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Enlarged security: the security problems posed by the
enlargement of NATO and the European institutions –
conclusions drawn from the colloquy

REPORT

submitted on behalf of the Political Committee
by Mr Urbain, Rapporteur

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*Enlarged security: the security problems posed by the enlargement of NATO
and the European institutions – conclusions drawn from the colloquy*

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¹ Adopted unanimously by the Committee.

² *Members of the Committee:* Mr Baumel (Chairman); MM Urbain, Blaauw (Vice-Chairmen); MM Antretter, de Assis, Bianchi, Sir Andrew Bowden, Mr Brancati (Alternate: Mrs Squarzialupi), MM Bratina, Brunetti, Bühler, Cusimano, Dias, Sir Anthony Durant, Mr Eyskens, Mrs Fischer, Mr Irmer, Sir Russell Johnston, Mr Kaspereit, Lord Kirkhill, MM Liapis, van der Linden, de Lipkowski, Van der Maelen, Martínez, Martínez Casañ, Puche Rodríguez (Alternate: Mrs Pulgar), MM Recoder, Rippinger, Roseta, Seitlinger, Skoularikis, Sir Keith Speed, MM Vinçon, Vrettos, Woltjer, Zierer.

Associate members: MM Akçali, Gürel (Alternate: Cem), Mr Kulahlı.

N.B. *The names of those taking part in the vote are printed in italics.*

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Draft Recommendation

*on enlarged security: the security problems posed by the enlargement of NATO
and the European institutions – conclusions drawn from the colloquy*

The Assembly,

- (i) Welcoming the outcome of the parliamentary colloquy held in Athens on the security problems posed by the enlargement of NATO and the European institutions;
- (ii) Reaffirming WEU's area of responsibility for security and defence matters in pursuance of the modified Brussels Treaty,
- (iii) Considering that WEU must acquire the necessary means to become involved where
 - (a) this is necessary in order to deter aggression directed at one of its member states;
 - (b) requests for its intervention are made by NATO, the United Nations, the OSCE or the European Union;
 - (c) Petersberg missions require rapid intervention,
- (iv) Reiterating Decision 18, which it adopted in Athens, and Recommendation 608 on the eastern dimension of European security,
- (v) Supporting any NATO enlargement that would enable stability and security to be effectively extended to central and eastern countries resolved to play an active part in such defence.
- (vi) Concerned nonetheless that such enlargement should not lead to any reduction in the obligations that derive from the Washington Treaty or contribute to weakening the Alliance's military means or perpetuating the present imbalance in political influence and the distribution of commands between the United States and the European members of NATO;
- (vii) Stressing at the same time the importance of creating a stronger Partnership for Peace with a view to extending stability and security to the entire continent of Europe.
- (viii) Convinced that the greater the part Europeans play within NATO, the more desirable the opening of the latter will be for all those who have an interest in ensuring that the European continent is an area of peace and stability,
- (ix) Considering that the European Union is called to make a substantial contribution to establishing an order for peace, stability and prosperity that will strengthen solidarity among states across the entire continent of Europe;
- (x) Stressing in consequence the importance of the revision of the Maastricht Treaty for European Union enlargement;
- (xi) Considering that WEU is called to play an essential role in Europe's security;
- (xii) Reaffirming that even though the territorial integrity of WEU member countries is nowadays no longer directly threatened, an absolute requirement of their security is that the modified Brussels Treaty remains the basis of a European defence policy;
- (xiii) Earnestly desiring the European Union's common foreign and security policy to succeed in drawing Europeans together in concerted action to promote peace in Europe and throughout the world, while taking the view that the fact that certain countries wishing to pursue a policy of neutrality are European Union members should not hinder or prevent decisions being made in the framework of WEU;
- (xiv) Aware that WEU has a remit to elaborate and implement decisions and actions of the European Union in this sphere and considering that it is therefore essential for the European Union and WEU to continue to draw closer together;

(xv) Convinced that such convergence implies that the European Union should in future accept as new members only those countries that are prepared to accede to the modified Brussels Treaty.

(xvi) Fearing that the manner in which NATO and the European Union will enlarge may lead to the creation, albeit temporary, of different security zones;

(xvii) Stressing therefore the important role WEU can play in extending and strengthening stability and security across central and eastern Europe,

(xviii) Convinced therefore of the need for WEU to review its policy on enlargement while aiming to ensure maximum convergence in the composition of the European Union, NATO and WEU;

(xix) Deeply desirous that measures taken by NATO and the European Union to develop their relations with countries that are not to become members, such as Russia or Ukraine, should be supplemented by drawing up arrangements for cooperation between those countries and WEU;

(xx) Stressing again the need to keep a close watch on political developments in Belarus, Moldova, Albania and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and at the same time pay attention to the situation in Transcaucasia,

RECOMMENDS THAT THE COUNCIL

1. Monitor closely the NATO enlargement process and its implications for the European institutions;
2. Take the necessary steps in readiness to negotiate the accession of new states to the modified Brussels Treaty and accommodate them in WEU,
3. Assess the financial implications of Atlantic Alliance enlargement for WEU member countries and inform the Assembly accordingly;
4. Ensure that until such time as all European Union members are members of WEU, the latter should remain an autonomous organisation, and specifically that the Council should retain its powers of decision and independent action and its freedom to intervene on behalf of the United Nations or the OSCE;
5. Enhance the European security and defence identity (ESDI), which would meet with a greater degree of approval from the public at large and which might be useful, particularly where humanitarian intervention is urgently required,
6. Invite all European Union members to accede to the modified Brussels Treaty and encourage them to join the Atlantic Alliance;
7. Reassess its enlargement policy on the basis of the principle that where a member country of the Atlantic Alliance and a candidate for membership of the European Union and the Atlantic Alliance that is a member of the reinforced Partnership for Peace fulfil the conditions for European Union entry, they also have a case for becoming full members of our own Organisation, ensuring all the while that such applications do not in any way impair the close cooperation and reciprocal transparency that exist between WEU and NATO;
8. Intensify cooperation between WEU and all its associate partners, in accordance with the criteria defined in paragraph 4(b) of Recommendation 608, both by strengthening their involvement in the Organisation's activities and giving them a more prominent role in WEU operations, particularly Petersberg-type missions;
9. Strengthen cooperation with Russia and Ukraine in specific areas, particularly arms control verification procedures, humanitarian operations, the monitoring of natural disasters and military transport.

Explanatory Memorandum
(submitted by Mr Urbain, Rapporteur)

I. Introduction

1. The collapse of the communist regimes in eastern Europe at the end of the 1980s, the reunification of Germany, the demise of the Soviet Union and the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact have, not surprisingly, radically altered the political and geostrategic map of Europe. The new democracies of central and south-eastern Europe lost no time in voicing their wish to belong to these economic and politico-military institutions of the West, in the belief that, on the international front, membership would guarantee their emancipation from Russia, while at home, it would contribute to building stable, western-style, economic and political structures

2. This is the reason why, to date, ten central and eastern European countries have applied to join NATO, the European Union and Western European Union. Although the group of applicants consists of countries with a similar history, they are far from homogenous in terms of either their economic or their political development. Moreover, the fact that they include among their number some countries to whose membership of NATO structures Russia would be implacably opposed, while taking a much softer line in other cases, widens the differences in their applications still further. Furthermore, from the West's point of view, it is virtually certain that accession to NATO will be by stages, while European Union and consequently WEU enlargement will require a much longer period of negotiation. Logically, therefore, a situation might be envisaged over the next ten years or so where some of the ten countries seeking to join Western politico-military structures would not be NATO members, others would not be members of the European Union and some might not even be members of either. Completing this picture of Europe's short-term future as one of change, characterised by the assimilation of groups of new member countries by stages into western politico-military structures, will be a partnership, seemingly essential to the new security system in Europe, involving the neutral countries and countries such as Russia and Ukraine (and later Belarus) that do

not want or are unable to join western institutions. Equally, there will be a need to try and think of ways to strengthen the security of yet other countries which, for a variety of reasons, will also remain on the sidelines of this two or rather three-way enlargement, for example the successor states of former Yugoslavia or Albania

3. Strengthening security for all European countries whether members, non-members or future members of European and Euro-Atlantic politico-military organisations is no easy task. Perseverance, imagination and flexibility are all necessary in order to attain the desired goal. Western European Union has, in your Rapporteur's view, a role to play in this connection and must be willing to accept the challenge

4. The colloquy organised by the WEU Assembly on 11 and 12 March dealt, it was generally felt successfully, with this vast, important and highly topical political issue. The large number of participants, the splendid contributions by the speakers and the high level of debate were yet another demonstration of the extent to which central Europe's future security and that of the whole of our continent arouses widespread interest. The present report attempts to recreate the atmosphere of the colloquy and to draw conclusions, and at the same time to present the objective factors determining the eastward enlargement of western institutions and the implications for the future of peace on our continent and throughout the world.

II. The ten applicant countries

(a) Poland

5. Poland, the largest and most populous central European country, has been a free market economy for some years now; it is also the fastest growing in the region (+ 7% in 1996). This impression of relative strength is underpinned by active diplomacy directed principally towards the country's incorporation into western politico-military systems, chiefly NATO. Poland's foreign policy also has a strong regional emphasis,

and is characterised by realism and maturity and a care to ensure that Russia and Ukraine do not become marginalised from the new Euro-Atlantic security system

6. Hence in October 1996, its President, Mr Kwasniewski, addressing the Royal Institute of International Affairs, dispelled any notion that nuclear weapons might be deployed on Polish territory and stressed that NATO enlargement should be accompanied by a charter governing the relationship between the Atlantic Alliance and Russia and by a security agreement with Ukraine. In an address to the WEU Assembly some weeks later, the Polish leader reiterated his country's aspirations to join NATO – and Western European Union – at the earliest possible opportunity and also stated that Poland would in any event press for Russia and Ukraine to be part of the new European security system

7. The creation of the joint Polish-Lithuanian and Polish-Ukrainian peacekeeping battalions, the tripartite military cooperation agreement Poland signed with Ukraine and the United Kingdom and the creation of an area of free trade with the Baltic Sea states (agreed in Stockholm in April 1996) are typical examples of the highly active and imaginative regional policy of a country which is a founder and still an active member of the Visegrad Group.

8. Poland's efforts to restructure its armed forces, which have recently have been brought under political control to meet NATO criteria, are undoubtedly being made easier by the distinct improvement in the country's economy. Poland now feels ready to shoulder the financial burden of integration with Euro-Atlantic structures (cf the Polish Euro-Atlantic Association report quoted by Reuters on 29 January). The text of this report was presented by Mr Onyszkiewicz, former Defence Minister of Poland, at the Athens colloquy). The Polish Government moreover hopes to be in a position to proceed with the major structural reforms required if Poland is to gain entry to the European Union – particularly in view of the might of the country's agricultural sector.

9. Poland has been an associate partner of Western European Union since 1994. President Kwasniewski, recently¹ warned NATO against

the danger of making too many concessions to Russia when drawing up a NATO/Russia Charter. If NATO was to undertake not to station nuclear weapons in the territory of the new member countries, it would be vital for the charter to be concluded with Russia to oblige the latter to withdraw its nuclear weapons from the Kaliningrad enclave. President Kwasniewski also stressed that it was very important that Ukraine should lead an independent existence.

(b) Hungary

10. Generally considered to be among the first group of countries to be admitted to NATO and also a candidate for accession to the European Union, Hungary, although long considered by the West as having the edge in the race towards integration with western economic, political and security structures, has shown little sign, since the fall of communism, of the economic growth widely expected of it by the West. The success of the programme for the reform of public finance implemented by the present leftist government and the economic liberalisation that was the legacy of its conservative predecessor nevertheless augur well for a more prosperous future. Moreover, in political terms the country is set on a resolute course of democratic stability.

11. For decades, Hungary's relations with most of its neighbours (Romania, Slovakia, Yugoslavia) have been heavily influenced by the fact that some three million Magyars live outside the country. The present government's policy consists of reconciliation of past differences and cooperation with other central European countries and this potentially destabilising factor therefore seems to have been obviated. The treaty of understanding, cooperation and good neighbourliness signed with Romania (autumn 1996) is of the highest political significance in view of the large Hungarian minority in Romania (over 1.6 million people) but also worthy of attention is the treaty with Slovakia (home to 600 000 Hungarians). These two agreements have made a vital contribution to improving the political climate in central Europe.

12. Hungary made known its wish to join NATO as early as 1994 and in the same year joined the Partnership for Peace programme. A major programme for restructuring the Hungarian army has also been set in train: this

¹ *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 10 April 1997

provides for equipment replacement, assimilation of the new western doctrine and interoperability between Hungarian and NATO forces by the year 2000

13 Hungary made an official application for accession to the European Union in April 1994. It is not keen on the idea put forward by France, and which Germany supports, of the European Union organising a standing conference of all applicant countries as it believes this will delay its accession to the Union

14 Hungary has been an associate partner of Western European Union since 1994.

(c) The Czech Republic

15. The Czech Republic came into being on 1 January 1993 following the partition of Czechoslovakia. Like Poland and Hungary it belongs to the group of countries generally considered as being in the first wave of entrants to NATO and the European Union. The country's economic success is matched by that of its transition to democracy, a process that occurred rapidly and without major upset. The absence of any differences with its neighbours, in large measure due to its extremely homogenous population and the fact that its borders are virtually unchallenged, rounds off an extremely positive picture; the Czech leadership feels its can thus realistically expect the country to become a member of western political and economic and politico-military institutions without creating serious difficulties for its future allies and partners or major objections being raised from countries that remain outside such institutions. The signature of a reconciliation agreement between Germany and the Czech Republic deploring atrocities committed by the Nazi regime and the massive expulsion of Sudetan Germans at the end of the war serves to illustrate the cordial relations that now exist between the country and its neighbours.

16 With regard to the Czech Republic's endeavours to reorganise its armed forces in order to bring them up to NATO requirements, progress has already been made in achieving interoperability between the Czech army and Atlantic Alliance forces. It is also worth noting that the Czech Republic is one of the few European countries recently to have increased its defence budget. As far as relations with the

European Union are concerned, note should be taken of an agreement signed on 1 January 1995 which provides for a progressive lowering of customs barriers

17 The Czech Republic became an associate partner country of Western European Union in 1994.

(d) Slovakia

18. Despite encouraging economic indicators for the last three years (growth: 5-7%, falling inflation, stable unemployment rate) and a satisfactory rate of progress towards a market economy, Slovakia, which became independent in early 1993, faces a threat to its plans to become a member of three western politico-security institutions (NATO, EU and WEU) because of the image it gives of a certain degree of political instability, arising mainly from the long-standing political feud between Prime Minister Vladimir Meciar and Slovakian President Michal Kovac. Slovakia's substantial Hungarian minority (568 000 people, according to Slovak sources, living in the south of the country along the borders with Hungary) is a further potential source of instability. Despite the agreement on good-neighbourly relations which Slovakia and Hungary signed in 1995, Hungarians living in Slovakia are particularly aggrieved by the adoption of a law on the country's official language recently passed by Parliament on the grounds that the legislation does not take sufficient account of the languages of ethnic minorities. To complete this overview, reference should also be made to the extremely good relations Slovakia has always maintained with the Russians, which occasionally arouse criticism in the West.

19 However, having once clearly defined its objectives, the Slovak leadership is actively setting about convincing the West that Slovakia should be included in any enlargement of western institutions. At the same time, internal measures have been introduced to bring the country's economy, government and armed forces up to the level of those of western countries. A referendum on the country's joining the Atlantic Alliance is also scheduled for the end of May. This will be the first time an associate partner country has consulted its people directly on the issue. In addition to its views on NATO accession, the Slovak people will also be asked

whether they would agree to having nuclear weapons or foreign troops on their territory

20 In his address to the WEU Assembly on 5 December 1996, the Slovak Prime Minister reiterated his country's determination to pursue its effort to gain entry to NATO and WEU, pointing to the fact that the Slovak army had been reorganised with this in view. He also argued that in the interests of stability in Europe as a whole, NATO should conduct the negotiations on enlargement in parallel with those leading to an agreement with the Russians, so as to prevent the latter from feeling marginalised, which might present a danger to European security.

21 Slovakia signed an association agreement with the European Union in 1993 and applied for membership at the European summit meeting in Cannes in June 1995. The country has been an associate partner in WEU since 1994

(e) Slovenia

22 Slovenia has had the good fortune, and the good sense, not to become involved in the armed conflict that accompanied the break-up of former Yugoslavia. Its geographical position, relatively homogenous ethnic composition and, to an extent, its history account for its having successfully come through the troubled period of the revival of its nationhood, democratisation of its political system and liberalisation of its economy, without experiencing any significant upheaval or major sacrifice

23. It now has to carve out a new niche for itself within the European security system. The security dimension of Slovenia's foreign policy hinges on the country having a firm anchorage in western politico-military institutions: specifically NATO, the European Union and WEU. Although Slovenia is not normally regarded as belonging to the first wave of chosen entrants, support for its candidacy is gaining ground, especially in view of the fact that, according to Western criteria, it is a democratic country, on good terms with its neighbours – nowadays even with Italy – and well on the way to being a free market economy, with growth at a satisfactory rate (1995 GDP + 4.8%, inflation 12.8%, unemployment 14.5%). Slovenia's application to join the European Union can be viewed in as promising a light as its accession to NATO in view of the country's small size, highly indus-

trialised nature and well-organised tertiary sector and its determination to adjust to European Union standards. Consequently, its chances of acceding to the European Union in the foreseeable future would appear to be fairly high. Chronologically speaking, Slovenia was the last country from central and eastern Europe to become an associate partner of WEU and hopes in due course to become a full member.

(f) The Baltic states

24. The security concerns of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania arise from their past history and their proximity to a very large country which has on a number of occasions exercised dominion over the whole region. Further factors for potential destabilisation are the size of the three countries, the fact that their borders – which Russia, moreover, has not yet recognised in Estonia and Latvia's case – are hard to defend and the nature of their populations which, in two Baltic states, include very large Russian minorities. The three states are consequently seeking membership of the three western political or politico-military organisations in order to safeguard their independence which, although not directly under threat at the moment, they feel cannot be regarded as secure for all time.

25 Accession to the Atlantic Alliance is clearly the main objective being pursued by the Baltic states under their security policy. It was with that in mind that they subscribed to the Partnership for Peace in 1994. NATO could offer them, among other things, a politico-military guarantee backed by the power of the United States and – something they are reluctant to admit – its nuclear umbrella. However, it seems unlikely they will be admitted to the Atlantic Alliance, at least in the first wave, in view of strong opposition from Russia which is constantly pointing to their geographic position and the fact they were formerly part of the Soviet Union (something the West does not acknowledge). The Russians make this argument an issue of principle, thus lending a tinge of sentiment to the rhetoric they employ against such an eventuality. It is clear, however, that the West cannot remain impassive to Baltic aspirations to greater security, whatever the difficulties of satisfying their claims in this respect. For this reason alternative proposals to direct NATO membership are continually being put forward. Of these,

one rather unusual suggestion is that the United States might guarantee the Baltic states' independence².

26. The three Baltic countries are also looking to join the European Union – with which they signed association agreements in 1995 – as quickly as possible, on both economic and political grounds. Most European observers are of the view that from an economic point of view, the entry of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania could go ahead without major difficulties as they are small countries which do not have vast agricultural sectors, but do have highly educated populations. However it is essential that they rid themselves of the after-effects of their former economic dependence on Russia as quickly as possible, while completing the economic reform programmes they already have well in hand – especially in Estonia and Latvia. Furthermore Russia is not nearly as set against their entry to the European Union as it is to their joining NATO. However, major issues of border definition (particularly the delay in the signature of agreements delimiting Russia's borders with Estonia and Latvia) and the status of the large Russian minorities in Estonia and Latvia still remain; if these continue unresolved until the time those countries accede, they could soon become significant areas of dispute between the European Union and Moscow.

27. Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania have been WEU associate partner countries since 1994 and want to become full members as soon as possible. For reasons similar to those already referred to in respect of the European Union, Russian opposition to this prospect should not prove categorical. By contrast, the WEU member states' policy of admitting as full members only those countries that are members of both the European Union and NATO means that the Baltic states could not join WEU before being admitted to NATO. However, it must be stressed that even if they cannot become full members, upgrading their status in WEU would considerably enhance the feeling of security of these three small countries.

28. As for Poland, the presence in the Kalinin-grad enclave of sizeable Russian military forces,

which include nuclear weapons, creates a security problem for Lithuania which is exacerbated by the issue of Russian military transit through its territory.

(g) Romania

29. A number of negative factors have for some time stood in the way of Romania's application to join western political and security institutions – chiefly NATO. These include the country's mediocre economic performance, the overriding influence on political life of the communist old guard and bilateral difficulties with some of the country's neighbours, particularly over ethnic minority issues.

30. However in recent months, encouraging new developments seem to have wrought considerable changes in this state of affairs. The conclusion of a treaty with Hungary in autumn 1996, the initialling of a treaty with Ukraine on 3 May 1997, the political changes that have taken place internally whose effect, *inter alia*, has been to introduce a programme of accelerated economic reform, the diplomatic efforts deployed by the new leaders in Bucharest and support from western political circles which have traditionally been friendly towards Romania have given new impetus to Romania's candidacy.

31. Hence France followed by the United Kingdom, Italy, Turkey and Greece have all openly supported Romania's inclusion among those chosen to form part of the first wave of NATO accessions. Prominent members of the United States Congress have reportedly³ come out in favour of NATO taking such a decision. Moreover Romania says it is willing to bear the financial burden of its incorporation in the Atlantic Alliance, its reasoning being that its security costs would be far higher were it to remain outside⁴.

32. While it is true that Romania's improved chances of joining Euro-Atlantic structures is a relatively recent development, the country nevertheless registered an interest in joining right

³ WEU Institute for Security Studies seminar on sub-regional stability in central Europe in view of EU and NATO enlargement, 13-14 February 1997.

⁴ President Constantinescu addressing the NATO Permanent Council on 4 February 1997.

² *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 28 February 1997.