security framework (seeing none in sight), they already in 1992 began to demand membership in Western military and political institutions - above all NATO and the EU. They began to look for security guarantees that, they had thought, would work - in collective defense, not collective security, structures.

These demands caught NATO initially by surprise. Having lost the adversary that many say is necessary for maintaining a functional alliance, NATO plunged after the end of the Cold War into an understandable identity crisis. Initially it was unclear what the purposes of the alliance should be -- this uncertainty, as indicated, prompted both the pessimists and optimists to argue that NATO's days were numbered. However, *right at the beginning it was firmly resolved that NATO was not going to dissolve*. The primary reason was, as Rob de Wijk, a high Dutch official in the alliance, asserts, "the residual threat from the Soviet Union (de Wijk, 1997: 46)." This threat was different from the one NATO was used to in the Cold War: it stemmed not from potentially antagonistic intentions of the mighty superpower, but from the domestic instability the declining Soviet Union found itself in. The NATO communiqué from May, 1990 recognized that the military risks facing NATO had been greatly reduced; nonetheless it was the alliance's view that change carried with it "instability and uncertainty" and that the USSR would "continue to retain substantial, modern and effective nuclear and conventional forces (quoted in Broadhurst, 1993: 60)." If anything, the unrest in Lithuania in January, 1991, the *putsch* against Mikhail Gorbachev in August, 1991, the dissolution of the USSR in January, 1992, and President Yeltsin's attack on the Russian parliament in October 1993 only corroborated these fears of the "residual" threat.

Still, an intense debate raged over the precise functioning of the alliance, the role of the US in it, and the position towards Central European states which soon wanted to become its members. France proposed a two-pillar command structure (separate for North America and the continent) and thus sought to minimize what previously was an overwhelming influence of the US in European security affairs. Paris argued that a European Security and Defence Identity (ESDI) had to be developed and that this process should be closely coordinated with the Western European Union (WEU) and the EU, which itself in the 1991 Maastricht Treaty expressed the determination to establish in the near future a common foreign and defence policy. France expected that the WEU, which had since its foundation in 1954 vainly hoped to become a distinctly European defence association, would acquire vital operational capacities which in the early 1990s were possessed only by the Americans, but which were essential to enable independent execution of large-scale military operations (de Wijk, 1997: 80).

The US certainly encouraged the Europeans to take more responsibility for their own security, particularly when it came to civil conflicts in Eastern and Southeastern Europe. They had no interest in intervening directly, for example, in the Yugoslav crisis (the largest of these conflicts) and urged its resolution through the EU, the WEU, the CSCE and later the UN means. Their only interest was in preventing the conflict from becoming internationalized - that is why the US agreed to send its forces to patrol the Macedonian border. Washington wanted to maintain its primary say in Europe's external, interstate security affairs and if the Yugoslav bloodshed had a chance of international spill-over, it was by way of directly involving the historically explosive territory of Macedonia.

However, the efforts of the above mentioned organizations to assuage the vicious civil war in Yugoslavia spectacularly failed. It became increasingly clear that, particularly in Bosnia-Herzegovina, no peace can be established without a massive military operation which would involve thousands of ground troops. It also became apparent that only NATO has the capability to carry out such operation and that no such capability exists without the US military

involvement. For all its hackneyed rhetoric of the European defence identity, France balked at attempting to lead, say, a WEU undertaking in Bosnia. No European country (France eventually included) wanted to act without the American participation. The peace in Bosnia was established only after the US, acting on a desperate EU request, took charge of the peace negotiations and committed its armed forces to guarantee it. The 1995 Dayton Accord on Bosnia showed that *Europe is not able to solve on its own its security problems*. David Haglund concluded that "if the vision of a common Western European security and defense policy was in part inspired by a quest to become more autonomous from Washington, then the fighting in the Balkans reveals how distant that vision remains (Haglund, 1993:1-2)."

The continuing leadership of the US has been, however, conspicuous also in several other important security decisions. For one, the US resoundingly rejected the French proposal of a two-pillar NATO command structure. In fact, as late as last year, it refused, despite bitter protests from some allies, to entertain even an idea of allowing for the first time in NATO history non-American generals to occupy leading positions in the unified command. When several names of European generals for heading the supreme military command in Mons, Belgium and the southern military command in Naples, Italy were mentioned in NATO circles, the US vehemently opposed their candidacy. One can speculate as to why the US continues to insist so strongly on leading the most important military positions within NATO, but the fact remains that *unless the structure of the present American-dominated integrated military command is changed, it is not possible to talk about genuinely European security*.

The US dominance has been obvious even in political decisions of NATO. In 1994 the US single-handedly and without any notable consultation with its allies put across the groundbreaking Partnership for Peace (PFP) proposal. This initiative built on a 1991 US initiative (shortly after the attempted *putsch* in Moscow) to create a North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC) and reach out to the countries of Eastern and Central Europe, many of which were showing signs of notable domestic instability. The creation of NACC was adopted despite French reservations and involved the acceptance of Central and Eastern European liaison delegations and observers at Brussels headquarters and at a number of committee meetings (Nye and Keohane, 1993:120). This move first indicated that NATO was moving from the maintenance of a collective defence capability to a more varied, multidimensional approach with an emphasis on *political* cooperation with the non-NATO countries in potential risk of domestic political rupture. NATO's new strategic perspective, adopted during NATO's Rome summit in November, 1991, took on a new task of trying to eliminate the risk of adverse consequences of instabilities that may arise from the serious economic, social and political difficulties, including ethnic rivalries and territorial disputes, which are faced by many countries in Central and Eastern Europe... They could lead to a crisis inimical to European security and even to armed conflicts (quoted in Allen, 1993: 72).

The PFP, then, sought to involve *militarily* those CSCE countries outside NATO that wished to cooperate closely with the alliance and thus abate the above mentioned risks. In total twenty six countries, including Russia joined the PFP, among them even the neutral states of Sweden, Finland, and Austria. The main areas of cooperation have been: joint military exercises, preparations for possible joint peacekeeping and humanitarian operations, standardization, interoperability, democratic control over armed forces and transparency of this control (Kelleher,

1995:176). NATO recognized that the enlargement of the alliance was not a question anymore -- the only two questions were, according to the speech given by president Clinton in January, 1994, who would become its members and when (quoted in Mandelbaum, 1996: 45)-- and the PFP initiative sought to capitalize as much as possible on the leverage the West has had over transitions in Eastern and Central Europe. The ensuing military cooperation was to give at least partial answer on who is eligible to join NATO - the PFP participants had received an opportunity to prove whether they are able and willing to take up all the responsibilities expected of NATO members. The US made through its secretary of defense William Perry very clear that the gates of NATO membership are opened to every European state, including Russia (Kelleher, 1995:102).

In 1997, during the summit of the heads of NATO states in Madrid, the first decision on the enlargement of NATO was taken and, again, the whole decision-making process was dominated by the US. In spite of the fact that majority of NATO members (nine out of sixteen, including France, Germany, and Italy) wanted to admit also Romania and Slovenia, the US ensured that only the three candidates of its choice (the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland) would get in. The manner in which this decision had been reached demonstrated minimally two phenomena: 1) that the way NATO governs itself and makes decisions is not democratic, if by democracy we mean that the will of majority prevails; and 2) that Europe is in no conceivable sense multipolar. The vociferous opposition of Russia to NATO expansion simply did not matter. The Russian proposal, continually voiced over a period of about five years, that in future NATO should be subordinated to the OBSE and that the OBSE rather than NATO be the basis of European security, was flatly rejected.

If the above paragraphs left the feeling that the attitude of the US has been close to dictatorial, this impression is misleading. The US administration has always argued that those with the greatest responsibility should have the greatest say in decision-making. The fact remains that the US has carried the brunt of responsibility for the external defence of NATO, the NATO response in Bosnia as well as its enlargement. It would have been completely unrealistic to expect an extensive US participation in European security with the US being cut off from the effective military command of NATO (the establishment of the two-pillar command structure would entail this). The leading role of Washington was, furthermore, brought about by the failure of European states to solve European problems. The US had to intervene in and mediate even the dispute between Greece and Turkey in 1994 - the efforts of the EU to solve the critical situation between the two states utterly failed. Washington also masterminded and paid for the crucial transfer of all nuclear arsenal from the territories of the Ukraine, Belarus, and Kazakhstan to Russia and achieved that these three states acceded to the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty. Most recently, the US brought together all parties in Northern Ireland to solve the 30-year old wave of ethnic violence there and was able to reach a peaceful settlement. This is something the EU did not even try to do, even though both Ireland and Great Britain are its members.

An additional reason for the de facto leadership of the US in European security matters is that only very few European countries seem to mind it. France's position has been an exception rather than the rule. Tony Judt put forward a blunt explanation of this attitude: "the US presence [on the continent] has relieved European states from the obligation to practice, or even design, a foreign policy of their own... [They] were quite pleased to keep the US in a post-Cold War Europe (Judt,

1997: 43)." Whether one agrees with this slightly cynical tone or not, the truth remains that an overwhelming majority of West Europeans (and now also East Europeans) feels that European stability can be assured only through a potent US presence. The late Norwegian foreign minister Johan-Jorgen Holst gave the European skeptics of the US role on the continent a strong challenge when he said that "there is no European substitute for the United States Navy or the American nuclear umbrella (quoted in Broadhurst, 1993: 62)."

That the European institutions are not effective in resolving continental security problems was most recently demonstrated when a civil strife broke out in Albania in 1997. The WEU despite its effort failed to manage the crisis and prevent a massive exodus of refugees. This was achieved only after Italy and Greece had decided to lead a limited intervention to Albania - these countries had, of course, been the most menaced by the uncontrolled departure of thousands of Albanians. The WEU, which was declared by the Maastricht Treaty to be an integral part of the EU, has been, as Allen Sens puts it, "trapped in a perpetually stillborn status (Sens, 1994: 23)." All of its members are also members of NATO and there has simply been no notable desire to replace a functioning NATO with an exclusively European defence organization. Such replacement would be, among other things, extremely costly and continually decreasing defence budgets after 1989 frustrated every hope of building up such an organization (Rijk, 1997: 124). The state of the EU common foreign and defence policy is today no better than that of the WEU - so far it has completely failed to take off ground.

The failure of plans to have effective European-only military arrangements should by no means lead to the conclusion that European institutions had no or little role in ensuring stability on the continent. In fact, the most important of them, the European Union, was acknowledged by NATO to have a unique role in fostering a more secure Europe. The 1994 NATO declaration on enlargement insisted that "the enlargement of NATO will complement the enlargement of the European Union, a parallel process which also, for its part, contributes significantly to extending security to the new democracies in the East (quoted in Rijk, 1997: 89-90)." One must keep in mind the pluralistic security dimension NATO always had: security within NATO became connected to the particular domestic characteristic of states that were also mentioned in the Charter of Paris -- multiparty democracy, human rights, minority rights, and economic freedoms (Weber, 1992:389). NATO has certainly been set to expand to only those countries with which it mutually shared political values -- this was, of course, objective of the EU as well. As an institution NATO has understood what the CSCE in practice could not understand: that only countries with very similar political culture and standards of behaviour can hope to form an effective collective security framework.

Already soon after the revolutions of 1989 NATO officials made clear that continued improvements in bilateral relations depended on the East European governments sustaining their democratic reform programs. The NATO secretary-general Manfred Woerner told Romanian foreign minister Adrian Nastas in February, 1991 that, in return for improved ties with NATO, Romania must continue to democratize (Weitz, 1993: 344). NATO and the EU have been both prepared to keep persuading those states that wanted to become their members in specific directions of social and economic change and well aware that they have considerable resources at hand to push for that transformation (Weber, 1992:366-8). *In this endeavour they have followed the Wilsonian belief that ultimately only liberal democracies can establish stable peace both at*

*home and abroad. They have, therefore, acted in accordance with the principles espoused in the Charter of Paris.*

The strongest leverage of the European Union over Eastern and Central European governments, all of which had already in 1990 declared their intention to join the EU, has lain in the economic sphere. All of them have had to grapple with significant economic downfall which had followed the collapse of their centrally-planned economies. One of the most pressing challenges for Central European states has been to reorient their export markets from the bankrupt East to the wealthy West. Up to eighty percent of foreign trade of these states (Nicolaidis, 1993: 200) was before 1989 conducted within the Council of Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA) area and was oriented mostly towards the Soviet Union. After 1989 the demand for exports from the Soviet Union sharply declined and Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia and other states were left with a dilemma of redirecting their foreign trade. Indeed, as Kalypso Nicolaidis notes, increased access to Western European markets was seen as one of the most crucial components for the viability of radical economic reforms and was, hence, the core objective of economic policymakers in the former communist countries (Nicolaidis, 1993: 197-8). The main difficulty these reformers faced was that the EU, a natural new trading partner for the former CMEA states, was relatively protectionist and was not eager to open its borders to products from the East.

Yet it was clear that the main contribution the EU could make to security of the continent was through increased efforts to stabilize the economies of East Central Europe and the newly independent states of the former Soviet Union (Goodby, 1993: 318). *Security problems were for many of these states to a considerable extent political economy problems as the persisting economic rupture did not bode well for the prospects of domestic stability.* Some of them needed to receive credits and direct aid, some of them needed to have their debts pardoned, some of them wanted to abolish their total dependence on Soviet/Russian vital natural resources (crude oil and natural gas), and all of them urgently needed the EU market and Western foreign investment to substitute the lack of domestic capital.

All of this gave the EU powerful leverage to shape internal and external policies of its eastern neighbours. Its organs, among other initiatives, established direct aid funds for both East Central Europe (PHARE) and the Commonwealth of Independent States and Georgia (TACIS) and were seminal in founding the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) in London. The EU leaders have made repeatedly clear that the Union was not going to give economic assistance to those states that failed to guarantee minority rights, refused to undertake economic reforms, decided to manage relations with their neighbours other than peacefully, or failed to move in the direction of establishing multiparty democracy and independent judiciary.

These demands were all voiced when the EU moved to sign associate membership agreements with the former communist states in 1991-2. If a country wanted to be considered as a prospective member of the EU, then it had to adapt and *harmonize* its policies and domestic institutions with the EU standard. The price of admission was constitutional democratic government and the code of conduct laid down in the European Convention on Human Rights and its supplementary protocols. Governments had to recognize that in order to obtain benefits of membership in Europe's economic institutions they had to belong to the Council of Europe and therefore accept both the scrutiny of the European Commission on Human Rights and the

jurisdiction of the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg (Ullman, 1991:146). In some instances no arm-twisting has had to be done. The Visegrad countries of Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia, for instance, all issued orders that no legislation should be passed without checking first its conformity with EU law (Keohane and Hoffman, 1993: 400). Hence, they set themselves to adjust all domestic laws and regulations to fit Union requirements. These countries, propelled by historical memories of victimization in the times of European instability, were only too eager to implement the EU-like policies and, in return, quickly "return to Europe".

The EU will soon embark on negotiations with the Czech Republic, Poland, Hungary, Slovenia and Estonia on bringing them to the EU because they satisfied both the political and economic requirements of the EU. On the other hand and at the same time, these negotiations will exclude, for instance, Slovakia (a former front-runner for membership in the EU) because despite its impressive economic results its government's domestic behaviour repeatedly undermined the conviction that Slovakia was moving in the democratic direction. For the same reasons Slovakia was kept out of NATO enlargement in Madrid (despite its active engagement in the PFP and the generally high regard for the Slovak armed forces in NATO circles). The Slovak case vividly demonstrates that benefits of joining NATO and the EU will be withheld from those countries that do not wish to conform to the prerequisites of thorough democratization.

It remains to ask oneself what are the main dangers that Europe faces as it progressively moves towards establishing a continental zone of peace. They lie, it appears, entirely in the possible spill-over effect from the domestic instability in the Balkan peninsula and in the region of the former Soviet Union, i.e. outside of the area of NATO collective defence (and in the case of the new Yugoslavia even outside the PFP area). An example of that could have been witnessed just a month ago. Once violence erupted in the Yugoslavian province of Kosovo, Russia and Western powers, led by the US, quickly moved to contain it. The danger has been that the unrest of ethnic Albanians there could spread to Macedonia, a country with a significant Albanian minority, and Albania proper. What David Singer and Melvin Small called "internationalized civil wars" (Small and Singer, 1982) are today the biggest possible threat to the stability of Europe. The fact that so far widespread civil violence in the Caucasus region and the Balkans have proved to be confinable and that all major states in Europe have an interest in this confinement gives us hope that a response to threatening situations in the future, should they arise, will be eventually found.

## **Conclusion**

Helga Haftendorn, a German political scientist, in 1993 argued that Europe had been "moving from uncertain stability to stable uncertainty (quoted in Haglund, 1993: VII)." Her argument has not proved to be entirely precise. There is little uncertainty as far as interstate conflicts are concerned. The chance of war erupting today between European states is extremely low. The CSCE order, established in Helsinki, confirmed in Paris, and backed today ultimately by US military power, guarantees that. However, there are better mechanisms developed internationally to deal with interstate conflicts than with intrastate ones. The 1990 plans for collective security encompassing both types of conflict without question failed. They were too ambitious: they ignored both the disincentives states may have to intervene in domestic conflicts and the enormous political differences between individual CSCE countries. Wilson's worry that no

workable collective security arrangement could exist between politically heterogeneous entities has once again been fully confirmed.

While the CSCE may have as an institution failed, most of its ideals have not. They have been adopted by both NATO and the EU in their dealings with Central and Eastern Europe. Both organizations have again and again emphasized that they would take as new members only those states that fully embrace democracy and free-market economy. Their overall aim has been to extend gradually the zone of stability eastward. *Their approach has shown that long-term security is not a purely military matter - it also has definite political and economic components.*

Particularly NATO proved to be a flexible alliance. If it has enjoyed a post-Cold War renaissance, it is because of the role the US had in it. The American leadership transformed the collective defence association into a body responsible for managing security in Europe as a whole. For the first time in NATO's history, alliance troops entered combat - not in defence of Western Europe against a massive Warsaw Pact attack, but rather in an out-of-area mission to implement a Bosnian peace plan and prevent violence from spreading elsewhere in Europe. What is perhaps even more remarkable is that this operation was carried out, thanks to the earlier American proposal of the Partnership for Peace, in association with Russia and other former communist states. NATO has demonstrated its ability to establish a pattern of cooperation in policymaking as well as military training and operations that ties old adversaries together in times of crisis. As long as this spirit of cooperation prevails, security in Europe will be ensured.

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