NATO and its New Members

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In November 2002 in Prague, NATO took the historic step of inviting Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Romania and Bulgaria to accede to full membership of its organisation. If all goes according to plan, this will bring the number of formerly communist states in the Alliance to ten by the end of May 2004, including Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary, who became full NATO members in 1999. Debate over the significance and desirability of this eastward enlargement has been intense and goes to the heart of questions over the very nature of the NATO. In contention is the extent to which NATO is shifting away from its traditional role as a military-focused alliance to one as much concerned with wider goals connected to the promotion of democracy and stability along its eastern borders, and what the implications of this may be for its continuing significance as an instrument for European security. In effect, are we looking at a 'New NATO', whose relevance to the post-Cold War, post-11 September European security environment has as much to do with the promotion of political values and collective security as the military goals of collective defence?

The role of the NATO enlargement process in encouraging democratic civil–military relations and military reform among the accession candidates is an important factor in this debate. Indeed, these have been the main areas of post-communist democratisation and structural adaptation where NATO has been able to play a substantive and meaningful role, given their close and obvious linkage to the primary organisational concerns of the Alliance itself. This article explores NATO's influence on civil–military and military reform in the ten states who have joined or have been invited to join the Alliance. It argues that the enlargement process has had a major impact in promoting and consolidating reformed institutional arrangements for the democratic civilian control of armed forces across the ten. It has also successfully set the agenda for many countries' process of structural military reform.

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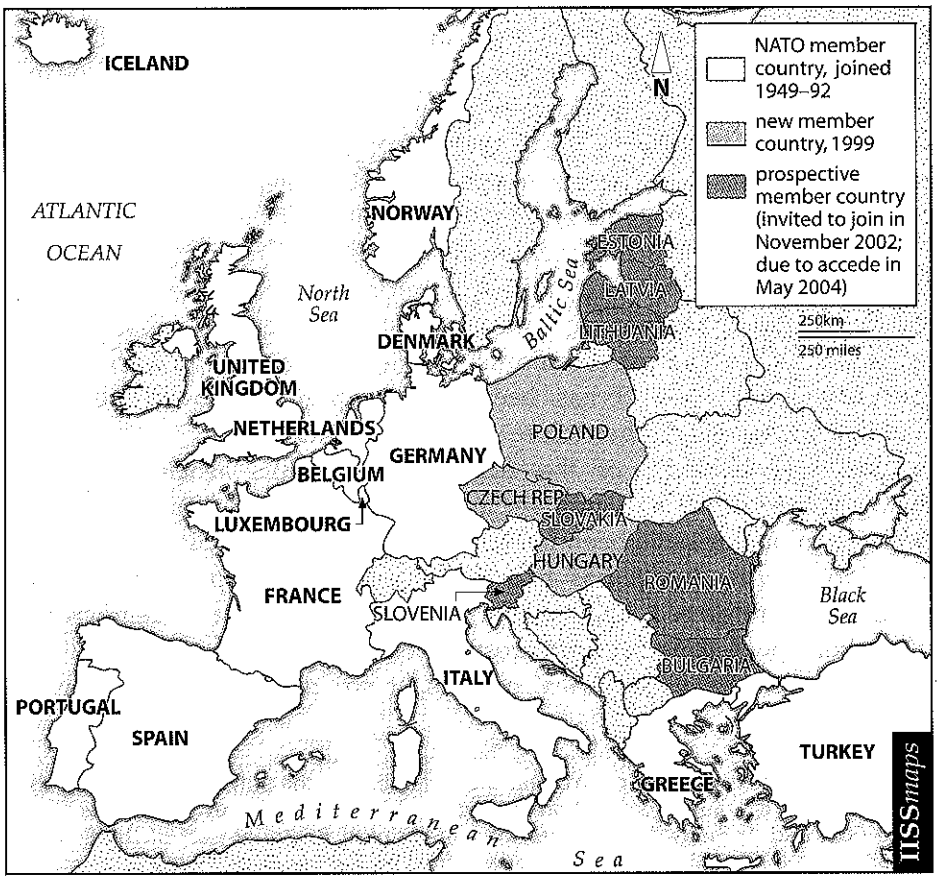
***Survival**, vol. 45, no. 3, Autumn 2003, pp. 145–166*

Nonetheless, the military contribution that the new member states can make to NATO is ultimately limited and their accession will likely intensify the Alliance's existing burden-sharing and defence-policy dilemmas. More widely, NATO's engagement with issues of civil–military and military reform in the ten first- and second-wave member states indicates the way in which the Alliance has prioritised the political aspects of the enlargement process over and above its more traditional focus on military matters.

NATO's eastward enlargement and military reform

In the early 1990s, the role of armed forces in the wider process of post-communist reform appeared crucial. In former communist countries, the military was a deeply politicised organisation, its own institutional interests closely tied to those of the communist regime. Given their dominance over the coercive tools of the state, these militaries had the potential to frustrate or reverse the post-communist transition.[1] Moreover, almost without exception, post-communist armed forces faced



the twin challenges of massive cuts in their budgets, and the need to restructure themselves to meet the demands of a transformed European security environment.[2] The problem of what to do about the region's armed forces dovetailed neatly with the prospect of an eastward expansion of the Alliance in the mid-1990s. NATO found itself at the forefront of Western states' efforts to encourage democratic civil–military and military reform in the formerly communist states of Europe.

The Alliance has pursued this agenda in the context of its wider enlargement programme. For example, the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC) and its successor, the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) of 1991 and 1997, the Partnership for Peace (PfP) of 1994, the Planning and Review Processes of 1997, and the Membership Action Plans of 1999, were all set up in order to create a more direct and progressively deeper relationship between NATO and its eastern neighbours. All were explicitly concerned, at least in part, with issues of civil–military relations and military reform. Article Three of the 1994 PfP Framework Document explicitly states that partner states will cooperate with NATO in facilitating 'transparency in national defence planning and budgeting processes', 'ensuring democratic control of defence forces', and developing 'forces that are better able to operate with those of the members of the North Atlantic Alliance'.[3] The Planning and Review Processes and the Membership Action Plans framework documents go further, establishing clear reform goals which partner countries are expected to fulfil, as well as detailed procedures to assess their progress.[4]

NATO's role in this area has been a significant feature in the enlargement debate, although its actual track record has been subject to less scrutiny. Proponents of enlargement have argued that NATO acts as a mechanism through which democratic norms of civil–military behaviour can be transmitted and reinforced, and through which effective approaches to military reform can be encouraged.[5] Opponents of enlargement have argued that the impact of NATO on these issues has been limited and incidental. Instead, civil–military reform in post-communist Europe remains dependent on wider processes of political change and economic development.[6] And in practice, they argue, military reforms have been largely ineffective, despite advice, assistance and encouragement from NATO.[7]

However, although the civil–military and military reform issue has featured prominently in the NATO enlargement debate, there is surprisingly little recent analysis on the substance and detail of these issues. 'Civil–military relations' are often referred to in a relatively uncritical manner, with a sometimes simplified concentration on questions of institutional and legislative change. Similarly, military reform issues

are often addressed in the context of a rather one-sided concentration on the immediate demands and preoccupations of NATO policy, with relatively little attention being paid to the longer-term priorities and constraints facing central and eastern European countries themselves. This article focuses on two distinct areas where NATO has played an active and important role: the development of democratic, civilian control of armed forces; and military reform and restructuring.

Democratic civilian control of armed forces

NATO's 1995 *Study on Enlargement* identifies 'civilian and democratic control over the military' as a key goal of its engagement with post-communist Europe.[8] Certainly, democratic civilian control over the armed forces is a central element of any state's wider process of democratisation. If the military is not under the control of civilian authorities, then, by nature of the concentration of coercive power in its hands, it will pose a potential threat to those authorities.[9] It is important to make a distinction, however, between simple *civilian* control of armed forces and *democratic* control. The Soviet Union had very strong civilian control over its armed forces, but this in no way could be considered democratic. Democratic, civilian control of armed forces requires much more than the simple maximisation of civil power over the military. It concerns the effective governance of the defence sector in a framework of democratic accountability and transparency, and is as much about the behaviour and responsibilities of the civil sector as the military.[10] In both first- and second-wave new NATO member states, notwithstanding some lingering problems, significant progress has been made in establishing civilian control over the armed forces and consolidating the democratic nature of this control. In all these areas, NATO assistance has been an important enabling and motivating factor for reform

Democratic control of armed forces in NATO's new member states

Establishing institutional procedures for civilian control over the armed forces has been a policy priority for all states engaged in the NATO enlargement process. This process has primarily addressed the traditional concerns of the civil–military relations literature: removing the military from politics and consolidating civil supremacy in the civil-military relationship.[11] In the main, these 'first-generation' reforms are complete or well underway in the ten post-communist states which have either joined or been invited to join the Alliance:

- the armed forces are not a significant actor in domestic politics;

- they do not have any remaining praetorian tendencies;
- they no longer have institutional or ideological connections with communist or other political parties; and
- institutional arrangements for democratic control of armed forces have been established.[12]

In practice, there was very little resistance from the military to these reforms, because of the absence of any strong tradition of military intervention in domestic politics, the communist experience of civilian control and general support for democratisation.

The civil–military reforms outlined above were mostly implemented in the early 1990s, as part of the broader attempt within these countries to introduce democratic constitutions and new legislative arrangements after the collapse of communism. At this fundamental level, NATO's influence was limited. Critics of the enlargement process are correct in claiming that it does not and has not spread democracy in an absolute sense.

The primary problem in post-communist civil–military relationships has not so much been the praetorian tendencies of the military itself, but rather that political and socio-economic instability, together with new and contested political institutions, create circumstances that can draw the military into politics. In the early 1990s, this problem was often compounded by complicated, ambiguous or unclear constitutional provisions concerning chains of command and civilian authority in the defence sphere. Poland, for example, suffered a minor political crisis in 1994 when then President Lech Walesa attempted to gain the support of the military in struggles with his domestic opponents.[13] Between 1991 and 1994, Slovenian Defence Minster Janez Janša used elements of the Slovenian armed forces to spy on and intimidate his political opponents.[14] In Bulgaria, divisions between the two main political parties in the period 1991–1997 resulted in the politicisation of some elements of the officer corps along party lines.[15] While none of these incidents challenged the fundamental mechanisms for civilian control over armed forces, the democratic quality of this control was called into question.

In addition, the first- and second-wave new NATO member states all have found the effective practice and implementation of democratic defence policymaking and defence budgeting to be difficult. Problems have included the absence of detailed information on the armed forces and defence spending, poor analysis of available defence policy choices, unrealistic assessments of the relationship between available resources and defence-policy options, and bureaucratic structures that have been unwilling or unable to implement policy decisions.[16] For much of the

1990s, for example, a lack of expertise in the Slovak Ministry of Defence hampered its ability to develop a coherent and realistic national security strategy.[17] These problems have often been intensified by the almost universal attempt to civilianise defence ministries, which were dominated by military personnel during the communist period. In many cases, new civilian appointees have only limited experience or expertise in defence and security matters. In Romania between 1996 and 2000, a series of inexperienced and politicised civilian appointments to the Ministry of National Defence led to questionable defence policy decisions and heightened civil–military tensions.[18]

Finally, developing effective parliamentary oversight of the armed forces and defence policy has been difficult. While the reforms of the early 1990s did generally codify parliamentary powers and establish institutional arrangements for exercising them, in practice the effectiveness of this oversight has been slow to emerge.[19] Often, the parliament's lack of resources and expertise, or even interest, in defence matters has meant that their powers on paper are much less in reality. In Hungary, for example, a focus on other areas of political and economic reform meant that successive parliaments did not, for the most part, engage with defence issues, and had a limited influence on the defence budget.[20] In the Czech Republic, despite reasonably strong parliamentary powers in relation to defence, the ability of parliamentarians to exercise proper oversight is hampered by a lack of institutionalised mechanisms for communication between parliament and the Ministry of Defence, and a lack of expertise that prevents parliamentarians from asking the right questions.[21] In Lithuania in the early 1990s, parliament's role in providing oversight of the military and defence policy was undermined by deep disagreements over the future direction of Lithuanian foreign policy and a bitter struggle for influence between the Ministry of National Defence and the parliamentary National Security Committee.[22]

Parliamentary oversight...has been difficult

NATO's influence

These problems still trouble the ten states currently under consideration for NATO membership, but are less pronounced and less pressing than a decade ago. NATO has played a significant role in helping these states make such progress. To be sure, the Alliance did not initiate democratisation in any of these countries, and had only a peripheral impact on initial drafting of their civil-military reforms. NATO contributed significantly, however, to the democratic consolidation of these arrangements. This influence has been exercised in three main

ways, all closely connected to the enlargement agenda. The first, and perhaps the most important, has been to tie the incentive of membership to reform conditionality; the second has been through the provision of technical assistance and advice; and the third has been the propagation and reinforcement of democratic norms of behaviour.

Critics of NATO enlargement often underestimate the degree to which the prospect of membership has acted as a motivation to further civil–military reform in post-communist Europe. It is significant that in all of the ten countries under consideration, serious attempts to address many civil–military reform challenges only really began once accession to the Alliance became a real possibility. In Poland, for example, early difficulties in civil–military relations resulted in no small part from the inadequate constitutional and legal framework established between 1989 and 1991. These were largely addressed through the introduction of a new constitution in 1997, as well as new defence and security legislation such as the *Law on the Office of the Defence Minister* of 1996.[23] Significantly, the emergence of NATO enlargement as a real possibility in the mid-1990s served to concentrate minds on this issue and increasingly inform the evolution of Polish thinking on questions of civil–military reform.[24] A similar evolution was visible in the Czech Republic and Hungary, countries with a tradition of anti-militarism, where civil–military and military reform issues remained low on the political agenda in the early 1990s. In both cases, the prospect of NATO accession raised the political profile of these issues and stimulated efforts to clarify and finalise defence and security legislation.[25]

If anything, these trends have been more pronounced amongst those states in the second wave of NATO enlargement. In Slovenia, the failure to be invited to join the Alliance at the 1997 Madrid summit was keenly felt. This disappointment was directly responsible for a more targeted and effective approach to defence reform. This culminated in the introduction of a series of new defence legislation between 1999 and 2002 that aimed to bring Slovenian defence planning and management arrangements up to NATO standards.[26] In Lithuania, the government's unequivocal decision to apply for NATO membership in 1994 placed pressure on Lithuania to conform to NATO norms of democratic, civilian control of armed forces. This led to the introduction of significant new defence legislation, a renewed concentration on reforming and improving the practices, procedures and transparency of the Ministry of National Defence, and heightened interest and engagement in defence issues on the part of the Lithuanian parliament.[27] In Slovakia, the rejection of its membership application to NATO in 1997 was an important contributory factor in the defeat of the authoritarian government of Vladimir Meciar in 1998, and

led to concerted effort to build and strengthen democratic institutions in the country, with particular emphasis on civil–military relations.[28]

The domestic political context, among other factors, has also been important, but in all the new NATO member states the agenda has been framed, shaped and directed by the NATO enlargement process. Moreover, it is noticeable that in those states – such as Ukraine, Belarus and Russia – for whom membership of the Alliance is, at best, a more distant possibility, attempts to institute and consolidate mechanisms for democratic, civilian control of armed forces have been more limited.[29] It is also significant that in Croatia and the Union of Serbia and Montenegro, two states which have only recently emerged or are emerging from authoritarian rule but which have both identified closer integration with NATO as a foreign policy goals, civil–military reform issues and the question of democratic control of armed forces have emerged as consistent political priorities.[30]

A second vehicle for NATO influence is technical advice and assistance. Under the auspices of its PfP and related programmes, NATO has engaged in a wide variety of activities aimed at promoting democratic civil–military relations in partner countries. These activities can be fitted into the following categories:

- conferences and seminars;
- the provision of advice on specific issues;
- the placement of advisors from NATO members in key positions in partner states' ministries of defence and general staffs;
- the participation of civilian and military personnel from partner states in NATO's political headquarters in Brussels and in the military Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE) in Mons;
- the Planning and Review Processes and the Membership Action Plans, which explicitly require partner states to identify the steps that will be taken to achieve the political goals of each programme, and provide detailed mechanisms for evaluating progress in these; and
- participation in multinational military exercises.[31]

It is in the consolidation of existing processes of democratisation that NATO's provision of advice, assistance and support programmes for democratic control of armed forces has been most significant. Such assistance has noticeably *not* stimulated democratic reform in states which have not already embarked on processes of democratisation. Belarus, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, for example, are all members of PfP, yet remain authoritarian in their politics. Nevertheless, elsewhere, NATO activities have helped to consolidate existing civil–military reforms in

areas such as lack of defence expertise amongst civilian ministry of defence personnel, or the development of effective and transparent mechanisms for defence planning and budgeting. For example, the Bulgarian Ministry of Defence assesses that defence advice from NATO member states has played an important role in addressing a lack of indigenous defence expertise and has successfully contributed to Bulgaria's civil–military and defence reform programme.[32] In Lithuania, a senior official in the Ministry of National Defence suggested that because of the NATO accession process and the large amount of defence advice and assistance that has accompanied it, the Lithuanian defence sector has developed into 'one of the most advanced groups of the population ... in terms of skills, education and experience'.[33]

All of this is reinforced by a steady flow of personnel from post-Communist countries to Brussels and back home again. Civilian and military personnel from central and eastern European defence sectors work permanently at NATO headquarters. While it is difficult to accurately assess the extent to which these arrangements have influenced the spread of democratic norms of civil–military behaviour in the post-communist region, it is clear that ministries of defence across the region now contain numbers of personnel with experience of working closely with other NATO members.[34] More broadly, the defence sectors of new member states are home to a growing pool of experience and expertise; there is increased understanding of how and why existing NATO members manage their own defence and security; and the mechanisms for democratic control of armed forces in these states are becoming steadily entrenched.[35]

Military reform and restructuring

All the ten states under consideration have undertaken major changes in their military structures since the collapse of communism. These began with a first wave of drastic measures in the early 1990s, when defence spending was reduced to around a half of the Cold War highs of the late 1980s, the size of armed forces was slashed, most procurement was abandoned and training levels were reduced.[36] However, as with the civil–military reforms of the same period, this first generation of post-communist military reform had little to do with NATO assistance or direction. Rather, it resulted from the wider geostrategic changes in Europe and severe domestic economic constraints. Since the mid- to late-1990s, however, all the new NATO members have engaged in a second wave of military reform that is closely linked to the concerns and priorities of the Alliance.

Early military reform had little to do with NATO

This was a time, of course, when all European military establishments had to adapt. Most European armed forces were organised and structured for Cold War missions: focused on the defence of national territory in a high-intensity, European land war. This mission required large, generally conscript-based force structures – structures that started to look anachronistic as the military's traditional roles, budgetary allocations and methods of organisation were all subject to scrutiny after the Cold War.[37] In the post-communist region, these challenges were reinforced by public revelations about the size of communist-era defence budgets, generally regarded as illegitimate and wasteful. The political consequences were massive defence-budget cuts throughout the region. In addition, the Czech and Slovak Republics faced the task of building new armed forces from the remnants of the old Czechoslovak military, while the Baltic States had to build their armed forces from scratch.

The new security environment increased the significance of different missions, including peace-support operations and, more recently, the kinds of counter-insurgency operations associated with the war on terrorism. Broadly, these new missions called for new forms of military organisation: smaller, more professional and flexible forces deployable in an expeditionary capacity.[38] Individual NATO states and the Alliance as a whole has had to grapple with these challenges since the end of the Cold War. As a consequence, NATO naturally has stressed particular methods of military organisation and particular approaches to military reform and restructuring for applicant states from post-communist Europe. Thus, for example, the 1995 *Study on Enlargement*, the PfP, the Planning and Review Processes and the Membership Action Plans all highlight to varying degrees the need for applicant states to be able to contribute effectively to 'new' missions, such as peace-support operations, and to develop interoperability between their armed forces and those of the Alliance.[39]

The impact of NATO's military reform priorities on the new and prospective member states has been significant, but not always helpful. NATO's implicit and explicit military-reform conditions have been imposed upon states that have serious economic and structural constraints on their military reform processes. The emphasis on meeting NATO-accession has sometimes come at the expense of a more sensible and country-specific assessment of long-term reform requirements. This has had mixed implications, both for the overall military effectiveness of the new NATO members, and for the Alliance's existing burden-sharing dilemmas.

Mismatched priorities?

Military matters were not accorded high priority during NATO's first round of enlargement in 1997–99. At the time of their invitation to join

the organisation in 1997, the armed forces of Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary were all emerging from a seven-year period of neglect and budget cuts that saw their operational effectiveness deteriorate markedly. A leaked copy of NATO's 1997 assessment of the invitees' Defence Planning Questionnaires (designed to provide NATO with an assessment of the three countries' military capabilities) was damning. It noted, among other things, that the Czech Army's equipment was 'old and close to obsolescence', that the training of Hungarian pilots fell 'far below' NATO standards, and that the Polish Army faced 'widespread and significant interoperability difficulties'.[40] The new members' military weaknesses were further exposed during the Kosovo conflict in 1999 when, for example, Hungary was forced to rely on allied aircraft to patrol its own airspace.[41] While these deficiencies clearly did not convince NATO to delay its first round of enlargement, the weaknesses highlighted by the Kosovo conflict in particular did encourage it to take a more robust approach to military reform in those states applying for a second round of enlargement. This resulted in the Membership Action Plans concept, which provided a stricter and more systematic framework for the evaluation of reform, and encouraged states to 'commit sufficient resources to defence to allow them to meet the commitments that future membership would bring in terms of collective NATO undertakings'.[42]

From 1997 onwards, the NATO-enlargement agenda increasingly informed the military-reform agendas of the various accession candidates. All these states undertook defence reviews that aimed to identify their security challenges and to outline the future role, structure and doctrine of their armed forces. These processes have mirrored developments in Poland and the Czech Republic, which, partly under pressure from NATO over their past poor performance, developed new defence and security strategies.[43] Hungary expects to complete a major defence review in summer 2003.[44] In general, these defence reviews have recommended small increases in defence spending, a further reduction in the size of armed forces, a move towards largely volunteer rather than conscript-based forces, and a focus on developing units that are deployable in multinational contexts.[45] For example, between 1999 and 2001, Slovakia passed a series of new defence legislation. This culminated in a major military reform plan, *Armed Forces of the Slovak Republic: Force 2010*, which identifies NATO accession and cooperation with the Alliance as one of the main goals of the armed forces. Key elements of the plan include an emphasis on 'quality personnel and equipment' that will be 'more deployable'. In practical terms, it envisages a reduction in the size of the armed forces from their 2001 level of 41,000 to 24,500 by 2010, and the abolition of conscription by 2006.[46] Similarly, the Bulgarian

government approved a new *White Paper on Defence* in 2002. This stresses the importance of developing interoperability and cooperation with NATO, sets a target of reducing the size of the military from a strength of approximately 77,000 to 45,000 by 2004, and restructures the armed forces to include more easily deployable rapid reaction forces.[47]

The Baltic States are in a different situation: since their breakaway from the Soviet Union in 1991, they have had to develop completely new armed forces. Still, their lodestone has been NATO accession, with its concurrent demands for interoperable and deployable forces. Latvia's *Defence Strategy* of 2001, for example, highlights the goal of preparing the armed forces 'for compatibility and participation in NATO' as one of its central priorities, and stresses the importance of developing their 'fast deployment capability'.[48] In 2001, Estonia published its *Security Concept* and its *National Military Strategy*, which identified NATO interoperability as a priority for the Estonian armed forces and aimed to enhance their rapid reaction capabilities.[49] Lithuania's *Defence White Paper* of 2002 echoes these themes, focusing on military cooperation with NATO and the development of a quickly deployable 'Reaction Brigade'.[50]

The lodestone has been NATO accession

As with the promotion of civil–military reforms, the incentive of membership has raised the political profile and significance of military reform, and encouraged governments to commit resources and political capital to it. It is noticeable, for example, that the defence reviews of all seven states in this group occurred in the period between the Madrid Summit of 1997 and the Prague Summit of 2002, a period when NATO was emphasising the military reform issue for candidate countries and laying out the Membership Action Plans. Moreover, NATO-sponsored technical advice and assistance has been, if anything, more pronounced in the military reform field than in civil–military relations.[51] Finally, the armed forces of both first- and second-wave member states have engaged with NATO since 1997 in a variety of joint military exercises, activities and operations, which have helped transmit NATO norms of professionalism and military organisation. This has been the case in particular for Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary, which have been fully integrated into the military structures of the Alliance since 1999 and are active contributors to NATO-led multinational operations. At the same time, the increasing involvement by all ten states in peace-support operations has produced its own military-reform dynamic, by creating a requirement for the particular kinds of forces able to fulfil these missions effectively.

Economic constraints versus the NATO missions

The militaries of the ten new and prospective members appear to be evolving towards the NATO model of smaller, more professional and deployable forces. Indeed, four of these countries plan to abolish conscription entirely (Slovenia by 2004, Slovakia by 2006, the Czech Republic by 2007, and Hungary between 2005 and 2010), while the rest have significantly reduced the length of service for conscripts and increased their volunteer components. Defence spending has risen across the board, and the visibility of units from post-communist armed forces in multinational operations and peace-support operations has increased markedly. The commitment of the ten states to UN and NATO-led Peace Support Operations increased by almost a third between 1997 and 2000, from 2,956 to 5,796 personnel.[52] This increase was driven mainly by NATO-led operations in the former Yugoslavia, and the defence reviews of all ten states acknowledge that such NATO-determined foreign policy considerations will play a greater role. By participating in such peacekeeping missions, the aspiring member states show themselves willing to play an active role in NATO's operations, and illustrate the progress that they have made in their military reforms.

These positive developments helped to secure invitations to join the Alliance for the seven second-wave states in November 2002. However, serious questions remain over the military capabilities and capacities of all the new and prospective member states. NATO's reform priorities and the responses of the ten in meeting them have sometimes camouflaged the extent of these problems. For example, a common feature of all the post-1997 defence reviews has been the development of units explicitly designed for participation in multinational operations, such as rapid reaction forces or peacekeeping battalions. In the main, these are drawn from the elite of each country's armed forces, are well-equipped, and are comprised of volunteer soldiers rather than conscripts. Deployed in multinational contexts, the units generally perform well, and have taken on more demanding roles and won praise from existing NATO members at operational and political levels. Thus, elite units have functioned as practical demonstrations of the new members' progress in military reform and helped these countries to meet NATO's interoperability targets. They also conform to the small, professional, flexible and deployable model that NATO is striving for in its own wider adaptation to the post-Cold War environment.

In most cases, however, these units represent only a small proportion of the new members' armed forces. The bulk of the armed forces remain conscript-based, under-resourced and largely unreformed. For example, Romania's recent defence and security reviews have recommended the

development of a 6,000-strong, all-volunteer rapid reaction force, equipped with helicopters and supported by the air forces' most modern aircraft. Elements of this elite core have recently been deployed on international operations in Kosovo, Afghanistan and Iraq. In contrast, much of the remainder of the 103,000-strong Romanian armed forces are equipped with Warsaw Pact-vintage equipment and armour of questionable serviceability and utility. Moreover, the government also plans to cut the length of military service for its 35,000 conscript soldiers from 12 to eight months. Given that a large proportion of this time will be committed to basic training, this reduction is likely to further degrade the effectiveness, availability and training levels of over a third of the Romanian armed forces.[53] Similarly, the Polish armed forces are divided into two distinct categories: operational forces, whose role is 'action within the framework of allied, multinational formations'; and territorial defence forces, whose role is to defend Polish national territory.[54] Since 1997, Polish operational forces have been subject to a major programme of modernisation and re-equipment, and have been active participants in multinational operations. In contrast, the development of territorial forces has been slow and they continue to suffer from a serious lack of investment.[55]

This trend towards 'two-tier' armed forces is visible to varying degrees across the region. It represents a common strategy towards military reform issues in all ten of the central and eastern European invitees: directing limited defence resources to a small part of the armed forces to meet the immediate requirements of NATO accession and membership, while attempting to maintain traditionally structured forces for the defence of national territory at minimal cost. To an extent, this approach is representative of a wider trend across the Alliance, where elite units – such as paratroopers – are often the most deployable and flexible available, and so tend to be used more frequently for multinational deployments. However, it has particularly heavy implications for the new member states, whose economic constraints mean fewer resources to go round, thus heightening the differences between the two military 'tiers'. For example, defence spending per head of the active armed forces in Europe's 'old' NATO members (excluding Iceland, which has no armed forces to speak of) is $103,511. In contrast, the same figure for the ten new post-communist members is only $15,774.[56] In this context, shifting available resources towards the development of elite cadres within the military has had a disproportionately negative impact on the larger part

A trend towards 'two-tier' armed forces is visible across the region

of the armed forces, often degrading their military effectiveness to a very great degree.[57]

The stark truth is that the ten recent and prospective NATO member states are poor in comparison to the original NATO members, and the real resources they can commit to defence are much more limited. For example, Spain, with a population of 40 million, devotes 1.27% of its $568 billion GDP to defence, generating a defence budget of $7.2bn that supports active armed forces of 143,450. Poland has a similar-sized population, but a GDP of $160bn. It commits a higher percentage of this to defence, 2.06%, but produces a defence budget that at $3.3bn is less than half that of Spain's, and which supports larger active armed forces of 206,045.[58] Similarly, the Netherlands has a population of nearly 16m and a GDP of $347bn. It allocates 1.87% of GDP to defence, has a defence budget of $6.5bn and supports active armed forces of 50,430. By contrast, Romania has a population of more than 22 million, but a GDP of only $38.4bn, of which it allocates 2.45% to defence, generating a defence budget of just under $1bn, supporting active armed forces of 103,000.[59] Moreover, having postponed major procurement decisions since the collapse of communism, all ten new member states are faced with the need to make major defence equipment purchases in the near future, a requirement that is likely to place further strain on already stretched defence budgets.

These economic constraints on defence spending, coupled with NATO's demands for interoperable, deployable forces, have presented the new member states with some tough choices. At its most acute, the dilemma facing these states concerns the tension between the need for their armed forces to provide for national defence and the need for them to be able to contribute effectively to Alliance operations. The choice most have made is to try and conform to the NATO imperative at the expense of providing for their own territorial defence. Given that a major European land confrontation is unlikely in the foreseeable future, and that NATO membership in any case provides the new members with the Alliance's Article 5 security guarantee, this may be a prudent decision. Nonetheless, it is one that poses its own challenges.

If NATO and its new members really do emphasise their contribution to Alliance tasks above their defence of national territory, then it makes sense to structure their military reform programmes on this basis to make more effective use of the resources available. This might entail strategies such as role specialisation in areas where the new states are strong – for example, nuclear, biological and chemical defence, medical units or engineers – or the development of joint infrastructure development and procurement approaches for expensive defence assets such as fighters.[60]

At present, however, this is a step that the new member states have been unwilling to take. Indeed, Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary all concluded deals in 2001–02 to buy or lease expensive Western fighter aircraft to provide for national defence (though in the wake of the devastating flooding which afflicted the country in 2002, the Czech government has since cancelled its order on cost grounds). These decisions occurred against the advice of NATO itself, and will place considerable demands on these states' national defence budgets.[61]

A 'New NATO'?

NATO has had a major impact on civil-military and military reform questions in the ten recent and prospective accession states. Through its own preconditionality and the motivating influence of accession, through technical advice and assistance, and through propagating and spreading norms of behaviour, NATO has helped post-communist states to prioritise and consolidate their civil-military reform processes, and provided incentives and assistance for them to tackle their longer term civil–military reform challenges. While difficulties in this area persist to varying degrees, all ten states have made considerable progress in developing the capacities of the defence management structures, civilianising their defence ministries, addressing their deficits in civilian defence expertise and improving parliamentary engagement in defence issues.

NATO's influence in relation to military reform in the ten new member states has had more ambiguous consequences. Certainly it has helped to prioritise the development of professional, interoperable forces that are deployable and able to contribute to Alliance operations. Through the Planning and Review Processes and the Membership Action Plans, it has established rigorous structures and evaluation procedures to ensure that prospective member states conform to these priorities. In vigorously promoting this model, NATO has highlighted the need for the ten new member states to confront the expensive and inevitable problem of reforming and modernising their communist-era military structures. However, the NATO accession process has also forced the central and eastern European states to make hard choices in their military reform strategies and priorities. In pushing interoperability and deployability, it has encouraged states to concentrate their reform efforts on expensive showcase units that meet NATO targets and that sometimes serve to camouflage more fundamental modernisation challenges in their armed forces as a whole. More widely, political and economic realities in the central and eastern European countries themselves mean that in the short to medium term at least, the real resources that they can contribute to defence will be limited, and this in turn is likely to only intensify

NATO's existing defence policy and burden sharing dilemmas once they all become full members.

In relation to the accession of the ten new member states, the political goals of the NATO enlargement process have outpaced the Alliance's traditional priorities. The military contribution that the new members can make to NATO is small, but the significance of enlargement as a motivation for and recognition of post-communist democratisation and structural change remains considerable. In this respect therefore, the first two waves of NATO's eastward enlargement have increasingly come to represent the embodiment of an evolving, wider Euro-Atlantic security community, whose military aspects may be less important than the political and symbolic values it represents.

It may still be too early, however, to talk realistically about a 'New NATO' on this basis alone. NATO's use of preconditionality towards the central and eastern European ten has paralleled wider processes of democratisation in these states and reflected a strong democracy-promotion agenda among the NATO member states themselves. These circumstances may be more difficult to replicate in future. Further to the east and south, the reform challenges faced by post-communist states are generally more severe and long term than those in the first ten new invitees and – perhaps with a few exceptions, such as Croatia – the incentive of NATO membership is still a remote prospect. In addition, changing NATO priorities (the most obvious example being anti-terrorism) may mean that the whole question of democratisation becomes less important to the Alliance, with implications for the evolving nature of its relationships with the remaining PfP states.[62] Nevertheless, the attraction of closer integration with NATO remains a powerful one – as illustrated by the Alliance's emergent relationship with the Union of Serbia and Montenegro[63] – and the structures and relationships established by almost a decade of eastern engagement in relation to civil-military democratisation and military reform remain active and robust. Indeed, whatever the potential difficulties and however distant the ultimate goal of accession, the central and eastern European experience shows NATO's power as a vehicle for promoting collective values and structural change across its eastern borders. NATO's influence in the post-communist region is unlikely to disappear overnight.

Notes

1 Andrew Cottey, Timothy Edmunds and Anthony Forster, 'Introduction: The Challenge of Democratic Control of Armed Forces in Postcommunist Europe', in Andrew Cottey, Timothy Edmunds and Anthony Forster (eds), *Democratic Control of the Military in Postcommunist Europe: Guarding the Guards* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2002), pp. 1–5.

2 Anthony Forster, Timothy Edmunds and Andrew Cottey, 'Reforming Postcommunist Militaries', in Anthony Forster, Timothy Edmunds and Andrew Cottey (eds), *The Challenge of Military Reform in Postcommunist Europe: Building Professional Armed Forces* (Basingstoke: Palgrave-Macmillan, 2002), pp. 245–249.

3 *Partnership for Peace: Framework Document* (10 January 1994), http://www.nato.int/pfp/pfp.htm

4 'The Partnership for Peace Planning and Review Process', *NATO Handbook 2001*, http://www.nato.int/docu/handbook/2001/hb030208.htm; Frank Boland, 'Mapping the Future', *NATO Review*, 50:1 (Spring 2002).

5 See, for example, 'The 1995 Study on NATO's Enlargement', *NATO Handbook* (Brussels: NATO Office of Information and Press, 2001), pp. 61–63; Dessie Zagorcheva, 'Correspondence on "NATO and Democracy"', *International Security*, 26: 3 (Winter 2001/02), pp. 227–230; William Hopkinson, *Enlargement: A New NATO*, Challiot Paper 49, (Paris: Institute for Strategic Studies of the Western European Union, 2001), pp. 7–8; Annette Just and Porter J. Goss, 'Ratification of NATO Enlargement', *European Security*, 7: 1 (Spring 1998), p. 7; Sean Kay, *NATO and the Future of European Security* (Lanham, MD and Oxford: Rowman and Littlefield, 1998), pp. 64–65. Harvey Waterman, 'Correspondence on "NATO and Democracy"', *International Security*, 26:3 (Winter 2001/02), pp. 223–225.

6 See, for example, Dan Reiter, 'Why NATO Enlargement Does Not Spread Democracy', *International Security*, 25: 4 (Spring 2001), pp. 55–56; Zoltan Barany, 'NATO Expansion, Round Two: Making Matters Worse', *Security Studies*, 11:3 (Spring 2002), 144–149.

7 Barany, 'NATO Expansion', pp. 149–153; Sean Kay, 'NATO Enlargement: Policy, Process, and Implications', in Andrew A. Michta (ed.), *America's New Allies: Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic in NATO* (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 1999), 161–170.

8 http://www.nato.int/docu/basictxt/enl-9502.htm

9 For a flavour of the debate on civilian control of the military, see, Samuel Huntington, *The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations* (Cambridge MA: The Bellknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1957); Morris Janowitz, *The Professional Soldier: A Social and Political* Portrait (London: The Free Press of Glencoe Collier-Macmillan Ltd. 1960); Samuel Finer, *The Man on Horseback: The Role of the Military in Politics* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1962); Martin Edmonds, *Armed Services and Society* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1988); Michael C. Desch, *Civilian Control of the Military: The Changing Security Environment* (Baltimore and London: The John Hopkins University Press, 1999).

10 Andrew Cottey, Timothy Edmunds and Anthony Forster, 'The Second Generation Problematic: Rethinking Democracy and Civil-Military Relations', *Armed Forces and Society*, 29:1 (Fall 2002).

11 Cottey et al.,' The Second Generation Problematic'.

[12] Cottey et al.,' The Second Generation Problematic'; Cottey et al, 'Democratic Control', pp. 252–253.

[13] Andrew A. Michta, *The Soldier-Citizen: The Politics of the Polish Army After Communism* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1998), pp. 82-83.

[14] Anton Alex Bebler, 'Civil-Military Relations in Slovenia', in Constantine P. Danopoulos and Daniel Zirker (eds), *Civil-Military Relations in the Soviet and Yugoslav Successor States* (Boulder and Oxford: Westview Press, 1996), pp. 206–210.

[15] Plamen Pantev, 'The Changing Nature of Civil-Military Relations in Post-Totalitarian Bulgaria', in Cottey et al., *Democratic Control*, p. 142.

[16] Cottey et al., 'The Second Generation'.

[17] Marybeth Peterson Ulrich, 'Developing Mature National Security Systems in Post-Communist States: The Czech Republic and Slovakia', *Armed Forces and Society*, 28: 3 (Spring 2002), p. 417.

[18] Larry L. Watts, 'The Crisis in Romanian Civil–Military Relations', *Problems of Communism*, 48:4 (July/ August 2001), 18–20. Watts cites the Romanian government's deeply contentious and unpopular attempt to use the military against protesting minors in 1999 as a direct consequence of the inexperience of new Ministry of National Defence personnel in defence matters and military affairs.

[19] Cottey et al., 'The Second Generation'.

[20] Pál Dunay, 'Civil-Military Relations in Hungary: No Big Deal', in Cottey et al. *Democratic Control*, pp. 74–75.

[21] Marie Vlachová, 'Parliamentary Control of the Armed Forces in the Czech Republic: Lots of Goodwill and Lots of Incompetence', *Paper for the Inter-University Seminar on Armed Forces and Society Biennial Conference*, Baltimore, 18–22 October 2001, pp. 12–13.

[22] Vaidotas Urbelis and Tomas Urbonas, 'The Challenges of Civil-Military Relations and Democratic Control of Armed Forces: The Case of Lithuania', in Cottey et al. *Democratic Control*, 118–119. Domestic political disagreements over Lithuania foreign policy in the early 1990's were quite heated and focused around whether neutrality or integration with western security structures was the most appropriate strategy for the new state.

[23] Andrew A. Michta, 'Poland: A Lynchpin of Regional Security', in Michta, *America's New Allies*, p. 50.

[24] Jeffrey Simon, *NATO Enlargement and Central Europe: A Study in Civil-Military Relations* (Washington: National Defense University Press, 1996), pp. 104–111; Paul Latawski, 'Democratic Control of Armed Forces in Postcommunist Poland: The Interplay of History, Political Society and Institutional Reform', in Cottey et al. *Democratic Control*, pp. 38–39.

[25] René Nastoupil, 'Current Czech Defense Policy', *The Journal of Slavic Military Studies*, 12:2 (June 1999), 110–114; Dunay, 'Civil-Military Relations', pp. 82–85

[26] Anton Bebler, 'Democratic Control of Armed Forces in Slovenia', in Cottey et al. *Democratic Control*, p. 171; Igor Kotnik-Dvojmo and Erik Kopa 'Professesionalisation of the Slovenian Armed Forces', in Forster et al. *The Challenge*, p. 151. This new legislation had a particular impact on defence planning in Slovenia and included *Size and Structure of the Slovenian Armed Forces 2010* (1999); the *Basic Long-Term Programme for Developing and Equipping the Armed Forces* (1999, 2001); the *National Security Strategy* (2001) and the *Defence Strategy* (2002) and *Defence Law* (2002).

[27] Urbelis and Urbonas, 'The Challenges', pp. 112, 117–120.
[28] Ulrich, 'Developing Mature National Security Systems', pp. 412–420
[29] David Betz, 'No Place for a Civilian?: Russian Defense Management from Yeltsin to Putin', *Armed Forces and Society*, 28: 3 (Spring 2002), pp. 500–501; Natalie Mychajlysyn, 'Civil-Military Relations in Post-Soviet Ukraine: Implications for Domestic and Regional Stability', *Armed Forces and Society*, 28:3 (Spring 2002), pp. 468-472; Konstantin E. Sorkin, 'The Belarus Military: A Loyal Segment of Society?' in Danopoulos and Zirker, *Civil-Military Relations*, 101–105.
[30] Timothy Edmunds, *Defence Reform in Croatia and Yugoslavia, 2000-03*, Draft Adelphi Paper (Oxford: Oxford University Press for the International Institute for Strategic Studies, forthcoming 2003).
[31] Andrew Cottey and Anthony Forster, *Defence Diplomacy? Oxymoron or New Tool of Security Policy*, Adelphi Paper (Oxford: Oxford University Press for the International Institute for Strategic Studies, forthcoming 2003).
[32] Velizar Shalamanov, 'Defence Policy and Military Consultancy: The Bulgarian Case', in Timothy Edmunds, Andrew Cottey and Anthony Forster (eds), *Defence Diplomacy in Central and Eastern Europe: Challenges to Comparative Public Policy*, ESRC Future Governance Working Paper (February 2001), p. 17.
[33] Andrius Krivas, 'An Attempt to Analyse the Efficiency of Policy Transfer: The Lithuanian Experience', in Edmunds et al. *Defence Diplomacy*, p. 19.
[34] See, for example, 'Fresh Faces at NATO', *NATO Review*, 49:1 (Spring 2001), p. 20.
[35] 'Interview with Andras Simonyi, Hungarian Ambassador to NATO, 1995–99', *NATO Review*, 49:1 (Spring 2001), p. 23.
[36] Andrew Cottey, Timothy Edmunds and Anthony Forster, 'Beyond Prague', *NATO Review*, 50: 3 (Autumn 2002), http://www.nato.int/docu/review/2002/issue3/english/military.html.
[37] See for example, Martin Shaw, *Post-Military Society: Militarism, Demilitarization and War at the End of the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991).
[38] Christopher Donnelly, 'Shaping Soldiers for the 21st Century', *NATO Review* 48:2 (Summer-Autumn 2000), pp. 28–31; See also, Charles C. Moskos, John Allen Williams and David R. Segal (eds), *The Postmodern Military: Armed Forces After the Cold War* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).
[39] 'Purposes and Principles'; *Partnership for Peace*; 'The Membership Action Plan (MAP)', *NATO Handbook*, p. 66.
[40] Brooks Tigner, 'NATO Papers Belie Modest Expansion Cost', *Defense News*, 12:49 (8–14 December 1997), pp. 1, 51.
[41] Pál Dunay, 'Building Professional Competence in Hungary's Defence: Slow Motion', in Forster et al. *The Challenge*, p. 67.
[42] 'The Membership Action Plan', p. 66.
[43] See, for example, *The National Defense Strategy of the Republic of Poland* (Warsaw: Ministry of National Defense of the Republic of Poland, 2000); *Reform of the Armed Forces of the Czech Republic: Objectives and Principles* (2001), Website of the Ministry of Defence of the Czech Republic, http://www.army.cz/reforma/reforma/english/docs/reforma.htm.
[44] Neil Barnett, 'Hungary Delays Defence Review', *Jane's Defence Weekly* (16 April 2003).
[45] Cottey et al. 'Beyond Prague'.

[46] *Armed Forces of the Slovak Republic: Force 2010* (Bratislava: Ministry of Defence of the Slovak Republic, 2002), pp. 4–6.

[47] *White Paper on Defence* (Sofia: Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Bulgaria, 2002), pp. 19, 30, 38; *The Military Balance 2001-2002* (London: Oxford University Press for the IISS, 2001), 85.

[48] Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Latvia, *The National Defence Concept of the Republic of Latvia 2001*, http://www.mod.gov.lv/english/08akti/02defence.php.

[49] Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Estonia, *Estonian Defence Forces 2002-2006*, http://www.mod.gov.ee/static/sisu/files/edf_2002.pdf.

[50] *White Paper: Lithuanian Defence Policy* (Vilnius: Ministry of National Defence of the Republic of Lithuania, 2002), pp. 5, 35–36.

[51] A high proportion of PfP cooperative activities in the 2000-01 period were heavily weighted in this area, as were the various Membership Action Plans. *Partnership Work Programme for 2000-2001: Specific Activities*, NATO website, http://www.nato.int/pfp/docu/pwp0001/pwp0001.htm.

[52] *The Military Balance 2002-2003* and *The Military Balance, 1998-1999* (London: Oxford University Press for the IISS, 2002, 1998).

[53] 'Armed Forces: Romania'; 'Army: Romania', *Jane's Sentinel Security Assessment – The Balkans – 11* (7 November 2002). Figures on the size of the Romanian armed forces taken from *The Military Balance, 2001-2002*, p. 96.

[54] *The National Defense Strategy of the Republic of Poland*, p. 15

[55] Paul Latawksi, 'Professionalisation of the Polish Armed Forces: 'No Room for Amateurs and Undereducated Soldiers?', in Forster et al. *The Challenge*, pp. 26–27

[56] *The Military Balance, 2001-2002*.

[57] For example, the average flying time for pilots in the Polish, Czech and Hungarian air forces' is 57 hours compared to a NATO average of 170 hours. The US Air Force considers 100 hours to be a dangerously low amount. Figures for the other new NATO members are comparable or worse. *Janes Sentinel Security Assessment – The Balkans; Central Europe and the Baltic States* (2002).

[58] Cottey et al. 'Beyond Prague'.

[59] *ibid.*

[60] *ibid.*

[61] Jane's estimate that the fighter deals will cost Poland $3bn, the Czech Republic $1.3bn and Hungary $500m. In comparison, their defence budgets in 2000–2001 were $3.3bn, $1.16bn and $690m respectively. 'Air Force: Poland'; 'Air Force: The Czech Republic'; 'Air Force: Hungary', *Jane's Sentinel Security Assessment – Central Europe and the Baltic States; The Balkans; The Military Balance, 2001-2002*, pp. 50, 66, 68.

[62] I am grateful to Andrew Cottey for this point.

[63] Edmunds, *Defence Reform*.