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**NATO'S MEMBERSHIP ACTION PLAN (MAP)
AND PROSPECTS FOR THE NEXT
ROUND OF ENLARGEMENT**

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KEY TERMS

ANP	Annual National Plan
DPQ	Defense Planning Questionnaire
EAPC	Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council
IPPs	Individual Partner Programs
MAP	Membership Action Plan
NAC	North Atlantic Council
NACC	North Atlantic Cooperation Council
NCO	Non-Commissioned Officer Corps
OOA	Out-Of-Area Operations
OCC	Operational Capabilities Concept
PARP	Planning and Review Process
PCC	Partnership Coordination Center
PFP	Partnership for Peace
PGs	Partnership Goals
PMSC	Political-Military Steering Committee
PWP	Partner Work Program
STANAGs	Standardized Agreements

I. NATO'S MEMBERSHIP ACTION PLAN (MAP) AND DEFENSE PLANNING: A PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT*

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When NATO adopted Partnership for Peace (PFP) at the Brussels Summit in January 1994, few had any notion of how important and essential the PFP program would actually become. Many aspiring NATO members were disappointed, perceiving PFP as a "policy for postponement." In response to persistent partner pressures to join, in September 1995, NATO produced a *Study on NATO Enlargement* that outlined the Alliance's expectations of new members. The study noted that:

"PFP would assist partners to undertake necessary defense management reforms [such as] transparent national defense planning, resource allocation and budgeting, appropriate legislation and parliamentary and public accountability. The PFP Planning and Review Process (PARP) and PFP exercises will introduce partners to collective defense planning and pave the way for more detailed operational planning."

After December 1995, the North Atlantic Council (NAC) ministerial launched enhanced 16+1 dialogues with those partners interested in joining the Alliance. By early 1997, twelve partners had expressed an interest in joining. When the Madrid Summit extended invitations to Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic in July 1997, NATO reiterated its open door policy, strengthened the role of partners in PFP decision-making and planning, and adopted new terms of reference under enhanced PFP to broaden cooperation beyond peace enforcement operations. The Political-Military Steering Committee (PMSC) continued to manage PFP programs including the development of the Partner Work Program (PWP) and Individual Partner Programs (IPP). The PARP became more significant and NATO expanded the number of Standardized Agreements (STANAGs) made available to Partners (now 1,169) through the Partnership

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Coordination Center (PCC) in Mons to plan military exercises and develop the PWP and PARP interoperability objectives.

At the June 1998 NATO Defense Ministerial, allies and PARP Partners agreed to a report entitled "Expanding and Adapting the PFP Planning and Review Process" which suggested major enhancements to the PARP to more closely resemble NATO's Defense Planning Questionnaire (DPQ). Beginning in 1999, NATO approved PARP Ministerial Guidance (now like the DPQ) that replaced the old interoperability objectives with Partnership Goals (PG) for Interoperability and for Forces and Capabilities which aimed to develop specific armed forces and capabilities that partners could offer in support of NATO operations. In addition, the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) provided the forum for greater partner participation in deliberations involving operations to which they contribute forces.

NATO's Washington Summit in April 1999, introduced the Membership Action Plan (MAP), in part to convince the remaining nine aspirants that Article 10 and the Open Door policy was not hollow and to assist the aspirants in developing forces and capabilities that could operate with NATO under its new Operational Capabilities Concept (OCC). The MAP went further than the 1995 *Study on NATO Enlargement* in defining what the aspirants needed to accomplish on the "path" to membership. It was designed to incorporate lessons learned in the accession discussions with Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic.

The MAP includes: (1) submission of a tailored Annual National Plan (ANP) that would cover political, economic, defense, resource, security, and legal aspects of membership; (2) a feedback mechanism through a NAC 19+1 Partner progress assessment; (3) a clearing house for coordinating security assistance; and (4) enhanced defense planning that establishes and reviews agreed planning targets. Just as PFP had matured into a fundamental program not originally envisioned by its architects, the MAP process contains the same potential. Consequently, it is time to assess the first year defense planning experiences of the new NATO members and of the nine MAP partners in order to suggest improvements to ensure the program's success.

DEFENSE PLANNING EXPERIENCES OF NATO'S NEW MEMBERS

Since accession on 12 March 1999, NATO's three new members — Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic — have all experienced continuing integration difficulties. Though each country is unique and is adapting differently to changes since 1989, all share the common experience and burden of a Warsaw Pact culture. They have inherited the inappropriate armed forces (too big and too heavy), decaying Soviet military technology, and need to reduce infrastructure. Additionally, all continue to experience the following problems:

- Budgetary constraints. Force goals adopted five years ago have still not been implemented, not only because of economic constraints, but also due to a failure of political will. Political decisions often have been either delayed or not made because of a lack of political interest (economic and social issues compete with absence of perceived threat) and/or because many senior political leaders remain uninformed, civilian specialists are scarce, and an active defense lobby does not yet exist. Defense planning has been hampered by the political need

to establish goals that have often not been resource-based and require prioritizing. For example, the political need to produce small "show-piece" units meant that scarce resources were drained from the Main Defense Forces and Territorial Forces, leading to their decay and general staff unhappiness and causing civil-military tensions. In other words, the appearances of action often compete with what is really necessary to develop.

- Planning failures. Since joining the Alliance all three new members have had to engage in force structure reviews. Hungary was forced to recognize that its resources were inadequate to required NATO force goal commitments. Consequently, during the summer of 1999 it announced a so-called Strategic Review that will alter the General Staff/defense ministry relationship and reduce the Hungarian Defense Forces (HDF) by 15,000 to 37,500. Poland adopted a new National Defense Plan on May 23, 2000 that will reduce its armed forces by more than 50,000 to 150,000 in six years. The Czech Republic is also now engaging in a Strategic Review that will likely result in the reduction of its armed forces by 17,000 to 40,000 in five years.
- Restructuring of military personnel. This challenge necessitates serious alterations in the officer corps and the need to build non-commissioned officer (NCO) corps — tasks that require the establishment of career paths and rigorous personnel policies. New members are still struggling complete this task.
- Constitutional and legal system inadequacies. Military confusion still persists over division of executive powers (to include relations between General Staffs and defense ministries) and on how to deal with Parliament and the media.
- National Security Concepts, Defense Concepts, and Military Doctrines. These documents, while reflecting significant rethinking of fundamental national security issues, are not yet up to real world challenges in defining force requirements and limited resources have forced new members to adopt a piecemeal approach to building forces. One of the lessons of Kosovo has been the recognition that out-of-area (OOA) operations are more likely and will require legal changes as well as new and different armed forces. Sending armed forces abroad requires sustainability, different logistics, and combat support. In addition, the European Union's (EU) entry into crisis management creates competing demands and necessitates greater EU-NATO cooperation.
- Defense planning complications. Incompatibilities exist between NATO and the partner's national planning processes. This problem persists, in part because of the lack of English-language trained personnel who understand NATO procedures and due to the failure to understand that political oversight and civilian control does not necessarily result merely from replacing military officers with civilians. More often, competent officers are replaced by less competent civilian personnel. Hence, Poland, for example, had to alter its national planning after becoming a NATO member. The Czech Republic and Hungary also found that their national planning processes were neither compatible nor interoperable with NATO. Both still maintain national plans and a NATO Defense Planning Questionnaire (DPQ) plan that remain parallel and are not yet embedded. As a result, new members suggest that MAP partners might consider adopting the PARP as the core of their planning to correct the

problem of parallelism in national and Alliance Plans and hope that the MAP process will correct this problem.

- Declining support for the military. The new members failed to adequately prepare their political elite and society for NATO membership. Hence, the new members continue to evidence declining social support for the military.

Though NATO's new members continue to experience these problems, the capacities of Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic's tend to be more advanced than NATO's MAP partners who aspire to NATO membership.

DEFENSE PLANNING EXPERIENCES OF MAP PARTNERS

Former Warsaw Pact Members: Bulgaria and Romania.

Both MAP partners share many of the same problems experienced by NATO's new members in dealing with the vestiges of Warsaw Pact culture, reducing and restructuring large and heavy armed forces, and dealing with the challenges of NATO defense planning. During 1999, the U.S. performed defense reform (Kievennar) assessments with both countries.

Heavily influenced by the U.S. defense planning studies, Romania's Army Reform 2004 envisions reducing the armed forces from 150,000 to 112,000 military and 28,000 civilians by 2004, after which procurement is to occur. Bulgaria's 2004 force plan envisions reducing the armed forces from 82,000 to 40,000 military and 5,000 civilians. There is a need to develop and control career development, but personnel systems are broken. As a result, it is difficult to assess career patterns of officers because often no common paper trail exists on personnel; generally a strong General Staff J-1 is needed. The normal practice of hiring and firing based on patronage continues to hamper development of performance-based advancement. In this vein, officers trained abroad often have been used improperly. The Warsaw Pact practice of "stove-pipe" training of officers still remains. As a result, a corporate identity has not yet developed.

Though the U.S. defense planning studies dealt with national (not NATO) requirements, they heavily influenced both ANP Chapters on Operational Capabilities. Romania's major challenge has been to balance MAP objectives with available resources, which are severely constrained. Though the Bulgarians were able to allocate extra resources for MAP implementation, they stressed "show case" units which competed with their national plan. Complications arose in January 2000, when many of the NATO PGs did not relate to and remained disconnected from the 2004 plan. The Bulgarian government then had to allocate additional resources for the PGs, but it lacks the capability to measure performance fulfillment. In sum, both want a NATO assessment mechanism to help them prioritize their MAP activities, and they would like NATO to streamline its procedures to help coordinate PARP, PGs, and the MAP ANP.

Romania approved its National Security Strategy in June 1999 and its Military Strategy in April 2000. Bulgaria adopted its National Security Concept in April 1998, a Military Doctrine in April 1999, a 2004 Defense Plan in October 1999, and Partnership Goals in April 2000.

Though the Bulgarians believe their documents are adequate, the Defense Plan 2004 and MAP are separate and need to be integrated.

The MAP Annual National Plan process has encouraged interagency planning in both countries. Romania created an inter-agency commission chaired by the foreign ministry that is responsible for developing and implementing the ANP. The foreign ministry drafted chapter 1; the defense ministry, chapter 2; finance, chapter 3; intelligence, chapter 4; and defense and justice, chapter 5. Bulgaria also established an inter-departmental structure, co-chaired by the foreign and defense ministries, to coordinate NATO integration. In an effort to facilitate communication and cooperation between the defense ministry and General Staff directorates in preparing its ANP, the Defense Ministry created an Integration Council in June 1999, which meets monthly and more often as necessary. All documents submitted to NATO are discussed in the Council. Although all major MAP activities are planned and objectives identified (e.g., air defense, C4, ASOC), the need to prioritize and allocate resources remains a major problem. Bulgaria has received no guidance in its MAP chapter on Defense and Military issues, and now hopes for NATO feedback. Another major problem has been the fact that national defense planning has not been synchronized with NATO defense planning because the timing for each plan is different.

Bulgaria has been using PFP and PARP for integration, but has discovered that it has often resulted in overlapping and wasted effort. Their IPPs have focused too much on quantitative, rather than qualitative items. They realize that great costs will be required and they must prepare public opinion as well as well-trained military and civilian personnel. The Bulgarian lessons of Kosovo made clear the interdependence of the civil-military infrastructure in consultation and coordination mechanisms. Kosovo also demonstrated the need to learn more about Rules of Engagement (ROEs) and about the importance of the media. Bulgarians also believe that Kosovo will change Plan 2004 in that they must develop more effective civil-military cooperation to implement the plans.

- The major challenge facing Romania and Bulgaria lies in their need to transcend Warsaw Pact habits in the area of personnel career development to insure that in 2004 their armed forces have the proper skills.

The Baltic States.

Though the three Baltic states — Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia — were in the Warsaw Pact, they were republics of the former Soviet Union and not independent states. Hence, in marked contrast to Romania and Bulgaria, since independence, these states have faced the challenge of building state institutions and defense establishments from scratch. Since each of the Baltic states is so small — 3.6, 2.65, and 1.5 million respectively — they are cooperating in building combined military institutions. During 1998, the U.S. performed defense reform (Kievenaar) assessments for all three Baltic countries, and their 1999 MAP ANPs reflected this influence and experience.

Lithuania maintains formal coordination of 14 government institutions and five working groups for its ANP, and has also established a Parliamentary Commission to specifically deal

with the MAP, in order to build public support through a public information campaign and for lobbying purposes.

Vilnius agreed to 66 PGs (37 are related to MAP implementation) and created a manager to oversee the implementation of each PG. They are attempting to further develop the PPBS for a three-year budget cycle and procurement system and have found the financial and human resource requirements to fulfill the PGs and PARP to be quite challenging. They want to combine the PARP with PPBS and place the PGs within their overall defense planning system. Hence, they intend to include PGs in their Annual Planning Guidance and other planning documents. Nevertheless, PG and PARP problems remain because the PGs did not conform to Lithuania's budget cycle. When the PGs appeared in spring 2000, Lithuania did not have enough time to acquire adequate resources, so some will not be financed.

Latvia's MAP has been useful because it has forced the government to focus on what it could accomplish, but it has not been easy to coordinate national planning, PARP, and the ANP. In an effort to maintain a tight link between resources and tasks, Latvia's ANP is divided into two parts — the first consists of five chapters of text; the second contains tables divided into 22 areas for implementation. Thus, Latvia's ANP is resource-based and it has established a central control system to monitor what has been accomplished. This commits the government to the plan and protects against political perturbations. The MAP is also part of a wide public relations strategy. It has the intended purpose to raise public support for defense structures and then NATO membership (now at 60%) with specific focus on Latvia's Russian minority where support has traditionally been weak.

In building its armed forces Latvia is focusing on three priorities — planning, personnel, and quality of life. First, Latvia has developed a program-based budget with a four-year time horizon. Second, its focus is on education of personnel; NCOs and senior officers must pass through the Baltic Defense College. Latvia is also making efforts to build a computerized database for the management of its personnel. Third, in order to maintain trained qualified officers and NCOs, Latvia has raised salaries, devised a new pension system, and added housing.

Latvia has learned two lessons from the first MAP ANP cycle. First, since the resource link is crucial, they must adjust timing. Second, they need to carefully monitor and coordinate ANP implementation with the other two Baltic states (and Denmark) because of the Baltic Battalion, Baltic Defense College, and joint radar BALTNET.

Estonia faced elections and a new government at the time of the ANP. Yet Tallin established a High Level Group on NATO Integration led by the Prime Minister and comprising the ministries of defense, foreign affairs, finance, justice, interior and chief of defense, supported by an inter-ministry experts-commission that prepares the integration documents. Each chapter of the Estonian ANP was drafted by a specific ministry and contains specific goals while the High Level Group maintains responsibility for overall implementation. Estonia also coordinates its ANP with the other two Baltic states and with some NATO members.

When the first package of PGs arrived from NATO in December 1999, there was insufficient time to respond by early 2000. Estonia had one month to analyze the goals and to

inform NATO how many it would accept. This had to be coordinated with the other Baltic states. In April 2000, Estonia agreed to fulfill 62 PGs by 2006. The ANP then arrived after the budget had already been approved. During the summer of 2000 when Estonia must submit its 2001 ANP and PARP survey to NATO, they intend to combine these documents.

- The major challenge facing the Baltic states results from their small size which necessitates cooperation and coordination in building their armed forces and renders them more vulnerable to any NATO alterations in timing and resource requirements.

New States: Slovakia and Slovenia.

In contrast to Bulgaria and Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia are small (5.6 and 2.0 million respectively) new states with different military traditions that must build military institutions from scratch. One state is a former Warsaw Pact member emerging from the Czech and Slovak Federated Republic and the other is a former non-aligned republic of Yugoslavia. Also, both have yet to receive U.S. assistance in defense planning. Their first ANP drafts were due in fall 1999.

Slovakia has received assistance from the U.S., U.K., and the three new NATO members, but only received the U.S. defense planning (Garrett) study in spring 2000 so it was unavailable for the Slovak ANP 2000. It has, though, been instrumental in updating the Slovak ANP for 2001 as well as for future force plans. Two major challenges face Slovakia:

- Since the present defense budget is 1.7% of GDP and is to rise 0.1% per year, Slovakia needs to prioritize scarce resources; and
- Because public support for NATO declined to 30% during the Kosovo war, a public campaign is necessary.

The government has developed a communications strategy to deal with this problem and has allocated 20 million Slovak crowns (Sk) (\$500,000) to the effort. As a result, public support increased to 42% during the spring of 2000, and has just reached 51%.

An Inter-ministerial Government Committee, co-chaired by the foreign and defense ministries and comprising eight agencies — to include finance, interior, education, environment, and the state resource administration — drafted Slovakia's ANP. The Government Committee Secretariat coordinates 11 working groups to draft the ANP and national programs. This body is working on ANP 2001. The U.S. defense planning assessment, delivered to Slovakia in spring 2000, will be used to draft the next ANP and to develop appropriate laws. Slovakia still lacks a crisis management system and needs to develop appropriate constitutional laws on security institutions. Though it has drafted a National Security Concept, governmental and parliamentary approval is still pending, as well as for appropriate SOFA obligations under PFP. Slovakia faces many challenges dealing with interoperability, personnel management, downsizing the armed forces, and making them professional.

Slovakia's participation in NATO activities is not only costly, but they overlap and are confusing. In the second cycle of PARP Slovakia participates in 29 Partnership Objectives and 3 PGs that will cost Sk500 million in 2000. Slovakia adopted 64 PGs that are divided into three priority groups (heavily influenced by the U.S. defense study) and its MAP ANP cost Sk200 million in 2000.

Slovenia views the MAP like going to school. If one compares its ANP 2001 with 2000 it is clear that Slovenia was not up to the task last year when they approached allies for assistance and received contradictory guidance. The initial 2000 ANP draft contained five chapters and was only 20 pages in length. After two months it had expanded to more than 100 pages. The Foreign Ministry State Secretary chairs the Working Group (with the defense ministry as the deputy chair), which includes 12 government institutions. The U.S. defense planning (Garrett) assessment just completed has been absolutely essential. As a result, the 2001 ANP draft is better prepared and informed. Slovenia would like NATO to perform a defense assessment. In addition, Slovenia's involvement in an EU Working Group has created some confusion and led to ANP modifications. In contrast to Slovakia, the Slovenian Finance Minister will not permit extra money to be allocated for MAP implementation or PGs. This has also led to abandoning many PGs (Slovenia has adopted 56 of 82) because funding was not available.

- The major challenge facing Slovakia and Slovenia comes not just from their being "new" small states that must build state institutions and armed forces from scratch with low defense budgets, but also from weak popular support for NATO.

Albania.**

In contrast to the other MAP partners Albania has experienced very strong popular support for NATO emerging as a result of the Kosovo conflict. During the war 500,000 refugees came to Albania, and the country provided seaports, airports, and ground bases. Albania, though, suffers from a very weak economy, high unemployment, rampant corruption and smuggling, and an army that self-destructed during the crisis that resulted from the failed pyramid schemes.

Lessons learned from the Kosovo crisis include Albania's recognition that it needs to improve its insufficient infrastructure, create new laws and inter-governmental agencies, and restructure its armed forces under civil control. In January 2000, Albania finally passed its National Security Strategy, and plans to establish the defense ministry and General Staff and five commands by the end of the year. Between now and 2004 the military infrastructure is to be rebuilt with 19,000 soldiers in 2006. As Albania builds its forces, it shares the same reverse pyramid personnel structure problems faced by many other MAP members with too many colonels, lieutenant colonels, and majors.

DEFENSE PLANNING FROM NATO'S PERSPECTIVE

During the MAP's ANP first cycle, MAP partners found NATO's capitals were either unengaged or disorganized. The MAP countries were very active in numbers of meetings —

** Macedonia, also a MAP partner, did not attend the conference.

though many were "hollow" — and it will be a challenge to prevent politicization of the PARP and MAP process after 19+1 meetings.

Two avenues exist for the development of MAP partners' capabilities. First, PARP establishes planning targets. PFP and U.S. Bilateral Working Groups (BWGs) need to define how to achieve them. Second, critical core skill deficiencies — such as English language training, defense resource management capabilities, long-range budgeting (annual budgets tended to undermine defense plans), air defense, and C3I — remain.

During the past year there was ample evidence that the process was not working effectively in many MAP partner countries. General Staffs were not cooperating with defense ministries, interagency (foreign and defense ministry) cooperation was lagging, deficiencies in NATO staffs within MAP bureaucracies were evident, national military strategies still exhibited shortfalls, and parliaments need to be more effectively brought into the process. Armed forces career development remains a major obstacle; not only are the personnel systems not up to the task, but physical constraints such as apartments inhibit personnel rotations that would support rational career development paths.

Next year, the PMSC assessments should help to establish and define red line areas and help MAP partners develop minimal capabilities. Many MAP members complain that many existing programs hamper their achieving specific goals; the MAP tools that need coordination are the ANP, IPPs, and security assistance. It is time to define a MAP partner's capability, and coordinate programs toward achieving that objective. The U.S. needs to develop a NATO strategy for the MAP within each country along with new tools for implementation. Now that the U.S. (OSD-EUCOM) bilateral defense planning/reform studies have been completed in seven of the nine MAP members (with the other two ongoing), it is time to broaden the EUCOM's Joint Contact Team Program beyond its present familiarization mandate to include training.

CONCLUSIONS

- Lessons learned by NATO's new members suggest that much work remains for MAP partners in dealing with constitutional and legal system inadequacies, National Security Concepts, Defense Concepts, and Military Doctrines and in defense planning.
- Not only are NATO's armed forces mismatched with the risks and threats that exist in the new environment (hence, the DCI), but the same applies to the MAP partners who are even more constrained by reduced budgets and armed forces that need restructuring.
- NATO and the MAP partners need to streamline the existing system to coordinate Alliance requirements with national timing and needs. The apparent disconnect between NATO and the EU creates confusion and competing demands on partners and requires more effective coordination.
- MAP partners want a NATO assessment mechanism to help them prioritize their MAP activities and help them identify minimal capabilities, and they would like NATO to streamline its procedures to help coordinate PARP, PGs, and the ANP.
- MAP tools that need coordination are the ANP, IPPs, and security assistance. It is time to define a MAP partner's capability, and coordinate programs toward achieving that objective.
- The EUCOM Joint Contact Team Program should expand beyond its present familiarization mandate to include training.

II. THE NEXT ROUND OF ENLARGEMENT*

Key Points

- The next U.S. Administration will need to devise a policy on NATO enlargement soon after it takes office in preparation for the 2002 NATO Summit.
- Political, geostrategic, and technical factors will frame the policy options on enlargement, though the shifting weight among the three will likely influence the final decision.
- Four policy options exist, each with a different impact on the Alliance's objective of enhancing stability and security beyond NATO and building a Europe whole and undivided.
- If NATO extended no invitation, its Article 10 credibility would be called into question; if it invited "one or more" for accession negotiations, it would maintain momentum but find it difficult to demonstrate sufficient development to the excluded MAP Partners; and if it invited all nine aspirants NATO might temporarily remove unpleasant political pressure but incur substantial political and geostrategic costs.
- Barring radical political and/or geostrategic upheavals, the U.S. should support a 2002 Summit policy announcing that the Alliance will "invite one or more new members" at a future (perhaps 2005 or 2006) Summit.

Since the revolutions of 1989-90 and the fall of the Berlin Wall, NATO has emerged as the backbone of Europe's security architecture. In response to the demands of outsiders for collaboration, NATO has consistently adhered to a strategy of inclusion to create a Europe whole and undivided. This was a conscious effort initiated at the July 1990 London Summit, where NATO invited the Soviet Union and non-Soviet Warsaw Pact members "to establish regular diplomatic liaison with NATO," and at the November 1991 Rome Summit, where it launched the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC) to include these countries. When the Soviet Union disintegrated in January 1992, NATO decided to include the former Soviet republics in the NACC, thus attempting to ensure a Europe free and whole. The same strategy prevailed at the Brussels Summit in January 1994, where NATO launched Partnership for Peace (PFP), which expanded to include NACC members and other CSCE (now OSCE) countries able and willing to contribute. The July 1997 Madrid Summit decision to invite the Czech Republic, Hungary, and

* This paper was initially published as INSS Strategic Forum #176 in October 2000.

Poland to begin accession talks was also portrayed in terms of inclusion: the Alliance reaffirmed that it remained open to new members under Article 10 adding that "[N]o European democratic country...would be excluded from consideration."

The next NATO Summit, scheduled for 2002, will have enlargement on its agenda. This action is necessary not just because the April 1999 Washington Summit stated that the next summit would review the enlargement process, but also because the nine Membership Action Plan (MAP) foreign ministers launched a political initiative on May 18-19, 2000 in Vilnius, Lithuania, to remind the member states of NATO "to fulfill the promise of the Washington Summit to build a Europe whole and free...[and] at the next NATO Summit in 2002, to invite our democracies to join NATO." This political initiative was followed by another gathering of the nine MAP NATO aspirant states' defense ministers in Sofia in October 2000. In sum, although the Alliance's internal conditions may not yet be sufficiently ripe for consensus on enlargement, NATO will be faced with increasing political pressures from the nine MAP aspirants. A new U.S. administration will need to develop a policy on this issue well before 2002.

THREE FACTORS FRAMING THE NATO ENLARGEMENT POLICY OPTIONS

Political

The guiding principle behind all NATO activities with the MAP partners who desire membership is that all enlargement decisions remain political. While this principle will remain a cornerstone of our policy, we need to recognize that as NATO moves down the MAP road we are *slowly* embedding ourselves in an implicit contractual relationship with the nine aspirants that will increasingly limit our future political choices. In other words, as we encourage MAP aspirants to implement political, economic, and defense reforms, NATO increases its obligation to "choose" (or at least to justify) invitees on fulfillment of these necessary criteria. This will limit our political choices, eventually proving it difficult for NATO not to invite a MAP partner who has clearly succeeded in implementing serious reforms, while at the same time limiting the Alliance's possibility to invite a partner who has not fulfilled these criteria. If NATO were to disregard these criteria, it would undermine the credibility and legitimacy of MAP for those partners (probably the majority) who did implement defense reforms but were not invited, hence destabilizing the entire process.

Ultimately, the Alliance has always said that enlargement will not be based purely on technical progress in defense (completion of the "NATO *acqui*"¹) or on success at democratic and market reforms. Enlargement decisions will also be influenced by the domestic politics in member states, intra-Alliance politics, and international developments. Thus, there will have to be consensus within and among current member states that adding a new member will contribute to overall Alliance security. This is not easy to game out and will clearly be influenced by a range of issues difficult to predict, including economic trends, the EU enlargement process, and developments in Russia.

¹ Just as the European Union has developed volumes of regulations and rules known as *acqui communautaire*, NATO has developed principles that might be called "NATO *acqui*."

Geostrategic

Since the end of the Cold War, the influence of geostrategic factors on membership decisions has been changing due to the shifting focus of NATO away from Article 5 defense missions to the more likely contingency of an Article 4 operation. This new focus carries different obligations for Alliance members.

Geostrategic factors were dominant during the Cold War, when execution of main defense actions and support to reception and onward movement of heavy defense forces were at the forefront of membership criteria. The 1995 principles on enlargement made clear that membership should be based on a number of considerations, not just ability to contribute to Alliance security.

Some have focused on geographic position as a key criterion. Yet, even during the Cold War, when Article 5 operations were more plausible and defense requirements were greater, NATO lived with "islands" — varying from Iceland to Norway to the U.K. — requiring reinforcement. Today, many potential candidates — such as Slovakia and Slovenia which provide a "land bridge" to NATO's "island" of Hungary, or Romania and Bulgaria as "containing" Serbia, "stabilizing" Macedonia, and tying Hungary to Greece (and Turkey) — are often discussed in geostrategic terms with Article 5 obligations in mind.

Including the states of Southeastern Europe in NATO would have geostrategic value in the context of any future Balkan crisis or with respect to advancing and protecting Alliance interests in Caspian Basin energy developments and even in the Middle East. But the importance of such geostrategic factors in the post-Cold War world may be overstated.

Although Article 4 actions are now more likely, geostrategic factors remain important, though in a different way. For example, in NATO's first Article 4, post-Cold War campaign and in return for their wartime support in Kosovo, NATO extended a limited (in space and time) Article 5 guarantee to non-NATO members — Bulgaria, Romania, Albania and Macedonia — threatened by Belgrade.² Hence, formal accession was not necessary for the Alliance to gain compliance of and access to a MAP (or PFP) partner. [Correspondingly, formal membership does not necessarily guarantee the new member's compliance nor the Alliance's access to its territory during a non-Article 5 contingency; in fact, it might actually *diminish* the Alliance's leverage.³]

In sum, while geostrategic factors will likely remain important in the post-Cold War world, they play a different role in the more likely non-Article 5 contingencies that will challenge NATO. Extending formal membership to MAP partners in southeast or northeast Europe may not provide the necessary solution that many adherents claim.

² "Statement on Kosovo," issued by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Washington, D.C.. Press Release S-1(99)62, 23 April 1999. Paragraphs 13 and 14 noted: "13. We will not tolerate threats by the Belgrade regime to the security of its neighbors. We will respond to such challenges by Belgrade to its neighbors resulting from the presence of NATO forces or their activities on their territory during this crisis. 14. We reaffirm our support for the territorial integrity and sovereignty of all countries in the region."

³ For example, during the Kosovo conflict, NATO found it difficult to contain the independent diplomatic efforts of the Greek and Czech foreign ministers.

Technical

When NATO adopted PFP at the Brussels Summit in January 1994, few had any notion of how important and essential the program would become, and many aspiring NATO members were disappointed, perceiving PFP as a "policy for postponement." In response to persistent partner pressures to join, in September 1995 NATO produced a *Study on NATO Enlargement* that stressed that the goal of enlargement was to "render obsolete the idea of 'dividing lines' in Europe"⁴ and outlined Alliance expectations of new members. The study noted that: "PFP would assist partners to undertake necessary defense management reforms [such as] transparent national defense planning, resource allocation and budgeting, appropriate legislation and parliamentary and public accountability. The PFP Planning and Review Process (PARP) and PFP exercises will introduce partners to collective defense planning and pave the way for more detailed operational planning."⁵

The December 1995 North Atlantic Council (NAC) ministerial launched enhanced dialogues with those partners interested in joining the Alliance. By early 1997, twelve partners had expressed such an interest. When the Madrid Summit extended invitations to the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland in July 1997, NATO reiterated its open door policy, created a new Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) to strengthen the role of partners in PFP decision-making and planning, and adopted new terms of reference under *enhanced* PFP to broaden cooperation beyond peace enforcement operations. The Political-Military Steering Committee (PMSC) continued to manage PFP programs, the PARP became more significant, and NATO expanded the number of Standardized Agreements (STANAGs) made available to Partners (now 1,169) through the Partnership Coordination Center (PCC).

At the June 1998 NATO Defense Ministerial, allies and PARP partners agreed to a report entitled "Expanding and Adapting the PFP Planning and Review Process" which suggested major enhancements to the PARP to make it more closely resemble NATO's Defense Planning Questionnaire (DPQ). Beginning in 1999, NATO approved PARP Ministerial Guidance (now like the DPQ) that replaced the old interoperability objectives with Partnership Goals (PG) for Interoperability and for Forces and Capabilities. The new guidance aimed to develop specific armed forces and capabilities that partners could offer in support of NATO operations. In addition, the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council provided a forum for greater partner participation in deliberations on operations to which partners contribute forces.

NATO's Washington Summit in April 1999 introduced the MAP, in part to convince the remaining nine aspirants that Article 10 (the Open Door policy) was not hollow, and in part to assist them to develop forces and capabilities that could operate with NATO under its new Operational Capabilities Concept (OCC). The MAP went further than the 1995 *Study on NATO Enlargement* in defining what the aspirants needed to accomplish on the path to membership. It was designed to incorporate lessons learned in the accession discussions with the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland.

⁴ *Study on NATO Enlargement*, September 1995, p. 5.

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 12-13.

The MAP includes submission of a tailored Annual National Plan (ANP) that covers political, economic, defense, resource, security, and legal aspects of membership; a feedback mechanism through a NAC 19+1 partner progress assessment; a clearing house for coordinating security assistance; and enhanced defense planning that reviews agreed planning targets. Just as PFP had matured into a fundamental program not originally envisioned by its architects, the MAP process contains the same potential. In fact, one might argue that the MAP's comprehensive program has created the necessary "*NATO acqui*" against which the Alliance can assess the nine MAP partners' technical preparations and capacities and judge readiness for membership. At the same time, the process is reinforcing and deepening the nine MAP partners' expectations of NATO reciprocation.

FOUR POLICY OPTIONS

From the perspective of the shifting weight among political, geostrategic, and technical factors, each of the following four 2002 Summit enlargement policy options can be assessed. Each option solves one set of problems and produces different challenges.

Option 1.

Assert the NATO Article 10 commitment to remain open, but invite no new members.

If the Alliance simply reiterates its commitment to remain open and invites no new members, the key challenge will be to maintain NATO credibility among the nine MAP partners and to keep them engaged in the MAP process to maintain its stabilizing role. While this option has the advantage of not undermining Alliance efforts to further develop cooperative relations with Russia (and Ukraine) and of not having to justify why partners did not receive an invitation, MAP partners will expect more than this. Some are likely to perceive an Alliance brush-off, make claims that NATO is pursuing a new "Yalta-2" policy, and argue that a divided Europe is emerging. In sum, the Alliance will probably find this option difficult to implement and justify, particularly in the face of MAP partner pressures and in light of its objective of maintaining a Europe free and whole.

Option 2.

Invite one or more aspirants to begin accession negotiations.

Inviting one or more aspirants to begin accession negotiations politically maintains momentum and demonstrates and reinforces NATO credibility on Article 10. At the same time, it raises the challenge of dealing with the uninvited MAP partners. NATO would need to persuasively demonstrate to the excluded MAP partners that the invited had actually achieved reforms that justified inclusion. If the case were not credible, it would be difficult to gain U.S. Senate support for the invited candidate(s),⁶ and some MAP partners would conclude that they would never get an invitation and might disengage from further cooperation.

⁶ While the U.S. Senate overwhelmingly supported the accession of the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland, it did go on record noting that guarantees would be expected that additional new members would be producers and not consumers of security. The experiences thus far with new members will only make this concern more salient in the next enlargement round.

In the fall of 1998, the North Atlantic Assembly (Roth) report suggested that NATO invite Slovenia at the April 1999 Washington Summit to demonstrate the credibility of Article 10. The Alliance did not adopt this proposal, in part because consensus did not yet exist and in part because Slovenia had simply not made sufficient effort in the development of its defense capabilities and structures compared to other aspirants. The political argument for maintaining enlargement momentum in order to demonstrate Alliance credibility and the geostrategic argument for a NATO "land bridge" is gradually becoming *less* persuasive after the Kosovo conflict experience coupled with the launching of the MAP and its further evolution. The net effect is the slow shift of balance toward *increasing* the weight of technical performance at the expense of political and geostrategic factors.

Inviting a new member for accession talks in 2002 presents more of a challenge to NATO now because we have acquired additional (and less than exemplary)⁷ performance experience with the three new members and have a more fine-tuned and developed MAP process in place. Whereas previous summits — the 1994 Brussels Summit, 1997 Madrid Summit, and 1999 Washington Summit — were able to develop new programs (such as PFP, then enhanced PFP and EAPC, and later the MAP, respectively) to maintain credibility, NATO's future programmatic options are becoming more limited. We have installed the MAP and need to use the process and its technical criteria to justify an invitation. Unfortunately, all the nine MAP partners have very limited technical capacities at the present time, and making a credible case for any of them on "*NATO acqui*" grounds is not yet possible.

Option 3.

Extend an invitation to all nine aspirants, with the caveat that actual accession will occur only after the specific five MAP chapters of "NATO acqui" have been completed.

This so-called "Big Bang" proposal to invite all nine MAP members gained political momentum with the Vilnius Statement in May 2000 and likely will be followed by additional political efforts. The argument of the nine MAP members is that a NATO accession invitation would permit them to stop politicking to join (and thereby remove the political burden from NATO) and would provide their governments political ammunition to build domestic social support to carry through defense reforms and justify continued participation in the MAP.

The argument that such an invitation would remove political pressure from NATO, though, is questionable. Many of the same MAP partners who have been designated future EU members are continuing to express impatience and vent frustration, arguing that the EU is stalling or delaying the date of accession. In addition, an invitation to the nine would not necessarily help them build social support for defense programs or for NATO. On the contrary, the experience of the three new NATO members since accession indicates that their governments have been unable to generate additional social support for defense budgets and for NATO.⁸

⁷ Since accession on 12 March 1999, all three new NATO members have implemented so-called "strategic reviews" and lowered the force goal commitments. Over the next six years, the Czech Republic will reduce its forces probably to 40,000, Hungary to 37,500, and Poland to 150,000. One could argue that these reviews are the result of defense planning failures in all three countries.

⁸ After becoming a member, Hungary revised downward its pre-accession commitments to raise defense expenditures 0.1 percent per year.

To offset the potential benefits that the nine believe would accrue from an invitation, the political and geostrategic costs of such a decision to NATO are potentially substantial. First, this option would mark a distinct shift in NATO post-Cold War policy in that the (unintended) result would be a *perception* that NATO had drawn lines — that now Europe was once again divided. It would signal to countries like Croatia and Moldova (perhaps less so for Austria, Sweden, and Finland) that they were outside the NATO membership circle, stretching the credibility of Article 10. Second, Ukraine, a fragile, non-MAP, PFP partner of 52 million is delicately balancing internal forces pushing toward the West and pulling toward Moscow and would find its strategic position challenged. Inviting all nine could tilt that balance, driving Ukraine outside the line. Third, such a policy would make it very difficult (if not impossible) for Russia to maintain a cooperative relationship with NATO. This policy would push Russia to become more competitive and to draw a line, perhaps reverberating in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo. In sum, an invitation to nine MAP partners at the next Summit would probably remove temporarily some unpleasant political pressure from the Alliance, but likely result in substantial political and geostrategic costs.

Option 4.

Announce that the Alliance will invite one or more new members at some future (perhaps 2005 or 2006) Summit.

Announcing the intention to invite one or more new members at a future Summit in 2005 or 2006 represents a variation of the December 1996 formulation that committed the Alliance to "invite one or more" at the July 1997 Madrid Summit. Politically, this differs from Option 1 in that it would demonstrate and reinforce NATO credibility about enlarging while remaining consistent with the strategy of building an undivided Europe. Technically, the option provides the (hopefully sufficient) three-to-four years necessary to permit germination and maturation of some MAP partners' technical capacities in fulfilling "*NATO acqui*." Geostrategically, it would provide necessary time to see how Russia evolves under Vladimir Putin, as well as to observe the reform efforts in Ukraine. Whether cooperative or competitive relations evolve in Russia or Ukraine will be the result of their internal evolution, not the result of NATO's *push*.

Success will be defined if the MAP process succeeds in "growing" one or more MAP partners who could be invited to accede to the Alliance on "*NATO acqui*" grounds; partners who through their reforms will be credible enough to the excluded partners to persuade them to remain engaged in the MAP program. Hence, enlargement of NATO will result not in the inclusion of weak "consumer" partners for the sake of political momentum, but in a stronger NATO with "producers" of security, and in continued stabilization of MAP and PFP partners. For these reasons, barring radical political and/or geostrategic upheavals, the U.S. should support a 2002 Summit policy announcing that the Alliance will "invite one or more new members" at a future (2005 or 2006) Summit.

CODA

One rightfully could ask regarding enlargement, to what end? Do limits exist? Does the Alliance have boundaries which it should not cross? The answer, of course, is yes; but these limits are not yet perceptible, because the geographic space comprising the common Euro-Atlantic values that define that area *cannot* yet be drawn with clarity. While many PFP and MAP partners espouse those values, their rhetoric masks the difficulty of transforming stated intentions into reality. NATO's MAP outlines the path and provides the tools. It remains to be seen who among the PFP and MAP partners has the will and capability to traverse that path.