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The eastern dimension of European security

REPORT

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

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1. Adopted unanimously by the Committee.

2. *Members of the Committee:* Mr *de Puig* (Chairman); Mr *Roseta* (Vice-Chairman); MM *Antretter*, de Assis, Blaauw, Sir *Andrew Bowden*, MM *Buhler*, *Caputo* (Alternate: *Arata*), MM *Cioni*, *Dias*, *Ehrmann*, *Eyskens*, Mrs *Fischer*, Mr *Fassino* (Alternate: *Benvenuti*), MM *Irmer*, Sir *Russell Johnston*, MM *Jurgens*, *Kaspereit* (Alternate: *BaumeI*), Lord *Kirkhill* (Alternate: *Marshall*), MM *Liapis*, *van der Linden*, *de Lipkowski*, *Van der Maelen* (Alternate: *Staes*), Mr *Martínez Casan* (Alternate: *Martínez*), MM *Pottakis*, *Pozzo*, *Puche Rodríguez*, *Recorder*, *Rippinger*, *Rokofyllos*, *Rodeghiero*, *Scitlinger*, Sir *Keith Speed*, MM *Urban*, *Vinçon*, *Zierer*, N... (Alternate: *Davis*)

Associate members: MM *Godal*, *Kamhi*, *Kulahli*.

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

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*Draft Recommendation**on the eastern dimension of European security*

The Assembly,

- (i) Concerned that almost seven years after the end of East-West confrontation, there is still no agreement on an outline for creating a comprehensive order of peace, justice and security for Europe as a whole;
- (ii) Underlining, therefore, how important it is for the OSCE summit in Lisbon on 2 and 3 December 1996 to succeed in making considerable progress towards developing a pan-European security model for the 21st century,
- (iii) Convinced, however, that such a security order can only be achieved if outdated thinking in terms of spheres of influence is replaced once and for all by a concept of cooperative security giving every country the freedom to join the international institutions and defence alliances of its choice,
- (iv) Seriously worried by the continuing unstable political situation in the Russian Federation,
- (v) Deploring that the East-West security debate is almost wholly dominated by the question of NATO enlargement, in which persisting fundamental differences between NATO and Russia are not only preventing any substantial progress from being made but are also making it difficult to reach agreement on the definition of Russia's role in the Euro-Atlantic security framework,
- (vi) Seriously concerned by the fact that the Russian State Duma has still not ratified the Start II Treaty and the Open Skies Treaty and that Russia is seriously considering linking NATO enlargement with requests for fundamental changes in the CFE Treaty provisions;
- (vii) Strongly regretting that NATO has been far too hesitant about presenting a concept on "who" and "when" in relation to its planned enlargement, and maintaining that the reasons it has given in answer to "why" will not be convincing until the new nature of security risks and the future political and military role of the Alliance in the new security environment have been clearly defined;
- (viii) Regretting that, even though it is highly desirable, it is unlikely that the central European countries will be admitted to the European Union in the immediate future
 - (a) because admission depends to some extent on the uncertain outcome of the internal reforms of the European Union which are to be agreed in the intergovernmental conference on the revision of the Maastricht Treaty, and
 - (b) because the European Union has made enlargement dependent on so many conditions that they cannot be met by the applicant countries within a relatively short period;
- (ix) Fearing that this process might be subject to further delays on account of differing views on the kind of congruence there should be between NATO, WEU and the European Union in relation to enlargement and the priorities to be set for its time-frame;
- (x) Convinced that WEU has far more than only a complementary role to play in stabilising the eastern dimension of European security;
- (xi) Warmly welcoming the decision of the WEU Council to admit Slovenia as the tenth associate partner country of WEU;

- (xii) Regretting however, the absence of any specific effort by WEU to draw up a concept for enhancing the status of the associate partner countries,
- (xiii) Disappointed that WEU's planned cooperation with the Russian Federation in the specific areas proposed by the Assembly has so far not been taken any further,
- (xiv) Impressed by Ukraine's strong political resolve to be integrated in European structures and by its readiness to intensify cooperation with WEU with the aim of becoming an associate partner;
- (xv) Underlining the importance for European security of the peaceful settlement of all remaining controversial differences between Ukraine and the Russian Federation, and of the establishment of friendly, stable relations between the two countries;
- (xvi) Regretting that many European and American politicians are neglecting developments in Belarus and are not paying enough attention to the anti-democratic and autocratic tendencies within the country's present regime or to the importance of its independence and the need to maintain a permanent dialogue with it;
- (xvii) Recalling the importance of the future tasks WEU is to carry out pursuant to the decision taken by the North Atlantic Council on 3 June 1996,
- (xviii) Stressing the importance of granting the associate member and associate partner countries the possibility of full participation in any operations conducted on the basis of the CJTF concept and under the political control of WEU,
- (xix) Convinced, therefore, that the enlargement concept established by WEU member countries in the framework of the Maastricht Treaty needs to be amended by adopting a more flexible approach which abandons strict application of the principle that full WEU membership should be conditional on full membership of NATO and the European Union;
- (xx) Recalling in this connection paragraph 4 of Assembly Recommendation 589:
- (xxi) Pointing to the importance of Turkey's position as a major factor for stabilising NATO's south-eastern region, particularly with regard to the various troublespots and conflicts in the Caucasus and other adjacent regions;
- (xxii) Strongly advocating that Denmark should decide that it wishes to accede to the modified Brussels Treaty,
- (xxiii) Emphasising how important it is to strengthen the role of the Nordic Council as a factor for stabilising the north-eastern region of Europe,

RECOMMENDS THAT THE COUNCIL

1. Take advantage of the OSCE summit, bearing in mind its limited powers, to elaborate a common concept of the 28 WEU countries on WEU's contribution for enhancing security and stability in central and eastern Europe;
2. Establish, in the framework of such a contribution, a common position on the issue of deploying nuclear weapons in central and eastern European countries,
3. Make arrangements with NATO allowing all associate countries of WEU to participate fully in actions implementing the CJTF concept under the political control of WEU;

4. Prepare a flexible approach to its enlargement policy, making provision for
 - (a) an invitation to all European member countries of NATO which so wish to accede to the modified Brussels Treaty;
 - (b) the possibility of upgrading the status of associate partner countries to that of associate member countries provided that the interested European states settle any bilateral problems they may have with neighbouring countries;
5. Leave no doubt that all ten WEU associate partner countries should be considered as potential candidates for accession to NATO;
6. Urge the European Union not to slow down the process of its enlargement to central Europe and to continue to consult all nations affected either directly or indirectly by any future enlargement of the European Union;
7. Urge all member countries of the European Union which have not yet ratified the cooperation treaty with Ukraine to expedite the ratification process;
8. Intensify the political dialogue with Ukraine and give it a constructive answer to its request to cooperate more closely with Western European Union;
9. Intensify the dialogue, and indeed cooperation, with the Russian Federation, seeking in any event to eliminate any misunderstanding and speculation as regards the enlargement of WEU,
10. Make it clear, however, to the Russian authorities that early ratification of the Start II Treaty and the Open Skies Treaty will facilitate more intensive cooperation between WEU and Russia in all areas of mutual interest,
11. Maintain a permanent political dialogue with Belarus and Moldova.

*Explanatory Memorandum**(submitted by Mr Antretter, Rapporteur)**I. Introduction*

1 A first working paper of the present report was discussed at a meeting of the Political Committee on 1 April 1996 which your Rapporteur was unable to attend for reasons beyond his control. He is grateful for the various comments and suggestions Committee members made during that meeting. The Committee subsequently decided to postpone the presentation of the report until after the presidential elections in Russia, which took place on 4 July 1996.

2 The clear victory of Boris Yeltsin over his main rival, the communist leader Gennadi Zyuganov, has not however stabilised the political situation within the Russian Federation. On the contrary, the deterioration in the state of health of the Russian President, who was facing a heart operation, led to an internal power struggle which culminated in the middle of October 1996 in the dismissal by Boris Yeltsin of the head of the National Security Council, Alexander Lebed, considered by many people as a hero because he managed to put an end to the Chechnya conflict. The real reasons for his dismissal are not wholly clear, but the Minister of the Interior, for instance, accused General Lebed of trying to seize power in Russia by force.

3 Whereas the political situation in Russia continues to give serious cause for concern and nobody can predict how it will develop, a number of other events have to be taken into account when assessing the eastern dimension of European security. One of them is the outcome of the meeting of the North Atlantic Council on 3 June 1996 in Berlin, which took the important decision to establish the European security and defence identity within NATO and give WEU a decisive role in implementing the CJTF concept. Even more important is the possibility the Berlin decisions opened up for the participation of countries that are not members of NATO in missions carried out in the framework of the CJTF, and thus possibly under the political control of WEU.

4 The Berlin decisions were made possible by France's decision to return to NATO's integrated

structures on condition that the establishment of the European security and defence identity within the Alliance does in fact lead to Europe having a greater say in the transatlantic partnership.

5 The third factor which must be taken into account is the development of the intergovernmental conference on the revision of the Maastricht Treaty, in which the creation of a real common foreign and security policy (CFSP) for Europe and future relations between the European Union and WEU continue to be the most difficult problems. The reluctance of the "neutral" countries belonging to the European Union to participate in a common defence, and the associate membership of WEU of three NATO countries that are not members of the European Union make it unrealistic in the foreseeable future to envisage any plans for early integration between WEU and the European Union. Furthermore, the decisions taken by NATO in June 1996 make it impossible to entertain any idea of giving the European Union, which has four neutral or non-aligned member countries, authority to issue general political guidelines to Western European Union. Any kind of subordination of WEU to the European Union is inconceivable as long as WEU remains a treaty-based organisation.

6 However the Franco-German idea of creating a sort of flexibility clause should be carefully examined by the WEU Council. WEU should take advantage of such a clause to become the European forerunner in security and defence matters, without waiting for the agreement of the four hesitant "neutral" countries, at the same time allowing all the European member countries of the Alliance to participate fully in WEU's activities and giving all central European countries wishing to cooperate more closely with the Organisation an upgraded associate status.

7 There is uncertainty as to what concrete results will be achieved by the intergovernmental conference in reforming the second pillar of the European Union and also as to how, and according to what timetable, the Atlantic Alliance will achieve (a) its political reform and structural reorganisation, (b) implementation of the CJTF concept in conjunction with WEU, and

(c) its enlargement concept, and this will have important consequences for the question of how and when a comprehensive security architecture for Europe as a whole can be established. This question is of major interest to all the central European countries which are pressing for admission at the earliest possible opportunity to the European and transatlantic security structures.

8. It is also a major concern for Ukraine and may well have an influence on the future policy of the Russian Federation although many observers say that domestic developments in Russia are subject to their own exclusive rules. In this context one should not forget what is happening in Belarus, to which the West does not pay enough attention, because too many politicians are convinced that this country has only one objective: reintegration with the Russian Federation. But the West does not know enough about the domestic situation in Belarus and many people equate President Lukashenko's dictatorial policy with the political will of the rest of the country, underestimating the existence of strong political opposition to the President. In any event, European politicians should not forget Belarus and should maintain a permanent dialogue with all the various political forces in the country.

9. Finally, two further factors will play an important role in the establishment of the security architecture referred to above: the first will be the future status of Turkey with regard to WEU and the European Union – and this also applies (although to a lesser extent) to Norway and Iceland. Secondly, the arrangements for bringing the successor states of former Yugoslavia and of Albania into this architecture, once the conflict has finally been settled, have to be worked out

II. The unresolved problem of creating a comprehensive pan-European security model

10. Nothing can better demonstrate the unresolved fundamental security problems facing Europe as a whole than the ongoing discussion in the framework of the OSCE on developing a common and comprehensive security model for Europe for the 21st century. Work on this project, based initially on a Russian proposal, will be one of the main subjects on the agenda of the next OSCE summit which is to take place in Lisbon on 2 and 3 December 1996

11. In fact, almost seven years after the end of the period of East-West confrontation, it has not been possible to agree even the outline of a comprehensive order of peace, justice and security in Europe in which each country could feel genuinely secure. In view of the complexity of the problem and the divergent interests involved, it is doubtful whether any final results will be achieved at the OSCE summit referred to. However, the OSCE seems to be an appropriate framework for developing such a comprehensive security model, embracing as it does all the countries of Europe, North America and central Asia.

12. Nevertheless, appropriate solutions cannot be found exclusively in the forum of the OSCE given that its tasks are limited, that it is not based on international treaties and executive means and that its powers are fairly weak. It is not possible to conceive of a comprehensive security architecture for Europe without defining the respective functions and roles the Atlantic Alliance (with NATO as its political and military instrument), WEU and the European Union should assume within that architecture, and without reaching agreement on the conditions under which interested countries can establish their relationships with these organisations.

13. Neither is it right that the OSCE should be given the task of defining the relevant responsibilities of NATO, WEU and the European Union, or that there should be any sort of subordination of these organisations to the OSCE. All the organisations referred to, including the OSCE, should make complementary contributions with a view to achieving a common and comprehensive security order for Europe.

14. However, when leading politicians spell out the advantages of regarding all relevant European and transatlantic security organisations as interlocking and mutually reinforcing institutions, what is effectively lacking is harmonisation and coordination of their work and planning processes. For instance, as regards the problem of enlargement – one of the subjects of greatest controversy between NATO and Russia – no overall concept of how to approach it has been developed between NATO, WEU and the European Union. On the contrary, the idea of the three organisations proceeding in parallel without specifying the criteria for so doing has led to a vicious circle, which threatens to block any further progress in the foreseeable future.

III. The disadvantages of limiting the security debate to the problem of NATO enlargement

15. In September 1995 NATO published a study on its enlargement which examined primarily the question of "why and how" to enlarge but did not answer the question of "who and when". The European Union, on the other hand, faces the challenge of first seeking agreement among all its member countries on the comprehensive institutional reforms to be discussed in the intergovernmental conference on the review of the Maastricht Treaty before being able to settle the question of enlargement.

16. According to the NATO study, "enlargement of NATO is a parallel process with and will complement that of the European Union". At the same time the study emphasises that "the two organisations will proceed autonomously according to their respective internal dynamics and processes". The enlargement of both organisations should be mutually supportive and "while no rigid parallelism is foreseen, each organisation will need to consider developments in the other".

17. As far as Western European Union is concerned, the problem of its enlargement is closely linked with the results of the intergovernmental conference which has to define its future role and the character of the relationship and cooperation between WEU and the European Union. NATO, on the other hand, has set out very clearly in its study on enlargement how it wishes WEU to tackle the question of enlargement:

"All full members of WEU are also members of NATO. Because of the cumulative effect of the security safeguards of Article V of the modified Brussels Treaty and of Article 5 of the Washington Treaty, the maintenance of this linkage is essential. Both enlargement processes should, therefore, be compatible and mutually supportive. At the same time, WEU is being developed as the defence component of the European Union, which strengthens the relationship between the two organisations. An eventual broad congruence of European membership in NATO, the European Union and WEU would have positive effects on European security."

18. However, bearing in mind the specific character of the three organisations, the desire to establish broad congruence in their enlargement procedures has so far simply slowed down the process as a whole. Additional factors are contributing to a situation that is again consigning the central European countries to an ante-chamber.

19. It is true that, at the ministerial meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Berlin on 3 June 1996, ministers reaffirmed their commitment to open the Alliance to new members. But no specific decisions were taken.

20. On that occasion, the North Atlantic Council again reaffirmed its

"determination that the process of opening the Alliance to new members should not create dividing lines in Europe or isolate any country. Our goal remains ever-closer and deeper cooperative ties with all NACC and PfP Partners who wish to build such relations with us. The enlargement of the Alliance is consistent with a wider process of cooperation and integration already under way in today's Europe involving the EU and WEU as well as the OSCE, the Council of Europe and other European institutions. Our strategy is to help build a broad European security architecture based on true cooperation throughout the whole of Europe."

21. However, after visiting Moscow in September 1996, Chancellor Kohl told Parliament that agreement had been reached with the French and the United States Presidents as well as with the British Prime Minister to postpone the debate on NATO enlargement until spring 1997¹. According to other press reports², a first decision is to be taken at a NATO summit meeting which might be held in early summer 1997. This information was confirmed by NATO officials during the Political Committee's visit to NATO headquarters on 16 October 1996.

22. But even through NATO officially denied the existence of a list of countries that might be admitted to NATO in a first wave, it has become

1 *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 12 September 1996.

2 *Die Welt*, 27 September 1996

clear that there is a tendency in the United States Congress to name specific countries such as Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary, as being among those that will be included in the first wave of NATO enlargement

23 According to other sources of information³ a group of five countries has been identified consisting of Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovenia and Romania, whereas Slovakia is not included. The question of how to proceed with enlargement, on a case-by-case basis, choosing several groups of states in different waves or admitting all the relevant candidates together at the same time, is a fundamental issue which has to be settled not only by NATO but also by WEU and the European Union. All three organisations also have to solve the problem of what kind of relationship they intend to establish with those countries that will not be invited to join

24. However, one has the strong impression that the present discussion is totally dominated by NATO. The effect of this is that the whole security debate is being reduced to a controversial dialogue between NATO and Russia, with very little chance of differences being settled. During his visit to Moscow, your Rapporteur had an opportunity to detect strong mistrust of NATO on the part of almost all his interlocutors, the only exception being Mr Stepashin, security counsellor to Mr Chernomyrdin the Prime Minister, who said that NATO enlargement was not one of the main issues in the presidential election campaign. The American proposal of a security charter between the Atlantic Alliance and Russia has been given a cool reception by the Russian authorities. According to the Russian approach, the first step should consist of substantial NATO adaptation. As the next step, NATO and Russia should conclude a legally binding agreement on their relations and only as the third step should the question of enlargement be discussed. Conversely, according to the NATO concept, enlargement comes first accompanied, in a second phase, by a procedure to enhance the PfP process, leaving the question of NATO-Russian relations to be settled as the third step.

3. *Die Welt*, 25 September 1996, *International Herald Tribune*, 21 October 1996.

25 At the moment it is difficult to see how these different approaches could be harmonised. Indeed, the Russian position seems to have hardened given that the Russian State Duma still refuses to ratify the Start II Treaty despite efforts made by the Russian and American defence ministers to persuade it to do so. Some members of the State Duma link the issue with the problem of NATO's enlargement, while others argue that the efforts being made by Republicans in the United States Congress to build a national missile defence system would undermine the anti-ballistic missile Treaty (ABM) concluded in 1972 between the United States and the then Soviet Union⁴

26. Another concern for a number of Russia's neighbours are the concessions made to the Russian Federation according to the final document of the Conference reviewing the CFE Treaty which took place from 15 to 31 May 1996 in Vienna. A major problem was created by Russia making a request to scale down its military commitments to reduce troops numbers in its flank regions. Russia asked to be allowed to deploy more troops on its southern flank than are permitted by the Treaty in relation to the various conflicts in the Caucasus and in particular in Chechnya. Furthermore, it asked for the regions of Pskov and St Petersburg to be exempt from the northern flank regulations. These regions border directly on Estonia, Latvia and Finland

27. Initially, the North Atlantic Council had stressed very clearly at its meeting on 5 December 1995 "that compliance with legally binding obligations is a necessary foundation for good overall relations... We welcome the 17 November 1995 decision by the Joint Consultative Group, in which the 30 CFE states reconfirm their commitment to the Treaty and agree to find a cooperative solution to the flank problem. In this context, we specially urge all States Parties who have failed to comply with their obligations, to intensify their efforts to reach as quickly as possible such a cooperative solution acceptable to all".

28. However, at the Vienna Conference a concession was made to the Russian Federation by giving it until May 1999 to fulfil its obligations regarding armaments limits in the regions of

4 *International Herald Tribune*, 16 October 1996

St. Petersburg and the north Caucasus. The partners conceded furthermore that the relevant flank areas, in which Russia has to reduce its troop numbers, will be scaled down in geographic terms. These concessions have given rise to major concern in the Baltic countries as well as in the southern region. If the West's concessions were intended to soften Russia's opposition to NATO enlargement, they apparently failed to do so.

29. During his visit to Latvia in September 1996, your Rapporteur was told by the Latvian Defence Minister that Russia's military potential near the Latvian border had been considerably reinforced as a consequence of the CFE review conference. Paratroop units, tank units with T-80 tanks and "frontier protection troops" some 80 000 strong were deployed near the Latvian border. According to Latvian information, Russia had also deployed border troops in Belarus and had reached an agreement with Belarus on joint border protection.

*IV. Giving immediate priority
to identifying the main problems affecting
the eastern dimension of European security*

30. The new settlement of the southern Russian flank problem has to be seen in a broader framework in which strong economic interests, particularly regarding the exploitation of Caspian petroleum and natural gas where several countries are involved, have to be taken into account. One of the major players in this context is Turkey: a NATO member country and a WEU associate member country situated on Europe's south eastern flank. The other is Iran.

31. Your Rapporteur went on an initial visit to Turkey on the first of a number of visits he made to various central and eastern European countries to gather information for this report. In view of that country's geographic position, bounded by regions engaged in conflict in the Caucasus, the Balkans and the Middle East, its economic and geopolitical interests in the Caucasus, and its politically close relations with the Turkish-speaking countries on the southern flank of the Russian Federation, Turkey's position is still a key one in European security terms. Its views and positions with respect to the issues remaining to be resolved in order to create a common and comprehensive security model for Europe cannot therefore be ignored and may have important consequences for the attitude member

countries of the European Union and WEU should adopt as regards its future role and place in European security structures

32. Another important factor for European security is Norway. Norway, like Turkey, is a NATO member and WEU associate member. The Russian Ground Troops Commander, Vladimir Semyonourov, seemed to be speaking an entirely new language when he stated at the end of February that NATO exercises under way in Norway were a threat to Russian national security and that Russian forces would be put on alert to monitor them.

33. On a number of other outstanding matters the Russian Federation's attitude will be decisive in paving the way for enhancing peace and security in central and eastern Europe. One is compliance with the condition, imposed by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe for Russia's entry into that organisation, that Russia should ratify the agreement with Moldova on the withdrawal of the Russian 14th Army and its equipment from Moldovan territory within six months of its accession to the Council of Europe. The other is the request that the Russian concept of the "near abroad" should no longer be used to suggest that certain of Russia's neighbours fall within a special Russian sphere of influence.

34. These issues have practical consequences first and foremost for future Russian relations with the Baltic states, with two of which there are still a number of territorial and other bilateral questions outstanding, and as regards Lithuania and Poland in relation to the future status of the district of Kaliningrad. The strong Russian military presence in this enclave and the problem of Russian military transit through Lithuanian territory are permanent concerns for Lithuania and Poland even though these countries avoid public discussion of the issues.

35. A further crucial element in terms of future European security will be the development of relations between the United States and Russia. It is well known that both superpowers were often tempted in the past to negotiate agreements and arrangements on matters relating to European security over the heads of the European countries, but there are also bilateral issues between the two countries which have important consequences for Europe, such as the future application of the ABM Treaty which has been called into question on several occasions by the Republican-dominated American Congress.