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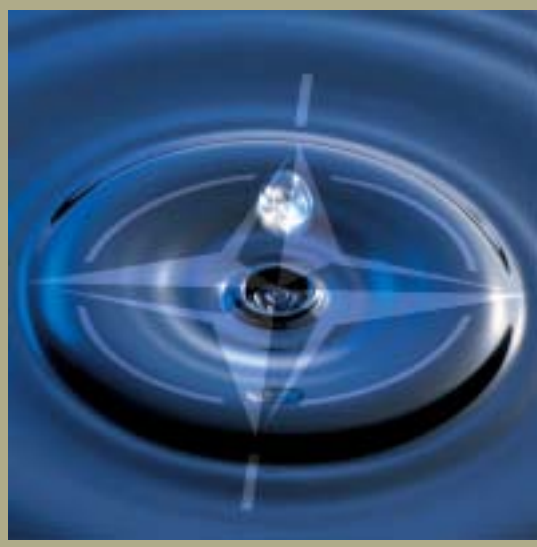

Note : References in this publication to the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia are marked by an asterisk (*) referring to the following footnote:
Turkey recognises the Republic of Macedonia with its constitutional name.

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Alliance purpose and fundamental security tasks

The essential purpose of the North Atlantic Alliance is to safeguard the freedom and security of all its members in Europe and North America in accordance with the principles of the United Nations Charter. To achieve this, the Alliance uses both its political influence and its military capacity, depending on the nature of the security challenges facing Alliance member states. As the strategic environment has changed, so too has the way in which the Alliance responds to security challenges. It continues to preserve stability throughout the Euro-Atlantic area and is evolving to meet new threats such as terrorism and other security challenges beyond its traditional area of responsibility.

The North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) is one of the key structures through which Alliance members implement their security goals. It is an intergovernmental organisation in which member countries retain their full sovereignty and independence, and serves as a forum in which they consult together and take decisions on matters affecting their security. NATO's structures facilitate continuous consultation, coordination and cooperation between members on political, military, economic and other aspects of security, as well as cooperation in non-military fields such as science, information, the environment and disaster relief.

After five rounds of enlargement, NATO's 12 founding members – Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, the United Kingdom and the United States – have been joined by Greece and Turkey (1952), Germany (1955), Spain (1982), the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland (1999) and, in the most recent round of enlargement, Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia (2004).

Collective defence

The Alliance works on the principle that the security of each member country depends on the security of them all. If the security of any one is threatened, all are affected. In signing the Washington Treaty, NATO's founding charter, every member state makes a commitment to each other to respect this principle, sharing the risks and responsibilities as well as the advantages of collective defence. This also means that many aspects of the defence planning and preparations that each country had previously undertaken alone are undertaken together. The costs of providing the facilities needed for their military forces to train and work effectively together are also shared.

Each country remains independent and free to make its own decisions, but by planning together and sharing resources, they can enjoy collectively a level of security far higher than any could achieve alone. This remains the fundamental principle of security cooperation within NATO.

Transatlantic link

The signing of the 1949 Washington Treaty was unprecedented in modern times. It not only diminished the risk of external aggression but also gradually brought together major European countries that had often gone to war against each other in the past, ensuring that there could no longer be any risk of military conflict between them. In fact, they would become dependent on each other and by sharing in each other's security, they would be able to work together effectively in many other fields to improve their prosperity. The significance of the Washington Treaty went even further. It established a security partnership between the European members of the Alliance and the United States and Canada, creating a permanent transatlantic link between Europe and North America.

NATO's transformation

When the Alliance was founded in 1949, the Soviet Union was seen as the main threat to the freedom and independence of Western Europe. Communist ideology, political aims and methods and military capacity meant that, whatever the Soviet Union's real intentions may have been, no Western government could afford to ignore the possibility of conflict. As a result, from 1949 to the end of the 1980s – the period known as the Cold War – the Alliance's main task was to maintain sufficient military capabilities to defend its members against any form of aggression by the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact. The stability provided by NATO during this period helped Western Europe as a whole to rebuild its prosperity after the Second World War, creating the confidence and predictability that are essential for economic growth.

The policies agreed by NATO member countries have evolved continuously in the light of the changing strategic environment. Since the end of the Cold War, Alliance policies and structures have been fundamentally transformed to reflect the sea change in Europe's political and military environment and the emergence of new security threats. In addition, the concept of defence has been broadened to include dialogue and practical cooperation with other countries outside the Alliance as the best means of reinforcing Euro-Atlantic security.

Today, NATO is much more than a defensive Alliance. Indeed, it has reached out to former adversaries and is now working to build and preserve peace and security throughout the Euro-Atlantic area. To achieve this, the Alliance is taking on an ever-greater number of tasks and adopting increasingly flexible, innovative and pragmatic approaches to resolve what are inevitably complex issues. In the process, NATO's central role in guaranteeing the security of the Euro-Atlantic area has been reinforced and many Partner countries are seeking future membership of the Alliance. Three Central and Eastern European countries – the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland – already achieved this objective in 1999. Seven more – Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia – did so in 2004.

NATO's transformation during the past decade has been characterised by a series of visionary initiatives, which represent concrete, highly practical responses to the new security challenges and opportunities of the post-Cold War environment. These include the Partnership for Peace, special relations with Russia and Ukraine, a dialogue with Mediterranean countries, the Membership Action Plan to help aspiring countries meet NATO standards, and effective cooperation with the European Union, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the United Nations. NATO is also actively addressing evolving security challenges by leading crisis-management operations in the Balkans and committing itself to operate when and where necessary to fight terrorism and other new threats beyond the Euro-Atlantic area.

Moreover, to improve its capacity to take on new missions, NATO is adapting and strengthening its capabilities. To this end, three key initiatives were launched at the Prague Summit in November 2002: the creation of a NATO Response Force; the reform of the military command structure; and the Prague Capabilities Commitment through which shortfalls in capabilities are being addressed by member countries' individual commitments and cooperative initiatives.

Fundamental security tasks

The Alliance's Strategic Concept, an authoritative statement of the Alliance's objectives and fundamental security tasks, provides guidance on the political and military means to be used in undertaking them. The publication of this document for the first time in 1991 marked a clear break with the past. During the Cold War, comparable sensitive strategic-planning documents had, understandably, been classified.

NATO's current Strategic Concept, published in 1999, describes the security risks faced by the Alliance as "multi-directional and difficult to predict". The Alliance's fundamental security tasks are defined as:

- acting as a foundation of stability in the Euro-Atlantic area;
- serving as a forum for consultation on security issues;
- deterring and defending against any threat of aggression against any NATO member state;
- contributing to effective conflict prevention and engaging actively in crisis management; and
- promoting wide-ranging partnership, cooperation and dialogue with other countries in the Euro-Atlantic area.

Assessing foreseeable security challenges and risks, the 1999 Strategic Concept concludes that the strategic environment is continuing to change in a generally positive way and that the Alliance, among other organisations, has played an essential part in strengthening Euro-Atlantic security since the end of the Cold War.

However, although the threat of general war in Europe has virtually disappeared, Alliance members and other countries in the Euro-Atlantic region face other risks and uncertainties, including ethnic conflict, the violation of human rights, political instability and economic fragility. In addition, the proliferation of nuclear, biological and chemical weapons and their means of delivery is a matter of serious concern, and the spread of technology could result in the greater availability of sophisticated military capabilities to potential adversaries.

Moreover, Alliance security has to take account of the global context and could be affected by wider risks, including acts of terrorism, sabotage, organised crime and the disruption of the flow of vital resources. Since the publication of the 1999 Strategic Concept and in the wake of the September 2001 attacks on the United States, the threat from terrorism and the risk posed by failed states are being fundamentally re-evaluated.

The first invocation of Article 5

Article 5 is the core clause of the Washington Treaty, NATO's founding charter, which states that an armed attack against one Ally shall be considered an attack against them all. In response to an invocation of Article 5, each Ally determines, in consultation with other Allies, how it can best contribute to any action deemed necessary to restore and maintain the security of the North Atlantic area, including the use of armed force.

Article 5 was first invoked on 12 September 2001 immediately following the 11 September terrorist attacks against the United States. The invocation was initially provisional, pending determination that the attacks were directed from abroad. This was confirmed on 2 October 2001, after US officials presented findings on investigations into the attacks to the North Atlantic Council, concluding that the *al-Qaida* terrorist network was responsible.

On 4 October, the Allies agreed a series of measures to assist the US-led campaign against terrorism. These include enhanced intelligence sharing and cooperation, blanket over-flight clearances and access to ports and airfields for US and other Allied craft for operations against terrorism, and the deployment of part of NATO's standing naval forces to the Eastern Mediterranean and of the Alliance's airborne warning and control systems (AWACS) aircraft to the United States. In addition, individual Allies are contributing according to resources and capabilities, in response to US requests. Assistance includes military support, as well as legal and financial measures to cut the flow of revenue to terrorist organisations.

At the heart of the transatlantic partnership

NATO's roles in providing for the security of its members and undertaking new tasks to extend security and stability further afield are based on a long-standing partnership between its European and North American member countries. The devastation in European countries after the Second World War left them highly dependent for their security on the United States and Canada. The North American Allies deployed large numbers of armed forces on European soil. Since these early days of the Alliance, they have continued to play a vital part in Europe's security – a role that is central to the concept of transatlantic security and an indispensable pillar of the Alliance.

Over the years, the number of North American forces in Europe has gradually decreased. The majority of forces available to the Alliance for the defence of Europe have for many years been provided by its European Allies. Moreover, most of the NATO-led peacekeeping forces in the Balkans, which are also supported by significant troop contingents from Partner countries and other non-NATO countries, are provided by European Allies.

Nevertheless, the United States continues to assume a disproportionate share of the costs of Alliance security and an inequitable share of the responsibility for Alliance actions, as a result of the imbalance between the United States and other Allies in terms of their military capabilities. Having benefited from the post-Cold War peace dividend in the early 1990s, the European Allies and Canada have not made the investments needed to adapt their military capabilities to new security challenges. They remain dependent on the United States in many key areas, such as the airlift capabilities required for rapid deployment of military forces, satellite communications and other areas of advanced technological capability.

Shortfalls in European defence capabilities were first brought into sharp focus during the Balkan conflicts of the 1990s, which demonstrated that European countries were not in a position to act without the support of the United States to prevent conflict from spreading. In the late 1990s, separate initiatives to strengthen defence capabilities were launched by NATO and the European Union (EU). In 1999, the two organisations agreed to establish a strategic partnership.

Lessons learned in the Balkans

When Bosnia and Herzegovina descended into civil war in the early 1990s, the European Union sent observers to monitor the implementation of UN resolutions but had neither the political mandate nor the military forces to do more. The

United Nations deployed forces but these were better adapted to peacekeeping than peace-enforcement operations – and it soon became clear that nothing short of force would end the fighting. The Alliance was, at first, reluctant to get involved since the implications of deploying NATO forces outside the traditional NATO area had not yet been addressed. However, as the situation deteriorated, NATO became increasingly involved between 1992 and 1995, providing military support for the monitoring and implementation of UN resolutions and sanctions. Eventually, when a US-brokered peace agreement was signed at the end of 1995, it was a NATO-led force of 60,000 troops, with a 20,000-strong US contingent, that supported its implementation.

Four years later, when violence in Kosovo escalated and the humanitarian crisis worsened, it was again NATO as a whole that took action, after the failure of all attempts to negotiate a solution. This crisis confirmed shortfalls that had already been identified in European defence capabilities. During the air campaign, most of the sorties were undertaken by US aircraft and, when it came to deploying the Kosovo peacekeeping force, it took several months for the force to reach full strength.

At present, Europe lacks the necessary capabilities to launch and sustain a military operation of the kind that eventually ended both the Bosnian and the Kosovo conflicts. However, the European Union is taking serious steps to strengthen its capabilities and a framework for EU-NATO cooperation (*described below*) has been developed. This allowed NATO to hand over to the European Union its mission in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, where NATO forces had been deployed since 2001, at the request of the country's president, to overcome the crisis in the country (*see chapter 10*). In March 2003, the European Union, using NATO facilities, launched Operation Concordia to take over from NATO, which provided important planning and logistical support to the EU-led troops. Moreover, NATO and the European Union agreed on a joint strategic approach for the Western Balkans in July 2003, and options for the European Union assuming responsibility for security in Bosnia and Herzegovina, with NATO support, by the end of 2004 are being discussed.

Strengthening European capabilities

Initially, it was the Balkan experiences that galvanised European countries into action. The European Union stepped up efforts to develop a European Security and Defence Policy, which would be matched by the necessary crisis-response capabilities. At the outset, defence and security questions were handled on behalf of the European Union by a separate organisation known as the Western European Union (WEU)[1]. However, at its Helsinki summit in December 1999, the European Union decided that it would in future develop its own role in security and defence, and set about creating the structures needed to do so. It also set itself the so-called Headline Goal of being able to deploy and sustain for at least one year a rapid reaction force of up to 60,000 troops by the year 2003.

For its part, the Alliance committed itself to reinforcing its European pillar through the development of an effective European Security and Defence Identity. The aim of this initiative was to support the European Union in its efforts to

[1] ***The Western European Union:*** *Established under the 1948 Brussels Treaty for Economic, Social and Cultural Collaboration and Collective Self-Defence, signed by Belgium, France, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. Subsequently, joined by Germany, Greece, Italy, Portugal and Spain. Functions related to crisis management and humanitarian tasks were taken over by the European Union, following decisions taken at the EU summit in Helsinki in 1999. Commitments under the Brussels Treaty related to collective defence remain unchanged and are safeguarded by a residual WEU secretariat.*

develop a credible security role and at the same time help create a stronger and more balanced transatlantic relationship by allowing European Allies to make a more effective and coherent contribution to Alliance missions and activities. To this end, NATO embarked on a process during the 1990s designed to provide a genuine European crisis-management capability without unnecessary duplication of the military assets and capabilities already available within NATO. Central to this process was the concept of "separable but not separate forces", which would allow for the use of NATO assets and capabilities in possible WEU-led crisis-response operations.

In April 1999, recognising that the European Union intended to become a security actor in its own right, NATO leaders, meeting in Washington, expressed their readiness to define and adopt the necessary arrangements for essential parts of NATO's military assets and capabilities to be made available for EU-led operations in response to crisis situations in which NATO as a whole would not be engaged militarily. Following the EU decisions taken at Helsinki, NATO began discussions and consultations directly with the EU on collaboration between them.

New forms of cooperation have since been defined. NATO and the European Union published a joint declaration in December 2002 on their evolving strategic partnership and in March 2003 agreed on a series of documents on cooperation in crisis management , including arrangements – known as the "Berlin Plus" arrangements – for the use of NATO assets and capabilities for EU-led operations, giving substance to this strategic partnership and opening the way for coordinated action. Permanent liaison arrangements will facilitate greater cooperation and consultation at the operational level. Agreement has been reached on providing for an EU cell at NATO's Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE) based in Mons, Belgium, and for NATO representation at the EU Military Staff.

NATO and the European Union have also concluded an agreement aimed at ensuring consistency, transparency and mutual reinforcement in the development of capability requirements common to the two organisations. In May 2003, the first meeting of the Joint NATO-EU Capabilities Group took place. Initiatives taken to strengthen Alliance defence capabilities (*see Chapter 3*) should be coherent with the European Union's European Capability Action Plan and the pursuit of its Headline Goal, and will help achieve much-needed improvements in the capabilities of European Allies in key areas.

The Alliance continues to be the means by which all NATO members assure their collective defence. It remains the cornerstone of Euro-Atlantic security and maintains its mandate and capacity to carry out crisis-management, peace-enforcement and peacekeeping tasks. The objective of EU-NATO security cooperation is to increase the options available for dealing with crisis and conflict, while avoiding duplication. This will strengthen European military capabilities so that future EU-led operations could be envisaged to deal with crises when the Alliance as a whole is not engaged.

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Strengthening defence capabilities

The Allies are making a concerted effort to strengthen their defence capabilities to ensure that NATO is able to field forces that can move quickly to wherever they are needed, sustain operations over distance and time, and achieve their objectives as quickly and effectively as possible while minimising unintended harm to non-combatants. Maintaining adequate military capabilities and a clear preparedness to act collectively remain of central relevance in today's security environment. In the event of crises that could threaten the security of Alliance members, NATO forces must be able to complement and reinforce political actions, and contribute to the management of such crises and their peaceful resolution.

The drive to improve capabilities was initiated when Allied leaders, meeting in Washington in April 1999, set out their vision of an Alliance for the 21st century: larger, more capable and flexible, committed to collective defence and able to undertake new missions, including contributing to conflict prevention and engaging actively in crisis-management and crisis-response operations. They launched the Defence Capabilities Initiative (DCI) to improve NATO's defence capabilities in key areas.

Over the following three years, the DCI achieved progress in some areas, notably those that required fewer resources, but shortfalls remained in critical capabilities and implementation was slow. In the meantime, the urgency to adapt and modernise has increased due to dangers from new and asymmetric threats, that is, threats from opponents who seek to exploit the vulnerabilities of modern societies and of militarily superior powers, often ruthlessly using unconventional means, particularly terrorism. The September 2001 terrorist attacks on the United States brought into sharp focus the threat posed by terrorism and the subsequent US-led intervention in Afghanistan highlighted continuing shortfalls in Allies' capabilities.

So, at the Prague Summit in November 2002, Allied leaders committed themselves to a more focused approach to strengthening NATO's military capabilities, as part of a package of measures to increase the effectiveness of future operations across the full spectrum of Alliance missions, including against terrorism. A three-pronged approach to improving Alliance defence capabilities was adopted: a new capabilities initiative, the Prague Capabilities Commitment; a NATO Response Force; and a streamlined command structure. Moreover, a series of defence initiatives were launched specifically to address new threats.

Improvements in Allied interoperability and critical capabilities will enable European Allies to make a stronger, more coherent contribution to NATO's missions by addressing shortfalls in European defence capabilities. Such improvements should also be mutually reinforcing with the European Union's efforts to develop military capabilities and to achieve its Headline Goal of creating a deployable corps-sized, rapid reaction force.

Prague Capabilities Commitment

The DCI targeted capabilities to which the Alliance as a whole aspired but did not involve nation-specific commitments. However, under the Prague Capabilities Commitment, individual Allies have made firm and public pledges to make specific improvements to key military capabilities with specific timelines for delivery and high-level monitoring of implementation.

Key capability areas include strategic air and sea lift; air-to-air refuelling, deployable combat support and combat service units; command, control and communications; air-to-ground surveillance; intelligence, surveillance and target acquisition; combat effectiveness, including precision-guided munitions and suppression of enemy air defences; and chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear defence capabilities.

Strengthening defence capabilities will require further reprioritisation in many Allies' defence budgets, for example in reducing force levels and shifting resources towards equipment modernisation. However, in many cases, smarter spending will not be enough and additional financial resources may be required. Cost-effective solutions to defence-capability shortfalls are being explored, such as the pooling of military capabilities, increasing role specialisation, cooperative acquisition of equipment, and common and multinational funding.

Once implemented, the Prague Capabilities Commitment will at least quadruple the number of large transport aircraft in Europe and, by pooling resources, European Allies will also boost their air-to-air refuelling capacity. The stock of non-US, air-delivered, precision-guided munitions is set to increase by 40 per cent by 2007.

NATO Response Force

The NATO Response Force will provide a high-tech, flexible, rapidly deployable, interoperable and sustainable force, including land, sea, and air elements, capable of carrying out the full range of Alliance missions. The development of this high-readiness force will also serve as a catalyst for promoting improvements and greater interoperability in Alliance military capabilities to ensure their continuing transformation to meet evolving security challenges.

Following a first force-generation conference in July 2003, a prototype force was launched in October 2003. An initial operational capability is expected to be ready by October 2004 and the force is due to be fully operational by October 2006. It will then number some 21,000 troops and have dedicated cutting-edge fighter aircraft, ships, army vehicles, combat service support, logistics, communications, and intelligence. It will be able to deploy to a crisis area within five days and sustain itself for 30 days.

New command structure

Allied leaders in Prague endorsed the outline of a leaner, more efficient, effective and deployable military command structure under two strategic commands, one operational and the other functional. The details of the new command structure were finalised in June 2003. It reflects the need for smaller, more flexible and rapidly deployable forces, better suited to NATO's new missions. The number of commands has been reduced from 20 to 11 and their responsibilities have been redefined.

All operational headquarters now come under the Allied Command Operations at Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE), based in Belgium. It is supported by two joint force commands, able to generate a land-based headquarters for Combined Joint Task Forces (CJTF), and a robust but more limited standing joint headquarters from which a sea-based CJTF headquarters can be drawn. CJTFs are flexible command structures that let military commanders draw on services from various countries to match the specific requirements of a particular military operation.

A new Allied Command Transformation (ACT) oversees the continuing transformation of NATO's capabilities and promotes the interoperability of its forces. Replacing the previous Atlantic Command, it is based in Norfolk,

Virginia, United States, but also has a presence in Europe. The fact that the Supreme Allied Commander for Transformation is also Commander of the US Joint Forces Command, the internal change engine for US forces, brings obvious advantages. ACT will play a key role in adapting capabilities and developing doctrine for the new NATO Response Force.

Combating new threats

Several initiatives were taken at Prague to enhance the Alliance's capabilities against terrorism and other new security threats. A military concept for defence against terrorism was endorsed. Cooperation has also been launched with Partner countries in the form of an Action Plan against Terrorism to exchange intelligence and to improve civil preparedness against possible chemical, biological or radiological attacks against civilian populations and to help deal with their consequences.

Five initiatives were launched to strengthen Alliance capabilities against nuclear, biological and chemical weapons: a prototype deployable analytical laboratory; an event response team; a virtual centre for excellence on defence against such weapons; a NATO stockpile of agents for biological and chemical defence; and a disease surveillance system. Moreover, a NATO Missile Defence feasibility study is examining options for protecting Alliance territory, forces and populations against the full range of missile threats. Capabilities to defend against cyber attack are also being strengthened.

On 1 December 2003, a new multinational Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) Defence Battalion achieved its initial operational capability. Based in Liberec in the northern part of the Czech Republic, the battalion is due to reach final operational capability for NATO operations in July 2004. At the time of its launch, 13 countries were participating in the formation of the battalion: Belgium, Canada, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Italy, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Spain, Turkey, the United Kingdom and the United States.

Since the establishment of NATO, the fundamental role of Allied forces has been to guarantee the security and territorial integrity of member states. The task of providing security through deterrence and collective defence remains a fundamental responsibility but, since the end of the Cold War, the role and organisation of NATO's forces have undergone major changes to adapt to the evolving security environment and to promote military cooperation with Partner countries.

During the Cold War, NATO's defence planning was primarily concerned with maintaining the capabilities needed to defend against possible aggression by the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact. With the fall of the Berlin Wall, some suggested that NATO was no longer needed. However, Euro-Atlantic security, while less confrontational, had also become more complex and many new challenges have emerged from outside Europe, including failed states, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery, and terrorism. This new security agenda became clear in the early 1990s with the ethnic conflicts in the Balkans, where NATO's forces were eventually called upon to play a peace-support and crisis-management role.

More recently, the September 2001 terrorist attacks and the subsequent operations in Afghanistan to root out *al-Qaida*, the terrorist group responsible for the attacks, have led to growing concerns about the threats posed by terrorism, failed states and the spread of weapons of mass destruction. NATO forces are now contributing to defence against terrorism and playing a wider role in international peace-support missions, which are taking NATO beyond the Euro-Atlantic area for the first time in its history. So, while the threats facing the Alliance today are less potentially apocalyptic than during the Cold War, they are very real, pressing and often unpredictable.

NATO's conventional forces

Since the end of the Cold War, the overall size of conventional forces has been significantly reduced: ground forces committed to the Alliance by member nations have been cut by 35 per cent; major naval vessels have been reduced by over 30 per cent and air force combat squadrons by some 40 per cent since the beginning of the 1990s. Most forces are no longer maintained at high levels of readiness and have been restructured to give greater emphasis to flexibility and mobility, and to enable them to take on new peace-support and crisis-management roles as well as to work effectively with forces from non-NATO countries.

One example of the way in which new circumstances have led to changes in the way Allied military forces are organised is the introduction of the military concept of Combined Joint Task Forces (CJTFs). This concept provides a flexible structure that lets military commanders draw on services from various countries to match the specific requirements of a particular military operation. It also facilitates the integration of non-NATO countries into NATO-led peace-support operations and allows for possible EU-led military operations using NATO assets and capabilities.

NATO's new crisis-management and peace-support roles (*described in more detail in Chapter 10*) took on increasing importance from the mid-1990s. Between 1992 and 1995, NATO forces became involved in the Bosnian war in support of the United Nations, helping monitor and enforce UN sanctions in the Adriatic as well as the no-fly zone over Bosnia and Herzegovina and providing close air support to the UN Protection Force on the ground. Air strikes, launched in August and September 1995 to lift the siege of Sarajevo, helped shift the balance of power and secure a peace settlement. NATO subsequently deployed a

UN-mandated, multinational force to implement the military aspects of the peace agreement, in December 1995.

In the spring of 1999, NATO's crisis-management role was reinforced when the Allies launched an air operation against the Yugoslav regime to force it to comply with international demands to end political and ethnic repression in the province of Kosovo. A large NATO-led multinational force was then sent in to help restore stability.

Two years later, in early 2001, NATO, in cooperation with the new democratic Yugoslav government, engaged in crisis prevention in Southern Serbia, an area with a large ethnic Albanian population. Later in the same year, NATO together with the European Union engaged in preventive diplomacy to help avoid the outbreak of civil war in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, by encouraging negotiations on a peace plan. A small NATO force deployed in the summer to peacefully disarm the rebels and provide security for international observers, and stability was soon restored.

The Balkan operations have allowed NATO forces to build up a great deal of experience in peace-support and crisis-management operations, and in leading multinational coalitions also involving non-NATO countries. This makes NATO an invaluable asset in today's security environment. Since the 11 September terrorist attacks, the Alliance is increasingly being called upon to contribute to building security in zones of instability beyond its traditional Euro-Atlantic area.

In Afghanistan, the Alliance agreed in August 2003 to take on command of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) to help bring stability to a failed state, long plagued by civil war and a safe haven for terrorists. NATO had previously played a significant planning role in support of Allies, who had taken on lead roles in ISAF. The enhanced NATO role ensures continuity and overcomes the problem of having to find new nations to lead the mission every six months. NATO personnel operate under the ISAF banner and continue to work within a UN mandate, which was expanded in October 2003 to allow for operations beyond the capital, Kabul.

NATO's engagement in Afghanistan is the Alliance's first mission beyond the Euro-Atlantic area. It reflects the seminal decision taken by Allied foreign ministers meeting in Reykjavik in May 2002, that "NATO must be able to field forces that can move quickly to wherever they are needed, sustain operations over distance and time." Moreover, following the US-led intervention against Saddam Hussein's regime, NATO has agreed to support the Polish-led multinational division in central Iraq with force generation, logistics, communications and intelligence. It is prepared to offer similar support to other Allies that request it.

The post-September 11 security environment has also seen the classic use of sea power against new threats. Since October 2001, under Operation Active Endeavour, NATO ships have been patrolling the Eastern Mediterranean, monitoring shipping to detect and deter terrorist activity. The mission has

since been extended to include escorting non-military shipping, upon request, through the Straits of Gibraltar, as well as to include the systematic boarding of suspect ships. In addition to deterring terrorism, the naval operation has brought some unexpected benefits and has had a visible effect on security and stability in the Mediterranean that is beneficial to trade and economic activity.

NATO's nuclear forces

NATO's policy towards nuclear weapons is one of the areas of military policy in which the most radical changes have taken place over the past decade. During the Cold War, NATO's nuclear forces played a central role in Alliance strategy. The existence of significant numbers of these forces and the stated willingness of Allied governments to maintain them and to contemplate their use, was designed to act as a deterrent – not just as a deterrent against the use of nuclear weapons by other countries, but as an ultimate deterrent against any form of aggression.

In the mid-1950s, a strategy of so-called "massive retaliation" emphasised deterrence based on the threat that NATO would respond to aggression against any of its members by every means at its disposal, specifically including nuclear weapons. In 1967, the strategy of "flexible response" was introduced, aimed at deterring aggression by creating uncertainty in the mind of a potential aggressor as to the nature of NATO's response, conventional or nuclear. This remained NATO's strategy until the end of the Cold War.

Nuclear weapons play a much reduced role in Alliance strategy today. Each of NATO's three nuclear powers – the United States, the United Kingdom and France – has greatly reduced the number of their weapons, in some cases by as much as 80 per cent. The circumstances in which the use of these weapons might be contemplated are acknowledged to be extremely remote and they are no longer targeted against any country or specific threat.

The fundamental purpose of the remaining nuclear forces is political: to preserve peace and prevent coercion by making the risks of aggression against NATO incalculable and unacceptable. Together with conventional, non-nuclear capabilities, they create uncertainty for any country that might contemplate seeking political or military advantage through the threat or use of nuclear, biological or chemical weapons against the Alliance.

At the same time, NATO Allies have a long-standing commitment to nuclear arms control, disarmament and the prevention of the spread of nuclear weapons, and NATO supports efforts to reduce nuclear weapons in a prudent and progressive manner as well as efforts to limit the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD). A WMD Centre has been established at NATO to identify requirements and exchange information in this field.

NATO forces

The term NATO forces can be misleading. NATO has no standing army. Instead, individual member countries make commitments as to the types and numbers of forces that will be made available to the Alliance to carry out agreed tasks or operations. These forces remain under national control until called for and are then placed under the responsibility of NATO military commanders.

In fact, NATO has few permanent military forces. Small integrated staffs at various multinational headquarters make up the Alliance's integrated military structure. Some operational forces, such as the NATO Airborne Early Warning Force, maintain permanent facilities for communications or air defence and surveillance. And standing naval forces, consisting of a small number of ships and personnel from some Allies' navies, are deployed on a rotational basis.

While NATO has no standing army, it can mobilize the forces of 26 Allies. Its integrated multinational structure has led to a historically unprecedented level of interoperability among military forces, equipped and trained to work together, according to common standards and procedures. This, together with years of experience of leading multinational crisis-management and peacekeeping operations, makes NATO an invaluable asset in today's security environment, where tackling new threats requires coordinated, international action.

The Alliance adapted to the post-Cold War strategic context by adopting a broader definition of security and launching a broad-based strategy of partnership and cooperation throughout the Euro-Atlantic area, which is now regarded as one of NATO's fundamental security tasks. The process was initiated in 1990, when Allied leaders extended a hand of friendship across the former East-West divide, proposing a new cooperative relationship with countries of Central and Eastern Europe and former Soviet republics.

This set the scene for the creation of the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC) in December 1991, as a forum for consultation aimed at building mutual trust. A few years later, the partnership process took a significant leap forward with the launch, in 1994, of the Partnership for Peace (PfP) – a major programme of practical bilateral cooperation between NATO and individual Partners.

Today, NATO and Partner countries regularly consult on security and defence-related issues in the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC), which succeeded the NACC in 1997. The forces of NATO and Partner countries interact frequently and conduct joint exercises, and their soldiers are deployed alongside each other in NATO-led peacekeeping operations in the Balkans. Steps were taken at the Prague Summit in November 2002 to strengthen cooperation between NATO and Partners and to better focus partnership activities on addressing 21st century security challenges.

The Partnership for Peace

One of the most remarkable international achievements in the field of security in the last ten years has been the Partnership for Peace (PfP) programme. Since its launch in 1994, the invitation to join the Partnership has been accepted by 30 countries: Albania, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, Georgia, Hungary, Ireland, Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Poland, Romania, Russia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan. Among these, ten have since become Allies: the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland in 1999, and Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia in 2004.

Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia and Montenegro have also expressed their desire to join the Partnership for Peace and the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council. NATO looks forward to welcoming these two countries into the Partnership, once they have met the conditions set forth by the Alliance, including full cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, in particular to detain and turn over persons indicted for war crimes to the Tribunal.

Based on the practical cooperation and commitment to democratic principles that underpin the Alliance itself, the purpose of the Partnership for Peace is to increase stability, diminish threats to peace and build strengthened security relationships between individual Partner countries and NATO as well as with other Partner countries. The essence of the PfP programme is the partnership formed individually between each Partner country and NATO, tailored to individual needs and jointly implemented at the level and pace chosen by each participating government.

The formal basis for the Partnership for Peace is the Framework Document. It sets out specific undertakings for each Partner country and enshrines a commitment by the Allies to consult with any Partner country that perceives a direct threat to its territorial integrity, political independence or security. Each Partner makes a number of far-reaching political commitments to preserve democratic societies; to maintain the principles of international law; to fulfil

obligations under the UN Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Helsinki Final Act[2] and international disarmament and arms control agreements; to refrain from the threat or use of force against other states; to respect existing borders; and to settle disputes peacefully. Specific commitments are also made to promote transparency in national defence planning and budgeting to establish democratic control over armed forces, and to develop the capacity for joint action with NATO in peacekeeping and humanitarian operations.

An Individual Partnership Programme is jointly developed and agreed between NATO and each Partner country. Two-year programmes are drawn up from an extensive menu of activities – the Partnership Work Programme – according to each country's specific interests and needs. Cooperation, which focuses in particular on defence-related work, includes practical cooperation that touches on virtually every field of NATO activity. The Work Programme offers activities in over twenty areas ranging from defence policy and planning, civil-military relations, education and training, to air defence, communications and information systems, crisis management, and civil emergency planning.

To ensure that Partner forces are better able to operate with NATO militaries in peacekeeping operations, guidance on interoperability or capability requirements is provided under a PfP Planning and Review Process. This mechanism is modelled on NATO's own force planning system and offered to Partners on an optional basis. Planning targets, or Partnership Goals, are negotiated with each participating country and extensive reviews measure progress. This process has contributed significantly to the close cooperation of Partner countries in the Balkan peace operations.

Over the years, the operational focus of the Partnership for Peace and the involvement of Partner countries in PfP decision-making and planning have been increased. An Operational Capabilities Concept was introduced to develop closer and more focused military cooperation, aimed at improving the military effectiveness of multinational forces. Moreover, a Political-Military Framework has been developed to strengthen consultation with Partner countries during an escalating crisis, which may require the deployment of peacekeeping troops, and to involve them earlier in discussions of the operational plan and the force generation process.

To integrate Partner countries better in the daily work of the Partnership, PfP Staff Elements, manned by officers from Partner countries, have been established at several NATO headquarters. Moreover, at the Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE) at Mons in Belgium, a Partnership Coordination Cell helps coordinate PfP training and exercises and an International Coordination Centre provides briefing and planning facilities for all non-NATO countries contributing troops to the NATO-led peacekeeping operations in the Balkans and Afghanistan.

The Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council

The Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council brings together NATO members and Partners, currently a total of 46 countries, in a multilateral forum for regular dialogue and consultation on political and security-related issues. It also serves as the political framework for the individual bilateral relationships developed between NATO and countries participating in the Partnership for Peace.

[2]***Helsinki Final Act:*** *adopted in 1975 by the then Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) to set standards for international behaviour, introduce confidence-building measures between East and West, promote respect for human rights, and encourage economic, cultural, scientific and technical cooperation.*

The decision, in 1997, to create the EAPC reflected a desire to move beyond the achievements of the NACC and to build a security forum that matched the increasingly sophisticated relationships being developed with Partners under the Partnership for Peace and in the context of the peacekeeping operation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, where troops from 14 Partners countries had deployed in 1996 to serve alongside their Alliance counterparts.

The establishment of the EAPC also complemented steps taken in parallel to enhance the role of the Partnership for Peace by increasing the involvement of Partner countries in decision-making and planning across the entire scope of partnership activities.

In addition to short-term consultations in the EAPC on current political and security-related issues, a two-year EAPC Action Plan provides for longer-term consultation and cooperation in a wide range of areas. These may include, but are not limited to, crisis management and peace-support operations; regional issues; arms control and issues related to the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction; international terrorism; defence issues such as planning, budgeting, policy and strategy; civil emergency planning and disaster-preparedness; armaments cooperation; nuclear safety; civil-military coordination of air-traffic management; and scientific cooperation.

Meetings of the EAPC are held monthly at the level of ambassadors, annually at the level of foreign and defence ministers and chiefs of defence, as well as occasionally at summit level. As of 2005, an annual high-level, stand-alone meeting will address important policy issues of concern to the Euro-Atlantic community. Most Partner countries have established diplomatic missions at NATO's headquarters in Brussels, which facilitates regular communications and enables consultation to take place whenever there is a need for it. NATO and Partner country ambassadors were, for example, able to meet at

very short notice on 12 September in the immediate aftermath of the September 2001 terrorist attacks on the United States. The solidarity expressed on that day by EAPC members – stretching from North America and Europe to Central Asia – and the cooperation that has since been manifest in the US-led campaign against international terrorism show how NATO's partnership initiatives have sown the seeds of a true Euro-Atlantic security culture.

Partnership after Prague

The shared determination to join forces against the terrorist threat was given concrete expression in the launch of a Partnership Action Plan against Terrorism, at the Prague Summit. Steps were also taken to improve cooperation between NATO and Partner countries. A comprehensive review of the EAPC and the Partnership for Peace recommended strengthening the political dialogue with Partners and further enhancing their involvement in the planning, conduct and oversight of activities in which they participate. Moreover, a new cooperative mechanism was introduced, the Individual Partnership Action Plan, which, rather than drawing from a menu of activities, allows the Alliance to tailor its assistance to Partner countries which have asked for more structured support for domestic reforms, according to specific needs and circumstances. Building on progress made at Prague, proposals are being developed in time for NATO's next summit meeting in Istanbul in 2004 to further tailor the Partnership for Peace to tackle key thematic issues and individual Partners' needs and capabilities; to promote defence reform which encourages military transformation and interoperability; and to enhance regional cooperation and mutual support.

Opening the Alliance to new members

NATO membership is open to any European country. Article 10 of the Washington Treaty allows existing members to invite "any European State in a position to further the principles of this Treaty and to contribute to the security of the North Atlantic area" to become a member. NATO's 12 founding members have grown to 26 today after five rounds of enlargement.

NATO's door remains open. After the latest round of enlargement, which saw Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia become members in 2004, another three aspirants, Albania, Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, hope to be invited in future.

The aim of each round of enlargement has been to extend Euro-Atlantic security and to increase NATO's strength, cohesion and vitality, and has not been directed against the security interests of any third country. Each round of enlargement has helped extend security and stability in Europe and heal the wounds of a continent, which suffered two wars in the first half of the 20th century and was then divided by an Iron Curtain for forty years. Greece and Turkey were admitted in 1952. In 1955, only ten years after the end of the Second World War, the Federal Republic of Germany joined, firmly integrating the country into the West and laying the conditions for ultimate German reunification. After much heated debate in political circles, Spain joined in 1982, though it remained outside the Alliance's integrated military structure until 1998. The decision taken at the 1997 Madrid Summit to invite the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland to begin accession talks to join NATO was a major step towards overcoming Cold War divisions by paving the way for former Warsaw Pact adversaries to join the Alliance.

Post-Cold War enlargement

The first post-Cold War round of enlargement was not a foregone conclusion and the decision required unanimity among all existing member countries. Paramount considerations were to preserve the Alliance's ability to take decisions based on consensus and to ensure that enlargement would strengthen European security. A Study on NATO Enlargement, commissioned in 1994 and published a year later, concluded that the admission of new members and the political, military and economic implications of enlargement would further the Alliance's basic goal of enhancing security and extending stability throughout the Euro-Atlantic area. In parallel with developing the Alliance's relationships with Russia, Ukraine and other Partner countries, the process would serve the interests of the whole of Europe.

A key issue throughout deliberations about this first post-Cold War enlargement round was how to correct Russia's perception of the Alliance as a military bloc hostile to Russian interests. The Allies agreed that Russia had an important contribution to make to European stability and security and acknowledged that Russian concerns with respect to the enlargement process needed to be addressed. Nevertheless, the right of each independent European state to seek its own security arrangements and to belong to international organisations had to be respected, as did the right of the members of the Alliance to take their own decisions. Prior to issuing invitations at the Madrid Summit, NATO sought to consolidate and institutionalise its dialogue with Russia through the 1997 Founding Act (*see Chapter 7*) and reiterated its commitment not to deploy nuclear weapons or station foreign troops on the territory of the new members.

Based on the recommendations of the Study on NATO Enlargement and following intensified individual dialogue with interested Partner countries and extensive consultations among Allies, the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland were invited to begin accession talks in 1997 and formally became members of the Alliance on 12 March 1999.

Several countries were disappointed not to be included in the first post-Cold War round of enlargement, but NATO members emphasised that the Alliance would remain open to other countries wishing to join in the future. At the Washington Summit in April 1999, the Allies launched a Membership Action Plan (MAP) to assist candidate countries in preparing for future Alliance membership (*see box*). Seven of the MAP's original participants, namely Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia, were invited to begin accession talks at the Prague Summit in November 2002.

After an extensive series of consultations with the seven countries, the Allies signed accession protocols for the seven invitees in March 2003. Once these protocols had been ratified in all member countries, according to their respective national and parliamentary procedures, the seven new members were able to accede to NATO's founding treaty on 29 March 2004. The new Allies are expected to make further progress on important reform commitments, in particular in the area of defence.

NATO is maintaining its open-door policy beyond this second post-Cold War enlargement round. It has encouraged the three other countries participating in the MAP – Albania, Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia* – to continue to pursue their reform efforts, particularly in the defence and security sectors. In the case of Croatia, full cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia will also be of key importance.

Membership Action Plan

Launched in 1999, based on the experiences of the first post-Cold War round of enlargement, the Membership Action Plan (MAP), assists countries aspiring to join the Alliance in their preparations for NATO membership. Nine countries – Albania, Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia and the former Yugoslavia Republic of Macedonia* – have participated since its inception. They were joined by Croatia in May 2002. Seven of these countries became members in 2004.

To become a member of NATO, aspirants have to demonstrate a functioning democratic, political system and market economy; respect for persons belonging to national minorities in accordance with OSCE standards; the resolution of all outstanding disputes with neighbours and a commitment to the peaceful settlement of disputes generally; the ability and willingness to make a military contribution to the Alliance and achieve interoperability with other members' forces; and the proper functioning of civil-military relations in line with democratic standards.

Participation in the MAP does not guarantee future membership. It does, however, enable all countries concerned to focus their preparations on the goals and priorities set out in the plan and to receive specialist help and assessments from NATO. These cover all aspects of membership, including political, economic, defence, resource, information, security and legal requirements.

Each participating country chooses the elements of the MAP which best suit its needs and establishes its own targets and schedules. Participation in the Partnership for Peace itself, and particularly in the PfP Planning and Review Process, is an integral part of the process, since it allows candidate countries to develop forces and force structures which are better able to operate with Alliance forces. Regular review meetings with Allies are held to monitor progress and ensure that advice and feedback is provided. Implementation of the MAP is kept under constant review by the North Atlantic Council.

Forging new relations with Russia

NATO has been building bridges and developing cooperation with Russia since the early 1990s. The rationale for cooperation between NATO countries and Russia is clear: common security challenges are best tackled through cooperation and Russia's involvement is critical for any comprehensive post-Cold War European security system.

In the wake of the September 2001 terrorist attacks, which reinforced the need for coordinated action to respond to common threats, the NATO-Russia partnership was given new impetus and substance at the Rome Summit in May 2002. A new NATO-Russia Council (NRC) was created, which brings together the NATO Allies and Russia as equal partners to identify and pursue opportunities for joint action. Cooperation is being intensified in key areas of mutual interest and concern.

The decision to deepen their partnership demonstrates the shared resolve of NATO countries and Russia to work more closely together towards the common goal of building a lasting and inclusive peace in the Euro-Atlantic area, which was first expressed in the 1997 NATO-Russia Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security, providing the basis for the NATO-Russia partnership.

Developing relations

Russia was a founding member of the North Atlantic Cooperation Council in 1991 and joined the Partnership for Peace in 1994, and Russian peacekeepers worked alongside NATO counterparts in the Balkans from 1996 until their withdrawal in summer 2003 (*see box page 25*). However, the true basis for a strong and durable partnership between NATO and Russia was provided by the Founding Act, signed in Paris on 27 May 1997. This led to the creation of the Permanent Joint Council (PJC) as a forum for regular consultation on common security issues and the development of a programme of consultation and cooperation.

Much progress was made over the next five years in building mutual confidence and overcoming misperceptions through dialogue. In 1999, despite differences over the Kosovo air campaign which led to a year-long interruption in the PJC's meetings, several activities, including peacekeeping in Bosnia and Herzegovina, continued without interruption.

Yet, the ambitions expressed in the Founding Act were never fully realised under the PJC. Its "NATO-plus-1" format meant that NATO came to the table with agreed Alliance positions, and NATO and Russia exchanged information and conducted consultations in a more or less "bilateral" fashion, which proved cumbersome when the time came to move beyond consultation and to seek more genuine cooperation. When the need for concerted action to tackle international terrorism and other new security threats became urgent in the aftermath of the 11 September attacks, the Allies and Russia were therefore quick to seize the opportunity to take their relationship to a higher level by establishing the NATO-Russia Council to promote cooperation as equal partners (*see box*).

To facilitate cooperation, Russia established a mission to NATO in 1998. Since then, to explain the new NATO and promote the benefits of the NATO-Russia partnership, a NATO Information Office has been set up in Moscow. A NATO Military Liaison Mission has also been established there, which is helping improve transparency and the development of practical military cooperation.

Deepening cooperation

The NRC is evolving into a productive mechanism for consultation, consensus building, cooperation, joint decision and joint action. Already in its first 18 months of existence, political consultations were held on the situation in Afghanistan, Serbia and Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina, and practical cooperation was leading to concrete benefits in many areas.

The NRC has created several working groups and committees on terrorism, proliferation, peacekeeping, theatre missile defence, airspace management cooperation, civil emergencies, defence reform, scientific cooperation and on the challenges of modern society. Experts have been tasked to carry forward individual projects in a broad range of other areas. Hardly a day goes by without an NRC meeting, at one level or another, leading to an unprecedented intensity of contacts and informal consultation.

The struggle against terrorism and new security threats are key areas of cooperation that are generating some of the first tangible results of the reinforced NATO-Russia relationship. Joint assessments of specific terrorist threats in the Euro-Atlantic area are being developed and kept under review and the military's role in combating terrorism is being explored. Cooperation against proliferation of nuclear, biological and chemical weapons and the spread of ballistic missile technology has intensified: a joint assessment of global trends in the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction is being prepared and cooperation in theatre missile defence is addressing the unprecedented danger posed by the increasing availability of ever more accurate ballistic missiles. A Cooperative Airspace Initiative is seeking to foster cooperation on air-traffic management and air surveillance, which will enhance air safety and transparency and will also help counter the threat of the potential use of civilian aircraft for terrorist purposes.

A key objective of military cooperation is to improve interoperability, since, modern militaries must be able to operate within multinational command and force structures, when called upon to work together in peace-support or crisis-management operations. A substantial exercise and training programme is being implemented

The NATO-Russia Council

The 2002 Rome Declaration, which builds on the goals and principles of the 1997 Founding Act, established the NATO-Russia Council (NRC) as a mechanism for consultation, consensus-building, cooperation, joint decision and joint action, in which the individual Allies and Russia work as equal partners on a wide spectrum of Euro-Atlantic security issues of common interest. Continuous political dialogue on security issues enables the early identification of emerging problems, the determination of common approaches and the conduct of joint actions, as appropriate.

The new Council, replacing the PJC, works on the principle of consensus. It is chaired by NATO's Secretary General. Meetings are held at least monthly at the level of ambassadors and military representatives; twice yearly at the level of foreign and defence ministers and chiefs of staff; and occasionally at summit level. An important innovation is the NRC Preparatory Committee, which meets at least twice a month to prepare ambassadorial discussions and to oversee all experts' activities under the auspices of the NRC.

Work under the NRC focuses on all areas of mutual interest identified in the Founding Act. Cooperation is being intensified in a number of key areas, which include the fight against terrorism, crisis management, non-proliferation, arms control and confidence-building measures, theatre missile defence, logistics, military-to-military cooperation, defence reform and civil emergencies. New areas may be added to the NRC’s agenda by the mutual consent of its members.

under the NRC. Logistics, including interoperability tests for equipment and procedures in areas such as air transport and air-to-air refuelling, are another focus of activities. Intensified cooperation in search and rescue at sea was initiated after the August 2000 sinking of the Russian nuclear submarine, *Kursk*, and the loss of its 118 crewmen. A framework agreement between NATO and Russia on submarine crew escape and rescue was signed in February 2003.

Defence reform is another area of shared interest. Russia and NATO countries need armed forces that are appropriately sized, trained and equipped to deal with the full spectrum of 21st century threats. While there is no blueprint for military reform, Russia could benefit from the experience of NATO countries, many of which have introduced fundamental reforms over the past decade to adapt their armed forces to today's requirements. Following an initial brainstorming in October 2002, cooperation has been launched on different aspects of defence reform, such as the management of human and financial resources; macro-economic, financial and social issues; and force-planning. The activities of a successful joint project for the retraining of retired Russian military personnel, set up in Moscow in July 2002, are being expanded. Moreover, the NATO Defense College in Rome set up two fellowships in 2003 for Russian scholars to promote research on defence reform.

Russia and NATO have been cooperating since 1996 to develop a capacity for joint action in response to civil emergencies, such as earthquakes and floods, and coordinate detection and prevention of disasters before they occur. And it was a Russian proposal that led to the establishment of the Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre in 1998 (*see box page 35*). Various disaster-relief exercises and seminars, often including participants from other Partner countries, help develop civil-military cooperation. Under the NRC, work in this area is concentrating initially on improving interoperability, procedures and the exchange of information and experience.

Scientific and technological cooperation with Russia, launched in 1998, focused on three specific areas of particular interest to Russia, namely plasma physics, plant biotechnology and the forecasting and prevention of natural and industrial catastrophes. Under the NRC Science Committee, however, a new focus of cooperation is the application of civil science to defence against terrorism and new threats, such as in explosives detection or in examining the social and psychological impact of terrorism. Environmental protection problems arising from civilian and military activities are a further new area of cooperation, under a Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society set up under the NRC in 2003.

Peacekeeping

For over seven years (until their withdrawal from SFOR and KFOR in summer 2003), Russia contributed the largest non-NATO contingent to the UN-mandated, NATO-led peacekeeping forces in the Balkans. Russian soldiers worked alongside NATO and Partner counterparts to support the international community's efforts to build lasting security and stability in the region.

Russian peacekeepers first deployed to Bosnia and Herzegovina in January 1996, where they were part of a multinational brigade in a northern sector, responsible for an extensive area, conducting daily patrols, security checks, assisting with reconstruction and performing humanitarian tasks, such as helping refugees and displaced people return to their homes.

Russia played a vital diplomatic role in securing an end to the Kosovo conflict, despite political differences over NATO's 1999 Kosovo air campaign. Its troops, originally deployed in June 1999, played an integral part in the Kosovo Force until their withdrawal, working to maintain security in multinational brigades in sectors in the east, north and south of the province; exercising joint responsibility for running the Pristina airfield, alongside a NATO contingent with responsibility for air movement; and providing medical facilities and services in Kosovo Polje.

Close cooperation between NATO and Russia in the Balkans has been critical in improving relations and building trust between the Russian and Allied militaries. The mutual confidence gained should provide a solid basis for further expanding military-to-military cooperation. Moreover, under the NRC, a generic concept for joint peacekeeping operations has been agreed, which develops common approaches, establishes a framework for consultation, planning and decision-making during an emerging crisis, and defines issues related to joint training and exercises.

NATO's relationship with Ukraine recognises the importance of an independent, stable and democratic Ukraine and the country's declared intention to increase its integration in European and Euro-Atlantic structures. This was expressed in the 1997 Charter on a Distinctive Partnership, which provides the formal basis for consultations with NATO on Euro-Atlantic security issues and established the NATO-Ukraine Commission (NUC) to direct cooperative activities.

NATO-Ukraine relations date back to 1991, when Ukraine joined the North Atlantic Cooperation Council, immediately upon achieving independence with the break-up of the Soviet Union. The country's aspirations towards Euro-Atlantic integration were also later reflected in 1994, when it became the first of the Commonwealth of Independent States to join the Partnership for Peace. Ukraine's commitment to contribute to Euro-Atlantic security has since been demonstrated in its support for NATO and its Allies in peacekeeping and crisis-management operations.

To facilitate cooperation, Ukraine established a mission to NATO in 1997 and a NATO Information and Documentation Centre was set up in Kyiv in the same year to help explain the new NATO and promote the benefits of the NATO-Ukraine partnership. In 1999, a NATO Liaison Office was also set up in Kyiv to support Ukraine's defence reform efforts and its participation in the Partnership for Peace.

Steps were taken in Prague in November 2002 to deepen and broaden the NATO-Ukraine relationship significantly with the adoption of the NATO-Ukraine Action Plan (*see box*).

Security cooperation

NATO and Ukraine actively cooperate in maintaining security and stability in the Euro-Atlantic area. In the Balkans, Ukraine has over the years contributed an infantry battalion, a mechanised infantry battalion and a helicopter squadron to the NATO-led peacekeeping force in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and deployments to the operation in Kosovo have included a helicopter squadron as well as a substantial contribution to the joint Polish-Ukrainian battalion. Further testifying to the country's determination to contribute to international stability, Ukraine is providing overflight clearance for coalition forces deployed as part of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan, in which lead roles are being played by individual Allies and where NATO took command in August 2003. Ukraine has also deployed 1,800 troops as part of a Polish-led multinational force in one of the sectors of the international stabilisation force in Iraq, which includes peacekeepers from several NATO and Partner countries.

Support for reform

Through advice and practical assistance, NATO and individual Allies are supporting Ukraine's efforts to achieve the ambitious reform agenda set out in the NATO-Ukraine Action Plan and its related Annual Target Plans. While much remains to be done, progress is being made. Legislative initiatives are helping lay the foundations for political, economic and defence reform, and several governmental structures have been put in place to oversee the implementation and coordination of reform efforts.

A key priority is defence reform, an area in which Ukraine can draw on the experience and expertise of NATO countries. Current Ukrainian priorities are to develop a new security concept and military doctrine and to complete a comprehensive defence review. NATO-Ukraine cooperation focuses on strengthening democratic and civilian control of the armed forces, improving interoperability with NATO forces and helping Ukraine transform its post-Soviet legacy of a large, top-heavy, ill-equipped force structure, into a smaller, modern and more efficient force, capable of meeting its security needs as well as contributing actively to European stability and security.

A Joint Working Group on Defence Reform (JWGDR) facilitates consultation and practical cooperation on issues such as defence budgeting and planning, military downsizing and conversion, the transition from conscript to volunteer forces, and civil-military relations. NATO also promotes the training of senior officers to support the defence transformation process and helps organise retraining programmes to ease the transition to civilian life of discharged Ukrainian military personnel. The Military Committee with Ukraines complements the work of the JWGDR by providing expertise in various areas that support military-to-military cooperation with Ukraine in the framework of the NATO-Ukraine Military Work Plan. Assistance by individual Allies for demilitarisation projects for the safe destruction of Ukraine's stockpiles of surplus and obsolete landmines has been channelled through a PfP Trust Fund.

Ukraine's drive to improve interoperability also benefits from participation in the Partnership for Peace. The PfP Planning and Review Process identifies key requirements for defence planning purposes, and a wide range of PfP activities and military exercises allow Ukrainian military personnel to gain hands-on experience of working with NATO forces.

Wider cooperation

Cooperation in civil emergency planning and disaster preparedness brings direct practical benefits for Ukraine. A key focus has been to help Ukraine, whose western parts are prone to heavy flooding, to prepare better for such emergencies and to manage their consequences more effectively. PfP exercises, including one held in Ukraine's Trans-Carpathia region in September 2000, help test disaster-relief procedures. Moreover, NATO countries and other Partners have assisted Ukraine after severe floods in 1995, 1998 and 2001.

Scientific cooperation with Ukraine started in 1991. Since then, Ukraine's participation in NATO science programmes has been second only to Russia. Cooperation has been boosted under the direction of a Joint Working Group on Scientific and Environmental Cooperation. In addition to applying science to defence against terrorism and new threats, in line with the new direction of NATO's science programme, Ukraine's current priorities for cooperation in science and technology include information technologies, cell biology and biotechnology, new materials and the rational use of natural resources.

NATO-Ukraine Action Plan

The 2002 NATO-Ukraine Action Plan builds on the Charter, which remains the basic foundation of relations. It provides a strategic framework for intensified consultations on political, economic and defence issues and sets out Ukraine's strategic objectives and priorities on the road towards full integration in Euro-Atlantic security structures. It sets out agreed principles and objectives, covering political and economic issues; information issues; security, defence and military issues; information protection and security; and legal issues.

NATO countries support reforms through assistance and advice. However, the burden for implementation falls primarily on Ukraine, which is being urged to take the reform process forward vigorously in order to strengthen democracy, the rule of law, human rights and the market economy. Particular emphasis is required to achieve a far-reaching transformation of the defence and security sectors.

Annual Target Plans, including specific Ukrainian measures as well as joint NATO-Ukraine actions, support the implementation of the objectives set out in the Action Plan. Assessment meetings take place twice a year and a progress report is prepared annually.

Dialogue with Mediterranean countries

Several of NATO's southern European members border the Mediterranean and security and stability in the Mediterranean area are therefore of major importance to the Alliance. Indeed, the security of the whole of Europe is closely linked to security and stability in the Mediterranean region.

For these reasons, in 1995, NATO launched a new dialogue with six countries in the southern part of the Mediterranean region, namely Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia. Algeria became a participant in February 2000. The Mediterranean Dialogue, which is an integral part of the Alliance's cooperative approach to security, aims to contribute to security and stability in the region, to achieve better mutual understanding and to correct misperceptions about NATO in Dialogue countries. The Dialogue complements other related but distinct international initiatives, such as those undertaken by the European Union and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

Political dialogue and practical cooperation

The Dialogue provides for political dialogue and practical cooperation with participating countries. All Mediterranean partners are offered the same basis for discussion and joint activities, but the level of participation varies from country to country according to their wishes.

The political dialogue consists of regular bilateral political discussions at ambassadorial level. These provide an opportunity to exchange views on a range of issues relevant to security in the Mediterranean, as well as on the future development of the Dialogue. Multilateral meetings of the North Atlantic Council with the seven Dialogue countries are also held to provide briefings on NATO's activities and to exchange views on topical events. Such meetings are usually held after each NATO ministerial and summit meeting, or when exceptional circumstances arise. On 23 October 2001, for example, a meeting was held with the Mediterranean partners about NATO's response to the 11 September terrorist attacks.

Practical cooperation is organised through an annual work programme. This includes invitations to officials from Dialogue countries to participate in courses at the NATO School in Oberammergau, Germany, and the NATO Defense College in Rome, Italy. Such courses cover peacekeeping issues, arms control, efforts against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, environmental protection, civil-military cooperation in civil emergencies, and European security cooperation.

Other activities include visits of opinion leaders, academics, journalists, and parliamentarians from Dialogue countries to NATO. In addition, the Dialogue promotes scientific cooperation through NATO's science programme. Since 2000, more than 800 scientists from Dialogue countries have participated in NATO-sponsored scientific activities.

More operational aspects of the programme's military dimension provide opportunities for

officials from Dialogue countries to observe PfP exercises, attend seminars and workshops organised by the Strategic Commands, and visit NATO military headquarters. In addition, NATO's Standing Naval Forces in the Mediterranean visit ports in Dialogue countries. In 2002, 300 officials from Dialogue countries participated in over fifty different activities organised under the military programme offered by NATO.

Three of the Mediterranean partners – Egypt, Jordan and Morocco – have in the past contributed to the NATO-led peacekeeping missions in the Balkans. By May 2002, only Morocco still had soldiers serving in SFOR and KFOR.

An evolving process

The Dialogue is progressive in terms of participation and substance. This flexibility allows its content to evolve and the number of Dialogue partners to grow with time. Over the years, political discussions have become more frequent and intense. The practical dimension has expanded significantly since the Dialogue was launched and now covers most activities in which other Partner countries participate.

The establishment of a Mediterranean Cooperation Group in 1997 gave the Dialogue a new and more dynamic direction. It provides a forum in which views can be exchanged between NATO member states and Dialogue countries on the security situation in the Mediterranean and on the further development of the Dialogue. At the Washington Summit in 1999, further steps were taken to enhance both the political and practical dimensions of the Dialogue, increasing opportunities to strengthen cooperation in areas where NATO can bring added value, particularly in the military field, and in other areas where Dialogue countries have expressed interest.

In the wake of 11 September, NATO and the Dialogue countries have met more frequently for consultations with the North Atlantic Council, both individually and as a group. An upgrade of the initiative was announced at the Prague Summit in November 2002. Alliance leaders agreed a package of measures to increase the political and practical dimensions of the Dialogue, making the strengthening and deepening of this relationship an Alliance priority.

These measures included a more regular and effective consultation process, the identification of more focused activities and a tailored approach to cooperation. As well as deepening existing areas of cooperation, new ones were suggested. These include specially selected activities to improve the ability of Dialogue countries to contribute to NATO-led non-Article 5 crisis-response operations, defence reform and defence economics, consultation on terrorism and on border security, as well as disaster management. The implementation of these measures will help transform the nature of the relationship between NATO and Dialogue countries. Moreover, options for a more ambitious and expanded framework for the Mediterranean Dialogue are being generated for consideration in time for NATO's next summit meeting in Istanbul in 2004.

One of the most significant aspects of NATO's transformation has been the decision to undertake peace-support and crisis-management operations in the Euro-Atlantic area and further afield. In the Balkans, where NATO first committed itself in 1995, instability and conflict posed direct challenges to the security interests of its members as well as to wider European peace and stability. More recently, with its commitment to peacekeeping in Afghanistan, the Alliance has demonstrated that it is prepared to address security challenges beyond its traditional area of responsibility.

Moreover, NATO's involvement in such operations has called for increased contacts and cooperation with non-NATO troop-contributing countries as well as with other organisations. This exemplifies the kind of security cooperation needed today, when close working relationships with international and non-governmental organisations and with non-NATO member countries, such as those participating in the Partnership for Peace, are key.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

Having supported UN efforts to end the Bosnian war between 1992 and 1995 (*see also Chapter 4*), NATO deployed a UN-mandated multinational Implementation Force (IFOR) to Bosnia and Herzegovina, six days after the signing of the Dayton Peace Accord on 14 December 1995, to implement the military aspects of the peace agreement. Its mission was to secure an end to hostilities; to separate the armed forces of the war-torn country's newly created entities, the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Republika Srpska; and to transfer territory between the two entities. IFOR completed its work within a year and was replaced by a smaller Stabilisation Force (SFOR) in December 1996.

In addition to deterring a resumption of hostilities and promoting a climate in which the peace process could move forward, SFOR's mission was extended to include support for civilian agencies involved in the international community's efforts to build a lasting peace in the country. The peacekeeping troops help refugees and displaced persons return to their homes and contribute to reforming the Bosnian military forces. Moreover, SFOR is active in apprehending indicted war criminals and transferring them to the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia in The Hague.

As the security situation has improved, the number of troops has been progressively reduced. By spring 2004, SFOR consisted of some 7,000 troops, a significant reduction on the 60,000 that were deployed under IFOR, reflecting the progress Bosnia and Herzegovina has made towards self-sustaining peace. Options for the future size and structure of SFOR are being assessed, including a possible termination of the operation by the end of 2004 with a transition possibly to an EU-led force, though NATO will maintain a presence in the country.

Kosovo

During 1998, open conflict in the Yugoslav province of Kosovo, which is predominantly populated by ethnic Albanians, forced more than 300,000 people to flee their homes. Belgrade ignored repeated international demands for the withdrawal of Serbian forces and for cooperation in bringing an end to the violence and allowing refugees to return. When NATO threatened the use of air strikes in October 1998, Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic agreed to comply and the air strikes were called off. The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) sent in observers, while NATO undertook aerial surveillance and deployed a military task

force to the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, ready to evacuate OSCE observers should renewed conflict put them at risk.

Violence flared up again at the beginning of 1999. Serbian forces intensified their operations. Intensive and concerted international diplomatic efforts to resolve the conflict failed; the OSCE observer mission withdrew in March. A few days after the OSCE's withdrawal, as a last resort, an Allied air campaign was launched against targets in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. It took 78 days of air strikes to force the Milosevic regime to end its repression and agree to the international community's demands. NATO held together, seeking only to strike the regime and military targets and taking care to minimise civilian casualties. At the same time, Allied forces helped alleviate the refugee crisis in neighbouring Albania and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia,* where, at their peak, the figures for ethnic Albanian refugees reached 445,000 and 330,000, respectively. Moreover, some 400,000 were believed to have been displaced inside Kosovo.

Following the conclusion of a Military Technical Agreement between NATO and Yugoslav commanders, a NATO-led Kosovo Force (KFOR) deployed to the province under a UN mandate. Its mission was to deter renewed hostility, establish a secure environment and demilitarise the Kosovo Liberation Army, as well as to support the international humanitarian effort and the work of the UN Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK).

At full strength, KFOR's initial deployment numbered some 43,000 troops. Progressive troop reductions have more than halved this figure. In June 2003, KFOR comprised troops from most NATO member states, 15 Partner countries and three other countries, namely Argentina, Morocco and New Zealand.

Following the Kosovo Liberation Army's undertaking to disband, KFOR has collected and destroyed a significant number of small arms and helped to build the Kosovo Protection Corps, a local civil-emergency force, which operates under UNMIK's authority and KFOR's day-to-day supervision. KFOR troops also patrol Kosovo's borders and man crossing points and guard key sites. Considerable manpower is engaged in protecting Serb inhabitants, who have returned to the province.

In close cooperation with UNMIK, KFOR is helping build a secure environment in which all citizens, irrespective of their ethnic origins, can live in peace and in which the growth of democracy can be fostered with international aid. This will be a difficult and long-term task. But civil reconstruction is underway and a measure of security and normal life has now been re-established for the local inhabitants.

Southern Serbia

In early 2001, NATO, the European Union and the OSCE pursued a concerted conflict-prevention strategy to help bring about the peaceful resolution of an armed conflict in Southern Serbia, which threatened the

stability of the region. Trouble had broken out in late 2000 in the Presevo Valley, where a large ethnic Albanian community remained under Serbian direct rule, lacking adequate political and social rights. Lightly armed ethnic Albanian fighters launched a series of attacks on Serbian security forces in the Ground Safety Zone – a five-kilometre-wide buffer zone along Kosovo's internal boundary with Serbia, off-limits to the Yugoslav Army, which was supervised by the NATO-led Kosovo Force under the terms of a Military Technical Agreement between the Alliance and the Yugoslav Army.

The rapidly escalating conflict presented a serious security risk with immediate implications for Kosovo. A political solution was needed both to guarantee enhanced rights for ethnic Albanians in Southern Serbia and to uphold the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

During spring 2001, a series of high-level contacts between NATO and the new Yugoslav government in Belgrade led NATO to agree to a gradual and progressive reduction of the Ground Safety Zone to allow the Yugoslav Army to re-establish control over the area. In return, the Belgrade government was required to introduce a number of confidence-building measures, which eventually persuaded the ethnic Albanian fighters to lay down their arms in May. A NATO team accompanied by an EU representative helped negotiate cease-fires and establish direct channels of communication between Serbian authorities and ethnic Albanian armed groups.

A broad set of measures was agreed to facilitate the speedy integration of ethnic Albanians into political and administrative structures in the region and the return of refugees. The international community monitored and assisted in implementation. The OSCE set up a programme to train a multi-ethnic police force for deployment in the mostly Albanian villages formerly held by the rebels and helped organise local elections, held in August 2002, to ensure more fair and equal representation of ethnic groups.

The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*

NATO forces took on clearly defined crisis-management missions in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia* from 2001 at the

request of the government. Internal unrest erupted in spring 2001, as ethnic Albanian armed groups challenged the authorities. NATO condemned the armed attacks and tightened controls along the border with Kosovo, while urging the government to pursue constitutional reforms to address ethnic Albanian grievances, with NATO's Secretary General playing a key role.

In June, NATO agreed to a formal request for military assistance in demilitarising the ethnic Albanian so-called National Liberation Army, on condition that a cease-fire was implemented and that a peace plan was agreed. A framework agreement was in place in August, which opened the way for NATO to send in 3,500 troops on a 30-day mission to disarm the ethnic Albanian armed groups.

At the end of September, following on from this mission, NATO was requested to keep a small force in the country to contribute to the protection of EU and OSCE observers, who were monitoring the implementation of the framework agreement. Some 700 NATO troops were deployed to participate in this operation, joining a small contingent of NATO troops, already based in the country to assure KFOR's lines of communication and logistics. This NATO operation was terminated in March 2003, when responsibility for the mission was handed over to the European Union, thanks to EU-NATO agreements allowing for the use of NATO military assets and capabilities for EU-led operations (*see Chapter 2*). As of 15 December 2003, thanks to success achieved in stabilising the situation, the EU-led military operation was terminated and replaced by an EU civilian police operation.

Afghanistan

In August 2003, NATO took over responsibility for the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) IV in Afghanistan to assist the Afghan Transitional Authority in creating a safe environment for the citizens of Kabul and the surrounding area. The country is trying to recover from two decades of civil war and, more recently, the destructive rule of the *Taliban*, who harboured terrorists.

ISAF is a UN-mandated international force that was put into place at the end of 2001. The first mission was led by the United Kingdom and consisted of forces from other countries, most of which were NATO member countries. ISAF II was then led by Turkey, and ISAF III jointly by Germany and the Netherlands. The original mandate limited ISAF operations to Kabul and the surrounding areas, however, in October 2003, a UN Security Council resolution authorised the expansion of operations beyond Kabul.

NATO has agreed to expand its mission more widely within Afghanistan, especially through temporary deployments outside Kabul and assuming military command of a substantial number of Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs), which are helping to stabilise the regions. Beginning with support to the German-led PRT in Kunduz, ISAF will progressively expand its role to support other PRTs. Many serious challenges are being faced in Afghanistan, as the international community works to help Afghans rebuild their country. NATO has committed itself to remaining in Afghanistan as long as it is needed there. A comprehensive strategy for NATO's engagement in Afghanistan is to be developed in time for NATO's next summit meeting in Istanbul in 2004, in close consultation with other international organisations and the Afghan Transitional Authority.

Responding to civil emergencies

All countries are responsible for ensuring that plans are in place at the national level for dealing with emergencies such as accidents involving chemicals or toxic spills, avalanches, floods and earthquakes, or managing the consequences of terrorist attacks. But disasters, whether man-made or natural, do not recognise international borders, so cooperation and planning at the international level is indispensable.

Cooperation between NATO countries has been taking place in the field of civil emergency planning for many years. More recently, this cooperation has been extended to include Partner countries. Major advances have been made in the way resources are organised to deal with civil emergencies in the Euro-Atlantic area.

Coordination within NATO

Effective responses to disasters call for the coordination of transport facilities, medical resources, communications, disaster-response capabilities and other civil resources. NATO has played a vital role in harmonising planning among its member countries, ensuring that the plans will work when required and making sure that the resources on which they depend are available.

Within NATO, the mechanism used for coordinating planning in this field consists of a series of technical planning boards and committees, working under the overall direction of a Senior Civil Emergency Planning Committee. These bodies regularly bring together experts from national governments, industry and the military to coordinate planning in relation to European inland surface transport, ocean shipping, civil aviation, food and agriculture, industrial production and supply, post and telecommunications, medical matters, civil protection, and petroleum production and supply.

Wider cooperation

Today, NATO experience and expertise in civil emergency planning is being made more widely available and is simultaneously drawing on the knowledge and capabilities of other countries participating in the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council. Increasingly, NATO's Partner countries are becoming actively involved in concrete forms of cooperation in the work of the planning boards and committees and, in 1998, a Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre was established (*see box*).

Civil emergency planning is also an important aspect of overall cooperation programmes with Partner countries and now makes up the largest non-military component of activities under the Partnership for Peace. Such activities include seminars, workshops, exercises and training courses, which bring together civil and military personnel from different levels of local, regional and national governments. Other international organisations, such as the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, the International Atomic Energy Agency and the European Union, are also important participants, as are non-governmental relief organisations.

The events of 11 September 2001 brought home the urgency of cooperation in preparing for possible terrorist attacks on civilian populations using chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear (CBRN) weapons. The Partnership Action Plan against Terrorism, issued at the Prague Summit in November 2002, encourages the sharing of related information and the participation in civil emergency planning to assess risks and reduce the vulnerability of civilian populations to terrorism and weapons of mass destruction. NATO and its Partner countries are working on an inventory of national capabilities that would be available in the event of such an attack. Moreover, a Civil Emergency Planning Action Plan has been agreed to assist national authorities in improving their civil preparedness for possible terrorist attacks with CBRN weapons. Discussions on the respective roles and capabilities of NATO and the European Union in the field of civil emergency planning have also been launched.

A Euro-Atlantic disaster-response capability

The need for a more coordinated Euro-Atlantic disaster-response capability led to the establishment at NATO headquarters, in June 1999, of a Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre (EADRCC), based on a proposal made by Russia. The Centre acts as a focal point for information sharing and coordinates responses among NATO and Partner countries to disasters in the Euro-Atlantic area. It also organises major civil emergency exercises which practice responses to simulated natural and man-made disaster situations.

The EADRCC contributed to humanitarian relief operations during the Kosovo refugee crisis and has done valuable work in response to major floods in Ukraine, Romania, Hungary, Albania and the Czech Republic; the Turkish earthquake in 1999; forest fires in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia* and Portugal; and extreme weather in Ukraine and Moldova.

The Centre works closely with the UN agencies that play a leading role in responding to international disasters – the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees – and other organisations.

Countries are encouraged to develop bilateral or multilateral arrangements to address issues such as visa regulations, border-crossing arrangements, transit agreements, customs clearance and status of personnel. Such measures avoid bureaucratic delays in the deployment of relief items and teams to an actual disaster location.

Arrangements have also been made for a Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Unit, made up of a mix of national elements, to be established when required and dispatched to emergency locations.

Collaborating in science and environment

Two distinct NATO programmes bring together scientists and experts on a regular basis to work on problems of common interest – the civil science programme of the NATO Science Committee and the environment and society programme of the Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society (CCMS). The networks created through collaboration, which is a tradition among scientists and a requirement for scientific progress, also fulfil a political goal of building understanding and confidence between communities from different cultures and traditions.

The science programme, which has been in existence for more than 45 years, has recently been reoriented to focus exclusively on priority research topics in defence against terrorism or countering other threats to security. In line with Alliance initiatives in countering new threats, NATO's civil science programme now concentrates its support for collaboration on topics in these areas. To reflect this fundamental change a new name has been selected for the programme, which is now known as the NATO programme for "Security Through Science".

The CCMS deals with problems of the environment and society by bringing together national agencies to collaborate on pilot studies in these areas. It has recently defined a number of security-related key objectives to guide its future work. The programme enhances cooperation between NATO and Partner countries in addressing problems of common concern.

As well as promoting core cooperative activities between scientists and experts from NATO and Partner countries, special initiatives of both committees foster increased cooperation with the scientific and environmental communities in Russia, Ukraine and the Mediterranean Dialogue countries.

Science for security, stability and solidarity

The origins of the NATO Science Programme go back to the 1950s, when progress in science and technology was considered to be of great importance to the future of the Atlantic community. A programme to promote scientific collaboration was therefore established, and for the next 40 years, collaboration between scientists in NATO countries was supported, setting high standards of scientific excellence.

From the early 1990s, after the end of the Cold War, the programme was gradually opened up to participation from non-NATO countries, until

in 1999 it was completely converted to provide support for collaboration between scientists in NATO countries and those in Partner countries or countries participating in the Mediterranean Dialogue. The clear focus has been on promoting progress and peace by creating links between scientists in these formerly separated communities.

From 2004, a further fundamental change has been introduced to the programme following the new threat of terrorism as well as other threats to the security of the modern world. The programme will in future offer support for collaboration only in priority research topics in the two areas of "Defence Against Terrorism" and "Countering Other Threats to Security".

The aim of the new "Security Through Science" programme is to contribute to security, stability and solidarity among nations, by applying science to problem solving. Collaboration, networking and capacity-building are means used to accomplish this end. Different types of grants are offered to working scientists in NATO, Partner and Mediterranean Dialogue countries to collaborate on the priority research topics. Grants are also offered to assist partner countries in setting up basic computer networking infrastructure.

Virtual Silk Highway

The largest and most ambitious project to be sponsored by the NATO Science Programme was launched in October 2001. Called the Virtual Silk Highway – a reference to the Great Silk Road which used to link Europe to the Far East, promoting the exchange of goods and of knowledge and ideas – the project has provided computer networking and internet access for the academic and scientific communities of eight countries in the Southern Caucasus and Central Asia.

Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan lie on the fringes of the European internet arena and their level of development is such that they will not be able to afford fibre-optic connection in the foreseeable future.

Through this NATO project, cost-effective, state-of-the-art satellite technology now connects the scientific and academic communities of participating countries to the internet, via a common satellite beam. The NATO grant has financed satellite bandwidth and the installation of nine satellite dishes – eight small ones in the countries linked to a large dish in Hamburg, Germany, which serves as the European hub. Other co-sponsors are contributing in kind.

A decision was taken in 2003 to extend the Virtual Silk Highway network to Afghanistan by installing a satellite ground station in Kabul.

Civil science has proved to be a highly effective vehicle for international dialogue, due to its universality and its ability to create new and highly effective international networks. The talent garnered in these scientific networks can be applied to the emerging threats to the Alliance. Science is both a means of finding answers to critical questions and a way of connecting nations.

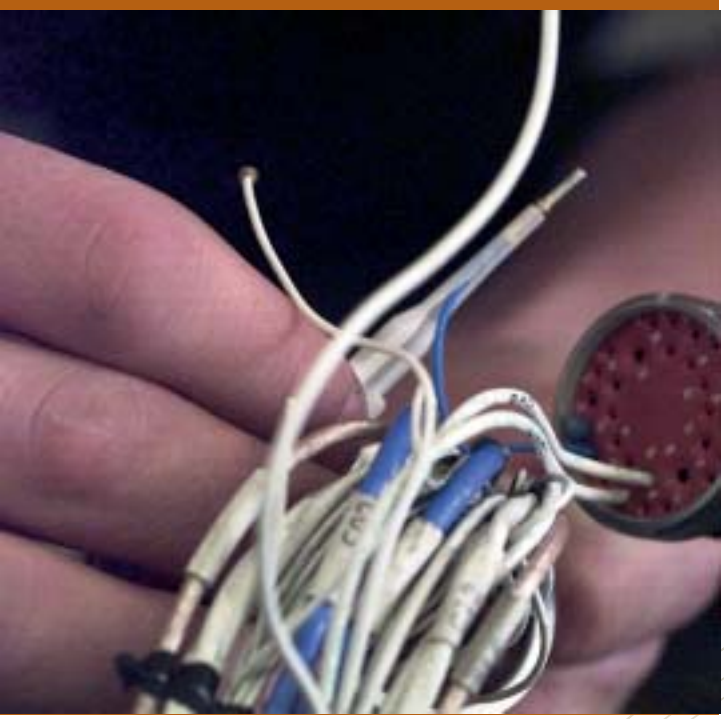
Tackling the challenges of modern society

The CCMS was created in 1969 to respond to concerns about environmental issues. It provides a forum for experts in different national agencies to share knowledge and experiences on technical, scientific and policy aspects of social and environmental matters, both in the civilian and military sectors.

Projects undertaken under the auspices of the CCMS promote cooperation in tackling problems affecting the environment and quality of life, such as environmental and noise pollution, urban problems, energy, human health, and defence-related environmental problems. In the latter sphere, typical areas of investigation are issues such as the re-use of land formerly used for military purposes, clean-up methodology, and environmental security, for example, with regard to oil pipelines.

The CCMS works on a decentralised basis, encompassing activities such as pilot studies, projects, workshops and seminars, all of which are funded nationally. One or more nations assume a lead role and take on responsibility for planning and coordinating the work. In recent years, activities have been broadened to include workshops and new studies on topics of particular interest to Partner countries.

The CCMS has also defined a number of key objectives to guide its future work, which are: reducing the environmental impact of military activities; conducting regional studies including cross-border activities; preventing conflicts in relation to scarcity of resources; addressing emerging risks to the environment and society that could cause economic, cultural and political instability; and addressing non-traditional threats to security.



The vulnerability of interconnected society

Today's society is more vulnerable than it used to be due to ever-increasing interconnectivity at all levels. A more open global community, more complex technological systems, increased dependency on electronic information and communications systems, intertwined food-production and delivery systems, interconnected and increasingly dense transportation systems – all these give rise to new and changing manifestations of vulnerability. The loss of telecommunications and power supply for an extended period of time, for example, could cause major disruption. And, in the wake of 11 September 2001, concerns about non-traditional terrorist threats, such as biological attacks or cyber warfare, have risen.

Preserving security and protecting society from a broad spectrum of challenges requires cooperation and coordination between different agencies in many areas, at both the national and international level. This has been seen in the US-led campaign against terrorism, which has involved not only military cooperation but also diplomatic, financial, economic, intelligence, customs and police cooperation.

A short-term project was launched in March 2001, under the auspices of the CCMS, to review common challenges and identify areas for greater international cooperation to reduce the vulnerability of complex, interdependent systems, which are vital to the functioning of modern society. Norway has taken the lead on this project, which involves Denmark, Georgia, Hungary, Lithuania, Moldova, Poland, Romania, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, the United Kingdom and the United States.

NATO is not a supranational but an intergovernmental organisation. It is an alliance of independent sovereign states, which have come together in the interests of joint security and the defence of common values. Decisions are reached on the basis of consensus.

To facilitate consultation, each member country is represented by a permanent delegation at NATO's political headquarters in Brussels, consisting of a Permanent Representative, who is the head of the delegation, and a Military Representative. Each of them is supported by a staff of civilian and military advisors, who represent their countries on different NATO committees.

Separate civilian and military structures have been established within NATO to deal with the political and military dimensions of Alliance work. Both structures support the North Atlantic Council, NATO's highest decision-making body.

Consensus and common consent

The Alliance is based on a shared commitment to practical, mutual cooperation on defence and security issues. There are no voting procedures in NATO and decisions are reached on the basis of consensus or common consent. This means that political consultation is a vital part of the decision-making process. All NATO bodies are made up of representatives of the member countries, whose role is to represent their country's point of view to their Allies and to report back to their own governments on the positions of other Allies.

While political consultation in NATO is an essential component of crisis management and is therefore often associated with periods of tension and difficulty, it is just as much an everyday activity, which enables member countries to explore the scope for reaching agreement and formulating long-term policies. Consultation takes many forms. It can involve simply sharing or exchanging information and opinions; communicating actions or decisions that governments have taken, or may be about to take, which could have a bearing on the interests of their Allies; providing advance warning of government actions or decisions and an opportunity for others to comment upon or endorse them; discussion with the aim of reaching a consensus on policies to be adopted or actions to be taken in parallel; or consultation designed to enable member countries to agree on collective decisions or joint action.

The consultation process is a continuous one. Since member state representatives are co-located within the same headquarters in Brussels, consultation between Allies can take place at the request of any of them, or on the initiative of NATO's Secretary General, at short notice. The machinery for consultation ensures that there is a permanent dialogue and plenty of opportunity to discuss and explain concerns.

Sometimes member countries find themselves in complete agreement and taking decisions poses no problem. Sometimes there is a majority view but one or more countries have a different opinion, in which case efforts are made to narrow the gap and, if necessary, reach a compromise. It is, of course, possible that differences may not be reconciled. In that case, individual member countries are free to pursue their preferred course of action. No member country is forced to take actions or to make decisions against its will. In general, however, a spirit of compromise and a sense of shared interests and objectives ensures that despite differences of opinion enough common ground for agreement can usually be found. Once taken, Alliance decisions represent the common determination of all the countries involved.

NATO's civilian structure

The most important decision-making body is the North Atlantic Council. Responsible for all NATO decisions, it is the only body established by the North Atlantic Treaty. The Council is, first and foremost, a political forum that brings together representatives of all member countries to

discuss policy or operational questions. It can meet at different levels, usually at least once a week with the ambassadors of each country, at least twice a year with foreign or defence ministers, and occasionally with heads of state or government. At whatever level it meets, its decisions have the same authority and reflect the views of each government. Normally, it meets to discuss issues of common concern or issues requiring collective decisions but there are no restrictions on subjects that the Council may discuss.

The Defence Planning Committee deals with most defence matters and subjects related to collective defence planning. It provides guidance to NATO's military authorities and has the same authority as the Council on matters within its competence. Like the Council, it normally meets at ambassadorial level but, at least twice a year, it meets at the level of defence ministers. Defence ministers also meet regularly in the Nuclear Planning Group, which keeps the Alliance's nuclear policy under review and discusses a broad range of specific policy issues associated with nuclear forces and wider concerns such as nuclear arms control and proliferation. France, which is not part of NATO's integrated military structure, does not participate in either the Defence Planning Committee or the Nuclear Planning Group.

Responsible to the Council and to the Defence Planning Committee are many subordinate committees, which discuss specialised aspects of policy and make recommendations for final decisions. Every member country is represented on each of these committees. One example is the Political Committee, which meets regularly, at different levels of seniority, to advise the Council on the main political questions of the day that have a bearing on Alliance policy. Another is the Defence Review Committee, which oversees the process of consultation leading to decisions on the level of military forces which member countries will make available to NATO's integrated military structure during the next planning period. NATO's Infrastructure Committee examines proposals for the common funding of facilities for use by NATO forces. The Economic Committee focuses on economic developments with a direct bearing on security policy. Budget Committees submit proposals to the Council for the management of the civilian and military budgets to which each nation contributes.

Consultation takes place across the entire spectrum of Alliance activities. A Conference of National Armaments Directors comes together regularly to consider political, economic and technical aspects of the development and procurement of equipment for NATO forces. In the field of information, a NATO committee on public diplomacy focuses on activities aimed at improving knowledge and understanding of NATO and its policies in both NATO and Partner countries. Issues concerning the Alliance's scientific activities and environmental programmes are discussed by the Science Committee and the Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society. Other committees and groups, such as the Political-Military Steering Committee on Partnership for Peace, help develop and oversee cooperation with Partner countries.

Alliance activities which involve Partner countries, such as peacekeeping or the PfP programme, are discussed with the governments concerned. Consultations are undertaken in the appropriate forums such as the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council, the NATO-Russia Council and the NATO-Ukraine Commission. Similarly, Mediterranean Dialogue activities are discussed with participating countries in the Mediterranean Cooperation Group. NATO attaches fundamental importance to the continuing work of these bodies. They provide useful fora, particularly in times of crisis, where differences can be discussed and views exchanged.

NATO's military structure

NATO's military structure is overseen by the Military Committee, which is the highest military authority in the Alliance but remains under the political authority of the North Atlantic Council. The Committee provides military advice to the Alliance. At its highest level, it gathers the Chiefs of Staff but, on a day-to-day basis, member countries are represented by their Military Representatives.

The Military Committee also provides guidance to the NATO Strategic Commanders. There are two such commanders, namely the Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR), whose headquarters – the Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE) – are at Mons in Belgium, and the Supreme Allied Commander Transformation (SACT), who is based at Norfolk, Virginia, in the United States.

SACEUR is at the head of Allied Command Operations, which commands military forces members have agreed to make available to NATO. He is therefore responsible for all NATO operations, regardless of their location, and is dual-hatted as Commander, US European Command.

SACT has a functional role. As head of Allied Command Transformation, he is responsible for promoting and overseeing the continuous transformation of Alliance forces and capabilities. He is also dual-hatted as Commander US Joint Forces Command.

The division of responsibilities of the two commanders was previously geographical with SACEUR at the head of NATO operations in Europe and the Supreme Allied Commander Atlantic (SACLANT) responsible for operations over the Atlantic Ocean. The streamlining of the military command structure was put forward and approved at the Prague Summit in November 2002. It reflected NATO's commitment to develop the capabilities and maintain the force readiness needed for crisis-management, peace-support and humanitarian tasks within and beyond its traditional area of responsibility. It was complemented by the creation of a NATO Response Force and the launching of the Prague Capabilities Commitment (*see Chapter 3*).

The NATO Parliamentary Assembly

The Alliance is an intergovernmental organisation, each member government being responsible to its own parliament. The support of the democratically elected parliamentary representatives for the goals of the Alliance is therefore important. The NATO Parliamentary Assembly is the inter-parliamentary forum of NATO member countries, bringing together European and North American legislators to discuss issues of common interest and concern.

The Assembly is completely independent of NATO but constitutes a link between national parliaments and the Alliance that encourages governments to take Alliance concerns into account when framing national legislation. It also acts as a permanent reminder that intergovernmental decisions reached within NATO are ultimately dependent on political endorsement by national democratic processes. The NATO Parliamentary Assembly also has extensive contacts with parliaments in Partner countries, which send representatives to participate in its discussions and deliberations.

The role of NATO's Secretary General

The Secretary General promotes and directs the process of consultation and decision-making throughout the Alliance. He is Chairman of the North Atlantic Council and of other senior committees and has considerable influence on the decision-making process. He may propose subjects for discussion and can use his position as an independent and impartial chairman to steer the discussion towards consensus in the interests of the Alliance as a whole. However, the Secretary General does not have the power to take policy decisions himself and can act on behalf of NATO only to the extent that the member governments agree that he should do so.

He is also the main spokesman for the Alliance and is at the head of the International Staff, which supports the work of the member countries at different committee levels.

Who pays for NATO?

Contributions to NATO budgets are calculated according to agreed cost-sharing formulae and represent only a small proportion of NATO countries' overall defence budgets.

Common-funded budgets are managed through separate civil and military budgets and a security investment programme.

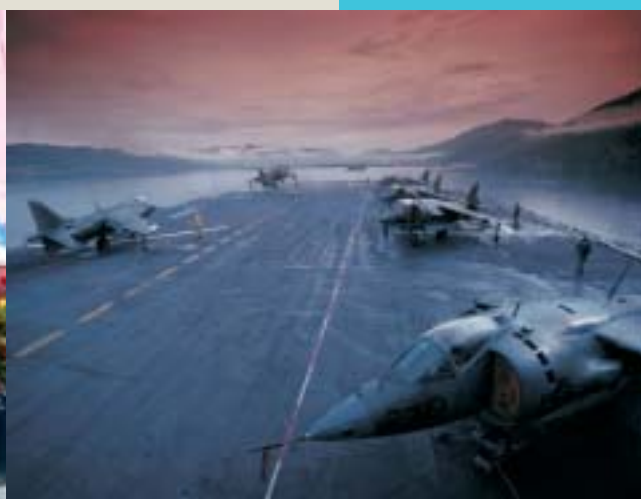
- The Civil Budget covers operating costs of the International Staff at NATO Headquarters; civilian programmes and activities; and construction, running and maintenance costs of facilities such as conference services for meetings of committees and working groups.

- The Military Budget covers operating and maintenance costs of the integrated military structure, including the Military Committee; the International Military Staff and associated agencies; the two Strategic Commands; and associated command, control and information systems, research, development, procurement and logistics agencies; and the NATO Airborne Early Warning Force.

- The Security Investment Programme finances installations and facilities needed by NATO over and above those built for their own national security purposes by individual member nations, for example, communications and information systems, radars, military headquarters, airfields, fuel pipelines, storage, harbours and navigational aids.

These budgets are supervised by Civil and Military Budget Committees and by an Infrastructure Committee, which is responsible for financing common-funded facilities that support NATO forces. A Senior Resource Board oversees policy on military common funding. Each member country is represented on these bodies. All NATO budgets are also subject to external controls.

Change and continuity



NATO today is a very different institution to that created in 1949. Both it and the wider world have evolved in ways which the Alliance's founders could hardly have imagined. NATO is a different institution to that which defended Western Europe for four decades during the Cold War or even that which oversaw Europe's post-Cold War transition in the 1990s. In a few years time, it will no doubt have transformed itself again as it develops coordinated responses to the security challenges facing member states in the early 21st century. Indeed, as the strategic environment changes, NATO will likely have to evolve increasingly rapidly to meet new threats to its member states. However, the basic tenets of cooperation within the Alliance, namely shared values and interests, remain true to the principles of its founding treaty.

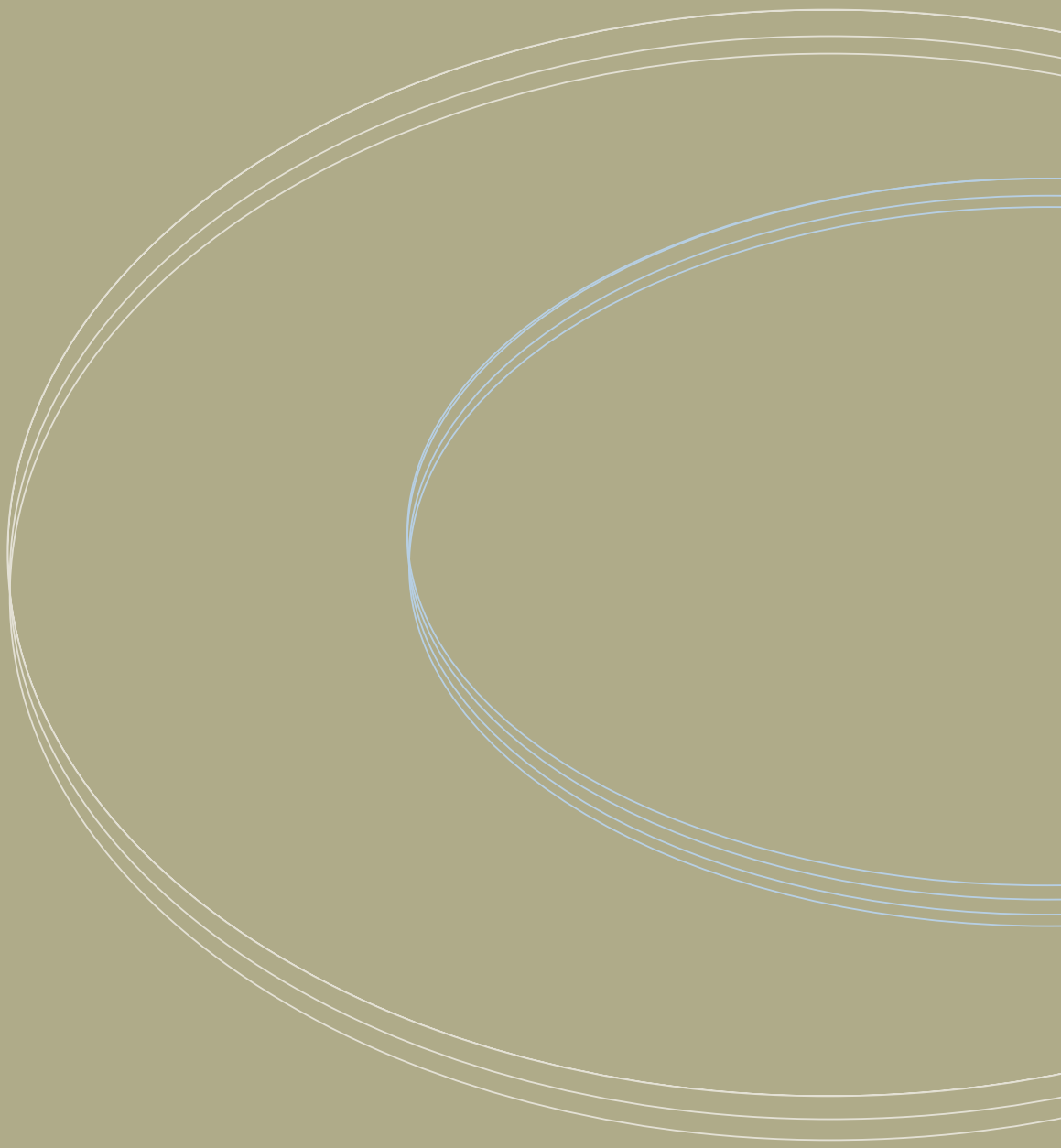
In the wake of the September 2001 attacks against the United States and the invocation of Article 5 for the first time in its history, NATO is engaged in a fundamental re-examination of the way in which it operates in order to address the threat posed by terrorism. Even before the terrorist attacks, the Alliance was committed to an extremely intensive programme of activities, running three crisis-management operations in the former Yugoslavia, preparing the ground to bring in new members and forging ever-deeper partnerships with countries and organisations in both the Euro-Atlantic area and the wider world.

Today, as the task of providing security becomes ever more complex, NATO has become involved in too many areas for its activities to be reduced to a single slogan or a sound bite.

NATO tomorrow

As the Alliance continues to enlarge, NATO will have to accommodate the interests of an increasing number of countries trying to act in unison. At the same time, the zone of stability within Europe will likely have grown and with it prospects of economic prosperity. Indeed, as the Alliance forges closer relations with Russia, Ukraine and other European countries, Europe is putting its divided past behind it and becoming an increasingly stable continent. These positive trends will have to be carefully nurtured.

While the nature of the threats faced by member states and the way in which NATO organises itself to deal with them are changing, the fundamental underpinning of the Alliance remains the same as it always has been. NATO provides a transatlantic political-military framework for managing security challenges. The Alliance couples Europe and North America, and balances a multitude of national interests. Moreover, as NATO evolves from a collective defence shield into a security manager in the broadest sense, it has come to represent a community of values, such as democracy and human rights, as much as a community of interests.



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