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**NAVAL  
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**MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA**

**THESIS**

**RUSSIA'S PROPOSAL FOR A EUROPEAN SECURITY  
TREATY: MOTIVES AND IMPLICATIONS**

by

Fredrick N. Harlambakis

September 2010

Thesis Co-Advisors:

David Yost  
Mikhail Tsypkin

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**RUSSIA'S PROPOSAL FOR A EUROPEAN SECURITY TREATY: MOTIVES  
AND IMPLICATIONS**

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of

**MASTER OF ARTS IN SECURITY STUDIES  
(EUROPE AND EURASIA)**

from the

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## **ABSTRACT**

Russian President Dmitry Medvedev's proposal for a European Security Treaty (EST) is an ambitious attempt to reshape the current Euro-Atlantic order, and thereby, advance Moscow's security interests. The EST proposed by Moscow would be a legally binding agreement. According to Moscow, it would uphold the principles of international law and achieve equal security for all states in the Euro-Atlantic region. However, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) allies generally view this treaty proposal as an attempt to undermine existing Euro-Atlantic security institutions, such as NATO and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). The EST proposal reflects Russian discontent with the current Euro-Atlantic security order. Many Russians hold that NATO has disregarded Russia's security interests since the collapse of the Soviet Union, notably in the Alliance enlargement process. Although the EST proposal has been dismissed by some observers as a Russian ploy to fracture NATO, governments in the Euro-Atlantic region have acknowledged the need to ensure that Russia's legitimate security interests are respected. NATO and Russia may find it to their advantage to pursue long-term cooperation on the basis of shared interests. They may then together deal effectively with the emerging threats of the twenty-first century.

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## **LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS**

CSCE	Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe
CSTO	Collective Security Treaty Organization
EASI	Euro-Atlantic Security Initiative
ESDP	European Security and Defense Policy
EST	European Security Treaty
EU	European Union
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
MR	Military Representation
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NDN	Northern Distribution Network
NRC	NATO-Russian Council
OSCE	Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PA	Parliamentary Assembly
U.S.	United States

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# **I. RUSSIA'S PROPOSAL FOR A EUROPEAN SECURITY TREATY: MOTIVES AND IMPLICATIONS**

## **A. MAJOR RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

Russian President Dmitry Medvedev's proposal for a new European Security Treaty (EST) is the most ambitious initiative undertaken by Russian diplomacy in recent years. Some have dismissed it as a clear attempt to empty Euro-Atlantic security institutions of their content. However, other commentators have interpreted the Kremlin's proposal as a genuine effort to provide a positive security vision for Europe in the twenty-first century. This thesis addresses the following questions: What does Moscow hope to gain from the proposed European Security Treaty? To what extent do NATO countries regard it as a serious proposal that might become a functioning treaty regime? Why, in spite of reservations about cooperation with Moscow, is NATO prepared to consider it? What are the implications for this proposal for NATO and the United States?

## **B. IMPORTANCE**

The Medvedev initiative constitutes a significant departure from the normal course of post-Soviet foreign policy in three respects. First, Moscow has delivered a set of ideas that go beyond the reactive. These ideas amount to more than simply a reflexive negative response to Alliance policies, such as NATO enlargement into Eastern Europe. Medvedev's proposed EST is an exceptionally ambitious attempt to promote Russia's own vision of European and Euro-Atlantic security. Second, the proposal has ostensibly challenged the assumption that Russia's international behavior is only designed to obstruct the interests of others rather to advance a positive agenda of its own. Finally, the Medvedev initiative has indicated a new confidence in Russia's role in world affairs and a belief that other great powers must respect its interests.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Bobo Lo, *Medvedev and the New European Security Architecture* (London: Centre for European Reform, July 2009), 1–2.

The underlying principle behind Medvedev's security concept—that is, his EST proposal—appears to be redefining the relationships among European security institutions in ways that are more inclusive of Russia and its interests. Since the end of the Cold War, Russia has felt excluded from the European mainstream. For the past two decades, political instability and socio-economic crisis have greatly reduced Moscow's influence abroad and have contributed to Russia's alienation in the European security sphere. This has occurred during a period in which NATO has become identified as the normative model of what it means to be European in the realm of military and security affairs. The Kremlin has attempted to limit Washington's influence in Europe and has argued that NATO bears an outdated Cold War ideology and has failed to give new purpose to its existence.<sup>2</sup>

This thesis investigates the hypothesis that Medvedev's EST proposal is intended to establish a multi-polar security architecture that is not only more inclusive of Russian strategic interests than the current institutional arrangements, but also one that is better suited to deal with the evolving security challenges of the twenty-first century. Although the European Union (EU), NATO, and the United States have considerable reservations about security cooperation with Moscow, it is in all three parties' vital strategic interests to agree upon a comprehensive European security architecture to provide protection against threats ranging from terrorism to nuclear attack.

### **C. PROBLEMS AND HYPOTHESES**

Medvedev's proposal has received mixed reviews from officials and experts throughout the Euro-Atlantic region, that is, the region encompassed by the territories of the states participating in the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). The underlying obstacle to a solution acceptable to all parties resides in their differing perspectives and interests. The non-Russian former Soviet republics and the former Warsaw Pact states in Eastern Europe have complained for some time that Russia has been exploiting its energy wealth to compromise their sovereignty. Additionally, many of them subscribe to the belief that the August 2008 Georgia-Russia war and

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<sup>2</sup> Lo, *Medvedev and the New European Security Architecture*, 3.

Russian disruptions of gas supplies in recent years suggest that Moscow's overall intent may be to weaken NATO's solidarity and reduce U.S. influence.<sup>3</sup> Conversely, some countries in Western Europe appear to have been more willing to consider Medvedev's EST initiative seriously than Russia's neighbors in Eastern Europe. Additionally, cooperation with Russia is important for the EU's energy sector. Moreover, many Europeans have disagreed with Washington's actions in Kosovo and Iraq, as well.<sup>4</sup> In their view, enhanced cooperation with Russia appears enticing.

This thesis discusses the main barriers to improving multilateral security cooperation by analyzing the varied strategic perspectives in the Euro-Atlantic region shaping reactions to the EST proposal. From the official Russian perspective, NATO continues to follow an outdated ideology intent on Russian containment.<sup>5</sup> From this perspective, restructured European security architecture is needed to establish a new order that is more respectful of Russian strategic interests. In the eyes of the Kremlin, this would entail minimizing Washington's influence in European affairs. Furthermore, Moscow perceives NATO enlargement as its most immediate security threat. Therefore, this thesis examines the Russian case for a new European security architecture as an alternative to the current NATO-dominated structure. Through the lens of the Kremlin, it appears, the EST is a vehicle designed to support the ascendance of a reformed regional power able to rebuff the enlargement and outreach policies of a Cold War relic, such as NATO.

Despite intense opposition to the EST on the part of some allies and reservations about cooperation with Moscow, NATO is nonetheless prepared to consider it. The Alliance is aware that reducing nuclear stockpiles, defeating the Taliban in Afghanistan, and denying the Iran a nuclear weapons arsenal are all goals that cannot be achieved

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<sup>3</sup> Richard J. Krickus, *Medvedev's Plan: Giving Russia a Voice but Not a Veto in a New European Security System* (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, December 2009), 3.

<sup>4</sup> Laurynas Jonavicius, *Dmitry Medvedev's Speech in Evian: Reading Between the Lines* (Vilnius, LI: Eastern Europe Studies Centre, 2009), 6.

<sup>5</sup> Lo, *Medvedev and the New European Security Architecture*, 2.

without Moscow's help.<sup>6</sup> NATO Secretary-General Anders Fogh Rasmussen further articulated this point in a speech delivered in December 2009 in Moscow. He advocated a stronger NATO-Russian partnership via the NATO-Russian Council (NRC), given that both sides share an interest in curbing threats, such as the spread of terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and drug trafficking.<sup>7</sup>

#### **D. LITERATURE REVIEW**

Since the end of the Cold War, NATO has taken on functions in addition to collective defense. Allied governments have employed the Alliance to perform tasks in support of collective security. Cooperation with former adversaries and other non-NATO nations in the Euro-Atlantic region, crisis management, and peace operations have emerged as prominent new roles for the Alliance in an unpredictable twenty-first century. Possibly, the greatest foreign policy challenge for NATO and the EU is determining how to achieve a more productive relationship with Russia while advancing policies toward former Soviet republics, which embody western values and advance EU and NATO interests. Moscow strongly opposes a Euro-Atlantic security environment dominated by NATO and the United States. In November 2009, Russian President Dmitry Medvedev unveiled a proposed EST, which has been widely perceived as an attempt to weaken NATO and minimize Washington's influence in European security affairs.

The Medvedev proposal is significant because it is a noteworthy departure from the characteristic post-Soviet Russian foreign policy role of acting as a "spoiler" and hindering states in pursuing their strategic interests. The EST proposal represents a more self-assured Russia, advancing a positive agenda, which seeks to revise the existing European security architecture to meet today's emerging challenges. The EST proposal published in November 2009 has to some extent clarified the blurred vision set forth by Medvedev in two prior speeches delivered in Berlin (June 2008) and Evian (October

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<sup>6</sup> Krickus, *Medvedev's Plan: Giving Russia a Voice but Not a Veto in a New European Security System*, 22.

<sup>7</sup> Anders Fogh Rasmussen, "NATO and Russia, Partners for the Future," Speech by NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen at the Moscow State Institute for International Relations, Moscow, December 17, 2009, [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/opinions\\_60223.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/opinions_60223.htm).

2008). Careful analysis of the provisions in the proposed treaty sheds light on Moscow's intentions, including the extent to which the EST could be useful in reasserting its influence in European security affairs. The EST may also provide insight as to whether NATO, under its provisions, would face the dilemma of integrating Russia into the Alliance decision-making process.

This thesis identifies areas of consensus amongst scholars who have asked similar questions in analyzing the EST. This thesis also examines previous research efforts and builds upon them to put Medvedev's EST proposal into perspective. The countries of the Euro-Atlantic region maintain differing strategic perspectives due to their divergent historical, political, and economic backgrounds. This diversity presents a hurdle in establishing concrete multi-lateral security cooperation. The EST proposal offers an occasion to analyze how the current European security architecture could be made more inclusive of Russian strategic interests while continuing to support those of NATO member states and other countries in the Euro-Atlantic region.

Commentators have agreed that Medvedev's EST proposal lacks the details required to make this proposal a credible security alternative. Additionally, experts continue to hold that a value gap exists between the Alliance and Russia. This position is justified through the EST's focus on security problems over democratic and human rights issues.<sup>8</sup>

First and foremost, the EST proposal lacks the requisite chapter and verse to be taken seriously by states in the Euro-Atlantic region as the foundation for a revised security architecture. Medvedev's five "specific provisions," which lay the foundation for the EST, provide neither specific nor original ideas for advancing European security. Respect for international law, national sovereignty and territorial integrity are all noble yet vague aspirations, when their meaning is not clarified by tangible goals.

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<sup>8</sup> Sergei Karaganov and Timofei Bordachev, *Towards a New Euro-Atlantic Security Architecture* (London: Report of Russian Experts for the Valdai Discussion Club, December 2009), 13.

Next, some observers in NATO countries have criticized the EST proposal provisions because they are unrealistic. For example, Article 9 states that Parties to the treaty “reaffirm that their obligations under other international agreements in the area of security, which are in effect on the date of signing of this Treaty are not incompatible with the Treaty.”<sup>9</sup>

As noted previously, some observers in NATO and EU countries have drawn attention to a perceived value gap between NATO and Russia in view of Moscow’s failure to acknowledge the importance of democracy and human rights in the EST text. The Russian government’s decision not to allude to democracy may stem from the non-liberal political regime now taking shape in Russia.

Russian commentators have referred to this regime’s conclusion that the slogan of “proliferating democracy” during “color revolutions” concealed a desire to broaden spheres of geopolitical dominance.<sup>10</sup> Many observers in NATO and EU countries believe that Russia under Vladimir Putin has taken a path reminiscent of the Soviet Union in its lack of respect for democratic norms. Autocratic rule has clashed with Moscow’s claim that Russia wishes to have a democratic government and a thriving free market.<sup>11</sup> Putin’s exploitation of Russia’s energy assets as a geo-political weapon has clashed with his assertion that positive relations with Russia’s neighbors have been a major foreign policy objective. In short, for many observers in NATO and EU countries, the prevailing truth is that Russia is a revisionist power, which seeks to dominate its neighbors. In their view, to expect the Kremlin leadership to behave otherwise is implausible.

Previous research in identifying both Moscow’s objectives for a revised European security architecture and critical reactions to the EST proposal has identified various gaps. For example, how could the EST be perceived as an attempt to undermine NATO? Why is the EST so vague? What reactions does Moscow hope to obtain from this

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<sup>9</sup> “European Security Treaty,” November 29, 2009, (Unofficial Translation), President of Russia Official Web Portal, <http://eng.kremlin.ru/text/docs/2009/11/223072.shtml>.

<sup>10</sup> Karaganov and Bordachev, *Towards a New Euro–Atlantic Security Architecture*, 13.

<sup>11</sup> Krickus, *Medvedev’s Plan: Giving Russia a Voice but Not a Veto in a New European Security System*, 19.

proposal? Does Russia have a long-term strategy for winning support for the EST? This thesis attempts to answer these questions through an analysis of the differences in strategic perspective in the Euro-Atlantic region. Identifying these differences may clarify Russian objections to NATO's post-Cold War policies, as well as why some NATO member states are more open than others to dialogue regarding a multi-polar security architecture, which would be more inclusive of Russian strategic interests than the current arrangements. For example, a barrier to a unified approach to Russia resides in the cleavages between certain long-established NATO allies in Western Europe and the new allies in Central and Eastern Europe regarding relations with Moscow. Officials and experts in France and Germany, for example, view Russia as more an important economic partner today, relying on its energy sector, than a security threat, and welcome attempts to establish stronger bilateral ties. In contrast, observers in Poland and the Baltic states tend to believe that Moscow has continued to exploit its energy assets to compromise their sovereignty. Additionally, in their view, the August 2008 Georgia-Russia war has proven that Russia cannot be trusted as a reliable security partner, in view of its attempts to maintain a sphere of influence in its near abroad.<sup>12</sup> Despite such cleavages, it is vital that NATO members reconcile their differences and deal with Russia in a united way. Bridging the gaps in the Euro-Atlantic region's strategic perspectives may provide a foundation for assessing Moscow's intentions for the EST proposal and analyzing its implications. How well founded, for example, are perceptions of this treaty as an attempt to undermine the Alliance's cohesion by driving a wedge between Washington and the Europeans?

In evaluating the current literature addressing Medvedev's EST proposal, this thesis catalogues and evaluates the arguments for and against this proposed treaty. Richard J. Krickus's monograph, *Medvedev's Plan: Giving Russia a Voice but Not a Veto in a New European Security System*, provides an overview of the essential arguments in evaluating the criticisms of the EST and the barriers to multi-lateral cooperation in a future European security system more inclusive of Russian strategic interests. Samuel A.

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<sup>12</sup> Krickus, *Medvedev's Plan: Giving Russia a Voice but Not a Veto in a New European Security System*, 83.

Greene and Dmitri Trenin further argue the necessity for the West to reengage with Moscow in their paper, *(Re) Engaging Russia in an Era of Uncertainty*. This paper advances the thesis that the West must seek to achieve an institutionalized partnership with Russia by incorporating its interests. *Towards a New Euro-Atlantic Security Architecture*, by Sergei Karaganov and Timofei Bordachev, presents a Russian perspective on the benefits of the EST proposal. Karaganov and Bordachev hold that “the most attractive aspect of this solution is the possibility to make the parties’ commitments in the field of collective security legally binding.”<sup>13</sup> Their paper further warns, “leaving things as they are will inevitably lead to a hidden or open rivalry between various sub-organizations of European security.”<sup>14</sup> In short, these three sources argue that the longer Russia remains on the periphery of the European security system, the more apt it will be to undermine it and postpone further prospects for a more profound re-engagement with NATO than has taken place so far since the August 2008 Georgia-Russia war.

To counter this argument, various sources have responded by declaring the EST a ploy to fracture NATO and drive a wedge between Washington and its European allies. Bobo Lo of the Centre for European Reform argues that the Alliance must preserve unity and discipline in approaching the EST proposal. Although the EST proposal represents a softened foreign policy approach concerning European affairs, some things remain constant: Russia continues to believe that it is a great global power and that the former Soviet republics belong in its sphere of influence and Moscow maintains a realist perspective in viewing the world as a competitive arena.<sup>15</sup> This argument summarizes the general contention of various sources that Russia simply cannot be relied upon or trusted to be a cooperative player in international politics.

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<sup>13</sup> Karaganov and Bordachev, *Towards a New Euro-Atlantic Security Architecture*, 17.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 14.

<sup>15</sup> Lo, *Medvedev and the New European Security Architecture*, 8.

## **E. METHODS AND SOURCES**

This thesis is based on qualitative historical study and analysis. Medvedev's EST proposal neither identifies tangible objectives nor adds new principles to the UN Charter, the Helsinki Final Act, and other basic documents.

This thesis relies on both primary and secondary sources. An essential component of the research is an analysis of the unofficial English translation of Medvedev's EST proposal posted on the Russian president's website. Further analysis is conducted through various secondary sources, including scholarly studies and news articles.

## **F. THESIS OVERVIEW**

This thesis is organized as follows. Chapter I discusses the Russian EST proposal's significance and the sources and methodology of the thesis. Chapter II examines the Russian case for a new security system based on the proposed EST, as well as the arguments opposed to it. This analysis demonstrates the prominent shortcomings of the EST proposal, including how it fails to enhance the European security architecture set in place by the Helsinki Final Act of 1975. The thesis considers Russian motives in proposing the EST, as well as its implications for NATO and the United States. Chapter III assesses why NATO is prepared to discuss the EST, despite intense opposition to the EST on the part of some allies and their reservations about cooperation with Moscow. Chapter IV offers conclusions and recommendations on how NATO might respond to the EST proposal.

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## **II. THE EST PROPOSAL: MOSCOW'S CASE FOR A NEW EUROPEAN SECURITY SYSTEM**

### **A. INTRODUCTION**

This chapter begins by providing a descriptive overview of President Medvedev's EST proposal, highlighting its purpose and vision for European security. Next, it raises key questions about the EST. It examines the Russian case for a new security system based on the proposed EST, as well as the arguments opposed to it. Finally, this analysis demonstrates the prominent shortcomings of the EST proposal, including how it fails to build upon the security principles established by the Helsinki Final Act of 1975. This chapter considers Russian motives in proposing the EST, as well as its implications for NATO and the United States, in particular.

### **B. THE EST: AN OVERVIEW**

President Medvedev's EST proposal is Moscow's vision for creating an undivided Euro-Atlantic security space. It is designed to revise the current security architecture, which Russia perceives as an impediment to its regional strategic interests. According to Medvedev, the goal is to negotiate a new wide-ranging pact in the form of a treaty "between the whole Euro-Atlantic area from Vancouver to Vladivostok."<sup>16</sup> Russia holds that this legally binding treaty would rid Europe of what Moscow perceives as dividing lines, sanctify the basic principles of international law, and achieve equal security for all states in the Euro-Atlantic region.

The final step in this analysis is to outline systematically the contents of the EST, beginning with the preamble and examining all the significant articles. This official text is described on the website of the Russian president as an "unofficial translation." The Russians may use this formula to protect themselves from unwanted interpretations. The

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<sup>16</sup> Dmitry Medvedev, "Speech at Meeting with German Political, Parliamentary and Civic Leaders," Berlin, June 5, 2008, [http://eng.kremlin.ru/speeches/2008/06/05/2203\\_type82912type82914type84779\\_202153.shtml](http://eng.kremlin.ru/speeches/2008/06/05/2203_type82912type82914type84779_202153.shtml).

quality of the English employed in this “unofficial translation” is sometimes sub-optimal, and calling this and other documents published on the website of the president of Russia “unofficial translations” may also provide an excuse for the awkward formulations—including unexplained ellipses—that are reproduced verbatim in this thesis.

## **1. Preamble**

According to the preamble, the parties would adopt the EST as a legally binding mechanism in order to “promote their relations in the spirit of friendship and cooperation in conformity with international law.”<sup>17</sup> The preamble states that the parties would be guided by “the principles set forth in the Charter of the United Nations, Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations (1970), Helsinki Final Act of the Conference for Security and Cooperation in Europe (1975), as well as provisions of the Manila Declaration on the Peaceful Settlement of International Disputes (1982) and Charter for European Security (1999).”<sup>18</sup> Above all, the EST acknowledges and supports the role of the UN Security Council, “which bears the primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security.”<sup>19</sup>

## **2. Articles 1–3**

First and foremost, the EST is based on “the principles of indivisible, equal and undiminished security.”<sup>20</sup> Essentially, this means that any security measures taken by a party to the treaty are to be “implemented with due regard to security interests of all other parties.” According to Article 2, parties to the treaty would have to ensure that decisions within the framework of the organizations and alliances to which they belong “do not affect significantly security of any Party or Parties to the Treaty.”<sup>21</sup> In other words, no

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<sup>17</sup> “European Security Treaty,” November 29, 2009 (Unofficial Translation), President of Russia Official Web Portal, <http://eng.kremlin.ru/text/docs/2009/11/223072.shtml>, preamble.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., Article 1.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., Article 2, paragraph 2.

party should seek to enhance its own security at the expense of another party. Article 3 of the proposed EST states that parties are entitled to request “information on any significant legislative, administrative or organizational measures” taken by another party if the measures “in the opinion of the Requesting Party, might affect its security.”<sup>22</sup> This part of the EST advocates transparency and mutual trust among the parties via communication “through diplomatic channels.”<sup>23</sup>

### **3. Articles 4–8**

The major theme in these articles is the establishment of forums to address grievances if a party believes that another party has violated or threatens to violate the EST. These articles provide detailed procedures for resolving conflicts. These procedures include bilateral and multilateral consultations, a conference of the parties, and an emergency or “extraordinary” conference in the case of a crisis or threat of attack. These forums act as mechanisms “to address issues related to the substance of this Treaty, and to settle differences or disputes that might arise between the Parties in connection with its interpretation or application.”<sup>24</sup>

Article 7 of the proposed EST states, “every Party shall be entitled to consider an armed attack against any other Party an armed attack against itself.”<sup>25</sup> Moreover, “it shall be entitled to render the attacked Party, subject to its consent, the necessary assistance, including the military one, until the UN Security Council has taken measures necessary to maintain international peace and security.”<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> “European Security Treaty,” Article 3, paragraph 1.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., Article 4.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., Article 7, paragraph 2.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

#### **4. Articles 9–12**

The major theme expressed in these articles is that “the Parties to the Treaty shall not assume international obligations incompatible with the Treaty.”<sup>27</sup> Yet, according to Article 9, the EST is not to affect the “primary responsibility of the UN Security Council for maintaining international peace and security, as well as rights and obligations of the Parties under the Charter of the United Nations.”<sup>28</sup> The EST is inclusive; that it is “open for signature by all States of the Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian space from Vancouver to Vladivostok as well as by the following international organizations: the European Union, Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, Collective Security Treaty Organization, North Atlantic Treaty Organization and Community of Independent States in...from...to....”<sup>29</sup>

#### **5. Articles 13–14**

The final two articles deal with procedures for acceding to and withdrawing from the EST. Article 13 states, “any State or international organization may accede to this Treaty after its entry into force, subject to the consent of all Parties to this Treaty, by depositing the relevant notification with the Depository.”<sup>30</sup> Article 14 further stipulates each party’s right to withdraw from the EST “should it determine that extraordinary circumstances pertaining to the substance of the Treaty have endangered its supreme interests.”<sup>31</sup>

### **C. THE EST: KEY QUESTIONS TO BE ADDRESSED**

The proposed EST raises the following questions: What is the Russian case for a new structure of European security institutions based on the Medvedev proposal? What are the main arguments opposed to the Russian proposal? What shortcomings have been

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<sup>27</sup> “European Security Treaty,” Article 9, paragraph 3.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, Article 9, paragraph 1.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, Article 10.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, Article 13, paragraph 2.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, Article 14.

highlighted by critics of the Russian EST proposal? According to Medvedev, existing European security institutions, such as NATO, bear “the stamp of an ideology inherited from the past” and have failed to provide universal mechanisms for cooperation and conflict prevention.<sup>32</sup>

#### **D. THE RUSSIAN CASE FOR THE EST**

Russian officials and commentators have criticized certain organizations for their perceived adherence to an outdated Cold War ideology and their supposed inability to respond to new challenges and threats. In February 2010, at the 46th Munich Security Conference, Sergey Lavrov, the Russian Foreign Minister, stated, “by overcoming the bloc-based Cold War approaches in the European architecture, and the derivative fears they arouse with regard to ‘spheres of influence,’ we will provide the new quality of mutual trust that Europe so desperately needs in contemporary conditions.”<sup>33</sup> Russians argue that a bloc approach has perpetuated a bipolar worldview that has neglected the Russian Federation’s strategic interests and relegated it to the periphery in its participation in security institutions, such as the OSCE and NATO.

Russians maintain that NATO in particular has revived open suspicion and strategic rivalry. For example, many Russians hold that NATO expansion has dealt a blow to Russia’s trust towards Canada, the United States and its European Allies. According the current Russian military doctrine published on February 6, 2010, NATO expansion is considered the top threat to Russian security. The first among “the main external military dangers” listed in the document is “the desire to endow the force potential of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) with global functions carried out in violation of the norms of international law and to move the military infrastructure of NATO member countries closer to the borders of the Russian Federation, including by

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<sup>32</sup> Medvedev, “Speech at Meeting with German Political, Parliamentary and Civic Leaders.”

<sup>33</sup> Sergey Lavrov, “Speech at the 46<sup>th</sup> Munich Security Conference,” Munich, February 6, 2010, <http://www.securityconference.de/Lavrov-Sergey.463.0.html?&L=1>.

expanding the bloc.”<sup>34</sup> Contrary to the fate of the Warsaw Pact, NATO has continued to grow and has become a multi-dimensional collective defense alliance, adding various roles, such as counter-terrorism, crisis response, and anti-piracy operations. However, from the Russian perspective, to quote Sergei Karaganov and Timofei Bordachev, “the Euro-Atlantic space has failed to overcome the legacy of the bipolar confrontation and create a stable and efficient system for multilateral interaction to counter traditional and new threats.”<sup>35</sup>

According to Karaganov and Bordachev, the current European security system lacks universal mechanisms for cooperation and conflict prevention.

The existing mechanisms and institutions for multilateral interaction on security matters deny Europe the ability to respond to new challenges and threats and to be an adequate participant in international [affairs]. There is no efficient institutional and legal framework in Europe for cooperation of all states in such matters as countering drug trafficking, terrorism and cybercrime, biosecurity, collective prevention and reaction to emergencies and humanitarian crises, environmental protection, and efforts to meet environmental challenges, including global climate change. The European Union and NATO prefer to address these issues independently, which rules out full-fledged participation of Russia and many other countries in these efforts and which also paralyzes efforts of the OSCE.<sup>36</sup>

Some Russians have complained that the EU’s European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP) is primarily intended to unite member states and augment their national capabilities rather than to strengthen international security in general. According to Karaganov and Bordachev, “the mechanisms they build, such as the European Security and Defense Policy, are primarily intended to unite member states and enhance their individual capabilities, rather than [to] strengthen international security in general.”<sup>37</sup> Russian commentators hold that institutional constraints on the coordinated participation of Russia and other non-member countries in NATO-led and EU-led operations to

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<sup>34</sup> “The Military Doctrine of the Russian Federation,” approved by Russian Federation presidential edict on 5 February 2010, Official website of the Russian Federation President; <http://kremlin.ru/>, English translation at [OpenSource.gov](http://OpenSource.gov), CEP20100208042001.

<sup>35</sup> Karaganov and Bordachev, *Towards a new Euro-Atlantic Security Architecture*, 6.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 8.

counter emerging security threats make such efforts ineffective and unproductive.<sup>38</sup> This may encourage non-EU or NATO member countries to focus more on bilateral cooperation, for example, between Russia and the United States, or between Russia and individual EU countries. According to Russian observers, Medvedev's EST proposal seeks to transcend the existing European security system by uniting existing security institutions and states from Vancouver to Vladivostok to respond to emerging threats in a transparent manner.

Moscow considers the era of NATO-centered unipolarity in European security affairs to be over and aspires to establish a more multi-polar security system inclusive of its strategic interests and attentive to its traditional role as a regional great power. It is likely that Russia will endure as an independent international player in security affairs. Russian commentators argue that Russia and other states that remain outside European security institutions, such as NATO and the EU, should support a revised security architecture based on the EST.

According to the Kremlin, the EST proposal's objective is to establish an undivided multi-polar European security architecture in an effort to strengthen peace, increase stability and enhance the predictability of certain states and multinational associations. As noted previously, according to Article 1, "the Parties shall cooperate with each other on the basis of the principles of indivisible, equal and undiminished security."<sup>39</sup> In addition, Article 2 stipulates that the key principles of relations between states would be based on meeting existing international commitments guided by the principles set forth in the Charter of the United Nations, the Helsinki Final Act, the Charter for European Security, the Manila Declaration on the Peaceful Settlement of International Disputes, and the Charter for European Security.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Karaganov and Bordachev, *Towards a new Euro-Atlantic Security Architecture*, 8.

<sup>39</sup> "European Security Treaty," Article 1.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, Preamble.

In other words, under this proposal, all international actions—whether by individual states or collective bodies—would be obliged to respect the security interests of all other states under existing international commitments. As the EST acknowledges, this obligation is already expressed in the UN Charter, the Helsinki Final Act, and other documents. The EST proposal does not explicitly seek to dissolve NATO or other multilateral organizations, nor does it call for an American withdrawal from Europe. However, as Dmitri Trenin, the Director of the Carnegie Moscow Center, has written, “it does call for NATO members to place their allegiance to the proposed treaty above their alliance obligations, and work within alliances to promote the treaty’s objectives.”<sup>41</sup> For example, Article 2 asserts that “a Party to the Treaty which is a member of military alliances, coalitions or organizations shall seek to ensure that such alliances, coalitions or organizations observe principles in the Charter of the United Nations...as well as in Article 1 of this Treaty, and that decisions in the framework of such alliances, coalitions, or organizations do not significantly affect security of any Party or Parties to the Treaty.”<sup>42</sup> It is not clear what the EST would add to the existing international legal and political commitments that it calls for upholding.

A central component of Medvedev’s EST proposal is cooperation “on the basis of the principles of indivisible, equal, and undiminished security.”<sup>43</sup> To quote the EST, “a Party to the Treaty shall not undertake, participate in or support any actions or activities affecting significantly security of any other Party or Parties to the Treaty.”<sup>44</sup> This implies that the EST is to be enacted as a legally binding commitment by all participating countries not to strengthen their own security at the expense of others. Dmitri Trenin has acknowledged that existing documents, such as the 1945 UN Charter, the 1975 Helsinki Final Act, and the 1999 Charter on European Security, already provide a legal framework, which is quite specific on such issues as the use of force, or the threat of such

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<sup>41</sup> Dmitri Trenin, “Talking to Moscow,” Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Washington, D.C., January–February 2010, [http://www.carnegieendowment.org/publications/index.cfm?fa=view&id=24657&zoom\\_highlight=european+security+treaty](http://www.carnegieendowment.org/publications/index.cfm?fa=view&id=24657&zoom_highlight=european+security+treaty).

<sup>42</sup> “European Security Treaty,” Article 2, paragraph 2.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, Article 1.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, Article 2, paragraph 1.

use.<sup>45</sup> Nevertheless, the EST proposal seeks to streamline the legal framework of Europe's current institutional security architecture by means of a single binding legal instrument.

The EST proposal has not only highlighted priorities in Russian thinking; it has also revealed Moscow's sensitivity to changing domestic and international circumstances. The relative unity of NATO and the EU over Moscow's use of force in Georgia, the impact of the financial crisis, and the election of Barack Obama as the President of the United States have radically changed the external context of Russia's policymaking. As a result, some analysts argue, Medvedev's EST proposal has revealed a conciliatory and inclusive approach in advocating a revised European security architecture. In their view, this shift in tone was illustrated by Medvedev's address at the London School of Economics in April 2009, immediately after the G-20 Summit.<sup>46</sup> Deviating from the aggressive rhetoric of his speeches in Berlin and Evian in 2008, which criticized NATO, Medvedev stressed that NATO "has a deserved place in the security system in the world and in Europe. It is the strongest military-political organization in the world today, and it has had quite comfortable conditions for development over these last years."<sup>47</sup> In effect, he argued that the EST would not replace existing organizations with new ones. Medvedev later asserted in an address at Helsinki University in April 2009 that the proposed new security architecture would involve "all Euro-Atlantic states, international organizations—including of course the European Union, NATO, the OSCE, CSTO, CIS—regional organizations and, of course, all the countries that belong to these organizations."<sup>48</sup> As a result, Article 10 of the EST states that it "shall be open for signature by all States of the Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian space from Vancouver to Vladivostok as well as by the following international organizations: the European Union,

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<sup>45</sup> Trenin, "Talking to Moscow." Trenin's observation should be qualified by the observation that the Helsinki Final Act is not a legally binding treaty but a political declaration.

<sup>46</sup> Lo, *Medvedev and the New European Security Architecture*, 4.

<sup>47</sup> Dmitry Medvedev, "Meeting with Students and Staff of the London School of Economics and Political Science," London, England, April 2, 2009, [http://eng.kremlin.ru/speeches/2009/04/02/2200\\_type82914type84779\\_214720.shtml](http://eng.kremlin.ru/speeches/2009/04/02/2200_type82914type84779_214720.shtml).

<sup>48</sup> Dmitry Medvedev, "Speech at Helsinki University and Answers to Questions from Audience," Helsinki, Finland, April 20, 2009, [http://eng.kremlin.ru/speeches/2009/04/20/1919\\_type82912type82914type84779\\_215323.shtml](http://eng.kremlin.ru/speeches/2009/04/20/1919_type82912type82914type84779_215323.shtml).

Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, Collective Security Treaty Organization, North Atlantic Treaty Organization and Community of Independent States in...from...to...”<sup>49</sup>

## **E. RUSSIAN MOTIVATIONS FOR THE EST**

The Kremlin’s motivations for putting forth the EST proposal are apparently not only to create a more multi-polar security system, but also to dispel the West’s negative perceptions of Russian foreign policy practices. The Medvedev proposal is significant in its departure from the normal course of post-Soviet Russian foreign policy in three respects. To begin, Moscow has taken a leadership role in proposing a collection of ideas that go beyond the reactive. Although Medvedev displayed a negative perception of European security trends during his Berlin speech in June 2008, his discourse offered more than negative reactions to NATO enlargement, U.S. missile defense plans, and general American unilateralism. This approach to foreign diplomacy signals a vast departure from the Yeltsin and Putin years, which have been characterized as more ad hoc and reactive in nature. Medvedev’s EST proposal sets out Russia’s own vision of European and Euro- Atlantic security.

Second, Moscow’s plan for a new European security architecture challenges the assumption that Russia’s international influence is predominantly preventative. Essentially, this means that the longstanding perception of Russia’s international policy among experts and officials in NATO and EU governments is that it has been far better suited to obstructing the interests of others than advancing a positive agenda of its own.<sup>50</sup> For instance, veto power as a permanent member of the UN Security Council has been a long-standing mechanism for asserting Moscow’s international influence for decades. Therefore, the EST proposal may reflect a Russian desire to play a leading role as a responsible player in regional and global affairs.

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<sup>49</sup> “European Security Treaty,” Article 10.

<sup>50</sup> Lo, *Medvedev and the New European Security*, 1.

Finally, the EST proposal has signaled a new self assurance in Russian foreign policy. In contrast to Russian policy during the Yeltsin and Putin presidencies, it has revealed a confidence that Russia is finally able to assume a more active role in international affairs, and that others—great powers and small states alike—must respect its interests.<sup>51</sup> The question still remains to what degree other countries in the Euro-Atlantic region are willing to satisfy Moscow’s desire for such a role in international security affairs.

Branding Europe’s current security system a Cold War relic, Russia seeks to revise European security institutions in ways more favorable to its strategic interests and to demonstrate its ability to wield influence in the region. The EST represents an attempt by Moscow to accomplish this in conjunction with the employment of “soft power” instruments, such as economic and energy leverage, most notably in former Soviet republics. Many western experts believe that Russia seeks to create a more multi-polar configuration of power in the region in an attempt to legitimize its control over its traditional hegemonic neighborhood in nearby former Soviet republics.<sup>52</sup> Moscow regards the existing European security system, dominated by the United States and NATO, as a hindrance to this. According to experts, Moscow’s ultimate vision for a European security system is an environment that would facilitate the projection of Russian influence. The EST is, therefore, a means to an end. According to Bobo Lo, director of the Russia and China programs at the Centre for European Reform, Moscow aspires to identify its position as “the ‘regional superpower’ in the former Soviet space.”<sup>53</sup> The consequence would be to place Russia in the European mainstream with recognition as a great power on a par with the United States and the European Union.<sup>54</sup>

Moscow has extended invitations to organizations and alliances to join the EST in an effort to achieve two objectives: to strengthen the legitimacy of the weak organizations founded and led by Russia, such as the CIS and the CSTO, and to dilute the

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<sup>51</sup> Lo, *Medvedev and the New European Security*, 1–2.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*

collective defense obligations of NATO members. Incorporating these Russian-led alliances under the umbrella of the all-encompassing EST would further Moscow's desire to wield influence, especially in its traditional sphere of influence in the former Soviet republics. For example, Russian security influence in this capacity would probably dampen prospects for either Georgia or Ukraine to achieve NATO membership.

Exploiting divisions within the NATO alliance may polarize its members. This would severely degrade the effectiveness of the most influential organization in the current European security system and allow Russia to gain further sway in European security affairs. However, former Soviet satellite states in Eastern Europe distrust Moscow's new assertiveness. Russia's military intervention in Georgia in 2008 has heightened the perception of vulnerability of some of the new NATO member states, perpetuating fears of Russian domination, which have burdened them for centuries.<sup>55</sup> Conversely, from a security standpoint, several Western European states (such as France, Germany, and Italy) feel less threatened by Moscow than they did during the Cold War, and they have chosen to focus more on developing economic transparency and cooperation with Russia than in the past. As a result, some of these states have expressed a cautious willingness to discuss Medvedev's proposal.

The EU and Russia share a mutually dependent economic relationship, most notably in the energy sector. Russia is the EU's third largest trading partner, behind the United States and China. Additionally, it is the largest supplier of energy to the European Union (supplying 33% of the EU's oil, 42% of its gas and 25% of its coal in 2007).<sup>56</sup>

Varied perspectives among EU member states in the security and economic spheres have prevented the development of a comprehensive relationship between the European Union and Russia. Even if the EST proposal fails to be adopted as a revised

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<sup>55</sup> Manuel de la Camara, *European Security and EU–Russian Relations* (Madrid: Real Instituto Elcano, May 14, 2009), 5.  
[http://www.realinstitutoelcano.org/wps/portal/rielcano\\_eng/Content?WCM\\_GLOBAL\\_CONTEXT=/elcano/elcano\\_in/zonas\\_in/defense+security/ari76-2009](http://www.realinstitutoelcano.org/wps/portal/rielcano_eng/Content?WCM_GLOBAL_CONTEXT=/elcano/elcano_in/zonas_in/defense+security/ari76-2009).

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

European security system, its mere introduction has the potential to create disarray in European security affairs, which may diminish U.S. influence in the region and further encourage Moscow to assert its own influence.

## **F. WESTERN CRITICISMS OF THE EST: AN OVERVIEW**

Medvedev's EST proposal has received broad criticism from experts and officials in NATO and EU countries owing in part to its inability to enhance the security principles already articulated in the Helsinki Final Act of 1975. The Final Act is a political declaration, which established a set of principles for guiding relations between all states in the Euro-Atlantic region (except Albania) during the Cold War in fields categorized in three "baskets."<sup>57</sup> Basket I principles concern relations between participating states, including refraining from the threat or use of force and respecting the inviolability of frontiers and the territorial integrity of states. Basket II covers cooperation in economics, science, technology, and the environment. Basket III cooperation encompasses human rights, freedom of information, culture, and education.<sup>58</sup> The role of the Final Act and the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) process during the Cold War has been characterized by four European authors as follows: "the CSCE process with its emphasis on the human rights dimension was essentially important for the emergence of the East European opposition movements, and the ideological warfare that the West pursued throughout the years of communism did play an important role in de-legitimizing the communist system. No wonder, then, that the 'return to Europe' was an elementary idea in most Central and East European countries at the time of the revolutions."<sup>59</sup>

Today, the EST has been perceived by NATO and EU experts and officials as a legally binding treaty pursued by Moscow that could have significant implications for the

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<sup>57</sup> Albania refused to participate in the CSCE during the Cold War and did not join the CSCE until June 19, 1991.

<sup>58</sup> David S. Yost, *NATO Transformed: The Alliance's New Roles in International Security* (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1998), 37–38.

<sup>59</sup> Sten Berglund, Frank H. Aarebrot, Henri Vogt, and Georgi Karasimeonov, *Challenges to Democracy: Eastern Europe Ten Years after the Collapse of Communism* (Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar Publishing Limited, 2001), 26.

current Euro-Atlantic security system. From the EU perspective, the current system has adequately preserved European security.<sup>60</sup> Therefore, any security dialogue should be held under the auspices of the current security organization involving all the states in the Euro-Atlantic region—that is, the OSCE, an institutional extension of the Helsinki Final Act. Rather than create the new security institution advocated by Moscow in the EST proposal, the EU has sought to reaffirm existing security commitments. For example, the “Corfu Process” has provided a forum for OSCE participating states to address where they have failed to respect the principles of comprehensive and indivisible security and how they can strengthen the implementation of commitments across all three OSCE dimensions or “baskets” of security.<sup>61</sup> It has sought to restore trust and confidence between the OSCE participating states, to assist them in implementing their commitments, and to clear the ground for concrete progress on security challenges.<sup>62</sup> The OSCE remains the unchallenged place to discuss fundamental principles of state interaction in the Euro-Atlantic region and to build new trust for joint action against complex challenges. Therefore, any attempt by Moscow to deviate from this framework by pursuing a revised security architecture would not only lack credibility in the eyes of the European Union and NATO; it would probably be rejected. According to the NATO Secretary-General Anders Fogh Rasmussen, “I don’t see a need for new treaties or new legally binding documents because we do have a framework already.”<sup>63</sup>

## 1. Europe Is More Secure Than Ever

Regardless of individual differences on concrete policy issues among EU member states, there are four fundamental conceptual positions that are shared across the EU, which conflict with the EST proposal and form the foundation for further criticisms of

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<sup>60</sup> Bjorn Fagerberg, “The EU and the Debate on Euro-Atlantic Security,” in *The Indivisibility of Security: Russia and Euro-Atlantic Security*, ed. Andrew Monaghan (Rome: NATO Defense College Forum Paper Series, January 2010), 48–51.

<sup>61</sup> Andrew Monaghan, “Defining the Indivisibility of Security: Russia and the Euro-Atlantic Community,” *The Indivisibility of Security: Russia and Euro-Atlantic Security*, Andrew Monaghan, ed. (Rome: NATO Defense College Forum Papers Series, January 2010), 36–37.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, 38.

<sup>63</sup> “European Security Treaty Rejected,” *EU Reporter*, <http://www.eureporter.co.uk/story/european-security-treaty-rejected>.

this proposal. First, most member states of the European Union have the impression that they are currently more secure than at any point in their history.<sup>64</sup> Medvedev’s proposal appears to reflect a widespread opinion of Russian foreign policy commentators that the current European security system is in a dire position and in need of sweeping changes. The EU is aware of the existing challenges to Euro-Atlantic security. However, the EU’s outlook differs from that of Russia. For example, the EU’s confidence is reflected in the introduction of the 2003 European Security Strategy, which states, “Europe has never been so prosperous, so secure nor so free. The violence of the first half of the 20th Century has given way to a period of peace and stability unprecedented in European history.”<sup>65</sup> The 2008 implementation report acknowledged that in the post-Cold War world, the European Union faces increasingly complex threats and challenges. Yet, the report states, “the EU remains an anchor of stability. Enlargement has spread democracy and prosperity across our continent. The Balkans are changing for the better.”<sup>66</sup> The bottom line here is that the EU is satisfied with Europe’s current security architecture and emerging threats must be addressed. However, the member states of the European Union consider themselves incomparably more secure today than at any point in their history. Therefore, the EU would caution against drastic measures, which would significantly alter an already successful security system. This point underscores the political and psychological foundation for the EU’s attitude toward the EST and for the EU’s judgment that it runs counter to the EU’s strategic security interests.

## **2. The Existing Security Order Should Be Preserved**

Second, although the existing security order is imperfect, it is valuable and should be respected.<sup>67</sup> Moscow has asserted that the Euro-Atlantic security system is flawed, which has revealed an apparent motivation for the EST proposal. The major flaw from

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<sup>64</sup> Fagerberg, “The EU and the Debate on Euro–Atlantic Security,” 46.

<sup>65</sup> *A Secure Europe in a Better World: European Security Strategy* (Brussels: Council of the European Union, December 12, 2003), 1.

<sup>66</sup> *Report on the Implementation of the European Security Strategy—Providing Security in a Changing World* (Brussels, December 11, 2008), 1.

<sup>67</sup> Fagerberg, “The EU and the Debate on Euro–Atlantic Security,” 48.

the Kremlin's perspective is that Russia's interests are simply being ignored. In June 2009, at the OSCE Annual Security Review conference, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov stated, "after the end of the Cold War and the crumbling of the bipolar system that divided EU/NATO nations and Comecon/Warsaw Pact states, a sustainable and effective system which would embrace states of the West and East never came to fruition. The chief systemic drawback consists in that over the 20 years we've been unable to devise guarantees of the observance of the principle of indivisible security. Today we're witnessing the infringement of a basic principle of relations between states that was laid down in the 1999 Charter for European Security and in the documents of the Russia-NATO Council—the commitment to not secure oneself at others' expense."<sup>68</sup> A centerpiece to the Russian claim that the existing security system is insufficient is Moscow's suspicion towards NATO, especially due to its eastward enlargement.

Such fervent Russian opposition to NATO enlargement provides the best example of the gap that exists between Russian perceptions of security in relation to the EU perspective (both NATO member states and non-member states). According to Bjorn Fagerberg, a Senior Advisor in the Secretariat of the Council of the European Union, "looking at Russia from an EU point of view and trying to understand its threat perceptions, it would seem that its Western borders have never looked so peaceful and unlikely to produce an attack as they do today."<sup>69</sup> One could even make a cogent argument that NATO and EU enlargements have produced a strategic stability in Europe that has been unrivaled in history. It is evident that a gap in perceptions has fueled drastically different views on the merits of the current Euro-Atlantic security sphere. Moscow feels left out and threatened by NATO as the center of gravity in European security. Conversely, the EU acknowledges that it has shortcomings, yet nevertheless places emphasis on the uniqueness of the current system and the successful results it has achieved.

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<sup>68</sup> Sergey Lavrov, "Hard Security Challenges in the Euro-Atlantic region. The Role of the OSCE in Creating a Sustainable and Effective Security System," Opening Session of the OSCE Annual Security Review Conference, Vienna, June 23, 2009, [http://www.mid.ru/brp\\_4.nsf/e78a48070f128a7b43256999005bcbb3/9eb56f1ecaad3ab5c32575df00362cc9?OpenDocument](http://www.mid.ru/brp_4.nsf/e78a48070f128a7b43256999005bcbb3/9eb56f1ecaad3ab5c32575df00362cc9?OpenDocument).

<sup>69</sup> Fagerberg, "The EU and the Debate on Euro-Atlantic Security," 50–51.

### 3. The Unique Features of This Security Order Must Be Safeguarded

Third, EU commentators assert, to quote Bjorn Fagerberg again, “the unique features that have made this security order so successful must be safeguarded” in order to preserve the current system.<sup>70</sup> The Kremlin has insisted that the EST proposal is not a ploy to rid Europe of the comprehensive approach to security embodied in the “three baskets” of the Helsinki Final Act. For example, in April 2009 at Helsinki University, President Medvedev stated, “if we could agree on a future treaty [concerning European security], we could consider it, if you want, as a kind of ‘Helsinki Plus’ treaty, that is as a confirmation, continuation and effective implementation of the principles and instruments born out of the Helsinki process, but adapted to the end of ideological confrontation and the emergence of new subjects of international law in the twenty-first century.”<sup>71</sup> Yet, Russian complaints with regard to Euro-Atlantic security generally focus on “hard security” matters—that is, politico-military issues, including arms control, peacekeeping and conflict management. As a result, Russian commentators convey the impression that other areas of security, such as the “human dimension” (respect for human rights, democracy, and the rule of law), are peripheral in nature. This Russian focus on hard security has spawned concern in the EU that the ulterior motive of the EST proposal is to “do away with the concept of comprehensive security as such, including the commitments in the ‘human dimension.’”<sup>72</sup>

Such aspirations would run counter to the development and enhancement of the concept of comprehensive strategy, based on the principle that the security of states cannot be separated from the security of their citizens. There is consensus in the EU that this approach will gain further momentum in the future. “We live in a world where terrorism, proliferation in weapons of mass destruction, regional conflicts, organized

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<sup>70</sup> Fagerberg, “The EU and the Debate on Euro–Atlantic Security,” 52.

<sup>71</sup> Dmitry Medvedev, “Speech at Helsinki University and Answers to Questions from Audience,” Helsinki, Finland, April 20, 2009, [http://eng.kremlin.ru/speeches/2009/04/20/1919\\_type82912type82914type84779\\_215323.shtml](http://eng.kremlin.ru/speeches/2009/04/20/1919_type82912type82914type84779_215323.shtml).

<sup>72</sup> Fagerberg, “The EU and the Debate on Euro–Atlantic Security,” 52.

crime and failing states are emerging as key threats to our security.”<sup>73</sup> These threats are becoming more complex, and therefore, require a collective response, not increased separation between the different dimensions of security.

The trans-Atlantic relationship between the European Union and the United States presents another unique feature of the Euro-Atlantic security order. This relationship has been viewed as one of the pillars of European security. Comments, such as Medvedev’s statement that “it is my conviction that Atlanticism as a sole historical principle has already had its day” (as stated in Berlin in June 2008) have not been well received by most Europeans.<sup>74</sup> In addition, they have perpetuated suspicion that the EST proposal seeks to drive a wedge between the United States and the European Union. Therefore, throughout the security debate, the European Union has insisted that any dialogue concerning European security include the United States and Canada.

#### **4. The Security Framework Must Develop Gradually**

Fourth, the European Union continues to hold that the Euro-Atlantic security framework can only develop gradually and consensually. A fundamental assumption for the European Union in the debate on Euro-Atlantic security “is that a solid and lasting security order can only be build over time. It must be the result of an incremental, gradual process.”<sup>75</sup> According to Bjorn Fagerberg of the Secretariat of the Council of the European Union, “there is a strong antipathy among the EU’s Member States to anything that smacks of big states doing deals over the heads of smaller ones.”<sup>76</sup> The member states of the European Union therefore feel strongly that any new security framework should follow the course of the CSCE process, which eventually led to the Helsinki Final Act and the creation of the OSCE.

The EU approach to security can be explained, in part, to the experiences of building the European Union itself. From the EU perspective, this institution has evolved

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<sup>73</sup> Fagerberg, “The EU and the Debate on Euro–Atlantic Security,” 53.

<sup>74</sup> Medvedev, “Speech at Meeting with German Political, Parliamentary and Civic Leaders.”

<sup>75</sup> Fagerberg, “The EU and the Debate on Euro–Atlantic Security,” 54.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, 54.

incrementally and consensually, and as a result, the EU approach to building security in Europe has followed suit. Many in the European Union believe “that the fluid and unpredictable nature of security threats also necessitates adaptable arrangements.”<sup>77</sup> Since the signing of the Helsinki Final Act in 1975, security threats have evolved in unimaginable ways. For example, thirty-five years ago, few could imagine that cyber security would become a significant trans-national threat. The bottom line is that security cannot be approached in a “fixed” manner with a finite solution. It should be viewed as a continual process, which requires security institutions to adapt to changing realities.

## **5. The United States Must Balance Other Factors in Relations with Moscow**

The United States has faced a difficult dilemma in balancing its policies regarding Euro-Atlantic security and its bilateral relations with Moscow. The dilemma has widely affected the U.S. government’s decisions in dealing with Medvedev’s EST proposal. Washington has pursued efforts to strengthen NATO, the European Union, and the human dimension of the OSCE while also striving to “reset” relations with Russia. Achieving success in these seemingly contradictory objectives has made outright rejection of the EST an impractical course. From the U.S. perspective, the OSCE remains a crucial Euro-Atlantic security institution along with NATO and the EU. Although NATO and EU enlargement have received more attention in recent years, the United States views the OSCE as paramount to expanding security dialogue in the Euro-Atlantic region. According to Phillip H. Gordon, Assistant Secretary of State, Bureau of Europe and Eurasian Affairs, “the OSCE’s comprehensive approach to security offers a vehicle for engagement across the political-military, economic, and human rights dimensions. That it is a process, and that such a process takes time, does not lessen its importance or the necessity for sustained U.S. engagement.”<sup>78</sup> In addition, the Obama Administration has supported the “Corfu Process” as an opportunity to review the current Euro-Atlantic

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<sup>77</sup> Fagerberg, “The EU and the Debate on Euro–Atlantic Security,” 55.

<sup>78</sup> Philip H. Gordon, Assistant Secretary Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs, “Statement Before the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe,” Washington, D.C., October 28, 2009, <http://www.state.gov/p/eur/rls/rm/2009/131055.htm>.

security order, identify new challenges and discuss ideas for revitalizing the organization. Furthermore, Assistant Secretary Gordon has taken note of Washington's interest in improving Euro-Atlantic security. "The United States participates actively in this broad dialogue and we are open to ideas for improving European security."<sup>79</sup> Washington fully supports the current Euro-Atlantic security system and the principles articulated in the Helsinki Final Act. The United States shares the EU perspective in adhering to the four fundamental criticisms, which form the basis of EU and U.S. analyses of the EST proposal. However, Washington must recognize broader strategic interests beyond the purview of Euro-Atlantic security in considering its relations with Moscow.

In an effort to "reset" relations with Moscow, the United States has engaged Russia on various fronts (strategic nuclear arms control, Iran, and Afghanistan) where it believes such engagement can make a strategic difference. As a result, it has deemphasized areas that have caused previous tensions with Moscow, such as NATO enlargement. By altering the political and psychological climate, it has paved the way for renewed engagement on strategic issues, particularly interests shared by Washington and Moscow. The prospects for a renewed security relationship between Washington and Moscow have made issues, such as the EST proposal, less relevant and less urgent. In other words, the U.S.-Russia strategic partnership is too important to allow a peripheral issue, such as the EST, to negatively affect bilateral security cooperation efforts. Therefore, Washington must pursue rather contradictory policies in advocating the enhancement of Euro-Atlantic security within the OSCE's Corfu Process, without disrupting renewed engagement efforts with Moscow by outright rejection of the EST. This requires careful diplomacy in acknowledging Medvedev's proposal while offering constructive criticism meant to further positive relations between Washington and Moscow. In February 2010, U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton stated, "some of Russia's proposals contain constructive ideas and we welcome the opportunity to engage seriously with Russia on this important subject."<sup>80</sup> Yet, in the end, the United States does

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<sup>79</sup> Gordon, Assistant Secretary Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs, "Statement Before the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe,"

<sup>80</sup> Hillary R. Clinton, "Remarks at the NATO Strategic Concept Seminar," Washington, D.C., February 22, 2010, <http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2010/02/137118.htm>.

not endorse the creation of new treaties concerning the overall framework for Euro-Atlantic security, and is intent on carrying forward discussions of Euro-Atlantic security within existing institutions, such as the OSCE, the NATO-Russian Council, and the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council.

## **6. The EST Lacks Precision**

NATO and EU criticisms of the EST are extensive and represent a general attitude of skepticism concerning Moscow's genuine motives behind this treaty proposal. The most widely held criticism concerns the EST's ambiguity in proposing lofty goals with little specific substance. As previously noted, Article 2 stipulates that "a Party to the Treaty shall not undertake, participate in or support any actions or activities affecting significantly security of any other Party or Parties to the Treaty."<sup>81</sup> Yet, Medvedev has failed to define what actions constitute a threat of "affecting significantly security."

If the EST came into force, this would inevitably lead to differences of opinion among states with varied perceptions in identifying and quantifying threats. Contrasting opinions would not only arise between Russia and NATO member states, for example. Steven Pifer, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution and a former U.S. ambassador to Ukraine, has observed that the implications could involve multiple states with contending judgments. "If the Russian draft were accepted without changes, it would trigger 'dozens of disputes as to meaning,' Pifer said. Differences of opinion would arise not just between Russia and the West, but also between Russia and Ukraine, Georgia, Moldova, Azerbaijan, and others, Pifer said."<sup>82</sup>

Creating a treaty regime in which individual states could subjectively define what "actions or activities" might be "affecting significantly security" would allow EST parties to object to virtually any action undertaken by other parties on the grounds that it might constitute a threat. Moreover, this concerns both current and aspiring NATO members because allowing each EST party to define what it considers a threat would essentially

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<sup>81</sup> "European Security Treaty," Article 2, paragraph 1.

<sup>82</sup> Steven Pifer quoted in indirect discourse in Volha Charnysh. "Russia Drafts Security Pact," *Arms Control Today* 40, no 1 (2010): 38–39.

give Russia a veto over further NATO enlargement.<sup>83</sup> Finally, Article 2 further articulates the EST's intent to transcend all obligations that EST parties would owe to other international organizations or alliances. Both the European Union and NATO are wary of such an obligation because it would give Moscow veto power over their collective decisions without holding membership status.

## **7. The EST Fails to Ensure Collective Security Commitments**

The EST's weak enforcement mechanism would fail to oblige its members to uphold any collective commitments to security. For example, Articles 4–6 set the parameters for bringing together treaty members in the event of a treaty violation or threat of violation. In the event of a crisis, Article 8 states, “the Extraordinary Conference of the Parties shall be effective if it is attended by at least four fifths of the Parties of the Treaty.”<sup>84</sup> According to Mikhail Tsyarkin, professor of the National Security Affairs at the Naval Postgraduate School, “this provision is in fact more favorable to NATO, which could in a crisis simply boycott the conference. Russia, which has no reliable allies, would have trouble doing likewise.”<sup>85</sup> The point here is that nothing obligates treaty members to attend a proposed “Extraordinary Conference” in the event of an attack or threat of an attack on a fellow member, and hence, this handicaps the decision-making efforts of the EST. Without a defined, effective means to ensure member participation in times of crisis, the EST fails to offer a credible mechanism for Euro-Atlantic collective security. To be sure, no treaty regime can compel a state to honor its commitments to take military action in defense of an ally or security partner.

## **8. The EST Neglects the Democracy and Human Rights Dimension**

A second criticism of the EST refers to its limited focus. That is, the EST concerns only “basket I” issues, such as geo-political and military affairs, while largely

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<sup>83</sup> “Russia: Security Treaty Aims to Supersede NATO, EU,” Oxford Analytica Daily Brief Service, December 14, 2009.

<sup>84</sup> “European Security Treaty,” Article 8, paragraph 4.

<sup>85</sup> Mikhail Tsyarkin, “Moscow’s Security Gambit,” Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, December 10, 2009, [http://www.rferl.org/content/Moscows\\_European\\_Security\\_Gambit/1900832.html](http://www.rferl.org/content/Moscows_European_Security_Gambit/1900832.html).

ignoring “basket II and III” issues dealing with economics, the environment, and the human dimension. Many critics within the European Union and NATO attribute this apparent disregard for “soft issues,” such as human rights and democratization to a perceived value gap between Russia and the West, which has persisted since the Cold War. In his Helsinki speech in April 2009, Medvedev stated, “in my opinion the future treaty should include the basic principles for developing arms control regimes, confidence building measures, and measures on restraint and reasonable sufficiency in military development. Russia has already made a significant contribution to arms control and we remain ready to do so again.”<sup>86</sup> From the Russian perspective, this emphasis on “hard security” implies that little erosion of the fundamental principles outlined in baskets II and III of the Helsinki Final Act has taken place since the end of the Cold War. This emphasis also implies that further democratization and protecting the human rights of Russians and others in the Euro-Atlantic region are of secondary concern to Moscow. The EST’s failure to address such issues, which NATO and the European Union view as inseparable components of security, is a prominent flaw.

Today, the OSCE remains the principal forum for discussing the fundamental principles of security and building inter-state trust for action against complex security challenges in the Euro-Atlantic region. This forum is rooted in the principles expressed in the Helsinki Final Act, as well as the Paris Charter, and it has continued with the “Corfu Process” in an effort to restore trust and transparency among the participating states. The advancement of democracy and respect for human rights represent essential values in the eyes of NATO and EU member states. On December 3, 2008, NATO’s North Atlantic Council further underscored the importance of beginning a security dialogue under the auspices of the OSCE:

We underscore that the existing structures—NATO, the EU, the OSCE and the Council of Europe—based on common values, continue to provide every opportunity for countries to engage substantively on Euro-Atlantic security with a broad *acquis*, established over decades, that includes respect for human rights, territorial integrity, the sovereignty of all states,

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<sup>86</sup> Dmitry Medvedev, “Speech at Helsinki University and Answers to Questions from Audience,” Helsinki, Finland, April 20, 2009, [http://eng.kremlin.ru/speeches/2009/04/20/1919\\_type82912type82914type84779\\_215323.shtml](http://eng.kremlin.ru/speeches/2009/04/20/1919_type82912type82914type84779_215323.shtml).

without dividing lines, and the requirement to fulfill international commitments and agreements. Within this framework, Allies are open to dialogue within the OSCE on security perceptions and how to respond to new threats, and seek to the widest possible cooperation among participating States to promote a common Euro-Atlantic space of security and stability. The common aim should be to improve the implementation of existing commitments and to continue to improve existing institutions and instruments so as to effectively promote our values and Euro-Atlantic security.<sup>87</sup>

It is evident that NATO and the European Union continue to uphold a legacy of values, which have been successfully embodied in Euro-Atlantic security institutions of today. From the perspective of the member states of NATO and the European Union, respecting these values has fostered unprecedented peace and stability. Therefore, any proposed treaty, such as the EST, which has failed to acknowledge the importance of democracy and respect for human rights, lacks credibility in the eyes of NATO and the European Union.

## **9. Moscow Lacks Credibility**

Moscow is further criticized for the EST due to its overall lack of credibility in upholding the principles it proposes to include in the EST. According to David J. Kramer, senior transatlantic fellow at the German Marshall Fund, “the main problem with the Russian proposal was that Moscow would itself be violating it.”<sup>88</sup> Kramer referred to Russia’s suspension of compliance with the CFE Treaty, energy supply cutoffs, cyber attacks, and export bans, which have significantly affected European neighbors. Furthermore, Moscow itself violates Article 1 of the very treaty it proposes. As previously noted, Article 1 stipulates, “any security measures taken by a Party to the Treaty individually or together with other Parties, including in the framework of any international organization, military alliance or coalition, shall be implemented with due

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<sup>87</sup> Dov Lynch, “The Corfu Process,” in *The Indivisibility of Security: Russia and Euro-Atlantic Security*, ed. Andrew Monaghan (Rome: NATO Defence College Forum Papers Series, January 2010), 34–35.

<sup>88</sup> Charnysh, “Russia Drafts Security Pact,” 3.

regard to security interests of all other Parties.”<sup>89</sup> Russia’s invasion of Georgia in 2008 clearly defies this article, and as a result, has led NATO and EU members to suspect that Moscow simply cannot be trusted in spearheading any proposed revision to the current Euro-Atlantic security order. Gary J. Schmitt, a resident scholar and director of advanced strategic studies at the American Enterprise Institute, has described the proposed EST as:

... especially problematic in light of recent Russian behavior in occupied Georgia, in the recent military exercises aimed at Poland, in the new laws passed by the Duma authorizing military interventions to protect Russians and Russian speaking peoples in surrounding states, and in the new authorities the Russian president is seeking enabling him to use the Russian military on his own authority.<sup>90</sup>

In short, many NATO and EU observers continue to maintain that Russia is a revisionist power that desires to dominate its neighbors rather than to cultivate constructive and balanced relations with them. To expect the Kremlin leadership to behave otherwise is simply unrealistic in their view. Therefore, Medvedev’s proposal fails to be credible in the eyes of many NATO and EU observers because Moscow has notably failed in recent years to uphold the principles that it has advocated for a revised Euro-Atlantic security system in the EST.

## **10. The Euro-Atlantic Region Does Not Need Another Security Treaty**

Finally, Western experts have asserted that it is superfluous to add yet another security organization in the form of the EST when a reasonably satisfactory security order with the necessary growth potential already exists. According to Patrick Nopens, a retired Belgian Army general, “the OSCE and its related instruments have all the prerequisites to continue to serve as the main collective security organization in the Euro-Atlantic area where a renewed security dialogue can take place.”<sup>91</sup> Russian officials and commentators have argued that NATO and EU members have guaranteed their security through legally binding treaties at the expense of non-members. Yet, experts in NATO

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<sup>89</sup> “European Security Treaty,” Article 1.

<sup>90</sup> Charnysh, “Russia Drafts Security Pact,” 3.

<sup>91</sup> Patrick Nopens, *A New Security Architecture for Europe? Russian Proposal and Western Reactions* (Brussels: Egmont Royal Institute for International Relations, Security Policy Brief, November 2009), 4.

and EU countries contend that the EST would add another tier to a security order already saturated with security organizations. In their view, the answer is not establishing another overarching security institution. The remedy resides in reforming and making better use of the security institutions already set in place. The current Euro-Atlantic security order has the capacity to provide security for the entire region, including Russia, if all the states in this region respect the principles articulated in the Helsinki Final Act.

For example, the OSCE is a regional collective security organization consisting of a set of institutions based on political commitments. However, legally binding treaties also exist within its overall framework, such as the CFE Treaty. In contrast, NATO originated as a legally binding collective defense pact consisting of allies committed to defend each other against an outside threat. Additionally, the Lisbon Treaty also covers members with a legally binding defense clause within the EU, “if a Member State is the victim of armed aggression on its territory, the other Member States shall have towards it an obligation of aid and assistance by all the means in their power, in accordance with Article 51 of the United Nations Charter. This shall not prejudice the specific character of the security and defense policy of certain Member States.”<sup>92</sup> Moreover, Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations states:

Nothing in the present Charter shall impair the inherent right of individual or collective self-defense if an armed attack occurs against a Member of the United Nations, until the Security Council has taken measures necessary to maintain international peace and security. Measures taken by Members in the exercise of this right of self-defense shall be immediately reported to the Security Council and shall not in any way affect the authority and responsibility of the Security Council under the present Charter to take at any time such action as it deems necessary in order to maintain or restore international peace and security.<sup>93</sup>

Collectively, these treaties all employ legally binding mechanisms, which have adequately served the current Euro-Atlantic security order in the past, and remain poised to continue in this capacity for the years to come.

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<sup>92</sup> “Consolidated Version of the Treaty on European Union,” May 9, 2008, *Official Journal of the European Union*, Article 42, paragraph 7.

<sup>93</sup> “Chapter VII: Action with Respect to Threats to the Peace, Breaches of the Peace, and Acts of Aggression,” June 26, 1945, Charter of the United Nations, Article 51.

In summary, the Euro-Atlantic region is already well equipped with legally or politically binding documents designed to ensure regional collective security. Therefore, another legally binding regime, such as the proposed EST, would seem redundant and unnecessary. Skepticism abounds from the NATO and EU perspective due to a perceived value gap that has continued to erode Medvedev's credibility in proposing the EST since the 2008 invasion of Georgia and the Russian recognition of Abkhazia and South Ossetia as independent states. Yet, despite these criticisms, both the European Union and NATO are willing to engage Moscow in reforming Euro-Atlantic security within the current framework. If Moscow is to advance a positive agenda to revise the current security order, it must do so while acknowledging the importance of respecting human rights and the sovereignty of its neighbors. U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton has stated U.S. policy as follows:

We intend to use the NATO-Russia Council as a forum for frank discussions about areas where we disagree. We will use it to press Russia to live up to its commitments on Georgia and to reiterate our commitment to the territorial integrity and sovereignty of all states. We will also use the Council to advocate on behalf of human rights and individual liberty—these are principles and values that Russia committed to uphold when it accepted the NATO-Russia Founding Act.<sup>94</sup>

Again, these principles are an essential element in revising the Euro-Atlantic security system. However, this conflict in perspectives has persisted for decades and has continued to hinder efforts to devise a more successful institutionalized security partnership between Russia and NATO.

## **G. IMPLICATIONS FOR NATO & THE UNITED STATES**

If the EST was signed, ratified and entered into force, implementing the new treaty would have profound implications for NATO and the United States, in particular. First and foremost, most NATO members perceive the EST as an attempt by Moscow to undermine the Alliance. On May 16, 2009, President Medvedev alluded to Russian misgivings about NATO's influence:

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<sup>94</sup> Clinton, "Remarks at the NATO Strategic Concept Seminar."

As a military and political bloc NATO is becoming larger and security is becoming more fragmented and more piecemeal. I think that this is bad for everyone concerned, no matter what our negotiating partners say. So we need new approaches. There was the Helsinki Final Act [of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe]; now we need a new document, not something drafted in opposition to NATO but to provide security in Europe. And what does security in Europe involve? It has a whole set of components, it consists of a whole range of countries: there are the European states, that is all the ones in Europe, there's the United States, there's Canada, there are all the European organizations such as NATO and the European Union, the Commonwealth of Independent States, and the Collective Security Treaty Organization. So if we can create a new matrix of relationships, I think it will be effective. In any case, this is obviously better than advancing NATO in every direction. At any rate we are not happy with that idea and we are going to respond to it.<sup>95</sup>

A central pillar of the EST is the objective to guarantee “equal” and “indivisible security” in a legally binding form. At first glance, this may appear advantageous for the security of states in the Euro-Atlantic region. However, implementation of the EST could trap NATO. As a legally binding international treaty, the EST could be used as a powerful tool to limit the scope of the Alliance’s defense and security mechanisms. Article 9 of the EST states, “the Parties to the Treaty shall not assume international obligations incompatible with the Treaty.”<sup>96</sup> In theory, NATO members would have to uphold the principles of the EST at the expense of the North Atlantic Treaty. This would essentially give Moscow veto power over any NATO or U.S. action on the pretext that it either would enhance NATO’s security at the expense of Russia’s, or would undermine the unity of the common security space.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov’s June 23, 2009 address at the Opening of the OSCE Annual Security Review Conference expressed Moscow’s belief in the OSCE as an institution capable of controlling NATO’s activities in defense and security matters, if reformed appropriately:

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<sup>95</sup> Dmitry Medvedev, “Interview with Sergei Brilyov, Anchor of Vesti V Subbotu [News on Saturday] Programme on Rossiya TV Channel,” May 16, 2009, [http://eng.kremlin.ru/text/speeches/2009/05/16/1134\\_type84779\\_216376.shtml](http://eng.kremlin.ru/text/speeches/2009/05/16/1134_type84779_216376.shtml).

<sup>96</sup> “European Security Treaty,” Article 9, paragraph 3.

It would have been enough to consecutively institutionalize and transform the OSCE into a full-fledged regional organization within the meaning of Chapter VII of the UN Charter. That is the OSCE would be dealing with the full spectrum of Euro-Atlantic issues and, above all, ensuring in the region—based on legal commitments—an open collective security system.<sup>97</sup>

A reformed and treaty-based OSCE, ensuring the EST's universal application of "indivisible security," would result in a Euro-Atlantic security arrangement parallel to NATO. Therefore, it would not only restrict NATO activities in the security and defense realm. It would provide Russia with additional institutional capabilities to influence the current Euro-Atlantic security order.

Despite the inherent conflicts between NATO and the EST, the Medvedev proposal presents an opportunity for the United States to take the lead in opening a broader dialogue with Moscow concerning common security interests. According to Jeffrey Mankoff, Associate Director of International Security at Yale University, opening a dialogue for a revised security order, which focuses on common threats "like interstate conflict, terrorism, and drug trafficking would give Moscow an incentive to contribute positively to Europe's security while separating these issues from more contentious questions related to Russia's domestic governance and adherence to European human rights norms."<sup>98</sup> Reading an agreement that would satisfy Russia regarding its role in Euro-Atlantic security promises to be a challenging endeavor. Yet, Russia has objective reasons to reduce tensions with its western neighbors due to a rising China to the east, and the spread of terrorism within and along its borders. Additionally, the emergence of global threats, such as nuclear proliferation, drug trafficking, and the spread of militant Islamist movements, further incentivizes Moscow to cooperate with NATO, and especially the United States. Moreover, the current economic crisis has increased the urgency for both Russia and Europe to reduce tensions leading to future confrontation, especially in the energy sector.

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<sup>97</sup> Lavrov, "Hard Security Challenges in the Euro-Atlantic Region. The Role of the OSCE in Creating a Sustainable and Effective Security System."

<sup>98</sup> Jeffrey Mankoff, "Reforming the Euro-Atlantic Security Architecture: An Opportunity for U.S. Leadership," *The Washington Quarterly*, 33, no. 2, (2010): 73.

NATO's challenge resides in engaging Moscow in constructive security talks, yet preserving freedom of action in the event Moscow chooses to play an obstructionist role. According to Mankoff, "moving ahead with negotiations would also place the ball in Russia's court."<sup>99</sup> The Alliance has an opportunity to show Moscow that it is not being reflexively excluded from the current security order. Furthermore, it has a chance to demonstrate to the Kremlin that Russian attempts to weaken or divide NATO will only result in further isolation.

## **H. CONCLUSION**

This chapter has provided an overview of the Russian case for the EST, as well as of the reservations expressed by experts in NATO and the European Union. Most NATO and EU commentators view the EST as a largely empty proposal fraught with hidden objectives. Moscow's criticisms of the current Euro-Atlantic security system are well documented. Yet, the EST has failed to provide the requisite elements to be considered a credible alternative to the current security order. Moscow's invasion of Georgia in 2008, coupled with its reputation as a regional "bully," have fueled a widespread western perception that Russia must be treated with caution. Relations of distrust between Russia and many of its neighbors have persisted for decades. It is this legacy, which threatens future prospects for security cooperation between Russia and many other members of the Euro-Atlantic community.

Despite its obvious faults, the EST has contributed to broader initiatives to relaunch discussions about a revised Euro-Atlantic security order. These broader initiatives include the Corfu Process and revived dialogue within the NATO-Russia Council and the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council. NATO, the European Union, and the Russian Federation have common interests, including nuclear arms control, climate change, energy security, counter-terrorism, and cyberspace. In the end, to achieve a stable and

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<sup>99</sup> Mankoff, "Reforming the Euro-Atlantic Security Architecture: An Opportunity for U.S. Leadership," 80.

peaceful Euro-Atlantic region, it is vital to build an inclusive security community and common security space. This can be achieved by establishing a new security narrative of cooperation to meet shared challenges.

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### **III. NATO'S WILLINGNESS TO DISCUSS THE EST: MOTIVES AND IMPLICATIONS**

#### **A. INTRODUCTION**

This chapter examines NATO's willingness to discuss the EST, despite intense opposition from some allies and their reservations about cooperation with Moscow. The Obama Administration has sought a "reset" of relations with Moscow in an effort to build a more cooperative and harmonious relationship than the one which prevailed during the final years of the George W. Bush administration. NATO's willingness to discuss the EST is more than a by-product of Washington's rapprochement with Russia. Other NATO capitals have their own reasons to favor improved relations with Moscow. Russia's EST proposal presents an opportunity to examine the need for a revised Euro-Atlantic security order and to explore the prospects for enhanced strategic cooperation with Russia.

#### **B. WASHINGTON'S RATIONALE FOR RESETTING RELATIONS WITH MOSCOW**

The Obama administration has sought a new era in U.S.-Russian relations in an attempt to build trust and cooperation through pragmatism in the pursuit of mutual interests. Vice President Joseph Biden declared at the February 2010 Munich Security Conference, "it's time to press the reset button and to revisit the many areas where we can and should be working together with Russia."<sup>100</sup> President Obama at the April 2009 London G-20 economic summit joined Russian President Medvedev in making the following joint statement:

The era when our countries viewed each other as enemies is long over, and recognizing our many common interests, we today established a substantive agenda for Russia and the United States to be developed over the coming months and years. We are resolved to work together to strengthen strategic stability, international security, and jointly meet

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<sup>100</sup> Joseph Biden, Remarks by Vice President Biden at the 45th Munich Security Conference, Berlin Germany, February 7, 2009, <http://germany.usembassy.gov/events/2009/feb-biden-security/>.

contemporary global challenges, while also addressing disagreements openly and honestly in a spirit of mutual respect and acknowledgment of each other's perspective.<sup>101</sup>

Today, Washington and Moscow share several common interests. In particular, securing and reducing nuclear weapon stockpiles, stabilizing Afghanistan, and preventing Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons are a few examples, which have garnered recent attention. The United States has a compelling reason to reengage with Russia because, according to Vice President Biden, “the spread of nuclear weapons is the greatest threat facing our country.”<sup>102</sup> Moscow also considers nuclear proliferation a threat to Russia, and it lacks the resources to sustain its current nuclear arsenal. Both nations, therefore, have powerful incentives to cooperate. Since Russia and the United States together possess ninety percent of the world's nuclear weapons, they are in a unique position to eliminate a significant portion of the world's fissile material.<sup>103</sup>

U.S. experts agree that Washington's priorities include gaining Russian cooperation on reducing nuclear stockpiles and obtaining Moscow's help regarding Iran's nuclear programs. Furthermore, according to Tomas Valasek, a Slovak expert on European security affairs, it is held within the Obama administration “that Russian self-interest, rather than U.S. concessions on NATO enlargement or missile defense, should drive Moscow's engagement with Washington.”<sup>104</sup>

Overall, Washington has set aside ideology in favor of pragmatism to advance strategic cooperation efforts with Moscow. The May 2010 National Security Strategy explicitly stated, “we seek to build a stable, substantive, multidimensional relationship

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<sup>101</sup> “Text of US–Russia Statement on Nuclear Arms,” Pravda, April 1, 2009, <http://engforum.pravda.ru/showthread.php?245830-Text-of-US-Russia-statement-on-nuclear-arms-AP-April-1-2009>.

<sup>102</sup> Joseph Biden, *The Path to Nuclear Security: Implementing the President's Prague Agenda*, Remarks of Vice President Biden at National Defense University, Washington, D.C., February 10, 2010, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/remarks-vice-president-biden-national-defense-university>.

<sup>103</sup> Krickus, *Medvedev's Plan: Giving Russia a Voice but Not a Veto in a New European Security System*, 5.

<sup>104</sup> Tomas Valasek, *Obama, Russia, and Europe* (Centre for European Reform, Policy Brief, June 2009), 1.

with Russia, based on mutual interests.”<sup>105</sup> In strategic terms, Russia is too important to remain on the periphery. Former U.S. Secretaries of State Henry A. Kissinger and George P. Schultz wrote in October 2008, soon after the NATO Allies had adopted a “no business as usual” approach in the wake of Russia’s use of force in Georgia, that “isolating Russia is not a sustainable long-range policy. It is neither feasible nor desirable to isolate a country adjoining Europe, Asia and the Middle East and possessing a stockpile of nuclear weapons comparable to that of the United States.”<sup>106</sup> Indeed, the Obama administration has engaged Moscow in areas in which it believes that Russia can make a strategic difference—strategic arms control, Iran and Afghanistan—and deemphasized issues that have caused prior tensions with Russia, such as NATO enlargement. Washington has cautiously changed the psychological climate, and has sought Russian engagement on issues in which it has a genuine interest and a key role.

Despite the EST’s lack of substance, it represents a broader strategic grievance between Russia and the countries of NATO and the European Union—that is, what Russians regard as the latter’s neglect of Russian security interests. According to a Research Advisor at the NATO Defense College, the British scholar Andrew Monaghan, “for Moscow, the constant demands for more substance [regarding the EST] are ‘tiring’ and miss the point of Moscow seeking a collective discussion—Moscow does not simply seek to place proposals on the table to await the critique of the West.”<sup>107</sup> It appears that in Russian eyes, the EST is a signal to the rest of the Euro-Atlantic community that Russia is no longer a Cold War foe, and that Russia has the potential to play a positive role in Euro-Atlantic security affairs. The bottom line is that Moscow desires to re-establish itself as a regional power, and therefore, favors a Euro-Atlantic security order, which not only respects Russian interests, but also acknowledges Russia as an elite power, as in decades and centuries past.

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<sup>105</sup> *United States National Security Strategy* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, May 2010), 44, [http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/rss\\_viewer/national\\_security\\_strategy.pdf](http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/rss_viewer/national_security_strategy.pdf).

<sup>106</sup> Henry A. Kissinger and George P. Schultz, “Building on Common Ground with Russia,” *The Washington Post*, October 8, 2008, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/10/07/AR2008100702439.html>.

<sup>107</sup> Monaghan, “Defining the Indivisibility of Security: Russia and the Euro–Atlantic Community,” 12.

The foundation for strategic cooperation between Russia and the United States is pragmatism and a desire to fulfill shared interests. Due to the pervasive U.S. influence in NATO, “resetting” U.S.-Russia bilateral relations has implications for the Euro-Atlantic security dialogue, especially the NATO-Moscow relationship. Not only is the “reset” likely to take precedence in guiding relations between the United States and Russia. It has also led the member states of the Euro-Atlantic community to discuss the prospects for a revised Euro-Atlantic security order. Although the EST is unlikely to be considered a viable alternative to the current international security institutions, outright rejection would further irritate Moscow and complicate broader strategic cooperation efforts with Washington and other NATO capitals.

### **C. WHY SHOULD NATO CONSIDER THE EST?**

Despite Russia’s perceived intentions of undermining NATO via the EST, the Alliance has acknowledged the necessity to discuss the Russian proposal in the course of reviewing the current Euro-Atlantic security order and its capacity to deal with emerging security threats. As Secretary Clinton noted in her February 2010 speech at the NATO Strategic Concept seminar, “NATO has always been the institutional means through which our democracies meet the security challenges of our day. And the issues we’re facing now are broader, and arguably more difficult than before.”<sup>108</sup> Why then is it necessary to consider a proposal, which inherently seeks to undermine the current Euro-Atlantic security system? This is partly because Europe will remain insecure as long as Russia takes a revisionist approach in the region’s security affairs. The power struggle between Russia, on the one hand, and NATO and the European Union on the other, has been manifest in the competition for influence over the non-Russian former Soviet republics and former Warsaw Pact states in Eastern Europe, and in the persistent conflicts over energy, military deployments, and arms control. According to the associate director of International Security Studies at Yale University, Jeffrey Mankoff:

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<sup>108</sup> Clinton, “Remarks at the NATO Strategic Concept Seminar.”

In part, this failure is due to Russia's retreat into authoritarianism and intervention in the affairs of its neighbors, but it is also the result of a persistent hesitancy on the part of European institutions to integrate a Russia that has not first transformed itself along liberal, democratic lines.<sup>109</sup>

In other words, neither NATO nor the European Union fully trusts Russia as a cooperative partner in the Euro-Atlantic security sphere because of a perceived value gap, which has persisted for decades, and which remains a polarizing point of contention in NATO-Russian relations.

Some Russians argue that this lack of trust has perpetuated a “bloc” approach towards European security affairs—and thus, has created a division between a growing “West” and diminishing “East.” The danger of this division for European security was exposed during the August 2008 Russia-Georgia conflict. This conflict occurred within the purview of a competition for influence between Russia and NATO in the security vacuum that emerged along Russia's borders after the collapse of the Soviet Union. The absence of a mechanism for preventing—or at least regulating—a conflict of this kind raises the possibility of escalation or even further instability in the future. This prospect has become more dangerous in light of the struggle for influence between Russia and NATO. However, despite this confrontation of interests in former Soviet republics, Russia and NATO also face many of the same common threats “ranging from Islamist extremism to terrorism and drug trafficking to the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.”<sup>110</sup> Security cooperation between Russia and NATO could be helpful in addressing such threats.

Today, no institutional mechanisms have proven to be capable of aligning the strategic interests of NATO and Russia or of achieving a compromise where the two sides disagree. Despite the EST's weaknesses, it represents Moscow's desire to begin a dialogue and define a more satisfactory role for Russia in the Euro-Atlantic security community. NATO fundamentally rejects the EST as an attempt to undermine its position

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<sup>109</sup> Mankoff, “Reforming the Euro-Atlantic Security Architecture: An Opportunity for U.S. Leadership,” 69.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*, 70.

as the preeminent Euro-Atlantic security institution. However, it has recognized the danger in antagonizing Moscow and the need to develop a security relationship with Russia along pragmatic lines. According to a report submitted by the Group of Experts on a New Strategic Concept for NATO:

NATO should pursue a policy of engagement with Russia while reassuring all Allies that their security and interests will be defended. To this end, the Alliance should demonstrate its commitment to the NRC (and invite Russia to do the same) by focusing on opportunities for pragmatic collaboration in pursuit of such shared interests as nuclear non-proliferation, arms control, counter-terrorism, missile defence, effective crisis management, peace operations, maritime security, and the fight against trafficking in illegal drugs.<sup>111</sup>

Therefore, in principle, the NATO alliance is willing to discuss Moscow's proposal for a revised Euro-Atlantic security system and to work with Russia to advance these common interests. Yet, the NATO allies will probably be unwilling to act in a manner, which diminishes their role in Euro-Atlantic security affairs.

#### **D. NATO CHALLENGES IN RE-ENGAGING MOSCOW**

NATO-Russian relations have been constrained by contrasting visions of a preferred Euro-Atlantic security order. These visions have differed not only in the desired leadership roles of both parties. Russia has also continued to question NATO's purposes in the post-Cold War security order. Moscow has fundamentally disagreed not only on the purposes of NATO itself, but also on the membership, it has conferred upon some former Soviet republics and the former Warsaw Pact states of Eastern Europe. Conversely, NATO has viewed itself as a positive and stabilizing force in the Euro-Atlantic security sphere, steadily increasing its membership since the 1990s. NATO has held that its benign intentions to expand the zone of peace and prosperity in Europe would eventually be understood and accepted in Moscow as a benefit to all, and not as a threat to Russia. In fact, however, the Kremlin has continued to view NATO enlargement

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<sup>111</sup> NATO Group of Experts, *NATO 2020: Assured Security; Dynamic Engagement: Analysis and Recommendations of the Group of Experts on a New Strategic Concept for NATO*, May 17, 2010, [http://www.nato.int/nato\\_static/assets/pdf/pdf\\_2010\\_05/20100517\\_100517\\_expertsreport.pdf](http://www.nato.int/nato_static/assets/pdf/pdf_2010_05/20100517_100517_expertsreport.pdf), 28.

as an encroachment on its traditional sphere of influence. According to James M. Goldgeier, a senior fellow for transatlantic relations at the Council on Foreign Relations, the core problem with NATO-Russia relations is, “NATO will not allow Russia to have a veto over alliance decisions, while Russia believes it is a great power deserving a full voice in European security affairs.”<sup>112</sup> These issues of power rivalry continue to challenge the advancement of a constructive strategic dialogue between NATO and Russia. The unresolved issues include devising a revised Euro-Atlantic security order and addressing the questions raised by the EST proposal.

Several challenges, which have continued to burden NATO-Russian relations in recent years, originated during the Cold War and in Russian domestic politics during the 1990s. Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, Moscow expected NATO to “either dissolve itself or engage Russia as an equal and strategic partner in European security.”<sup>113</sup> Instead, the Alliance steadily enlarged eastward, beginning with a unified Germany, then incorporating several Central and Eastern European countries, including the Baltic states. Although there were sound reasons for NATO enlargement, such as stabilization and security enhancement, the process reinforced the belief in Moscow that NATO had not changed its core mission as an alliance directed against Russia. Overall, Russia’s perceptions focused on its political losses in Central and Eastern Europe rather than on NATO’s vision of promoting stability and cooperation throughout the Euro-Atlantic region. Therefore, in the post-Cold War world, most Russians have continually perceived NATO as an anti-Russian alliance.

In the 1990s, Russia suffered from political weakness and significant socioeconomic challenges. NATO enlargement was a further detriment to the Russian psyche, as it was perceived as a national humiliation. According to the President of the New Eurasia Foundation in Moscow, Andrei Kortunov, quoted prior to the Helsinki Summit between President Clinton and Russian President Yeltsin in March 1997, “it is the fear of being isolated, marginalized in a role in Europe, and it goes deep into Russian

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<sup>112</sup> James M. Goldgeier, *The Future of NATO*, Council Special Report no. 51 (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, February 2010), 10.

<sup>113</sup> “Russia/NATO: Divisions Outweigh Shared Interests,” *OxResearch Daily Brief Service* (December 16, 2009).

history. There is a perception in Russia that we are not taking [taken] as Europeans, and we are literally pushed out of Europe. We are getting isolated on the continent.”<sup>114</sup> Comparable perceptions have shaped Russian identity for centuries and continue to influence Moscow’s outlook on Euro-Atlantic security. Therefore, NATO has become a natural focus for increasing anti-Western sentiment in Russia since the 1990s. Embittered political elites have found it easier to blame outside forces for Russian misfortunes than to address the vast challenges that besiege Russia, which include political corruption and demographic decline. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, not only the fundamental existence of NATO but also its enlargement has spurred resentment among Russian elites. Against this backdrop, the effort to build an institutionalized partnership, which transcends the vastly different perspectives of NATO and Russia, has posed a significant political challenge.

NATO in fact faces several broad challenges in developing a functional relationship with Russia. To begin, pragmatic cooperation with Moscow is essential for maintaining a steady strategic relationship. President Obama noted at the announcement of the new START treaty on March 26, 2010, “when the United States and Russia can cooperate effectively, it advances the mutual interests of our two nations, and the security and prosperity of the wider world.”<sup>115</sup> Today, it seems that the interests of both states are more aligned than ever before. Both Moscow and Washington have vested interests in a stable Afghanistan, counter-terrorism, overcoming the global economic crisis, and anti-piracy operations. President Medvedev echoed the importance of cooperation with the United States in a speech at the Brookings Institution in Washington, D.C. on April 13, 2010, “we will cooperate with the United States on the most important issues like countering terrorism, trans-border crime, and piracy...We are going to overcome the effects of the global economic crisis as well because we do not know what the future will

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<sup>114</sup> Andrei Kortunov and Gennady Gerasimov, “Uneasy Alliance,” *Public Broadcasting Service Online News Hour*, February 7, 1997, [http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/europe/jan-june97/russia\\_2-7.html](http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/europe/jan-june97/russia_2-7.html).

<sup>115</sup> Barack Obama, “Remarks by the President on the Announcement of New START Treaty,” Washington, D.C., March 26, 2010, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/remarks-president-announcement-new-start-treaty>.

be.”<sup>116</sup> Despite contrasting perspectives on European security and a perceived value gap between Washington and Moscow, pragmatism will continue to encourage strategic cooperation due to the advancement of national interests.

Second, preserving unity among the twenty-eight NATO member states has proved increasingly difficult in recent years as the Alliance has expanded and differences between members have become even more pronounced. There are major disagreements among European member capitals over how to engage Russia. According to Manuel de la Camara, of the Real Instituto Elcano, “there is no common view on Russia among the EU’s member states. Russia and some EU countries (especially the larger ones) prefer to address some of the main issues on a bilateral basis, in particular in the energy area. This has prevented the development of a truly comprehensive relationship between Russia and Europe.”<sup>117</sup> Conversely, allies, such as Poland and the Baltic states, are wary of extensive cooperation with Moscow in any field. For example, Laurynas Jonavicius of the Eastern Europe Studies Centre in Vilnius, Lithuania, has noted, “emphasis on pragmatism in EU-Russia relations should be regarded as an attempt to divide Europe from inside by contrasting the actors having different economic interests and possibilities.”<sup>118</sup> From an Eastern European perspective, Moscow is using its energy clout to make an economic appeal to the traditional Western European powers. Gaining the support of states, such as Germany and France, would effectively minimize the voice of the Eastern European NATO allies and EU members due to their relative economic inferiority. In addition, Eastern European NATO allies and EU members are generally wary of extensive cooperation with Moscow due to the August 2008 Russian-Georgian conflict. From their perspective, the unilateral invasion of a sovereign state and the disproportionate use of force are evidence that Russia simply cannot be trusted.

Maintaining unity among the NATO member states is an essential element for establishing a functional long-term relationship with Moscow. As noted in Chapter II,

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<sup>116</sup> Dmitry Medvedev, “Russia–U.S. Relations and Russia’s Vision for International Affairs,” *The Brookings Institution*, Washington, D.C. (April 13, 2010).

<sup>117</sup> Manuel de la Camara, *European Security and EU–Russian Relations*.

<sup>118</sup> Jonavicius, *Dmitry Medvedev’s Speech in Evian: Reading between the Lines*.

NATO has viewed the EST as an attempt to fragment the Alliance, thereby minimizing its effectiveness. Overcoming this challenge will be paramount to not only building cooperation with Moscow. It is also vital in advancing the mutually acknowledged need for a revised Euro-Atlantic security order.

Third, in a post-Cold War world, NATO is challenged to redefine itself as a relevant alliance capable of overcoming the unpredictable threats of the present day. The development of a new strategic concept, to be published in November 2010, offers NATO an opportunity to address this challenge. According to Goldgeier, a new strategic concept will allow NATO, “to determine in principle when, where, how, and why it needs to act rather than simply responding in an ad hoc manner as new problems arise that its leaders determine require alliance action.”<sup>119</sup> This may be an unrealistic aspiration given the unpredictability of events, but transparency in future policy-making and military operations may address some future Russian grievances with NATO. Furthermore, transparency is vital for building cooperation with global partners in the new multi-polar world order. According to Rolf Mutzenich, a scholar at the Friedrich Ebert Foundation in Berlin, “for this purpose, there needs to be a realistic assessment of what NATO should and, above all, can do.”<sup>120</sup>

Another challenge for NATO in maintaining its relevance is to articulate its role in the event of non-military and even non-violent threats that could devastate a society. For instance, cyber attacks originating from Russian soil against Estonia in 2007 and prior Russian cutoffs of gas supplies through Ukraine have left populations in certain NATO member states helpless. If NATO is to remain relevant in today’s world, it “has to band together in the face of assaults that threaten a member state.”<sup>121</sup> The important point is that for NATO to remain relevant, it is vital that an alliance commitment endures in which a threat to one member is met collectively.

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<sup>119</sup> Goldgeier, *The Future of NATO*, 6.

<sup>120</sup> Rolf Mutzenich, “Security With or Against Russia? On the Russian Proposal for a European Security Treaty,” *Internationale Politik und Gesellschaft* (Berlin: Friedrich–Ebert–Stiftung, February 2010), 74.

<sup>121</sup> Goldgeier, *The Future of NATO*, 7.

Perhaps the most pressing challenge of all in NATO redefining itself is whether its members have the political will to plan shared commitments and follow through on them with sufficient investment and action. According to a professor of National Security Affairs at the Naval Postgraduate School,

The NATO allies now face threats and discern security imperatives in addition to the classical collective defense contingency of responding to ‘an armed attack’. They thus have greater latitude—and indeed must exercise judgment—in allocating resources to multiple security tasks.<sup>122</sup>

Consensus on the Alliance’s purposes is irrelevant without the political will to act on them. Some NATO member capitals do more than others to honor alliance commitments. This results in discrepancies in “burden sharing.” Despite this enduring issue, strong political leadership in defining NATO’s common purposes, maintaining unity in achieving them, and transparency in executing NATO’s tasks are paramount for meeting the unpredictable threats of today and in the future.

Building a functional relationship with Moscow demands such elements in order to endure for the years to come. NATO has expressed its willingness to remain united and advance the prospects of Euro-Atlantic security based on mutual interests with Russia. According to the Group of Experts on a New Strategic Concept for NATO, chaired by former U.S. Secretary of State Madeline Albright, “although NATO members view Russia from diverse perspectives, the Alliance is united in its desire to engage with the leaders of that country in order to prevent harmful misunderstandings and to identify and to pursue shared goals.”<sup>123</sup> This statement suggests that, despite contrasting perspectives regarding Euro-Atlantic security, the NATO allies view Russia as an important player whose cooperation is vital for meeting unpredictable threats.

NATO’s revised Strategic Concept is an opportunity to demonstrate to Russia that it has the capacity and political will to overcome the obstacles, which have burdened its relationship with Moscow since the 1990s. Moreover, it is also an occasion to express

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<sup>122</sup> David S. Yost, “NATO’s Evolving Purposes and the Next Strategic Concept,” *International Affairs* 86, no. 2 (March 2010): 520.

<sup>123</sup> NATO Group of Experts, *NATO 2020: Assured Security; Dynamic Engagement: Analysis and Recommendations of the Group of Experts on a New Strategic Concept for NATO*, May 26.

NATO's willingness to build and maintain a strategic partnership with Russia—one that is institutionalized rather than being personality-driven. However, the political will of the leadership in NATO capitals will remain important. Unity within the Alliance is vital to making this vision a reality. In a broad sense, a revised Strategic Concept is an implicit signal towards Moscow, which communicates NATO's acknowledgement that a revised Euro-Atlantic security order is needed. However, it is to be revised under the auspices of long-standing security institutions, such as NATO and the OSCE, not under the new legal framework envisaged in the EST.

#### **E. NATO OBJECTIVES IN RE-ENGAGING MOSCOW**

Within the framework of these larger challenges, NATO has several objectives in cultivating a more constructive long-term strategic relationship with Russia. In March 2009, NATO foreign ministers decided to resume formal meetings and practical cooperation under NATO-Russia Council auspices. This decision was consistent with the Obama administration's desire to "reset" relations with Moscow. Since then, noticeable strides have been made in building a long-term strategic partnership. The NATO Secretary-General, Anders Fogh Rasmussen, noted at a December 4, 2009 NRC formal session, "a trusting, productive NATO-Russia relationship is important not just for European security, but indeed for global security. Our goal should be to build a true strategic partnership between NATO and Russia, based on trust, shared views and shared goals."<sup>124</sup>

Reflecting a new political climate in the NATO-Russia partnership, the NATO allies have made several important decisions aimed at reinvigorating this relationship. First, they agreed on establishing the NRC Work Programme for 2010, which is designed to improve the working methods of the NRC itself, to make it a more result-oriented and politically relevant structure. Second, Secretary-General Rasmussen initiated a Joint Review of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Common Security Challenges, which has identified Afghanistan, terrorism, piracy, and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, as among the many

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<sup>124</sup> Anders Fogh Rasmussen, "NATO and Russia Agree to Move Partnership Forward," North Atlantic Treaty Organization, December 4, 2009, [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/news\\_59970.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/news_59970.htm).

mutual concerns NATO and Russia share. These efforts reflect a realization that NATO and Moscow share many of the same concerns in preserving security throughout the Euro-Atlantic region. Restoring channels of dialogue and cooperation via the NRC has demonstrated the willingness of both NATO and Russia to build a growing strategic partnership.

## **1. Cooperation in Afghanistan**

Today, NATO maintains a host of objectives in re-engaging Russia. These include cooperation on missile defense, security and prosperity, and Afghanistan. The Afghanistan example is especially crucial for NATO because many hold that it must succeed in its mission there to remain relevant in the twenty-first century. According to the United States Special Envoy to Afghanistan and Pakistan, Richard Holbrooke, “Russia’s support of the Afghan people is both vital and wide-ranging.”<sup>125</sup> This seems to suggest that cooperation with Russia will continue to be a critical factor in the stabilization of Afghanistan. NATO and Russia share many of the same interests in stabilizing Afghanistan—for example, curbing the spread of Islamic terrorism and drug trafficking. The Northern Distribution Network (NDN), a logistical transit corridor that involves Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Russia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan, plays an indispensable role in supplying the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) with both lethal and non-lethal supplies.<sup>126</sup> It embodies the type of strategic cooperation between Russia and NATO that is vital for the stabilization of Afghanistan.

On January 26, 2010, the Russian and NATO chiefs of staff approved a framework military cooperation agreement, which “includes Russia's support for the U.S.-led military operation in Afghanistan, specifically military transit via Russian

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<sup>125</sup> Richard Holbrooke, “U.S. Envoy Holbrooke on U.S.–Russia Cooperation on Afghanistan,” *OP–ED on U.S.–Russia Cooperation on Afghanistan*, June 9, 2010, <http://www.america.gov/st/texttrans-english/2010/June/20100610141501bpuh7.795352e-02.html>.

<sup>126</sup> Andrew C. Kuchins and Thomas M. Sanderson, *The Northern Distribution Network and Afghanistan: Geopolitical Challenges and Opportunities*, A Report of the CSIS Transnational Threats Project and the Russia and Eurasia Program (Washington, D.C.: Center for Strategic and International Studies, January 2010), 5.

airspace, as well as joint anti-piracy and antiterrorism efforts.”<sup>127</sup> Maintaining the NDN as an alternative logistics corridor also represents the type of “high politics” cooperation with Russia that NATO would like to cultivate. At this point, it appears that NATO is keen on incorporating Russian interests in the Euro-Atlantic security order to ensure prolonged cooperation in advancing both parties’ interests in Afghanistan and beyond. Therefore, outright rejection of the EST without consideration of a revised Euro-Atlantic security order might derail laborious efforts to “reset” relations with Washington, and also hinder the growth of a NATO-Russian strategic partnership.

#### **F. HOW DO NATO MEMBER STATES VIEW THE EST?**

NATO member states have remained united in resisting Russia’s call for a legally binding regime for the Euro-Atlantic security order via the EST. Nevertheless, varied national interests do exist within the Alliance. Moscow has courted certain allies in an effort to gain support for the EST. This has encouraged some NATO capitals to be more open to discussing a revised Euro-Atlantic security system. Western European powers, such as France, Germany, and Italy, view Russia as a vital economic partner and no longer feel directly threatened by the formidable Cold War foe of decades past. Leaders of these countries have been invited to Moscow, St. Petersburg, and Sochi to garner support for the EST. For example, on a visit to Moscow on July 16, 2008, the Italian President, Giorgio Napolitano, declared, “I personally listened to the ideas regarding a new architecture for Euro-Atlantic security put forward by the president with great interest. Italy’s position will be one of special attention to this issue and openness to deeper discussions of the proposal within the European Union.”<sup>128</sup> The political message to France especially has been mixed with bilateral trade offers and investment opportunities. During the 7<sup>th</sup> International Investment Forum in Sochi in September 2008, French Prime Minister François Fillon and Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin signed

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<sup>127</sup> “NATO, Russia Agree Military Cooperation Framework,” *Ria Novosti*, January 26, 2010, <http://en.rian.ru/world/20100126/157688180.html>.

<sup>128</sup> Anna Smolchenko, “Napolitano Backs New Security Pact,” *St. Petersburg Times*, July 18, 2008, [http://www.sptimes.ru/index.php?action\\_id=2&story\\_id=26584](http://www.sptimes.ru/index.php?action_id=2&story_id=26584).

agreements on new bilateral projects in the fields of high technology, energy, and space, including cooperation in developing the Shtokman gas field and a joint project to launch Soyuz spacecraft from a French launch site.<sup>129</sup>

In spite of the economic incentives, French President Nicolas Sarkozy has been cautious in responding to the EST. German Chancellor Angela Merkel has joined Sarkozy in this opinion, welcoming healthy debate regarding the EST proposal yet cautioning against steps that might undermine existing international security agreements and structures. In a joint article published in France's *Le Monde* daily on February 3, 2009, Sarkozy and Merkel said they were “ready to debate” Medvedev's proposal, “with our allies, and with our European partners, and to consider everyone's point of view. By doing so, we shall reiterate our confidence and commitment to the EU, NATO and the OSCE, to the tried and tested European standards underpinning our security, to the arms control and disarmament regime, and trans-Atlantic cooperation.”<sup>130</sup> These Western European allies are prepared to discuss the need to revise the current Euro-Atlantic security system. Yet, it seems they judge that the EST ultimately raises more questions than it answers.

Despite recent improvements in Russia-NATO relations, Georgia, the three Baltic states and most Central and Eastern European countries—all states that view NATO as the main pillar of Europe's security—remain extremely wary of the EST. Most of these countries consider themselves as having been victimized at times by Russian aggression over the centuries up to and including the Cold War, and they therefore view the EST as a ploy to divide and weaken NATO, and to draw them within Russia's sphere of privileged interest. As previously noted, in their eyes, the 2008 Russian-Georgian crisis is further proof that Moscow cannot be trusted as a reliable arbiter of European security affairs.

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<sup>129</sup> Marcel H. Van Herpen, *Medvedev's Proposal for a Pan-European Security Pact: Its Six Hidden Objectives and How the West Should Respond*, The Cicero Foundation (Maastricht, NED: October 2008), 12.

<sup>130</sup> Joint article by M. Nicolas Sarkozy, President of the Republic, and Mrs. Angela Merkel, Chancellor of Germany, in *Le Monde* newspaper, French Embassy, London, U.K. February 3, 2009, <http://www.ambafrance-uk.org/Security-our-joint-mission.html>.

We agree with Russia that the existing security architecture needs improvement,” Georgian Foreign Ministry official Sergi Kapanadze commented in response to Medvedev’s remarks. However, he said that in Tbilisi’s view it is unthinkable that a country “that is violating all international documents and agreements” should initiate a new security system.<sup>131</sup>

By contrast, Azerbaijan and the members of the Collective Security Treaty Organization—a Russian-led regional body that brings together Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan—support the EST. On May 31, 2010, the Parliamentary Assembly Council of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) officially declared its support for the EST in an effort to improve the European security structure. According to the Chairman of the CSTO Parliamentary Assembly (PA), Boris Gryzlov, “the entire space must be within the overall security frames and all members of the Council have supported Russian President Dmitry Medvedev’s initiative on improving the structure of European security.”<sup>132</sup> Furthermore, the CSTO PA Council members welcomed the development of the Russian leader’s idea and declared their intent to persuade their European colleagues that relations on security issues must be based on this approach. The fact that the CSTO’s perspective contrasts with that of Georgia and the Central and Eastern European states regarding the EST should be no surprise because the CSTO is a Russian-led organization that aspires to grow in strength and importance as a rival security institution to NATO. In theory, if the EST were to be ratified, it would greatly enhance the CSTO’s prestige as a key factor in European and Eurasian security. However, the resources and capacity of the CSTO do not match its ambitions—a common theme in Russian foreign policy objectives.

Overall, it is evident that divergent perspectives persist within the Euro-Atlantic region regarding security requirements. Despite varied interests amongst its members, the Alliance has recognized that re-engaging Russia in pursuit of a long-term strategic partnership is consistent with its “vital interests” and supportive of its intention to remain

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<sup>131</sup> Jean-Christophe Peuch, “Russian Proposal for European Security Encounters Skepticism,” *Eurasianet.org*, March 3, 2009, <http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insightb/articles/eav030409a.shtml>.

<sup>132</sup> Gryzlov quoted in “Post-Soviet Bloc Supports Medvedev's Pan-European Security Plan,” *Ria Novosti*, May 31, 2010, <http://en.rian.ru/russia/20100531/159232256.html>.

the preeminent Euro-Atlantic security institution. In doing so, NATO members have acknowledged the need to revise the current Euro-Atlantic security system. However, this revision is to be done within the structures already set in place within NATO and the OSCE. Washington's "reset" with Moscow will continue to play a major role in NATO's re-engagement with Russia. Although the consensus among NATO members is that the EST is not a realistic framework for Euro-Atlantic security, it is unlikely that NATO will plan to reject it out of hand. Doing so could add to the list of Russian grievances and might derail the re-engagement process. In the end, the EST constitutes an implausible vehicle for Euro-Atlantic security because Moscow has little credibility. Its limited resources and its reputation as a "regional bully" make many NATO and EU states regard such a proposal with caution.

#### **G. IS MOSCOW CREDIBLE IN PROPOSING THE EST?**

Both reputation and recent events have greatly reduced Russia's credibility in advancing the EST. From the fourteenth century onwards to the Cold War, Russia has sought to expand and maintain an empire largely through coercion and domination throughout Central and Eastern Europe, as well as Central Asia. Inevitably, the non-Soviet former Warsaw Pact states and some former Soviet republics have responded to the EST with much skepticism. The fact that the Russians themselves have already violated the first article of the very treaty Medvedev has proposed does not bode well for Moscow. Article 1 of the EST states, "the Parties shall cooperate with each other on the basis of the principles of indivisible, equal, and undiminished security."<sup>133</sup> The 2008 Russian-Georgian crisis has demonstrated that Moscow neither respects "the indivisible security" of a neighboring state, such as Georgia, nor seeks to adhere to the standards that it has advocated for a revised Euro-Atlantic security order.

Furthermore, there is evidence to suggest that the EST is nothing more than a hollow aspiration. Russia possesses neither the influence nor the resources to make it a reality. With Washington and NATO tied up with their own problems, Russia has been left to its own devices, yet has shown little vision or sense of responsibility in its vaunted

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<sup>133</sup> "European Security Treaty," Article 1.

“zone of privileged interests.” In June 2010, a conflict over gas with Belarus exposed the fragility of the newly formed customs union—a Russian-dominated economic club comprised of Russia, Kazakhstan, and Belarus. Claiming that Minsk owed it approximately two hundred million U.S. dollars, Russia started to cut gas supplies. The Belarusian leader, Alyaksandr Lukashenka, upped the stakes by ordering a cut in transit shipments of Russian gas to the EU, arguing that it was also owed money. Eventually Gazprom resumed full supply, yet Minsk maintained its claim. Lukashenka has also sabotaged the customs union with Kazakhstan and Russia by demanding, “that Russia scrap its export duty on oil and oil duty products, which would allow Belarus to buy them at Russia’s domestic prices and to re-export them at a profit.”<sup>134</sup> In response, Moscow again cut gas supplies to Minsk. Other disagreements ranging from Lukashenka’s unwillingness to recognize the independence of South Ossetia and Abkhazia to Russia’s ban on Belarus’s milk products have demonstrated that Moscow has mostly relied on coercion to pursue its interests with Belarus. Despite these disputes, Minsk has continued to extract large subsidies from Russia while challenging its authority.

In June 2010, unrest in Kyrgyzstan between ethnic Kyrgyz and Uzbeks in the city of Osh spurred interim government appeals for Russian military help. Yet, the Kremlin stood back owing to its inability to assert a sufficient military presence to quell the violence. A Russian armed forces expert, Alexander Golts, has argued that Russia neither had the capacity nor the will for such an intervention, “the Russian army—which largely consists of unskilled recruits and is plagued by bullying—is not equipped for the sort of peacekeeping operation they were asked to carry out in Kyrgyzstan. Besides, Russia’s ‘allies’ in the CSTO, particularly nearby Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan, have no desire to see Russian troops setting a precedent by sorting out the internal affairs of a neighboring state.”<sup>135</sup> Russia declined to respond to a request that it send troops to Kyrgyzstan, and this weakens its claim that the country is part of a Russian zone of privileged interest. This situation has reinforced the impression that Russia is unable to play a supportive

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<sup>134</sup> “Russia’s Empty Empire: Russia’s Neo-Imperialist Ambitions Founder on the Rocks of Reality,” *The Economist* (June 19–26, 2010): 52.

<sup>135</sup> “Russia’s Empty Empire: Russia’s Neo-Imperialist Ambitions Founder on the Rocks of Reality,” 52–53.

security role in its own backyard. It seems that the Central and Eastern European members of NATO and the EU have grounds for their adamant opposition to the EST. Moscow's capabilities to back up its treaty proposal appear as hollow as the ambition it has pursued.

## **H. CONCLUSION**

Despite opposition to the EST proposal, NATO has acknowledged the need to revise the current Euro-Atlantic security order. This has helped to lay the foundation for a growing strategic partnership with Moscow—a matter of “vital” strategic interest to all the NATO allies, including the United States. Washington's “reset” with Russia has spurred recent efforts to build this partnership based on mutual interests. However, re-engagement with Moscow is about more than just the United States. The various NATO and EU member states have their own interests in building a long-term strategic partnership with Russia and stand to gain from this endeavor. Both NATO and Moscow maintain vastly different perspectives, which have shaped their visions for a future Euro-Atlantic security order. Multiple challenges lie ahead in reigniting the NATO-Russian partnership. Despite these hurdles, both parties understand the need for cooperation.

NATO has expressed a willingness to review the EST and formally respond to it to prevent a derailment of the “reset.” In a speech at the Moscow State Institute for International Relations on December 19, 2009, NATO Secretary General Rasmussen stated, “President Medvedev has proposed a new European Security Treaty. And of course, we can discuss it also in the NRC. But the primary and natural venue for discussing these proposals is the OSCE, which brings together all the nations that have an interest in discussing President Medvedev's ideas.”<sup>136</sup> These comments reflect NATO's preference to reform the current Euro-Atlantic security system within existing institutions. The Alliance has questioned the merits of the EST proposal itself, as well as the credibility of Russia as a constructive interlocutor in putting the proposal forward. NATO has maintained caution thus far in responding to the EST. In fact, however, several NATO member nations believe that the EST is a hollow proposal, which would

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<sup>136</sup> Anders Fogh Rasmussen, “NATO and Russia, Partners for the Future.”

cause more problems than it would solve. It appears that the EST is a complex and lofty vision, which Moscow has neither the will nor the capacity to uphold. In the words of Alexander Golts, “Moscow bosses imitate imperial ambitions in the same way they imitate democracy.”<sup>137</sup>

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<sup>137</sup> “Russia’s Empty Empire: Russia’s Neo–Imperialist Ambitions Founder on the Rocks of Reality,” 53.

## **IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **A. INTRODUCTION**

Russia's proposal for a European Security Treaty (EST) has failed to offer a credible alternative to the current Euro-Atlantic security order. Yet, it has succeeded in fostering discussions among NATO and EU members about revising the current Euro-Atlantic security system to meet the emerging threats of the twenty-first century. In a post-Cold War world, NATO has acknowledged the necessity of respecting Russia's legitimate interests within the Euro-Atlantic security sphere. Despite doubts and reservations regarding the utility of the EST, NATO has agreed to review this proposal to prevent a derailment of Washington's "reset" with Moscow and to maximize prospects for constructive NATO-Russian relations.

This chapter asks the following questions: What conclusions can be drawn from Russian President Medvedev's EST proposal? What course of action should NATO take in response to the EST proposal? NATO's de facto rejection of the EST is unlikely to profoundly damage relations with Moscow due to the mutually acknowledged necessity of establishing a long-term strategic relationship based on shared interests.

### **B. WHAT CONCLUSIONS CAN BE DRAWN FROM THE EST?**

NATO and Moscow hold vastly different perspectives on Euro-Atlantic security. Yet, today their strategic interests are in some ways more aligned than ever before. Countering threats of terrorism, securing nuclear weapons, preventing Iran from becoming a nuclear weapons state, and bringing the war in Afghanistan to a successful conclusion are but a few of the interests shared by both parties. These threats can only be addressed effectively on the basis of real security cooperation between NATO and the Kremlin. This underscores the importance of an institutionalized partnership between NATO and Russia—a relationship that not only transcends the personal relationships of the political leaders, but also incentivizes cooperation through pragmatism. Although the EST proposal has lacked substance, it has symbolized Moscow's plea for a strategic

mechanism to foster Euro-Atlantic security cooperation in a way that not only respects Russian interests, but also advances interests shared with NATO and the EU. It is important in this regard to distinguish between categories of interests. While NATO's unity must be sustained, it would be dangerous and counterproductive to try to isolate Russia.

### **1. Strategic Interests vs. Vital Interests**

NATO's re-engagement with Russia has been regarded by some observers as a by-product of Washington's "reset" with Moscow—a decision that has acknowledged respect for Russia's legitimate interests as a genuine strategic interest for NATO. Despite the EST's many flaws, the NATO allies recognize that they must walk a fine line in rejecting this proposal without hindering long-term cooperation efforts. Strategic cooperation with Moscow is of vital strategic interest to all the NATO allies, including the United States.

Relatively few American interests are truly vital, in that policy failures could endanger the survival of the United States. According to the Commission on U.S. Policy toward Russia, co-chaired by former United States Senators Chuck Hagel and Gary Hart, "U.S. interests in combating proliferation and terrorism clearly fall into this strictly defined vital category and should receive priority in our foreign policy, both with respect to Russia and elsewhere."<sup>138</sup> The United States must have a clear vision of which goals are vital and which are important but not vital in dealing with Moscow. Russian interests also matter because American policies formulated without regard to Russian perspectives are not as likely to succeed in achieving their intended goals.

According to the Director of the Institute for Democracy and Cooperation in New York, Andranik Migranyan, a former member of the Russian Presidential Council, "although no member of the Obama administration will mention it publicly, the change in Washington's approach was made in the spirit of the recommendations" advanced in the

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<sup>138</sup> The Commission on U.S. Policy toward Russia, *The Right Direction for U.S. Policy Toward Russia*, Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs and the Nixon Center (Cambridge, MA and Washington, D.C.: March 2009), 15.

Hagel-Hart report.<sup>139</sup> Further analysis of the Hagel-Hart report concluded, “in pursuing its ‘vital interests,’ at a certain stage, a country sometimes has to either sacrifice or pay less attention to secondary interests. That is because quite often one set of interests contradicts the other.”<sup>140</sup>

Beyond Washington, this analysis seems to apply to NATO as a whole. Despite varied, often contradictory interests among members, the NATO allies have recognized the vital importance of respecting Russia’s legitimate interests in a revised Euro-Atlantic security order. Much to the chagrin of some observers in Central and Eastern Europe, the Alliance must consider the Russian perspective to effectively advance its long-term objectives. Neglecting Russian interests would be a prescription for the failure of NATO policies that require Russian cooperation. Moreover, such neglect would exacerbate Moscow’s grievances toward NATO and possibly encourage Russia to adopt a more antagonistic attitude.

It seems that the other NATO allies have followed Washington’s lead in pursuing a more pragmatic relationship with Moscow because they share the same vital interests in combating nuclear proliferation, preventing Iran from becoming a nuclear weapons state, stabilizing Afghanistan and countering terrorism. For example, in May 2010, the NATO-Russian Council (NRC), meeting in a Military Representation (MR) session, “approved the NRC-MR Work Plan for 2010 and expressed the will and ambition to bring NATO-Russia military-to-military cooperation to a higher level over the next year.”<sup>141</sup> At this stage, NATO-Russia cooperation is sub-optimal. However, the steps taken since 1991 constitute a necessary beginning to a long-term process.

It seems that NATO’s willingness to discuss the EST is, in effect, an implicit recognition that Russian cooperation is necessary to pursue future NATO policies. Russian cooperation is a vital strategic interest to NATO because it will ensure that future

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<sup>139</sup> Andranik Migranyan, “Russia Optimistic,” *National Interest Online*, July 15, 2010, <http://www.nationalinterest.org/Article.aspx?id=23700>.

<sup>140</sup> Ibid.

<sup>141</sup> “NATO Chiefs of Defence Discuss Operations, Transformation, Resources,” *Defence Professionals*, May 7, 2010, <http://defpro.com/news/details/15076/>.

NATO-Russia endeavors are effectively pursued. In addition, it will enhance NATO's relevance as a security institution capable of addressing today's unpredictable threat environment. Although NATO and Moscow have different perspectives concerning Euro-Atlantic security, they share vital common interests, which may prove to be the foundation for a long-term strategic partnership. A looming question is whether NATO can remain united in this effort and maintain the political will to see this commitment through.

## **2. NATO Must Remain United**

The EST proposal presents an arrangement that would improve Russian security and undermine that of the Alliance. Therefore, it is critical for NATO to maintain unity of purpose in responding to the EST. This endeavor poses significant challenges because several NATO allies regard Russia's revival as a menace to their own sovereignty. According to the associate director of International Security Studies at Yale University, Jeffrey Mankoff:

Only the United States, with its overwhelming hard and soft power, can convince the Europeans to take a chance on integrating Russia more fully into the European security structure by exercising political leadership and reinforcing its commitment to uphold the security of all its European partners.<sup>142</sup>

The most prominent reason for NATO skepticism regarding the EST is the fear that a legally binding treaty would hinder its ability to execute its collective defense responsibilities and allow Moscow to divide and rule. U.S. leadership is therefore crucial to quell potential divisions among the NATO allies, most notably the divide on some issues between certain states of Central and Eastern Europe and their Western European counterparts. Furthermore, this is why the process must be defined as Euro-Atlantic rather than simply European. Moscow has acknowledged the need to include Washington in the process of devising a new security order. Russian President Dmitry Medvedev stated on March 5, 2010 at a Russian Defense Ministry session, "the reaction to Russia's

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<sup>142</sup> Mankoff, "Reforming the Euro-Atlantic Security Architecture: An Opportunity for U.S. Leadership," 74.

initiative regarding a European security treaty largely acts as a barometer of our relations with the U.S. and NATO.”<sup>143</sup> Thus far, the Alliance has demonstrated resolve in remaining united despite varied perspectives among the allies regarding Moscow and the EST. Maintaining unity along with continued political will to revise the Euro-Atlantic security order within the current international institutions, including NATO and the OSCE, will be a demanding effort. Yet, re-engagement through pragmatism is likely to motivate both sides to pursue a revised Euro-Atlantic security system based on shared strategic interests.

### **3. Russian Isolation Would Be Dangerous and Counterproductive**

Various Western and Russian commentators agree that continual isolation of Russia would inevitably lead to confrontation. History provides grounds for such a judgment. For example, it can be argued that the failure of Britain and France to make a more generous settlement with Germany after World War I was one of the factors that led to the most devastating war in human history. Conversely, after World War II, the United States welcomed West Germany and Japan into a U.S.-led security system, and thus, provided a stable place for both states in the post-war environment and a pathway to prosperity. Despite the reservations of several NATO allies concerning the Alliance’s latest re-engagement with Moscow, they recognize that it would be dangerous to try to isolate Russia. According to Richard J. Krickus, “if defeated countries are not integrated into the post-war security system, they may eventually undermine it.”<sup>144</sup>

Many Russians had a sense of defeat after the collapse of the Soviet Union, and have been wary of NATO’s policies, including enlargement. Therefore, considering the EST (despite its obvious flaws) would be advantageous to NATO and the European Union because it would be another positive step towards recognition of Moscow as a strategic partner within the future Euro-Atlantic security order.

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<sup>143</sup> “Response to Russia’s Europe Security Idea Barometer of Relations with U.S., NATO–Medvedev (Part 2),” Moscow Interfax via Open Source Center, March 5, 2010.

<sup>144</sup> Krickus, *Medvedev’s Plan: Giving Russia a Voice but Not a Veto in a New European Security System*, 19.

Many challenges remain in this process, and no clear solution exists at the present time. Above all, the most compelling question in acknowledging Russian security interests has been formulated by Richard J. Krickus as follows: “how to provide Russia with a voice but not a veto in crafting a new Trans-Atlantic security system?”<sup>145</sup>

In order to advance the shared strategic interests of NATO and Russia, legitimate Russian interests obviously need to be respected. The EST proposal has not only provided Moscow a point of departure to express its grievances. It has also advanced the Russian security agenda to the forefront of NATO priorities and has inspired the Corfu Process under the auspices of the OSCE. Therefore, the EST proposal has proven to be a catalyst for revising the Euro-Atlantic security order. Yet, in order to advance Moscow’s security interests, NATO must feel that it can benefit from this endeavor as well.

Although the EST proposal leaves much to be desired, NATO should continue to re-engage with Moscow and consider the general idea behind it in depth. Moving ahead with discussions would also put the ball in Russia’s court. According to Mankoff:

Given the West’s concern about Russia’s real intentions, the United States and its European allies need to have a flexible approach, allowing Moscow to participate in a constructive way, but preserving their freedom of action in the event that Russia chooses to play a solely negative, obstructionist role.<sup>146</sup>

Inviting the Kremlin to modify the current EST proposal to provide a more realistic vision for Euro-Atlantic security would be a true test for Moscow. NATO and the European Union must demonstrate to Moscow that it is not being excluded from the current Euro-Atlantic security order by giving greater substance to the NATO-Russia Council and other cooperative frameworks. However, the NATO allies must also demonstrate that Russian attempts to weaken or divide the Alliance would be counterproductive in terms of Russia’s own political and security interests.

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<sup>145</sup> Krickus, *Medvedev’s Plan: Giving Russia a Voice but Not a Veto in a New European Security System* viii.

<sup>146</sup> *Ibid.*, 80.

## C. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE WAY AHEAD

Many western and Russian commentators have provided recommendations for a way ahead to re-engage Moscow, and pursue a Euro-Atlantic security structure inclusive of Russian interests. Responding to requests by American and Russian officials, concurrent studies have taken place to encourage debate over security issues in the Euro-Atlantic region. Three such studies are examined: the East-West Institute, the Euro-Atlantic Security Initiative, and the NATO Group of Experts.

### 1. The East-West Institute

The East-West Institute—an international, non-partisan think tank—convened two seminars, one in Brussels in cooperation with the Egmont Institute, and one in Moscow, organized with the Institute for World Economy and International Relations (IMEMO). As a result of these seminars, a report was published in June 2009, which concluded, “states of the Euro-Atlantic region should embrace a common strategic vision of security issues.”<sup>147</sup> Furthermore, it was concluded that this vision be based on the following principles:

- recognition of the pluralism of decision-making centers in the security sphere and the need for them to cooperate;
- preparedness to negotiate from a position of respect for the declared security interests of all states;
- the right of each state to determine its own security arrangements;
- striving to convert conflicts in the Euro-Atlantic security sphere into win-win situations;
- a commitment to confidence-building, especially to policies that would facilitate collective action for preventing, containing, or reversing unfolding crises.<sup>148</sup>

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<sup>147</sup> *Euro-Atlantic Security: One Vision, Three Paths* (New York: The East-West Institute, June 2009), i. <http://docs.ewi.info/EuroAtlantic.pdf>.

<sup>148</sup> *Ibid.*

In short, the panel of experts agreed that Russian interests should be taken into account in a revised Euro-Atlantic security order and that Russia should be treated as an equal by all regional member states.

In the final analysis, three possible paths towards strengthening Euro-Atlantic security were presented, and these paths represented the three main strands of opinion among the experts. The first path emphasized maintaining the institutional status quo, yet advocated remedial repairs, such as removing mutual misperceptions, strengthening transparency and confidence, and pursuing common interests in the Euro-Atlantic zone.

The second path suggested reforming the overall architecture of Euro-Atlantic security by signing and bringing into force the EST. According to this approach:

The Treaty should translate political commitments in the security sphere taken by OSCE members at different times into legal obligations. The treaty should also provide mechanisms ensuring universal application of this principle.<sup>149</sup>

For champions of the EST, the key to ensuring its success is to respect the legitimate security interests of all states in the Euro-Atlantic region. In addition, proponents of the EST hold organizations, such as the OSCE, NATO, the CSTO, and the EU, must be involved in the creation of this new Euro-Atlantic security order. Despite such lofty goals, it is doubtful that the OSCE and NATO would be supportive of a treaty that fundamentally attempts to undermine their autonomy. This fact seemingly dooms this suggested path as the most unrealistic of the three paths recommended for consideration.

The third path advocated partial reconstruction of the current Euro-Atlantic security order. The elements of this third path include:

identifying additional and creative political, legal, and military arrangements, possibly including overlapping security guarantees, that address potential security concerns of states in Central and Eastern Europe and the Black Sea region; pursuing common interests beyond the Euro-Atlantic zone.<sup>150</sup>

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<sup>149</sup> *Euro-Atlantic Security: One Vision, Three Paths*, 4.

<sup>150</sup> *Ibid.*, i.

Of the three possible scenarios, partial reconstruction presents the most plausible course for a revised Euro-Atlantic security order because its revision of the existing security system enhances its legitimacy in the eyes of the Euro-Atlantic community in the spirit of the Corfu Process. In addition, this recommendation would not only implicitly respect Russian interests, but also recognize the security concerns of the states of Central and Eastern Europe. According to the paper, “the United States, NATO, the EU, and Russia need to partially reform existing institutions in order to establish real forms of power sharing and measures of ‘cooperative-collective security’ in a great region stretching from the Baltic Sea to the Caucasus.”<sup>151</sup>

Some concrete measures to help facilitate such a proposal include the following:

Practical steps that will defuse the tensions in the southern Caucasus that have not dissipated after the August 2008 war...Russia, the EU, the OSCE, and the UN—working with the countries concerned—should take immediate measures to conclude legally binding agreements on non-use of force between sides of the conflict... [and] to resolve on a compromise basis the problem of monitoring the security and military situation;...

Joint U.S-European-Russian cooperation on BMD defenses as a precaution against potential threats coming from outside the Euro-Atlantic region...

The development of a system of cooperative collective security through sub-regional security communities and new variable military consultative structures...as opposed to trying to define spheres of influence between the United States/NATO and Russia/CSTO within the Black Sea and Caucasus regions.

NATO, the EU, and Russia can together or in parallel provide mutual and overlapping security guarantees to countries that seek those guarantees (Georgia and Ukraine may be among them).<sup>152</sup>

One way to accomplish such a task would be to establish operational measures in which various parties could collaborate. For example, one possible model could be the peacekeeping command system erected in Bosnia after the Dayton accords in 1995.

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<sup>151</sup> *Euro-Atlantic Security: One Vision, Three Paths*, 4.

<sup>152</sup> *Ibid.*

Much will depend upon the willingness of Washington and Moscow to agree to sincerely engage in a reform of the status quo. Even if the political will exists to pursue such reform, both Russia and the United States will need to do so “without undermining well-established institutions, such as NATO, and without ignoring new structures, such as the CSTO.”<sup>153</sup> The East-West Institute report has helped to clarify the debate regarding Euro-Atlantic security reform and has outlined a focused set of choices. It has also helped to facilitate discussions about the prospects for revising the Euro-Atlantic security order and making it capable of meeting the challenges of the twenty-first century.

## **2. The Euro-Atlantic Security Initiative**

At the request of both Russian and American officials, a commission known as the Euro-Atlantic Security Initiative (EASI) embarked upon a two-year study beginning in December 2009. Its objective is to help enhance the existing Euro-Atlantic security structure of the twenty-first century. In coordination with the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace—a global public-policy think tank—twenty-five public figures, former policymakers, business executives, military leaders, and policy analysts have begun an extensive effort to develop means for cooperation between the West and Moscow within a revised Euro-Atlantic security order. Some of the conclusions thus far have paralleled those of the East-West Institute report. For instance, according to Sam Nunn, a former U.S. senator and one of the three co-chairs of the EASI, “there can be no coherent, effective global-security strategy that does not take into account Russia, its strengths, its weaknesses, its aims and its ambitions.”<sup>154</sup> Again, this statement reiterates the fact that Russian interests need to be incorporated into a revised Euro-Atlantic security structure. Another one of the EASI co-chairs, Wolfgang Ischinger, said on the same occasion, “one of the real challenges of our way of thinking about security requires that we move from thinking in zero-sum terms to a way of thinking in win-win terms.”<sup>155</sup>

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<sup>153</sup> *Euro-Atlantic Security: One Vision, Three Paths*, 4.

<sup>154</sup> Euro-Atlantic Security Initiative Launch, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Federal News Service, Washington, D.C., December 10, 2009, <http://www.carnegieendowment.org/events/?fa=eventDetail&id=1505>, 2

<sup>155</sup> *Ibid.*

A second theme repeated by the EASI commission is that the vital interests of NATO and Russia are more aligned now than ever before. In Sam Nunn's words, "I don't think there's been in any time in history, certainly not in modern history, where the real essential interest, true interest, vital interest of the great powers, basically including Europe, U.S., and Russia but also including Japan, China and many other nations, where those interests have aligned as they do today."<sup>156</sup>

This assertion not only echoes the conclusions of the East-West Institute report, it further complements one of several conclusions from the March 2009 report authored by the Commission on U.S. Policy toward Russia, co-chaired by Chuck Hagel and Gary Hart. In short, cooperation with Russia is in NATO's vital interest because NATO and Russia share many of the same security interests—for example, building a secure and stable Afghanistan, curbing terrorism, and preventing the spread of weapons of mass destruction.

Furthermore, there is wide consensus among Western experts and politicians that a revised Euro-Atlantic security structure should be pursued within existing institutions, and should not take the form of a legally binding treaty, such as that outlined in Russia's EST proposal. It seems that this debate has revealed a dividing line between Moscow and NATO, and that neither side is willing to bend. The EASI commission has not yet presented any concrete proposals for revising the existing Euro-Atlantic security order. However, it plans to encourage constructive debate with the intention of building trust and transparency and contributing to future policy initiatives.

### **3. The NATO Group of Experts and NATO's Strategic Concept**

Revising NATO's Strategic Concept may prove to be a vital step in providing renewed recognition to Russian security interests. In May 2010, the NATO Group of Experts, chaired by former U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, submitted a report outlining recommendations for a new NATO Strategic Concept. Recommendations for an

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<sup>156</sup> Euro-Atlantic Security Initiative Launch.

alliance re-engagement with Moscow and the incorporation of Russian security interests were presented throughout the document, which underscored the importance of such a task.

To begin, the Group of Experts has acknowledged, “the new Strategic Concept should reaffirm NATO’s desire to help build a cooperative Euro-Atlantic security order which includes security cooperation with Russia.”<sup>157</sup> Bearing this in mind, the Group stated that engagement with Russia is a priority, but not at the expense of defending the security interests of NATO allies. For example, at NATO military headquarters in Mons, Belgium, planners are thinking about how to defend Eastern European members from Russian attack. According to NATO Secretary-General Rasmussen, “we have all necessary plans in place to defend and protect all allies. I think the Russians would be surprised if we didn’t. That’s the core purpose of the alliance.”<sup>158</sup> Commitment to the NATO-Russian Council (NRC) should be the focus of the Alliance in collaborating with Moscow along pragmatic lines.

The Group of Experts has expressed hope in building a strategic relationship with Russia. However, Moscow’s foreign policy unpredictability remains a concern. Therefore, the Alliance must remain cautious in re-engagement:

The Strategic Concept can be instrumental in unifying the Allies’ views on Russia, clarifying NATO’s intentions towards Moscow, and laying the groundwork for more substantive cooperation. Because Russia’s future policies toward NATO remain difficult to predict, the Allies must pursue the goal of cooperation while also guarding against the possibility that Russia could decide to move in a more adversarial direction.<sup>159</sup>

This statement implies that NATO’s revised Strategic Concept will not only incorporate Russian security interests into the fold, but it will also maintain unity within the Alliance and hedge against the risk that the Kremlin might adopt “adversarial” policies.

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<sup>157</sup> NATO Group of Experts, *NATO 2020: Assured Security; Dynamic Engagement: Analysis and Recommendations of the Group of Experts on a New Strategic Concept for NATO*, May 11.

<sup>158</sup> Rasmussen quoted in “The Allies Reach Out to the Kremlin, and Start to Think about the Unthinkable,” *The Economist* (July 31, 2010): 39.

<sup>159</sup> NATO Group of Experts, *NATO 2020: Assured Security; Dynamic Engagement: Analysis and Recommendations of the Group of Experts on a New Strategic Concept for NATO*, May 16.

The NATO allies remain committed to upholding the framework for a NATO-Russian partnership spelled out in the 1997 NATO-Russia Founding Act and the 2002 Rome Declaration. According to the Group of Experts, “both documents express a commitment to identify and to pursue opportunities for joint action based on mutual interests and the understanding that security in the Euro-Atlantic region is indivisible.”<sup>160</sup> The NRC provides the forum for consultation, transparency, consensus-building, and making and implementing decisions. Therefore, the Group of Experts recommended, “the Allies should work with Russia to ensure an agenda for the NRC that responds in a frank and forward-looking way to the security concerns of both sides, and that identifies specific areas for joint action.”<sup>161</sup> This recommendation is rather broad but nevertheless makes some valid points. First, by reaffirming the role of the NRC as the central mechanism for NATO-Russian cooperation, the report is explicitly stating to Moscow that the institutions are already in place to build a long-term, institutionalized partnership. However, both sides must be willing to trust in the system, and that will be a tall order to accomplish. Next, NATO wishes to not only build transparency with Moscow, but also to continue to strengthen institutions, which have predictable protocols and procedures in order to ensure that this transparency is institutionalized. Again, this will remain a continuing challenge. Yet, these initial steps recommended by the Group of Experts constitute a critical starting point for bringing these ideas to life.

#### **D. CONCLUSION**

NATO’s consideration of the Russian EST proposal and the course of action recommended by various Russian and western experts have provided an opportunity to widen the debate about how a revised Euro-Atlantic security order should be pursued in the years to come. Although it is too soon to determine how NATO will fully incorporate Russian security interests into the future Euro-Atlantic security order, it is evident that the Alliance recognizes the importance of acknowledging Russia as an equal partner, which shares many of same strategic interests. Therefore, it is vital that this partnership develop

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<sup>160</sup> NATO Group of Experts, *NATO 2020: Assured Security; Dynamic Engagement: Analysis and Recommendations of the Group of Experts on a New Strategic Concept for NATO*, May 26.

<sup>161</sup> *Ibid.*, 27.

along pragmatic lines to help ensure long-term cooperation. However, as the East-West Institute, the Euro-Atlantic Security Initiative, and the NATO Group of Experts have emphasized, a revised Euro-Atlantic security order should be pursued under the auspices of existing institutions.

Convincing Moscow that these structures take Russian interests into account will be a formidable task because of the legacy of mistrust on both sides. Yet, it is more realistic and practical to revise the working relationship of the NRC than to legally bind all the countries of the entire Euro-Atlantic region under a Russian-proposed security treaty. In the end, there are no simple solutions to address the interests and security concerns of all the NATO allies and Russia in a revised Euro-Atlantic security system. The recommendations brought forth by commissions, such as the East-West Institute, the EASI, and the NATO Group of Experts have served their purpose in fostering healthy debate and thereby shaping the future Euro-Atlantic security order. Despite the EST proposal's many flaws, it too has helped to bring this debate to the forefront of Euro-Atlantic security affairs. In the end, there are no simple answers to these complex questions.

Only time will tell if NATO and Moscow can exert the political will to establish a constructive, long-term, institutionalized partnership. The key will be respect for the legitimate security interests of Russia and the NATO allies.

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