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# Asset or Burden?

**Poland as NATO's New Eastern Frontier**

**Kåre Dahl Martinsen**

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## Preface and acknowledgements

This study is the result of a two-year project. It was initiated at the Norwegian Institute for Defence Studies and funded in its entirety by the Norwegian Ministry of Defence. Most of the research has been carried out in the years 1999 and 2000. Yet as is evident from the sources used, some of the changes that have taken place during the first half of 2001 have been taken into account.

The Norwegian Institute for Defence Studies has long been engaged in security issues and Central European developments. This study is an attempt to combine both fields. In the course of my work I have been able to draw upon the advice of my colleagues, of whom Sven G. Holtmark deserves special mention. I have benefited greatly both from his detailed knowledge of Polish politics, and his critical comments.

In Warsaw, the editor Mrs. Maria Wagrowska and staff members of the journal *Polska Zbrojna* have been willing interlocutors and connection point for meeting Polish experts working on security issues. Of these, I am particularly grateful for having been able to meet with Gen. Dr. B. Balcerowicz of the Academy of National Defence, and Dr. Olaf Osica of the Institute for Eastern Studies. In Brussels, members of the Polish delegation to NATO took time off to answer my queries and discuss Polish integration into NATO. The information they provided together has proved indispensable for my analysis. I also owe a debt of thanks to the staff at the University Library in Warsaw and at the Library of the London School of Slavonic Studies.

Finally, it remains to be said that although I would prefer to share it with others, the responsibility for any faults and errors is solely mine.

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## Abbreviations and acronyms

Baltnet	Baltic Regional Air Surveillance Co-ordination Centre
Baltron	Baltic Naval Squadron
Baltdefcol	The Baltic Defence College
Baltsea	Baltic Security Assistance Group
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
DPQ	Defence Planning Questionnaire
EAPC	Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council
EMOP	Enhanced and More Operational Partnership.
ESDI	European Security and Defence Initiative
GUUAM	Georgia, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, and Moldova.
KFOR	Kosovo Force
MAP	Membership Action Plan
MoD	Ministry of Defence
NAC	North Atlantic Council
NACC	North Atlantic Co-operation Council
OSCE	The Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe
PARP	Planning and Review Process
PfP	Partnership-for-Peace
SFOR	Stabilisation Force
WSI	Military Intelligence Service
UOP	State Security Organ

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## Introduction and main questions

In 1996, the Polish minister of defence Stanislaw Dobrzanski claimed that "Poland's entry would have a tremendous impact on NATO."<sup>1</sup> Many shared his view. Of the three countries admitted in 1999, Poland was regarded as the most important addition.<sup>2</sup> This positive evaluation was not so much due to size of territory or population dwarfing the two other entrants, as Polish ambitions to play an active role in the Alliance. This study will provide an assessment of this impact.

Doing that necessitates going back to the decade preceding membership. During most of the 1990s, Polish foreign and security politics were geared towards gaining membership. Establishing close relations with western countries, above all the USA and Germany, was initially regarded as the most important task. Since neither of the two questioned the wisdom of enlargement, bilateral problems were few. In Poland, co-operation with NATO enjoyed broad support and involved relatively little in terms of internal adjustments or expenditure. Only when NATO policies towards the applicant countries gained a clearer outline, did this change. The most important step was the launching of Partnership-for-Peace (hence PfP) in January 1994. The chief aim was to facilitate co-operation between the Alliance and the countries that joined the programme. To achieve that, PfP listed a set of targets. Among these, the obligation to establish co-operative relationships with neighbouring states played a central part. NATO would not accept new members having unsettled accounts with their neighbours. For the Polish leadership, this was a daunting task. To the east, the country bordered on four newly independent states. Relations with these had traditionally been characterised by deep antagonisms.

This study includes a survey of Polish co-operation attempts with the eastern neighbours. This is not intended as mere background information, but is included in order to assess the impact of Polish membership on regional stability. But there is a linkage here between Poland's eastern relations and Poland's standing in the Alliance that should not be underestimated. If perceived within NATO as a provider of regional stability, or to

use the increasingly popular term 'exporter of security', Poland's standing will be boosted. In turn, this will increase Poland's ability to gain acceptance for viewpoints and policies among the other members.

But NATO's requests were not limited to good neighbourly relations. The necessity of narrowing the gap between training and equipment of the Polish armed forces and NATO was also set as a priority. No Polish government questioned this, but the grand plans for upgrading and new purchases have more often than not failed to yield the intended results. Analysing why is relevant for several reasons. Above all, it will throw light on Polish adaptation to NATO's requirements and make it possible to discuss whether Poland will be a military burden or a valuable addition. NATO tried to function as advisor and query board to Poland both during the PFP years and after membership was achieved. As will be shown, this was far from the unmitigated success Polish sources often make it into. This renders it necessary to question NATO's role as an advisor, and how will change in the wake of Polish membership.

Nevertheless, even if Polish eastern policy has made significant progress, and upgrading of Polish military equipment and expertise is progressing, these are necessary but not sufficient to make an impact on NATO. Positive results may yield little more than courteous remarks from allies. What is required is for Poland to enter into a close relationship with other alliance members. The final part of this study will focus on Poland's possibilities of gaining support for its priorities. Polish views will have a bearing on alliance cohesion. Central issues here are the development of an EU-led military force and who to be invited in the next enlargement round. This part of the study cannot avoid being somewhat tentative. None of these issues has yet been finally settled. But in an assessment of whether Poland's impact is an asset or burden to NATO, it plays an integral part.

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## The road to NATO

The following subchapters will discuss Polish-NATO relations as they developed during the 1990s. The dissolution of the Warsaw Pact, soon to be followed by the collapse of the Soviet Union, triggered the first reorientation of Polish security politics. The main question was whether Poland should go it alone, or together with the other Central European countries jointly try to attract Western interest and engagement in the region. Membership was only referred to as one, and a somewhat remote possibility. This soon changed, as will be shown this was above all due to political developments in Moscow. After an intensive period of relations building, PFP was launched and contacts were given an institutional basis.

It must be said that the Polish government, once NATO was put on the agenda, did not have to vest much in convincing the population of the benefits of membership. Polish perceptions of NATO have been consistently positive all through the 1990s. At no point have opinion polls shown a support rate falling below 70 per cent.<sup>3</sup> Such strong support may be explained by referring to past experiences when Poland was a pawn in European power struggles. Many if not most explanations for Poland's quest for membership start here. NATO's Article 5 guarantee of assistance in case of military attack could therefore be presented as the main motive behind the membership application. But other arguments came to play a stronger role in the course of the domestic debate. Notable among these was the interpretation of membership as synonymous with regaining sovereignty over security and foreign policy.<sup>4</sup>

Sovereignty in the post-war period was limited, most important decisions concerning Polish security were made in Moscow. This was blatantly symbolised in the appointment of the Soviet marshal Konstantin Rokossovsky as Polish deputy prime minister and minister of defence from 1949 to 1956. The domestic government was equated as alien, depending on Soviet assistance to survive. The overthrow of the Communist regime was seen as a first step towards regaining national sovereignty.<sup>5</sup> But as long as Poland was not allied with other western powers, sovereignty could easily be curtailed through decisions taken by others. NATO membership has been widely regarded as

the solution to this quandary.<sup>6</sup> Apprehensions have lessened, but national sovereignty still remains a sensitive issue. Politicians and the press react strongly to any foreign political statements that can be interpreted as overlooking, discarding or relegating Polish interests.

## Ending Soviet hegemony

Communist rule in Poland ended with the first free parliamentary elections in 1989. The new political leadership did not have a readily prepared solution to the country's security situation. The options depended on the developing security architecture in Europe. A new and stronger role for the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) seemed a more likely option at the time than NATO enlargement. Early in 1991, the Polish deputy minister of defence Janusz Onyszkiewicz declared his government had no plans of joining NATO.<sup>7</sup>

However, in the course of that year, the government's official position changed. This was not so much due to public debate as the Soviet attempts to oppress Baltic independence with military means in January that year. This prompted the Central European governments into action. At a hastily convened meeting in Budapest, the Polish, Czechoslovak and Hungarian foreign ministers demanded the termination of the Warsaw Pact's military co-operation.

The impression of Central European unity was further strengthened shortly after when the heads of state of the three countries met in the Hungarian town Visegrád. However, the declaration issued was rather tame, referring mainly to the need for joint solution of economic and trade issues. No efforts were made to institutionalise co-operation on security matters. Only the Polish foreign minister Skubiszewski wanted to expand joint efforts to cover this field.<sup>8</sup>

At the meeting of the Political Consultative Committee, the only remnant of the Warsaw Pact in Prague in July 1991, the Pact was formally dissolved. The Soviet representatives recommended supplanting the Pact with a system of bilateral security treaties. The Central European countries initially welcomed this idea. But then the Soviet side insisted that these treaties should include an article prohibiting the signatories from entering an alliance aimed at the

other party.<sup>9</sup> This was interpreted as little more than a continuation of Soviet hegemony over Central Europe, and promptly rejected by the Hungarian, Czechoslovak and Polish representatives.

A month later, prominent Soviet politicians attempted to topple Gorbachev through a coup. This had strong reverberations in Central Europe. The Polish, Czechoslovak and Hungarian presidents gathered for emergency talks. In a joint declaration, the need for regular consultations on security issues with NATO was underlined. However, this was only intended as an interim solution. The declaration concluded "...there is a need to create conditions for the direct inclusion of Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary in the activities of the Alliance."<sup>10</sup> This expression of unanimity seemed to signal the beginning of Central European co-ordination on security matters. But any such endeavours stranded on the Czech prime minister Václav Klaus' opposition to any kind of institutionalised Central European network outside NATO and the EU. According to him, that would only postpone the date of membership.<sup>11</sup>

The Moscow coup attempt triggered the Czechoslovak and Hungarian governments to press for a rapid withdrawal of Soviet soldiers. Poland chose a different approach. The reason was Germany, or more precisely the German chancellor's remarks made in connection with German unification. These were interpreted as questioning the validity of the Polish-German border. The Polish foreign minister replied by questioning the wisdom of withdrawing Soviet soldiers. Kohl soon recanted. This delayed the process of troop transfer. Of the three new NATO members, Poland was the last to see the complete withdrawal of Soviet soldiers. This was not achieved until late October 1992, three months after Czechoslovakia and more than a year after Hungary. In this connection, the slow pace of withdrawal from the three former Soviet Baltic republics was regarded with apprehension in Warsaw. Although withdrawal was completed in neighbouring Lithuania in late August 1993, Soviet troops remained stationed in Latvia and Estonia another year.

The withdrawal affected the countries in the region differently. In Hungary and Czechoslovakia, the army left little more than derelict barracks and pollution problems. The soldiers that left were transferred to regions far away. Poland was different. Troops leaving Polish territory often went no further than across the border either to Belarus or to Kaliningrad. The up-

surge of military personnel in the Kaliningrad region was accompanied by statements from the Russian leadership indicating that Kaliningrad would now be strengthened militarily.<sup>12</sup> In retrospect, these plans turned out to be short-lived. But at the time, there were no indications that this would necessarily be the case. Russian moves were closely followed by Warsaw.

### **NATO as the sole option**

Although NATO membership had been official policy already from the summer of 1991, other organisations with a security mandate existed. Some of these had emerged after 1989. The Visegrád Triangle, then called the Quadrangle, and the Central-European Free Trade Association (CEFTA) were occasionally mentioned as solutions to meet the security problems of the region. This was above all due to the perception that economic decline and increasing social poverty were the main problems facing the former Soviet block. Opinion polls conducted at the time proved that this perception was widely shared by the population in the countries, Poland among them, as well.<sup>13</sup> However, this awareness did not preclude an interest in military alliances. Although Poles surveyed would agree that unemployment, corruption and crime were security risks, these factors did not prevent them from expressing a strong interest in NATO membership.<sup>14</sup>

NATO came to play a strong part in the political debate not least because none of the other regional organisations seemed to make any progress. Visegrád did not move beyond the level of discussion forum. CEFTA eased trade barriers between the countries, but the EU is of course overshadowing the organisation completely in the economic field. The numbers make this clear. CEFTA is an organisation that stands a much better chance of survival in Western literature than in the region it is supposed to cover.<sup>15</sup>

Security from military threats was altogether different. No regional organisation was formed to address this issue. In fact, the only organisation with an explicit security mandate apart from NATO was the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, renamed in 1994 the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (hence OSCE).

The Soviet view had been that NATO and the Warsaw Pact should be subjugated to the OSCE. With the collapse of the Warsaw Pact, the stance

was modified and a system whereby Europe was split in two with Russia being in charge of peacekeeping and crisis management in the eastern half and NATO and the WEU in the western, was proposed.<sup>16</sup> With the exception of president Havel who briefly seemed to harbour some sympathies, these recommendations failed to attract any sizeable support in Central Europe.

OSCE as an alternative option to NATO never received any noticeable attention in Poland.<sup>17</sup> A few articles were written exploring the possibility of a non-aligned Poland, but concluded that this would mean a return to the buffer predicament of the inter-war years.<sup>18</sup> One of those opposing NATO membership, Professor Marcin Król, argued that NATO was in chaos and disarray. This state would constrain Polish foreign policy autonomy and would pre-empt Polish mediation in East European conflicts.<sup>19</sup> But Professor Król remains an exception. It is difficult to find any trace of a debate in Poland on the possibility of alternatives to NATO.

The wars in Yugoslavia showed that the efforts to create a system of interlocking, co-operating European institutions handling European security failed to reduce the conflict. Judging from contemporary Polish press reports on the war in Bosnia, NATO was regarded as the only organisation capable of ensuring safety against military aggression.<sup>20</sup>

Thus, a characteristic feature of the debate on security in Poland has been the clear-cut distinction between NATO and other international organisations when it came to security matters. The security dimension of most notably the EU, especially the efforts to formulate a common foreign and security policy and the potential usage of WEU, were rarely discussed.<sup>21</sup> This is not difficult to explain when recalling that for most of the 1990s, a military component of the EU remained on the drawing board.

Another feature of the debate was Polish politicians' consistent emphasis on Poland being accepted as an equal member. All signals coming from the west to the contrary, have been rejected. This was particularly evident in the various debates concerning costs. Especially the different scenarios proposed by R. D. Asmus, R. L. Kugler and F. St. Larrabee which attracted considerable attention in the West, seemed to relegate Poland to a buffer status.<sup>22</sup> This prompted numerous rebuttals from Polish politicians and academics.<sup>23</sup>



## Building relations

The first precursor to NATO's eastward expansion was the London Declaration issued on 6 July 1990 calling for increased political and security co-operation between NATO and the Warsaw Pact members. In the declaration, the establishment of direct diplomatic relations between NATO and these countries was recommended.<sup>24</sup>

At a summit meeting held in Rome in November the following year, NATO's new strategic concept of peacekeeping and crisis management was presented. Here, NATO asserted its will to respond to crisis outside the territory of the Alliance with specially trained rapid reaction forces. Alongside this, the North-Atlantic Co-operation Council (henceforth NACC) was established with membership open for all members of NATO, former members of the Warsaw Pact, non-aligned countries and former Soviet republics. The Council was to provide the framework for a joint discussion of security problems.

Despite the expressed interest in NATO membership, the Central European countries felt they failed to engage the Clinton administration in a constructive dialogue. The prevailing sentiment in the region was that the West focused exclusively on Russia. In particular Strobe Talbot, then U.S. deputy secretary of state, was regarded as an advocate for a 'Russia-first-and-only-Russia' policy. This was worrying for the Central Europeans, especially since developments in Russian politics were interpreted as being heavily Soviet in style and content. The concept of a "*near abroad*" embracing the former Soviet Union republics as well as the insistence on a *droit de regard* over Central European security matters, became pronounced in the course of 1993.<sup>25</sup> This approach enjoyed the support of all factions in the Russian Duma. In addition, the consolidation of the Commonwealth of Independent States seemed to progress under Russian leadership. In 1992, a security agreement specifying how the CIS countries should co-ordinate their security and defence policies with Russia had been signed in Tashkent. This seemed like the return of the Soviet Union. The Central-European governments claimed their security concerns received scant attention.<sup>26</sup> Western governments focused their efforts on president Yeltsin whom they perceived as an indispensable guardian of stability and reforms.

The lack of communication between Central Europe and Western leaders early in the 1990s may have been due largely to differing perceptions of regional problems and adequate solutions. The Central Europeans had started to perceive security in terms of military alliances. The West did not. Until 1993-94, it was expected that the eastward expansion of the EU would occur within the near future. A larger EU was supported by Russia, and regarded by many Western observers as the best reply to Central European security needs. But EU inaction combined with growing impatience in the region and strenuous lobbying from Central European émigré groups in the US, necessitated a NATO response of some kind where Poland and the other countries desiring membership were offered a modicum of institutional affiliation. The North Atlantic Council was regarded as insufficient.

## Partnership-for-Peace

The launching of Partnership-for-Peace in January 1994 provided a framework for regularised contacts with NATO qualitatively different from NACC. NACC meets twice annually when ministers from the more than forty member countries convene. Although joint ambassadorial meetings are held monthly in Brussels, these are hardly arrangements conducive to close co-operation. PFP opened up for daily consultations, facilitated greatly through the establishment of a Partnership Coordination cell located within the Supreme Headquarters Allied Forces Europe, SHAPE, at Mons in Belgium. PFP contained a list of targets that were to form the basis for co-operation. Among these were democratic control and transparency in defence planning and budgeting, military co-operation with the alliance to facilitate joint operations in peacekeeping and humanitarian operations, and the obligation of each country to contribute to European security through close co-operation with its neighbours to overcome historical animosities.

PFP was to be a bilateral relationship. The individual PFP country would decide the pace in achieving the rather generally formulated targets. NATO would provide the "...participating states the possibility of strengthening their relations in accordance with their own individual interests and capabilities."<sup>27</sup> PFP was not membership, and it was not a foregone conclusion that it would



lead to it. There was no inherent guarantee that membership was assured once a country had complied with all the targets defined. Polish politicians sometimes referred to PfP as "Partnership for Appeasement". The official Polish attitude expressed by president Walesa was that PfP ran the danger of becoming a permanent waiting room.<sup>28</sup> Yet, despite contemporary misgivings, PfP became an important instrument. PfP enabled the partnership countries to set individual targets for the upgrading of their military forces.<sup>29</sup> Collaboration was reciprocal; it provided the Alliance with a testing ground for co-operating with non-members with security problems differing greatly from those traditionally handled.

Co-operation between a partner country and NATO took the form of projects, each specifying a distinct problem that would be solved with the assistance of NATO. This assistance consisted mainly of advice and consultations. Some funding was allocated from NATO to train officers from the partner countries where the lack of sufficient language skills had been identified as a major obstacle to co-operation.

The number of projects a country entered with NATO was widely used as an indication of membership desires. By the end of 1997, the number of Polish PfP projects was 450, more than any other PfP country.<sup>30</sup> This was significantly more than any other partnership country and gave Poland a considerable public relations advantage compared to the Czech Republic and Hungary where the political will to fund PfP activities was more limited. It should be added though, that the range of PfP activities in Poland also led to very high expectation on the Western side as to how fast Poland could reform its armed forces and reach NATO levels of compatibility. In retrospect it seems clear that the number of projects entered was always far larger than the number of projects actually completed, and among those it seems fair to assume that the final results often deviated from the original intentions. But as far as can be ascertained, no publicly accessible analysis of completion rate is available.<sup>31</sup>

### **Civilian control**

The establishment of civilian control over defence matters and security politics was not expected to pose a significant problem in the case of Poland. Not

only had the country been the first in the region to break with the Communist system, but president Walesa was a strong supporter of NATO membership. Nevertheless, how civilian control was to be implemented and guaranteed became a subject of a lengthy controversy.

Walesa tried to exploit the strong support NATO enjoyed to increase his own influence over politics. Concerning the military, he did not have to do anything. President Walesa had a strong supporter in General Tadeusz Wilecki, at the time chief of the General Staff.<sup>32</sup> Moreover, the Communist regime had endowed him with an institutional arrangement that vested maximum control with the president and virtually none with parliament.

Parliament objected to this set-up. In March 1990, two prominent Solidarity members were made deputy ministers of defence with the mandate of introducing civilian control. But this attempt failed and a deadlock remained until 1994 when military intelligence was transferred from the Ministry of Defence to the General Staff.<sup>33</sup> This move precluded all possibilities of parliamentary monitoring of intelligence activities, but more importantly this move had a negative impact on parliamentary efforts to achieve control over defence planning and expenditures.

Relations between parliament and the military leadership reached an all-time high in autumn 1994. At a dinner party with the then minister of defence Piotr Kolodziejczyk and higher military commanders present, the latter group used the occasion to hold a vote of confidence against the minister.<sup>34</sup> They did this with full presidential backing, Walesa had shortly before stated that "the army is to be governed by the military".<sup>35</sup>

The issue was not finally settled until the 1996 *Law on the Office of the Defence Minister* explicitly placed the Ministry under civilian control. At the same time Wilecki lost his position, one might add to widespread political acclaim and media coverage. The new chief of Staff, general Henryk Szumski made no attempt to challenge the changes that had caused the downfall of his predecessor.

Politicians and officers who regarded the previous Polish set-up as contravening NATO practice had referred to PfP requirements as a source of support.<sup>36</sup> In this, they had been strongly supported by the few western security experts who visited Poland.

Using NATO as a tool to achieve parliamentary control meant that the Alliance had become associated with democratisation, and as such became an integrated part of internal political reforms. This linkage has further enhanced Polish support for further NATO expansion.

Agnieszka Gogolewska, a political scientist, has analysed the parliamentary struggle to achieve control. In her opinion this had less to do with averting military interference in politics than with the more mundane issue of public money.<sup>37</sup> The defence sector lived off the taxpayers and had to be made accountable to their representatives in parliament. Unless investment decisions are done openly, i.e. under parliamentary control, there was no guarantee that the investments will be used in accordance with politically defined targets.

### **PfP in retrospect: a mixed legacy**

The fundamental idea behind PfP was that the partner country should initiate projects and that NATO would offer assistance during implementation and finally review it on completion. This meant a break with the top-down approach characterising the Warsaw Pact. But NATO's ability to offer the appropriate assistance was limited especially during the early years. On the Polish side, authorities were at times inundated with offers and the amount of co-ordination undertaken centrally was poor. Even when negotiations had been conducted and a project plan agreed, implementation at lower levels was not guaranteed. If an agreement had been struck at lower levels, a go-ahead from central quarters could not automatically be expected.

Looking at the projects that were initiated, the large majority targeted the diffusion of skills. Together with projects mapping infrastructure deficiencies, they were designed to achieve a modicum of interoperability with NATO in a select number of areas. They encompassed command, control and communications, NATO operational procedures, aircraft identification systems and logistic support. But this unavoidably meant that other areas were given scant attention. Defence planning must be counted among these.

By 1997-98, NATO officials became aware that the plans for upgrading of military equipment and human resources put forward by the Ministry of

National Defence often defined targets beyond reach.<sup>38</sup> The impression on the side of NATO was that Poland expected NATO to issue priorities that would serve as a go-ahead for Polish planning.

### **NATO as advisor**

The causes for failure to complete projects on schedule or as intended cannot be blamed on Polish recipients alone. NATO officials have often pointed to the existence of a "mental barrier" impeding communication as an explanation. But PfP was a novel institution, and one may ask to what extent NATO was prepared for the task and whether enough efforts were undertaken from the Western side to overcome the mental barrier.

Analyses and comments on the PfP process have often been confined to the political criteria set by the Alliance and the partner countries' efforts to comply. The need to increase the level of competence within the partners' military forces ensuring a modicum of interoperability with NATO has been offered far less attention.<sup>39</sup> This is regrettable for at least two reasons: NATO's ability to proffer advice will provide us with an indicator of the rapprochement between the Alliance and the partner countries, in this case Poland. Secondly, NATO credibility as a military alliance is influenced by the level of interoperability.

NATO was not prepared for the role as advisor. But, it should be added, neither were the partner countries. It was both a question of former adversaries trying to single out areas for co-operation, and bridging the discrepancy between expectations on the part of the partner countries and what NATO was capable of offering. The PfP countries expected NATO assistance far in excess of what the Alliance could contribute both in terms of available manpower, but also in terms of money. But the largest gap was created by the former Warsaw Pact countries' belief that although they now had transferred their allegiance from Moscow to the West, the two military alliances shared the same basic features. Bureaucrats and officers had been trained to ensure the implementation of detailed instructions issued from above. There would be instructions and detailed schedules covering all aspects of army life. This policy efficiently removed all scope for independent decision-making. Expectations were that this policy would remain unaltered.

The lack of initiative and independent thinking remained the most important obstacle to efficient co-operation between NATO and Poland during the first years of Pfp. Getting a dialogue started proved difficult. In practical terms this meant that NATO advisors often were at a loss as to whether they had received all the necessary information to ensure that the design of a co-operation project ensured an efficient use of money and men. According to many Western officers and MoD officials engaged in co-operation with Poland, this process is far from terminated. The Polish side had to form a clear picture of what was required, and how NATO could assist.<sup>40</sup> NATO's capacity to work out detailed plans was limited, and this part was left to the Poles, NATO could assist during implementation but the responsibility was to be that of Poland. Only at the final point, when a project would be reviewed and assessed, was NATO committed to participate.

Only gradually did the relationship change towards genuine dialogue and intensified co-operation. Yet, this change has left lower levels relatively unaffected. Although no precise figures can be given to justify this conclusion, it seems to be a common experience for western countries involved in assistance or co-operation with military units, bases etc. that the recipients expect clear and detailed guidelines specifying what they were to do and when to do it. This includes mundane tasks such as the upgrading of western equipment either purchased or donated. One may expect that this situation will change and that the differences between Western and Polish practice will eventually even out.

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## Polish Eastern Policy

In 1997, U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright justified NATO enlargement as a means to achieve stability: "...the new NATO can do for Europe's east what the old NATO did for Europe's west: vanquish old hatreds, promote integration, create a secure environment for prosperity, and deter violence."<sup>41</sup> The choice of verbal form should be noted, 'can do' indicated that the completion of this task lay in the future and that the process could be derailed. There was no automatic guarantee that NATO presence would assure peaceful conditions and co-operation across the borders. This depended on the countries themselves.

Poland faced a particular challenge in this respect. Historically, relations with all the bordering countries had been marked by antagonism. This was mirrored in popular opinion polls where none of the surrounding nationalities, with the possible exception of the Czechs, was perceived as friendly.<sup>42</sup> Of the surrounding countries, none posed greater problems than the new states established in the east: Russia, Belarus and Ukraine. This chapter is an account of how Poland has attempted to engage these new neighbours first in a co-operative relationship. If Poland succeeded in this task, accusations that NATO enlargement created new dividing lines would lose validity.

With the Polish efforts having to start from scratch, it was close to impossible to envisage what directions the relationship would take. Much depended on the political vagaries of the countries concerned. A brief look at the map makes clear that the interests and problems of Lithuania differ fundamentally from those of Ukraine. Thus, any similarities in the bilateral relationships were hardly to be expected, apart from the basic presumption that all parties were interested in mutual co-operation. But the main challenge was not so much the establishment of bilateral diplomatic relations and signing agreements on good neighbourly relations, as the need to provide them with a genuine basis for co-operation. In addition to trade and cultural exchanges, security issues soon came to play an important role. Why and how will be emphasised here.

When independence movements gained momentum in the neighbouring Soviet republics from the late 1980s, they put the Polish government in a quandary. On the one hand, these movements enjoyed broad support in Poland, on the other the government needed to maintain good relations with Moscow. Thus, the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991 did not release any diplomatic rush from Warsaw towards the newly independent states. This was due not only to the popular misgivings mentioned above, or the conflict between president and government over the responsibility for foreign policy described in the preceding chapter. A basic problem that long remained unresolved concerned what role post-Soviet Eastern Europe should be given in Polish foreign policy.

Walesa did not want to create the impression that both directions, East and West, were given the same weight. The main emphasis was put on creating a dialogue with NATO and the EU. It is relevant to underline that the resources available to conduct foreign policy were limited. Resources should here be understood as staff skilled in Western languages, time available for negotiations and the money required for trips abroad. Instead of spreading these resources thinly across the board, priority was given to the two Brussels-based organisations. In addition, political and economic relations with Germany came to play an increasingly important role.

The political leadership could not assume that the broad support for an active Western policy would apply in the case of an Eastern policy. The unsettled historical questions as well as the situation for the Polish minorities in Belarus, Ukraine, Lithuania and Slovakia opened up a set of issues that would not only be hard to solve, but also difficult to control politically. Reports on discrimination against compatriots across the border could inflame public opinion and undermine the decision to emphasise relations with the West. Moreover, any attempts to improve Polish relations with Lithuania, Belarus or Ukraine, could not avoid affecting Polish-Russian relations. Repercussions could possibly take the form of cutbacks on Russian deliveries of gas and oil. Thus, some politicians clearly favoured a cautious approach to the newly independent states in the East fearing that a too bold Polish policy would antagonise Moscow.

Among them was foreign minister Skubiszewski who during a parliamentary debate in early 1993, advocated a neutral position for Poland in the

disagreements between Moscow and the former Soviet republics. He stated that "Russia has remained a major power, despite its current limitations and problems, and it is going to reinforce this position. ... Poland does not want to side with either party in the conflict."<sup>43</sup>

This view was severely criticised by the president and the political opposition claiming that it reflected a deferential attitude towards Russia characteristic of the past. But this criticism did not translate into action. Both president and opposition used the opportunity to reap political benefit, hardly a difficult task in this particular case. But neither had any clearly formulated alternative policy to present to parliament. One reason may have been the impression that foreign minister Skubiszewski's argument reflected the balance of power quite accurately. Russia was a regional great power with the ability to influence developments, whereas Poland lacked the necessary international backing to risk implementing a policy Moscow might interpret as a provocative challenge.

In particular, the minister of foreign economic relations Podkanski recommended such a policy to secure a positive dialogue with Moscow. The political opposition, and in particular the then chairman of the Sejm's Foreign Policy Committee Bronislaw Geremek immediately accused the centre-left Pawlak government of harbouring Russophile sentiments. Geremek declared that any "... emphasis on a privileged Polish-Russian dialogue may be viewed with alarm. ... This is disturbing and can amount to a violation of the principle of consensus over Polish foreign policy."<sup>44</sup> Geremek feared that a closer Polish-Russian political relationship would be detrimental to NATO membership possibilities.

But advocating more attention directed eastwards was not necessarily synonymous with more attention directed to Moscow. A growing number of politicians and commentators accused the government of neglecting the countries in-between, i.e. Ukraine, Belarus and the three Baltic republics Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia. The editor of the influential Paris-based journal *Kultura*, Jerzy Giedroyc claimed the political elite completely lacked a concept of what Poland's role in the Central European region should be.<sup>45</sup> At the time, his criticism seemed apposite. Until the launching of PpP in 1994, Polish foreign policy had concentrated on the West with little success. NATO's main concern was to develop a dialogue with Moscow. The EU

maintained a political dialogue with the Central European countries. At the same time, it barred its markets from unwelcome competition through strict enforcement of quota regulations. Thus, none of the government's endeavours seemed to have yielded any results in terms of closer integration with the West. But that did not automatically mean a redirection of resources and increased prominence for an eastern policy.

However, P4P turned out to provide Poland with two necessary assets required for a more active approach. First of all it provided Poland with institutionalised channels for dialogue with NATO and its members. Particular problems could also be presented and discussed in the North Atlantic Co-operation Council where all P4P-countries were members. Secondly, Polish-Russian relations had lost their exclusive bilateral character.

## Ukraine

From the outset, it was obvious that developments in Ukraine, and in particular the relationship between Kyiv and Moscow would have a far greater impact on Poland than any political debacle in Lithuania or Belarus. To Poland, Ukraine was and still remains the gravest security concern. Any major political changes there will have immediate consequences for Polish security in the widest sense, both militarily and economically.

Poland is indeed among the few countries apart from Russia with a close interest in Ukrainian politics. Ukraine contrasts sharply with other countries in the region, e.g. Lithuania where several Western countries have vied for the attention. Ukraine is different in that Western attention for a long time has overlooked it, focusing instead on Russia. At the beginning of the 1990s, the Ukrainian government worked to establish closer contacts with Western Europe, and clearly expected that these initiatives would be reciprocated.<sup>46</sup> The West seized upon only one initiative, nuclear disarmament pressing hard for the transfer of nuclear arms to Russian territory. Apart from financial support, no form of security guarantees was issued. Ukraine had problems finding any partners that were interested or had anything to offer beyond the level of polite remarks. Poland was the only exception.

## Poland's role

The Polish *Security Strategy* published in 2000, provides a good indication of the importance Poland attributes to Ukraine. No other country is mentioned as frequently and attributed with the same importance. And it should be added, in no other case does Poland aspire to assume such an active role:

*Poland will work for the development of a strategic partnership with an independent and democratic Ukraine, which is one of the most important elements of stability and security in Europe. We shall support, to the best of our abilities, the democratic authorities in Kyiv in their efforts to consolidate Ukraine's independence and stability, and forge stronger links with European integrations structures.<sup>47</sup>*

Exactly Ukrainian independence, and this should be read as independence from Moscow, is the sine qua non of Polish policy towards Ukraine.

This willingness to play the role as Ukraine's advocate did not emerge rapidly. Poland's early recognition of Ukrainian independence was followed by years of inactivity. Relations started to improve in the course of 1993. In his outline of Polish foreign policy priorities presented to the Sejm in April that year, foreign minister Skubiszewski underlined that Poland wanted to support Ukrainian independence.<sup>48</sup>

Despite this positive attitude, relations were hardly given a flying start. Attempts to establish a framework for economic co-operation faltered, mainly due to the gap in reform progress between the two. Likewise, the Ukrainian proposal from 1992 to establish a "security zone" from the Baltic to the Black Sea whereby the countries would co-operate closely on security matters received a negative response in Warsaw. Joining would contradict Polish efforts to gain NATO membership.

However, the Polish attitude towards a purely bilateral security co-operation was more favourable. In April 1994, minister of defence Piotr Koldziejczyk visited Kyiv to explore the possibilities for co-operation. The initiative was welcomed, and it was agreed that a Ukrainian unit should participate in the Co-operation Bridge exercises held near Poznan in September

1994. The following year saw a rapid growth in military and political contacts with talks held between the chiefs of staff of both countries and between the defence ministers. Cross-border co-operation between the Polish Cracow Military and the Ukrainian Carpathian Military Districts also developed.

Co-operation with Poland strengthened Kyiv's contacts with the West, and provided at the time one of the very few westward channels for contact and communication. This prompted a change in Ukrainian foreign policy towards looking at NATO enlargement in positive terms. By the end of 1995, president Kuchma not only stated that NATO enlargement to the East did not threaten Ukraine, but added that NATO was an element of stability in Europe.<sup>49</sup>

In 1995 president Clinton visited Kyiv. A PfP programme was developed and a document underlining the need for a special dialogue between NATO and Ukraine was signed in September. Poland supported these measures strongly, and played the role as intermediary. It should be added that Polish efforts in other forums have been successful. These include securing Ukrainian membership in the Council of Europe. And in 1996, Poland used its position as chairman of the Central European Initiative to grant Ukraine membership. The Initiative was established in 1991. The founding members counted Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, Austria and Italy. Membership has later been expanded and now amounts to 16 countries.<sup>50</sup> Although some projects involving agriculture and small-business development and youth exchange have been conducted under its auspices, the Initiative is basically little more than a discussion forum. But it may provide Ukraine with an opportunity to develop links with the neighbouring countries to the West.

### **From rhetoric to action**

The Ukrainian leadership's dismal reform record hampers co-operation with the West. Although the presidency enjoys strong executive powers, president Kuchma has so far not taken advantage of them to initiate reforms that would be conducive to Western investments in the economy. Ukraine is of great strategic importance, but without the necessary economic and political reforms in operation, the economic links necessary to create a stable foun-

ation for the political contacts are absent. This imbalance applies to military co-operation.<sup>51</sup> Apart from Poland, the only other NATO country with sufficient resources, and patience should be included as a vital one, is the USA. Suffice it here to repeat the conclusions drawn in a recent analysis:

*Despite some important accomplishments in the development of the Ukrainian military since 1992, there is still no coherent and integrated military reforms strategy for the development of the armed forces; no careful balancing of stated commitments and scarce resources.<sup>52</sup>*

Without any clear priorities within the Ukrainian military, co-operation is difficult. It is difficult to assess what is needed and whether this is matched by what is given. Yet, one may argue that this problem affects NATO and in particular the USA as main donor more directly than Poland. Polish-Ukrainian co-operation involves joint exercises, exchange and training of officers. These are time-consuming tasks, but they are not particularly costly.

The Ukrainian side has repeatedly tried to attract a Polish commitment to defence industrial projects. The Polish attitude has in general been negative. Only when the projects are short-termed and limited to specific problems has co-operation taken place. An example in point is the agreement signed in January 2001 by the two countries' defence ministers on the upgrading of Polish MiG-29 and Su-22 military aircraft in Ukraine.

Polish co-operation with Ukraine has been a protracted process. The apparent harmony on the political level cannot hide the fact that achievements have been slow and often less than intended. The plans for the establishment of a joint Polish-Ukrainian brigade illustrate this fully. Despite the political support from the defence ministers, implementation was constantly delayed. In 1998, three years after the plans had been broached for the first time, Poland completed its contribution. At that time, neither the Polish nor the Ukrainian parliament had ratified the agreement. This was done the following year. The main reason has been lack of money on the Ukrainian side.<sup>53</sup>

The emphasis given to Ukraine has occasionally been criticised in Poland.<sup>54</sup> But there are no indications that this policy is due to change. Rather,

the Polish government has deliberately played the Ukrainian card to attract Western military, political and economic involvement to the region. Although the results have been far from impressive, Polish priorities remain unperturbed. During his survey of Polish foreign policy presented to parliament in 2001, foreign minister Bartoszewski stated that Poland was "...seeking the greatest possible involvement of the US and the European Union in supporting Ukraine's European option".<sup>55</sup> This was almost a verbatim echo of presentations made to parliament in the preceding years.

The only Western country that takes an active interest seems to be the USA. During president Bush's visit to Warsaw in June 2001, the need to assist Ukraine was on the agenda.<sup>56</sup> This is of course not the first time such statements have been made. Suffice it here to conclude that if no-thing else is achieved, Bush's statements will further consolidate Poland's pro-US leanings.

Like Poland, the U.S. has been concerned that Ukraine should maintain its policy of distance to Moscow. This is, as has already been mentioned, far easier politically than economically. But so far, only Russian industry has displayed a strong interest in investing in Ukraine. Russian companies have purchased shares in their Ukrainian counterparts, or in other cases received shares as payment for goods. Since 2000, official relations have improved as well. Plans have been launched for large-scale co-operation in space research and aviation.<sup>57</sup> This may have a spillover effect on the armaments industries.<sup>58</sup> The Moscow newspaper *Kommersant* commented on 24 January 2001 that "Russian-Ukrainian military co-operation is set to develop to such an extent that Ukraine, which has been tilting toward NATO, will now lean toward Moscow."<sup>59</sup> This may be little more than wishful thinking on the Russian side; there have been no indications that Ukraine wants to scale down its relations with the West including Poland. But writings like these are bound to cause misgivings in Warsaw.

## Russia

Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, Polish perceptions of Russian developments have been markedly less optimistic than the views held in the West.

The Polish political leadership, irrespective of party affiliation, has never disregarded the possibility of an anti-democratic backlash in Russia. This accords with the prevailing attitudes in the other Central-European countries. Post-Soviet Russia attempted early on to distance itself from the Soviet policies and actions in the region by officially expressing regret for what had been committed and at the same time emphasising the discontinuity created by the collapse of the Soviet Union. But, as the Austrian scholar Gerhard Mangott has remarked, the new Russia was not considered particularly new by the ruling elites in the region.<sup>60</sup>

Thus, it is no surprise that co-operation on security matters at best played a marginal role during the 1990s. The Polish side launched different small-scale initiatives. Apart from the occasional seminar where Polish and Russian security experts stated their opinions on the pros and cons of NATO enlargement, nothing else took place. Russian predictability on the enlargement issue was broken at one point, raising expectations that Moscow's negative attitude would change. During a visit to Warsaw in August 1993, president Yeltsin stated he had no objections to Polish NATO membership. Travelling onto Prague, he repeated that Russia had no right to prevent the Czech Republic from joining any organisation.<sup>61</sup> But soon his aides had rebuffed all interpretations that Russian policy had changed.

In 1994, attempts were made to give bilateral relations a new footing. Judging from the political outlooks of the foreign ministers of the two countries this seemed to be within reach. Kozyrev was regarded as pro-Western and strong voices in the Pawlak government (mid-1993-1995) had expressed an understanding for a Russian sphere of interest in Eastern Europe. In Cracow in late February, the two chaired a conference optimistically entitled "Towards a New Partnership". The Polish side came to the meeting with a number of initiatives that would have provided bilateral relations with an institutional framework. With the break-up of the Warsaw Pact and CMEA, relations had faltered. Trade had dwindled, the Polish side wanted to establish financial arrangements that could function as a clearinghouse for the barter trade still predominating. In addition, crime had grown alongside the increasing number of Russian visitors to Poland. This was an issue that required joint efforts.



The conference was a failure. The Polish initiatives were given scant attention by the Russians. Foreign minister Kozyrev used the occasion to reiterate his opposition not only to Polish NATO membership but also to the PFP, at the time only a few months old. He claimed that the very term "partnership" was unslavic, and thus unsuited for countries like Poland and Russia. Instead, he launched the terms "common changes or perestroika" without specifying what that was supposed to mean.<sup>62</sup> Marek Calka, a Polish diplomat has summed up the impression this made on the hosts: "This seemingly trivial change confirmed that the Russian approach to Polish-Russian relations was completely different from that of Poland."<sup>63</sup> During the rest of 1995 and the following year, no improvement in relations could be detected. Polish politicians continued to visit Moscow to elicit possible areas for co-operation without success.

But the guilt should perhaps be more equally divided than Mr. Calka's statement implies. As discussed earlier, the Polish leadership failed to draw up a consistent and realistic policy due to

*... a lack of co-ordination in Poland of individual decision making centres, conflicts between the President, Government and Parliament and ever greater differences between the main political forces in respect to the policy towards Russia.*<sup>64</sup>

But at the time, this was not perceived as a particularly severe problem. Relations with Russia were regarded as a matter of secondary importance compared to the need to safeguard Polish NATO-membership.

An improvement in relations has occurred in recent years. Russian and Polish spokesmen have stated that the chill of the previous years when little was done to further bilateral relations, is now a thing of the past.<sup>65</sup> But how the political entente will be translated into political action remains to be seen.

Although it is difficult to rank the factors explaining why the chill of previous years has evaporated, Russia's need to develop a better working relationship with NATO has most certainly played a major part. But the fact that NATO membership for Poland no longer figures on the agenda, looms large as well. It should be noted that security experts from the Baltic countries often refer to Poland as an example of how relations with Moscow

improve, once membership is a fait accompli. Clearly, they expect the same to happen once they have joined the Alliance.

### **Energy and security**

At the beginning of the 1990s, the Soviet Union and subsequently Russia's strong role in Polish foreign trade had been regarded with apprehension.<sup>66</sup> The lack of reforms in Russia was regarded as an impediment to Polish adaptation to market mechanisms. But in the course of the decade, trade issues lost much of their political salience, not least because commerce with the West developed rapidly diminishing Russia's importance. In 1990, Russia had ranked second in terms of imports (20 per cent of total) and exports (15 per cent of total), tailing closely behind Germany. In 1998, this had changed completely. Just above 5 per cent of all Polish imports came from Russia, slightly more, 5,7 per cent of all Polish exports were destined for Russia.<sup>67</sup> There is one exception to this development. Russia has retained its position as Poland's main supplier of energy.<sup>68</sup>

Dependence on Soviet and later Russian natural gas deliveries has been regarded with apprehension since the beginning of the 1990s. Poland ran the risk of being blackmailed, easily achieved by simply switching off gas deliveries. Both the Military Doctrine published in July 1992 and the Security Strategy adopted in January 2000 emphasise the need to look for alternative suppliers.<sup>69</sup>

The gas was switched off, albeit briefly, in the winter of both 1992 and the following year when deliveries suddenly and without warning stopped. It turned out that the reason was not Russian political pressure against Poland, but rather reduced Russian deliveries to Ukraine in response to Ukrainian payment arrears. The Ukrainian solution was simply to siphon off the gas quantities required.

Ukraine is the junction for Russian gas exported to the West. Close to 95 per cent of all exports cross Ukrainian territory.<sup>70</sup> West European gas demand is increasing and the Russian exporters are eager to secure a second route reducing dependence on Ukraine to avoid the illicit tapping of gas. Plans were launched early in the 1990s. In 1993, Poland and Russia made an agreement concerning the construction of a new pipeline transporting gas from Yamal

to Western Europe. If completed, the transit fees would mean a steady source of income, either in cash or in gas volumes for Poland. The construction would also mean employment opportunities for Polish workers and contracts for the engineering industry. The fact that the pipeline will go through Belarus may possibly serve as an entry for Polish enterprises to the Belorussian market as well.

But it is exactly the choice of trajectory that has put the Polish authorities in a quandary. The pipeline will circumvent Ukraine. If the plan is carried through, it will reduce Russian dependence on the pipelines running through Ukraine drastically, and deprive that country of one of its few stable sources of income.<sup>71</sup>

Polish authorities are forced to move with utmost care to avoid upsetting relations with Ukraine while at the same time remaining open to Russian suggestions. Just how delicate the situation was became clear in May 2000 when deputy economics minister Jan Szlazak resigned. Officially, this was due to the slow restructuring of the coalmining sector. Yet, the Warsaw weekly *Polityka* claimed that Szlazak was forced to quit after a letter written to Gazprom in February where he expressed his interest in Gazprom's plans without prior consultations with the rest of the government.<sup>72</sup> According to the magazine, Gazprom had suggested building a pipeline from Poland to Slovakia, thus connecting the planned pipeline with the transit network running westwards from the Ukrainian-Slovak border.

During president Kwasniewski's visit to Moscow in July 2000, Russia relaunched the proposal both in the bilateral talks between the presidents and during plenary meetings. In an interview after the meeting, Kwasniewski admitted that the issue had been raised but claimed no final decision had been made. Moreover, he regarded the issue as primarily of an economic and not a political nature.<sup>73</sup> That assessment was taken as an affront to Ukraine by the leadership in Kyiv. Thus, foreign minister Bronislaw Geremek was compelled to issue a statement where exactly the political nature of the plan was underlined: "I am convinced there will be no such agreement, for it's not in Poland's interest, and I think the Russian side is also aware of that."<sup>74</sup> In the following months, senior Polish politicians and government ministers repeatedly made official statements reassuring Ukraine that their interest would be given weight.<sup>75</sup> But this is not the same as an outright refusal.

Although the new pipeline will supply extra volumes of gas to Poland, the Polish authorities have not put the recommendations from the Security Strategy to rest. The possibility of constructing a pipeline tying the Polish network to the North Sea gas field have been explored several times during the 1990s. In June 2001, the Polish Oil and Gas Company and the Danish DONG company agreed to form a consortium to construct a pipeline linking the two countries and making the transport of gas from Norway possible. If completed, it would lessen dependence on Russia. In late August 2001, the outgoing Polish government signed a deal with Norway for the import of approx. 5 billion cubic metres of gas from 2008.<sup>76</sup> This is slightly less than half the amount of gas consumed in 2000. The Polish centre-left government elected soon after the deal with Norway was signed, may opt for renegotiations due to the price which is substantially above Russian imports. But if the government chooses to go through with the deal, Russian pressure against Polish authorities over the new gas transit route would be weakened. Poland would be less susceptible to accept Russian offers simply because no alternative supplier is available. So far, the Polish authorities have been very cautious, refraining from making any explicit commitments.

Caution on the Polish side is not only necessary due to the anticipated consequences for Ukraine. In November 2000, *Gazeta Wyborcza* revealed that an optic cable had been laid along the Polish stretch of the Yamal-Europe pipeline.<sup>77</sup> This had been done without informing the Polish authorities, apparently by withholding the details from the construction plans agreed. When completed, the cable would be the main communication highway between Russia and the West carrying telephone calls and electronic data. To Poland this means a sizeable income in transit fees. According to data provided by *Gazeta Wyborcza*, the current fees amount to 52 million zlotys annually (\$11.4 million). In short, Russian tactics have not been conducive to finding a compromise in the gas route question. A final solution is still pending.

### **Confronting NATO enlargement**

Russian media have repeatedly focused on two aspects of enlargement, one concerned costs, the other the consequences for Russia's position in the

region. The issue of costs had gained prominence after the U.S. assistant defence secretary Franklin D. Kramer in 1997 openly chided the Czech government for not spending enough to prepare the armed forces for membership, an accusation later repeated by NATO officials.<sup>78</sup> This was dwelt upon by the Russian press arguing that scarce resources would be wasted on military means.<sup>79</sup>

The other aspect, concerning the consequences for Russia remained more diffuse; this may be attributed to a general lack of directions for Russian foreign policy on the region. At the time of accession, the prevailing sentiment seems to have been that the region was lost to Russian influence.<sup>80</sup>

But until enlargement was a fact, Russian foreign policy worked hard to produce solutions short of full membership in NATO for the applicants. Foreign minister Primakov argued in favour of a "*French option*" for the new members, i.e. letting new members participate in the political structures but barring them from full military participation. Poland immediately declared that this was unacceptable, a position that was later repeated in Prague and Budapest.

After the June 1996 Ministerial Meeting of the North Atlantic Council, Primakov repeated his opposition to an expansion of NATO's military infrastructure to Central Europe. In his definition, this included not only troops and hardware, but also joint military command structures, air defence systems and intelligence.<sup>81</sup> If implemented, this would have amounted to a membership on paper only for the applicants. U.S. Secretary of state Albright declared NATO had no plans to station nuclear weapons or substantial combat forces on the territory of the new members.<sup>82</sup> This was intended to placate Russian apprehensions. Moreover, it would make it politically costly for Russia to deploy nuclear arms in adjacent areas like the Kaliningrad enclave. By December 1996, tensions had cooled and Primakov declared that Russia was interested in an open dialogue with NATO.<sup>83</sup>

Partly to allay Moscow's reactions to the planned enlargement, plans were made to give the relationship between NATO and Russia a new footing. It was known that Russia regarded a mere PFP-relationship as insufficient, since this would not reflect Russia's importance and weight in European security. The Russian viewpoint was therefore that bilateral relations should be given a formal framework where NATO acknowledged this special role.

This led to the Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security signed between NATO and Russia in May 1997. At the time of signing, this was considered as an important mechanism for regularising contacts and dialogue. The Act also opened up for the establishment of the NATO-Russia Permanent Joint Council where security matters of mutual interest could be addressed.

Western and Russian politicians presented this as a breakthrough, but for widely differing reasons. NATO regarded the establishment of the Council as a first step towards regularised contacts with Russia on European security issues. The Russian leadership equated the Council with access to influence NATO decisions. In Poland, this interpretation caused anxiety. It was feared that Russia now could postpone enlargement. But according to Madeleine Albright, what had been agreed in the Founding Act, gave Russia "no opportunity to dilute, delay or block NATO decisions".<sup>84</sup> Financial Times wrote "... western diplomats freely acknowledge, it [the Pact, KDM] could mean nothing at all."

Hardly had the new relationship been regularised before NATO's war against Yugoslavia started in March 1999. Russia responded by severing all contacts with the Alliance as well as bilateral security projects with NATO members. Poland was partner to no bilateral projects, and was therefore not directly affected.

### **The new military doctrine**

The bilateral relations between Warsaw and Moscow are influenced by the changing modes in Russia's relationship with NATO. According to a Polish journalist, the Russian political elite, irrespective of political hue, has long regarded Poland as a loyal American satellite.<sup>85</sup> Polish security politics were at best influenced indirectly, as a result of Russian dealings with NATO. As far as can be ascertained from interviews and written material, Russia has not raised issues pertaining solely to Polish foreign and security dispositions during meetings in the Joint Council since its establishment in 1997. As mentioned previously, scant attention was paid to Poland with one important exception. Polish attempts to play a regional role, i.e. advocating closer links between NATO and Ukraine as well as Baltic membership, have provoked

Moscow's ire at regular intervals. But this has mostly been done through newspaper articles. In bilateral relations, Moscow has during the last years refrained from trying to exert pressure against Poland's policies on these issues.<sup>86</sup>

To gather an impression of how Russia perceives Poland, the Russian Military Doctrine signed by president Putin in April 2000 provides valuable insight.<sup>87</sup> The Doctrine is an official Russian view of the strategic situation in the regions bordering Russia, and the policies deemed adequate for furthering Russian interests. The rapprochement between Moscow and NATO in the wake of the terrorist attacks in USA, may have rendered part of the Doctrine obsolete. But since the Doctrine was the result of a lengthy process and hard bargaining between the parties involved, it may still be indicative of how Russia's security is perceived by influential organs like the general staff and the ministry of defence.

The Doctrine heralded a shift in perceptions away from the emphasis put on co-operation with NATO in vogue at the time of signing the NATO-Russia Founding Act in 1997. 13 different factors representing threats are listed in the Doctrine. Here, NATO plays a prominent part in that "[t]he expansion of military blocks and alliances to the disadvantage of the military security of Russia", and "[t]he establishment/reinforcement of armed units affecting the balance of forces close to the borders of Russia and the borders of her allies as well as in the adjacent maritime areas," both refer to NATO.<sup>88</sup> What should be noticed here is the careful phrasing, instead of 'bordering Russia', the phrase chosen is "close to". Poland fits both categories, but the term "close to" is sufficiently vague to refer not only to Poland but to the rest of Central Europe as well. The list also contains a reference to "...training, equipping and preparing troops in other countries for deployment on Russian territory or on the territory of Russia's allies."<sup>89</sup> This may relate to developments in Central Asia, primarily the training of Islamic fundamentalists in countries like Afghanistan and their raids into Tajikistan, a Russian ally. But it may also be taken as an expression of the Russian military leadership's opposition to PFP, and the ensuing military co-operation with the Alliance.<sup>90</sup>

This position reflected in the quotations rendered above, affects Poland in two ways. Firstly, Polish attempts to develop closer links with Lithuania

and Ukraine are interpreted as representing a threat to Russia. Secondly, if Poland were to allow the stationing of allied troops on Polish territory, it would be regarded as a menace to Russia. Russia could retaliate by increasing its military presence in Belarus.

A further indicator of change is the differences in style and content when comparing the 2000 version with its predecessor dating from 1993. The 1993 version had emphasised the need to preserve the neutrality of the former allies in Central and Eastern Europe.<sup>91</sup> Any changes in this status would be perceived as a change in the European security balance and as a threat to Russia.

The 1993 document had been severely criticised by military leaders as being too influenced by romantic preconceptions of the West and exaggerated hopes for co-operation. The armed forces refused to accept the document's main intentions, lobbying instead for the adoption of a new doctrine. They were supported by the ministry of defence which joined them in pressing for an entirely opposite approach.

Only towards the end of September 1999 did the Ministry of Defence announce that a new military doctrine was being finalised.<sup>92</sup> Yet, due to the criticism voiced against it from military quarters, it soon became clear that publication would be further delayed.<sup>93</sup> The changes in NATO doctrine, enlargement and the closer degree of co-operation with former Soviet allies in the Baltic region and on the Balkans had not been taken sufficiently into account.

Only at the beginning of January 2000 was the preliminary version of the new "Conception of National Security" approved by president Putin and disseminated among a select number of institutions for final adjustments.<sup>94</sup> Putin signed the final version 21 April.<sup>95</sup>

Putin justified the need for a new doctrine by referring to the unstable situation in the Caucasus, and NATO's attack against Yugoslavia which had occurred without the prior approval of the UN Security Council. Although the Doctrine was presented as an attempt to adjust to new international surroundings, the text contained numerous passages that revealed not so much an adaptation as a relapse back to the threat perceptions of the Cold War. The 1993 version had started with a preamble stating that ideological confrontation was waning as the result of varied efforts made to increase inter-

national co-operation and reduce risks. Apparently, intentions were to compel the Russian military to distinguish between threats and dangers, and concentrate their efforts on countering the latter. In the 2000 version, both preamble and distinction, and the resultant need to prioritise, have been deleted. Instead, the necessity of increasing military and security co-operation with Russia's allies was emphasised.

### The importance of Belarus

The actual identity of 'Russia's allies' referred to in the Doctrine is never explicitly listed with the exception of Belarus. Other countries intended may originally have denoted the signatories to the 1992 Tashkent Agreement on military and security co-operation under the auspices of CIS. In addition to Belarus, Armenia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kirgystan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan endorsed it.<sup>96</sup> But this is a motley assembly and military co-operation is proceeding at very different levels.

Only Belarus is given a separate and rather lengthy treatment in the text. In the section entitled "*Military-political conditions*", priority is to be given to "the implementation of a joint defence policy with Belarus, the co-ordination of the development of armed forces and military infrastructure of both Union states".<sup>97</sup> This is a recent addition to the Doctrine, as late as 1999 the draft text did not mention Belarus.

Belarus is the only country where the leader has tied his policies closely to a strong Russian military presence, being fully aware of the strategic value of his country as Russia's Western outpost. This was clearly expressed in a speech given by the Belorussian president Alexandr Lukashenka:

*The Belorussian army is the only thing Russia has in the west. And I say it does not need anything else, because we shall guarantee security in the west both to Belarus and to Russia, provided the Russian armed forces give us certain assistance.*<sup>98</sup>

### Russian-Belorussian military co-operation

Russian-Belorussian military co-operation antedates the publication of the Doctrine. In fact, it was never severed completely despite the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Before that, Belarus was the most heavily militarised Soviet republic both in terms of military installations and the share of defence industry in the national economy. After independence, Russian military presence remained strong. An agreement permitting the stationing of 25,000 Russian soldiers was signed soon after the collapse of the Soviet Union.<sup>99</sup> This number was most probably exceeded as numerous soldiers were stranded in Belarus en route from Central and Eastern Europe. But this was a temporary phenomenon. The current level of Russian military personnel in Belarus seems to be lying in the range of 2000 men. Close to all are involved either in the construction or manning of radar installations.<sup>100</sup>

In January 1995, a new formal basis was provided with the signing of several intra-governmental agreements. They listed the conditions for Russian usage of military installations in Belarus for the next 25 years. A month later, president Yeltsin went to Minsk and signed further agreements, which gave Russia the mandate of guarding the country's borders with Lithuania, Ukraine and Poland. Exactly how this agreement is implemented remains a subject of conjecture. Claims that Russian soldiers would assume responsibility for physically guarding and patrolling the Belorussian-Polish border seem unfounded.

In 1999, the two countries signed an agreement merging the air commands of the two countries. Joint air and air defence exercises have taken place not in Belarus, but in the Kaliningrad Region, the official explanation being that Belarus lacked adequate training ground.<sup>101</sup> At the same time, the establishment of a joint military force of approx. 300,000 men was envisaged. Apparently, a third would be Belorussian soldiers, with the remaining 200,000 being Russian. Yet, in this case, as in numerous others, Lukashenka seems to have forgotten to clear this with his Russian counterparts. This may explain why, when addressing the Union Assembly of the two countries a month later, he presented a diluted version. This time he claimed that any military contribution from Russia would not be automatically forthcoming.<sup>102</sup>

The question remains how strong is Russia's commitment. Although Lukashenka has persistently attempted to extract concrete promises from Putin leading to a closer union, no breakthrough has occurred. For Belarus, the most pressing problems are in the field of trade where the need for Russian investments is particularly acute. Yet, even in military matters where Russian interests in maintaining control of Belarus are undoubted, Putin seems unwilling to make any concrete commitments beyond those areas that clearly serve Russian needs. Examples are Russian involvement in Belorussian armaments production and the construction of military installations on Belorussian territory.

Current Russian construction activities include the building of air defence radars in Baranivichi and the sub-marine tracking system in Vileyka.<sup>103</sup> Steps have been taken to engineer a replacement for the old Skruna radar dismantled when Latvia gained independence. This left Russia with a gap in the early-warning radar network. The construction of the new Volga radar in Belarus will mitigate this loss. The value of this radar has increased not least due to the declining efficiency of the space-based network of Oko and Prognoz early-warning satellites.<sup>104</sup> The last Prognoz satellite was shot into space in 1998 without any replacement available. In the case of Oko, the optimal number of satellites in orbit is 9. This has rarely been achieved, the normal state seems to have been four satellites. No upgrading seems to be forthcoming, and any plans in this respect suffered a severe setback with the fire in the command centre in May 2001. A ground-based radar is cheaper, and therefore far more reliable than satellites.

### **Poland, Belarus and regional stability**

The close relationship between Russia and Belarus assures the latter a special place in Polish eastern policy. Russian military constructions and the close alignment in military and security matters only enhances Polish apprehensions. In addition, Belarus illustrates that it is possible to make a complete volte-face, dismantle reforms and go back to a model uncannily similar to the one in existence before the collapse of the Soviet Union. Having done that, the Belorussian leadership has promoted itself as a rallying point for undemocratic forces in neighbouring Ukraine. The Polish government regards the country

as a source of regional instability, a perception shared by their colleagues in Kyiv and Vilnius.<sup>105</sup>

The Russian sentiment that Central Europe has been lost is to a certain extent mirrored in Poland albeit with focus given to Belarus.<sup>106</sup> After independence was gained upon the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991, contacts with Poland expanded at all levels involving politicians, academic institutions, local government and ordinary citizens. Poland was the link to the West.

This development did not last long. Polish-Belorussian relations rapidly became difficult after president Lukashenka assumed power in Minsk in 1994. Although winning the elections on an anti-corruption ticket, he rapidly declared himself against the reformist policies of his predecessor. Instead, the solutions were to be closer co-operation with Russia.

After Lukashenka dissolved Parliament in 1996, the presidents of Poland, Lithuania and Ukraine issued a joint protest. This was a unique example of trilateral unanimity. The three countries have later adopted policies towards Belarus reflecting the differences in their relationship with the West and Russia.

Lithuania is economically more dependent on Belarus than Poland. Until quite recently, Lithuania has exported considerable quantities of agricultural products, consumer goods and electricity to Belarus. Belorussian payment arrears have meant that this trade has dwindled rapidly and thus deprived Lithuania of significant export earnings. Moreover, despite Lithuanian urgings, the Belorussian authorities have protracted the final demarcation of the common border. Lithuania has therefore opted for a more low-key approach than Poland.

The Ukrainian president has occasionally criticised internal developments in Belarus, but more often made his apprehensions of the close security co-operation between Minsk and Moscow known. Russian control over Belarus was a source of instability and meant that closer co-operation between Kyiv and NATO was the only option left to Ukraine to balance Russian regional designs.<sup>107</sup>

Poland has sought to attract international attention to the developments in Belarus. During the Polish chairmanship of the OSCE from 1998, Lukashenka's attacks on democracy featured regularly on the agenda. This had little, if any effects. Polish media covers the fate of the Polish minority and the Catholic

Church regularly. Security experts and military leaders in Warsaw focus on Russia's military involvement. Especially during the debate on Polish army restructuring, the question of whether Poland possessed sufficient resources to resist a combined Russian attack from Belarus and the Kaliningrad enclave was raised. But Russian presence in Belarus has so far remained rather modest, despite the grand statements regularly issued by the leadership in Minsk.

## Kaliningrad

At the beginning of January 2001, U.S. officials claimed that Russia had moved tactical nuclear weapons to the Kaliningrad enclave.<sup>108</sup> Polish reactions were initially quite alarmist, only to become more subdued later on. In an official statement issued by the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, earlier demands for the right to inspection issued in the wake of the US reports were retracted.<sup>109</sup> If nothing else, the sudden and short-lived flurry of newspaper articles has served to underline the relevance of developments in the Kaliningrad enclave for Poland. Poland's basic problem is that its ability to influence developments in the enclave is virtually non-existent. A co-operation agreement was signed in 1992, only to be replaced by a new agreement and a council devoted to cross-border border co-operation. These have failed to yield any noticeable results. Kaliningrad has remained, to quote a Polish headline "*the big unknown*".<sup>110</sup>

Polish efforts to raise these issues with Moscow have been met with a negative response. One of the few points where the Russian leadership has been willing to address Kaliningrad in bilateral negotiations has concerned communications between the regions and Russia proper. Russian access across Polish territory first became a difficult topic after the Soviet army had been withdrawn from Polish territory. The government has refused to give Russian authorities permission for the transfer of military equipment across Polish territory. The only route open to Russia is across Lithuania.

Polish failures to elicit a Russian response to the faltering conditions in Kaliningrad is not only due to Russian refusal to discuss internal matters with a foreign state, but may be ascribed to lack of an official Russian policy on

the future fate of the enclave. The local political leadership in Kaliningrad has favoured the establishment of a so-called "special economic zone" to attract foreign investments. The military has stubbornly and successfully resisted all such attempts. When the former commander-in-chief of the Russian Baltic Fleet, Admiral Vladimir Yegorov was elected governor of the province in November 2000, one Polish commentator remarked that whereas the civilian side is dreaming of a Baltic Hong Kong, the military is turning the region into a Russian equivalent of the U.S. Guantanamo base on Cuba.<sup>111</sup>

Polish abilities to stabilise developments in the enclave are clearly limited. The only option for Poland is regional co-operation. By transforming developments in the Kaliningrad enclave into an issue for multilateral efforts, the chances of achieving an improvement in local conditions increase. This attempt has been tried, yet without yielding any grand results so far. But it should be noted that the Kaliningrad authorities are committed to co-operating with Poland as much as possible. When Moscow broke off security co-operation with NATO and its members, a move that had adverse effects on co-operation in other sectors as well, bilateral co-operation between Kaliningrad and Poland was not affected.<sup>112</sup>

The only regional organisation where both Poland and Russia are members is the Baltic Council. Yet, initiatives taken here have regularly stranded on lack of Russian engagement.<sup>113</sup> The reason may be that the Council is regarded as an impotent club serving as little more than a discussion forum. The EU is not and will therefore have a greater chance of success.

Chris Patten, EU commissioner for external relations, voiced his concern over the future of the enclave in January 2001 after the EU had produced a report on the region's position once enlargement had been implemented.<sup>114</sup> Patten listed a number of projects aimed at supporting the development of the region. Prominent among these were the facilitating of visa issuance and border crossings. Patten's initiative occurred almost simultaneously with demonstrations in Kaliningrad against the Russian leadership's neglect of the region's needs.

From a Polish perspective, the issue at stake here is not so much Kaliningrad and the EU, but rather that the EU has recognised the problems posed by the Schengen Agreement imposing strict rules on border crossings. Yet, that is far from saying that the EU will relax visa regulations. Lithuanian



authorities have long hoped that the lenient regulations would allow transit passengers from Kaliningrad en route to Belarus and Russia to cross Lithuanian territory without a formal visa. But this would contravene Schengen, and from 2003 visas will be made mandatory.<sup>115</sup>

After the Report was published, Patten went to Moscow to inform the Russian government on the conclusions drawn, and would then await "the Russian government's ideas on the matter."<sup>116</sup> So far, an official Russian response has not been forthcoming.

## Lithuania

Poland's current relationship with Lithuania spans a wide range of activities and has been extensively institutionalised. Military and security co-operation plays a prominent role.

At the beginning of the 1990s, conditions were quite the opposite and little indicated that rapprochement would develop to the extent it has. Until it became clear that good neighbourly relations would be a merit for any NATO applicants, official contacts were few. Indeed, the relationship between Poland and Lithuania was regarded as a regional source of instability by Western observers.<sup>117</sup>

One of the reasons was the Polish minority in the country, some 260,000 or 7 per cent of Lithuania's population. When the Lithuanian popular front Sajudis started to work for Lithuanian independence during the late 1980s, the Polish minority did not offer its support. They feared that independence from Moscow would pave the way for anti-Polish sentiments.

The government in Warsaw was compelled to establish relations with Lithuania. Warsaw wanted to provide support for the Polish minority while at the same time avoid being seen as interfering in internal Lithuanian affairs. This proved a difficult balancing act and may account for the slow progress of relations. In January 1992, a Declaration of Friendly Relations and Good-Neighbourly Co-operation was signed by the two countries' foreign ministers. The Declaration was little more than a formal statement of intent, no areas were prioritised, and more importantly, neither party seemed willing to invest time or resources. This made the relationship between the

two countries something of an anomaly at the time. During the following two years, the Declaration lay dormant and virtually no progress was made.

Yet, the situation was set to change, not least because of the Polish minority in Lithuania, but also Western pressure requiring the states to settle their historical grievances. An inter-state Treaty was signed as late as spring 1994, making Lithuania the last of Poland's neighbours where this was done. In 1997, the relationship was upgraded and called a strategic partnership, and expanded to include a joint Parliamentary Assembly, a Consultative Committee of Presidents, and a Council for Inter-Governmental Co-operation.<sup>118</sup>

## Military co-operation with Poland and the West

Lithuania seeks to emulate the Polish membership strategy. International co-operation, PfP activities and upgrading the armed forces are all regarded as steps towards membership. And if this strategy should fail, these reforms would enhance their chances of NATO assistance should any threat to their security emerge.

Polish efforts to develop relations with Lithuania have been facilitated by both countries' relationship with Denmark. The Danish government has pursued an active policy towards the Baltic states, but has gradually concentrated on the relationship with Lithuania. At the same time, political contacts between Denmark and Poland have increased considerably, not least in the field of security and military co-operation. Lithuanian politicians regard this kind of triangular co-operation a suitable mechanism for developing closer contacts with the West while at the same time avoiding complete dependence on Poland. Nevertheless, Polish-Lithuanian military co-operation has gained its own dynamics. Co-operation has been given an impetus thanks to NATO's increasingly positive evaluations of Lithuanian defence and security policy. And finally, Lithuania has been mentioned as one of the few potential markets for Polish armaments.<sup>119</sup>

Poland and Lithuania are in the process of establishing a joint battalion labelled LITPOLBAT. Some financial assistance is being provided by NATO and by NATO countries. Much like Poland at the beginning of the 1990s, Lithuania is receiving aid from the USA in the form of surplus material and

upgrading of extant equipment. This concerns in particular communication systems, anti-nuclear and anti chemical protection capabilities, and the establishment of an English language training centre.

Polish attempts to integrate Lithuania into NATO processes and projects have since the late 1990s run parallel to other allied efforts directed towards the region. A so-called Baltic Assistance Group (Baltsea) has been established to serve as co-ordinator. The efficiency of this body is difficult to assess. Many bilateral projects, exchanges of personnel, transfer of equipment seem to take place without the involvement of the Centre. The U.S. Office for Defence Co-operation has local representatives in the three U.S. embassies. The most notable achievements so far have been the creation of a Baltic naval squadron (Baltron). Since 1998, it has undertaken mine sweeping exercises.

Norway and the USA have jointly funded a regional air space surveillance control centre called Baltmet. The centre is located at Karmelava in Lithuania. Here, data from radars in all three Baltic states are collected, processed and transferred to NATO headquarters.<sup>120</sup>

In June 1999, the Baltic Defence College (Baltdefcol) was opened in Tartu, Estonia. Instructors are from the West, though not necessarily NATO countries. The intention is to provide NATO-level education on strategy, operations and tactics, logistics, staff management and administration, military technology and total defence. This will enhance the countries' ability to co-operate militarily with NATO. Polish officers have also been invited to participate in the courses. But apart from providing the occasional lecturer, interest among officers has been dismal. In 2000, no Polish officers participated.<sup>121</sup> The reasons provided were, as a Polish journalist observed, the usual, spanning financial, organisational and linguistic barriers.<sup>122</sup>

However, none seem insurmountable. Costs are moderate. If participants are unable to cover expenses, NATO provides funding. Claiming that the usage of English is a deterrence against participation is nothing short of embarrassing, Polish officers have benefited from extensive English coaching funded by NATO since the mid 90s. The failure of Poland to participate illustrates what Zdzislaw Znajder has referred to as typical Polish political "*verbalism*", a strong rhetoric emphasis on co-operation resulting in few concrete measures.<sup>123</sup> The long-term implications for Poland in this concrete

case should not be overlooked. Poland's credibility as an intermediary for Lithuania may be weakened in the eyes of other NATO countries. Likewise, Polish complaints that NATO's attention is excessively focused on either Russia or the Balkans, and insufficiently directed to the Baltic, lose clout when Poland can be accused of failing to take advantage of the channels offered.

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## Military and strategic implications

Polish membership occurred at a time when NATO was undergoing a radical transformation. The new Strategic Concept passed in April 1999 emphasised the possibility of operations outside the membership countries. This called for significant changes in training and equipment of the Alliance, and in particular the need for the European members to upgrade their equipment to maintain interoperability with the Americans.<sup>124</sup>

These momentous changes may explain why so little attention was paid to the consequences of accepting new members that militarily were far below Alliance levels. NATO may have believed that the growing number of PfP projects enabled officials in Brussels to form a fairly accurate picture of the extent of the problems. This neglect was highlighted in 1997 when each of the prospective members was obliged to complete a detailed Defence Planning Questionnaire (DPQ). By late October, the three had returned them thus enabling NATO to make an evaluation.

The information provided caused concern in NATO.<sup>125</sup> Although all countries were subjected to criticism, the 43-page long Assessment of Poland drew particularly damning conclusions concerning the army. It was characterised by “widespread and significant interoperability deficiencies”. If these problems were not solved, they would “substantially limit its combat capacity”.<sup>126</sup> The Assessment further contained scathing remarks on the modest reforms that were being implemented. Even allowing for the improvements that were made in the following two years, the main conclusion that Poland militarily was a burden remained valid by 1999. The criticism voiced was a setback for Poland. Polish politicians had stated that they wanted to participate fully in the Alliance, but without soldiers up to the task, this amounted to little more than political intentions. Reforms were initiated to erase the objects of criticism.

This chapter presents these efforts and evaluates the outcome. It will start with a survey of the first efforts made to assess the needs of the Polish armed forces. The contents of these reforms are not as interesting as why

they failed. The reasons are by no means solely a thing of the pre-membership era, but have continued to mar military restructuring ever since.

Although Poland had applied for NATO membership, an entrance date remained elusive. Donations of Western equipment were made, on an increasing scale one might add, but most plans indicated that upgrading would have to rely on domestic production. This affected Polish defence industry, at the time a major employer wielding considerable political clout. The defence lobby has remained powerful, despite numerous attempts to curb its influence. Although domestic production seemed like a cheaper option than Western imports despite the latter’s superior quality and significant signal effect, another option was to continue co-operation with Russian manufacturers and jointly undertake upgrading of the mainly Soviet-made equipment used by Poland. Why this option fell will be discussed.

The main part of the chapter focuses on current reform work. After a discussion of NATO’s difficult role as advisor, a brief summary of changes in army, air force and navy is given. Reforming the secret services turned out to be an unexpectedly difficult and lengthy process.

Poland participated in NATO peacekeeping in Kosovo in the wake of the war against Yugoslavia. The ability to do that had been made possible by the ongoing reforms. The attempts to secure both the location of a sub-regional headquarters on Polish territory as well as having a special contingency plan drawn up for Poland, have failed. Why will be discussed, before ending with a discussion on possible task specialisation for Poland.

It may be necessary to add that we are at a very early point in the process. But as will be shown here, reforms have been discussed and implemented often and long enough by now to make a discussion of some fundamental obstacles possible.

### Assessing needs and splitting the bill

The DPQ’ and follow-up studies provided a detailed presentation of the state of Polish defence. The conclusions drawn defined the direction of subsequent reforms and should therefore be repeated here.

The state of the navy was decried and deemed to be particularly grave. Only a few vessels were "capable of more distant deployment beyond Poland's coastal region and the Baltic Sea".<sup>127</sup> Moreover, the modest reforms initiated by the government were not expected to lead to any appreciable improvements. Condition of the harbour facilities, including fuel depots and repair docks were painted in black colours as well.

Concerning the air force, the Soviet-made MiG fighters were in need of radical and costly improvements in order to reach interoperability levels. Moreover, it was noted that combat readiness was low, and airlift capacity close to non-existent. None of the Polish air bases had equipment for handling cargo.

The army's tactical reconnaissance resources were very modest. Neither air force radars nor navigation equipment was capable of exchanging data with NATO countries. Moreover, none of the country's airfields, and the country had been endowed with 55, were connected to a fuel pipeline system. Some of these problems could be solved through NATO infrastructure grants. Even with rather generous allocations from NATO, only the most urgent priorities would be met. How all the deficiencies revealed in the wake of the DPQ would be met was left unmentioned, let alone how the bill should be split.

Splitting the bill became a contentious issue within the Alliance during the latter half of the 1990s. Different attempts were made at designing a key that would keep all parties satisfied. That turned out to be impossible not least since opinions on enlargement were divided. The member states did not agree on which countries to accept, and accordingly the willingness to pay for other members' favourites was, politely said, rather modest. Not surprisingly, the discussion could hardly avoid being entangled in the ongoing debate on burden sharing within the Alliance. Especially within the US Congress, many felt that the Europeans should contribute a large share since enlargement was perceived primarily as an enhancement of the European NATO members' safety. But finally, it was difficult to agree on what should be prioritised and therefore funded within the foreseeable future. Some estimates even envisaged major upgrading in the NATO countries bordering the new members since they could be required to provide military assistance to the three new entrants. Thus, any cost assessment made unavoidably became entangled in the political debate. Suffice it here to quote the main numbers presented by

the three most important studies made by the U.S. Congressional Budget Office, RAND corporation, and the US State Department respectively.

The study by the Congressional Budget Office was published in March 1996 as the first of the three.<sup>128</sup> Expansion cost would be in the range between \$61 and \$125 bill. The distance between the two extremes reflects the lack of precise knowledge on the state of the applicants' defence sectors as well as the need to take a wide range of threat scenarios and what an adequate response would be into account. The study published by RAND in the autumn the same year focused on the different military options available for NATO: e.g. major upgrading of the new members' defence sector, NATO bases etc.<sup>129</sup> According to the options chosen, costs would lie between \$40 and \$60 billion, of these the applicant countries were expected to cover \$8 billion. In July the following year, the Clinton Administration presented a cost estimate compiled by both the State Department and the Defence Department.<sup>130</sup> The bill would lie between \$27 and \$35 billion. It was stated that the US would cover 10 per cent of this sum. The European allies and the new entrants would cover the rest. This estimate was not well received in Europe. First of all, there had been no discussion in NATO on how the bill would be split, and the US Administration seemed to be getting off rather cheaply especially when considering that enlargement had been pushed far more vigorously in Washington than in many European countries. Secondly, the sums did not inspire confidence. They seemed incredibly low. The French president, dismayed that Slovenia and Romania were not accepted among the first-wave entrants, declared at the Madrid Summit in 1997, that France would not provide any of the means necessary to pay for enlargement. This was hardly an endearing position seen from Warsaw.

But France was not alone in being critical. The German government consistently opted for the cheapest solutions and low-cost scenarios, the British Ministry of Defence toyed with the idea that enlargement costs should be financed from member countries' contributions to NATO infrastructure projects. To complicate the issue even further, opinions in the US Congress were in favour of pressing the Europeans to pay the main burden, as was reflected in the division of costs suggested by the US administration.

These different proposals notwithstanding, all agreed that the final sum needed to achieve compatibility depended on the state of the new members'

military hardware. But little was known about this. Another element of uncertainty concerned the new entrants' will to foot the bill. It could not be taken for granted that the parliaments in Warsaw, Prague, and Budapest would be willing to increase defence budgets at a time when economic problems and social needs required immediate, and costly solutions.

This led to worries that once membership was assured, the political resolve to finance upgrading would wane. The Czech Republic proved to be a salutary warning. When the matter of the dismal state of equipment used by the Czech army was raised, prime minister Václav Klaus stated that this problem was "really secondary" since joining NATO was a political question.<sup>131</sup> Only the Polish government presented a detailed report correcting some of the data presented in various Western assessments.<sup>132</sup> Politicians and researchers doubted the American estimates and produced their own.<sup>133</sup> With the benefit of hindsight, calculations from both sides of the Atlantic have proved wrong. Yet, the essential point here is that the Polish government soon drafted a plan for upgrading. It represented an improvement upon western calculations in that it attempted to break down future spending on a yearly basis with detailed specifications of where the sums should be spent. The RAND calculations did not do that, instead lumping the sums together.<sup>134</sup> Apart from lacking precision, it made any debate on the feasibility of the calculations difficult.

The plans were ambitious and intended to impress both foreign observers and the domestic audience. In the first case this was easily done. But the domestic appeal of the programme should not be underestimated. In the months preceding membership, the press had written extensively about the dismal state of defence, morale in the armed forces and the lack of sufficient manpower, in particular pilots, and modern equipment. It was pointed out that the rapprochement with NATO had resulted in a spot-wise modernisation where only those units allocated for co-operation with NATO had been granted sufficient resources.<sup>135</sup>

Thus, upgrading had been highly selective. The authors behind the RAND study wrote in autumn 1997 that NATO would have to decide "How much of the NATO defence package should be in place on the day of accession and how much can the Alliance afford to build once these countries have already joined?"<sup>136</sup> The authors further remarked that this issue had been

largely ignored. No explicit decision in the form of an entrance formula that had to be fulfilled before membership was made. The need to reach the closest degree of interoperability was repeated by both sides in official documents, political declarations and official speeches. But this did not mean that they agreed on how interoperability was best achieved. NATO emphasised human resources and allocated money to training of officers. This was perceived as the basic requirements that had to be fulfilled before issues like upgrading and purchases of new equipment were to be addressed. Polish officials tended to focus on the latter possibly believing that import of Western, especially US-made equipment would not only serve as a manifest expression of interoperability, but also as a proof of their political sympathies.<sup>137</sup>

### Western donations

The different estimates presented all agreed on one point, it could not be expected that Poland would be able to come up with the funding required to pay for the upgrading. Western assistance was bound to play an important role.

During the Pfp-years, Poland like the other countries in the region received gifts in the form of externally funded training. These would either be language courses and lectures conducted in the Pfp country or the offering of in the West, in particular at the NATO School in Oberammergau in Germany. The latter came to increase considerably in the course of the 1990s with the U.S. as the largest host country.

Upgrading human resources has been a protracted affair. But the management and co-ordination required to make this process run smoothly, are not particularly exacting. Most is, as indicated above, conducted in foreign countries, leaving the Polish side with the task of finding qualified candidates. Western assistance in the form of gifts posed quite another challenge. Already early in the 1990s, Poland received equipment from several western countries. But as a rule, the donor countries offered only equipment they had exchanged for something more efficient. Thus, Poland was left with yesterday's version. Although it resulted in spot-wise upgrading of some sectors in Polish defence, it was hardly the key to a generally enhanced interoperability with NATO. It should rather be understood as attempts to

gain a foothold in what was at the time believed to be a promising market for Western armaments.

These activities, labelled 'military tourism' by some, were inadequate.<sup>138</sup> But the Polish recipients were not in a strong bargaining position. Rejecting the offers could harm their standing in NATO, and with the critical reviews increasing in the period following the leakage of the DPQ results, they felt obliged to accept all that was offered.

This deferential attitude has changed since 1999. Part of the explanation is a change in Polish negotiation behaviour. Instead of passively receiving all that was on offer, they are now more capable of formulating their own priorities and choosing among what the western countries can offer. Poland is now in a position to choose among several offers. One of the consequences has been that smaller, and less important allies like Denmark end up in a situation where their offer is compared with that made by other allies, forcing them to be willing to adapt to accommodate Polish priorities. As such, this development should be welcomed since it ensures a more efficient use of Western assistance than was occasionally the case at the beginning of the 1990s. In addition, Western co-operation has changed away from donations to industrial co-operation and regular sales.

The issue of sales attracted considerable Western attention during the early 1990s. Todd Sandler and Keith Hartley, researchers at the Centre for War Economics at the University of York, emphasise increased weapons sale from the original NATO members to the new entrants as a potential enlargement benefit.<sup>139</sup> The new member states were at times described as the "last market" for Western producers. With the end of the Cold War, sales had dwindled. Poland ranked high on the list of potential customers. This was not only due to its size, but to Polish ambitions of becoming a full NATO member as soon as possible. If that was to happen, Poland would have to rely on imports.

### **Poland and European Defence Industry**

Reliance on imports became a hotly disputed topic in Polish debate.<sup>140</sup> As a legacy from the Warsaw Pact, the country had a sizeable defence industrial base. Before joining, some believed that NATO membership would guaran-

tee the survival of the country's armaments industry. Others regarded the prospects in a much more sombre light, believing that the negative trends experienced throughout the 1990s would continue with procurement orders bypassing domestic producers.

One of the reasons was the lack of change at enterprise level. Output changed little despite diminishing sales. Production plans made at a time when membership was little more than a possibility, were not shelved despite the growing rapprochement between Poland and NATO during the latter half of the 1990s. The expensive plans for a new generation of the Gorilla (Goryl) battle tank made at the beginning of the decade may be taken as an illustration. Despite the criticism focusing both on costs and the fact that light armoured vehicles would be more adequate; a prototype was developed.<sup>141</sup> It should be added that the criticism was not only forthcoming from those sections of the defence establishment and commentators that were concerned about interoperability with NATO, but NATO officials had also emphasised that what was called for was mobility, i.e. light armoured vehicles, to their Polish colleagues on several occasions.<sup>142</sup> Minister of defence Janusz Onyszkewicz agreed, and stated that the output of Polish armaments enterprises would have to change, but implied at the same time that it was up to the enterprises to seize the opportunity and adapt to the new needs.<sup>143</sup> But he warned that this kind of modernisation would mean less reliance on heavy industry, a major employer.

Neither has happened. One might instead argue along the lines of Polish reformers and senior defence officials and claim that too little has been done.<sup>144</sup> In their view, the country remains burdened with an oversized armaments sector incapable of modernisation depending not so much on the military as on local politicians for their survival. Most agree that this situation cannot continue, and that armaments much like the rest of the country's enterprises will have to find their niche in the European market. Poland has some comparative advantages that might entice western investors and partners, advantages that are not limited to the civilian sector. These include low production costs and a skilled labour force.

But the issue of weapons sale should be expanded somewhat to mention the possibilities of joint production. As mentioned previously, this possibility was explored by some Western enterprises with dismal results. One of the

main causes, the lack of a predictable framework for the Polish armaments producers and a clear delineation of state responsibility and ownership, is being changed through privatisation, sell-offs and closures. This may also reduce the clout of the industrial lobby in controlling procurement. Subsequently this may open up for industrial co-operation with Polish enterprises. Another reason why this may be a more feasible option today than it was at the beginning of the 1990s concerns the changes on the Polish side. A decade ago, most Western industrial ventures in Poland concentrated mainly on assembly line production with R&D work conducted in the western partner plant. As a result, the Polish enterprise lacked tasks that could assure the retention of its own technical staff, let alone entice new. This problem had become less acute. Today, many armaments producers manufacture a wide range of civilian products and are thus able keep personnel involved in R&D on the payroll even in times without military contracts.

Development of niche products has been suggested as one way for Poland to compete in the European arms market.<sup>145</sup> Enterprise managers launched numerous projects at the beginning of the 1990s for the production of items thought to be in demand on the international market. Only very few were implemented. Generally speaking, failure was due to flaws in the plans or conflicting signals from the government concerning privatisation, but also the fact that the international armaments trade dwindled at the beginning of the 1990s struck Polish producers hard. Old customers in the Middle East were now on an embargo list drawn up by NATO and adhered to by Warsaw. No state aid to mitigate the drop in sales was forthcoming. No decision was taken before the question of state ownership was solved. Some anticipated that the sell-off was going to happen swiftly, others that the state would retain some degree of ownership. Enterprise plans differed accordingly with most presenting some plans hoping to gain some public financing, and with a few desperately scrambling for new partners and new products.<sup>146</sup>

Nevertheless, it was difficult to identify exactly which were the sectors where Poland had anything resembling a comparative advantage capable of being exploited. On this point the Czech Republic was perceived as being in a comparatively better position. It was expected that Czech armaments producers would concentrate on the production of optical instruments, a field where they were regarded as highly competitive. But like in Poland, stalled

privatisation and the lack of a consistent government policy on armaments production undermined whatever advantages Czech industry had at the time.

In April 1999, the Polish government decided to launch an all-out privatisation and sell its controlling stakes in six industrial concerns producing armaments. This involved aircraft factories in Warsaw and Rzeszow, two machine factories in Gliwice and Warsaw, a centre for industrial optics in Warsaw, and the personnel safety equipment called Maskpol. These constituted the concluding cluster slated for privatisation following 26 other companies where the state was in the process of relinquishing its position as major shareholder.<sup>147</sup> This move had been made possible through the rather surprising support of the local trade unions. Their hope was that new owners would be able to secure punctual payment of wages. This had been impossible while the enterprises had remained in state ownership. The government expected that new owners would be able to diversify production. In some cases this had already happened, a few enterprises had expanded their production for the civilian market after military contracts had diminished. These enterprises have been able to attract western attention and joint production offers. More are likely to come as a result of clearer Polish reform priorities. Likewise, the Polish government has formulated a clearer set of rules for international co-operation to guarantee that the mistakes of the early 1990s are avoided. Offers that open for Polish research and development input will be priorities.

### **The Russian option**

The preceding section may have given the impression that Western producers were alone in offering their products. That was far from the case. Russian companies vied for contracts as well. They emphasised the fact that their products were already in use, but in need of upgrading. Furthermore, industrial co-operation would be far easier than in the case of the Western newcomers. Russian producers already had a network of contacts with Polish enterprises and industrial research institutes resulting from decades of close co-operation. The armaments industries in the Warsaw Pact countries had been interconnected through a system of centrally, i.e. Moscow, given orders whereby production of an item was subdivided among several producers. Although some, most notably Czechoslovakia and to a lesser degree



Poland, developed and produced some items independently, most countries relied on Russia for design of new products, as well as upgrading and spare parts.<sup>148</sup>

After 1989, Moscow tried to retain Russian dominance in the armaments market in various ways. Russian politicians and producers knew that the Central European countries would be compelled to upgrade their equipment, and concluded that the cheapest solution would be continued dependence on Russian products and upgrading of extant equipment instead of opting for Western-made goods. This sounded reasonable, but only if two aspects were overlooked. One concerned the fact that armaments like security politics were thoroughly politicised. Choosing Russian-made products would be regarded as a signal of political allegiance. Secondly, Russian materiel was not NATO compatible and would therefore contravene Polish membership aspirations.

The Russian side was probably well aware of these problems, but tried to maintain their position in the region by linking armaments with Russian debt. All the former planned economies in the region had accumulated substantial sums outstanding in the course of the late 80s. Various arrangements were proposed to settle the issue. Due to the desperate lack of hard currency, Russia had to pay in kind. The Central and East governments agreed to this provided oil and natural gas made up a sizeable share of the settlement. Russia refused and required instead that armaments should play a dominant role. With the notable exception of Slovakia, negotiations hardly progressed.<sup>149</sup>

Poland avoided the entire issue by opting for a so-called zero option in 1995 whereby mutual debts were annulled. This option benefited Russia economically. In Poland, many expressed astonishment on how a solution so obviously disadvantageous could have been signed. The Polish side could probably have extracted some sort of compensatory arrangement for armaments e.g. spare parts deliveries, but chose to forfeit this possibility. Thus, Poland avoided being involved in lengthy negotiations with Moscow pressing for a settlement amounting to continued reliance on Russian deliveries.

But this did not mean that Russian attempts to gain a foothold on the Polish market stopped. Parallel to the negotiations on Russian debt the Polish-Russian Commission for Trade and Economic Co-operation had in 1994 signed a protocol with the clause

*...there is a political will to conclude a framework agreement on armaments cooperation between Poland and Russia in line with international practice. Such an agreement could become the basis for broad co-operation, including joint production and marketing of special products.*<sup>150</sup>

The Russian side made the first move. Some months after the signing of the protocol, Moscow proposed that Polish aviation producers could be given a licence to manufacture MiG-29, in return Russian Baltic fleet vessels could be repaired in Polish naval yards. Although the proposal was launched at a time when the renewal of the Polish air force was high on the political agenda, Warsaw did not make any commitments on the issue.

Two years later, in 1996, a more detailed Russian initiative aimed directly at a select group of small, and struggling Polish arms producers was launched. Virtually all of these had previously been involved in joint production agreements with Russian enterprises. In a few cases, the Russian proposal gained a positive response. These mainly concerned the production of spare parts.

In 1998 president Kwasniewski went on what was labelled a "private visit" to Moscow, ostensibly to attend the Tchaikovsky competition. During his stay, he met with Yeltsin and invited him to Poland. Yeltsin accepted and according to Polish sources indicated that it was necessary that they put the issue of Polish NATO membership behind them and give the relationship a fresh start.<sup>151</sup> In the wake of the Tchaikovsky summit, as it was later known, the Polish defence minister Janusz Onyszkiewicz stated that the dialogue on military and security matters should be reopened as well. Some Polish arms manufacturers may have thought that this opened for the re-establishment of joint production and co-operation with Russian enterprises and expected the possibility to be seized upon by their Russian counterparts. This did not happen. Joint development of new products has failed to materialise.

But the issue of Russian MiG planes reemerged towards the end of the decade. Upgrading would be a cheaper solution than purchasing or leasing new planes. But Poland was reluctant to enter into any co-operation with Russia alone. Thus, when the German government explored the possibilities for upgrading of its MiGs inherited from the former GDR air force, Poland watched closely to see whether there would be an opening for a third coun-

try. With Germany involved, the possibilities of Russian domination would have been less.

The German plans envisaged that upgrading would be undertaken as a joint project with Russian producers. Why the German plans failed is not easily explainable. *Strategic Survey 1999/2000* claims that it was due to official Russian opposition to participate in the upgrading of new NATO members.<sup>152</sup> Although this view may have played a role at the time, the Russian position soon changed completely. Far from discriminating against Poland or the other central European countries in recent years, Russian arms producers have long tried to attract Polish interest. Although the shelf price of Russian products is exceptionally low when compared to western products, running costs are high and the prospects of being dependent on Russia for spare parts prohibitive. The problem of spare parts has been solved mainly through purchases from Ukraine. The Ukrainians were left with a significant part of the Soviet armaments production and have therefore been able to maintain the output of some items; in other cases the Ukrainians have simply dismantled some of their own equipment and sold off the parts. Similar practice is well known from Poland and the other countries in the region. When Poland decided to purchase 22 MiG-29s from Germany, upgrading was completed by Polish enterprises without Russian participation.

### **Multinationality and Interoperability**

One important mechanism for achieving interoperability has been participation in multinational units. Other motives should be included when accounting for why the Polish authorities have emphasised this option. From a NATO perspective, multinational units may be readily deployed on missions where the security interests of an individual member country are not directly threatened. Polish participation thus increases Poland's credibility as an alliance member. This asset may then be translated into increased influence in NATO decision-making. Whereas other NATO members explore the possibility of cutting costs through participation in multinational units, to Poland the double benefits of increased competence and increased standing within NATO have been at the forefront.

As mentioned previously, the possibilities of joint units with the eastern neighbours Ukraine and Lithuania are being explored. Progress has been far swifter in the other direction. In March 1999, Poland together with Denmark and Germany established the Multinational Corps Northeast in Szczecin. This was the first permanent multinational unit formed in Central Europe with participants from the West. The importance attributed to this Corps in Poland is considerable. Apart from the prestigious aspects connected with being the host nation to the Corps, it is widely praised for its diffusion of Western skills and practices to a wide number of Polish officers.<sup>153</sup>

It should be added that Polish participation in the Corps, but in particular the ongoing efforts to establish multinational units with Lithuania and Ukraine have attracted criticism from Belarus and Russia. In the Russian Military Doctrine, both PFP and bilateral Western engagement in countries neighbouring Russia or its allies, were presented as security threats.<sup>154</sup> In the case of Belarus, the possibility of a Polish attack and Western engagement in the Baltic has been a recurrent item in president Lukashenka's speeches over the past years. As far as can be ascertained, Polish politicians or security experts have never presented the reactions from Minsk or Moscow as arguments in favour of disbanding multinational units with the eastern neighbours. Instead, the prevailing attitude seems to be that the criticism is hardly unexpected and should rather be taken as an indication that the Polish efforts serve their ultimate purpose, namely tying the eastern neighbours closer to the west and thereby limiting Russian influence.

### **Army 2012: a grand approach?**

The political struggle surrounding civilian control over military and security matters that went on until 1996, ruled out any radical reforms or major procurement projects.<sup>155</sup> Only in 1998 did the government launch a large-scale reform plan called "*Army 2012: The Foundation of the Modernization Programme of the Armed Forces 1998-2012*".<sup>156</sup>

Significantly, the reform document was merely approved by the government, but not given the status of a decree. This meant that although it was formally binding on all government agencies, it could easily be modified without involving parliament. Officially, it was claimed that this approach

would provide the Ministry of Defence with sufficient flexibility to adapt the plan to meet future NATO requirements.<sup>157</sup> Yet, this seems implausible. The Ministry could most likely have counted on parliament's approval if it would become necessary to change the plan. It seems rather that the Ministry was aware that "Army 2012" most likely would have to be modified in the foreseeable future and would therefore prefer to avoid making too specific commitments that would later have to be broken.

"Army 2012" also envisaged changes in defence industry. Yet, apart from the expected emphasis on the need to retain a national pool for future R&D, no specific measures were outlined. The unsolved questions of privatisation versus continued state ownership, and the extent of military procurement in the oncoming years were not specified, even though one might have expected the latter point to be discussed in some detail in the reform document. Yet, on one point the document heralded a major change: all previous plans and documents pertaining to the defense industry launched during the 1990s, had underlined the need to retain a large production capacity in case Poland was denied membership in the Alliance. This approach had now been overtaken by the approaching membership. Polish armaments producers would have to attract international partners for new investments, state orders would no longer be sufficient to keep production running.

"Army 2012" also emphasised the need for reducing bureaucracy. The military-administrative division inherited from the Warsaw Pact was changed. Instead of the four, the country was divided in two districts: the Pomeranian with Wroclaw as centre, and the Silesian with headquarters located in Bydgoszcz. The powers of these were limited to providing administrative and logistical support for the army. Command authority would rest with the planned Territorial Defense Forces.

"Army 2012" called for a reduction in the number of personnel serving in the armed forces to 180,000 by 2004. Although national conscription was to be retained, the reform document projected a rapid increase in professional personnel to two-thirds by the year 2012. Although much of this reform document has been modified or postponed, increasing the share of professionals has been retained in all later reform plans.

Another difficult part concerns the need to reduce the number of senior officers. But the problem is not just one of numbers and salaries. The top

echelon constitutes a conservative element that has been able to block or dilute necessary changes. Secondly, unless vacancies are created, junior officers educated in the West will find their career ambitions thwarted and seek other sources of employment. Early in March 1999, the Ministry of Defence decided to reduce the number of senior officers sharply as part of the reforms.<sup>158</sup>

### **Improving infrastructure**

Of all the priorities listed in "Army 2012", modernisation of communication systems and the training of the required personnel to operate them were among the few that actually were implemented. In fact, if it had not been for American financing, it is dubious whether this project would have been completed. The U.S. approach was not a complete exchange of technology, but a careful selection of those units that would require the most up-to-date equipment urgently. The recipients were Polish forces singled out for international operations. For the remainder of the armed forces, efforts have been taken to link the extant analogue technology with NATO's digital.

NATO has long provided funding for infrastructure projects, but the Polish side was expected to contribute as well. How much depended on the project in question. Usually, the Polish side covered labour costs. If construction materials required were available on the Polish market, these would usually be included in the Polish contribution. But tasks regarded as urgent would usually be covered entirely by NATO. One example was the installation of a NATO compatible system for air traffic control.<sup>159</sup>

In addition, military bases and training facilities were modernised. Naval installations and a few airfields have been improved to meet NATO standards, other airfields were to be selected later pending a final decision on which of the former 55 Warsaw Pact airfields would be closed. Likewise, storage and depot facilities have been singled out for upgrading in order to make them usable for NATO troops. NATO will continue to come forward with financial assistance for these purposes. Some sums had been allocated during the late 1990s to meet the most urgent demands only to grow in size after membership was a fact. In April 2001 the Polish minister of defence

Bronislaw Komorowski announced that NATO had pledged to spend \$650 million on the upgrading of infrastructure.<sup>160</sup>

The Polish armed forces had counted approx. 400,000 during the 1980s, the facilities and installations inherited were far in excess of what was needed. Political statements and earlier plans have thus all underlined that upgrading was to run parallel to closures of facilities no longer needed. As a rule, these were often outdated and located in the wrong place. A strict restructuring was needed. "Army 2012" called for reductions in general infrastructure spending and a concentration of resources to a few select areas. But exactly where these reductions were to be made was left unspecified. This was to be worked out by the MoD. In this, the ministry did not prove very successful, closures were fiercely resisted by the local population and politicians.

### **Procurement and defence budgets**

During the 1990s, Western armaments producers focused closely on Poland. They were eager to gain a foothold on the Polish market once the MoD had decided on what to prioritise. But procurement of new equipment remained limited. One case which attracted considerable criticism abroad and taken as a proof that Poland was unreliable, concerned a contract signed with BAE Systems RO Defence, a British manufacturer of tank turrets. A contract was signed which opened up for joint production involving Polish armaments enterprises. But soon after, the order was sharply reduced due to unforeseen funding problems.<sup>161</sup>

One reason why upgrading has been a protracted affair and suffered many setbacks is the lack of budgetary realism. Polish politicians will often point the finger at the military establishment and claim that their plans exceed the resources available. This is undoubtedly true, but they are not alone. During the debate on enlargement costs, Polish estimates took government pledges that the defence budget would hover between 2.05 and 2.32 per cent of GDP between 1998-2012, as their point of departure.<sup>162</sup> During this period, the economy was expected to grow at slightly more than four per cent.<sup>163</sup> Neither has happened, the estimates for economic growth have not been met, and the pledges on the defence budget have not been fulfilled.

The share of BNP allocated to defence reached 2.16 per cent in 1996. In the following years the share diminished to 1.95 per cent in 2001.<sup>164</sup> This affected planning badly, and made it imperative to base all upgrading procurement plans on greater realism.

In the *Defence Strategy Document* passed by the Polish government in May 2000, two pages are devoted to "Defense Planning and Programming".<sup>165</sup> Despite the brevity, the pledges are explicit:

*...we will regularly develop 6 year long programs for defensive preparations laying down the key assignments in the field of facilities maintenance and technical and organizational development as well as proficiency improvement of the national defense system...and estimation of the necessary financial resources.*<sup>166</sup>

The reform package launched in 2001, nick-named the Komorowski plan after the then minister of defence, is an attempt to fulfil this pledge.<sup>167</sup>

### **The Komorowski Plan**

"Army 2012" was an attempt to divest the armed forces of the legacy of the Warsaw Pact. This legacy was not only a question of superfluous bases and outdated equipment, but also rules and procedures suited to an entirely different military structure and mentality from NATO. Closure of bases would have enabled a reallocation of funding. Institutional reform would have reduced bureaucratic red tape. Together, they might have made the modernisation targets listed in "Army 2012" less unfeasible.

It has been suggested that one of the reasons why "Army 2012" largely failed, was the lack of information concerning the extent of problems among the planners. One might add that the planners aggravated the problem by setting remarkably short deadlines. For instance, in mid-1998 the programme was further extended with a list of 65 itemized objectives that were to be implemented in preparation for NATO membership, i.e. in the course of half a year (sic).

A new approach based on greater realism was required. In January 2001 the Polish government adopted a new comprehensive modernisation plan entitled "Programme for the Technical restructuring and Modernisation of the Polish Armed Forces 2001-2006".<sup>168</sup> The plan had been prepared by the General Staff working in close contact with the Ministry of Defence. This time, one of the major pitfalls of previous initiatives, the lack of co-ordination and failure to gain the prior approval in the ministry and in the General Staff needed to present a united position to Parliament was to be avoided.

According to the plan, in the course of a six-year period, troop numbers will be reduced by one quarter from the present level of 200,000 to approx. 150,000. This is a continuation of the reductions envisaged in "Army 2012" where a level of 180,000 was to be achieved by 2004, with further reductions being implemented ending with a level of around 150,000 soldiers were to be achieved by 2012. The 2001 plan furthermore envisions that half of the army, i.e. 75,000 men will be made up of professional soldiers. To achieve this, an increase in pay is required. Newspaper articles have pointed to the dismal pay levels for officers.<sup>169</sup> The private sector can offer more and has been able to attract a large number of the qualified specialists the armed forces need to retain in order to be able to modernise.

Much attention is devoted to equipment upgrading. Upon launching it, prime minister Jerzy Buzek declared that by 2006, one third of the army would be using modern equipment and thus be fully interoperable with other NATO units.<sup>170</sup> To achieve this, spending on new equipment is to be increased drastically. The increase is daunting, and impossible to fulfil unless the ministry and the armed forces succeed in the efforts of closing unnecessary bases and installations and selling off military real estate. This point was particularly emphasised in the Programme.

Declaring this to be an urgent task is, as has been mentioned previously, nothing new. But the price of failure may this time be significantly higher than before. This is not only a question of misplaced investments and the galloping costs of maintaining useless equipment, but also one of psychology. Although important progress has been made in different areas, the endless stream of project plans and reforms documents have hardly had a positive effect on efficiency in the armed forces. Considerable time has been spent discussing proposals, assessing ramifications and suggesting modifications to

superior staff elements, only to experience that plans are scrapped or postponed awaiting new revisions. *Polska Zbrojna*, the leading Polish journal on military and security issues, has devoted endless pages to new plans, revision of old, and their not infrequent dismissal after a period of time. Thus, when the front page headline runs "Now, a six-year plan!", the irony is hardly coincidental.<sup>171</sup>

The root of the problem may well be the mismatch between the aspirations of both military leaders and politicians and the means available to implement them. That problem is solvable provided that plans are better co-ordinated and based on greater financial realism than in the past. If not, the armed forces will lose confidence in the politicians' will to allocate the means required and politicians will despair at the unexpected delays and rising costs experienced in the course of every reform and end up questioning the wisdom of military advice.

Polish experts tend to point to another explanation when questioned about the lack of reform progress. They claim that there is a lack of interlocutors able to bridge the civilian-military gap. Both sectors tend to draw up plans and scenarios with scant attention to each other. The lack of integration has a negative impact on Poland's position within NATO. The constant stream of information, queries and requests coming from NATO requires skills and experience to sort out the essential. Without interlocutors, this becomes difficult. The problem for NATO is that requests will not be met with a swift reply, let alone necessary modifications of reforms or policies if that is called for. Subsequently, this becomes Poland's problem too.

NATO has long been monitoring Polish budgetary developments closely. In their view, the Polish defence budget is insufficient to assure the necessary level of interoperability with NATO. NATO's Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR) General Joseph Ralston pointed this out during a visit to Warsaw in January 2001.<sup>172</sup> The response from the minister of finance Jaroslaw Bauc was noncommittal, he did not promise any increase in the defence budget despite NATO criticism.<sup>173</sup> But it would be wrong to jump to conclusions based on previous failures. The current Programme differs radically from its predecessors on two accounts:

First of all, budgetary expectations seem to have been set within realistic limits. For the period 2002-2006, the defence budget is expected to amount

to approx. 1.95 per cent of GNP annually. According to minister Komorowski, the reform plan has been based on the military receiving this share throughout the reform period.<sup>174</sup> This is slightly less than the 1999 level when the defence budget made up 2.05 per cent.<sup>175</sup> These sums are to be augmented by income generated from the sale of obsolete training grounds and buildings; according to the plan the sums will be between 200 and 250 million zloty (\$50 to 60 million). Although the feasibility of these stipulations may be questioned, even if the final results tilt towards the lower end of the range, the impact on the reforms should not be too serious. In 1999, the defence budget ran to 12,599 million zlotys.<sup>176</sup>

Secondly, the General Staff has now been located within the Ministry's structures. This is a clear signal that the General Staff now has been made subordinate to the political leadership of the ministry. Double planning and the resulting bureaucratic infighting which has marred reforms so far, may thus have been eradicated.

### **Army pre-eminence**

Ever since Poland left the Warsaw Pact, all Chiefs of the General Staff have been army officers. The army is by far the largest branch of the armed forces. The almost 120,000 strong Land Forces comprise approx. 70 per cent of all manpower.

Consequently, all reform plans and initiatives focus on the needs, problems and potentials of the army. Although all parts of the army have been affected by the modernisation plans, units trained to be deployed in international operations under NATO command have received preferential treatment. According to the reform programme referred to above, by 2006 one third of the army will have reached a standard "comparable to that of European armies, especially in the spheres of reconnaissance, command, air defence, general armaments and material, and individual equipment for soldiers".<sup>177</sup>

Irrespective of whether the deadline will be met or not, the units intended for international operations receive resources far in excess of those allocated to the rest of the army. According to the deputy chief of the General Staff, the division will unavoidably result in "well-trained selected units furnished with relatively modern equipment, with the rest of the units being low

category. A considerable portion of the Army would turn into a sort of mobilisation centre."<sup>178</sup> Polish officers and politicians have earlier voiced their objections to the division of the army into an A and B team. In an interview with the newspaper *Wprost* in late 1998, the then minister of defence, Janusz Onyszkewicz, argued that it was time to leave this discussion behind and move ahead with military reforms.<sup>179</sup> He admitted the gap between those troops singled out for international service and the rest, but claimed that this was not a particularly Polish phenomenon. Other, richer countries in the West were also compelled to prioritise units that would participate in international operations. Expecting that the entire Polish army would receive the same kind of modern equipment was unrealistic.

Some officers and politicians have criticised the emphasis given to international operations at the expense of defence against an attack from the east. Russian control over Belarus has taken the place of Russian military build-up in Kaliningrad in their reasoning for why Poland must remain prepared to counter any Russian-led aggression. It should be noted that those sharing this opinion, have failed to influence decision-making.

### **Air force - a laggard?**

In 1989, Poland owned 565 attack airplanes.<sup>180</sup> By the turn of the century, this number had been more than halved declining to 267.<sup>181</sup> Only a very limited number have been upgraded to meet standards. These aircraft have been equipped with global positioning navigation system and 'identification-friend-foe' equipment manufactured under licence in Poland. This is regarded as little more than an interim solution; how to renew the air force has been strenuously discussed since the mid-90s.

In early November 2000, the Ministry of Defence signalled that it was interested in a US offer for the leasing of sixteen F-16 fighters.<sup>182</sup> The U.S. offer is estimated to cost Poland approx. \$200 million over a five-year period. Although the deal might involve offset agreements for Polish industry worth around \$100 million, unless extra-budgetary resources are made available the price will be impossible to meet.

Developments took a new turn in April 2001 when the Polish Ministry of Defence stated that the country would require 16 new fighter planes by

2003 and 60 by 2006.<sup>183</sup> But again, financing was left out. Deputy defense minister Romuald Szeremietiew said that potential bidders had been contacted and given "specific conditions through diplomatic channels." They had been asked to compile their offers by the end of May thus enabling the government to make its decision by the end of June. A remarkably short time limit, one might add.

Not surprisingly, this caused considerable criticism in Parliament. The deputy chairman of the Sejm's Defense Committee, Jerzy Szmajdzinski of the opposition Democratic Left Alliance, claimed that the plans had been issued at a particularly awkward time. The government's term was moving towards its end with a renewed lease on power far from certain, he argued. Szmajdzinski feared that even if a decision were made before election time, the next government might overturn it and return the issue to a status quo ante. "What we don't need is for the next election winners to start their rule by verifying, vetting, and upsetting contracts which...are worth close to \$4 billion," Szmajdzinski added. To avoid that, the tender proceedings should be fully transparent and as public as possible and supervised by the main political forces.<sup>184</sup> In the end, the issue has been postponed till after the election.

Quite another question, which Szmajdzinski left out, is whether the politicians will be willing to allocate the means needed. After years of impressive growth rates in BNP, signs of recession could be detected at the beginning of 2001. Convincing Parliament that defence expenditure should be increased sufficiently to allow for an upgrading of the air force will be very difficult, if possible at all.

The issue of new fighter planes is clearly the most pressing, and hotly disputed of all modernisation priorities. It has almost overshadowed the decision made in late August 2001 to purchase eight transport planes from the Spanish CASA plane manufacturer.<sup>185</sup> The deal is worth \$211 million, but according to the agreement CASA has agreed to purchase 51 per cent of the shares in the Polish PZL Okecie aerospace company. Until now, Okecie has been entirely state-owned. A foreign owner will, if the contractual intentions are carried out, provide it not only with new managerial skills and production modernisations, but also give it access to the Western market.

## Plans for the navy

The preferential treatment of army units singled out for international service and the difficulties connected with renewing the air force have at times put the plans and problems connected with naval upgrading in the shadow. The main exception has been the US donation of two Perry frigates. This was done on the condition that the Polish navy financed their upgrading. Upgrading involved fitting them helicopters. This seems to have been an unexpected cause of delay, negotiations on the acquisition of the helicopters have so far not been finalised. When that is done, the timeframe for the acquisition and upgrading of the second frigate will be completed. This timeframe will also include a financing plan.<sup>186</sup>

Upgrading the frigates is costly. Suggestions have been made that work on the second should be postponed. One reason is that the operating costs of the one completed are said to be far higher than the original estimates indicated.<sup>187</sup> Nevertheless, the navy has emphasised that operating costs are far below the sums required by comparable vessels already in the Polish navy. Whether this argument is sufficiently strong to secure the financing of the second Perry frigate remains to be seen.

The frigates are the most recent acquisitions, but plans have been made for the construction of new corvettes and mine destroyers.<sup>188</sup> Although still on the drawing board, a naval five-year-plan covering the years 2001-2006 indicates that work on the first mine destroyer should start by 2003.

An upgrading plan attributed with considerable importance by the navy, concerns the three small fighting vessels of the Orkan class. The plan covers new missile systems, fitting of new radars, and installation of electronic warfare and decoy deployment systems. The Dutch THALES company will be responsible for the integration of all subsystems into one combat system.<sup>189</sup> According to statements from admiral Ryszard Lukasik, Commander-in-chief of the Polish navy, the contracts with the foreign suppliers are due to be signed before the end of 2001.<sup>190</sup> This will enable a complete upgrading of all three ships by 2003. Although the contractor is Polish, THALES will play a key role. If this turns out successful, i.e. completed within budgetary limits and according to agreed time schedules, it is expected that this approach will form a pattern for the upgrading of the four Tarantula-class corvettes.



Poland has three submarines in service. According to the navy 2001-2006 plans, two of these will be decommissioned in 2002 and 2003 respectively. Building new ones is regarded as too costly. A far cheaper solution is to purchase decommissioned submarines from allied countries. In August 2001, Poland expressed an interest in buying two, possibly five of the Norwegian Kobben-class submarines.<sup>191</sup> They all date from the mid-60s but have later been modernised before they were decommissioned in 2001.

Moreover, the navy plans to phase out its MiG fighters and supplant them with Polish-made patrol aircrafts and helicopters. Implementation will depend on the size of future defence budgets. Thus, one may assume that other needs have been given greater priority.

But not all renewal is pending on future budgets. In autumn 2001, the navy commissioned a new logistics vessel. Originally, the ship had been scheduled for delivery in Russia, but due to payment problems the agreement was cancelled.<sup>192</sup> The vessel can be used for maintenance, as hospital, and for command and control of maritime surveillance and reconnaissance. It will be based in Swinoujscie.

### **Intelligence and secret services**

The gap between Polish and Western standards in intelligence gathering and handling constitutes an obstacle to co-operation with other NATO countries that should not be overlooked. Within NATO, this has remained a topic for criticism.<sup>193</sup> Poland has been slow in changing both the legal basis for its intelligence services and the procedures for handling sensitive material issued by NATO.

The first perceptible changes in Polish military intelligence started after the fall of the Communist regime, but not as the outcome of Western pressure but as a response to domestic changes. The general conflict in Polish society between the old Communist elite and pro-Western forces unavoidably affected the intelligence sector. Soon after signing the PfP-agreement, the question of continued employment of security officers recruited by the Communist regime was raised by NATO.<sup>194</sup> The Alliance was worried that the Polish side would not be able to keep military technology and sensitive information secret. These problems only increased in the course of the

1990s. Closer relations between Poland and NATO meant that the amount of information transferred to Warsaw increased, at the same time the efforts made by the Polish authorities to streamline the country's secret services were judged insufficient. It should be added that many Polish security experts share this view.<sup>195</sup>

But Polish criticism against the country's intelligence organs has so far paid scant attention to the impact on Polish-NATO relations. Instead, focus has been given to the abuse of secret material for political purposes. Perhaps the most famous example occurred in 1996 when prime minister Józef Oleksy was accused by the minister of internal affairs of being a Russian spy.<sup>196</sup> The accusations were later rejected by the state prosecutor as groundless. The new prime minister transferred the State Security Organ, UOP, away from the Ministry of Internal Affairs and vested it with the Prime Minister's Office.<sup>197</sup> The Military Intelligence Service, WSI, was not affected.<sup>198</sup>

This did not end the controversy surrounding the secret services. Especially the use and more often abuse of files dating from the Communist era have been surfaced in public debate at regular intervals. The need to put an end to this played an instrumental role in the most recent institutional innovation. Early in 1999, it was decided to create a Special Services Committee consisting of the ministers for internal affairs, foreign affairs, defence, the heads of the UOP and the WSI and the leader of the National Security Council, an organ affiliated with the Presidential Chancery.<sup>199</sup> The Committee was to be subordinate to the Prime Minister's office.

As the brief survey above makes clear, the controversies have been confined to domestic affairs. NATO has so far been left out. But the questions that have been raised concerning professionalism and imperviousness to external pressure are unlikely to have passed unnoticed in Brussels. The fact that the Polish Parliament passed the necessary legislation to streamline Polish laws with NATO regulations on military security late in 1998, is a step in the right direction but hardly sufficient.

The lack of institutional "fire-walls" protecting the security services from political pressure might eventually undermine Poland's position within NATO. One of Poland's obvious comparative advantages is the detailed knowledge of the neighbouring countries to the East. Combined with a wide network of

contacts, both political and economic, Polish analysts are able to follow developments closely. This is of value to other Alliance members, but in order to function as a reliable supplier, the integrity of the services amassing the information should be beyond reproach.

After the elections in autumn 2001, the heads of the WSI and UOP resigned due to disagreements over the new government's reform plans. The contents of these plans are not known.

### **Kosovo**

The war against Yugoslavia and subsequent peace keeping in Kosovo have served as test cases for Poland's ability to contribute to NATO. Polish politicians quickly drew a parallel between the oppression of the Albanian population in Kosovo and their own sufferings under German occupation. In retrospect, this may seem somewhat exaggerated. Nevertheless, public opinion and the political elite were far more unanimous on the need to act than for instance their Czech colleagues.<sup>200</sup>

NATO's war against Yugoslavia and the subsequent establishment of KFOR, turned out to be somewhat of a test case for the three new members. Poland was a strong supporter of the operations. Like the two others, overflight and land transit rights were rapidly granted to NATO. In addition, the usage of Polish airbases was offered. But the Polish government was alone in making a public commitment of Polish combat troops. There was no noticeable opposition to this in Parliament. Apparently, Polish units would have been used if the plans for operation BRAVO, i.e. a ground invasion of Yugoslavia, had been implemented in the event that the air strikes failed to have an impact.

Polish commitments to KFOR were extensive. The original contribution included its 800-man elite 18th Air Assault Battalion. This was subsequently extended with a platoon of Lithuanian soldiers and additional troops from the 10th Logistics Brigade. In July 1999, the Battalion was exchanged with soldiers from the Polish-Ukrainian Battalion. This was a small, but unnoticed diplomatic victory for Poland and NATO. The Ukrainian parliament had been critical of NATO's actions, but acquiesced to letting the joint Polish-Ukrainian force be deployed.

In March 2000, Poland was among the few NATO countries to reply affirmatively to NATO's request for additional troops. 600 men from the 10th Armoured Cavalry Brigade were sent to Kosovo. The initial plan was to deploy them only for a two-month period, this time limit has been repeatedly extended. Poland was alone among the new entrants to increase its initial commitment. Hungary's contribution remained a military police unit of 350 men, the Czech a 150-man strong reconnaissance company.

The overall strength of the Polish contribution places the country in the "middleweight class" of countries like Spain and the Netherlands sending 1,200 and 2,050 soldiers respectively. These are the countries that Polish military representatives frequently quote as comparison.

### **Failed attempts: headquarters and contingency plan**

Since becoming a member, Poland has invested considerable efforts in achieving two targets. One is the adoption of a contingency plan for Poland specifying allied assistance to Poland in case of attack. The second concerns the establishment of a sub-regional headquarters on Polish territory. Both attempts have failed for different reasons. But since the reasoning behind the efforts is rather similar, some words on why Poland tried to gain support for these issues in NATO are merited.

During the Cold War, specific contingency plans enumerating potential threats, war theatre operations and detailed reinforcement scenarios covered most of Western Europe. At present, NATO operates with two contingency plans, one covering the North Atlantic area, the other Eastern Turkey. Although these plans are still retained, the entire planning process underwent a change from 1995 when emphasis was given to so-called generic plans. These lack the formers' detailed account of enemy intentions, interests and forces. Instead, emphasis is given to how potential conflicts may develop and how allied forces may be deployed to the area affected.

The change in plan contents must be seen in connection with the emphasis in NATO's Strategic Doctrine given to small-scale conflicts and crisis management as well as the efforts to improve relations with Russia. Adopting a contingency plan for Poland would strongly contravene these efforts. Moreover, one might add that it would also undermine Poland's attempts to

convince Russia that Polish membership as well as further enlargement to the Baltic states is not directed against Russia. Leaving the possible diplomatic repercussions aside, why Poland has pursued the issue of a 'Polish' contingency plan is somewhat bewildering. It would be wrong to ascribe this to an inadequate understanding or acceptance of NATO's changed role and retention of outdated perceptions on European security. Polish participation in international operations and the emphasis on mobility and flexibility in military modernisation plans flouts such an interpretation. Rather, the issue seems to have to do with national prestige, a contingency plan would represent a tangible proof of Poland's importance as an alliance member.

The issue of national prestige has undoubtedly been at play concerning the question of a sub-regional headquarters in Poland. Poland has argued that due to size and geographic location, one of these or an additional should be located in Poland. Pushing this issue, very much like the desired contingency plan, has been described as 'flogging a dead horse' by other NATO representatives. The question of sub-regional headquarters is up for revision. Although the final outcome of the process has not been settled yet, new headquarters will be dependent on the presence of a corps. The Poles have argued that the multinational Danish-German-Polish Corps in Szczecin qualifies. Yet, this seems unlikely, not least because of lack of German support for the Polish project.

A more suitable strategy for Poland could be to make its own national headquarters NATO compatible specifying how NATO could use it if an emergency should arise. Although this option will not provide the same kind of prestige ideal for internal political consumption, it provides the kind of organisational flexibility NATO desires. The Komorowski plan referred to previously is a step in the right direction.<sup>201</sup> Six priorities are listed, greater capacity to function as host to NATO activities is listed as one of these.<sup>202</sup>

### **Burden sharing and comparative advantages: what role for Poland**

NATO concerns over Poland's upgrading record should not only be regarded narrowly as a question of Polish military capabilities. Failure to implement a

realistic upgrading plan has wide repercussions on alliance burden sharing. Priority areas like communications, airspace surveillance and technical infrastructure would not have been improved unless NATO footed the bill. Bilateral donations from the US have also played a key role. But this was all regarded as interim solutions necessary because the Polish side quite clearly lacked funds. Not all allies were equally happy with this situation. The quarrels at the Madrid Summit in 1997 over enlargement financing illustrate the divisive potency of these issues. With the next enlargement round approaching, burden sharing will re-emerge on the agenda. This is why the Komorowski plan is so important, and why failure this time will be infinitely more costly politically. But it would be wrong to paint too bleak a picture. The planners have learnt from previous mistakes, having now gained a far better idea of the problems and NATO's requirements. The plans are based on greater realism.

On the side of NATO, no grand plan for how enlargement costs should be financed has been drawn up. It proved politically too difficult. So far, upgrading has been financed from common NATO funding. This has been increased through slightly higher membership fees. What still remains unclear is bilateral aid. This is not only a question of the actual sums involved, but also donors' conditions. A question that is difficult to answer, but should be posed nonetheless, is to what extent the dividing line between assistance and sales ventures is being blurred. The most important outside donors ever since the first PfP projects were launched, have been the US followed at some distance by Britain and Germany. These countries are also the most important exporters of armaments to Poland. But here it is possible to detect an improvement. Industrial co-operation with the West, although still limited, is no longer entered into just to maintain production. Polish participation in innovation and development of new products will be given weight when Western offers are considered. Polish authorities are now in a position to negotiate and press for improved terms of co-operation, a decade ago this was hardly the case.

As indicated above, upgrading now seems to stand a better chance of success. If so, Poland will be less of a burden. The question then arises what Poland's contribution to the Alliance will be in addition to military capacities interoperable with other NATO countries.

Poland has a comparative advantage compared to the other NATO countries. The co-operative relationships with Ukraine and Lithuania provide Poland with an insight into regional developments surpassing other NATO countries. Co-operation is proceeding at different paces, with noticeably more progress in the case of Lithuania. In the case of Ukraine, results have failed to meet expectations. But it should be added that Poland based on its own transition from communist planning to market democracy, has a sufficiently realistic perception of the problems to avoid being disappointed and withdraw. The relationship with Ukraine is an asset. Developments in Ukraine have strong repercussions on the surrounding countries. Thanks to the detailed knowledge of Ukrainian affairs, Poland should be in a prime position to influence NATO policies.

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## Polish membership and alliance cohesion

Enlargement would have an impact on alliance cohesion. The question was how? The fact that the new members were all Central European countries tied to Germany with economic and political links, made some conclude that NATO would now see the emergence of a cluster of countries dominated by Germany.<sup>203</sup> Central Europe would be Mittel-Europa with Berlin as the pivot. Such a development would affect cohesion badly, first of all by weakening ties between France and Germany, but possibly also by undermining the German-American relationship that had grown so close during German unification.

Some believed that enlargement to Central Europe was a mistake insofar as the greatest security challenges to Europe were found on the southern shores of the Mediterranean. Expanding eastwards meant that attention would be drawn away from these problems and commit scarce Alliance resources that could better be used elsewhere. As previously mentioned, the French president expressed these views in no uncertain terms at the 1997 Madrid Summit.

In Poland, questions of Alliance cohesion rarely figured on the agenda in the years preceding enlargement. Western musings over what would happen to the Alliance now that the "common glue", i.e. fear of the Soviet Union was gone, never made an impact on the Polish debate. Seen from Poland, enlargement would be the next task that should unite the Alliance once more.<sup>204</sup> Misgivings over enlargement were often reduced to French stubbornness and anti-Americanism. It was an easy task to find French statements supporting such a view.

But this was simplifying an important issue. Poland's choice of Alliance partners would have an impact on the Alliance. Reciprocally, the extent to which Poland managed to gain other members' support would define whether Poland would be able to influence alliance policies. Recapping part of the conclusions drawn in the preceding chapters, Poland will depend on sizeable financial transfers from NATO and on bilateral assistance in the near future. Close co-operation with other members will reduce possible opposition to this. Moreover, attempts to extract a stronger western engage-

ment in Ukraine and assurances that the next round of enlargement will include at least Lithuania of the three Baltic republics, will remain futile unless other members support Poland's position. These questions will be discussed here.

However, the first part of the chapter will be devoted to the bilateral relationship with Germany. During chancellor Kohl's years, it grew very close. The question is to what extent this rapprochement has been continued under the current German leadership. Especially the French political leadership feared a Central European block led by Germany.

Finally, the Polish view on the EU's commitment to create a military pillar, the European Security and Defence Identity (ESDI) will be discussed. Polish politicians and security experts fear that this will weaken the US engagement in Europe. At the same time, a clearer delineation of EU's security role has strong repercussions on Poland.

The Polish position relative to this development has, as will be shown here, been rather ambiguous. This is a position that Poland shares with some of the other European NATO members. This chapter will therefore end with a discussion of whether this opens up for a new, Atlanticist block with Poland as member.

## Germany

At the beginning of the 1990s, Polish politicians regarded the close relationship between Moscow and Bonn with apprehension. Chancellor Kohl became aware of this and initiated a pattern of co-operation between Germany and Poland to reduce the reasons for concern. Eventually the German government played a very active role advocating Polish membership in NATO.<sup>205</sup> Kohl also became an advocate of Polish EU membership. During a short span, political contacts deepened and relations improved considerably.<sup>206</sup>

This rapprochement did not outlast the change of governments in Germany in 1998. Among Polish politicians and security experts the prevailing perception is that Schröder's government is far more preoccupied with EU reforms and the relationship with France, than with Central and Eastern Europe. In the months leading up to his election in September 1998, Schröder travelled to Poland and reassured that the foreign policy conducted under

Helmuth Kohl would not be altered.<sup>207</sup> The Polish side assumed that this would amount to active German support for Poland's EU application. Nevertheless, in his first speech to the Bundestag as chancellor, enlargement of the EU was referred to very briefly and then only as a part of his so-called double strategy consisting of both "Vertiefung und Erweiterung" – integration and enlargement. Although most Polish observers may regret the ending of Kohl's diplomacy, others regarded Schröder's plans for the EU as more realistic arguing that only by reforming the EU internally would the Union be prepared to accept new members.<sup>208</sup> Nevertheless, this amounted to a strong change from Kohl's policy of active engagement. This was well phrased in a headline from a Warsaw newspaper running "Germany is turning away from Poland".<sup>209</sup>

Germany's disinterest was a serious problem because it meant in practical terms that Poland and the other applicants in the region were deprived of their most efficient source for information about inside processes in the EU. Polish politicians could use their contacts with German politicians and bureaucrats both in Berlin and Brussels to gain support for their position. The Nordic members Denmark, Sweden and Finland could have been a potential alternative source of information and contacts provided they had co-ordinated their policies on enlargement.

Compared to his predecessors Genscher and Kinkel, the current German foreign minister Joschka Fischer has been distinctly less supportive of EU enlargement. His foreign policy has retained the traditional emphasis on good relations with France but without attempting to continue the policy of close contacts with Poland.

In a widely debated speech given in 2000, Fischer emphasised that the future of EU co-operation will entail a transfer of national sovereignty to Brussels.<sup>210</sup> Polish reactions were predictably negative. Fischer's visions were assessed in the light of U.S.-European relations. In an article in the magazine *Polityka*, the commentator Adam Szostkiewicz summed up prevailing views by pointing out that the EU's idea of Europe often boils down to the relationship between EU and Russia.<sup>211</sup> The lands-in-between are overlooked. Referring to a joint press conference with president Clinton and chancellor Schröder in Portugal in June 2000, Szostkiewicz noted that whereas Schröder talked about European independence, Clinton had been

concerned about democracy and human rights.<sup>212</sup> This meant, according to Clinton, that all countries sharing these values should be given a chance of participating in the European integration process. This was interpreted as continued U.S. support for Poland's position, as well as the other Central- and East European applicants.

Another issue where the two countries disagree concerns future NATO enlargement. Poland is, as mentioned previously, a strong advocate for the next round to include Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. The German line has been positive, though never as supportive as when Poland applied. Polish politicians have tried to elicit a stronger commitment from Germany without success.

An exception to the lukewarm German support occurred in Late June 2000. During a visit to Estonia, Walter Kolbow, a senior German defence official, stated that Russian opposition to NATO membership for any of the Baltic countries must be overcome before any decision could be taken.<sup>213</sup> This seemed to confirm what Polish politicians and their Baltic colleagues had long claimed, that Russia enjoyed a *de facto* veto over further enlargement. The German MoD rapidly censured Kolbow, but this did little to dampen Baltic and Polish apprehensions over what they interpreted as lack of German support.

### **A Central European Block?**

French fears over German pre-eminence after enlargement did not only focus on the bilateral relationship between Berlin and Warsaw but also on the possibility of a German-dominated Central-European block. But for Germany to assume a leadership role, two factors would have to be fulfilled. One was German ambitions to play this role, such ambitions were difficult to detect especially when security issues were discussed. The other was the existence of a common perception of regional security problems that in turn would make joint efforts with Germany natural. During the first years of the 1990s, some co-operation attempts between the new entrants seemed to indicate that a Central European block was emerging.

One of these attempts was the efforts made by Czech government members and MoD officials to co-operate closely with their Warsaw colleagues. The motives had less to do with interests in any regional unity than

with Czech fears that the close relationship between Poland and Germany would limit enlargement to Poland alone.<sup>214</sup> After enlargement, co-operation rapidly dwindled. Upon signing the NATO accession documents, the Czech Ambassador to NATO Karel Kovanda underlined that to the Czech, Hungary and Poland were only two allies among 18, and that joint admission did not mean joint positions.<sup>215</sup>

This turned out to be true. Since joining in 1999, the three countries have not attempted to voice their interests of views *en bloc*. The lack of co-operation may represent lost opportunities. Poland and the Czech Republic face largely similar problems in their efforts to meet NATO's requirements, both have large armaments industries producing relatively similar equipment. Instead of competition, a pooling of resources could have led to cost-effective solutions. Some initiatives opening up for industrial co-operation were launched, but led nowhere.

This pattern may now have been broken. In May 2001, a declaration of intent aiming at the establishment of a multinational battalion was signed between Poland, the Czech Republic and Slovakia.<sup>216</sup> The main intention is to diffuse Western practice to Slovakia as part of the Slovak leadership's strategy to adapt to NATO requirements. Like in the case of Lithuania and Ukraine, Poland will function as the intermediary.

The practice of adding smaller groupings from the Central European countries to larger Western units has been an important learning experience for all parties, but has hardly provided the Central Europeans with any political clout. A Polish-Czech-Slovak battalion will stand a better chance.

### **The demise of the Weimar Triangle**

The lack of German engagement has meant that one of the pillars of Polish foreign policy has been weakened. Poland's problem is that compensating this through close co-operation with other NATO countries will hardly yield the same benefits. Relations with Denmark are good, but that country is hardly a motor in European integration. Co-operation with Britain is making progress in the military area, but the British government has a far too ambivalent attitude towards European integration to be able to play the role as Poland's advocate.

One country that could have done that was France. Traditionally, relations between the two countries were close. Paris was the base of many Polish anti-communist exiles. After the collapse of the communist regime, it seemed as if contacts would be resumed and grow close. Common ground had been found in both governments' apprehensions over German unification.

Kohl's successful policy of rapprochement with Poland eased Warsaw's fears, but actually only enhanced French concerns. The French government feared that German contacts with Poland would increase Berlin's political weight at the expense of Franco-German co-operation.<sup>217</sup> France could not match Germany's importance as trading partner or political focal point. But if working in tandem, France might be less likely to interpret Germany's position as a threat to the close relationship between Paris and Bonn. In fact, both Germany and Poland welcomed a French contribution and presence in the region. Neither wanted to reduce Poland's integration with the West to a bilateral German-Polish venture.

As a result, the so-called Weimar Triangle was established in 1991. Expectations were high at the time of launching. But little has been done to translate them into deeds. Co-operation involving joint military exercises, language training, exchange of officers and security experts, have developed rapidly between Germany and Poland. France has been involved only to a limited degree, and then at best on an ad hoc basis. The reason seems to be that France has objected to being drawn into a bilateral relationship that at the time was progressing well. French insistence on the usage of French on an equal footing with German has not been conducive to co-operation either. But these factors dwindle in comparison to the French positions on EU enlargement and a continued US engagement in European security, both perceived as negative by Warsaw and contrary to Polish interests.

The Weimar Triangle has thus not developed beyond the level of a discussion club. This was clearly reflected in a joint article written by a Polish, a French and a German researcher on the future of the Triangle published in August 2000.<sup>218</sup> The article was remarkable in that it was the first time in many years that anybody attempted to treat the Triangle seriously by sketching up possible future tasks such as the exchange of specialists, reinvigorating dormant co-operation projects, small seminars etc. None of this is very original, and it should be added that all and more are regularly undertaken by

German institutes and research foundations. Thus, a renewed Weimar Triangle, if that came to pass, would mean including France in the ongoing range of activities.

Klaus Bachmann, one of the authors behind the article, concluded that the Weimar Triangle now has only one function: calming down the fears of the participants.<sup>219</sup> A necessary task perhaps, but hardly one likely to yield political dividends.

## Poland and Baltic enlargement

Polish politicians have used every occasion to support continued NATO enlargement. The prime objective is to get Lithuania accepted into the Alliance. Although most other NATO countries have emphasised that NATO will remain open, only Denmark has been an active supporter of the Polish position. To Poland, the main problem is that Germany so far has avoided making any strong commitment to Baltic membership.

Germany is not alone. Opinions differ between the other countries bordering the Baltic Sea. Denmark and Poland have been the most vociferous advocates of NATO expansion. In Sweden and Finland, the political leadership seems to be at odds with security experts and the military establishment on the pros and cons of NATO expansion. The Finnish chief of defence, Admiral Juhani Kaskeala has been a far stronger supporter of Baltic NATO membership than president Halonen.<sup>220</sup> In Sweden, the situation is the opposite, with prime minister Göran Persson regarding enlargement as a positive contribution to regional stability whereas the senior officers have professed the exact opposite position.<sup>221</sup> Russia has remained opposed to NATO enlargement.<sup>222</sup> But even this position seems to have been moderated recently. During a state visit to Finland in autumn 2001, president Putin stated that it was every sovereign country's right to apply for NATO membership, an eerie echo of his predecessor's statement in Warsaw in 1997. But Putin refrained from adding that enlargement would have a negative impact on regional stability.<sup>223</sup>

Russian politics towards the Baltic countries have rarely gone beyond that posture. No efforts have been made to start political talks on mutual



problems. Signs have emerged that this is changing somewhat with Russia being interested in closer contacts with the Baltic countries. To Russia, the prospect of Baltic EU membership raises a host of problems that can best be solved if Russia and the Baltic countries join forces.

For most of the 1990s, the USA played a reticent role. The Clinton administration preferred other Western countries to assume the lead. This strategy largely failed. The perceptions of Germany and Denmark have little in common with those of Sweden. Finland has been more concerned about creating close relations with Estonia, and has so far attempted to get the EU more closely involved in the Baltic area through the so-called Northern Dimension of the EU launched in 1997.<sup>224</sup> Germany has been particularly reluctant towards American participation in the Baltic Sea Council. In 1998, the U.S. representative at the Baltic Sea Council meeting was barred from participating during one of the sessions at Germany's request.<sup>225</sup>

The Clinton administration's policy on NATO expansion including any of the three Baltic countries was if not negative, then lacking in enthusiasm. Like in the case of Central Europe, the US preferred the EU to expand first. But the EU remained a slow mover with no explicit policy formulated for the region until the so-called Northern Dimension was launched in 1997. But what this Finnish idea meant for the Baltic region remained unclear, and at least according to one Polish foreign policy expert still remains so.<sup>226</sup> From a Lithuanian point of view, the Northern Dimension was regarded from the very beginning as concealment for Helsinki's ambitions to attract EU funding to projects tying bordering Karelia and Estonia to Finland.<sup>227</sup> The Northern Dimension carefully omitted any reference to the region's security problems, i.e. the Baltic republics' sense of insecurity. Their response was to lobby the West, especially the USA for a clearer commitment in the region.

This was achieved with the U.S.-Baltic Charter of Partnership signed between the U.S. and the three Baltic States in January 1998. It provided the countries with a formal pledge that the U.S. was concerned about their security: "America's security is tied to Europe, and Europe will never be secure if Baltic security is in doubt".

The Charter represented a careful balancing act on behalf of the Clinton Administration. U.S. Assistance to the Baltic countries in their transition towards democracy and market economy was promised, but NATO membership

was not included as part of this process. This meant that Russia would find little reason to object to the Charter. Activities that Russia disapproves of, e.g. military assistance as joint training and exercises, donation of military equipment etc. are conducted either bilaterally or under the auspices of PfP.<sup>228</sup>

Compared to the Clinton Administration's cautious policy on Baltic enlargement, president Bush has been far more assertive, a fact that has been welcomed by the Polish government and security experts.<sup>229</sup> In a speech made at Warsaw University in June 2001, he stated that the Alliance remained open "without red lines or outside vetoes".<sup>230</sup> Bush refrained from naming the countries heading the queue. Secretary of State Colin Powell was more outspoken during a congressional hearing held a week after Bush's speech. Powell stated that Washington would not accept a zero option, i.e. no enlargement, at the NATO summit in Prague in 2002. When urged by Senator Jessie Helms on the possibilities of the Baltic membership, Powell answered that Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania had "a pretty good chance" provided they continued their efforts to meet the Alliance's military and political requirements.<sup>231</sup>

Poland's role in the region has been limited to rhetorical support for NATO enlargement. Lithuania is the main exception. As discussed earlier, institutional relations are remarkably close, this is less the case with the two other Baltic republics.

But Poland can do little more than offer advice and share information with other countries that are interested in NATO. The fact that Poland is still dependent on large foreign investments to modernise the economy, means that Poland is unlikely to be able to offer anything in the form of material support. This kind of assistance has been forthcoming from other countries, notably the USA but also other NATO members have donated equipment. But Polish experiences in negotiating with NATO and the efforts undertaken to adapt to NATO's requirements are by no means inferior assets and will ensure that Poland may play a key role.

## Poland and the ESDI

Poland's desire to join the EU is primarily motivated by improved market access. But like in the case of NATO, full participation in an important deci-

sion-making forum was a prime objective. EU's economic and political significance for non-members has been obvious since the beginning of the 1990s when the first aid and assistance agreements between Warsaw and Brussels were signed.

Polish perceptions of the EU have mainly focused on its functions as an economic club, a trading block with an increasingly dominant position. Security issues and military co-operation have hardly been offered any attention.<sup>232</sup> This is not so much the result of wilful neglect, as a reflection of EU's lack of a clear profile on this issue for much of the 1990s. Only with the St. Malo meeting in December 1998 where the French and the British foreign ministers agreed to intensify efforts to develop a European Security and Defence Identity (ESDI), did the EU seem to transgress the level of formal pledges.

Pledges towards developing a European force were repeated at the EU summit in Cologne in June 1999. The Polish position was cautious. At a meeting in WEU, where Poland had the status of associate partner, the Polish representative Przemyslaw Grudzinski professed that Poland supported a stronger security and defence identity for the EU.<sup>233</sup> But when plans and suggestions for an autonomous military force, i.e. independent of NATO were made known in the course of 2000, caution changed to apprehension in Poland.<sup>234</sup> In October, the Polish NATO Ambassador Andrzej Towpik argued that there was no cause for worry since the planned European military capacity would only undertake peace missions, humanitarian relief, and rescue operations.<sup>235</sup>

Not until the Helsinki summit in December 2000 were any detailed, concrete statements made. At Helsinki, a "headline goal" of an independent reaction force consisting of 50,000 to 60,000 troops by 2003 was declared. The force should be deployable within 60 days and have the necessary resources to be sustained for a year. In the following, year, an embryonic military staff, a political and security committee and a military committee started operating. Four areas where the EU should attempt to co-operate with NATO had been identified: security issues, capability goals, EU access to NATO resources, and the creation of consultation mechanisms between NATO and EU.<sup>236</sup>

This made it clear that EU's plans went far beyond the limited tasks mentioned by Towpik. Polish concerns did not abate. If the EU were to

become a strong autonomous security actor on the European continent, NATO could be undermined. This could eventually result in American disinterest and withdrawal from the continent, a Polish nightmare scenario.<sup>237</sup> Madeleine Albright had warned in late 1998 against the EU initiating measures that would result in duplication of NATO resources and tasks and the discrimination of non-Union members.<sup>238</sup> These could eventually result in a "decoupling" of the U.S. and Europe. Poland adhered to this perception, and hoped that it would start a process within the EU that would be inclusive for non-members as well.<sup>239</sup> In this connection, a sobering comment by minister of defence Janusz Onyszkiewicz should be recalled. Shortly before a NATO defence ministers' meeting in December 1999, he expressed dismay at the lacking precision in the EU's plans for crisis management forces.<sup>240</sup> But he added that he was too much of a realist to believe that the EU countries would come up with the necessary financial means to create a force that would be totally independent of NATO.

The key to Polish attitudes to ESDI is not merely reducible to pro-American sentiments in the population and among the decision-makers alike. Much should be attributed to Poland's experiences from the past decade of negotiations with the Union. To Western observers, and perhaps especially so for politicians and decision-makers inside the EU system, an enhanced security role including military means is the logical outcome of integration in other areas. This viewpoint is not necessarily the case for Polish observers. Not only have they so far been excluded from the economic integration process, but negotiations have been markedly lopsided. They have been characterised by EU demanding that the rules and regulations valid in the EU are to be transferred to Poland unabridged and with minimal if any transitional exemptions for Poland. Economic grants are withheld if adaptation is deemed insufficient. Membership negotiations have been in a deadlock with Polish failures to comply with several EU requirements, agricultural reforms often cited as the prime example. But the lack of progress on the EU side, especially the failure to agree on necessary internal reforms before enlargement can be completed, should not be overlooked either. The negotiation climate has therefore not been without effects on the Polish attitude towards ESDI.

## Polish participation

The Polish position is that ESDI should be complementary to NATO and not independent of it. The problem for the EU is a lack of equipment necessary to undertake operations. If EU is to use NATO facilities, the Alliance members will have to grant their approval. Poland and Turkey long refused to enter into any agreement with the EU that would lead to a division of resources. Both were dissatisfied with EU's inability to suggest any framework for co-operation with non-EU members on security issues.

The Polish and Turkish attitude has vexed France in particular. At an informal NATO meeting in Birmingham in October 2000, the French minister of defence Alain Richard attempted to calm apprehensions by confirming "...for our non-EU allies our readiness to discuss any subject, without a priori, situated in the framework of the principles and decisions of the European Council."<sup>241</sup> Yet, this assertion was rendered meaningless by two facts, one the lack of any willingness to discuss the aspects in the bilateral negotiations with Poland so far, and by Mr. Richard emphasising that: "...the development of consultation and cooperation between the EU and NATO must take place while respecting the EU's total autonomy (and, of course, that of the Alliance) in decision-taking".<sup>242</sup> This amounted to little more than a reiteration of the traditional French viewpoint. Other EU countries do not have the same reservations as France in engaging in close co-operation with the Alliance and will therefore be closer to Poland's views.

Poland wants to participate in ESDI on an equal footing with the most prominent EU members. Poland applied for NATO membership in order to gain influence over the development of European security. Hence, staying outside what might become an important security policy forum does not make sense. Thus, when the European countries both inside and outside the EU nominated units for the future Euroarmy, Poland offered units constituting one brigade.<sup>243</sup> But a basic condition for Poland was that the country should be given real influence in preparation and execution of operations.<sup>244</sup> This position was shared by other countries, most notably Norway and Turkey.

What has proved particularly aggravating for Poland is the EU's unwillingness to develop consultative mechanisms where non-members could be

included. Polish politicians had hoped that the EU would perpetuate the arrangements developed by the WEU where Poland had enjoyed rights only formally inferior to those of full members. In an interview with a Polish newspaper, foreign minister Bronislaw Geremek underlined that the same rights Poland had enjoyed in the WEU, should be continued in ESDI.<sup>245</sup>

When Norwegian politicians raised the issue prior to the Helsinki summit, it was made clear that the separation between those inside the EU and the rest would be far stricter than had been the case with the WEU. This means that Poland will be deprived of the institutionalised contacts provided previously, and thus be excluded from the EU's deliberations over ESDI at the formative stage. But Polish concerns also focus on the consequences of ESDI for the Baltic republics. They had status as associated partners with the WEU and thus access to information and a forum dominated by West European countries where they could present their views. EU's failure to agree on consultative mechanisms means that they will be deprived of this possibility.<sup>246</sup>

The EU prefers to avoid the different affiliation categories that characterised the WEU opting for a clearer distinction between those on the inside and outside. But the differing perceptions of security, setting Poland apart from countries like France and Germany apparently has played a role as well. The French foreign minister Hubert Vedrine repeatedly stressed the need for what he called "euro-centric" countries to join ranks and counter US proposals aiming at the subjugation of ESDI to NATO.<sup>247</sup> In Poland, this was interpreted as a deliberate move to keep countries with a strong Atlanticist orientation, like Poland, outside the ESDI until the EU could present anybody interested in participation with a *fait accompli*.<sup>248</sup>

Official statements indicate that Polish interest in the ESDI partly depends on the EU's eastern policy, not so much towards Poland and the other membership candidates, as Ukraine<sup>249</sup>. Henryk Szlajfer, head of strategic planning in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, bluntly stated that unless the EU managed to create a closer relationship with Ukraine, then ESDI remains little more than idle talk.<sup>250</sup>

## An atlanticist block?

Based on the discussion so far in this chapter, one might easily get the impression that Poland's impact on NATO cohesion is difficult to detect. Attempts aimed at creating a close co-operation with other European alliance members have failed. The efforts to create a troika with France and Germany led nowhere. Expectations that Poland and the two other new entrants would form a bloc headed by Germany had no basis in reality. If the planned establishment of a Polish-Czech-Slovak battalion is successfully implemented, the three countries may choose to co-ordinate their positions on some points. But it should be noted, that Poland was the only one of the three to criticise the Helsinki Summit's failure to create consultation mechanisms with non-EU members.

Polish efforts to continue the close relationship created during Kohl's chancellorship, have not been reciprocated. Chancellor Schröder's lacking commitment is most certainly the failure that has been most disappointing. But a rapport with Berlin would have kept Poland abreast with developments in the EU, especially how the ESDI is evolving. Likewise, Poland could have offered Germany ideas and insight into regional developments. What the Polish side perceives as a lack of commitment from the German government has precluded this kind of close political dialogue.

The question then remains which countries Poland is likely to co-operate closely with in the future. The key to that answer is the USA. Polish politicians have remained distinctly pro-American in their views on European security. A continued US presence in Europe is regarded as indispensable. American politicians have tried to come forward with solutions to security problems that Poland regards as being of prime importance. The U.S.-Baltic Charter of Partnership counts among these, as does the US pledge to keep NATO open to future Baltic membership. Moreover, the US commitment to Ukrainian independence corresponds with Polish objectives.

But the emphasis on a continued US presence in Europe cannot be understood unless Polish perceptions of Russia are included. It was stated introductorily, that Polish observers always regarded the possibility of an authoritarian backlash in Russia as more feasible than did many of their Western colleagues. In recent years, developments in Belarus have been

taken as proof of Russian hegemonic ambitions in the region. Likewise, Russian animosity towards PpP and NATO enlargement has underlined the gap separating Russian and Polish perceptions of regional security. Thus, from a Polish perspective, proximity to Russia can only be balanced by a strong US presence and a vital trans-Atlantic relationship in NATO. Other countries share this perception. Norway, Turkey and Iceland shared Poland's apprehensions over the impact of ESDI on NATO's role. They fear that NATO will be weakened, and that paragraph 5 will be reduced to little more than a declaration of intent.

These countries have consulted informally with each other when NATO has debated ESDI.<sup>251</sup> Since this is an issue that will certainly feature on the agenda for the foreseeable future, co-operation between them is likely to continue. It should be added that if Poland is included in the next EU enlargement round, Warsaw will be able to function as an intermediary for the countries on the outside of the Union. Poland will have amassed considerable experience in how that role should be played to maximum advantage by then.

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## Concluding remarks:

### Poland in NATO - asset or burden?

The question in the title cannot be answered with a simple yes or no. Poland's impact on NATO is a complex issue. Based on the three aspects of Polish membership discussed in the preceding chapters: Polish eastern policy, upgrading of military equipment and human resources, and the impact of Polish membership on alliance cohesion, a few remarks will be presented here.

Doing that, it is necessary to underline that it is still early days. General Wesley Clark may unwittingly have offered consolation to the Poles when during a visit to Warsaw in 2000 he claimed that reaching NATO levels would at least require a decade, a remark that gave him the front page.<sup>252</sup> This should not be taken as more than a deterrent against inflated expectations of how rapidly changes can be implemented and the benefits reaped.

When attempting to balance benefits and costs of Polish membership, a word of caution is necessary. Not all of these can be quantified and measured against each other. Some costs lend themselves easily to calculations, e.g. the readjustment of Polish fuel depots to meet NATO requirements; whereas the potential costs resulting from a more aggressive Russia do not. As will be recalled, much of Western enlargement debate focused on this aspect. Furthermore, whereas benefits will often be identifiable only after some time, calculable costs are often more immediate. One of the benefits of Polish membership to NATO rests in Poland's policy of actively engaging its eastern neighbours in co-operation. As will be argued here, this represents an untapped, i.e. future potential for the Alliance.

Some comments are merited on whether the problems observed are transitional phenomena that will disappear as a result of closer co-operation between Poland and NATO, or whether they constitute more deeply entrenched, institutional obstacles requiring explicit political commitments to be effaced.

Planning procedures are among the problems of a transitional nature that will diminish gradually as adaptation to Western practice gains ground. One

reason is NATO's criticism which will persist until practice improves. But NATO is not alone in this. Polish media have repeatedly and often gleefully pointed to the squandering of public money resulting from poor military planning and investment decisions. This has political consequences. The hard-fought parliamentary control over the armed forces has resulted in transparency in the sense that planning and decision-making is subjected to political scrutiny. This has imbued the military leadership as well as the senior echelons in the MoD with a greater sense of realism. This becomes clear when comparing the Komorowski plan to its predecessors. When interviewed about new projects, military leaders now often add "pending on the budget" when future procurements have been outlined.<sup>253</sup> Until the late 1990s, such trivial constraints were rarely mentioned when new strategies were presented by senior officers.

A more difficult obstacle concerns the lack of rapport between the military and politicians when reforms are being planned and implemented. This is a legacy from the past when military experts were usually conservative and used to having the final word. But even today, officers advocating reforms will find that their ideas and plans are easily discarded.<sup>254</sup> Officially, the communications problems are admitted, but often discarded as past problems solved after the infamous Drawsko dinner in 1994.<sup>255</sup> Such an event is unlikely to be repeated, but the efficiency of parliamentary control may still be doubted. Andrzej Karkoszka, co-chair of the Polish NATO negotiation team from 1995 to 1997 has recently remarked that "[t]here is still much to be done in this field."<sup>256</sup> Parliamentary control may be expected to increase in the near future. Economic growth is not progressing as fast as expected, reforms have been postponed and state expenses are to be reduced by 6.5 per cent for 2001.<sup>257</sup> Cuts in the defence budget seem unavoidable. But increased parliamentary watchfulness is not necessarily conducive to greater efficiency. With unemployment looming, MPs may continue their fight against closure of military facilities, a fight that has been remarkably successful so far.

But there is another gap, perhaps not as easily identifiable as the one above, this concerns the relationship between the military and civilian experts. Most Western readers are likely to feel that this is well-known territory, indeed similar conflict can be found in all bodies where these two are

present. But in Poland, this is not only a question of differing perceptions within the MoD or between the General Staff and other state bodies.<sup>258</sup> The gap also affects communication between the Polish NATO delegation and the decision-makers back home. When plans and ideas are launched in NATO for discussion in the member countries, a response from Warsaw is at times issued too late, or in too general terms preventing the Polish delegation from participating effectively in deliberations. Hungary and the Czech Republic are referred to as examples of how important swift responses and efficient decision-making is for a country's standing.<sup>259</sup> To mitigate this problem, a political initiative from the government must be forthcoming. The coalition government that lost parliamentary elections in autumn 2001 was unable to muster the necessary strength to implement necessary reforms. Whether the new government will change this record, remains to be seen.

The armaments industry is another area where gradual change is evident. Direct state involvement is diminishing and more responsibility is being allocated to the enterprise level. The need to gain prior approval and backing from government offices in Warsaw in every instance will be lessened and decision-making speeded up. Entering into co-operation with Western companies will be greatly facilitated. The original intentions, that Polish enterprises should be major contributors in the upgrading process, will be more feasible.

### **Polish eastern policy: buffer or intermediary?**

Polish eastern relations have increased in scope and depth during the 1990s. The initial problems have largely been overcome. Co-operation in political, military and economic areas are expanding. When compared with the obstacles posed by national stereotypes and unsolved historical disputes at the beginning of the 1990s, the improvements are remarkable.

The main and worrisome exception is Belarus. In this case, Poland is impotent. Alone, little can be achieved. Trade and political contacts are too feeble to be used to lobby the regime in Minsk. Poland has to rely on OSCE to exert pressure. But the OSCE has so far achieved little more than cosmetic legal changes. Furthermore, the OSCE is alone. Belarus has lost its guest member status in the Council of Europe. The EU has no office in that

country and NATO has frozen its relations with Belarus. Trying to exert influence via Moscow, i.e. to make Russia support anti-Lukashenka political forces in Belarus seems hypothetical. Moscow's response to the openly rigged parliamentary elections in Belarus in October 2000 was congratulatory. Polish perceptions of Russia will be strongly influenced by Russian regional policies in Central- and Eastern Europe. And since this is an aspect of Russian foreign policy that so far has been offered scant attention in the West, Polish perceptions may easily be at odds with those of its Western allies.

Russia is not perceived as representing a direct military threat to Poland. But the possibility that Russia may resort to military means to exert favours and concessions from some of the countries in-between, e.g. Latvia and Ukraine, is occasionally mentioned as a possibility should Russia resume a more aggressive foreign policy. If that were to happen, Poland's security would be impaired.

Whereas Belarus is a constant source of instability because of its current political leadership and Russia's support for the incumbent regime, the threats to Polish security emanating from the other neighbouring countries are based primarily on reform failures. This does not apply to all the countries in equal strength, but above all to Ukraine and the Kaliningrad enclave. In both cases, Polish resources are far too limited to mount any rescue operation that could secure economic growth and political stability.

The relationship with Ukraine plays a pivotal role. It has developed positively, but is not an unequivocal success. Political relations have not been complemented with strong economic links. Polish contacts have for long been mainly focused on the Ukrainian president and government, only recently has attention been widened to include the opposition. Polish politicians have sought to attract Western interest and engagement in Ukraine well aware that an economically weak and politically fragmented Ukraine would hardly be the desired buffer between Russia and Central Europe. Although the full scope and political implications of the rapprochement between Moscow and Kyiv observed during the first half of 2001 cannot yet be discerned, Polish reactions have been apprehensive. A stronger Russian presence, not to mention influence, over key sectors in the Ukrainian economy is equated with increased vulnerability for Poland.

From a Polish perspective, membership in NATO provides the country with guaranteed military assistance in case of attack. But NATO also constitutes a forum for the discussion of regional security problems and a platform for negotiations with Russia. These possibilities were aptly illustrated when Poland co-chaired the NATO-Russia Permanent Joint Council from March to June 2000. Due to Russia's opposition to NATO's war against Yugoslavia, no substantial discussions took place under the auspices of the Council. Recent Russian initiatives concerning the Kaliningrad region and statements from the Kremlin may indicate that relations with Moscow and Warsaw are improving. Nevertheless, perceptions of how regional security issues should be solved are unlikely to change. Polish advocacy of NATO enlargement to the three Baltic republics will not be met with greater understanding in the Kremlin. But president Putin's statement in Helsinki and later in Brussels in autumn 2001 indicates that Russia is unlikely to make Baltic membership into an obstacle hindering co-operation with the West.<sup>260</sup>

Poland managed to launch and consolidate an Eastern policy at a time when NATO distinctly lacked one. NATO's attention was overwhelmingly focused on Russia. Some efforts have been undertaken to rectify this state of affairs and include the countries in between in a more direct relationship with Brussels. The signing of a charter with Ukraine was an important step, but few concrete measures have followed. Poland and the USA are practically the only NATO countries that have exerted sufficient potency and resources to engage in long-term co-operation with Ukraine.

Polish eastern policy has had a positive impact on NATO in that it has contributed to regional stability. Polish relations with Lithuania have given that country a close link with NATO, and the policy towards Ukraine offers the leadership in Kyiv the possibility of counterbalancing Russian influence. But much of Poland's future ability to remain an active player depends on how NATO's policy towards the region develops.

NATO's policy may assume two different directions: one is enlargement to include one or all of the three Baltic applicants, the other option is postponement with a continued emphasis on PfP as an interim solution. But even if NATO decides in favour of enlargement, PfP will continue to be a major tool not only for drawing the prospective members closer to the Alliance, but also as the institutional tool for developing closer links with Ukraine as well

as Russia. Exactly how this will develop is of relevance to Poland. The resources available for co-operation with the eastern neighbours are limited. But if conducted under the auspices of the PfP, other countries will share the expense either directly or through NATO funding. Poland is a prime example of how PfP was used as a preparatory programme leading to full membership. Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia would like to copy that passage.

In the wake of the last enlargement round, the future of PfP was doubted. Fears were expressed that interest in PfP would wane among those European countries that had applied for membership without being included in the 1999 enlargement round. A relapse into old nationalist patterns was thought possible since the only political parties that would profit from NATO's no would be the extreme right and left having opposed membership from the beginning. That did not happen. One reason may have been the stage of reforms the applicant countries had reached by 1999. Democracy and market economic conditions have become sufficiently entrenched to weaken the support for extremist parties. But a strong factor has been NATO's pledge that the Alliance will not be closed to new members in the future and a strong commitment to continued PfP activities.<sup>261</sup>

At the Washington Summit in 1999, two new initiatives were launched to retain the relevance of the PfP. One was the so-called Enhanced and More Operational Partnership, the other the Membership Action Plan (MAP) for those countries aspiring to join the alliance.<sup>262</sup> EMOP consists of four elements. The first concerns the development of a Political-Military Framework for NATO-led PfP operations. The intention is to give the partner countries a greater say in NATO-led crisis management operations in the future.

Secondly, the Planning and Review Process (PARP) by which projects initiated by partnership countries are evaluated, is to be continued with increased emphasis on interoperability between NATO and those partner forces earmarked for NATO-led operations. To achieve this, a PARP Ministerial Guidance was adopted at the Summit to increase co-ordination in the development of the partners' crisis-management forces.

Improved military co-operation is also the target of the third initiative, the so-called Operational Capabilities Concept. The chief aim is to increase joint operational capabilities enabling the Alliance to assemble PfP forces with the skills required to handle crisis-management operations similar to those un-



dertaken in Bosnia and Kosovo. To achieve this, a pool of multinational formations trained in peacetime ready to be deployed at short notice will be developed. In order to upgrade the human resources involved in partnership activities, EMOP includes an educational and training element consisting of a PfP Consortium of defence academies and security studies institutes, a Pfp Exercise Simulation Network, and Pfp Training Centres.

At a meeting with representatives from the Pfp countries in October 2000, NATO presented a new plan for how the process is to proceed.<sup>263</sup> NATO will identify areas where co-operation stands the greatest chance of success. Not only will this allow NATO to concentrate resources, but the Pfp countries will be forced to define their priorities among the different fields of activities where NATO perceives Pfp contributions as possible and ultimately force enhancing. This may provide Poland with a window of opportunity. As mentioned previously, co-operation with Lithuania and Ukraine has endowed Polish military advisers with considerable expertise, a resource that may be exploited more easily if institutionalised in the new Pfp.

### Upgrading: too little, too late?

Upgrading of the armed forces to make them more interoperable with NATO has so far been a dismal affair. Plans have been economically unfeasible, budgetary constraints have rarely been taken into account when procurement plans have been launched. The consequences are serious in that Poland's dependence on financial transfers from NATO for infrastructure purposes will remain high. But the other NATO countries will be increasingly unwilling to foot the bill unless planning realism and implementation rates improve.

Thus, the outcome of the Komorowski plan will be watched carefully by Poland's allies. The political consequences of failure here should not be underestimated: laggards lose influence. Poland will find it difficult to gain support for new ideas and initiatives requiring assistance or participation from other members, if Poland is perceived as not having undertaken the necessary upgrading measures on its part. Minister of defence Stanislaw Dobrzanski's claim from 1996 that "Poland's entry would have a tremendous impact on NATO" may then be taken as little more than typical wishful thinking.<sup>264</sup>

An aspect of upgrading that has been successful concerns Polish participation in the establishment of multinational units. These include Polish participation in peacekeeping missions in the Balkans, as well as the units established jointly with Lithuania and Ukraine, and the planned Czech-Polish-Slovak battalion. A special role has been played by the Multinational Corps Northeast in Szczecin which is widely regarded as an important source of western ideas and skills for Polish officers.

Poland has invested considerable resources into these units and has consistently emphasised willingness to participate in international missions. But it is an emphasis that has entailed political costs. The units singled out for international missions and multinational force formations represent only a smaller segment of the Polish armed forces. The resulting split into an A team receiving modern NATO equipment, and a B team having to make do with far less has been criticised. The government has admitted this policy of preferential treatment, but has pointed to the fact that other western countries have chosen a similar approach. Poland's adherence to this pattern should be taken as a proof that they are willing to participate fully in allied international operations. Participation in distant areas is regarded as a safeguard; other countries will be more willing to assist Poland in the event of an emergency. When dispatching of Polish contingent to participate in the Gulf War, a Polish diplomat stated:

*As a nation that has been subject to invasion and annexation more than once in our history, we feel it important to have some of our soldiers in the Gulf as a way of underscoring our commitment to the inviolability of our own borders.<sup>265</sup>*

### Cohesion: odd man out?

The quotation above reveals an understanding of the linkage between alliance membership and membership obligations as something far more exacting than preparing for allied assistance in case of an attack from the east. As such, it would make for an optimistic conclusion to this study. Nevertheless, it is necessary to question an argument implicit in much of the discussion on the

preceding pages, namely that Poland's regional policies represent an asset to the Alliance and that this value will be increased even more once upgrading has progressed even further. That assumption may not be shared by all NATO members. The Mediterranean countries, especially France will perceive the impact differently, and negatively because Polish views usually follow US policies closely. This has been most strongly felt in the case of ESDI where Poland has expressed its reservations in unusually strong terms. On this issue, Poland has aligned itself with the other NATO flank states Norway, Turkey and Iceland, all outside the European Union and all strongly supportive of retaining a good trans-Atlantic relationship.

But in comparison to the three other states, Poland seems the most likely candidate to join the EU in the foreseeable future. Nothing indicates that Polish views on the ESDI are likely to change. Poland will most likely continue to pursue a political line which puts NATO at the forefront, preferring to see ESDI relegated to functions that will not conflict with NATO's agenda. This position will provide Poland with much political clout both in NATO and EU, and it will also have a considerable impact on future European security and defence politics. As discussed above, Polish interests and concerns often differ from those of the larger EU countries. So far the Union's eastern policy has above all been focused on Russia. Once inside, the EU will have to accommodate Polish concerns over developments in countries in-between: Belarus and Ukraine.

Poland's historical predicament has been the role of a buffer state. The quest for membership was based on a strong sense of insecurity. President Lech Walesa expressed it thus in 1992: "There is Russia, which threatens, the West, which is frightened, and us in the middle."<sup>266</sup>

Based on the discussion presented here, it is possible to conclude that this role has now been confined to the past. Poland has created a network of relations with countries not only in the east, but also with other western countries sharing Poland's perceptions. Co-operation has reduced the deep-rooted sense of vulnerability. "The notion that security is invariably and for all time predetermined by geography has been one of the more durable fallacies promoted by theories of international relations."<sup>267</sup> What is different for Poland now is not so much that it is the border country of NATO, but that NATO membership makes it possible to use this very location as a valuable asset.

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## Notes

<sup>1</sup> *Jane's Defence Weekly*, 21 February 1996, p.32.

<sup>2</sup> E.g. Pernal 1997, Michta 1999.

<sup>3</sup> For the first half of the decade, see Starzynski 1996, p. 60.

<sup>4</sup> Smoleń 1998.

<sup>5</sup> See Kamiński 2000.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, and Kupiecki 1998, pp. 14-27, Czajkowski & Pieprzyk 1999.

<sup>7</sup> Kusin 1991, p. 35.

<sup>8</sup> Weydenthal 1991.

<sup>9</sup> Clarke 1991, p. 41. Polish authorities subsequently claimed that the Soviet Union had retracted from this position, this was strongly denied by the Soviet Foreign Ministry as communicated through TASS, 8 July 1991.

<sup>10</sup> *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 7 October 1991.

<sup>11</sup> Klaus 1994.

<sup>12</sup> Konarski 1992.

<sup>13</sup> See the opinion polls presented in Smoke 1996, especially Ch. 4, "Public Attitudes – Poland", pp. 55-64.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.* p114.

<sup>15</sup> Trade between Poland and the CEFTA accounts for a dwindling share of Polish foreign trade, hovering between 5 and 7 per cent from 1995 to 1998, during the same period, trade with the EU accounted for between 65 and 70 per cent. *Rocznik... 2000*, table 4, "Obroty handlu zagranicznego według grup krajów (ceny bieżące)", p. 442.

<sup>16</sup> See Lynch 2000, pp. 81-82.

<sup>17</sup> See Prystrom 1994, pp. 50-51. Why the OSCE has never received much attention in Poland, see Zięba 2001.

<sup>18</sup> E.g. Szafarz 1994.

<sup>19</sup> Król 1993.

<sup>20</sup> Kuźniar 1994, p. 9.

<sup>21</sup> This deficiency is reciprocated on the western side. In his extensive exposé of the WEU and the future of European security, Willem van Eekelen, former Secretary General of the WEU, Poland is mentioned once (p. 278), in connection with NATO enlargement. The security concerns of Central Europe or the Baltic states are not discussed. Eekelen 1998.

<sup>22</sup> Asmus et. al. 1997.

<sup>23</sup> E.g. Cziomer 1998.

<sup>24</sup> *London Declaration... 1990*, section 4.

<sup>25</sup> Dov Lynch interprets the "near abroad" policy as a quest for stability on Russia's borders. This differs from the prevailing Central European understanding where the concept is used to justify Russian interference, See Lynch 2000, p. 44.

<sup>26</sup> See Winid 1999, Chapter 1 "Okres przygotowań", pp. 9-33.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Nietz 1994.

<sup>29</sup> Koziej 1998.

<sup>30</sup> *Development ...* 1999.

<sup>31</sup> Nevertheless, I have not found any Polish defence expert or NATO official that has disputed my conclusions. Accounting for the high expectations on both sides and the less than expected results, a security scientist wryly commented "*How could it be otherwise*". The rather dismal conclusions drawn here are further supported by the reforms failures discussed under the heading *Army 2012: a grand approach?* p. 63.

<sup>32</sup> Wilecki's antipathy towards political control was strongly expressed during a speech at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Warsaw in 1995, see *Rzeczpospolita* 17 August 1995.

<sup>33</sup> The full name is the Ministry of National Defence. 'National' is usually omitted as will be done here.

<sup>34</sup> The event is usually referred to as the Drawsko dinner, named after the location where the party was given.

<sup>35</sup> Kuźniar, 2001, quote taken from p. 78.

<sup>36</sup> Filipiak & Tarkowski 1994.

<sup>37</sup> Gogolewska 1996.

<sup>38</sup> Interviews with James Hirsch, Danish Ministry of Defence, December 2000, and Jan Olsen, Norwegian Ministry of Defence April 2001. *The Polish Yearbook of International Affairs*' annual review of Polish-NATO relations is as a rule devoid of any admittance of Polish shortcomings. The notable exception is the entry for 2000 by Andrzej Towpik, Poland's Ambassador to NATO. Towpik 2000, pp. 24-25.

<sup>39</sup> A notable exception is Simon 2000.

<sup>40</sup> Interviews with James Hirsch, Danish Ministry of Defence, December 2000, and Jan Olsen, Norwegian Ministry of Defence April 2001.

<sup>41</sup> Albright 1997a.

<sup>42</sup> Dybczynski 2000, p. 191, and Hartmann 1995, p. 947.

<sup>43</sup> *Polityka*, 17 October 1993,

<sup>44</sup> Geremek, quoted by Calka 1995, footnote 12

<sup>45</sup> Władysław 1993, p. 11.

<sup>46</sup> See Wolczuk 1999 and Kozakiewicz 1999, ch. 6.

<sup>47</sup> *Strategia bezpieczeństwa ...* 2000, section 3.4.2. "Stosunki dobrosąsiedzkie".

<sup>48</sup> Skubiszewski 1993.

<sup>49</sup> Chojnowska 1997, p. 144.

<sup>50</sup> The following countries are full members: Austria, Bosnia, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Italy, Macedonia, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia. In addition to Ukraine, Albania, Belarus, Bulgaria, Moldova, and Romania are associate members.

<sup>51</sup> See Parchomenko 2000.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid. p. 80.

<sup>53</sup> Gromadzki 2000b.

<sup>54</sup> Znajder 2000p.

<sup>55</sup> *Report by the Minister...* 2001.

<sup>56</sup> *RFE/RL Newslines* vol. 5, no. 115, part II, 18 June 2001.

<sup>57</sup> Tyler 2001.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> Mangott 1999, p. 49.

<sup>61</sup> *RFE/RL Daily Report* 27 August 1993.

<sup>62</sup> Calka 2000, p. 51. In Russian "*sovmeštnye pereobrazovaniia ili perestroika*".

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> Magdziak-Miszewska 1996, p. 125.

<sup>65</sup> *RFE/RL Newslines*, vol. 5, no. 64, part II, 2 April 2001

<sup>66</sup> Calka 1995a.

<sup>67</sup> Table 1 (476) "Obroty handlu zagranicznego według głównych partnerów (ceny bieżące)", in *Rocznik...* 1999, p. 441.

<sup>68</sup> Throughout the 1990s, Russia supplied almost three quarters of the natural gas consumed, in the case of oil the share was above 90 per cent. See Table 10 (415) "Bilans ropy naftowej", and Table 11 (416) "Bilans gazu ziemnego wysokometanowego", in *Rocznik...* 1999, p. 400.

<sup>69</sup> *Strategia bezpieczeństwa ...* 2000, section 2.5. "Zagrożenia ekonomiczne".

<sup>70</sup> Balmaceda 2000c, p. 167.

<sup>71</sup> Gromadzki 2000a.

<sup>72</sup> Dziadul 2000.

<sup>73</sup> *Poland, Belarus, and Ukraine Report*, 25 July 2000, Volume 2, No. 26.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

<sup>76</sup> Lelyveld 2001.

<sup>77</sup> The first article was published in the 17 November issue, see Kublik & Bosacki 2000. The reporters continued publishing additional material throughout November and December that year.

<sup>78</sup> Kohout 1997, *Polska Zbrojna* no. 5, 2001.

<sup>79</sup> Black 2000, footnote 200.

<sup>80</sup> See Świerczyński 2000, p. 5.

<sup>81</sup> Kahl 1998, p. 23.

<sup>82</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>83</sup> NATO Press Service, *Press Communique M-NAC-2* (96) 165.

<sup>84</sup> Albright 1997b.

<sup>85</sup> Gromadzki 2000d. A similar explanation is given by Black 2000.

<sup>86</sup> M. Menkiszak mentions that the Russian leadership tried to persuade Warsaw to change policies at a bilateral meeting in February 1996. Menkiszak 2001, p. 166, footnote 116.

<sup>87</sup> "Voennaya doktrina" ... 2000. A German translation of the Doctrine containing a comparison between the final version and earlier drafts can be found in *Osteuropa*, no. 7, 2000, pp. A221-A246. My discussion is based on the net version of the Russian original published by *Rossiskaya gazeta*, 21 April 2000, <http://www.rg.ru/official/doc/ykazi/doc-war.htm>.

<sup>88</sup> "Voennaya doktrina" ... 2000, Section I: Military-political Foundations / Military-political Conditions ("Voенно-polititscheskie osnovi / Voенно-polititscheskaya obstanovka")

<sup>89</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>90</sup> This interpretation is supported by the German security analyst Lothar Rühl, see Rühl 2000.

<sup>91</sup> One may argue that the document entitled "Main Guidelines of the Military Doctrine of the RF" (Osnovnye polozhenia voennoi doktriny Rossiskoi federatsii (Izloshenia)) presented in *Krasnia Zvezda* 19 November 1993 was not, as the title implies, a fully-fledged military doctrine.

<sup>92</sup> *Krasnia zvezda*, 30 September 1999.

<sup>93</sup> General Valerij Manilov who played a central role in the compilation of the Doctrine, has provided a detailed account of the disagreements and debates during the preparatory phase. See Manilov 2000.

<sup>94</sup> The discussion here is based on *Konseptsia natsionalnoi besopasnostii Rossiskoi Federatsii*, published in *Rossiskaya gazeta*, 10 January 2000, <http://www.rg.ru/official/doc/ykazi/conc.htm>. For an analysis of the process behind, see Wehner 2000.

<sup>95</sup> The newspaper affiliated with the Ministry of Defence *Krasnia zvezda* waited until 12 May before printing it. This was interpreted as a sign of MoD dissatisfaction with the final version, see Walter 2000, p. 785.

<sup>96</sup> Kuzio 2000a, p. 83.

<sup>97</sup> Franz Walter makes a confusing mistake here. He states that the passage on Belarus can be found under the heading "Ensuring the National Security of the Russian Federation" in the Military Doctrine. There is a chapter with a similar title

("Ugrozi natsionalnoi besopasnosti Rossiskoi Federatsii") but in the National Security Concept, not in the Doctrine which is the only document where Belarus is specifically mentioned. This is done in Section I: Military-political Foundations / Military-political Conditions ("Voенно-polititscheskie osnovi / Voенно-polititscheskaya obstanovka"). (Walter 2000, p.792.)

<sup>98</sup> Rich 2000, p. 19.

<sup>99</sup> Balmaceda 1999.

<sup>100</sup> Rontoyanni 2000 p. 6.

<sup>101</sup> Rich 2000, p. 19.

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>103</sup> Rontoyanni 2000, p.6.

<sup>104</sup> Zaloga 2000, p. 13.

<sup>105</sup> Gricius 1999, Perepelitsa 1999.

<sup>106</sup> Graczyk and Szacki 1996, and Strałkowa & Ausiannik 1999, in particular the preface, p. 1, and *Report by the Minister* ... 2001.

<sup>107</sup> *RFE/RL Newslines*, 9 February 1999.

<sup>108</sup> Gertz 2001.

<sup>109</sup> *Oświadczenie* ... 2001.

<sup>110</sup> Wróbel 2000a. For an early account of Polish fears of Russian designs, see Luczak 1994.

<sup>111</sup> Miecik 2001, p. 92.

<sup>112</sup> Lecture given by Marek Menkiszak, Polish Institute for Eastern Studies, at the Norwegian Institute for Defence Studies, October 2001.

<sup>113</sup> Dragsdahl 1997.

<sup>114</sup> *Uniting Europe*, no. 128, 22 January 2001, p. 11.

<sup>115</sup> *RFE/RL Newslines*, vol. 5, no. 192, Part II, 10 October 2001.

<sup>116</sup> *RFE/RL Baltic States Report*, 12 February 2001.

<sup>117</sup> E.g. Hartmann 1992.

<sup>118</sup> Kolecka 1997, p. 136.

<sup>119</sup> Polish-Lithuanian co-operation in security and defence matters are discussed at length in a special issue of *Polska Zbrojna* no. 21 2000.

<sup>120</sup> Kuzio 2000b, p. 17.

<sup>121</sup> Mitek 2000.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>123</sup> Znajder 2000, p. 225.

<sup>124</sup> Interoperability has been defined as the ability of systems, units or forces to provide services to, and accept services from other systems, units or forces, and to use the services so exchanged to enable them to operate effectively together. (Joint Staff 1999)

- <sup>182</sup> Holdanowicz 2000.
- <sup>183</sup> *RFE/RL Newslines*, 17 April 2001
- <sup>184</sup> *RFE/RL Newslines*, 19 April 2001
- <sup>185</sup> *RFE/RL Newslines*, 29 August 2001
- <sup>186</sup> *Naval Forces*, no. 3, 2001, pp. 76-86, p. 86.
- <sup>187</sup> Exact numbers have not been published.
- <sup>188</sup> The corvette plans are known as Project 621 "Gawron", and the mine destroyer as Project 257 "Kormoran".
- <sup>189</sup> This is commonly referred to as Project 151.
- <sup>190</sup> *Naval Forces*, no. 3, 2001, pp. 76-86, p. 86.
- <sup>191</sup> *Stavanger Aftenblad*, 28 August 2001.
- <sup>192</sup> Holdanowicz 2001b.
- <sup>193</sup> Hoppe 1999
- <sup>194</sup> *ibid.* Similar queries were directed to the Czech MoD.
- <sup>195</sup> See Podolski 1999.
- <sup>196</sup> Władyka 1996.
- <sup>197</sup> In Polish *Urząd Ochrony Państwa*, UOP is occasionally translated as State Protection Office.
- <sup>198</sup> In Polish *Wojskowa Służba Informacyjna*.
- <sup>199</sup> In Polish the full name of the Council is *Burowo Bezpieczeństwa Narodowego*, Jachowicz 1997.
- <sup>200</sup> See Hendrickson 2000.
- <sup>201</sup> The Komorowski Plan, p. 56.
- <sup>202</sup> <http://www.kprsm.gov.pl/forces/archivan/forces.htm>
- <sup>203</sup> E.g. Handl 1993, Randzio-Plath & Fridmann 1994, Böhlke et al. 1995.
- <sup>204</sup> E.g. Kupiecki 1998, Chapter 1, "Ciężar zwycięstwa. NATO u progu zmian pozimnowojennych", pp. 8-36
- <sup>205</sup> In 1994, minister of defence Volker Rühle was censured by foreign minister Klaus Kinkel for pursuing a too active policy of eastward expansion. The Polish reaction was one of dismay and surprise, see Kostyrko 1994.
- <sup>206</sup> For a survey, see Trzcieleńska-Polus, 1998.
- <sup>207</sup> On the visit to Poland, see *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 18 June 1998.
- <sup>208</sup> Albiński 2000, p. 383.
- <sup>209</sup> Cichocki 1999.
- <sup>210</sup> Fischer 2000.
- <sup>211</sup> Szostkiewicz 2000.
- <sup>212</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 44.
- <sup>213</sup> Goble 2000b.
- <sup>214</sup> E.g. Szymanowski et al 1995.

- <sup>215</sup> *CTK News Summary*, March 15, 1999.
- <sup>216</sup> *Jane's Defence Weekly*, 20 June 2001.
- <sup>217</sup> French apprehensions over German dominance permeate the introductory chapters of the 1994 edition of the official white book on defence, see *Livre Blanc...* 1994.
- <sup>218</sup> Kühnhardt et al. 2000. Prof. Anne-Marie Le Gloannec, deputy director of the Marc Bloch Centre Franco-Allemand de Recherches en Sciences Sociales in Berlin, starts her analysis of Franco-German-Polish relations by expressing surprise at the rapid development of close links between Germany and Poland. The Weimar Triangle is not mentioned even once. Le Gloannec 2001.
- <sup>219</sup> Bachmann 2000, p. 871.
- <sup>220</sup> "Motstridiga signaler om Baltikum", editorial, *Hufvudstadsbladet*, 8 June 2001.
- <sup>221</sup> "Baltikum, Finland, Sverige och NATO", editorial, *Hufvudstadsbladet*, 21 October 2000.
- <sup>222</sup> *Aftenposten* editorial 8 September 2001.
- <sup>223</sup> Laurén 2001.
- <sup>224</sup> Lipponen 1997.
- <sup>225</sup> *Aftenposten* 26 January 1998.
- <sup>226</sup> Mazur-Barańska 2000.
- <sup>227</sup> Interview with Dr. R. Lopata, Institute of International Relations and Political Science at Vilnius University, Garmisch-Partenkirchen, April 2001.
- <sup>228</sup> For the consistency of Russian objections, see Pushkov 1997; Kortunov 1998; Kazantsev 1999.
- <sup>229</sup> Geremek 2001, Węglarczyk & Pawlicki 2001, and the article entitled "Polaks, Adwokat Ameryki" by Montgomery and Węglarczyk 2001.
- <sup>230</sup> President Bush quoted in O'Rourke 2001.
- <sup>231</sup> Secretary of State Colin Powell quoted in Tully 2001.
- <sup>232</sup> For a survey of Polish EU perceptions, see Czaputowicz, 1999, and Stadtmüller 2000.
- <sup>233</sup> See the minutes from the WEU Council of Ministers meeting, Luxembourg, 23 November 1999, <http://www.weu.int/eng/index.html>
- <sup>234</sup> In June 1999, Germany followed suit joining France in the call for "...an autonomous military force", see Rogers 1999.
- <sup>235</sup> PAP 19 October 1999.
- <sup>236</sup> *The Military Balance...* 2000, p. 35.
- <sup>237</sup> See Kupiecki 1999.
- <sup>238</sup> *The Guardian*, 14 December 2000.
- <sup>239</sup> For a succinct presentation of how Poland regards the complementarity between ESDI and NATO ideally should develop, see the article "UZE + UE =?" in *Trybuna*, 23-24 October 1999, by the Polish foreign policy expert and member of the Social Democratic Party (SLD) Longin Pastusiak.

- <sup>240</sup> PAP 3 December 1999.
- <sup>241</sup> *Atlantic News*, no. 3237, 12 October 2000, p. 3.
- <sup>242</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>243</sup> Domisiewicz 2000.
- <sup>244</sup> See Foreign Minister Geremek's statement to PAP. PAP daily news bulletin, 15 December 1999.
- <sup>245</sup> Rzeczpospolita 16 November 1999.
- <sup>246</sup> See Flera 1999, p. 394.
- <sup>247</sup> Lang 1999, p. 4.
- <sup>248</sup> Rzeczpospolita, 16 December 1999.
- <sup>249</sup> Potel 1999
- <sup>250</sup> *ibid.*
- <sup>251</sup> Interview with Polish NATO delegation, Brussels, April 2000.
- <sup>252</sup> Goławski 2000a.
- <sup>253</sup> E.g. the interview with admiral Ryszard Lukasik referred to on p. 61
- <sup>254</sup> For a discussion of the generational between older, i.e. Soviet-educated officers and junior staff, and the communication problems between the military and the civilian establishment, see Goławski 2000b.
- <sup>255</sup> See p. 11. Andrzej Towpik, Polish ambassador to NATO from 1997, in an article entitled "A few remarks on the Sources of our Success" claims that "[T]he effectiveness of Polish security policy was determined to a large extent by its cohesion, firmness and consistency in its implementation..." (Towpik 2001, p. 520). Even when concentrating entirely on the political aspects, Towpik omits upgrading and procurement from his presentation, his conclusion is improbable.
- <sup>256</sup> Karkoszka 2001, p. 535.
- <sup>257</sup> RFE/RL Newline vol. 5, no. 200, Part II, 22 October 2001.
- <sup>258</sup> See Mróz 1999.
- <sup>259</sup> Interview with Jan Olsen, Norwegian Ministry of Defence, April 2001.
- <sup>260</sup> Laurén 2001, Lobjakas 2001.
- <sup>261</sup> "Membership Action Plan (MAP)", NATO Press Release, 24 April 1999.
- <sup>262</sup> These are currently Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Albania, Bulgaria, Romania and Macedonia.
- <sup>263</sup> Hill 2000.
- <sup>264</sup> See footnote 1, p. 1.
- <sup>265</sup> Quoted in Jakobsen 1998, pp. 66-67.
- <sup>266</sup> Walesa, quoted by Skålnes 1998, p. 52.
- <sup>267</sup> Mastny 1997, p. 13.

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