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FIFTY-SEVENTH SESSION

Towards a new security architecture for Europe?
- reply to the annual report of the Council

REPORT

submitted on behalf of the Political Committee
by Arcadio Díaz Tejera (Spain, Socialist Group) and Gerd Höfer (Germany, Socialist
Group), Rapporteurs

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Report transmitted to: the President of the Council of WEU; the Secretary-General of the WEU; the President of the Council of the European Union; the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy; the President of the European Commission; the EU Commissioner for institutional relations and communication strategy; the Presidents/Speakers and the Chairmen of the Foreign Affairs, Defence and European Affairs Committees of the 39 national parliaments represented in the Assembly; the Presidents of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, the Baltic Assembly, the Nordic Council, the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation, the CIS Parliamentary Assembly, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Collective Security Treaty Organisation; the President of the European Parliament; the Secretaries General of the Parliamentary Assemblies of the Council of Europe, NATO and the OSCE.

Towards a new security architecture for Europe? – reply to the annual report of the Council

REPORT¹

*submitted on behalf of the Political Committee
by Arcadio Díaz Tejera (Spain, Socialist Group) and Gerd Höfer (Germany, Socialist Group),
Rapporteurs*

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MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

¹ Adopted by the Committee on 4 November 2009.

RECOMMENDATION 842²

Towards a new security architecture for Europe? – reply to the annual report of the Council

The Assembly,

- (i) Welcoming the initiative taken by the president of the Russian Federation, Dmitry Medvedev, to review the existing European security architecture which could contribute to the shaping, progressively, of a Euro-Atlantic security space, whole and free, providing common and indivisible security for all;
- (ii) Believing that Russia's recognition of the two breakaway regions of Georgia, its military build-up there, its continued occupation of Georgian territory and the continuing disputes over its observance of international commitments made in August last year raise question marks over the very principles President Medvedev has set out as integral to the kind of new security architecture he wants for Europe;
- (iii) Convinced that a common security system in which all countries enjoy equal security can only work if all partners share common values;
- (iv) Aware that Russia wishes to base the new Euro-Atlantic security architecture on a legally binding treaty signed not only by all OSCE participating states but also by the existing security organisations operating in the Euro-Atlantic area, including NATO, the Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO) and the OSCE itself and taking note of the Russian draft for a European Security Treaty published on 29 November 2009;
- (v) Noting that the vast majority of OSCE participating states are reluctant to envisage new institutions for, or a new treaty on European security but agree on the need to improve the functioning of the existing structures;
- (vi) Convinced that any Euro-Atlantic security architecture, to be successful, needs to better integrate Russia, which is not a member of the two most active institutions, NATO and the European Union;
- (vii) Stressing that there are other countries in the OSCE area, in particular in central Asia, that do not belong to either the EU or NATO but wish to improve their security dialogue with them;
- (viii) Aware of the ongoing division inside the EU and NATO about future relations with Russia and the continuing apprehensions of some member states about potentially greater Russian influence over the EU and NATO;
- (ix) Noting the many grievances Russia has expressed with regard to the functioning of the OSCE, particularly in the balance of its three dimensions;
- (x) Considering the opportunities the NATO-Russia Council (NRC) can offer for cooperation between NATO member states and Russia, but noting also the frustration Russia has expressed with regard to the NRC and aware that the NRC has yet to prove its lasting capacity to serve as a platform for confidence-building and conflict prevention;
- (xi) Considering that there is intensive cooperation between the European Union and Russia over a wide range of issues based on increasingly important trade relations, including in the energy sector, but stressing that there is far too little cooperation in the field of security and crisis management;
- (xii) Considering that President Medvedev's proposal for a reform of the existing Euro-Atlantic security system needs to be seen in connection with his efforts to reform and modernise his country;
- (xiii) Believing that internal reform will contribute to the credibility of Russia's claim to be part of the wider Euro-Atlantic family of democracies, interested in active governance of the common security challenges they face;

² Adopted by the Assembly on 1 December 2009 at the 1st sitting.

(xiv) Believing that Russia should review its relations with its neighbours, which are marked by a lack of confidence and by suspicion, characterised by a desire to restore the country's former influence and overshadowed both by its often unconstructive involvement in what are known as the "frozen" conflicts and, in particular, by the way it conducts its energy policy;

(xv) Welcoming the launch of the Corfu Process within the OSCE establishing a structured dialogue aimed at rebuilding trust and confidence among member states, improving the functioning of the present OSCE mechanisms and achieving a better implementation of existing commitments;

(xvi) Encouraging OSCE participating states also to use the Corfu Process to explore areas where adaptation and reform of existing mechanisms and commitments are necessary, to develop proposals for new forms of conflict prevention and management and to identify and address new and emerging threats to Euro-Atlantic security;

(xvii) Stressing the importance for other organisations involved in Euro-Atlantic security, in particular the EU and NATO, of conducting a policy that does not run counter to or give the impression of contradicting the main objectives of the OSCE;

(xviii) Finding it useful for the European Union and NATO to engage in a dialogue with the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and the Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO),

RECOMMENDS THAT THE COUNCIL INVITE THE WESTERN EUROPEAN UNION MEMBER STATES, AS MEMBERS OF THE EUROPEAN UNION, TO:

1. Respond more positively to the initiative taken by the Russian President to review the existing security architecture and invite Russia also to submit its proposals to the EU and NATO, so as to find new forms of cooperation that better involve Russia in the security dialogue inside the EU and NATO;

2. Use the Corfu Process not only to identify:

- Inconsistencies,
- inefficiencies,
- selective implementation and
- subjective interpretation

of existing commitments and mechanisms but also to explore areas where adaptation and reform of OSCE responses are necessary, such as

- terrorism,
- fundamentalism,
- conflicts bordering the OSCE area,
- organised crime,
- illegal immigration,
- human trafficking,
- drug trafficking,
- energy supply,
- cybercrime and
- climate change;

3. Give priority to resolving the frozen conflicts;

4. Develop a new system of arms control for Europe taking account of the changes that have taken place since the signing of the 1999 agreement on the adaptation of the CFE Treaty and the Istanbul Commitments;

5. Deepen practical cooperation with Russia on Afghanistan, in particular with respect to training and equipping police forces and the transit of civil and military matériel and explore the possibility of involving the CIS and CSTO in that cooperation;
6. Develop a new concept for cooperation with Russia on civilian and military ESDP crisis-management operations;
7. Launch a joint assessment by the EU and Russia of emergent and new threats to Euro-Atlantic security;
8. Encourage NATO to invite Russia to make a contribution, with its views, to the Alliance's new Strategic Concept;
9. Invite the CIS and CSTO to make proposals for cooperation with the EU and encourage NATO to do likewise;
10. Support interparliamentary dialogue on the Euro-Atlantic security architecture;
11. Increase efforts to inform public opinion about the security challenges in the Euro-Atlantic area, thereby paving the way for more public support for crisis management.

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

submitted by Arcadio Díaz Tejera (Spain, Socialist Group) and Gerd Höfer (Germany, Socialist Group), Rapporteurs

I. Introduction

1. The question as to whether Europe needs a new security architecture was put back on the international agenda in June last year by President Dmitry Medvedev of the Russian Federation, less than a month after the new president took office and before the war in Georgia brought Russia and NATO close to a cold war-style confrontation and shook the foundations of Europe's security structures.
2. President Medvedev's move is a sign both of Moscow's growing concern, rightly or wrongly, that Russian views tend to be ignored and of the country's increasing self-confidence, emboldening it to seek a revision of existing security structures, the better to serve its interests.
3. By contrast to President Putin's speech at the 2007 Munich Security Conference,³ President Medvedev's initiative is not only a "cri de coeur", and a criticism of NATO and the West, but also an invitation to dialogue.
4. Russia regards the existing European security system as "West-centric" and unable to prevent and respond to crises. The current set-up relies too much on NATO, thereby excluding others and harming their essential security interests.
5. Given the global nature of today's security challenges, Russia wants to stop bloc approaches to security and to promote a pan-European security system which will enable "effective coordination of the efforts of the various international agencies active in the area of security in the Euro-Atlantic region"⁴ and ensure lasting security for all member states from Vancouver to Vladivostok. What President Medvedev is really looking for is, in fact, a revision of the Euro-Atlantic security architecture.
6. In Russia's view, the new security architecture should be based on a legally binding treaty and should strengthen the principle of the indivisibility of security in the Euro-Atlantic area, the lack of which it sees as the main structural shortcoming of the current set-up.
7. The treaty should be signed not only by all OSCE participating states but also by the existing security organisations such as NATO, the CSTO (Collective Security Treaty Organisation)⁵ and the OSCE itself. Russia wants to correct three major trends that it has observed since the ending of the cold war and which it perceives as threatening its security interests: no country must be allowed to assure its own security at the expense of others; measures on the part of military alliances or coalitions of countries that undermine the unity of the common security area should not be permitted; and there should be no expansion of military alliances in a way that threatens the security of other parties to the new treaty.
8. The new treaty should also establish a collective conflict prevention and resolution mechanism and new forms of cooperation in the fields of non-proliferation and the fight against terrorism and organised crime, as well as reinvigorating arms control.
9. The present opens numerous windows of opportunity for a major revision of the current Euro-Atlantic security architecture. First, the new American President and his administration enjoy much more positive relations with Moscow than did the previous one. According to President Medvedev,

³ www.securityconference.de

⁴ Sergey Lavrov, statement at the opening session of the OSCE Annual Security Review Conference, Vienna, 23 June 2009, www.osce.org

⁵ CSTO has seven member states (Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan).

Washington now listens to what Russia has to say and takes Moscow's views into account.⁶ Second, a window of opportunity has been opened with the beginning of negotiations on a new START, the American decision to renounce the installation of elements of its global missile defence system in the Czech Republic and Poland, and the delay in Georgia's and Ukraine's accession to NATO. Third, the shock of the war in Georgia has made everyone realise that something was going wrong within the current European security system. Fourth, the EU and NATO member states share important geopolitical, military, and economic interests with Russia. Fifth, NATO is drafting a new Strategic Concept, thus presenting an opportunity for Russia to make its voice heard. Finally, the Euro-Atlantic community should take advantage of having a politician with reformist ambitions – both internal and external – at the helm in Russia.

10. President Medvedev's initiative needs to be seen in the context of his parallel efforts to reform his country from the inside. In Russia's case, external and internal reforms go hand in hand. In fact, internal reform is almost a pre-condition for successful efforts to review the external security system. In the end, it all boils down to creating the necessary confidence in Russia's claim to belong to the wider Euro-Atlantic family of democracies, interested in an active governance of the common security challenges they face. However, given the difficulties with Moscow in other areas of international cooperation, such as the issue of Russia's accession to the World Trade Organisation (WTO) or its attitude towards a new partnership agreement with the EU, many take the view that Russia must do a lot more in order to show that it is serious about change.

11. It became clear in the course of your Rapporteur's visit to Moscow in October 2009⁷ that Russian officials, experts – including those one might expect to be critical – and foreign diplomats also welcomed the Medvedev initiative because it presented an opportunity for further democratisation and modernisation of the country.⁸

12. Ever since the ending of the cold war and the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact, two important underlying questions have remained unanswered: firstly, what is Russia's place in Europe? And secondly, how can the security requirements of eastern European countries and the successor states of the former Soviet Union best be met? President Medvedev's initiative offers an opportunity to find the answers.

13. One reason why we have still not defined Russia's place in Europe is that Russia itself has not made up its mind fully about the geopolitical role that it wishes to play. Geographically speaking, a part of Russia is European and around 75 % of its population lives in its European part. But Russia is also a Eurasian power that shares borders with China and has close relations with India. The United States is considered "European" in the political sense and is a military ally of 26 European countries. Any successful future European security architecture would better integrate Russia into Europe's security structures without in any way excluding the United States.

14. The current set-up is insufficient to do this. It has clearly not been successful in preventing military conflict, as we saw recently in Georgia, nor is it ready to react quickly and propose sustainable conflict resolution mechanisms. The existing structures have weaknesses that continue to prevent us from efficiently tackling other so-called "frozen" or protracted conflicts in Transnistria, Nagorno-Karabakh and the Crimea, for example, or the Balkans still. A further problem is, as Mark Entin Director of the European Studies Institute at the Moscow State Institute of International Relations (MGIMO) points out, that NATO, and to a lesser extent the EU, are perceived by a large part of the Russian society as aggressively pursuing policies that smack of double standards.

15. This is the third time since the cold war ended that the chance of a truly new beginning in our relations has presented itself. On previous occasions, following the break-up of the Soviet Union and

⁶ Dmitry Medvedev, meeting with students and staff of the University of Pittsburgh, 25 September 2009. <http://eng.kremlin.ru>

⁷ Rapporteur Gerd Höfer had meetings in Moscow from 18 to 20 October 2009. He is grateful to the German Embassy in Moscow and Russian Delegation to the Assembly for their support in preparing and organising the visit.

⁸ This last point was emphasised in particular by Tatiana Parkhalina, Director of the Centre for European Security, Moscow.

in the wake of the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks in the United States, the potential for cooperation was not exploited to the full. Worse, the impression was left that one side had been taken advantage of, given the particular circumstances and balance of power of the time. The US, Russia, the EU – all of us – must grasp this new opportunity, which, if lost, may not return for many years.

16. The Assembly is grateful to the Finnish Parliament for hosting a colloquy, “Towards a new European security concept?”, on 22 October 2009, which has provided major input for the present report.

II. Limitations of the Euro-Atlantic security architecture

17. The current security architecture principally rests on three pillars: the OSCE, NATO, and now the EU/ESDP. While these institutions have undergone significant transformation since the ending of the cold war to adapt to a new security environment, they have shown weaknesses and recently failed to prevent and resolve conflict in Europe and may, in the view of some analysts, such as Bobo Lo, Director of the Russia and China programmes at the Centre for European Reform, have sometimes even contributed to aggravating crises.

18. The wider Europe, as envisaged for the new Euro-Atlantic security architecture, could also include the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), the Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO), whose role in European security Russia would like to see increase, and possibly the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), not least because the Russian President presently considers its members as Russia’s “closest strategic partners”.¹⁰ The Council of Europe and WEU provide complementary and also, in the latter’s case in particular, reserve functions to the European security framework.

1. The OSCE

19. The OSCE has its origin in the 1975 Helsinki Final Act, and has developed into the main conceptual framework for confidence-building and cross-bloc security issues. Initially conceived as a body which would establish principles to ease tension between East and West, it was transformed in the post-cold war period into an all-inclusive Euro-Atlantic security organisation – which today counts 56 members – responsible for early warning, conflict prevention and crisis management. The organisation potentially offers a legitimate framework to ensure pan-European security by including the United States, Europe, and Russia. In addition, the OSCE has, by its very nature, access to a wide array of conflict zones and a mandate to tackle the majority of problems arising in its area, including through the deployment of forces for peacekeeping operations.

20. Sergey Lavrov, Foreign Minister of the Russian Federation, believes that if the OSCE had been fully institutionalised and converted into a fully-fledged regional organisation under Chapter VIII of the United Nations’ Charter, it could “have ensured, on the basis of legally binding obligations, an open system of collective security in the region”.¹¹ In 2007, Mr Lavrov presented a draft Charter which was supported by the CSTO member states to the OSCE ministerial meeting in Madrid.¹² A further proposal from Russia and other CSTO member states to transform the OSCE into a fully-fledged intergovernmental organisation and resolve the issue of its legal status was put forward only very recently.

21. The OSCE’s effectiveness in the field of conflict prevention and resolution has been limited notwithstanding many useful initiatives and achievements. Today, its work is confined to non-military operations, such as national minority issues and electoral observation missions which often fuel tensions between western and eastern members and which Russia in particular has denounced as

⁹ Bobo Lo, “Medvedev and the new European security architecture”, Centre for European Reform policy brief, July 2009. www.cer.org.uk

¹⁰ Dmitry Medvedev, “Go Russia!”, 10 September 2009. <http://eng.kremlin.ru>

¹¹ Sergey Lavrov, statement at the opening session of the OSCE Annual Security Review Conference, Vienna, 23 June 2009. www.osce.org

¹² Vladimir Soccor, “Russia-led bloc emerges in OSCE”, Eurasia Daily Monitor, 15 November 2007. www.jamestown.org

unacceptable interference in the internal affairs of a sovereign country. This evolutionary shift in the OSCE's focus is a reality however, and one endorsed by OSCE participating states, including Russia, in the Moscow Declaration of 1991.

22. Alexander Grushko, Russian Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs, complains that the OSCE focuses on the human security dimension, while the politico-military dimension (hard security) has almost come to a standstill.¹³ Critical analysts go even further, claiming that the OSCE not only fails to act as a hard security actor in Europe, but that its human security work is also hampered by Russia's attempts to neutralise the organisation's democracy-promoting role. Russia's reaction following the war in Georgia, when it pushed the OSCE mission out of the breakaway regions, serves to illustrate the ongoing difficulties.

23. Andrey Rudenko, Senior Policy and Planning Advisor to the OSCE Secretary General, admitted during the Assembly Colloquy in Helsinki,¹⁴ that a Europe whole and free and at peace with itself remained a goal rather than a reality and hard work was still necessary to achieve common and indivisible security across all parts of the OSCE.

24. The OSCE is incapable of sanctioning ongoing breaches of the Helsinki principles. It does not possess any standing armed forces to oblige member states into compliance, it suffers from financial limitations and its activities are severely hampered by conflicts of interests between member states. Finally, the structural necessity of allowing each member state a right of veto over decisions is naturally not conducive to quick decision-making.

25. OSCE Secretary General, Marc Perrin de Brichambaut, recently hinted at the competitive pressure the OSCE feels from other institutions, including the EU (and, one might add, the Council of Europe). It is true that there is a degree of overlap between international organisations and a thorough review of the security architecture should also deal with them.

26. The OSCE's arms' control regime is in crisis due to the controversy surrounding Russian troops stationed in the so-called frozen conflict areas bordering on Russia, the dispute over missile defence systems, and the suspension of the Treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE). The CFE treaty, signed in Paris in November 1990, set limits on conventional forces and weaponry for NATO and the Warsaw Pact. A 1999 adaptation of the CFE Treaty transformed bloc limits into national ones. Under the Istanbul Commitments, Russia agreed to withdraw its forces from Abkhazia, South Ossetia and Moldova. Its failure to do so and the consequent refusal by NATO member states to ratify the modified CFE Treaty has led to the current stalemate.

27. Finally, while the principle of the indivisibility of security on a wider European scale is enshrined within the OSCE, it remains at the level of a political commitment only. This is why Russia seeks to "strengthen the pan-European obligations by transferring them from the political to the legal plane"¹⁵ so that not only the states but also the international organisations in the Euro-Atlantic area become responsible for implementing those obligations.

2. NATO

28. NATO was created in 1949 as an intergovernmental military coalition against the Soviet Union. Today the Alliance gathers 28 members and 22 partners in the Euro-Atlantic area. It has the advantage of bringing together the United States and Europe, hence making it a very powerful military structure. However, NATO cannot always provide solutions of its own, both because it is constrained in its military role, and because it often lacks the necessary international legitimacy to act in certain theatres where it is seen as an instrument of the US.

¹³ Alexander Grushko, addressing a special meeting of the OSCE PA on a new European Security Architecture, 20 February 2009. www.osce.org

¹⁴ "Towards a new European security concept?", Assembly colloquy at the invitation of the Finnish Parliament, Helsinki, 21-22 October 2009.

¹⁵ Sergey Lavrov, statement at the opening session of the OSCE Annual Security Review Conference, Vienna, 23 June 2009. www.osce.org

29. NATO also currently has to cope with two internal crises: (i) a discrepancy between the Alliance's political aspirations and its military capabilities; and (ii) internal tensions due to diverging priorities and uneven levels of commitment among Allies, including a critical divide on Russia and the accession of new members.

30. The growing scope of NATO operations in the 1990s and the change in the geopolitical landscape following the end of the Soviet Union led to transformations within NATO. The Defence Capabilities Initiative was established to stimulate European allies' spending on defence; a NATO Response Force (NRF) was created to enable the rapid deployment of NATO forces on combat fields worldwide; and the Atlantic Command was replaced by an Allied Command Transformation (ACT) located in Norfolk, Virginia. NATO adopted peacekeeping and crisis-management functions and, following the disintegration of the Warsaw Pact, started to enlarge eastward.

31. However, even though these transformations contributed to improving the Alliance's capabilities, the European allies still fail to match the US defence effort and balance its dominant role. The NRF has not yet been used – both because it is optimised for short-notice combat operations NATO is unlikely to conduct and because divergences among NATO members limit the scenarios in which it might be used. Moreover, following the fact that decisions in NATO are subject to consensus, the political process involved in approving a combat operation can be time-consuming, sometimes prohibitively so.

32. Also, despite its great conventional military capacities, the Alliance – including its structure, its equipment, the training of its troops and its political functioning – is less apt to respond to unconventional threats, such as terrorism and cyber attacks, which are closer to police and intelligence missions than purely military interventions. Current transformations remain focused on conventional combat operations even though NATO forces find themselves almost exclusively in situations where they operate amongst a civilian population, have to train local forces and build government capacity (e.g. Afghanistan). Mats Berdal, Professor of Security and Development in the Department of War Studies at King's College, London, and David Ucko, Adjunct Fellow at the RAND Corporation, Washington DC and a Transatlantic Fellow at SWP in Berlin, Germany, believe that “a disconnect [has grown] between NATO's configuration for major combat operations and the broadening of its actual portfolio into humanitarian, stability and wider peacekeeping operations and activities”.¹⁶

33. Finally and most importantly, the transformation process has so far failed to reconcile the divergences in opinion across the Alliance as to whether it should remain a collective defence organisation whose main purpose is to provide collective security, or rather be a global security actor conducting operations far from its traditional North-Atlantic homestead. These divisions have steadily increased in recent years with the accession of a growing number of east European states which, given their history and geographic location are tacitly seeking protection against Russia. When the war in Georgia broke out, public opinion and governments in the Baltic countries and elsewhere openly questioned NATO's resolve in the event of Russia increasingly putting military pressure on one of the former Soviet republics still hosting a substantial Russian-speaking population. A further open question is what NATO can contribute to securing the energy supply of its members.

34. The review of NATO's Strategic Concept will offer an opportunity to clarify these and other matters and will also give Russia a chance to make its mark on NATO. If NATO takes the partnership with Russia seriously, it ought also to be serious about involving Russia in the process of reviewing the Strategic Concept.

3. NATO-Russia Council

35. The NATO-Russia Council (NRC) is not an institution in itself but a framework for security partnership with Russia. It was established in 2002, but draws on an earlier cooperation agreement concluded in 1997. It has served as a regular consultation forum between NATO and Russia, providing the two parties with opportunities to develop further practical cooperation and joint

¹⁶ Mats Berdal and David Ucko, “NATO at 60”, *Survival*, April-May 2009. www.iiss.org

operational capabilities, including in the areas of theatre missile defence, countering terrorist threats to civil aviation, and logistical interoperability.

36. But the NRC is still only an ad hoc solution. It has yet to prove that it can successfully serve as a confidence-building platform. NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen admitted recently that “the foundations of this relationship were not strong enough”¹⁷ and that practical cooperation had therefore not yet achieved its full potential.

37. In reality, Russia has obtained nothing more than a consultative role in the NRC, and cold war perceptions keep dragging on. As a consequence, as Dmitry Rogozin – Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to NATO – complains, the discussions held within the NATO-Russia Council are often “devoid of any meaningful content”,¹⁸ and the Council has so far failed to build effective trust and cooperation in specific areas. The Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov thinks that “the NATO-Russia summit in Bucharest in April 2008 failed to adopt a joint declaration because one country refused to reaffirm the principle, enshrined in the NRC founding documents, that no one should ensure his own security at the expense of the other.”¹⁹

38. Following the war in Georgia, the work in the NRC was immediately suspended by NATO. This was a counterproductive decision and went against the very idea of the Council, which should be to offer a channel of communication in fair and stormy weather.

39. The relationship also suffers from profound differences in strategic culture. In Russia there is a strong tendency to see security in terms of geopolitical interests and the presence of other western powers in Eurasia is perceived as a security threat. NATO, on the other hand, is not a single country but a multilateral organisation where different strategic cultures coexist. It considers threats in their global context and views security in terms of integration. The current NATO-Russia partnership is “locked into incompatible security conceptions of Eurasia” and therefore relies on “asymmetric expectations”.²⁰

40. The main view in Moscow is that NATO is an instrument of American interests and therefore a hostile organisation aiming to isolate Russia by decreasing its sphere of influence in the former Soviet area.

41. President Medvedev recently recalled that “NATO is nevertheless a military bloc, and its missiles are targeted against Russia. We do not feel excited about the fact that more and more nations are joining NATO, that it is expanding further and getting closer to our borders”.²¹ NATO leaders, including Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen, claim instead that “a more stable and prosperous Europe is [indeed] contributing to the security of Russia”.²²

42. Celeste Wallander, currently Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Russia/Ukraine/Eurasia in the new US Administration, points to a further problem: in recent years, “disagreements on Russia were [also] among the most damaging and problematic areas of dispute within the transatlantic community”.²³

43. Indeed, a significant number of “new” NATO and EU members regard Russia as their historical rival and seek to minimise its influence on the international scene. Lithuania’s Foreign Minister

¹⁷ Anders Fogh Rasmussen, “NATO and Russia: A New Beginning”, Carnegie Europe address, Brussels, 18 September 2009. www.carnegieeurope.eu

¹⁸ Dmitry Rogozin, “Russia, NATO, and the Future of European Security”, Chatham House, REP Roundtable Summary, 20 February 2009. www.chathamhouse.org.uk

¹⁹ Sergey Lavrov, “Russian Foreign Policy and a New Quality of the Geopolitical Situation”, Diplomatic Yearbook 2008. www.mid.ru

²⁰ Celeste Wallander, “American Priorities for a Transatlantic Strategy on Russia”, Robert Schuman Foundation, January 2009. www.robert-schuman.org

²¹ Dmitry Medvedev in an interview with Fareed Zakaria from CNN, 20 September 2009. <http://eng.kremlin.ru>

²² Anders Fogh Rasmussen, “NATO and Russia: A New Beginning”, Carnegie Europe address, Brussels, 18 September 2009. www.carnegieeurope.eu

²³ Celeste Wallander, “American Priorities for a Transatlantic Strategy on Russia”, Robert Schuman Foundation, January 2009. www.robert-schuman.org

Vygaudas Usackas explains that they see European integration as the best guarantor of lasting stability and peace, and joined NATO as a protection against Moscow. This attitude hampers the West's capacity to dialogue with Moscow as well as to define a common policy toward Russia within western security institutions. However, as Vygaudas Usackas points out, while they would not entrust their security to Russia, they would support enhanced cooperation with Moscow.²⁴

44. During your Rapporteur's visit to Moscow, Russian contacts frequently complained that certain new NATO member states had used their status to fight old wars with their big neighbour. The ostentatious support for the Georgian President in the war in August last year in particular drew criticism.

45. Germany's former Foreign Affairs Minister, Joschka Fischer, has suggested transforming NATO into a real European security system that includes Russia as a member.²⁵ NATO has been so central to the security of its current members that he believes it also needs to play a central role in a new European security system. But it is currently as unlikely that NATO will undergo the necessary transformation as it is that Russia will deviate from its current strategic course, which could be defined as seeking to remain a power in its own right. But the long-term consequences of such stagnation of the strategic environment are not satisfactory for anyone.

46. Russia is interested in establishing closer relations between NATO and the CSTO; possibly even seeking a partnership of equals. Practical cooperation is actually taking place in Afghanistan for the training of Afghan army units. However, there are tremendous discrepancies between the two organisations, both in scale and capabilities.

47. NATO views cooperation with Russia as a matter of necessity and will make confidence-building and the revitalisation of the NATO-Russia Council a priority. However, as the Director of the NATO Defence College in Rome, Karl Heinz Kamp, points out, a new consensus needs to be found inside the Alliance concerning the amount of influence that Russia should have over NATO's decision-making.²⁶

4. The European Union

48. The EU, through its European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP), has become a growing security actor in Europe. If it is militarily less significant than NATO, the Union's wide political, economic, social, judicial, and cultural competences enable it to conduct more diverse actions, including conflict prevention and post-conflict reconstruction. And, because lasting solutions to conflicts are never military, the EU will – in the medium to long term – be the best equipped to provide security in Europe, especially as it is developing the complementary military competences necessary to be able to intervene in crises and re-establish stability.

49. In recent years, the EU has therefore increasingly affirmed itself as a security provider. Since starting to mount crisis-intervention missions in 2003, it has completed 13 missions and is currently conducting a total of 14 – 12 civilian missions and two military operations. The EU is increasingly solicited for crisis management and conflict resolution. However, defence spending by most European states remains low and unlikely to grow, in view of the current financial and economic crisis. In total, there have been only six military missions, past and present.

50. Limited cooperation has taken place between the EU and Russia in ESDP operations, most recently with the provision of Russian helicopters for the EU mission in Chad and during the anti-piracy operation off the coast of Somalia. The Union's ESDP offers wide scope for security cooperation. Sergey Utkin, responsible for Political Aspects of European Integration at the Institute of World Economy and International Relations (IMEMO), Moscow, believes that the difficulties both sides had in arranging a Russian contribution indicate the need for a better framework in order to facilitate and speed up future Russian contributions to ESDP operations.

²⁴ Vygaudas Usackas, opening address to the International Seminar on "Eastern Partnership – opportunities and challenges", Vilnius, 17 September 2009. www.urm.lt

²⁵ Joschka Fischer, "Finding Russia's place in Europe", The Guardian, 11 January 2009.

²⁶ Karl-Heinz Kamp, "Towards a New Strategy for NATO", Survival, September 2009.

51. The potential for EU cooperation with Russia is much higher than the possibilities offered by the NATO-Russia Council. The EU maintains a much broader agenda with Russia and offers in the form of the future Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) a comprehensive framework for an extended cooperation. Unfortunately, relations have been overshadowed by questions relating to the energy trade and not much progress is being made on the negotiations on the PCA. Also, Russia continues to prefer bilateral relations with individual EU member states instead of seeing the EU as a whole. This is one of the fundamental contradictions of the Russian position: how can Russia become part of Europe if it focuses on bilateral relations? Many EU member states, however, tend to give way to Russian overtures and more information about the repercussions for the other European partners would sometimes be helpful.

52. At the Assembly Colloquy in Helsinki, Oksana Antonenko from the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS), London, explained that Russia analysed the degree of clout the EU had in terms of its response to events in Georgia. The EU was not at the time a clear security actor, and Russia was watching to see whether it was serious. In Georgia, the EU was caught in the paradox of having petrified the status quo by accepting that its mission was limited to the Georgian side, while at the same time claiming Georgia's territorial integrity at a political level. Your Rapporteur's meetings in Moscow confirmed that there will be no meeting of minds any time soon on the situation in Georgia. There is little reason to believe Russia would reverse its decision on the recognition of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. However, there is some unease even in Russia at the fact that the decision was supported only by Venezuela and Nicaragua. This raises the question as to how Russia can defend its claim to be one of the poles of a multi-polar international security system. Does it really want to base its credibility on such partners?

53. Following past EU eastward enlargement, the buffer zone separating Russia from the EU is now limited to Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine and Belarus. Since May 2009, these countries have been influenced by EU foreign security policy through the Eastern European Partnership Initiative. Designed to create more democratic stability eastward, the Eastern European Partnership provides for both bilateral and multilateral measures to enhance cooperation between the 27 EU member states and their eastern neighbours.

54. But while the partnership aims to contribute to economic stability and cooperation in the region, it lacks a security dimension. The EU, despite the considerable progress of its European Security and Defence Policy, is not yet capable of providing collective security for its members, nor security guarantees for its neighbours.

55. Nevertheless, by supporting their neighbours' domestic structural reforms, including in the areas of security, good governance and economy, the Eastern European Partnership could enhance security cooperation and good neighbourly relations and has the potential to promote confidence within the region through increased political contact between partners as well as by reducing trade barriers. Lithuanian Minister for Foreign affairs Vygaudas Usackas goes so far as to conclude that "a stable Europe can be guaranteed only by creating a stable and secure region beyond the EU's borders".²⁷ It is worth mentioning in that context, that the Eastern Partnership has opened up possibilities for normalisation of relations with Belarus.

56. The Eastern European Partnership is not only about trade, energy and visa liberalisation. It also and more importantly promotes values and principles. The success of the partnership will depend on EU member states' joint political and financial commitment in a time of economic crisis, as well as on their ability to persuade Moscow that this partnership, aimed at creating stability in the zone separating Russia from the EU, can also be beneficial to Russia. It is necessary to ensure that the EU initiative cannot be misconstrued as a partnership *against* Russia.

57. So far, increasing western influence on the borders of Russia *is* perceived as a threat by Moscow. Recent years have seen the rise there of pro-western governments distrustful of Russia (the Orange Revolution in Ukraine in 2004, and the Revolution of Roses in Georgia in 2003), changes that

²⁷ Vygaudas Usackas, opening address at the International Seminar on "Eastern Partnership – opportunities and challenges", Vilnius, 17 September 2009. www.urm.lt

President Medvedev sees as “very vexing and unfair.”²⁸ It has therefore been suggested that the EU should consider including Russia in the partnership to try to ease tensions and avoid perceived geopolitical competition. It also has been suggested that apprehension on the part of Russia about EU interference in its neighbourhood might be the trigger for the increasing authoritarianism and nationalism in that country.²⁹

5. CSTO

58. The Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO) based in Moscow has seven members and is, like the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), an institution created in the post-Soviet space. It is based on the Treaty of Tashkent, signed in 2002 by Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Tajikistan. Uzbekistan joined in 2006. The treaty contains a mutual defence commitment and also provides for an interparliamentary wing, the CSTO Interparliamentary Assembly, which has its seat in Saint Petersburg.

59. The ESDA/WEU Assembly regularly meets with members of both the CSTO IPA and the Interparliamentary Assembly of the Commonwealth of Independent States. A formal agreement governs the relationship with the latter.

60. The CSTO has been described by the Moscow Institute of Contemporary Development as “a multipurpose security structure in the making”.³⁰ So far, the CSTO’s contribution to European security has been minimal and the organisation’s activities rather limited. However, a presentation made to members of the Political Committee in 2007 included interesting regional approaches towards organised crime as well as to human and drug trafficking.

61. A new stage in the field of military cooperation was reached in October 2009, when the CSTO launched what it claimed to be a “NATO-style” rapid reaction force, during a military exercise in Kazakhstan involving 7 000 troops, 90 aircraft and helicopters.³¹ The presidents of Armenia, Kazakhstan, Russia and Tajikistan were present; however Belarus and Uzbekistan did not participate in the exercise. European diplomats in Moscow explain that the CSTO Rapid Reaction Force had slowly evolved out of joint military exercises but was still in its infancy. Agreements on deployment, equipment and funding had still to be adopted.

62. It is generally assumed that Russia dominates the CSTO, not only because it is the only member country that has the capability to provide security guarantees for the other members, but also because the other members have widely differing security concerns, depending on their geographical location. The CSTO has also been criticised for being a Russian tool and for misrepresenting perpetuation of the existing undemocratic regimes in its member states as the fight against terrorism and fundamentalism.³² However, Sergey Utkin, from the Institute of World Economy and international Relations (IMEMO), Moscow, believes that although Russia may dominate CSTO in terms of resources, it does not do so politically: No CSTO member state has been willing to recognise the breakaway regions Abkhazia and South Ossetia. In no way can these countries be described as Moscow’s puppets.

63. Russia seeks a more prominent role for the CSTO in the European security structure. So far, NATO and the EU have been very hesitant or flatly refused to engage in cooperation with the CSTO. But with the CSTO improving its capabilities and in view of its work on drug trafficking, its potential contribution to security and stability in the central Asian region should not be neglected. The Institute of Contemporary Development, Moscow, proposes, for instance, charging the CSTO with the logistic support of the NATO operations in Afghanistan.

²⁸ Dmitry Medvedev in an interview with Fareed Zakaria from CNN, 20 September 2009. <http://eng.kremlin.ru>

²⁹ Maxime Lefebvre, “La France, l’Union européenne et les Etats-Unis face à la Russie”, Robert Schuman Foundation, January 2009. www.robert-schuman.org

³⁰ “The Architecture of Euro-Atlantic Security”, Institute of Contemporary Development, Moscow 2009, p. 22.

³¹ Moscow Times, 19 October 2009.

³² “The Architecture of Euro-Atlantic Security”, Institute of Contemporary Development, Moscow 2009, p. 23.

III. Russia as a security actor

1. Russia's place in Europe

64. Since the end of the cold war, Russia has struggled to establish its identity and find its place in Europe and the world. Even in the pre-Soviet era, when Russia was a dominant member of the European diplomatic community, it never adopted the constitutional and social structure of western European countries. Past achievements play an important role and divergent points of view over historical events can lead to over-sensitivity and fierce rejoinders, as was recently the case with Estonian-Russian or Polish-Russian relations.

65. Russia's sacrifices in the second world war are part of that sacrosanct culture and Russian leaders still struggle with the idea that other people consider what Russia proudly presents as its liberation as the beginning of many years of occupation and dominance. President Medvedev only recently stated that "Russia obviously has its own perception of its role in the world and of its achievements; [and] on certain occasions Russia has literally come to the rescue of humankind" (referring to Russia's participation in the second world war).³³ Consequently, because Russia expected a more conciliatory attitude from its western partners, which turned out to be illusory, there is a feeling of disappointment and frustration.

66. Alexander Kramarenko, Director for Foreign Policy Planning at the Russian Ministry for Foreign Affairs and known to be one of the minds behind the Medvedev proposal, explained to your Rapporteur that following the ending of the cold war and the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact, a conflict of expectations arose that transformed itself into a crisis of confidence.

67. Russian leaders believed that the country would automatically become part of the Greater Europe. The possibility of accession to NATO had even been contemplated. However, a different choice had been made by Russia's western partners. Given Russia's weakness at the time and an absence of legally binding rules, it had been possible to steer the OSCE towards a focus on western interests. NATO had taken on new members, although the most pressing modern security challenges required a different response to those that could be given by military alliances. The era of binding military alliances should be replaced by an era of legally binding treaties. It was time to renew and recast the principles that should govern countries' behaviour.

68. A leading Russian diplomat explained recently at a meeting of a Brussels think-tank that the power vacuum that was left after the cold war ended had been filled by western structures, leaving Russia in a state of isolation. The new members of NATO added only limited capabilities to the Alliance and in fact had brought with them their own problems and conflicts, so their accession was, from a military point of view, counterproductive and contradictory. Russia therefore had reason to believe that there were other – geopolitical – reasons for extending NATO eastwards.

69. Tatiana Parkhalina, Director of the Centre for European Security, Moscow, confirmed in a meeting with your Rapporteur that the war in Georgia had made it obvious again that Russia had, in fact, no allies. The country's socio-economic and political model did not appeal to neighbouring nations which were then drawn towards NATO and the EU.

70. Even though a majority of Russians seem favourable to greater cooperation with the West, many continue to accuse the Euro-Atlantic community of having downgraded Russia to the rank of second-rate power and of exploiting Russia's weakness. During your Rapporteur's visit to Moscow the point was made that at the present time, Russian society was supportive of the current prime minister and president, despite an observable reversal in the trend towards greater democratic freedom and transparency.

71. The political cultures in Russia and in Europe are different. While in Europe the state is considered as a means of serving society's interests, Russia sees the state as an end in itself, and its foreign policy is therefore ultimately directed towards regaining Russia's great power status. Commenting on the importance of human rights for security, a member of the Foreign Affairs

³³ Dmitry Medvedev in an interview with Fareed Zakaria from CNN, 20 September 2009. <http://eng.kremlin.ru>

Committee of the Federation Council responded by asking what carried greater importance, state or individual sovereignty.

72. There is a risk that Russia's recognition of the importance of human rights and the rule of law may tend to come across as half-hearted. However, at the Assembly colloquy in Helsinki, Alexander Torshin, First Vice-President of the Federation Council and leader of the Russian Delegation to the Assembly, once again made clear the view that it was important not to strengthen one dimension of security at the expense of others. However, it was the political-military dimension that had been neglected and therefore needed to be reinvigorated. He pointed to the human suffering caused by the situation in Georgia: roughly one million Georgians living in Russia now had great difficulties in seeing family members.

73. Despite Russia's efforts to present itself as growing towards modernisation, analysts continue to be highly critical. According to them, Russia is not a real democracy; it does not value either human rights or economic liberalisation as central policy and imposes limits on the right to contest in all sectors of activity. Following the country's negative experience with the "colour" revolutions in Georgia and Ukraine, any kind of outside influence is viewed with the utmost suspicion. In its National Security Strategy 2009-2020, Russia itself indicates that it "will oppose a liberalisation of the energy market, 'democracy promotion', and the fostering of civil society organisations by external actors with equal determination".³⁴

74. However, Russia considers itself as part of European civilisation, having common Christian roots with Europe. While 75% of Russian territory lies in Asia, roughly 78% of the Russian population lives in "European Russia", that is in the western part of Russia delimited eastward by the Ural Mountains. Moscow and Saint Petersburg – the two most important cities in Russia – are located in European Russia, and important cultural exchanges between Russia and Europe have taken place for centuries. Nevertheless, a gap exists between regions more flexible to western-type modernisation, such as Moscow, Saint Petersburg or Nizhniy Novgorod, and traditional agrarian regions.

2. Russia's National Security Strategy and Foreign Policy Concept

75. A look at Russia's National Security Strategy (NSS) published in May 2009 and the Foreign Policy Concept (FPC, July 2008) provides an interesting insight into Russia's view of its strategic environment and its strategic concept. For Bobo Lo of the Centre for European Reform, Russia's foreign policy can be understood as an extension of domestic politics and "reflects atavistic instincts, historical and cultural influences and geographical realities, as well as contemporary political and economic conditions".³⁵ It is also highly and increasingly geopolitical. But in the words of Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov "Russia is guided in international affairs by understandable, pragmatic interests, devoid of any ideological motives whatsoever".³⁶

76. Traditionally, Russian foreign security policy has been based on the notion that unilateralism, NATO's eastward expansion, non-compliance with arms control agreements and energy security are significant factors determining external threats. These external threats only add to domestic challenges such as demographic decline, the rise of poverty, terrorism, nationalism, organised crime, corruption and pandemics. Lieutenant Colonel Marcel De Haas, Senior Research Fellow at the Netherlands Institute of International Relations, believes the NSS demonstrates Moscow's concern about foreign threats and reaffirms traditional Russian fears "that the country is encircled by enemies, creating a need to seek allies and create buffer zones against such dangers".³⁷

³⁴ Henning Schröder, "Medvedev's national security strategy to 2020: Russian Analytical Digest, 18 June 2009, www.res.ethz.ch

³⁵ Bobo Lo, "Russia's crisis – what it means for regime stability and Moscow's relations with the world", Centre for European Reform policy brief, February 2009. www.cer.org.uk

³⁶ Sergey Lavrov, at the international symposium "Russia in the 21st Century", Moscow, 20 June 2008. www.mid.ru

³⁷ Marcel De Haas, "Medvedev's security policy: A provisional assessment", Russian Analytical Digest, 18 June 2009. www.res.ethz.ch

77. Russia's Foreign Policy Concept (July 2008) describes Russia as a great power capable of influencing international developments, and identifies interests as a guide for foreign policy. It reasserts Russia's engagement eastward, namely with China and India as well as with the CSTO and SCO, to maintain security and stability in Eurasia as well as to create a network of the main actors in the Asia-Pacific region. The document presents energy as a strategic asset. It insists on the importance of being and remaining a nuclear power. With regard to Euro-Atlantic security, "the FPC describes Moscow's desire to create a different regional collective security and cooperation system than the one currently employed by the West, thereby ensuring the unity of the Euro-Atlantic region".³⁸ It rejects further NATO eastward enlargement, but demonstrates a desire to cooperate and maintain good relations with the West.

78. The FPC stresses that parity with the US in strategic nuclear weapons should be gained or maintained. Furthermore, it asserts that Russia should develop as a global power [and protect] Russian citizens in the so-called "near abroad". The protection of Russian minorities was also put forward as an argument during the war in Georgia. Such statements give cause for concern among Russia's neighbours. They run the risk of compromising the prospects of successfully transforming Europe's security architecture in the way Russia wants it to change.

79. Your Rapporteurs believe that lasting security depends on the rejection of any ambition of "spheres of influence" and respect for each country's territorial integrity and independence. We are aiming for the security of what should be seen as the "common neighbourhood", not anyone's "near abroad". It should be an area of cooperation, not of rivalries.

80. The National Security Strategy also puts economic development at the centre of Russian preoccupations. As Professor Henning Schröder from Bremen University and Head of the Russian Division at the Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik (SWP), Berlin, notes, only an increase in economic output will allow Russia to substantiate its claim to great power status. The NSS projects the vision of a Russia that has overcome its domestic crisis, undergone major economic revival, and is demanding to be accorded equal status with the other great powers.³⁹

81. Russia sees itself and wants to assert itself as an incontrovertible global power, not only in view of its status as a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council, but also given its important gas and oil reserves and the power of its army. However, during the Bush Presidency these ambitions were not met with equal enthusiasm in Washington. Bobo Lo summarises the position thus: Moscow thought it had acquired a new significance as America's strategic partner in the so-called global war on terror, only to discover that the Bush administration had a very different view of Russia's importance. Far from being recognised as an equal partner, it was seen as one of many regional allies. This disjunction in perception became evident in the run-up to the US-led invasion of Iraq and was further illustrated by the United States' unilateral withdrawal from the 1972 ABM Treaty in connection with its missile defence programme and President Bush's refusal to enter into more than the most basic disarmament commitments, US force deployment in central Asia and a second wave of NATO enlargement into the Baltic states, together with support for the "colour" revolutions in Georgia, Ukraine, and Kyrgyzstan.⁴⁰

IV. Russia's President as a driving force for internal and external reform

1. The nexus of internal and external reform

82. President Medvedev seems determined to modernise Russia at home in order to restore Moscow's great power status on the international stage. In a recent article: "Go Russia", an address to the Russian nation, which was posted on the Internet, the president expresses his concern about Russia's "inefficient economy [relying on the export of raw materials], semi-Soviet social sphere,

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Henning Schröder, "Medvedev's national security strategy to 2020", Russian Analytical Digest, 18 June 2009. www.res.ethz.ch

⁴⁰ Bobo Lo, "Russia's crisis – what it means for regime stability and Moscow's relations with the world", Centre for European Reform policy brief, February 2009. www.cer.org.uk

fragile democracy, negative demographic trends, and unstable Caucasus".⁴¹ He sounds resolved to put an end to centuries of corruption and paternalistic attitudes, to modernise Russia's economy by opening it to western and other post-industrial centres of modernity and technology, to push Russians to new achievements, especially in technological innovation, and wants to "cultivate a taste for the rule of law" as a means to a better standard of living in Russia.

83. He is conscious that Russian democratic institutions are flawed and deplores the political inertia of the Russian population and civil society. He remains optimistic for the future given the youth of Russia's democracy (compared to western European and American democratic systems). He aims to ensure Russia develops in a democratic way, through persuasion, encouragement to the innovative and creative potential of individuals, and harmonisation of "the interests of the individual, society and government". As he recalls, "democracy [in the West] occurred on a mass scale not earlier than the mass production of the most necessary goods and services began; when the level of technological development of western civilisation made it possible to gain universal access to basic amenities: to education, health care and information". He therefore identifies the development of modern information technologies as a priority in order to make Russian society more transparent. But, he acknowledges that such changes will take time, and insists that "Russian democracy will not merely copy foreign models".⁴²

84. Your Rapporteurs believe that Russia needs to decide whether it wants to be part of the greater Euro-Atlantic community of modern democracies and open societies and join forces with those seeking to define the future European and global security architecture. Russia is free to choose its own values, its own political system and its own future, but a common security system in which all countries enjoy equal security can only work if all partners share common values.

2. The proposal for a new security architecture for Europe

85. President Medvedev first introduced the idea of developing a new European security architecture in a meeting with German political, parliamentary and civic leaders in Berlin on 5 June 2008.⁴³ There, he pronounced Atlanticism obsolete and stressed the need to promote unity between the whole Euro-Atlantic area from Vancouver to Vladivostok in order to arrive at collective solutions to European security challenges and establish equal security for all.

86. The President emphasised Russia's desire to abandon old-style "bloc" politics, and called for a new version of the 1975 Helsinki Final Act on European security in which the principle of the indivisibility of security would finally be legally binding. He also pointed out that Europe should be interested in partnership with Russia in order to reduce military spending, secure energy supplies, and develop a common technological space.

87. Since then, President Medvedev has reiterated on several occasions Russia's strong desire for a strategic partnership between Europe and Russia: a partnership which "should be built on the principles of equality, pragmatism, mutual respect for each other's interests and, of course, common approaches to key security issues".⁴⁴

88. At the Evian World Policy Conference on 8 October 2008, the president provided more details regarding his proposal for a new European security architecture. A future treaty would, he said:

- outline "basic principles for security and intergovernmental relations in the Euro-Atlantic area";
- affirm the "inadmissibility of the use of force or the threat of its use in international relations";

⁴¹ Dmitry Medvedev, "Go Russia!", 10 September 2009. <http://eng.kremlin.ru>

⁴² Dmitry Medvedev in an interview with Fareed Zakaria from CNN, 20 September 2009. <http://eng.kremlin.ru>.

⁴³ <http://eng.kremlin.ru>

⁴⁴ Dmitry Medvedev addressing a joint press conference following the Russia-EU summit in Khanty-Mansiysk, 27 June 2008. <http://eng.kremlin.ru>

- guarantee equal security to all states in the Euro-Atlantic area. (It would include three “no”s: “no ensuring one’s own security at the expense of others. No allowing acts (by military alliances or coalitions) that undermine the unity of the common security space. And finally, no development of military alliances that would threaten the security of other parties to the Treaty”.);
- confirm that no state or organisation has exclusive rights to maintain peace in Europe;
- establish “basic arms control parameters and reasonable limits on military construction”.

89. While in Berlin the Russian President took an aggressive stance against NATO, in Evian he specified that a new European security architecture should not merely be a replacement for existing institutions, including NATO.

90. In April 2009 in Helsinki, he reiterated his willingness to reach a “Helsinki Plus”-type agreement, which would preserve the “spirit of Helsinki”, based on “openness, collaboration, equality and mutual respect”, but which would strengthen European values. Such an agreement would be “based on existing instruments, but adapted to new security challenges”.

91. He said he was ready to discuss a new Treaty within the OSCE, but since he believed organisations only solved partial and peripheral security issues, he proposed convening a pan-European summit gathering all individual states and international organisations involved in countering security threats and challenges in the Euro-Atlantic area, the objective being to compare the security strategies of each of these organisations, and eventually agree on a common security strategy.

92. As Alexander Grushko, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, recalled, Russia is “not proposing the elimination of existing mechanisms – including those in which Russia is not a participant”.⁴⁵ On the contrary, according to Mr Lavrov, Russia is “in favour of strengthening coordination and synergies between existing international structures [so that they may finally conduct] joint action against common threats”.⁴⁶

93. From Russia’s perspective, the objective of a new treaty would be “to find strategic areas of cooperation and agree on a procedure for acting to ensure international security in such a way as to not create risks and threats to others and to avoid provoking yet another round of a ruinous arms race. Russia is therefore referring to a broader format for dialogue than the OSCE, so as to guarantee the involvement of all organisations in this process on a basis of parity”.⁴⁷

Reactions to President Medvedev’s proposal

94. President Medvedev’s critics believe his proposal is a ploy to set the NATO allies and the OSCE, Council of Europe and EU members wondering whether the security architecture they have is the right one, by creating unwarranted uncertainty about the legitimacy, efficiency and credibility of those institutions. Many suspect Moscow of wanting to weaken the human rights dimension of the OSCE (“Helsinki *Minus*” instead of “Helsinki *Plus*”), which it increasingly regards as biased and one-sided. Other critics fear that Russia’s aim is effectively to veto further NATO expansion by seeking to maintain a recognised sphere of influence in its own neighbourhood and to keep the United States – often perceived as synonymous with NATO – at bay.

95. According to Bobo Lo of the Centre for European Reform, President Medvedev’s initiative is a positive step and “reflects Russia’s desire to play a leading role as a ‘responsible stakeholder’ in regional and global affairs”. It was also a clear demonstration of Russia’s determination to redefine Europe in ways that would be more inclusive of Russia and its interests. Russia’s ultimate objective was to reaffirm itself as a strong actor and regain its great power status in the international arena, to be

⁴⁵ Alexander Grushko, addressing a special meeting of the OSCE PA on a new European Security Architecture, 20 February 2009. www.osce.org

⁴⁶ Lavrov Sergey, statement at the opening session of the OSCE Annual Security Review Conference, Vienna, 23 June 2009. www.osce.org

⁴⁷ Alexander Grushko, addressing a special meeting of the OSCE PA on a new European security architecture, 20 February 2009. www.osce.org

treated as an equal partner to Europe and the United States, as well as to re-establish a Russian sphere of influence in the former Soviet space so as to “consolidate its position as a ‘regional superpower’”.⁴⁸

96. In view of these and other criticisms, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov tried to play down President Medvedev’s initiative, declaring at the OSCE Annual Security Review Conference in June this year that he was “not proposing anything other than a collective and honest discussion of common problems”.⁴⁹ Sergey Utkin, from the Institute of World Economy and international Relations (IMEMO), Moscow, believes Mr Lavrov wanted to underline that Russia had no final answers for everything and therefore wanted to work alongside its foreign partners on the reform of the European security architecture.

97. At the Assembly Colloquy in Helsinki,⁵⁰ Oksana Antonenko from the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS), London, pointed to the prevailing ambivalence surrounding the Medvedev proposal and the strangeness of the timing of renewed discussions on the subject.

98. She found it puzzling that this discussion was taking place at a moment when institutions as such had become less important and what counted were the political will, and actual capabilities of individual countries, to take part in solving today’s security challenges. She found it equally puzzling that this discussion had resurfaced in the midst of the financial and economic crisis, when defence budgets would continue to shrink. Mrs Antonenko believed it was pointless to spend a lot of time discussing a new security architecture for Europe when European governments had so much difficulty convincing public opinion that the defence effort was justified in the first place.

99. She highlighted the fact that, as far as she could see, the distinction between a European Security Architecture and a European Security Treaty was important and tended to be overlooked. Russia was committed to a legally binding document defining rules of behaviour, much less so to actually reshaping the institutional landscape. Russia’s western partners had agreed to discussions on the architecture, but there was no endorsement of the idea for a new treaty. It was important to be clear about whether the common objective was a “Helsinki II” or a “Helsinki Plus” agreement, or to develop new ideas on how better to integrate Russia in the existing security system.

100. According to her, Russia’s objectives were to freeze the current status quo and see no more NATO enlargement; scrap the CFE and instead negotiate a new and different agreement; obtain a quid pro quo, i.e. a trade-off between recognition of Kosovo and of Abkhazia and South Ossetia; give the CSTO equal status with NATO and shift the focus of the OSCE from human rights to hard security.

101. Russia was aware that there was no meeting of minds for the time being on such an agenda. That was the reason why the proposal had been so vague until now. It would be possible, however, to agree on small steps forward, but the current dialogue was heading for disaster. She thought it was necessary to move away from the idea of a great new strategic bargain and much better to concentrate on what she called “security horticulture”, i.e. the need to grow the capacity to solve real security problems from the bottom up and to develop a culture of security thinking where people, and not institutions, would be able, by thinking differently, to cooperate and solve problems.

102. The areas of common interest where such a new approach could be applied were Afghanistan, where it was not in Russia’s interest for NATO to fail, the frozen conflicts, in particular in Nagorno-Karabakh; human security concerns such as migration, crime and human and drug trafficking; and the establishment of a genuinely integrated missile defence.

103. With such a strategy, and because today’s security challenges were too pressing, results were more important than simply relying on having started a process.

⁴⁸ Bobo Lo, “Medvedev and the new European security architecture”, Centre for European Reform policy brief, July 2009. www.cer.org.uk

⁴⁹ Sergey Lavrov, statement at the opening session of the OSCE Annual Security Review Conference, Vienna, 23 June 2009. www.osce.org

⁵⁰ “Towards a new European security concept?”, Assembly colloquy at the invitation of the Finnish Parliament, Helsinki, 21-22 October 2009.

104. Speaking at the same Assembly colloquy, Paul Dunay, researcher at the Geneva Centre for Security Policy, believed the Medvedev proposal offered a good opportunity to hold new discussions on a number of issues, including some blocked ones. Contrary to Mrs Antonenko, he argued that the discussion process was important in itself and if the process failed to bear results it would not be a disaster. In his view, Russia had successfully manoeuvred the West into a kind of political trap: if there was no breakthrough, Russia had demonstrated the West's lack of cooperation and would not feel inhibited in exercising more freedom of action, whereas in the opposite event it would succeed in having a part of the security architecture reviewed in a way that was more to its liking.

105. At the time of their publication, the general objectives of the Medvedev proposal – other than to introduce the new president to the international community – had been to stop, or even reverse, the change in the political status quo; test the reaction of Russia's partners, bring multilayered ideas forward even if they were not entirely firmed up; take advantage of western pangs of conscience about past behaviour towards Russia and confront the West with its contradictions and divisions.

106. At another level, the objectives had been more specific, and included stopping NATO and EU enlargement eastwards and consolidating the new division of Europe into two spheres of influence, ensuring the prevalence of a single set of international rules over other existing rules, readjusting the emphasis of the OSCE's security preoccupations, legitimising the organisations created in the post-soviet space (CIS, CSTO) and breathing new life into European arms control agreements.

107. However, in the meantime, President Medvedev had become much more realistic, and now only expected to achieve a new emphasis within the OSCE and relaunch arms control in Europe. It was very likely that the security architecture would continue to develop organically and that little would be achieved.

108. Russia's initial assumptions had been wrong, Mr Dunay felt, because, in his view, the current European security architecture was not NATO-centric. He criticised Russia for failing to understand this and for continuing to oppose NATO enlargement. Such opposition was, however, likely to meet with some success, as it was something of a self-fulfilling prophecy.

109. NATO could not stop its expansion policy. However, it was likely to slow down anyway. The West could tacitly comply with Russian demands not to expand further into the former Soviet space, but could never openly accept such a limit as small countries would continue to seek shelter. In any case, potential candidates for NATO accession were neither convincing nor appealing.

110. While Russia had a point about achieving a better balance of interests with the OSCE it was illusory to believe that western countries would refocus on politico-military security at the expense of the values of democracy and human rights. He therefore wondered how far "rebalancing" could go. In his view it offered an opportunity to create a new atmosphere and could allow for a spirit of cooperation to return to the OSCE.

111. Regarding arms control, he called on Russia to define what type of arms control it wanted. The impression given was that Russia was seeking "old-style" arms control involving massive negotiations with large delegations.

112. The idea of giving precedence to respect for one set of international legal principles at the expense of others (in particular the right to self-determination and respect for human rights) was the equivalent of Russia trying to engineer a reversal in the principles of international law and turning the clock back six decades. This was certainly not a shared agenda with the West and would even undermine principles enshrined in documents that Russia had also accepted.

113. To seek a bigger role for the post-Soviet organisations CIS and CSTO would be tantamount to seeking the emergence of an asymmetrical bipolar system of European security. A divided Europe would, however, not necessarily imply confrontation.

114. NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen proposes to focus on practical cooperation in areas of common interest, on confidence-building (by revitalising the NRC as a forum for serious discussion in which differences can be expressed and all security concerns can be discussed), and on a joint assessment of the new 21st century challenges. He calls for a greater realism in NATO-Russia

relations in order to avoid unrealistic expectations in the future. In his recent speech at Carnegie Europe, Brussels, Secretary General Rasmussen said Russia should realise that, despite the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact, NATO will stay – not because it sees Russia as an enemy, but because the allies share common values – and will continue to prioritise the security of its members. On the other hand, the western public must understand that Russia remains a great European power, and that the fact that the cold war is at an end does not mean that Russia’s interests completely coincide with the West’s – particularly as regards NATO enlargement to former Warsaw Pact countries. He therefore insisted on the importance of the West understanding Russia’s interests and taking them into account, and vice versa.⁵¹

115. The EU recognises it depends on Russia if it is to face up successfully to today’s global challenges. However, EU member states prefer to discuss the Russian initiative within the existing institutional frameworks and believe in the need to improve existing structures and procedures rather than looking for new ones. The EU underscores the notion of shared responsibility when it comes to dealing with global security challenges. In this regard, any revised security architecture should not be based solely on common interests, but also on shared values (democracy, human rights and the rule of law), necessary for the creation of an equal partnership and the peaceful resolution of conflicts. With the PCA negotiations moving only slowly and the prospects of an agreement on energy trading slim, there is currently no appetite for seeking a more robust cooperation framework for its security relations with Russia.

The “Corfu Process” in the OSCE

116. The Russian proposal was then taken to the OSCE, as the natural and most relevant forum in which to discuss pan-European security issues. The informal OSCE ministerial meeting in Corfu in June this year launched the “Corfu Process” which aims to provide a framework for further dialogue on European security.

117. At their meeting in Corfu, the OSCE ministers of foreign affairs met, as OSCE Chair and Greek Foreign Minister Dora Bakoyannis put it in a carefully phrased statement, “to discuss the current challenges and future perspectives of the common, indivisible, comprehensive and cooperative security, which has marked the post-cold war European security architecture”.⁵² They agreed to renovate the security system to cope with new threats and challenges: ethnic conflict and border disputes, and examined areas such as arms control regimes and democracy and the rule of law, as well as discussing energy security, illegal migration and human trafficking, and terrorism.

118. In Corfu, the NATO-Russia Council also met for the first time since the war in Georgia. The Russian Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs, Alexander Grushko, made it clear at this session that Russia would not accept the kind of one-way cooperation in which NATO continues to use Russia as a partner in certain theatres such as Afghanistan, but fails to take its interests into account.

119. Andrey Rudenko from the OSCE Secretariat General explained to the Assembly colloquy in Helsinki that the evolution of the overall political context, among them a worsening of the global economic crisis, the failure to reach consensus on extending the UN and OSCE missions in Georgia and a new administration in the United States, contributed to the change in attitude towards the idea of a renewed security dialogue within the OSCE.

120. The Corfu Process had identified “clear and present” threats to the security of Europe: the persistence of frozen conflicts and unresolved border disputes; the absence of consensus on CFE and the lack of progress with respect to CSBM (Confidence and Security Building Measures). In addition, a deepening economic crisis could jeopardise social cohesion. Energy supply, migration, human trafficking, terrorism and fundamentalism, cybercrime and instability in adjacent regions could become security preoccupations for OSCE participating states. Finally, democracy, rule of law and respect for fundamental principles on human rights needed to be strengthened.

⁵¹ Anders Fogh Rasmussen, “NATO and Russia: A New Beginning”, Carnegie Europe address, Brussels, 18 September 2009. www.carnegieeurope.eu

⁵² Dora Bakoyannis, Chair’s concluding statement to the press, Corfu Informal Meeting of OSCE Foreign Ministers on the Future of European Security. www.osce.org

121. The following principles currently guided the discussions: the *objective* was to re-establish trust and confidence among OSCE participating states; the *format* was anchored in the OSCE but involved all existing security institutions and would also include think tanks and other contributors; the *bases* were the existing CSCE and OSCE agreements and the aim was to strengthen rather than try to replace them; the *future framework* was to be decided by OSCE ministers, probably at the next meeting in Athens in December 2009.

122. The first five sessions of the Corfu Process had allowed member states to draw up a list of OSCE principles which have not been maintained, of commitments which were either only partially or selectively implemented or subjectively or unilaterally interpreted, and of OSCE mechanisms and procedures for the peaceful settlement of disputes and conflict prevention which were either not activated or had proved insufficient or outdated.

123. While it was too early to evaluate the results of these efforts, a number of new ideas had been brought up, including the need to review the OSCE tool-box for conflict prevention and conflict management mechanisms.

124. The further discussions and the ministerial meeting in Athens would have to address whether the final outcome of the Corfu Process would be a document, a summit or simply practical steps. It should also clarify whether the Medvedev proposal was covered by the OSCE process or was to re-emerge with a life of its own. Finally, the correlation between the OSCE review and the work on a new Strategic Concept for NATO needed to be clarified.

125. Mr Rudenko recalled that bridging differences would take time. In the run-up to the CSCE summit in 1975, over 2 400 meetings had been held in Geneva and 4 660 proposals had been deliberated.

126. Timo Kantola, Director for Security Policy and Crisis Management at the Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, explained at the Assembly colloquy in Helsinki that, for Finland, as for the other EU member states, it was vital to rebuild trust and confidence among OSCE participating states. It was important for the EU to contribute to the Corfu Process in a coherent way. It was also important that the discussions in the Corfu Process were not “decoupled” from the real security problems and their root causes. But he warned against being over ambitious. The main goal for the EU was developing its foreign and security policy and, in that context, developing EU cooperation with Russia.

127. He believes the Corfu Process should look at the following issues: the OSCE has to develop its tools for conflict prevention and crisis management so that these can serve a modern, comprehensive approach; the OSCE chairmanship should be better equipped for emerging situations: it should be able to mandate envoys and augment missions for limited periods. Progress on frozen conflicts is instrumental for rebuilding trust and confidence and there has to be strong support for the human dimension, including for the work of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) and of the High Commissioner on National Minorities, the legal personality of OSCE. It is telling that the need to revitalise the politico-military discussions comes only at the end of his list together with the need to deal with new challenges.

Prospects for further developments

128. The Corfu Process is scheduled to issue its first conclusions for the OSCE ministerial summit in December. At the same time, the new administration in Washington has understood the need to improve its relations with Russia. President Medvedev and President Obama have put forward a common agenda for negotiations on disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation.

129. Preserving the transatlantic link will prove essential for a successful security structure. But, along with many in Russia and elsewhere, your Rapporteurs believe that there should not be one country whose status towers above that of the rest. That is why we find President Obama’s new approach to his country’s foreign policy very encouraging.

130. President Medvedev should also conduct a thorough review of Russia’s foreign policy, in particular as regards its own neighbourhood. He must realise how damaging it has been for his proposal and for Russia itself that his country’s relations with almost all of its neighbours are

characterised by lack of mutual confidence or outright tension. The review should clarify the role that Russia wishes to play in the world. This would help alleviate concerns about its intentions.

131. Russia's heavy involvement in frozen conflicts has not always been constructive. Its recognition of the two breakaway regions of Georgia, its military build-up there and continuing difficulties over its observance of international commitments made in August last year raise question marks over the very principles President Medvedev has set out as integral to the kind of new security architecture he wants for Europe. The Tagliavini report⁵³ draws attention to the many questionable activities and measures undertaken by Russia in the months before the military conflict was triggered by Georgian forces. However, Mark Entin, Director of the European Studies Institute at the Moscow State Institute of International Relations (MGIMO), stresses that Russia had a right under international law to respond to Georgia's armed attack.

132. Russia, its neighbours, the EU and the United States have everything to gain from a serious dialogue on the strengths and weaknesses of the current security architecture and ways of improving it. Arms control, nuclear proliferation, international terrorism, climate change and the security of our energy trade are questions that concern us all in one way or another.

133. Your Rapporteurs believe a dialogue on the new security architecture should first address those issues and only then focus on institutional aspects. The frozen conflicts, the CFE crisis and the numerous non-proliferation issues provide us with ample opportunity to show that we are able and willing to find common ground even where we used to differ. As members of parliament we know that our citizens, our voters, do not want us to create yet more institutions or sign yet another treaty. Rather, they look to us to find answers to the pressing challenges of our times, in Europe and worldwide.

V. Conclusions

134. To say that Russia's geopolitical position makes it an indispensable strategic partner for Europe is a truism. More important is the genuine and honest invitation from the new Russian President to debate jointly the future security architecture for the Euro-Atlantic area. This opportunity should not be wasted.

135. But as long as the West suspects Moscow of having a hidden agenda, trust and confidence will not return.

136. Western hesitancy, combined with a strong dose of old thinking and reinforced by a new mental iron curtain have so far channelled the proposal into its present course inside the OSCE. It will be up to the OSCE summit in Athens in December of this year to decide on the future of the debate on Euro-Atlantic security and up to the Russian President whether he wants to relaunch his idea of a European security treaty.

137. The fundamental question is, of course, why the OSCE would gain in effectiveness simply because the commitments and mechanism were backed up by a legally binding document. If there was no agreement in the past about a coherent interpretation of OSCE rules, why should member states agree now? The same is true for the right of veto, which will certainly not disappear in a European security treaty unless, of course, such a treaty were negotiated outside the OSCE framework.

138. The OSCE is riven structurally by internal division and member states may not be able or indeed willing to revive its role to what it was in the post-Soviet era.

139. EU members make up 27 out of the 56 OSCE participating states. Soon EU members may constitute the majority within the OSCE. The EU is slowly but steadily gaining in importance on the international stage. The Lisbon Treaty is designed to give it a further push forward, reinforcing the already observable tendency of the EU to seize opportunities for conflict management wherever it suits. The 27 EU members are much more powerful as an actor in promoting the Union, than in taking common action within other organisations.

⁵³ www.ceiig.ch

140. How can the fundamental structural problem of the post-cold war architecture – the fact that Russia is neither a member of NATO nor of the EU – be resolved? Possibly the way out of this conundrum is to think about new forms of cooperation with Russia, such as a triumvirate composed of the United States, the EU and Russia. The arguments for and against such an arrangement would need to be carefully weighed.

141. While there is a need in the medium and long term to develop broader concepts of security cooperation, it is necessary *immediately* to deepen practical cooperation with Russia. The frozen conflicts must be addressed as a priority. We need to sit down together and resolve them before we can envisage new institutions. Otherwise we will only move these issues on to another table and not solve anything, and give a false impression of being terribly busy but in fact achieve little.

142. Your Rapporteurs believe that Afghanistan presents a timely opportunity for successful cooperation, allowing for progress to be made in other fields at a later stage. It is a conflict that is not inside the OSCE but bordering upon it. It is a conflict Russia suffers from, in regard to which it has declared an interest in cooperation, and an area where all NATO member states should welcome such cooperation.

143. We have witnessed major institutional changes during the financial and economic crisis, where the once omnipotent G7/G8 has been quickly replaced by the new G20. Euro-Atlantic security institutions may also change once the necessary consensus is found for our objectives.

144. But it should not be forgotten that the difficulties the existing security architecture has in responding to crisis and conflict are not primarily institutional in nature but are the result of an unwillingness to seek compromise on the part of the countries acting within that architecture.

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