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# NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL Monterey, California



## THESIS

**THE NATO-RUSSIA COUNCIL:  
ORIGINS AND PROSPECTS**

by

Anthony M. Sparagno Jr.

June 2003

Thesis Advisor:  
Second Reader:

David S. Yost  
Mikhail Tsypkin

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**THE NATO-RUSSIA COUNCIL:  
ORIGINS AND PROSPECTS**

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Major, United States Marine Corps  
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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of

**MASTER OF ARTS IN NATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS**

from the

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## **ABSTRACT**

On 28 May 2002, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the Russian Federation adopted a Declaration in Rome on “NATO-Russian Relations: A New Quality.” The Declaration replaced the Permanent Joint Council (PJC) with the NATO-Russia Council (NRC) as the new venue for consultation, cooperation, joint decision and joint action. This thesis analyzes the origins and prospects of the NRC. It provides background on Moscow’s relations with NATO from 1990 to 1997. It analyzes the PJC, which was established by the May 1997 Founding Act, notably with regard to the key events in the PJC’s history and its merits and shortcomings. Although the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks against the United States led to a new era in NATO-Russia relations, each side has pursued this new relationship because of its own motives. The thesis analyzes the Rome Declaration and discusses the key differences between the NATO-Russia Council and its predecessor, the PJC. It also assesses the NRC’s progress to date and its visible and potential problems. The thesis concludes that the prospects for the NATO-Russia Council depend in large part on the political will of the participating governments.



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## I. INTRODUCTION

The end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union in December 1991 ushered in a new era of relations between the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) and Moscow. Even prior to the Soviet collapse, at the Paris conference in November 1990 the member states of NATO and the Warsaw Pact declared that they no longer viewed each other as adversaries and that they intended to overcome the decades of mistrust and confrontation. In May 1997, NATO and Russia formalized their new relationship with the endorsement of the Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security. NATO and Russia pledged better cooperation in an effort to build a lasting peace in the Euro-Atlantic area. The Founding Act established the NATO-Russia Permanent Joint Council (PJC) as the venue for consultations and cooperation.

NATO and Russia utilized the PJC primarily as a forum for dialogue. In response to NATO's March-June 1999 air campaign against Yugoslavia, however, the Russians suspended their participation in the PJC until July 1999. The Russians then limited the PJC agenda to the Balkan peacekeeping operations with Russian participation – the Stabilization Force (SFOR) in Bosnia and the Kosovo Force (KFOR) in Kosovo - until February 2000.

After the terrorist attacks against the United States on 11 September 2001, NATO and Russia decided to deepen their cooperation. In May 2002 they established a new venue known as the NATO-Russia Council.

The purpose of this thesis is to analyze the origins and prospects of the NATO-Russia Council (NRC). The thesis compares and contrasts the new NATO-Russia Council with its predecessor, the PJC, and considers whether the structural changes embodied in the NATO-Russia Council are sufficient to promote a better relationship between the parties. In addition, this thesis identifies potential problems in the NATO-Russia Council and, more important, in the foundations of the new NATO-Russia relationship – that is, the interests and intentions of the two parties.

This topic is important because the events of the last century, including the two World Wars and the Cold War, illustrate the need for stability and security in the Euro-

Atlantic area. NATO and Russia have unique strategic roles in this region. According to their own declarations, they face common challenges and share common responsibilities for the future of security and stability in the Euro-Atlantic region.

The thesis is based on primary and secondary sources. The primary sources include the May 1997 Founding Act, the May 2002 Declaration on A New Quality of NATO-Russia Relations, and statements by NATO, NATO Member States, and the Russian government. The secondary sources include works by political and military analysts in newspapers, professional journals, and other reports.

The thesis is organized as follows. Chapter II examines the PJC from its inception in 1997 to its termination in 2002. The chapter begins with background on Moscow's relations with NATO and the West from 1990 to 1997. This section provides a brief overview and analysis of Russia's involvement in the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC), NATO's Partnership for Peace (PfP) initiative, the peacekeeping mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina – including both the Implementation Force (IFOR) and SFOR, and the Bosnia Contact Group. Although dialogue and cooperation did exist, NATO-Russia relations fell short of the aspirations articulated by NATO and Moscow. Given Russia's unique strategic role in the Euro-Atlantic region and the post-Cold War issues of NATO's new Strategic Concept and enlargement, both sides recognized the necessity to improve NATO-Russia relations. The May 1997 Founding Act and the PJC were intended to facilitate consultation and cooperation between NATO and Russia.

The chapter then examines the issues that influenced the signing of the Founding Act and provides an analysis of the completed document as well as of the key events in the PJC's proceedings. The PJC's activities fall into four distinct periods: from its inception in May 1997 to March 1999; the suspension of Russian participation from March to June 1999; the period of an agenda limited to SFOR and KFOR matters, from July 1999 to February 2000; and the period from February 2000 until its replacement in May 2002. This chapter analyzes the successes and shortcomings of the Founding Act and the PJC throughout each of these periods.

Chapter III discusses the origins of the NATO-Russia Council. The chapter begins with an overview of Russia's relations with the West when Vladimir Putin became

the acting President of Russia on 31 December 1999. Although NATO-Russia relations were frigid at the onset of his presidency, Putin pursued a foreign and domestic policy agenda that envisioned Russia closely tied to the West.

The next section of the chapter explains how the terrorist attacks against the United States on 11 September 2001 led to a new period of cooperation between Russia and the Allies. Although the events of 11 September marked the turning point in better cooperation between the Allies and Russia, each side has pursued this new relationship because of its own motives. The thesis analyzes the apparent motives of each of the parties.

Chapter IV offers a detailed analysis of the NATO-Russia Council. This chapter begins with a review of the Founding Act and the PJC. It then discusses the issues that influenced the building of a new relationship. The chapter examines the May 2002 Rome documents that established the Council. The section then discusses the key differences between the PJC and its successor. Although both forums were designed to provide an institution for consultation, cooperation, joint decision and joint action for NATO and Russia on nearly the same issues, the structure for their interactions includes some significant changes.

The NATO-Russia Council will not meet in the PJC's format of 19+1, whereby NATO member countries agreed on an Alliance position before presenting their consensus view to Russia. The NATO-Russia Council will meet "at 20" – that is, Russia and the NATO member states will seek a consensus without the NATO countries having previously determined an Alliance policy. Another significant difference is that the Secretary General of NATO will chair the NATO-Russia Council, in contrast with the "troika" arrangement for chairing PJC sessions.

This chapter also provides an analysis of the NATO-Russia Council by assessing its progress to date and the visible and potential problems. One provision that could be problematic in some circumstances is the "safeguard," whereby any NATO Ally can remove an item from the NRC's agenda. Although early reports indicate that the new Council is proving to be successful, some analysts believe that problems are likely to surface as soon as the Council is confronted with a tough issue about which Russia and



the West have sharply different opinions. Moreover, many analysts argue that for the new NATO-Russia Council to work effectively each side will have to put the past behind and exert the political will necessary to make this partnership successful. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the NATO-Russia Council's prospects.

The final chapter offers conclusions regarding the NATO-Russia Council. This chapter synthesizes the key findings and presents judgments regarding the prospects for the NATO-Russia Council.

## II. THE NATO-RUSSIA FOUNDING ACT AND THE PERMANENT JOINT COUNCIL

The events in 1989-91 that marked the end of the Cold War – the fall of the Berlin Wall, the collapse of Communist governments in East-Central Europe, the unification of Germany, and the disintegration of the Warsaw Pact and the Soviet Union – obliged the Allies to redefine NATO's purposes and to endow it with new roles in addition to its traditional core missions of collective defense and dialogue with adversaries.<sup>1</sup>

The purpose of this chapter is to analyze one of the most significant new roles of the Alliance, namely dialogue and cooperation with Russia, the principal successor state of NATO's Cold War adversary, the USSR.<sup>2</sup> The chapter considers the development of the NATO-Russia relationship within the Permanent Joint Council (PJC) founded in 1997 and why the PJC did not achieve the results desired by its architects. The chapter discusses NATO-Russia relations from 1990 to 1997 and the origins of the 1997 Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security between NATO and the Russian Federation. The chapter examines the issues that influenced the signing of the Founding Act and Russia's view of the document. Furthermore, it examines some of the key events of the PJC's history and analyzes its successes and failures. Finally, the chapter reviews the events that contributed to the replacement of the PJC by the NATO-Russia Council.

### A. POST-COLD WAR NATO-RUSSIA RELATIONS

At NATO's July 1990 London Summit, Heads of State and Government from the member states of the Alliance offered a new era of relations with their Cold War adversaries. The North Atlantic Council, in the words of its London Declaration, proposed to the member states of the Warsaw Pact "a joint declaration in which we solemnly state that we are no longer adversaries."<sup>3</sup> In addition, the member states of the

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<sup>1</sup> David S. Yost, *NATO Transformed: The Alliance's New Roles in International Security* (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace, 1998), p. 72.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. David S. Yost states that "These new roles can be defined and categorized in various ways, but the two most significant roles are cooperation with former adversaries and other non-NATO countries in new institutions such as Partnership for Peace, and crisis management and peace operations beyond the territory of NATO allies."

<sup>3</sup> NATO, North Atlantic Council, London Declaration on a Transformed North Atlantic Alliance, July 6, 1990, par. 6.

Alliance stated that it “will do its share to overcome the legacy of decades of suspicion” by offering more regular diplomatic and military contacts.<sup>4</sup> At the November 1990 Paris meeting of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE), the member states of NATO and the Warsaw Pact made a joint declaration on the improvement of their relations and confirmed that they intended to move beyond the decades of mistrust and confrontation in order to “increase stability and to build a united Europe.”<sup>5</sup>

From December 1991 to May 1997, the relations of the NATO Allies with former members of the Warsaw Pact and republics of the former Soviet Union took place in a number of venues. One of the earliest venues for discussion was the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC). Although dialogue did occur in the NACC between NATO and the former adversaries, the NACC never reached its intended objective of promoting an “institutional relationship of consultation and cooperation on political and security issues.”<sup>6</sup> According to David S. Yost,

NACC activities consisted in fact mainly of meetings – workshops, seminars, conferences, colloquiums, and so forth. For this reason, some observers called it “a gigantic talking shop where the formal opening speeches usually filled up most of the time available and the conclusions of the proceedings merely restated the questions originally posed for debate.”<sup>7</sup>

Another program designed to promote stability and security in the Euro-Atlantic area has been NATO’s Partnership for Peace (PfP). According to the *NATO Handbook*,

The aim of the Partnership is to enhance stability and security throughout Europe...The PfP programme focuses on defence-related cooperation but goes beyond dialogue and cooperation to forge a real partnership between each Partner country and NATO. It has become an important and

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid., par. 7, 8.

<sup>5</sup> Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE), 1990 Paris Summit, Charter of Paris for a New Europe, 19-21 November 1990. <http://www.osce.org/docs/english/1990-1999/summits/paris90e.htm>. Accessed September 2002.

<sup>6</sup> NATO, North Atlantic Council, Rome Declaration on Peace and Cooperation, November 8, 1991, par. 11.

<sup>7</sup> Yost, *NATO Transformed*, 95.

permanent feature of the European security architecture and is helping to expand and intensify political and military cooperation throughout Europe.<sup>8</sup>

In June 1994, Russia signed the PfP framework document. The *NATO Handbook* states that the program is based on the “principle of self-differentiation.”<sup>9</sup> That is, NATO and each partner country tailor the program to meet the objectives determined by both parties.<sup>10</sup> The relationship between NATO and Russia did not blossom into the maturity that some had expected. According to David Yost, writing in 1998, “Russia has been an exceptionally passive participant in PfP, except for the programs dealing with civil-emergency planning.”<sup>11</sup> The accomplishments under PfP auspices have, however, been less significant than the successful NATO-Russia cooperation in the Balkan peacekeeping missions.

Prior to the Founding Act in May 1997, the highlight of NATO’s consultations and cooperation with Russia was its peacekeeping partnership in Bosnia and Herzegovina with the Implementation Force (IFOR) and the follow-on Stabilization Force (SFOR). Since January 1996, a brigade of Russian peacekeepers consisting of approximately 1200 airborne troops has been working alongside NATO troops in the U.S. sector known as Multinational Division North.<sup>12</sup> In addition, an unprecedented agreement governing the command and control relationship between NATO and Russian troops placed a Russian General as the Special Deputy to the Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR).<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> NATO, *NATO Handbook*, Chapter 3: The Opening Up of the Alliance, Partnership for Peace, Aim and scope. Updated 8 October 2002. <http://www.nato.int/docu/handbook/2001/hb030201.htm>. Accessed May 2003.

<sup>9</sup> NATO, *NATO Handbook*, Chapter 3: The Opening Up of the Alliance, Partnership for Peace, Procedures and Structures. Updated 8 October 2002. <http://www.nato.int/docu/handbook/2001/hb030203.htm>. Accessed May 2003.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Yost, *NATO Transformed*, 136.

<sup>12</sup> NATO, Office of Information and Press, *NATO and Russia: Partners in Peacekeeping*, Brochure (Brussels, Belgium), 19 February 2001. <http://www.nato.int/docu/presskit/010219/brocheng.pdf>. Accessed July 2002.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

The Russian General is responsible for advising SACEUR on all matters concerning Russia's participation in SFOR.<sup>14</sup> According to a June 2002 NATO Fact Sheet on NATO-Russia relations:

One of the most successful areas of NATO-Russia cooperation has been the joint commitment to promoting peace and stability in the Balkans. Russia contributes the largest non-NATO contingent to the UN-mandated, NATO-led peacekeeping forces and its soldiers have worked alongside NATO counterparts since 1996 in support of the international community's efforts to build lasting security and stability in the region.<sup>15</sup>

NATO Secretary General Lord Robertson wrote that the cooperation between NATO and Russia in SFOR "is living proof of a shared commitment that serves Russian, NATO and pan-European security interests."<sup>16</sup>

In addition to the military cooperation through SFOR, the political cooperation in the Bosnia Contact Group has led to improved relations between Russia and the West. "It is noteworthy that the Bosnia Contact Group, formed in April 1994, initially consisted of the Quad [France, Germany, the United Kingdom, and the United States] plus Russia. At the outset, the Contact Group was officially composed of U.S. and Russian representatives, plus three from the International Conference on Former Yugoslavia (ICFY) who would nominally speak for the UN, the European Union, and the ICFY."<sup>17</sup> Since several other major institutions – the United Nations (UN); the European Union (EU); the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), renamed the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) effective 1 January 1995 – had been unable to prevent or stop the war in the former Yugoslavia, the emergence of a Russian-Western relationship became more important. Although each of these institutions, as well as the Contact Group, contributed in part to peace in the Balkans, it is reasonable to conclude that the West needed Russian participation in order to establish security and stability in Southeastern Europe.

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> NATO, "NATO-Russia Relations," NATO Fact Sheets, 11 June 2002. <http://www.nato.int/docu/facts/nato-rus.htm>. Accessed July 2002

<sup>16</sup> Lord Robertson, NATO Secretary General, "Prospects for NATO-Russia Relations," *Front Line*

<sup>17</sup> Yost, *NATO Transformed*, 184.

Throughout this volatile period between 1990 and 1997, it became clear that NATO needed to establish a special relationship with the other key player on the European continent – Russia. Initiatives such as the NACC, PfP, IFOR/SFOR, and the Contact Group, combined with NATO’s enlargement, led to negotiations on a special NATO-Russia relationship. In May 1997, NATO and Russia formalized their special relationship with the endorsement of the Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security. Although relations between Russia and the Allies were continuing to improve, coming to an agreement on the Founding Act involved some challenges.

## **B. THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE FOUNDING ACT**

The Founding Act was the pinnacle of NATO-Russia relations in the 1990s. According to a NATO fact sheet,

Since the end of the Cold War, NATO has attributed particular importance to developing cooperation with Russia, whose involvement is critical for any comprehensive post-Cold War system of European security. Russia was a founding member of the NACC in 1991 and joined the Partnership for Peace in 1994. However, the true basis for the development of a strong and durable partnership between NATO and Russia was provided by the 1997 Founding Act.<sup>18</sup>

Discussions on the terms of the Founding Act were not entirely amicable. According to the memoirs of the former Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeny Primakov, difficulties began when Moscow realized that “The US was not interested in talking about enlargement with Russia, but favoured the idea of talking about NATO-Russia relations in a broader context (ie enlargement was already decided).”<sup>19</sup> High-level discussions about NATO-Russian relations started at the beginning of 1996 with one-on-one talks between Russia and several NATO member states. According to Primakov, “the US was showing signs of irritation at the way Russia was talking in parallel with other NATO members.”<sup>20</sup> As a result, NATO Secretary General Javier Solana and Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeny Primakov were prominent figures in the discussions

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<sup>18</sup> NATO, “NATO-Russia relations,” NATO Fact Sheets, 11 June 2002.

<sup>19</sup> Yevgeny M. Primakov, *Years in Big Politics*, trans. and abridged J B K Lough, F-70, Camberley Surrey, England: Directorate General Development and Doctrine, Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, The Conflict Studies Research Centre, June 2000, p. 3. [http://www.cscr.ac.uk/frames/frames\\_page.htm](http://www.cscr.ac.uk/frames/frames_page.htm). Accessed August 2002.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 5.

with U.S. Secretaries of State Warren Christopher (January 1993 - January 1997) and Madeleine Albright (January 1997 – January 2001).<sup>21</sup>

From the onset of the negotiations, each side had different goals for the Founding Act. According to an analysis by Peter Trenin-Straussov,

The main objective of NATO leaders was to enlarge the alliance without at the same time jeopardizing its relations with Russia. The main objective of the Russian leadership, once it realized that it couldn't stop the enlargement process, was to win security assurances from NATO which would minimize the material impact of enlargement on Russia's national security.<sup>22</sup>

Prime Minister Primakov's work *Years in Big Politics* also suggests that Russia was concerned about security assurances in the Founding Act. In Primakov's words,

Russia needed a fairly detailed document which defined its relations with NATO, and not a declaration along the lines of 'we will not attack each other'. If we were going to create a NATO-Russia Council [the Permanent Joint Council] we had to agree on the basis on which it would work, the nature of the problems it would and would not deal with, as well as which decisions were binding or not. I emphasised that the framework principles of CFE [Conventional Armed Forces in Europe Treaty] modernisation should be reflected in the document since we could not accept an agreement with NATO without settling the issue of the non-approach of the NATO military machine towards our territory.<sup>23</sup>

In the early months of 1997, several rounds of negotiations had taken place, but little was accomplished. According to Primakov, "We had the impression that our NATO partners were not in a hurry and were, perhaps, slowing down movement towards concrete agreements" by paying particular attention to the political and organizational aspects of the document while avoiding the military issues.<sup>24</sup> The Russians concluded that they "had reached an impasse" and that NATO was waiting for the results of the Russian-American Helsinki Summit, which was to take place in March 1997.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid., p. 5.

<sup>22</sup> Peter Trenin-Straussov, *The NATO-Russia Permanent Joint Council in 1997-1999: Anatomy of a Failure*, (Berlin Information-center for Transatlantic Security, BITS Research Note 99.1 ISSN 1434-3258, July 1999) <http://www.bits.de/public/researchnote/rn99-1.htm>. Accessed August 2002.

<sup>23</sup> Primakov, *Years in Big Politics*, p. 6.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., p. 10.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

According to RFE/RL journalist Sonia Winter, “Presidents Boris Yeltsin and Bill Clinton ended their Helsinki summit...declaring it was a success.”<sup>26</sup> Russia and the United States made major progress on European security, arms control, the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, and economic issues.<sup>27</sup> With regard to NATO enlargement and NATO-Russia relations, both sides walked away with acceptable decisions. Although Russia was unable to get a legally binding commitment that NATO enlargement would not lead to a threatening buildup of permanently stationed conventional forces and nuclear weapons near Russia’s borders, it did leave the summit with the security assurances that it needed.<sup>28</sup> Tough negotiations on the document continued, and in May 1997 all of the parties were able to come to an acceptable agreement on the content of the Founding Act.

Most of Russia’s security concerns were addressed in the “Political-Military Matters” section of the document, but there was also disagreement over what type of document it would be and what to call it. According to Peter Trenin-Straussov, “Russia wanted a legally binding document, preferably a treaty, [or an agreement] with strict obligations for both sides. It wanted not only consultations with NATO, but, more importantly, joint decision-making on the major issues of European security, and joint action.”<sup>29</sup> According to Primakov, “The NATO side favoured [a] ‘Charter’, which would offer them more room in [the] future for the interpretation of the binding nature of their commitments.”<sup>30</sup> Peter Trenin-Straussov states that “In the end, the negotiators...reached a formula, which averted a looming crisis in the relations between Russia and the West, but produced a compromise which had few enthusiasts on either side.”<sup>31</sup> The Founding Act, like the 1975 Helsinki Final Act of the CSCE, is a political declaration, not a legally binding treaty. Despite the shaky ground on which the

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<sup>26</sup> Sonia Winter, “Russia/US Helsinki Summit Declared a Success”, *Radio Free Europe Radio Free* 24 March 1997. <http://www.rferl.org/nca/features/1997/03/F.RU.970324152504.html>. Accessed September 2002.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Arms Control Association, “Joint Statements of the Helsinki Summit,” *Arms Control Today*, March 1997 [http://www.armscontrol.org/act/1997\\_03/js.asp](http://www.armscontrol.org/act/1997_03/js.asp). Accessed September 2002.

<sup>29</sup> Trenin-Straussov, *The NATO-Russia Permanent Joint Council in 1997-1999*.

<sup>30</sup> Primakov, *Years in Big Politics*, 15.

<sup>31</sup> Trenin-Straussov, *The NATO-Russia Permanent Joint Council in 1997-1999*.



Founding Act was established, it was still a step in the right direction for the enhancement of NATO-Russia relations.

### **C. PROVISIONS FOR THE PERMANENT JOINT COUNCIL**

At the heart of the Founding Act was the creation of the NATO-Russia Permanent Joint Council. The Founding Act states that “The central objective of the Permanent Joint Council will be to build increasing levels of trust, unity of purpose and habits of consultation and cooperation between NATO and Russia, in order to enhance each other’s security and that of all nations in the Euro-Atlantic area and diminish the security of none.”<sup>32</sup> The Founding indicates that the PJC “will provide a mechanism for consultations, coordination and, to the maximum extent possible, where appropriate, for joint decisions and joint action” by NATO and Russia.<sup>33</sup>

The Founding Act directs that the PJC “will be the principal venue of consultations between NATO and Russia in times of crisis or for any other situation affecting peace and stability.”<sup>34</sup> Moreover, it directs that the PJC will meet at different levels over regular timetables: Foreign and Defense Ministers will meet with their respective counterparts twice a year while ambassadors or permanent representatives on the North Atlantic Council will meet each month.<sup>35</sup> The Founding Act states that the PJC may also meet at the level of Heads of State and Government and that it may establish working groups or committees for specific areas of cooperation.<sup>36</sup>

The Founding Act states that the “Permanent Joint Council will engage in three distinct activities: [1] consulting on topics in Section III of this Act and on any other political or security issue determined by mutual consent; [2] on the basis of these consultations, developing joint initiatives on which NATO and Russia would agree to speak or act in parallel; [3] once consensus has been reached in the course of

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<sup>32</sup> NATO, Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security between NATO and the Russian Federation, Paris, 27 May 1997, Section II. <http://www.nato.int/docu/basic/txt/fndact-a.htm>. Accessed July 2002.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

consultation, making joint decisions and taking joint action on a case-by-case basis.”<sup>37</sup> Section III of the Founding Act lists nineteen broad areas for consultation and cooperation and states that “[o]ther areas can be added by mutual agreement.”<sup>38</sup> The Founding Act and the PJC provided a strong foundation for the establishment of a NATO-Russian partnership. According to Javier Solana, NATO Secretary General at the time of the establishment of the Founding Act, “The real depth of the partnership will emerge once Russia and NATO staffs start to work closely, even daily, together.”<sup>39</sup>

#### **D. KEY EVENTS IN THE PERMANENT JOINT COUNCIL’S HISTORY**

This section of the chapter examines the key events in the PJC’s proceedings. The PJC’s activities fall into four distinct periods: from its inception in May 1997 to March 1999; the suspension of Russian participation from March to June 1999; the period of an agenda limited to SFOR and KFOR matters, from July 1999 to February 2000; and the period from February 2000 until its replacement in May 2002.

##### **1. The PJC from May 1997 to March 1999**

The first noteworthy meeting of the PJC took place on 11 September 1997 at the NATO Headquarters in Brussels. Prior to this the only other meeting was devoted to organizational issues and planning for the content of future meetings.<sup>40</sup> According to the NATO press release after the 11 September 1997 meeting at the ambassadorial level, the two sides agreed to exchange “views on peacekeeping operations, the situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina, and a work programme of the PJC until the end of the year.”<sup>41</sup> In addition, “All participants welcomed the outcome of the meeting and expressed their determination to continue the work in a positive spirit.”<sup>42</sup> On the surface, the first meeting was a typical media performance with lots of smiles and shaking of hands. Political analysts, however, viewed this meeting with more skepticism.

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> NATO, Founding Act, Section III.

<sup>39</sup> Javier Solana, “NATO and Russia: A True Partnership,” NATO News Articles: L’Unità”, 25 May 1997 <http://www.nato.int/docu/articles/1997/a970528a.htm>. Accessed August 2002.

<sup>40</sup> NATO Press Release (97) 87, 18 July 1997. <http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/1997/p97-087e.htm>. Accessed September 2002.

<sup>41</sup> NATO Press Release (97) 104, 11 September 1997. <http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/1997/p97-104e.htm>. Accessed September 2002.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

According to RFE/RL's Paul Goble, the 11 September 1997 meeting of the PJC "provided support for those who argue that this body will help to overcome Russian suspicions about the Western alliance. But the session also provided evidence that this body may give Moscow a much larger voice over NATO policy than many in the alliance appear to want."<sup>43</sup> After giving three arguments for each interpretation, Goble concluded that "the debate on whether the new NATO-Russia council gives Moscow only a voice or almost a veto will continue, with each meeting providing the occasion for measuring just how much it is of each."<sup>44</sup>

The first several meetings all dealt with generally the same topics, namely peacekeeping, SFOR, and the situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina. However, as the participants grew more accustomed to this forum, the list of topics began to expand. The PJC began to exchange views on diverse issues, including the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and workshops to train retired Russian military officers. At the beginning of the PJC's second year it began discussions on tough issues in disarmament and arms control, including the CFE and Open Skies Treaties. However, the topics that remained foremost on the agenda at each of the monthly meetings were SFOR and the situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

NATO Secretary General Robertson, in a February 2001 speech at the Moscow State Institute of Foreign Relations (MGIMO), provided an impression of the PJC's achievements from its inception in 1997 until Moscow suspended Russian participation in March 1999.

The NATO-Russia PJC met for the first time in July 1997 and it had only until March 1999 to show its potential. The record shows, however, that substantial progress was achieved even in this short period. Not only did the PJC establish itself as the venue for NATO-Russia consultations, but a whole network of experts' contacts, Working Groups, and ad-hoc

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<sup>43</sup> Paul Goble, "Analysis from Washington --The NATO-Russia Council's First Test," *Radio Free Europe Radio Liberty*, 15 September 1997. <http://www.rferl.org/nea/features/1997/09/F.RU.970915120541.html>. Accessed August 2002.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

meetings developed under its umbrella, addressing the areas of consultation and cooperation foreseen in the Founding Act.<sup>45</sup>

Willem Matser, an expert in NATO's Office of the Special Adviser for Central and Eastern Europe, presented a different view: "Despite early optimism, however, it rapidly became clear that the PJC was not functioning as intended. Some of the PJC's shortcomings could be attributed to cultural differences."<sup>46</sup> One such cultural difference was NATO's bottom-up decision-making, in contrast with Russia's top-down approach to negotiations.<sup>47</sup>

Matser states that because "NATO functions on the basis of consensus ... [it relies on] an ongoing process of informal consultations among the Allies' Permanent Representations at NATO headquarters in order to smooth the way towards agreement."<sup>48</sup> Russia, however, did not deal individually with each of the member states of the Alliance, and Moscow did not maintain a permanent presence at NATO headquarters.<sup>49</sup> Therefore, when Moscow attended the meetings of the PJC, it was not prepared to effectively participate in the "consensus-building process" that was taking place.<sup>50</sup> Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty journalist Jeffrey Donovan reports that, according to "Andrew Kuchins, director of the Russia program at Washington's Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, ... the PJC foundered because Russian officials never really made an effort to make it work."<sup>51</sup> Ira Straus notes that "there was a persistent fear that Moscow might disrupt the existing NATO consensus and divide the allies if it was allowed to talk freely with them. Based on this fear, it was decided that NATO must not talk to Russia in the Permanent Joint Council until NATO had first reached its own

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<sup>45</sup> Lord Robertson, Secretary General of NATO. Speech given at the Moscow State Institute of Foreign Relations (MGIMO), 21 February 2001. <http://www.nato.int/docu/speech/2001/s010221a.htm>. Accessed August 2002.

<sup>46</sup> Willem Matser, "Towards a new strategic partnership," *NATO Review* vol.49, no. 4 winter 2001. <http://www.nato.int/docu/review/2001/0104-05.htm>. Accessed August 2002

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

<sup>51</sup> Jeffrey Donovan, "Council to Be Launched Amid Unprecedented Security" *Radio Free Europe Radio Liberty*, 27 May 2002. <http://www.rferl.org/nca/features/2002/05/27052002091843.asp>. Accessed July 2002.

common position separately, thus ensuring the council's ineffectiveness."<sup>52</sup> The pre-coordinated positions of the Allies, combined with a fear of Russian attempts to erode Alliance solidarity, evidently contributed to a confrontational "19 versus 1" format instead of the "19 plus 1" format that was envisioned in the Founding Act.

The PJC functioned, in other words, as a forum in which each side presented its views. Russia and NATO were committed, however, to improving bilateral relations. In February 1998 the inauguration of the NATO Documentation Centre in Moscow took place. On 18 March 1998 a Russian Mission to NATO was established. Two months later, Russia and NATO welcomed the beginning of negotiations to establish reciprocal Military Liaison Missions. All of these events were envisaged in the Founding Act and were designed to improve NATO-Russia relations and to help facilitate cooperation. According to a NATO press release, "The NATO-Russia Permanent Joint Council (PJC) had an extraordinary meeting on Thursday 18 June [1998] at NATO Headquarters. Ambassadors exchanged views on the situation in Kosovo and on the international community's response to the crisis in the light of the meeting held by the President of the Russian Federation [Boris Yeltsin] and the President of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia [Slobodan Milosevic] in Moscow on 16 June 1998."<sup>53</sup> From this point on, Kosovo became the central topic in NATO-Russia discussions.

## **2. The PJC and the Kosovo Crisis**

Initially both Russia and NATO called for diplomatic efforts to find a peaceful solution to the crisis in Kosovo. In addition, both NATO and Russia expressed a deep concern about the serious humanitarian crisis that was taking place in Kosovo. In the fall of 1998 NATO and Russia called for Belgrade's immediate and full compliance with the United Nations Security Council resolutions on the Kosovo crisis. At the 13 October 1998 PJC meeting it was clear that NATO and Russian views on Kosovo had begun to go in different directions. NATO informed Russia about its "decision to issue an Activation Order (ACTORD) for the limited air response and the phased air operation, underlying its determination to help put an end to the intolerable humanitarian situation in Kosovo and

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<sup>52</sup> Ira Straus, "Big bang theory and NATO's flexibility," *The Russia Journal*, Issue no. 21 (164), 7 June 2002.

<sup>53</sup> NATO-Russia Statement, Press Release (98) 84, 18 June 1998.  
<http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/1998/p98-084e.htm>. Accessed September 2002.

to support ongoing efforts aimed at a political solution.”<sup>54</sup> Russia reiterated its firm commitment to pursue a political settlement and expressed opposition to any military action.<sup>55</sup>

NATO and Russia pledged their full support for the international verification missions for Kosovo and the ongoing peace talks in Rambouillet. They “urged the parties to work responsibly and intensively in order to achieve an interim political agreement.”<sup>56</sup> According to the 17 March 1999 PJC press statement, “NATO and Russia continued their regular consultations on the crisis in Kosovo...[and] will continue their efforts aimed at peace and stability in the region.”<sup>57</sup> On 24 March 1999 NATO began a 78-day bombing campaign against targets throughout the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in order to stop the “ethnic cleansing” in the Serbian province of Kosovo.

In protest over NATO’s actions, Russia suspended its participation in the PJC. According to Lord Robertson, “Our relationship was plunged into its most serious crisis.”<sup>58</sup> Dimitri Trenin, Deputy Director of the Carnegie Moscow Center, has described the impact of Kosovo.

NATO strikes against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia...came as a shock to many in Russia. The use of force without the express sanction of a United Nations Security Council resolution dramatically devalued not only the Russian veto right but also the former superpower’s actual international weight. Moscow was shown to be impotent to prevent a major international military operation in an area, which it traditionally regards as crucial to its entire position in Europe.<sup>59</sup>

It is worth noting that Trenin seems more concerned about Russia’s status and influence than about the UN Charter. The Kosovo crisis significantly affected NATO-

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<sup>54</sup> NATO, Press Statement, 13 October 1998. <http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/1998/p981013e.htm>. Accessed September 2002.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

<sup>56</sup> NATO, Press Statement, 17 February 1999. <http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/1999/p990217e.htm>. Accessed September 2002.

<sup>57</sup> NATO, Press Statement, 17 March 1999. <http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/1999/p990317e.htm>. Accessed September 2002.

<sup>58</sup> Lord Robertson, Speech given at the Moscow State Institute of Foreign Relations (MGIMO), 21 February 2001.

<sup>59</sup> Dimitri Trenin, “Russia-NATO relations: Time to pick up the pieces,” *NATO Review* vol.48, no. 1, spring 2000. <http://www.nato.int/docu/review/2000/0001-06.htm>. Accessed July 2002.

Russia relations. Whatever progress the PJC had made during the nearly three years of its existence appeared to have vanished.

Oksana Antonenko, a Research Fellow at the International Institute for Strategic Studies, presented a Russian perspective on one of the lessons of the Kosovo crisis. According to Antonenko:

[T]he much-touted institutions for confidence-building and cooperation between Russia and NATO – including the Permanent Joint Council – failed when tested by their first real crisis. Facing a stark conflict of interests – interests that are important but not vital to each side’s security – the former adversaries sacrificed the years of hard work spent establishing good relations, and now chose to ignore each other’s opinions. The 1997 Russia-NATO Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security failed not only to ensure joint decision-making, but even a working mechanism for crisis management. All of the forms of Russia-NATO cooperation supposedly institutionalized by the Founding Act were terminated [by Russia] immediately following the start of NATO bombing.<sup>60</sup>

Immediately after the strikes, Russia took steps to express its opposition to NATO’s intervention in the Kosovo crisis. Leonid Ivashov, head of the main directorate for international military cooperation of the Defense Ministry, declared, “We have already told you that we have recalled our military representatives from NATO. We also have recalled the servicemen who were being educated in military educational establishments in the countries taking part in the aggression against Yugoslavia. We have recalled all our delegations from these states.”<sup>61</sup> Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov stated that “The NATO information service representative in Moscow has been told to leave Russia... We no longer have and will have no more contacts with the NATO leadership, including its secretary-general, until the aggression against Yugoslavia

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<sup>60</sup> Oksana Antonenko, “Russia, NATO and European Security after Kosovo,” *Survival* 41-4, Winter 1999-2000, p. 125.

<sup>61</sup> British Broadcasting Corporation, “Russian Military Severs All Contacts With NATO,” Ekho Moskvyy radio, Moscow, in Russian 3 April 1999.

stops.”<sup>62</sup> Moreover, the ITAR-TASS news agency reported, “the opening of a NATO communication mission in Moscow has been postponed ‘until the better times’.”<sup>63</sup> Russia’s suspension of dialogue and cooperation with NATO spread to the PfP program, the Permanent Joint Council and the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council. Despite these seemingly harsh actions, Russia maintained diplomatic links and relationships that served its own interests. According to Pavel Felgengauer,

Gen. Thomas Kuenning, the Pentagon’s man in charge of the Cooperative Threat Reduction (CTR) program, had been scheduled to visit Moscow in late March [1999]. The visit was then cancelled, but the Russian authorities later decided that the CTR program meant too much to Russia to be sacrificed out of solidarity with the Serbs. As a result, Kuenning was received in Moscow this week...This week Gen. Kuenning visited a training center at Sergiyev Posad where officers of the Defense Ministry’s 12<sup>th</sup> Chief Administration will be testing security systems for nuclear munitions in conjunction with American experts. The systems judged to be the most suitable will be purchased with funds from the U.S. government and installed at Russia’s nuclear weapons facilities...[T]he obvious benefits deriving from the Nunn-Lugar program are a good guarantee that it will be the last program to be shut down if relations continue to deteriorate, and the first to be revived as soon as another warming trend arrives in relations between Moscow and Washington.<sup>64</sup>

Owing in part to pressure from Moscow, it appears, Milosevic accepted a peace proposal. On 10 June 1999, NATO forces ended their bombing campaign. The next day, approximately 200 Russian troops made an unexpected dash to the Pristina airport. Their mission was apparently to seize the airport as a point of insertion for troops to be airlifted

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<sup>62</sup> British Broadcasting Corporation, “NATO information representative told to leave Russia – Ivanov,” ITAR-TASS news agency (World Service), Moscow, 26 March 1999. According to NATO Fact Sheets, the NATO Information Office in Moscow was inaugurated on 20 February 2001. <http://www.nato.int/docu/facts/nato-rus.htm>. Accessed September 2002. The information service representative that was expelled came from the NATO Contact Embassy in Moscow. NATO, “Major Milestones in NATO-Russia Relations: A chronology of important events,” 5 October 2000. <http://www.nato.int/docu/basicxt/fndact-c.htm>. Accessed July 2002.

<sup>63</sup> British Broadcasting Corporation, “Russian Defense Ministry Limits Business Contacts With NATO,” ITAR-TASS news agency (World Service), 26 March 1999. The Founding Act called for the establishment of a NATO documentation centre or information office in Moscow in order to improve public understanding of evolving relations between NATO and Russia. <http://www.nato.int/docu/basicxt/fndact-a.htm>. Accessed July 2002. According to NATO Fact Sheets, the NATO Information Office in Moscow was inaugurated on 20 February 2001. <http://www.nato.int/docu/facts/nato-rus.htm>. Accessed September 2002.

<sup>64</sup> Pavel Felgengauer, “A Month from Now, Russia May Have to Pay for Safeguarding Its Own Nuclear Arsenal,” *Sevodnya*, 21 May 1999, in *The Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press*, vol. 51, no. 20 (16 June 1999), p. 19.



from Russia to enable Moscow to control a large part of Kosovo; this might have given Moscow a strong bargaining position regarding Kosovo's fate and the terms of Russian participation in a Kosovo peacekeeping operation.<sup>65</sup> According to Oksana Antonenko, "The race to Pristina undoubtedly speeded up negotiations between Moscow and NATO commanders on Russia's role in KFOR. However, the Russian military was not pleased with the results of those negotiations. Russia had to give up its demands for a special sector of Kosovo, independent of NATO's chain of command. Nor could Russian troops take control over heavily Serb-populated areas. Negotiations over the exact deployment of Russia's troops in the British, US, French and German sectors dragged on until August [1999]."<sup>66</sup>

### **3. The PJC from July 1999 to February 2000**

Although the Kosovo crisis led to some antagonism between Russia and the West, both sides believed that relations would return to normal. According to Irina Lagunina, "The two [unidentified NATO] experts said that despite Russia's decision to formally withdraw cooperation with NATO, they believed that future cooperation was inevitable."<sup>67</sup> According to Antonenko, "By August 1999, at least one opinion poll showed some improvement in mood. Asking 'How do you think relations between Russia and NATO will develop after the Kosovo conflict?', the poll results showed that only 17% expected relations to undergo Cold War tensions, while 52% supported gradual normalisation. Prime Minister Vladimir Putin gave the justification for such normalisation when he said that 'Russia should be and will be an integral part of the civilised world and in this context we will cooperate with NATO'.<sup>68</sup> Russia's suspension of activities in the PJC lasted for nearly four months.

On 23 July 1999, after nearly a four-month absence, Russia resumed its dialogue with NATO and returned to the Permanent Joint Council. Under the auspices of the Permanent Joint Council, NATO and Russia issued a Statement on the Security Situation

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<sup>65</sup> Oksana Antonenko, "Russia, NATO and European Security after Kosovo," p. 138.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid.

<sup>67</sup> Irina Lagunina, "Russia: NATO Experts Hope For Resumption Of Contact With Russia," RFE/RL, 30 April 1999. <http://www.rferl.org/nca/features/1990/04/F.RU.990430141019.html>. Accessed August 2002.

<sup>68</sup> Oksana Antonenko, "Russia, NATO and European Security after Kosovo," p. 137.

in Kosovo. According to the statement, “NATO and Russia will continue to consider in the PJC ways of further improving security in Kosovo.”<sup>69</sup> As Dmitri Trenin points out, however, “By the end of 1999, Russia-NATO relations had not fully recovered from the blow dealt by Kosovo. The word partnership was no longer mentioned. Cooperation and dialogue were still limited to the two ongoing peacekeeping operations in the Balkans, SFOR and KFOR.”<sup>70</sup> Moreover, Trenin adds,

Towards the end of 1999, Russia’s deteriorating relations with the West were further aggravated, first by the corruption scandal and soon thereafter by the second war in Chechnya. From the Russian point of view, these developments overshadowed problems with NATO...[M]ounting Western criticism over Russia’s human rights record in the northern Caucasus has raised the spectre of Moscow’s international isolation for the first time since the end of the Cold War...[However, Russia] now urgently needs to mend its fences with the West for a host of financial, economic and political reasons.<sup>71</sup>

In light of these events and the changing international political climate with the arrival of new leadership in both Moscow and NATO, the prospect for improved relations looked promising.

#### **4. The PJC from February 2000 to May 2002**

According to A.V. Grushko, Deputy Director of the Russian Foreign Ministry All-European Cooperation Department, “After the Yugoslav situation was brought back into the international legal field political contacts with NATO began to be restored. In February 2000 NATO Secretary General George Robertson visited Moscow. During the course of the visit, in addition to a thorough review of current relations between Russia and NATO, the first conceptual conversation about prospects for the future took place.”<sup>72</sup> During the February 2000 meeting, Lord Robertson, who had then been NATO’s Secretary General for four months, and Russia’s new acting president Vladimir Putin

<sup>69</sup> NATO, Press Statement, 23 July 1999. <http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/1999/p990723e.htm>. Accessed September 2002.

<sup>70</sup> Dmitri Trenin, “Russia-NATO relations: Time to pick up the pieces.”

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

<sup>72</sup> A. V. Grushko, Deputy Director of the Russian Foreign Ministry, All-European Cooperation Department, “Russia-NATO Twenty Appears to Be Working,” Daily News Bulletin, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, Information and Press Department, (published in *International Affairs*, No. 7, 2002), 9 July 2002, Document # 1401-08-07-2002, <http://www.in.mid.ru/BI.nsf/arh/FBDA6E00A5C7FDAB43256BF2003FD3F9?OpenDocument>. Accessed March 2003.

“negotiated a joint statement on the restoration of full relations between the alliance and Russia.”<sup>73</sup> The joint statement said that

NATO and Russia are fully determined to contribute to building a stable and undivided Europe, whole and free, to the benefit of all of its peoples...They will promote the strengthening of security in the Euro-Atlantic area on the basis of the Founding Act and through cooperation within the Permanent Joint Council...NATO and Russia will work to intensify their dialogue in the Permanent Joint Council. They agree that Russia and NATO would pursue a vigorous dialogue on a wide range of security issues that will enable NATO and Russia to address the challenges that lie ahead and to make their mutual cooperation a cornerstone of European security.<sup>74</sup>

Both parties applauded the decision to improve relations. According to Lord Robertson, “After my visit to Moscow this February, I feel that we are at a new juncture in NATO-Russia relations...I am also very much encouraged by Acting President Putin’s remarks made following my visit. They reflect a willingness to engage Europe, including the Alliance, to cooperate and to move the NATO-Russia relationship forward.”<sup>75</sup> Furthermore, in June 2000, “Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov, speaking at a joint press conference with Lord Robertson after the session of the Permanent Joint Council, said the Russian leadership attached importance to a renewal of the dialogue with NATO which served to strengthen European stability and security. ‘We have a mutual interest in fully taking account of the interests and concerns of each other,’ Ivanov said, declaring his satisfaction that the talks had been frank and substantial.”<sup>76</sup>

Willem Matser has reported that NATO-Russia relations continued to improve and “[b]y spring 2001, the PJC’s work agenda had expanded to cover a wide range of issues of mutual interest...Indeed, the programme was almost as broad as the one that existed at the end of 1998. In February 2001, after a year of negotiations, NATO

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<sup>73</sup> Dmitri Trenin, “Russia-NATO relations: Time to pick up the pieces.”

<sup>74</sup> NATO, “Joint statement on the occasion of the visit of the Secretary General of NATO, Lord Robertson, in Moscow on 16 February 2000,” *NATO Review*, Web edition, Vol. 48 – No. 1, Spring-Summer 2000, p. 20. <http://www.nato.int/docu/review/2000/0001-0c.htm>. Accessed February 2003.

<sup>75</sup> Lord Robertson, NATO Secretary General, “Prospects for NATO-Russia Relations,” *Front Line*. <http://www.nato.int/docu/articles/2000/a000501a.pdf>. Accessed July 2002.

<sup>76</sup> NATO, “NATO-Russia relations back on track, says Robertson,” *NATO Newspages*, 9 June 2000. <http://www.nato.int/docu/newspage/2000/n000601e.htm>. Accessed September 2002.

Secretary General Lord Robertson was able to inaugurate a NATO Information Office in Moscow.”<sup>77</sup>

The ongoing involvement of Russia and NATO in SFOR and KFOR reinforced the need for improved relations. In subsequent meetings, the dialogue began to extend to topics that had been discussed prior to NATO’s Kosovo campaign.

Major developments in NATO-Russia relations took place after the terrorist attacks against the United States on 11 September 2001. On 13 September 2001, the NATO-Russia Permanent Joint Council convened an extraordinary meeting at the Ambassadorial level at which Russia and the Allies pledged to work together in the struggle against international terrorism. According to the NATO press statement:

The NATO-Russia Permanent Joint Council...expressed its anger and indignation at the barbaric acts committed against the people of the United States of America. The deepest sympathies of Allies and Russia lie with the victims and their families. While Allies and Russia have suffered from terrorist attacks against civilians, the horrific scale of the attacks of 11 September is without precedent in modern history. NATO and Russia are united in their resolve not to let those responsible for such an inhuman act to go unpunished. NATO and Russia call on the entire international community to unite in the struggle against terrorism.<sup>78</sup>

Over the next several months, high-level discussions took place in which Russia and NATO exchanged information and views on how to combat terrorism.<sup>79</sup> At the 7 December 2001 meeting of the PJC at the Foreign Minister level, NATO and Russia agreed to begin discussions on the development of a new council that would bring the Alliance’s member states and Russia together “to identify and pursue opportunities for joint action at 20.”<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> Willem Matser, “Towards a new strategic partnership.”

<sup>78</sup> NATO, “Meeting in extraordinary session of the NATO-Russia Permanent Joint Council at Ambassadorial level,” Press Statement, 13 September 2001. <http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/2001/p010913e.htm>. Accessed September 2002.

<sup>79</sup> NATO, “NATO-Russia Consultations on Combatting Terrorism,” Press Statement, 2 October 2001. <http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/2001/p011002e.htm>. Accessed September 2002.

<sup>80</sup> NATO, NATO-Russia Joint Statement: issued on the Occasion of the Meeting of the Permanent Joint Council at the Level of Foreign Ministers in Brussels on 7 December 2001,” Press Statement, 7 December 2001. <http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/2001/p011207e.htm>. Accessed March 2003.

Cooperation in the struggle against terrorism continued to be the foundation of the new relationship. On 4 February 2002, NATO and Russia held a joint conference on the role of the military in combating terrorism. According to a keynote address by Secretary General Robertson, “This conference is another step towards turning a tragedy into an opportunity: a strong relationship befitting NATO and Russia, and benefiting the entire Euro-Atlantic community.”<sup>81</sup> Cooperation between NATO and Russia continued. On 27 May 2002, on the fifth anniversary of the establishment of the Founding Act and on the eve of the Rome Summit, NATO opened its Military Liaison Mission in Moscow in order to “support the implementation of the military cooperation and serve as the principal liaison between NATO HQ and the Russian Ministry of Defence.”<sup>82</sup>

On 28 May 2002, NATO and Russia declared that they were determined to achieve “A New Quality” in their bilateral relations. The signing of this declaration created the new NATO-Russia Council. According to the Rome Declaration, “In the framework of the NATO-Russia Council, NATO member states and Russia will work as equal partners in areas of common interest. The NATO-Russia Council will provide a mechanism for consultation, consensus-building, cooperation, joint decision, and joint action for the member states of NATO and Russia on a wide spectrum of security issues in the Euro-Atlantic region.”<sup>83</sup>

## **E. CHAPTER SUMMARY**

The purpose of this chapter has been to analyze one of the most significant new roles of the Alliance, namely the pursuit of dialogue and cooperation with Russia, the largest successor state to the former Soviet adversary. The chapter has examined the development of the NATO-Russia relationship within the Permanent Joint Council (PJC) and has considered explanations of why the PJC did not achieve its desired outcome – e.g., the Alliance’s reliance on pre-coordinated positions. The chapter has reviewed how

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<sup>81</sup> Lord Robertson, Secretary General NATO, “NATO-Russia Cooperation in Combating Terrorism: A Good Idea Whose Time Has Come,” Key note address at the NATO-Russia Conference on the Military Role in Combating Terrorism, 4 February 2002, NATO Defence College, Rome. <http://www.nato.int/docu/speech/2002/s020204a.htm>. Accessed August 2002.

<sup>82</sup> NATO, “Fifth anniversary of NATO-Russia special relationship – a turning point,” 27 May 2002. <http://www.nato.int/docu/update/2002/05-may/e0527a.htm>. Accessed September 2002.

<sup>83</sup> NATO, “NATO Russia Relations: A New Quality,” Declaration by Heads of State and Government of NATO Member States and the Russian Federation, Rome Italy, 28 May 2002. <http://www.nato.int/docu/basicxt/b020528e.htm>. Accessed August 2002.

NATO-Russia relations in the immediate post-Cold War period led to the 1997 Founding Act. It has examined the issues that influenced the contents of the Founding Act and Russia's view of the completed document. The chapter has also analyzed some of the key events of the PJC's history and has examined the events that contributed to the replacement of the PJC by the NATO-Russia Council. However, a more detailed analysis of the origins of the NATO-Russia Council is offered in Chapter III.

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### III. ORIGINS OF THE NATO-RUSSIA COUNCIL

This chapter discusses the origins of the NATO-Russia Council. It begins with an overview of Russia's relations with the West when Vladimir Putin became the acting President of Russia. It then describes how the terrorist attacks against the United States on 11 September 2001 led to a new period of cooperation between Russia and the West. Although the events of 11 September marked the turning point in better cooperation between the Allies and Russia, each side has pursued this new relationship because of its own motives. The chapter analyzes the apparent motives of British Prime Minister Tony Blair, of the NATO nations collectively, and of President Vladimir Putin and the Russian Federation.

#### A. RUSSIA'S RELATIONS WITH THE WEST IN DECEMBER 1999

The NATO-Russia Council formally began with the 28 May 2002 signing of the document "NATO-Russia Relations: A New Quality." However, it can be argued that a new quality in NATO-Russia relations began on 31 December 1999 when Vladimir Putin became Russia's acting president. When Putin took over the presidency from Boris Yeltsin, "one of his first foreign policy decisions was to end the year-long 'freeze' in NATO-Russia relations."<sup>84</sup> The Russian decision to put on ice normal relations with NATO can be directly attributed to two key events during the spring of 1999. According to Mark A. Smith, "Russian perceptions of the 1999 NATO strategic concept, which arguably justified the use of military force without necessarily gaining the consent of the UN Security Council...[and] NATO's failure to consult adequately with Russia over its decision to take military action against Yugoslavia" led to a division between Russia and NATO.<sup>85</sup> Despite the frigid relationship at the onset of his presidency, Putin had a foreign and domestic policy agenda that envisioned Russia closely tied to the West. This is consistent with the fact that Putin, like many Russians, identifies Russia "as belonging

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<sup>84</sup> Paul Fritch, "Transforming the Alliance," *NATO Review*, Summer (2002).  
[http://www.nato.int/docu/review/2002/issue2/english/analysis\\_pr.html](http://www.nato.int/docu/review/2002/issue2/english/analysis_pr.html). Accessed September 2002.

<sup>85</sup> Mark A. Smith, *Contemporary Russian Perceptions of Euro-Atlanticism*, F74 (Camberley, Surrey, England: Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, Conflict Studies Research Centre, February 2002), p. 3.



more to Western than Eastern civilization.”<sup>86</sup> According to Vladimir Baranovsky of the George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies, Europe is Russia’s “most important region” in terms of “fundamental interests in the international arena” and “the major would-be focus of its long-term international strategy.”<sup>87</sup> Alexander Vershbow, the current U.S. Ambassador to the Russian Federation, has stated, “Even before the September 11 terrorist attacks, President Putin had made a strategic choice for closer relations with Europe and the United States, setting aside the competitive, confrontational approach of the Soviet past.”<sup>88</sup> A September 2002 article in *The Economist* offered the following assessment of Putin: “A pragmatist in foreign policy as in everything else, he had started looking for closer ties with America and Europe, and a bigger role for Russia in international bodies, well before September 11th last year.”<sup>89</sup> Despite Putin’s Western orientation and his foreign policy initiatives, relations with NATO were strained prior to 11 September 2001. According to an article in China’s *Xinhua Roundup*, “With Putin elected president, Russia tried to mend fences with NATO, but with little success.”<sup>90</sup> However, the terrorist attacks against the United States on 11 September 2001 provided a “powerful boost” to NATO-Russia relations, “suddenly thrusting the window of opportunity wide open.”<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>86</sup> Vladimir Shlapentokh, “Old”, “New” and “Post” Liberal Attitudes Toward the West: From Love to Hate, a paper published in August 1998 by the Special Advisor for Central and Eastern European Affairs, NATO Secretariat. p. 3.

<sup>87</sup> Vladimir Baranovsky, “Institutional Battles,” (paper published by the George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies).  
<http://www.marshallcenter.org/CISS/Russia%20and%20the%20West/English/Book%20outlines/Baranovsky%20E%20Outline.htm>. Accessed July 2002.

<sup>88</sup> Alexander Vershbow, “NATO and Russia: Redefining Relations for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century,” *Russia Watch*, no. 8, (April 2002): 16. (on-line journal from the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, Harvard’s John F. Kennedy School of Government). [www.ksg.harvard.edu/bcsia/sdi](http://www.ksg.harvard.edu/bcsia/sdi). Accessed September 2002.

<sup>89</sup> “Vladimir Putin, friend or foe of the West?” *The Economist*, vol. 364, no. 8291 (21 September 2002): 46.

<sup>90</sup> Jian Feng and Song Jian, “NATO, Russia Strive to Promote Relations to Higher Level,” *Xinhua Roundup*, (Beijing Xinhua), FBIS transcribed text in English, 28 May 2002.  
[https://portal.rccb.osis.gov/servlet/Repository?encoded=legacy\\_products:CPP20020529000011N.html](https://portal.rccb.osis.gov/servlet/Repository?encoded=legacy_products:CPP20020529000011N.html). Accessed October 2002.

<sup>91</sup> Dmitri Trenin, “Walking Through Windows,” *Russia Watch*, no. 8, (April 2002): 15. (on-line journal from the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, Harvard’s John F. Kennedy School of Government). [www.ksg.harvard.edu/bcsia/sdi](http://www.ksg.harvard.edu/bcsia/sdi). Accessed September 2002

**B. 11 SEPTEMBER 2001: A NEW PERIOD OF COOPERATION BETWEEN NATO AND RUSSIA**

Willem Matser, a Dutch expert regarding NATO-Russia relations on the NATO International Staff, has highlighted the significance of the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks for NATO-Russia relations. According to Matser, “Few events bring people together more effectively than a tragedy and few tragedies have been greater or their consequences more wide-reaching than that of 11 September...In the wake of this shared disaster, the unity of purpose of Allies and Russia in the face of a common threat has been a key feature of the international coalition’s war on terrorism. Moreover, the shuttle diplomacy, summits and flurry of new proposals of recent months have clearly opened up great opportunities for closer cooperation and a deeper relationship between NATO and Russia.”<sup>92</sup>

According to Mitchell A. Orenstein, the Special Editor for the April 2002 Issue of *Russia Watch*, “Following the events of September 11...a chorus of world leaders have proposed bold new ideas for the future of global security. None have been more influential than those of Russian President Vladimir Putin, who, in the immediate wake of September 11, proposed a new collaboration between Russia and the West. This initiative was seized upon by Western leaders.”<sup>93</sup> Although both sides were instrumental in developing a closer relationship, in conjunction with the international coalition’s war on terrorism, President Putin initiated the rapprochement. Leon Aron, a resident scholar and Director of Russian Studies at the American Enterprise Institute, has noted that soon after the terrorists flew the high-jacked airliners into the World Trade Center towers and the Pentagon, President Putin was the first foreign leader to contact President Bush.<sup>94</sup> In addition to publicly denouncing the attacks and pledging his support to the American people, Putin responded to the United States military’s heightened state of alert by “standing down its [Russia’s] troops and canceling scheduled strategic bomber and

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<sup>92</sup> Willem Matser, “Towards a New Strategic Partnership,” *NATO Review*, Vol. 49 – No. 4, Winter (2001). <http://www.nato.int/docu/review/2001/0104-05.htm>. Accessed September 2002.

<sup>93</sup> Mitchell A. Orenstein, “Towards a New NATO-Russia Partnership,” *Russia Watch*, no. 8, April (2002): 1. (on-line journal from the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, Harvard’s John F. Kennedy School of Government). [www.ksg.harvard.edu/bcsia/sdi](http://www.ksg.harvard.edu/bcsia/sdi). Accessed September 2002.

<sup>94</sup> Leon Aron, “Putin’s Progress; Russia joins the West,” *The Weekly Standard*, vol. 7, no. 25, [on-line journal from the Lexus Nexus database] (March 11, 2002): 19.

missile exercises.”<sup>95</sup> During the next two days, Putin again phoned Bush to discuss Russian cooperation against terrorism.<sup>96</sup> Moreover, “[a]t Russia’s instigation, the NATO-Russia Permanent Joint Council condemned the attacks in the strongest terms and pledged an ‘intensification’ of cooperation ‘to fight the scourge of terrorism’.”<sup>97</sup>

Since the 11 September attacks Putin has taken numerous actions to support the war on terrorism and has made key decisions to enhance Russia’s relations with the United States, NATO and the West. According to Sergei Blagov, “Russia has undertaken a series of friendly gestures towards the US. Last October [2001], the Kremlin announced a shutdown of its Cold War era military facilities, a spy station in Lourdes, Cuba, and a naval base in Cam Ranh Bay, Vietnam.”<sup>98</sup> Mark Smith reported that “Moscow has become part of this anti-terrorist coalition, and will cooperate in the exchange of intelligence, in cutting off the sources of financial support for terrorist groups and allowing its airspace to be used by the USA for humanitarian missions.”<sup>99</sup> Putin has made these bold moves despite opposition from some high-level Russian political and military officials

According to Sarah E. Mendelson, a Russia and Eurasia expert at the Center for Strategic and International Studies:

As the political leadership in Russia expressed – at first cautiously, then more enthusiastically – its willingness to cooperate on fighting terrorism, the military leadership lagged behind noticeably. Chief of the General Staff Anatoly Kvashnin busily argued that Russia would not participate in U.S. retaliatory actions. Minister of Defense Sergei Ivanov refused to consider the possibility that troops from NATO members would be deployed in any state of the Commonwealth of Independent States, declaring that there were “absolutely no grounds, not even for hypothetical suggestions.”<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>95</sup> Ibid.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid.

<sup>98</sup> Sergei Blagov, “The price of Russian support,” *Asia Times* (contained in the on-line publication from the Center for Defense Information, Russia Weekly), no. 226, article 2, 10 October 2002. <http://www.cdi.org/russia/226-2-pr.cfm>. Accessed October 2002.

<sup>99</sup> Mark A. Smith, *Contemporary Russian Perceptions of Euro-Atlanticism*, p. 7.

<sup>100</sup> Sarah E. Mendelson, “U.S.-Russian Military Relations: Between Friend and Foe,” *The Washington Quarterly*, 25:1, Winter (2002): 164.

Sergei Blagov reported that “Russia’s initial opposition to the stationing of American military forces close to its borders in Central Asia made its neighboring Central Asian states reject the idea of letting American forces use their territories for the operation in Afghanistan. However, Russia eventually changed its position due to its interest in seeing the Taliban regime fall, as well as in expanding its ties with the US.”<sup>101</sup> Leon Aron noted that “With Russia’s blessing, two C-130 U.S. military cargo planes and 100 U.S. military personnel arrived at an airbase near Tashkent, capital of Uzbekistan...[Three days later on 25 September 2001] Defense Minister Sergei Ivanov announced that U.S. troops could use military facilities in Tajikistan to launch strikes into Afghanistan.”<sup>102</sup> According to *The Economist*, “Hardline Russians still complain that Mr. Putin has let their country’s world position slip – for instance, by allowing American troops into former Soviet Central Asia and by raising too few objections to NATO membership for the three Baltic republics.”<sup>103</sup>

Putin ignored the opposition and continued to court the West. Leon Aron reported that on 3 October 2001, “Putin made the first visit to NATO headquarters in Brussels by any Russian or Soviet leader. After meetings with the secretary general, Putin announced Russia’s ‘great readiness to cooperate and interact’ with NATO. He also signaled a softening in Russia’s opposition to further NATO enlargement, even including the three former Soviet republics of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania.”<sup>104</sup> The West gladly welcomed Putin’s willingness to cooperate and interact.

The diplomatic responses by both parties in the wake of 11 September “helped to transform the nature of the US-Russian relationship from partnership to quasi-alliance.”<sup>105</sup> This new relationship was outlined in the 13 November 2001 Joint Statement by President Bush and President Putin on a new Relationship between the United States and Russia:

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<sup>101</sup> Sergei Blagov, “The Price of Russian Support.”

<sup>102</sup> Leon Aron, “Putin’s Progress; Russia Joins the West.”

<sup>103</sup> “Vladimir Putin, Friend or Foe of the West?” *The Economist*, p. 46.

<sup>104</sup> Leon Aron, “Putin’s Progress; Russia Joins the West.”

<sup>105</sup> Mark A. Smith, “Contemporary Russian Perceptions of Euro-Atlanticism,” p. 6.

Aware of our responsibility to contribute to international security, we are determined to work together, and with other nations and international organizations, including the United Nations, to promote security, economic well-being, and a peaceful, prosperous, free world. We affirm our determination to meet the threats to peace in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Among these threats are terrorism, . . . proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, militant nationalism, ethnic and religious intolerance, and regional instability.<sup>106</sup>

The events of 11 September, and the joint statement by Presidents Bush and Putin two months later, helped to transform the nature of the NATO-Russia relationship as well. According to the joint statement by President Bush and President Putin, “We support the building of a Euro-Atlantic community whole, free, and at peace, excluding no one, and respecting the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of all nations. To this end, the United States and Russia will work, together with NATO and other NATO members, to improve, strengthen, and enhance the relationship between NATO and Russia, with a view to developing new, effective mechanisms for consultation, cooperation, joint decision, and coordinated/joint action.”<sup>107</sup> This joint statement established the framework for the NATO-Russia Council that was founded six months later, and the founding declaration included almost exactly the same words.<sup>108</sup> Although 11 September came to be recognized as “a turning point in relations between the West and Russia” and “a decisive catalyst for the new spirit of cooperation between the Allies and Russia,” each side pursued this new relationship because of its own motives.<sup>109</sup> Sergei Rogov, Paul Fritch, and many other analysts agree that the terrorist

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<sup>106</sup> Joint Statement by President George W. Bush and President Vladimir V. Putin on a New Relationship Between the United States and Russia, “Joint Statement on New US-Russian Relationship,” Office of the Press Secretary, The White House, 13 November 2001. <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2001/11/print/20011113-4.html>. Accessed October 2002.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid.

<sup>108</sup> “NATO-Russia Relations: A New Quality,” Declaration by Heads of State and Government of NATO Member States and the Russian Federation. This document contains the following statement: “The NATO-Russia Council will provide a mechanism for consultation, consensus-building, cooperation, joint decision, and joint action . . . on a wide spectrum of security issues.” These include, but are not limited to, non-proliferation and the struggle against terrorism. <http://www.nato.int/docu/basic/txt/b020528e.htm>. Accessed August 2002.

<sup>109</sup> Sergei Rogov, “The New Relationship Between Russia and NATO,” page 13, *Russia Watch*, No. 8, April 2002; and Paul Fritch, “Transforming the Alliance,” *NATO Review*, Summer 2002. [www.ksg.harvard.edu/bcsia/sdi](http://www.ksg.harvard.edu/bcsia/sdi). Accessed September 2002.

attacks on 11 September were probably the impetus for the new relationship. However, more important than this key event were the motives and intentions of each side.

### **C. BRITISH PRIME MINISTER TONY BLAIR'S INITIATIVE**

One key figure behind the establishment of better Russian-NATO relations, post-11 September, was Prime Minister Tony Blair. In a letter to NATO's Secretary General Robertson, Blair wrote, "The contacts which you, I and other NATO leaders have had with President Putin since 11 September suggest that we now have an opportunity to achieve a transformation in Euro-Atlantic security."<sup>110</sup> In a separate letter to President Putin, Blair wrote, "I believe we now have an opportunity to achieve a lasting transformation in Euro-Atlantic security based upon a new partnership between Russia and NATO."<sup>111</sup> These documents suggest that Blair was motivated by the opportunity to replace the failed PJC. In his letter to the NATO Secretary General, Blair wrote, "I believe that we must seize the opportunity presented by the current crisis and build upon this willingness to find new ways in which to work together...I strongly believe that we need to launch this new beginning in a way which changes mind sets...[W]e need to re-launch co-operation by replacing the PJC with a new body which would be tasked with finding new ways and areas in which NATO and Russia can work together at 20 rather than 19 + 1."<sup>112</sup>

In light of the sentiments expressed in the joint statement by Presidents Bush and Putin two days before, it can be argued that Prime Minister Blair decided that a European could most effectively sell the concept of a new NATO-Russia relationship to the other European members of the Alliance. In his letter to Lord Robertson, Blair wrote, "I fully support the sentiments expressed in the joint statement agreed by President Bush and President Putin on 13 November...I hope that it will be possible to take this discussion forward rapidly within NATO with a view to launching a process at the December [2001] NATO Ministerial meetings, which would lead to agreement at the May Ministerial

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<sup>110</sup> Prime Minister Tony Blair, 10 Downing Street, London, letter to Lord Robertson of Port Ellen, 15 November 2001 (copy furnished by courtesy of the NATO and European Policy Group, British Ministry of Defence, London).

<sup>111</sup> Prime Minister Tony Blair, 10 Downing Street, London, letter to His Excellency President Vladimir Putin, 16 November 2001 (copy furnished by courtesy of the NATO and European Policy Group, British Ministry of Defence, London).

<sup>112</sup> Prime Minister Tony Blair, letter to Lord Robertson of Port Ellen.

meetings.”<sup>113</sup> In his letter to President Putin Blair wrote, “I have now written to Lord Robertson and other NATO leaders to launch formally the ideas which we have discussed.”<sup>114</sup> Given the U.S.-Russian Joint Statement and the subsequent diplomatic activity by British Prime Minister Blair, it is reasonable to conclude that Blair was promoting the Russo-American proposition within NATO channels.

#### **D. MOTIVES OF NATO NATIONS**

Various analysts have speculated on the motives of NATO nations in seeking better relations with Russia. For example, some observers have suggested that a motive may be removing any Russian obstacles to NATO’s next round of enlargement. According to Mark Galeotti, the new NATO-Russia relationship “represents both a triumph and a defeat...It is a defeat in that the Kremlin has been forced to acquiesce to further NATO enlargement.”<sup>115</sup> Keith Richburg reported in the *Washington Post* that “by creating the council and enshrining it in the ‘Rome Declaration’ signed here today by all 20 heads of government, NATO is making the alliance’s planned expansion more palatable to Moscow.”<sup>116</sup> Secretary of State Powell said: “That [knowing Russia still opposes NATO’s enlargement] does not surprise or shock me - - it’s been the Russian position for some time...[However,] I think we have succeeded in making the enlargement of NATO once again less of a problem for the Russians and less of an irritant in our relations.”<sup>117</sup> Prime Minister Blair also acknowledged that establishing a new NATO-Russian relationship before the Prague Summit would “greatly help the handling of the NATO enlargement debate.”<sup>118</sup> According to Susan Glasser of the *Washington Post*, some Russians also see the new NATO-Russia Council as a way to

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<sup>113</sup> Ibid.

<sup>114</sup> Prime Minister Tony Blair, letter to His Excellency President Vladimir Putin.

<sup>115</sup> Mark Galeotti, “The view from the Kremlin,” *Jane’s Intelligence Review*, [on-line journal], 1 July 2002. <http://www.janes.com>. Accessed August 2002.

<sup>116</sup> Keith B. Richburg, “NATO, Russia Form Limited Partnership; New Policy Council to Give Moscow Voice, but Not Veto, on Select Issues,” *Washington Post*, 29 May 2002, p. A.10. (ProQuest On-line database) <http://proquest.umi.com>. Accessed August 2002.

<sup>117</sup> Powell quoted in *ibid*.

<sup>118</sup> Prime Minister Tony Blair, letter to Lord Robertson of Port Ellen.

“mute Russian opposition to NATO’s expansion.”<sup>119</sup> Although officials have “categorically denied any links between NATO-Russia cooperation and enlargement of the alliance,” many observers see it as a repetition of the events that preceded the enlargement in 1997-1999.<sup>120</sup>

Another motive for NATO nations in seeking better relations with Russia is that Moscow’s cooperation is vital in combating terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD). According to Sergei Rogov, the Director of the Institute for U.S. and Canadian Studies at the Russian Academy of Sciences, “The West must recognize that NATO’s efforts to deal effectively with twenty-first century threats will be far more successful if they are accompanied by closer cooperation with Russia.”<sup>121</sup> As previously discussed, the Russian Federation has been an extremely valuable member of America’s anti-terrorism coalition and will (it is hoped) continue to be so in the future. NATO Secretary General Lord Robertson also understands the need for Russian cooperation against terrorism. In a speech given at the Diplomatic Academy in Moscow on 22 November 2001, he said, “if we want to come up with any meaningful response to the terrorist menace, to the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and other new and emerging threats, we need a solid NATO-Russia relationship...[T]he current state of NATO-Russia relations is not sufficient to deal seriously with the new security challenges that confront us today and tomorrow.”<sup>122</sup>

Another argument regarding the West’s motives in seeking a new relationship with Russia is that it encourages transparency and prevents suspicions between NATO and the Russian Federation. According to Celeste A. Wallander, the Director and Senior Fellow of the Russia and Eurasia Program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, “The [NATO-Russia] council could, if properly utilized, create transparency

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<sup>119</sup> Susan B. Glasser, “Russia and NATO Go Back to Start: Rise of New Joint Council Comes After Collapse of Old One,” *Washington Post*, 25 May 2002, p. A.21. <http://www.washingtonpost.com>. Accessed July 2002.

<sup>120</sup> Ahto Lobjakas, “NATO: Allies Await Russian Response to Cooperation Proposal,” *Radio Free Europe/ Radio Liberty (RFE/RL)*, 27 February 2002. <http://www.rferl.org/nca/features/2002/02/27022002085719.asp>. Accessed July 2002.

<sup>121</sup> Sergei Rogov, “The New Relationship Between Russia and NATO.” p. 13.

<sup>122</sup> Lord Robertson, NATO Secretary General, “A New Quality in the NATO-Russia Relationship,” (speech given at the Diplomatic Academy, Moscow, Russia, 22 November 2001). <http://www.nato.int/docu/speech/2001/s011122a.htm>. Accessed August 2002.



about Western intentions and plans to allay suspicions that they are pretexts to encircle Russia throughout Europe and Eurasia.”<sup>123</sup> The following analysis by Paul Fritch is an excellent illustration of how the Allies could refer to the 11 September terrorist attacks to reinforce their argument that NATO is not directed against Russia:

For years, we had maintained that: “NATO and Russia share common interests,” and “NATO is not directed *against* Russia.” For years, Russia’s political leaders had joined us in these statements, but then returned home to perpetuate the stereotype of a hostile, aggressive Alliance, bent on “encircling” and marginalizing Russia...Yet on 12 September 2001, when NATO – for the first time in its 53-year history – declared itself to be under attack, the enemy was not the “red menace” to the east, but terrorism.<sup>124</sup>

The West saw the new international situation as an opportunity to do away with any remaining Cold War animosity.

The Allies may have also embraced better relations with Moscow because they want to capitalize on Russia’s diplomatic ties with nations that do not have strong ties with the West. According to *The Economist*, “staying friendly with such traditional allies [as Iraq and North Korea] is pragmatic and sensible, not just for [economic] investment, which would be small, but because Russia could be a mediator that one day helps even such renegades as North Korea to open up.”<sup>125</sup> Western nations have drawn upon Russia’s diplomatic status with respect to certain world crises. According to Ian Bremmer, “President George W. Bush asked President Vladimir Putin to help initiate mediation between India and Pakistan. At the recent Asian Summit in Almaty, Putin worked hard to bring [Pakistani President Pervez] Musharraf and Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee to the negotiating table,” to try to settle their conflict over the highly disputed Kashmir region.<sup>126</sup>

#### **E. MOTIVES OF PRESIDENT VLADIMIR PUTIN AND RUSSIA**

The motives of President Putin and Russia also deserve analysis. The thesis has already suggested that prior to the 11 September terrorist attacks against the United

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<sup>123</sup> Celeste A. Wallander, “The NATO-Russia Council,” *Russia Watch*, no. 8, (April 2002): 18.

<sup>124</sup> Paul Fritch, “Transforming the Alliance.”

<sup>125</sup> “Vladimir Putin, friend or foe of the West?” *The Economist*, p. 46.

<sup>126</sup> Ian Bremmer, “Russia and NATO in Search of Common Ground,” *The Moscow Times*, p. 10, 17 June 2002.

States, President Putin had a foreign and domestic policy agenda that envisioned Russia closely tied to the West. President Putin's post-11 September actions were consistent with this agenda. According to Leon Aron, an expert on Russia at the American Enterprise Institute, "Putin's response to the war on terrorism was, in fact, fundamentally consistent with the 1990's foreign policy of his predecessor Boris Yeltsin... This course in foreign policy, moreover, was itself a product of the Russian nation's new domestic direction—the new course charted by the anti-Communist revolution."<sup>127</sup>

Many other arguments have been advanced to explain Russia's motivation for its support for the war on terrorism and its desire for improved relations with the West. For example, one of the main arguments is that Russia wishes to gain support from NATO nations for its war in Chechnya. According to Stephen Blank, a Professor of National Security Studies at the Strategic Studies Institute of the U.S. Army War College, "It is strange that a regime so adamantly opposed to international terrorism wavered about entering into powerful alliances against this scourge. Beyond providing intelligence support and possibly ceasing its proliferation of arms to rogue states, Russia wants considerable compensation for its new approach, specifically, U.S. and Western endorsement of its war in Chechnya."<sup>128</sup> Vladimir Shlapentokh, a Professor of Sociology at Michigan State University, states that Putin "recognizes the importance of gaining the support of the international community in his war against Chechnya."<sup>129</sup> Gail W. Lapidus, a senior fellow at the Institute for International Studies and Professor of Political Science at Stanford University, also supports this argument. In her view, Putin "has attempted to reframe the [Chechnya] conflict as a war on terrorism and to win American and Western acquiescence in, if not support for, Russia's military campaign by arguing that the threat posed by international terrorism in Chechnya was not limited to Russia but was a threat to the West as a whole."<sup>130</sup>

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<sup>127</sup> Leon Aron, "Putin's Progress; Russia Joins the West."

<sup>128</sup> Stephen J. Blank, "Putin's Twelve-Step Program," *The Washington Quarterly*, 25:1, Winter (2002): 147.

<sup>129</sup> Vladimir Shlapentokh, "Is the 'Greatness Syndrome' Eroding?" *The Washington Quarterly*, 25:1, Winter (2002): 142.

<sup>130</sup> Gail W. Lapidus, "Putin's War on Terrorism: Lessons From Chechnya," *Post-Soviet Affairs*, vol. 18, 1 (January-March 2002): 42.

As Mark Galeotti has pointed out, “Since his [Putin’s] prompt offers of sympathy and support after 11 September, the West has been much less critical of operations in Chechnya.”<sup>131</sup> In a speech at the NATO-Russia Conference on the Military Role in Combating Terrorism on 4 February 2002, Lord Robertson said, “The terrorist threat is not new. Our Russian colleagues, who have seen the tragic loss of countless military and civilian lives at the hands of terrorists over the past decade, can bear witness to that.”<sup>132</sup> Although not specifically stated, Lord Robertson was probably referring to events in Chechnya and perhaps also to the 1999 series of apartment building bombings in Moscow that killed approximately 300 people.<sup>133</sup>

Soon after Russia pledged its support for the war against international terrorism, Western criticisms of Russia’s actions in Chechnya were silenced. However, as months passed, many Western European officials resumed their criticism of Putin’s handling of the Chechnya crisis. This criticism was, again, silenced after the 23 October 2002 crisis in Moscow in which “50 heavily armed Chechen fighters took around 800 people hostage in a Moscow theater...When the crisis ended three days later, at least 118 hostages were dead.”<sup>134</sup> Less than three weeks later, *Russia Weekly* reported that, “According to NATO Secretary General George Robertson, it is getting more and more clear that terrorists are operating on the territory of Chechnya and that international terrorists are being trained

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<sup>131</sup> Mark Galeotti, “The view from the Kremlin.”

<sup>132</sup> Lord Robertson, NATO Secretary General, “NATO-Russia Cooperation in Combating Terrorism: A Good Idea Whose Time Has Come,” (keynote address given at the NATO-Russia Conference on the Military Role in Combating Terrorism, NATO Defence College, Rome, 4 February 2002). <http://www.nato.int/docu/speech/2002/s020204a.htm>. Accessed August 2002.

<sup>133</sup> The Russian Government claims that Chechen terrorists conducted the Moscow bombings; however, no evidence has been presented to support this claim. Despite the uncertainty regarding the identity of the perpetrators, these bombings were clearly designed to terrorize the Russian population. According to Professor Gail Lapidus, “a number of Russian political actors and analysts remain skeptical of this official version. No compelling explanation has ever been offered of what motivation Chechen groups might have had to carry out such attacks, or what conceivable benefit might have accrued to them as a result. On the other hand, there is some evidence to suggest that Russian security services may have themselves organized these actions, at the behest of highly-placed members of the Yel’tsin administration, to influence the upcoming elections and to provide a pretext for renewing the war.” Lapidus, “Putin’s War on Terrorism: Lessons From Chechnya,” p. 43.

<sup>134</sup> Gregory Feifer, “Russia: Experts Criticize Aggressive Foreign Policy,” *Radio Free Europe Radio Liberty*, 5 November 2002. <http://www.rferl.org/nca/features/2002/11/05112002161104.asp>. According to this article, all but two of the hostages died from the effects of a sedative gas pumped into the theater to knock out the hostage takers, many of who held explosive detonators in their hands. Accessed November 2002.

there.”<sup>135</sup> In an exclusive interview with President Bush on the eve of the NATO Summit in Prague, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty asked the question: “Russian President Vladimir Putin has equated his war in Chechnya with the U.S. war on terrorism. Do you agree with that equation, or do you still feel – as was stated during your election campaign – that Russian forces are committing brutalities against innocent Chechen civilians?”<sup>136</sup> President Bush refused to harshly criticize Putin’s actions in Chechnya. He answered, “I think that, or hope that, Russia should be able to solve their issue with Chechnya peacefully. That is not to say that Vladimir [Putin] shouldn’t do what it takes to protect his people from individual terrorist attacks.”<sup>137</sup>

Another motive behind Russia’s desire for better relations with the West may be its interest in improving its economic performance. As Celeste A. Wallander has observed, “Putin has a broader and longer term agenda, which is not really about NATO and its details. Putin’s objective is Russia’s economic development, and its integration into the global financial and trade system.”<sup>138</sup> According to Vladimir Baranovsky, a fundamental factor promoting Russia’s relations with Europe has been “Russia’s interest in economic links with Europe... [This is] due both to the imperatives of domestic reforms and to a desire to obtain better positions in the world market.”<sup>139</sup> Mark A. Smith of the Conflict Studies Research Centre has reported that, “on 28 September [2001], US Trade Secretary Robert Zoellick said that there was an opportunity to reassess Russo-US relations, and that the USA would speed up its analysis of Russia’s appeal to be accorded market economy status. Although he denied that rules would be eased for Russia’s application to join the WTO [World Trade Organization], he anticipated that there would be rapid progress in WTO talks.”<sup>140</sup> By supporting the war against terrorism Putin has

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<sup>135</sup> “Putin optimistic about Russia-NATO cooperation,” [on-line publication from the Center for Defense Information] *CDI Russia Weekly*, no. 231, article 9, Itar-Tass, 12 November 2002. <http://www.cdi.org/russia/231-9-pr.cfm>. Accessed November 2002.

<sup>136</sup> Jeffrey Donovan, “NATO: Transcript of RFE/RL’s Exclusive Interview With U.S. President Bush,” *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*, 19 November 2002. <http://www.rferl.org/nca/features/2002/11/19112002091308.asp>. Accessed November 2002.

<sup>137</sup> Ibid.

<sup>138</sup> Celeste A. Wallander, “The NATO-Russia Council,” p. 19.

<sup>139</sup> Vladimir Baranovsky, *Institutional Battles*, George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies

<sup>140</sup> Mark A. Smith, “Contemporary Russian Perceptions of Euro-Atlanticism,” p. 7.

been able to gain economic benefits for the Russian Federation. According to Sergei Blagov, Russia's cooperation in the war on terrorism "secured US backing for Moscow's efforts to join the World Trade Organization, and Russia received full membership in the G8 group of the industrialized nations."<sup>141</sup> On 6 June 2002, the United States awarded Russia market economy status. "The U.S. market economy designation follows by a week a similar announcement from the 15-nation European Union."<sup>142</sup> According to Martin Crutsinger, "The decision, which was made by the Commerce Department's Import Administration, represented a further step in Bush's campaign to strengthen economic ties, symbolizing that relations between the United States and its former Cold War foe have entered a new era. For his part, Putin has actively pursued closer ties with the West as a way to bolster his country's efforts to recover from 70 years of communist central planning and lift the country's economic fortunes. He also viewed the designation as a reward for Russia's support since Sept. 11 of the U.S.-led war against terrorists."<sup>143</sup> In addition to securing economic benefits, Moscow's post-11 September actions have elevated Russia's political status within NATO, Europe, and the international arena.

According to Vladimir Baranovsky, political interactions in Europe are essential to maintain Russia's respectable international status.<sup>144</sup> These interactions will take place primarily with NATO and the European Union. According to Willem Matser, a Dutch expert with the Office of the NATO Secretary General's Special Advisor for Central and Eastern Europe, "Russia's principal objective has not changed. It still wants, above all, to be treated as a mature, influential partner and to have a voice in the key Euro-Atlantic security institutions and in defence and security decisionmaking."<sup>145</sup> Chris Patten, the European Union Commissioner for External Relations, has stated, "The European Union believes...that the NATO-Russia agreement to create NATO at 20 will

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<sup>141</sup> Sergei Blagov, "The price of Russian support."

<sup>142</sup> Martin Crutsinger, "U.S. Calls Russian Market Economy," Associated Press, 6 June 2002. Published in the Center for Defense Information (CDI) Russian Weekly # 209. <http://www.cdi.org/russia/209.txt>. Accessed December 2002.

<sup>143</sup> Ibid.

<sup>144</sup> Vladimir Baranovsky, *Institutional Battles*.

<sup>145</sup> Willem Matser, "Towards a New Strategic Partnership."

provide a fresh impetus to Russia's role in strengthening European security."<sup>146</sup> In the view of Paul Fritch, an expert on NATO-Russia issues in NATO's Political Affairs Division, "President Putin has pursued consistently his vision of Russia as a 'European' power... [and his] 'Westernist' strategy envisions genuine cooperation with Western Europe and the United States, in order to restore Russia's political and economic might and to face more effectively long-term threats to the south and the east."<sup>147</sup> According to Mitchell Orenstein and Dmitri Trenin, the new NATO-Russia Council changes Russia's status in NATO from a "symbolic partnership" to an "associate member."<sup>148</sup> Vladimir Shlapentokh has suggested that, "In the future, Putin may take steps – some serious, some symbolic – to show the world and his own people that Russia still plays an important role in the international arena."<sup>149</sup>

#### **F. CHAPTER SUMMARY**

The purpose of this chapter has been to analyze the origins of the NATO-Russia Council. The chapter has examined Russia's relations with the West when Vladimir Putin became the acting President of Russia on 31 December 1999 and how the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks against the United States led to a new era of cooperation. The chapter has examined the apparent motives of British Prime Minister Blair, of the NATO nations collectively, and of President Putin and the Russian Federation. Several motives help to explain why each of the parties has pursued and embraced a new NATO-Russia relationship. None of these motives is solely responsible for the establishment of better relations between the Allies and Russia; however, they have together contributed to a better relationship and to the eventual establishment of the NATO-Russia Council.

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<sup>146</sup> Interfax, Diplomatic Panorama for Moscow, "EU Welcomes Russia-NATO Agreements," 28 May 2002 FBIS transcribed text, Document ID: CEP20020529000064.

<sup>147</sup> Paul Fritch, "Transforming the Alliance."

<sup>148</sup> Mitchell A. Orenstein, "Towards a New NATO-Russia Partnership," *Russia Watch*, no. 8, April (2002): 5 and Dmitri Trenin, "Walking Through Windows," *Russia Watch*, no. 8, April (2002): 15.

<sup>149</sup> Vladimir Shlapentokh, "Is the 'Greatness Syndrome' Eroding?" p. 143.

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## IV. THE NATO-RUSSIA COUNCIL

### A. REVIEW OF THE FOUNDING ACT

On 27 May 1997, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the Russian Federation approved the Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security. After several years of unsuccessful attempts, NATO and Russia formalized their new relationship and made a commitment to “build together a lasting and inclusive peace in the Euro-Atlantic area on the principles of democracy and cooperative security.”<sup>150</sup> The Founding Act “reaffirms the determination of NATO and Russia to give concrete substance to their shared commitment to build a stable, peaceful and undivided Europe, whole and free, to the benefit of all its peoples.”<sup>151</sup> Leaders from both sides praised the Act and looked forward to a strategic relationship that would build upon the “practical cooperation” between NATO and Russian troops serving side-by-side in peacekeeping operations in the Balkans.<sup>152</sup>

In an article published two days before the signing of the document, NATO Secretary General Javier Solana described the Founding Act as “a quantum leap...[that] sets the seal on a permanent and close working partnership...[T]he Founding Act represents a strategic gain for the whole of the European continent.”<sup>153</sup> At the signing ceremony of the Founding Act, Russian President Boris Yeltsin stated, “Europe is undergoing a time of deep transitions. What is being created is a foundation for a new type of relations among states. We are determining the face of the future European environment, and the decisions being taken at this time will determine which way and

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<sup>150</sup> NATO, Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security between NATO and the Russian Federation, Paris, 27 May 1997, Preamble. <http://www.nato.int/docu/basicxt/fndact-a.htm>. Accessed July 2002.

<sup>151</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>152</sup> Harald Kujat, Chairman of the Military Committee of NATO, at the NATO-Russia Council meeting at the level of Military Representatives, “Combating terrorism: a key objective,” NATO, NATO Fact sheets, (Article first published in *Krasnaya Zvezda*, a newspaper published by the Russian Ministry of Defence on 25 December 2002), <http://www.nato.int/docu/articles/2002/a021225a.htm>. Accessed February 2003.

<sup>153</sup> Javier Solana, “NATO and Russia: A True Partnership,” NATO, NATO News Articles, 25 May 1997, <http://www.nato.int/docu/articles/1997/a970528a.htm>. Accessed August 2002.



how our continent will enter the next 21<sup>st</sup> Century.”<sup>154</sup> After the Heads of State and Government made their speeches and signed the Founding Act, Secretary General Solana concluded with the following remarks: “Our signatures have just sealed a historic document. These pages will, that is our sincere hope, form a bridge towards a new relationship between NATO and Russia that leaves behind the vicissitudes of the past and looks towards the future. Let us walk together.”<sup>155</sup> In addition to the hopes expressed about how the relationship would lead to peace and security in the Euro-Atlantic area, the Founding Act also specified that the NATO-Russia Permanent Joint Council would be the forum for interaction.

## **B. ASSESSMENT OF THE PERMANENT JOINT COUNCIL**

According to the Founding Act, “The Permanent Joint Council will provide a mechanism for consultations, coordination and, to the maximum extent possible, where appropriate, for joint decisions and joint action with respect to security issues of common concern.”<sup>156</sup> Secretary General Solana described in May 1997 how the PJC was expected to facilitate the cooperation between Russia and the Alliance:

The mechanisms of the new relationship are truly innovative...The consultations will cover a broad range of political or security related matters. Based on these consultations, the Joint Council will develop joint initiatives on which NATO and Russia would agree to speak or act in parallel. Once consensus has been reached, it will make joint decisions, if appropriate, and take joint action on a case-by-case basis...When consensus is not possible, both sides will of course remain free to take decisions and actions on their own.<sup>157</sup>

Although the PJC lasted only five years and was eventually replaced by the NATO-Russia Council, it did have some merit. According to a June 2002 NATO Fact Sheet, “The Permanent Joint Council was established as a forum for regular consultation on common security issues. Over the next five years, a substantial programme of

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<sup>154</sup> Boris Yeltsin, President of the Russian Federation, Remarks given at the Signing Ceremony of the NATO-Russia Founding Act, Paris, 27 May 1997, <http://www.nato.int/docu/speech/1997/s970528e.htm>. Accessed August 2002.

<sup>155</sup> Javier Solana, Secretary General NATO, Remarks given at the Signing Ceremony of the NATO-Russia Founding Act, Paris, 27 May 1997, <http://www.nato.int/docu/speech/1997/s970528a.htm>. Accessed August 2002.

<sup>156</sup> NATO-Russia Founding Act, Section II

<sup>157</sup> Javier Solana, “NATO and Russia: A True Partnership”

practical security and defence-related cooperation was developed and much progress was made in building mutual confidence and overcoming misperceptions through dialogue, in spite of differences over the Kosovo air campaign that led to a year-long interruption in the PJC's activities."<sup>158</sup>

A. V. Grushko, the Deputy Director of the Russian Foreign Ministry's All-European Cooperation Department, offers in retrospect a similar positive assessment of the PJC. According to Grushko,

The "deep freeze" of the links with the Alliance in the wake of the Yugoslav crisis, however, enabled the parties to pause for breath and take a new look at the basic approaches to the building of their mutual relations. The food for reflections was there. The Russia-NATO Founding Act and the Permanent Joint Council (PJC) created on its own basis had been in existence for about two years. A certain culture and habits of political dialogue had taken shape. Some concrete projects had been launched. As a result both we and NATO came to understand each other's behavior better. The activities of NATO and its internal workings had become transparent for us.<sup>159</sup>

In practice, however, as time passed, inherent problems with the PJC's structure and mechanics led to its ineffectiveness. DR A. (Anonymous), an expert on NATO-Russia relations, offered the following analysis in an article in 2001: "The Founding Act and the NATO-Russia Permanent Joint Council might have illustrated the state of NATO-Russian relations at the time of negotiations and probably was the best solution available at the time. The framework has since shown its limits."<sup>160</sup> In the words of Peter Trenin-Straussov, Founder and Director of the Moscow School of Political Studies, "the PJC was becoming less, rather than more relevant over time."<sup>161</sup>

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<sup>158</sup> NATO, "NATO-Russia relations," NATO Fact Sheets, 11 June 2002, <http://www.nato.int/docu/facts/nato-rus.htm>. Accessed July 2002.

<sup>159</sup> A. V. Grushko, Deputy Director of the Russian Foreign Ministry, All-European Cooperation Department, "Russia-NATO Twenty Appears to Be Working," Daily News Bulletin, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, Information and Press Department, (published in *International Affairs*, No. 7, 2002), 9 July 2002, Document # 1401-08-07-2002, <http://www.in.mid.ru/BI.nsf/arh/FBDA6E00A5C7FDAB43256BF2003FD3F9?OpenDocument>. Accessed March 2003.

<sup>160</sup> DR A. (Anonymous), "Whither NATO-Russia co-operation," *International Journal*, Volume LVI No. 2 (Spring 2001): 327.

<sup>161</sup> Peter Trenin-Straussov, *The NATO-Russia Permanent Joint Council in 1997-1999: Anatomy of a Failure*, (Berlin Information-center for Transatlantic Security, BITS Research Note 99.1 ISSN 1434-3258, July 1999) <http://www.bits.de/public/researchnote/rn99-1.htm>. Accessed August 2002.

### C. THE BUILDING OF A NEW NATO-RUSSIA RELATIONSHIP

Leaders in Russia and the Alliance member states also recognized the shortcomings of the dialogue and cooperation in the PJC framework and sought ways to improve the relationship. The combined struggle against terrorism became the basis for improved relations. After the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks against the United States, leaders from Russia and the West seized the opportunity to improve NATO-Russia relations. According to Grushko, “As early as September 13 the Russia-NATO PJC issued a strong statement condemning the barbaric acts of terrorism. It contained an expression of readiness for joint struggle. And a month later a concrete program of interaction in this sphere saw the light of day.”<sup>162</sup> At the 7 December 2001 meeting of the PJC at the level of Foreign Ministers, Russia and the Allies stated that

Today we commit ourselves to forge a new relationship between NATO Allies and Russia, enhancing our ability to work together in areas of common interest and to stand up to new threats and risks to our security...We have decided to give new impetus and substance to our partnership, with the goal of creating a new council bringing together NATO member states and Russia to identify and pursue opportunities for joint action at 20.<sup>163</sup>

According to Grushko, “A strict deadline for this work was set – it had to be finished before the new meeting of the foreign ministers in Reykjavik [Iceland] in May 2002...After inter-agency consultations, the Russian side submitted a draft document on a new quality of Russia-NATO relationships to all NATO member states in February of this year [2002]. The document combined all of the previously reached understandings regarding a new nature of relations and was a follow-up to the ministerial decisions of December 7.”<sup>164</sup>

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<sup>162</sup> A. V. Grushko, “Russia-NATO Twenty Appears to Be Working.” The statement that Grushko refers to is reproduced in Chapter II of this thesis.

<sup>163</sup> NATO, “NATO-Russia Joint Statement issued on the Occasion of the Meeting of the Permanent Joint Council at the Level of Foreign Ministers in Brussels on 7 December 2001,” NATO Press Statement, 7 December 2001, <http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/2001/p011207e.htm>. Accessed March 2003.

<sup>164</sup> A. V. Grushko, “Russia-NATO Twenty Appears to Be Working.”

Russian officials lobbied for several key principles that they wanted to be the basis for the functioning of the new NATO-Russia Council.<sup>165</sup> According to Grushko, the Russians named the following principles:

unconditional compliance with international law, the UN Charter and the Helsinki Final Act; the focus on agreeing joint approaches, working out joint decisions, and determining joint actions on the basis of a systemic political dialogue covering a wide range of security issues; commitment to consensus; rejection of unilateral actions that run counter to joint decisions. It was fundamentally important that the Russian document spelled out the formula of “twenty”: for example, it said that Russia and NATO countries would pledge to act in their “national capacity” in the new body, not by the obsolete “19+1” formula.<sup>166</sup>

The draft document underwent several revisions in a number of complex but constructive negotiation sessions.<sup>167</sup>

Nearly all of Moscow’s principles were incorporated in the signed 28 May 2002 Declaration by Heads of State and Government of NATO Member States and the Russian Federation on NATO-Russia Relations: A New Quality. Two Russian principles – “unconditional compliance with international law, the UN Charter and the Helsinki Final Act; ...[and] rejection of unilateral actions that run counter to joint decisions” – were absent from the final document.<sup>168</sup> It can be argued that NATO’s unilateral military intervention in the 1999 Kosovo crisis, without explicit UN Security Council authorization, motivated Russia’s proposal to include these principles. If the Russians had successfully incorporated these principles into the Declaration, they could have constrained the Alliance and improved their ability to influence international affairs.

At the 14 May 2002 Ministerial Meeting of the PJC, both sides approved a final draft document and recommended that the heads of State and Government sign the declaration.<sup>169</sup> In the final Declaration, NATO and Russia agreed to “observe in good faith our obligations under international law, including the UN Charter, provisions and

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<sup>165</sup> Ibid.

<sup>166</sup> Ibid.

<sup>167</sup> Ibid.

<sup>168</sup> Ibid.

<sup>169</sup> Ibid.

principles contained in the Helsinki Final Act and the OSCE Charter for European Security.”<sup>170</sup> However, as noted earlier, there is no mention of the Moscow-proposed principle: “rejection of unilateral actions that run counter to joint decisions.”<sup>171</sup>

#### **D. THE ROME DECLARATION**

On 28 May 2002, five years and a day after the signing of the Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security between NATO and the Russian Federation, the leaders of the Alliance’s nineteen members and Russia gathered in Rome for a summit. The Heads of State and Government of NATO Member States and the Russian Federation signed a Declaration titled “NATO-Russia Relations: A New Quality.”<sup>172</sup>

Leaders of the Alliance praised the new relationship. For example, Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi stated, “ I sincerely believe that this bond [the Declaration on NATO-Russia Relations: A New Quality] will be a decisive one for history and for world security.”<sup>173</sup> President George W. Bush also praised the new relationship embodied in the NATO-Russia Council (NRC). According to his address, “Today marks an historic achievement for a great alliance and a great European nation. Two former foes are now joined as partners, overcoming fifty years of division and a decade of uncertainty. And this partnership takes us closer to an even larger goal: a Europe that is whole, free and at peace.”<sup>174</sup> The other Heads of State and Government of the North Atlantic Alliance all voiced their satisfaction with the new NATO-Russia relationship.

NATO Secretary General Robertson also praised this historic event, but he cautioned that this was just the beginning: “[T]here will be high expectations of all. Expectations that this will not be just another glitzy protocol event, but a real

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<sup>170</sup> NATO, “NATO Russia Relations: A New Quality,” Declaration by Heads of State and Government of NATO Member States and the Russian Federation, Rome, Italy, 28 May 2002. <http://www.nato.int/docu/basic/txt/b020528e.htm>. Accessed August 2002.

<sup>171</sup> A. V. Grushko, “Russia-NATO Twenty Appears to Be Working.”

<sup>172</sup> NATO, “NATO Russia Relations: A New Quality.”

<sup>173</sup> Silvio Berlusconi, Prime Minister of Italy, Address given at the Summit Meeting of NATO and Russia at the level of Heads of State and Government, Rome, Italy, 28 May 2002, p. 15, (Contained in the compilation of the speeches delivered and the text of the Rome Declaration itself) <http://www.nato.int/docu/comm/2002/0205-rome/0205-rome.htm>. Accessed March 2003.

<sup>174</sup> George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, Address given at the Summit Meeting of NATO and Russia at the level of Heads of State and Government, Rome, Italy, 28 May 2002, p. 19 (Contained in the compilation of the speeches delivered and the text of the Rome Declaration itself) <http://www.nato.int/docu/comm/2002/0205-rome/0205-rome.htm>. Accessed March 2003.

breakthrough. Expectations that the new NATO-Russia Council will not just talk but will act, not just analyse but prescribe, not just deliberate but take decisive action. We have a profound obligation to ensure that these expectations are not disappointed.”<sup>175</sup>

Vladimir Putin, the President of the Russian Federation also praised the Declaration on a New Quality of Relations. At the Rome Summit Meeting of the NATO-Russia Council on 28 May 2002 President Putin said:

It would be difficult to overestimate the significance of the Summit. Even quite recently, this kind of meeting between leaders of Russia and the NATO member nations, given the format and quality it has today, would have been simply unthinkable. It has now become a reality – one which is possible thanks to intensive work and the willingness to engage in lively and open dialogue...We have come a long way – from opposition to dialogue, from confrontation to cooperation. And we fully understand that the signing of the Rome Declaration is only the beginning of building fundamentally different relations.<sup>176</sup>

#### **E. COMMENTARY ON THE ROME DECLARATION**

In the weeks following the momentous event in Rome, journalists began reporting on the different views of the Rome Declaration and the details of the new NATO-Russia Council (NRC). In August 2002, Russian First Deputy Foreign Minister Vyacheslav Trubnikov declared that “The NATO-Russia Council has all the prerequisites to become an efficient tool of cooperation in concrete spheres of the antiterrorist fight, including the prevention of terrorist acts committed with the use of mass destruction weaponry components and the liquidation of their aftermath.”<sup>177</sup> Negative opinions of the NATO-Russia Council were also expressed in Russia, however.

Mark Galeotti reported that “A commentary in the influential centrist-nationalist newspaper *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* said that ‘Russia’s relations with the alliance, even in

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<sup>175</sup> Lord Robertson, NATO Secretary General, Opening remarks given at the Summit Meeting of NATO and Russia at the level of Heads of State and Government, Rome, Italy, 28 May 2002, p. 12 (Contained in the compilation of the speeches delivered and the text of the Rome Declaration itself) <http://www.nato.int/docu/comm/2002/0205-rome/0205-rome.htm>. Accessed March 2003.

<sup>176</sup> Vladimir, Putin, President of the Russian Federation, Address given at the Summit Meeting of NATO and Russia at the level of Heads of State and Government, Rome, Italy, 28 May 2002, p. 17, (Contained in the compilation of the speeches delivered and the text of the Rome Declaration itself) <http://www.nato.int/docu/comm/2002/0205-rome/0205-rome.htm>. Accessed March 2003.

<sup>177</sup> Moscow ITAR-TASS, “Russia sees closer ties with NATO, EU as key to defeating terrorism,” (Moscow), FBIS transcribed text in English, 23 August 2002, Document ID: CEP20020823000343.

the format of the ‘20’, look like a sham.’ Others were even more strident: the Gazeta.ru website claimed that ‘Russia capitulates to NATO’ in a piece apparently widely circulated within the General Staff and even, according to one officer who spoke to JIR [*Jane’s Intelligence Review*], for a while displayed in several offices of the General Staff building itself.”<sup>178</sup> According to Francesca Mereu,

[Vyacheslav] Nikonov of the Politika Foundation also criticized the new NATO-Russia Council, saying Moscow won’t be given either decision-making powers or the ability to influence future events...“In my opinion, the [NATO-Russia Council, or the so-called] ‘20 Formula’ is a good deal, but so far it is just a piece of paper. I have to admit that I’m a NATO skeptic, and I don’t believe something good will result from the NATO-Russia Council. This [council] means that Russia will be given the possibility to make decisions concerning antiterrorist operations and issues on nonproliferation of weapons of mass destruction. But it is evident that antiterrorism and nonproliferation are not the main problems for European security. Important problems will be discussed at another table without the participation of Russia.”<sup>179</sup>

Political analysts also expressed views on the prospects for the new NATO-Russia Council. According to Alexander Golts,

The honeymoon between Russia and NATO isn’t even over yet, but the bride and groom already seem to have lost interest in each other. Just three weeks ago, Italian Prime Minister Silvia Berlusconi compared the meeting between President Vladimir Putin and the 19 NATO country leaders with the way Aeneas came from Troy to the banks of the Tiber and took the local king’s daughter as his wife, thus uniting East and West. Berlusconi called the meeting a ‘world wedding’, and each leader considered it a duty to proclaim the end of the division of Europe. But the Russia-NATO Council’s first working session in Brussels a week later...showed little had changed. Even before the meeting, [Russian Defense Minister] Ivanov said he didn’t expect any ‘epoch-making decisions’. He also said Russia does not plan to discuss with the alliance issues that could in ‘any way impose restrictions on the development of Russia’s armed forces’. This all confirms that the pompous setting and

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<sup>178</sup> Mark Galeotti, “The view from the Kremlin,” *Jane’s Intelligence Review*, [on-line journal], 1 July 2002. <http://www.janes.com>. Accessed August 2002.

<sup>179</sup> Francesca Mereu, “Analysts Pessimistic About NATO Enlargement, NATO-Russia Council,” [on-line publication from the Center for Defense Information] *CDI Russia Weekly*, no. 214, article 1, 12 July 2002. <http://www.cdi.org/russia/214-1.cfm>. Accessed October 2002.

lofty speeches at the ‘wedding’ in Rome were designed to draw attention away from the newlyweds’ more-than-modest dowry.<sup>180</sup>

Alexander Golts may have prematurely interpreted Russia’s cautious attitude as a sign that there are significant problems in the NRC.

Other analysts were more optimistic about the relationship and the prospects of the NATO-Russia Council. Paul Fritch, an expert on NATO-Russia issues in NATO’s Political Affairs Division, provided one such view. According to Fritch,

In the period since the Summit, further NATO-Russia meetings have been held at all levels – defence ministers, ambassadors, political advisors, and experts. Four new working groups have been created, and a range of expert meetings convened to transform the political message of Rome into practical cooperation in key areas...And while we all continue to grapple with the rules and procedures of this entirely new structure, the political will that has too often in the past been missing from the NATO-Russia dialogue is evident at all levels. We are still in the very early stages of this ambitious undertaking, but the prospects for a genuinely new quality in NATO-Russia relations are bright.<sup>181</sup>

#### **F. COMPARISON OF THE PJC AND THE NATO-RUSSIA COUNCIL**

Examining the Rome Declaration provides insights into the expected new quality of NATO-Russia relations. According to the Rome Declaration, the NATO-Russia Council would replace the PJC as the “mechanism for consultation, consensus-building, cooperation, joint decision, and joint action...[and] serve as the principal structure and venue for advancing the relationship between NATO and Russia.”<sup>182</sup>

The Rome Declaration was not designed to replace or discount the Founding Act, but to build upon the Act. According to the Rome Declaration, “As participants of the Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security, we reaffirm the goals, principles and commitments set forth therein.”<sup>183</sup> Furthermore, the Rome Declaration

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<sup>180</sup> Alexander Golts, “Russia’s NATO romance seems long over,” *Russia Journal*, No. 22 (165), 14 June 2002

<sup>181</sup> Paul Fritch, “Transforming the Alliance,” *NATO Review*, Summer (2002).

<sup>182</sup> NATO, “NATO Russia Relations: A New Quality.”

<sup>183</sup> *Ibid.*



was intended to establish “a qualitatively new relationship between NATO and the Russian Federation” which would contribute to the accomplishment of the goals contained in the Founding Act.<sup>184</sup>

This “qualitatively new relationship” would be achieved in the venue of the NATO-Russia Council. According to the Rome Declaration, the NRC “will operate on the principle of consensus. It will work on the basis of a continuous political dialogue on security issues among its members with a view to early identification of emerging problems, determination of optimal common approaches and the conduct of joint actions, as appropriate.”<sup>185</sup> These guiding principles share many similarities with those outlined in the Founding Act.

The meeting schedule of the NATO-Russia Council also resembles that of the PJC. According to the Rome Declaration, “It will meet at the level of Foreign Ministers and at the level of Defense Ministers twice annually, and at the level of Heads of State and Government as appropriate. Meetings of the Council at Ambassadorial level will be held at least once a month, with the possibility of more frequent meetings as needed...Meetings of Chiefs of Staff will take place no less than twice a year, meetings at military representatives level at least once a month.”<sup>186</sup>

There is, however, one difference in the meeting schedule of the NATO-Russia Council. The Rome Declaration established a Preparatory Committee (PrepCom) “[t]o support and prepare the meetings of the Council.”<sup>187</sup> According to the Rome Declaration, “The Preparatory Committee will meet twice monthly, or more often if necessary.”<sup>188</sup> The PrepCom consists of representatives from the twenty nations and because it has more frequent meetings than take place at the Ambassadorial level most of

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184 Ibid.

185 Ibid.

186 Ibid.

187 Ibid.

188 Ibid.

the discussion takes place within this committee.<sup>189</sup> In addition, the NRC has established ad hoc working groups (ADWG) or expert groups to work on specific details of an issue.<sup>190</sup>

There are other significant differences in the structures of the PJC and the NRC. According to the Rome Declaration, the NRC will

bring together NATO member states and Russia to identify and pursue opportunities for joint action at twenty...In the framework of the NATO-Russia Council, NATO member states and Russia will work as equal partners in areas of common interest...The members of the NATO-Russia Council, acting in their national capacities and in a manner consistent with their respective collective commitments and obligations, will take joint decisions and will bear equal responsibility, individually and jointly, for their implementation.<sup>191</sup>

According to Mark Galeotti, “The new NATO-Russia Council represents a real step forward from its predecessor, the Permanent Joint Council, which was established in 1997 to institutionalise meetings between NATO members and Russia on a ‘16 + 1’ basis (later ‘19 + 1’) but which became little more than a forum for public declarations. Given that the NATO powers approached meetings having already decided their line in advance, Moscow came to characterise it as ‘19-versus-1’.”<sup>192</sup>

Alexander Golts offers the following explanation of the key difference between the NRC and the PJC: “The new NATO council is supposed to lay the foundation for a new kind of cooperation and the Rome declaration states that participants in council meetings will act in their national capacity. This implies that discussions on the issues the new body is to address will start from scratch, without NATO states first working out a common position.”<sup>193</sup> Although the NRC begins discussions without a pre-coordinated NATO position, the members of the Alliance decide which issues will go to the NATO-Russia Council.

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<sup>189</sup> Information provided by an expert on NATO-Russia relations. 28 February 2003.

<sup>190</sup> Ibid.

<sup>191</sup> NATO, “NATO Russia Relations: A New Quality.”

<sup>192</sup> Mark Galeotti, “The view from the Kremlin.”

<sup>193</sup> Alexander Golts, “Russia’s NATO romance seems long over.”

According to an expert on NATO-Russia relations:

All projects must be approved by [the] Allies first before they can be submitted for debate/consideration in the NRC. But this does not mean that all of the details are worked out by [the] Allies first...So, there are still debates that are decided “at 20,” which is different from the PJC when Allies had their decisions firmed up before they would address it with Russia. In the PJC, there was no such thing as “working out the details with Russia” because the details were pre-determined.<sup>194</sup>

Each of the NATO members and Russia can make a proposal for consideration within the NRC. However, the 19 members of the Alliance then meet in the Political Committee, of which Russia is not a member, to decide if this is an issue that they want to discuss with Russia in the NRC.<sup>195</sup> Moreover, each NATO member retains the ability to withdraw any item from discussion with Russia in the NRC.<sup>196</sup> According to Susan Glasser of the *Washington Post*, “some NATO members...expressed concern that Russia would be given too prominent a role...Eventually, NATO decided on a ‘safeguard’ provision, allowing any member to withdraw an item from the council’s agenda and refer it to the NATO governing council, to which Russia does not belong.”<sup>197</sup> According to an expert on NATO-Russia relations, if an Ally begins to see the discussions “heading in an undesirable direction,” it can remove the issue from the NRC for discussion among only the Allies.<sup>198</sup> Although the safeguard exists, “it has yet to be exercised.”<sup>199</sup>

Another procedural difference between the PJC and the NRC is that “The NATO-Russia Council will be chaired by the Secretary General of NATO.”<sup>200</sup> This is in contrast to the PJC, which was “chaired jointly by the Secretary General of NATO, a representative of one of the NATO member States on a rotation basis, and a

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<sup>194</sup> Information provided by an expert on NATO-Russia relations. 28 February 2003.

<sup>195</sup> Ibid.

<sup>196</sup> Ibid.

<sup>197</sup> Susan B. Glasser, “Russia and NATO Go Back to Start: Rise of New Joint Council Comes After Collapse of Old One,” *Washington Post*, 25 May 2002, p. A.21. <http://www.washingtonpost.com>. Accessed July 2002.

<sup>198</sup> Information provided by an expert on NATO-Russia relations. 28 February 2003.

<sup>199</sup> Ibid.

<sup>200</sup> NATO, “NATO Russia Relations: A New Quality.”

representative of Russia.”<sup>201</sup> According to Peter Trenin-Straussov, “This elaborate ‘troika’ scheme reflected a difficult compromise, but for many Russians it suggested that NATO would have a 2:1 majority on procedural matters.”<sup>202</sup> This new format of the NRC’s chair is expected to eliminate this perception of biased leadership even though it could be construed by Russian critics of the NATO-Russian Council as awarding complete control over procedural matters to NATO.

According to the Rome Declaration, “The NATO-Russia Council, replacing the NATO-Russia Permanent Joint Council, will focus on all areas of mutual interest identified in Section III of the Founding Act, including the provision to add other areas by mutual agreement...NATO member states and Russia will continue to intensify their cooperation in areas including the struggle against terrorism, crisis management, non-proliferation, arms control and confidence-building measures, theatre missile defence, search and rescue at sea, military-to-military cooperation, and civil emergencies.”<sup>203</sup>

In May 2002 Robert E. Hunter and Sergey M. Rogov suggested a strategy for the NATO-Russia Council. According to Hunter and Rogov. “The trick is for both sides to focus more on what they do than on how they do it. This means not reaching for the moon at first...And it means starting small, one careful step at a time.”<sup>204</sup> Hunter and Rogov listed a number of possible areas in which the NATO-Russia Council could focus, such as cooperating in civil emergency planning; conducting joint military exercises that include Russia; stationing Russian officers at NATO military headquarters and NATO officers at Russian headquarters; and, creating a counter-terrorism information sharing center.<sup>205</sup>

When the NATO-Russia Council was established it continued discussions on the topics that were contained in the 2002 work programs for the PJC. According to a 6 June 2002 statement by the Defense Ministers of the NATO-Russia Council, “We are strongly

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<sup>201</sup> NATO, Founding Act, Section II

<sup>202</sup> Peter Trenin-Straussov, *The NATO-Russia Permanent Joint Council in 1997-1999: Anatomy of a Failure*.

<sup>203</sup> NATO, “NATO Russia Relations: A New Quality.”

<sup>204</sup> Robert E. Hunter and Sergey M. Rogov, “NATO, Russia Can Get Far With Small Steps,” *Los Angeles Times*, 22 May 2002.

<sup>205</sup> *Ibid.*

committed to the implementation of the NRC Work Programme for 2002...and have given directions to our Ambassadors to take this work forward.”<sup>206</sup> In this statement, they assigned over a dozen specific tasks under the following broad headings: “Struggle Against Terrorism,” “Crisis Management,” “Non-Proliferation,” “Arms Control and Confidence-Building Measures,” “Theatre Missile Defence,” “Search and Rescue at Sea,” and “Military-to-Military Cooperation and Defense Reform.”<sup>207</sup>

#### **G. THE NATO-RUSSIA COUNCIL’S REPORTED PROGRESS TO DATE**

Since its inception, the NATO-Russia Council has apparently achieved genuine success. The area which has seen the most accomplishments is the Struggle Against Terrorism. According to NATO Secretary General Robertson, “The work on terrorism is at the very heart of the work that NATO and Russia are doing together.”<sup>208</sup> Since the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks against the United States, NATO and Russia have conducted two conferences “focusing on the role of the military in combatting terrorism.”<sup>209</sup> The first conference took place on 4 February 2002 and the more recent one took place on 9 December 2002, the latter under the auspices of the NATO-Russia Council. According to Lord Robertson, “NATO and Russia are now sharing intelligence and intelligence assessments of areas like the Balkans. We are debating and discussing how our military capabilities can be reshaped so that we can deal better with combating terrorism. And we are seeking to discover all the time new ways in which we can cooperate to deal with this greatest menace of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.”<sup>210</sup> Russian President Vladimir Putin, in a message to the participants of the Conference On the Military’s Role in Combating Terrorism, stated:

I am convinced that Russia and NATO have the potential for cooperation in the new security conditions. It has been this common understanding of

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<sup>206</sup> NATO, Statement by the Defence Ministers of the NATO-Russia Council, 6 June 2002. <http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/2002/p020606e.htm>. Accessed December 2002.

<sup>207</sup> NATO, “NATO Russia Relations: A New Quality.” And NATO, Statement by the Defence Ministers of the NATO-Russia Council, 6 June 2002.

<sup>208</sup> Lord Robertson, Questions and Answers with NATO Secretary General, Lord Robertson, NATO, NATO Speeches, ITAR-TASS press agency Moscow, 9 December 2002. <http://www.nato.int/docu/speech/2002/s021209c.htm>. Accessed December 2002.

<sup>209</sup> Lord Robertson, NATO Secretary General, “The Role of the Military in Combating Terrorism,” speech given at the NATO-Russia Conference, Moscow, 9 December 2002, NATO, NATO Speeches. <http://www.nato.int/docu/speech/2002/s021209b.htm>. Accessed December 2002.

<sup>210</sup> Lord Robertson, Questions and Answers with NATO Secretary General.

the need for joint actions that has made it possible to alter the quality of the Russia-NATO relationship. It is of fundamental importance that the antiterrorist sphere is now part and parcel of our increasingly strong cooperation with the North Atlantic Alliance.<sup>211</sup>

Although the struggle against international terrorism is the primary topic on the NATO-Russia agenda, the NATO-Russia Council has made progress in other areas.

During September 2002, the NATO-Russia Council sponsored a three-day field exercise called “Bogorodsk 2002” to test their response to a terrorist act against a chemically hazardous production facility.<sup>212</sup> According to a Press Release from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, “Russia believes that the joint exercise under the aegis of the Russia-NATO council will constitute an important contribution to combining efforts of the international community in the area of civil emergency response and will help to build on the potential of Russia-NATO equal cooperation in fields of mutual interest.”<sup>213</sup>

NATO and Russia have also made progress in defence reform. According to a NATO statement, “A joint NATO-Russia conference entitled ‘NATO-Russia Council and Defence Reform’ was held on 10 October 2002 at the NATO Defense College in Rome. The conference focused on a range of issues related to defense reform experiences in Russia and NATO member countries. Topics of discussion included: requirements for armed forces, management of change, conduct and implementation of strategic defence reviews, as well as concrete projects for NATO-Russia cooperation.”<sup>214</sup> According to a keynote address by NATO Deputy Secretary General Ambassador Alessandro Minuto Rizzo,

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<sup>211</sup> Vladimir Putin, “Russian President Vladimir Putin Sends Greetings to Participants of the Conference On the Military’s Role in Combating Terrorism,” Daily News Bulletin, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, Information and Press Department, 10 December 2002, Document # 2002-12-09-01.

<http://www.in.mid.ru/Bl.nsf/arh/B5A022B26312B52343256C8B003EC220?OpenDocument>. Accessed March 2003.

<sup>212</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, Press Release on Upcoming NATO-Russian EMERCOM Field Exercise “Bogorodsk-2002,” 23 September 2002, Document # 1875-20-09-2002.

<http://www.in.mid.ru/Bl.nsf/arh/CFA27B65153295F743256C3D00479B5D?OpenDocument>. Accessed March 2003.

<sup>213</sup> Ibid.

<sup>214</sup> NATO, “NATO-Russia conference to focus on defence reform,” NATO Update, 10 October 2002. <http://www.nato.int/docu/update/2002/10-october/e1010a.htm>. Accessed October 2002.

NATO-Russia cooperation on defence reform is an exercise in transparency and openness. An exercise in putting problems on the table, and examining how we can learn from each other. An exercise in sharing our experiences, our expectations, perhaps even our frustrations. And an exercise, therefore, in building confidence between us, and in promoting the interoperability of our forces and strengthening the NATO-Russia relationship.<sup>215</sup>

In addition to the conferences, dialogue, and military exercises, NATO and Russia have reached agreements and made joint decisions on cooperation. According to Lord Robertson, “Today, [20 September 2002] less than four months after its creation, the NATO-Russia Council at Ambassadorial level reached agreement on Political Aspects of a Generic Concept of Joint NATO-Russia Peacekeeping Operations...This decision constitutes a milestone in NATO-Russia cooperation within the new NRC framework, and a further contribution to security and stability in the Euro-Atlantic area.”<sup>216</sup>

Another significant accomplishment of the NATO-Russia Council is its landmark agreement on mutual help and co-operation in submarine crew search and rescue at sea.<sup>217</sup> According to the agreement, “NATO and Russia will work to standardise search and rescue procedures, collaborate in developing the necessary equipment, exchange relevant information and conduct joint exercises.”<sup>218</sup> NATO Secretary General Robertson declared that “Submarine search and rescue is a fine example of what our relationship really means.”<sup>219</sup> The NRC venue was not the reason why Russia and the Allies were able to reach a consensus.<sup>220</sup> Much of the negotiations took place under the auspices of the PJC; however, little progress was made toward an agreement.<sup>221</sup>

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<sup>215</sup> Ambassador Alessandro Minuto Rizzo, keynote address given at the NATO-Russia Council and Defence Reform, NATO Defense College, Rome, NATO Speeches, 10 October 2002. <http://www.nato.int/docu/speech/2002/s021010a.htm>. Accessed December 2002.

<sup>216</sup> Lord Robertson, “Statement by NATO Secretary General, Lord Robertson, in his capacity as chairman of the NATO-Russia council,” NATO Press Releases, 20 September 2002. <http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/2002/p02-109e.htm>. Accessed October 2002.

<sup>217</sup> NATO, “NATO and Russia sign submarine rescue agreement,” NATO Update, 8 February 2003. <http://www.nato.int/docu/update/2003/02-february/e0208a.htm>. Accessed February 2003.

<sup>218</sup> Ibid.

<sup>219</sup> Ibid.

<sup>220</sup> Information provided by an expert on NATO-Russia relations. 21 May 2003.

<sup>221</sup> Ibid.

Moreover, the nature of the agreement had changed over time.<sup>222</sup> According to an expert on NATO-Russia relations, “There was the realization that we wouldn’t get an agreement unless the document became a very short one. So, it would not be fair to say that the venue was the deciding factor. Rather, the Russians had to change what they were expecting in the way of an agreement.”<sup>223</sup>

The NATO-Russia Council has made progress in other areas. According to a statement by the NATO Secretary General, Lord Robertson, in his capacity as Chairman of the NATO-Russia Council, “Today, Foreign Ministers of the NATO-Russia Council...welcomed in particular progress achieved in intensifying cooperation...in theatre missile defence, where an ambitious work programme has set forth a road to interoperability of Allied and Russian systems.”<sup>224</sup> In addition, the NATO-Russia Council Foreign Ministers welcomed the progress achieved “in crisis management, where NRC Ambassadors agreed on a political framework to take work forward on future NATO-Russia peacekeeping operations, and where progress was made in the dialogue on ways to enhance border security in the Balkans.”<sup>225</sup>

The NATO-Russia Council is also moving forward in non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD). According to Lord Robertson, “NRC proliferation experts are examining ways to keep WMD and ballistic missile technology out of the hands of terrorists.”<sup>226</sup> In a 22 November 2002 NATO-Russia Council review of the first six months, Foreign Ministers of the NRC applauded the work “in non-proliferation, where work is underway for a joint assessment of global trends in the proliferation of NBC [Nuclear, Biological, and Chemical] agents and their means of delivery.”<sup>227</sup>

The progress over the past nine months has silenced nearly all of the NATO-Russia Council’s critics in Russia. However, some Russians, perhaps influenced

<sup>222</sup> Ibid.

<sup>223</sup> Ibid.

<sup>224</sup> Lord Robertson, “Statement by NATO Secretary General, Lord Robertson, in his capacity as chairman of the NATO-Russia council,” NATO Press Releases, 22 November 2002. <http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/2002/p021122e.htm>. Accessed December 2002.

<sup>225</sup> Ibid.

<sup>226</sup> Lord Robertson, “The Role of the Military in Combating Terrorism.”

<sup>227</sup> Lord Robertson, “Statement by NATO Secretary General, Lord Robertson, in his capacity as chairman of the NATO-Russia council,” 22 November 2002



by Cold War attitudes, remain skeptical of NATO. Vladimir Isachenkov of the *Moscow Times* has reported that “The Russian government’s critics dismiss the new cooperation as more show than substance, and warn that NATO remains a political enemy. ‘NATO is a big stick in the hands of the United States, aimed against any nation or regime that Washington dislikes’, Communist lawmaker Viktor Ilyukin said. ‘NATO’s final goal toward Russia is to seize its resources’.”<sup>228</sup>

Despite these criticisms, key leaders within the Russian government continue to applaud the NATO-Russia Council. According to Vice Admiral Valentin Kuznetov, Russia’s senior military representative to NATO,

We now have joint projects to do, and by working together we have come to understand each other better...We are becoming more predictable for each other, and this is extremely important...Unlike the past, when NATO just presented its coordinated view to us, we are now making decisions together...The more we work together with NATO, the better we get to know each other and the stronger our security will become.<sup>229</sup>

At an 11 November 2002 joint press conference following a meeting with Secretary General Robertson, President Putin said, “We consider that the potential laid in Rome for cooperation within the framework of the Russia-NATO Council is beginning to be realized.”<sup>230</sup> Following the 22 November 2002 meeting of the NATO-Russia Council, Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov said, “Half a year has not yet passed since the meeting of the heads of state and government of Russia and NATO in Rome. But one can already say with confidence now that the council at 20 is becoming an effective instrument of cooperation and joint activity.”<sup>231</sup>

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<sup>228</sup> Vladimir Isachenkov, “Warmer Ties Quell Fears Over NATO,” *Moscow Times*, 21 November 2002, p. 1.

<sup>229</sup> Ibid.

<sup>230</sup> Vladimir Putin, “Russian President Vladimir Putin Remarks and Answers to Questions at Joint Press Opportunity Following Meeting with George Robertson, Brussels,” Daily News Bulletin, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, Information and Press Department, 11 November 2002. <http://www.in.mid.ru/BI.nsf/arh/EA66AF40B736D55043256C71004B484F?OpenDocument>. Accessed March 2003

<sup>231</sup> Igor Ivanov, “Transcript of Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs Igor Ivanov Remarks at Press Conference Following Russia-NATO Council Meeting (Prague, November 22, 2002),” Daily News Bulletin, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, Information and Press Department, Document # 2421-23-11-2002. <http://www.in.mid.ru/BI.nsf/arh/C33114E870EA4C3743256C7C00323B81?OpenDocument>. Accessed March 2003.

Western leaders have also praised the work of the NATO-Russia Council. Lord Robertson, NATO's Secretary General and Chairman of the NATO-Russia Council, has applauded the progress of the Council. In November 2002 "Lord Robertson also said that all the members of the NATO-Russia Council '*can be proud*' that it had succeeded in converting the pledges and promises made at the May 2002 NATO-Russia Summit into concrete decisions and activities in areas ranging from peacekeeping in the Balkans, missile defence to search and rescue at sea and defence reform."<sup>232</sup> In an article first published in *Krasnaya Zvezda*, a newspaper published by the Russian Ministry of Defence, on 10 October 2002, Lord Robertson wrote, "As I write this, NATO-Russia cooperation has become the rule rather than the exception...Our partnership is real, and it is growing."<sup>233</sup> At a 13 May 2003 press conference following the meeting of the NATO-Russia Council, NATO's Secretary General, Lord Robertson, provided comments on the progress to date. According to Lord Robertson,

Substantial progress has been made in moving towards practical co-operation in most areas...which were identified in the joint declaration in Rome...Some people will believe that this list that I have read out is dry, maybe even boring. There will be people who will wonder what some of the technical jargon means and to some, perhaps ordinary, people in the populations of the 20 countries in the NATO-Russia Council, it will appear so technical that it's not relevant. But I make the point, as the Chairman of the NATO-Russia Council, that this is an agenda of solid, concrete, and productive co-operation...So this is an agenda for change, an agenda for reform, an agenda for co-operation, which we can be justifiably proud of and is a clear signal of where we intend to go in the future.<sup>234</sup>

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<sup>232</sup> NATO, "NATO Secretary General meets with President Putin," NATO Update, 11 November 2002. <http://www.nato.int/docu/update/2002/11-november/e1111a.htm>; italics in the original. Accessed November 2002.

<sup>233</sup> Lord Robertson, "A Time for Action: Breathing Life into the NATO-Russia Partnership," NATO Fact sheets, (Article first published in *Krasnaya Zvezda*, a newspaper published by the Russian Ministry of Defence on 10 October 2002), <http://www.nato.int/docu/articles/2002/a021010a.htm>. Accessed February 2003.

<sup>234</sup> NATO, "Press Conference by NATO Secretary General, Lord Robertson following the meeting of the NATO-Russia Council," Moscow, 13 May 2003. <http://www.nato.int/docu/speech/2003/s030513a.htm>. Accessed May 2003.

## H. VISIBLE AND POTENTIAL PROBLEMS OF THE NATO-RUSSIA COUNCIL

Nearly all of the official statements from Moscow, NATO Headquarters in Brussels and Alliance governments speak positively about the NATO-Russia Council. However, this does not mean that there are no problems and disagreements within the Council. According to an American expert who follows NATO-Russia relations, “Of course problems exist in the NRC.”<sup>235</sup> This expert suggests that the problems are not publicized for two reasons: first, U.S. leaders have not been questioned by Congress or the media about NATO-Russia relations; second, nearly all the participating nations believe in the NRC and want it to be successful.<sup>236</sup> Moreover, there is a natural tendency for both sides to accentuate the positive aspects while downplaying the negative ones.<sup>237</sup>

According to another Washington-based analyst, “undoubtedly there are problems with the NATO-Russia Council that have not been publicized.”<sup>238</sup> This analyst indicates that one such possible problem may be the “general lack of deliverables” from the NRC.<sup>239</sup> However, a lack of concrete accomplishments to date should not be a major concern and in no way proves that the NRC is headed down a path towards failure. Dialogue and cooperation may well lead to a more mature relationship capable of tolerating differing views and opinions. Secretary General Lord Robertson holds that the NATO-Russian relationship has reached a certain level of maturity. According to Lord Robertson,

I think that the existence of the NATO-Russia Council has prevented differences over Iraq from becoming a crisis, like the NATO-Russia relationship suffered during Kosovo in 1999. It has brought about a new maturity...And I think that that is a very good sign for the future of the international community that NATO nations and Russia can now have established a working relationship of such durability that it can survive

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<sup>235</sup> Information provided by an expert on NATO-Russia relations. 20 March 2003.

<sup>236</sup> Ibid.

<sup>237</sup> Ibid.

<sup>238</sup> Information provided by an expert on NATO-Russia relations. 30 March 2003.

<sup>239</sup> Ibid.

and move on from even passionately held differences of opinion, like the one that recently took place on Iraq.<sup>240</sup>

Dialogue and cooperation between Russia and the Alliance in areas of mutual interest may represent small but natural steps in the building of a more meaningful relationship based on trust. Robert Hunter and Sergey Rogov have pointed out that “The importance of this type of effort [that is, beginning with small steps in optimal areas] is not its modesty but its practicality, its potential for building the mutual trust to turn common interests into common action. This is the stuff that will validate the grand hopes that have emerged in Russia’s relations with the West since Sept. 11. Done carefully, deliberately and with wisdom about both problems and possibilities, this can lead to a dramatic reshaping of Eurasian security.”<sup>241</sup>

There are also potential problems that may arise in the NATO-Russia Council. Some analysts believe that problems are likely to surface as soon as the NATO-Russia Council is confronted with a tough issue about which Russia and the NATO Allies have sharply different opinions. Moreover, at this writing, in May 2003, the NATO-Russia Council has been in existence for only a year, and it is still benefiting from the post-11 September convictions regarding a shared struggle against terrorism. As time passes and the memories of 11 September 2001 fade, the shared convictions may wither, leaving the NRC more vulnerable to differences in opinion.

Another potential problem within the NATO-Russia Council resides in the safeguard measures. According to Robert Hunter and Sergey Rogov, “Still, the new NATO-Russia Council is surrounded by so-called safeguards that make it not much better than the old council. NATO allies have to agree before any item goes on the agenda; both NATO and Russia retain the right to act separately on any item; any NATO ally, on its own, can pull an item off the agenda.”<sup>242</sup>

Up to this point, the NATO Allies have never exercised the option of pulling an issue from the NATO-Russia Council “at 20” back to the “NATO only” North Atlantic

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<sup>240</sup> NATO, “Press Conference by NATO Secretary General, Lord Robertson following the meeting of the NATO-Russia Council,” 13 May 2003.

<sup>241</sup> Robert E. Hunter and Sergey M. Rogov, “NATO, Russia Can Get Far With Small Steps,” *Los Angeles Times*, 22 May 2002.

<sup>242</sup> *Ibid.*

Council forum. If this does occur, Russia's reaction might be influenced by various circumstantial factors. However, it is possible that such actions by NATO would lead Moscow to become more skeptical of NATO's intentions.

If the Allies came to the NATO-Russia Council with a pre-determined position at some point, that could also disrupt the relationship. According to the House of Commons Defence Committee report, *The Future of NATO*, "The developments in NATO-Russia relations, particularly since 11 September, have been exciting and promise a great deal...Despite the disappointment of the PJC, NATO is right to take this opportunity to test Russia's willingness to engage constructively in important common security issues. And, correspondingly, NATO should be wary of giving the impression of any 'pre-cooking' of decisions."<sup>243</sup> According to an expert observer, "[T]here are some issues that Allies have determined will be pre-coordinated before approaching Russia. These issues are not written in stone, but all Allies know that they are there."<sup>244</sup> This observer opines that proliferation issues and peacekeeping operations are two topic areas in which the Allies may want to "manage things" by approaching Russia with a "pre-coordinated" position.<sup>245</sup> These examples are, it should be noted, not particularly persuasive in that both topic areas are explicitly listed in the May 2002 "New Quality" declaration, and NATO and Russia have been cooperating in peacekeeping in the Balkans since December 1995.

Problems could also originate from the Russians. Moscow must move beyond its PJC behavior pattern and be willing to devote the resources and exert the political will necessary to make the partnership work. DR A. points out that during the period of the PJC, "Russia did not partake in security debates to foster cooperation and build genuine partnership. It adopted a skeptical attitude, combating NATO enlargement and disputing the Alliance's renewed *raison d'être* and new missions."<sup>246</sup> Alexander Golts states that "The [Permanent] Joint Council failed when it became clear that on key issues such as Yugoslavia, Moscow held views that were the opposite [of] those of NATO states and

<sup>243</sup> Defence Committee, *The Future of NATO*, The House of Commons, Seventh Report of Session 2001-02, 24 July 2002, p. 37.

<sup>244</sup> Information provided by an expert on NATO-Russia relations. 20 March 2003.

<sup>245</sup> Information provided by an expert on NATO-Russia relations. 14 April 2003.

<sup>246</sup> DR A. (Anonymous), "Whither NATO-Russia co-operation," P. 326.

tried to sow dissension within the alliance. And Russian generals would sometimes propose topics that NATO members saw as locking them into fruitless discussions...If Russian politicians intend to carry on these demonstrations of their own grandeur in the future and continue attempts to drive a wedge between the United States and its Western European allies, then the new council's prospects will be no brighter than those of its predecessors."<sup>247</sup>

Another potential problem is the possible lack of political will of NATO and Russian officials below the ministerial level. As documented in this thesis, key leaders (including heads of state and government) support the NATO-Russia Council. This vigor has also been visible at the ministerial level. However, Andrew Jack of the *Financial Times* has reported that "A senior US diplomat added that although co-operation was 'excellent' at the ministerial level 'we have not seen below [that level] an equivalent intensity' among military staff."<sup>248</sup> This also raises the question: What will be the future of NATO-Russia cooperation and the NRC after current leaders leave office? Speculation on this issue is beyond the scope of this thesis. However, it should be viewed as a potential problem.

Although visible and potential problems confront the NATO-Russia Council, both sides must continue to strive to resolve their differences and carry forward dialogue and cooperation. Discussion and cooperation in the NATO-Russia Council are essential in building peace and stability in the Euro-Atlantic area.

## **I. CHAPTER SUMMARY**

The purpose of this chapter has been to assess the NATO-Russia Council's prospects. The chapter has reviewed the Founding Act and the Permanent Joint Council. The chapter has examined the process of building the new NATO-Russia relationship, including the terms of the May 2002 Rome Declaration. The chapter has compared the NATO-Russia Council and the Permanent Joint Council, and has reviewed the reported progress to date. Finally, the chapter has discussed the visible and potential problems of the NATO-Russia Council.

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<sup>247</sup> Alexander Golts, "Russia's NATO romance seems long over."

<sup>248</sup> Andrew Jack, "Russia urges wider role for joint forum with Nato," *Financial Times*, 14 May 2003, p 6.

Although the NATO-Russia Council has been in existence for only a year, all indications suggest that it has enhanced the relationship between Russia and the NATO Allies. NATO and Russia must both continue to display the political will necessary to make the NATO-Russia Council work. Even though few tangible products have to date been evident, some analysts believe that the dialogue and cooperation are slowly melting away remaining Cold War suspicions.<sup>249</sup> This may result in further cooperation and agreements on the toughest of issues, including proliferation, military reform, and theater missile defense.

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<sup>249</sup> Information provided by an expert on NATO-Russia relations. 20 March 2003.

## V. CONCLUSIONS

At the end of the Cold War relations between the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the Russian Federation, the principal successor state of the former Soviet Union, began to improve. However, the 1990s also witnessed negative Russian reactions to NATO enlargement and the Alliance's military campaign in the Kosovo crisis. During this period a number of venues were established to promote dialogue and cooperation between the Allies and their former adversaries in the Warsaw Pact, including the former Soviet republics.

Russia became a member of NATO's North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC) and Partnership for Peace (PfP), but interaction in these venues did not fully achieve the desired goals and expectations of each party. However, Russia's political involvement in the Bosnia Contact Group and military participation in Bosnia and Herzegovina with the Implementation Force (IFOR) and the follow-on Stabilization Force (SFOR) proved to be more successful. Despite these achievements, the changing political landscape in Europe combined with the violence in the Balkans to reinforce the need for increased cooperation with Russia in order to bring greater security and stability in the Euro-Atlantic area. The Alliance realized that it needed to establish a special relationship with the other major power on the European continent — Russia.

In May 1997, NATO and Russia formalized their special relationship with the endorsement of the Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security. The Founding Act was a non-binding political declaration in which both sides pledged to work together to promote peace and security in the Euro-Atlantic area. At the heart of the Founding Act was the creation of the NATO-Russia Permanent Joint Council (PJC). The PJC was designed to be the venue in which Russia and the Allies would meet to discuss, coordinate, and if appropriate, decide and act on a number of broad issues that relate to European security. The PJC lasted for five years (1997-2002). Although there were some accomplishments, the PJC failed to achieve the results desired by its architects. Both Russia and NATO contributed to the PJC's shortcomings. Russia's initial decision not to maintain a permanent presence at NATO headquarters contributed



to the inadequacy of the PJC. This stymied Russia's ability to participate in the daily operations of the Permanent Joint Council. The choice by the Allies to pre-coordinate their positions before discussions began with Russia also undermined the PJC's effectiveness, because this resulted in a confrontational "19 versus 1" format instead of the "19 plus 1" format envisioned in the Founding Act. The PJC's failure to formulate a joint solution in response to crisis in Kosovo led to Russia suspending its participation in the PJC in response to NATO's March-June 1999 air campaign against Yugoslavia.

After the NATO air campaign ended, Moscow returned to the PJC but limited the agenda to the Balkan peacekeeping operations of SFOR and the Kosovo Force (KFOR). At the beginning of January 2000, the new leaders in NATO and Russia agreed to establish better relations. In February 2000, the NATO Secretary General, Lord Robertson, and Russia's acting President, Vladimir Putin, met in Moscow and issued a joint statement in which they pledged to increase dialogue and cooperation in the Permanent Joint Council. Over the next year and a half the relationship gradually improved. However, it was Russia's response to the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks against the United States that elevated the relationship to a higher level. Russia's support to the United States and its participation in the coalition against international terrorism became the basis for the new relationship. Over the next several months, key leaders in NATO and Russia took actions to build upon this newly discovered partnership.

The central figure in the building of a stronger NATO-Russia relationship was President Putin. Putin's foreign policy agenda has been focused on better relations with the West. Despite some opposition from high-ranking government and military officials in Russia, Putin initiated the post-11 September 2001 rapprochement and opened the door for better NATO-Russian relations. Western leaders embraced Russia's initiatives, and this led to noteworthy diplomatic movement.

On 13 November 2001, Presidents Bush and Putin issued a joint statement on a new relationship between the United States and Russia. As a response to Russia's rapprochement with the West and the joint statement by the Presidents of Russia and the United States, British Prime Minister Tony Blair initiated discussions about establishing a new relationship between Russia and the Alliance. Blair's initiative was predicated on

the idea that the PJC, with its mixed record, had to be replaced by a new institution and that a European could most effectively sell the concept of a new NATO-Russian partnership to the European members of the Alliance. Although the events of 11 September 2001 marked a turning point in better cooperation between Russia and the Allies, each side pursued this improved relationship because of its own motives.

Various analysts have speculated on the motives of NATO nations in seeking better relations with Russia. Some observers have suggested that the Allies were motivated by the desire to mitigate Russia's opposition to NATO's next round of enlargement. Some analysts have identified the need to gain Russia's cooperation in combating international terrorism and preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction as a motive for the Allies to seek a better relationship with Moscow. Other observers have specified additional motives – such as encouraging transparency and overcoming remaining Cold War suspicions – to help explain why the Alliance sought better relations with Russia. The Allies may have also embraced better relations with Russia because they hope to benefit from Moscow's diplomatic ties with nations that do not have strong ties with the West.

President Putin and Russia have also had their own motives for improving their relations with the Alliance. Russia has used its support for America's war on international terrorism as a way to gain Western support for its operations in Chechnya. Economic benefits in trade and investment constitute another Russian motive for improved relations with the West. In addition to gaining support for its war in Chechnya and securing economic benefits, Russia has used its post-11 September actions to elevate its political status within the Euro-Atlantic region and beyond.

On 28 May 2002, five years and a day after the adoption of the Founding Act, NATO and Russia endorsed a Declaration on “NATO-Russian Relations: A New Quality.” The Rome Declaration was not designed to replace the Founding Act but to express the renewed resolve of NATO and Russia to build a lasting peace in the Euro-Atlantic area. Moreover, the Rome Declaration established the NATO-Russian Council – the new venue to replace the Permanent Joint Council.

Since May 2002 the NATO-Russia Council (NRC) has been the new forum for consultation, cooperation, joint decision and joint action. The NRC focuses on a number of security issues of mutual interest that are identified in the Founding Act. Although the NATO-Russia Council appears at first glance to be similar to the PJC, the fundamental difference is that the NRC operates “at twenty.” This means that the Allies and Russia will seek a consensus without the NATO countries having previously determined an Alliance policy. Another difference is the establishment of the Preparatory Committee (PrepCom) to meet at least twice a month to carry on the NRC’s work and to prepare for and support its meetings.

Like the PJC, the NATO-Russia Council has received its share of criticism. Some hard-line Russian government and military officials have criticized the NRC as evidence to support their allegation that Russia has once again “surrendered” to NATO. These critics hold that the “new” relationship will be like the old, in that Moscow will have little or no influence on NATO’s decisions. Some Western critics, unfamiliar with the structure and procedures of the NRC, have claimed that this new relationship could give Russia a “veto” in the Alliance.<sup>250</sup> Other Western critics have claimed that the NRC could give Russia too prominent a role in NATO decisions, and that this could result in a fracture of the Alliance’s cohesion.

At the time of this writing, in May 2003, the NATO-Russia Council has been in existence for only one year, but its apparent success has silenced nearly all of its critics. The NRC has evidently made substantial progress in the struggle against terrorism. NATO and Russia have held two conferences on the role of the military in combating terrorism and now share some intelligence and intelligence assessments. The NRC has moved beyond dialogue to cooperation. Within the first eight months of its existence, the NRC has reached agreements on political aspects of joint NATO-Russia peacekeeping operations and submarine crew search and rescue at sea. Furthermore, the NRC has reportedly made some progress in other areas identified in the Rome Declaration – crisis

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<sup>250</sup> Examples of these Western critics are cited by Ira Straus, “Whittling down the new Russia-NATO set-up,” *The Russia Journal*, 29 March-4 April 2002. (contained in the on-line publication *Johnson’s Russia List*, JRL #6164, # 13, 31 March 2002), <http://www.cdi.org/russia/johnson/6164-13.cfm>. Accessed August 2002.

management, non-proliferation, arms control and confidence-building measures, theater missile defense, military to military cooperation and defense reform.

Although nearly all official reports indicate that the NATO-Russia Council has been successful, visible and potential problems should be noted. One visible problem has been the lack of concrete accomplishments. However, two formal agreements were reached during the Council's first year, the agreement on submarine crew search and rescue at sea; and, the agreement on political aspects of a generic concept of joint NATO-Russia peacekeeping operations. Of the two, the agreement on NATO-Russia peacekeeping operations was the only significant accomplishment of the NATO-Russia Council.

Additional problems may arise in the NATO-Russia Council as soon as it is confronted with a tough issue about which Russia and the Allies sharply disagree. Such disagreements are more likely to arise after the post-11 September convictions regarding a shared struggle against terrorism have faded away. The safeguard measure that allows any member of the Alliance to withdraw an item from the NRC's agenda for discussion among only the Allies could also cause problems in some circumstances. Moreover, if the Allies returned to their practice during the Permanent Joint Council period and came to the NATO-Russia Council with a pre-determined position, this could damage the trust in the relationship.

Problems could also originate with the Russians. For example, if Russia failed to devote the resources and to exert the political will necessary to make this partnership successful, the NATO-Russia Council would fall victim to the same fate as the PJC. Russia as well as NATO must also display the political will that is necessary to make the NATO-Russia Council work.

Although the NATO-Russia Council has been in existence for only a year, the available evidence suggests that (despite the visible and potential problems), it has enhanced the relationship between Russia and the NATO Allies. The on-going dialogue and cooperation may eventually melt away remaining Cold War suspicions and build trust. If Russia and the Allies can build greater trust and mutual confidence in the

NATO-Russia Council, they may be able to sustain a productive relationship despite disagreements on particular issues.

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