NATO’s transformation to an organization whose mission places greater emphasis on collective and cooperative security has important implications for its enlargement process. These implications are the subject of this chapter. Central to this discussion are the issues inherent to NATO’s enlargement strategy, issues that will likely come to the fore as NATO makes its next enlargement decision. From the perspective of the United States and its allies, perhaps the most significant question is how further NATO enlargement could affect NATO’s ability to provide for the collective defense in the context of gray-area commitments to non-NATO countries. Included in this chapter is an examination of the various levels of NATO commitments and a discussion of their potential military implications.

CONTEMPORARY EUROPEAN SECURITY ENVIRONMENT

NATO’s current strategy for enlargement is both the result of and a contributor to the benign security environment that currently prevails in Europe. This environment is characterized by the absence (or extremely low incidence) of armed conflict and the lack of any near-term potential for a major war. From the standpoint of U.S. interest in peaceful and democratic development in Europe, the current European security environment, when compared with the situation in the 1980s or early 1990s, represents a remarkably positive turn of events.
If incidence of armed conflict is used as a measure, Europe is the most peaceful continent in the world. Since 1996, Europe has had the fewest armed conflicts of the world’s five continents/regions. The early part of the 1990s witnessed a brief upsurge in the incidence of armed conflict on the European continent. But after reaching a high point in 1993, the upsurge, caused mainly by the fall of communism and the sometimes violent dissolution of the communist federal states, declined. Following NATO’s involvement in ending the strife in former Yugoslavia, Europe was virtually free of armed conflict by 1996.

Figure 2.1 illustrates world trends in the occurrence of armed conflict in the 1990s. A similar pattern applies for the severity of the armed conflict, with severity defined in terms of casualties and encompassing the continuum from minor armed conflict to intermediate armed conflict to war. The upsurge in armed activity in Kosovo in 1998–99

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1As used here, an armed conflict is “a contested incompatibility which concerns government and/or territory where the use of armed force between two parties, of which at least one is the government of a state, results in at least 25 battle-related deaths.” This definition is used by SIPRI (the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute) and other institutions monitoring conflict worldwide. (Peter Wallensteen and Margareta Sollenberg, “Armed Conflict, 1989-99,” Journal of Peace Research, 37:5, 2000, p. 648.)

2These data are based on information published by the conflict monitoring group at Uppsala, which is used by SIPRI. For purposes of incidence of conflict, the Uppsala conflict monitoring group uses the following geographical delineation of the world into continents and regions: Europe (including the states of the Caucasus), Middle East (Egypt and southwestern Asia, including Turkey, Iran, and the Arabian peninsula), Asia (including Australia and Oceania), Africa (excluding Egypt), and the Americas (Western Hemisphere excluding the Pacific island states). (Wallensteen and Sollenberg, p. 648.)

3The data are from information published by the conflict monitoring group at Uppsala, which is used by SIPRI. The Uppsala group and SIPRI use the following definitions: Minor armed conflict is at least 25 battle-related deaths per year and fewer than 1,000 battle-related deaths during the course of the conflict. Intermediate armed conflict is at least 25 battle-related deaths per year and an accumulated total of at least 1,000 deaths, but fewer than 1,000 per year. War is at least 1,000 battle-related deaths per year. (Wallensteen and Sollenberg, p. 648.) According to the SIPRI definitions, there have been six European wars in the decade of the 1990s (Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo, Chechnya, Georgia, and Azerbaijan), but the inclusion of wars in the Caucasus (Chechnya, Georgia, and Azerbaijan) within this European category is questionable. In standard geographical definitions of Europe, the south Caucasus forms a part of Asia: “On east, the conventional boundary [of Europe with Asia is] . . . Ural Mountains and Ural River; on southeast, Caspian Sea; on south, Caucasus
that led to NATO’s Operation Allied Force against Yugoslavia in 1999 does not alter either pattern significantly. Furthermore, the near-term potential for a major inter-state war in Europe is currently low— in marked contrast to the high potential for a major war that characterized the Cold War—and this situation is not likely to change unless Europe undergoes a major shock equal in magnitude to the fall of communism.

The benign security environment does not mean, however, that there are no disputes. Some territorial-, resource-, and minority-related
inter-state tensions persist in Europe. So far, a multitude of conflict resolution and conflict management mechanisms have prevented such disputes and tensions from escalating to militarized strife (with the prominent exception of the former Yugoslavia), and they reasonably may be expected to continue to do so in the future. The potential for conflict, mainly internal but also inter-state, exists primarily in the “unintegrated” area of Europe, which mostly consists of formerly communist states in central, eastern, and southern Europe.\(^5\)

In contrast, the integrated area of Europe, consisting roughly of NATO and EU member states, has achieved a high level of political and economic integration leading to a true “security community”—a region in which war has ceased to be an option for solving disputes between members. In such a context, peace operations in the unintegrated area of Europe—ranging from coercive peace enforcement (such as NATO’s Kosovo operation in 1999) to less contested forms (such as NATO’s involvement in Bosnia-Herzegovina)—are the most likely military operations that NATO would undertake in the near- or mid-term.

The benign security environment represents a complete change from what had been the “natural” state of affairs in Europe in the modern era (and even earlier), one characterized by frequent major wars and near-war crises. The major difference between the post–World War II situation and the historical pattern is that the United States, through its creation of NATO and its preponderant position within NATO, denationalized defense in the part of Europe outside the Soviet zone of control. This military unity that the United States imposed on the main European states (except Russia) through NATO then allowed political and economic unity to develop and to evolve all the way to the current stage of a security community.

Presently, the United States, and the U.S.-led alliance, has a preponderance of power in Europe, and nothing on the horizon indicates a serious challenge to that preponderance.\(^6\) Although causality is im-


\(^6\)Despite much writing in the early 1990s that the unipolar (U.S.-dominant) situation in the world amounted to a temporary stage, reality has shown otherwise, with a
possible to prove conclusively, the creation of a benign security envi-
ronment in Europe as a whole (not just in the integrated portion) in
the second half of the 1990s is at least correlated with NATO’s pre-
ponderance of power in Europe and its transformation from an orga-
nization focused primarily on collective defense of member states
into a mechanism for conflict prevention and conflict management
in areas outside the NATO member states. It is hypothesized here
that NATO’s self-designation as an institution for upholding peace
and security in Europe and its proven willingness to use force for
conflict management and conflict prevention in areas outside NATO
member states have played a major role in bringing about the cur-
rently existing benign security environment in Europe, for NATO’s
actions have meant that leaders in the unintegrated part of Europe
who otherwise might have used force to pursue their goals have had
to modify their behavior to take NATO’s potential reaction into
account.

The security environment is currently being further shaped by
NATO’s enlargement strategy, which serves to impose a behavioral
regime on much of unintegrated Europe. Countries in this region
have the possibility of full membership or a privileged cooperative
status if they abide by a set of norms meant to advance democratic
internal development and cooperative international behavior. The
linkage between a country’s behavior and its suitability for NATO
membership represents a complete switch from the way NATO en-
larged during the Cold War. NATO’s commitment to enlargement,
demonstrated by the admission of three new members in 1999, has
provided leaders in this region with incentives to pursue reform and
to settle disputes with neighboring countries.

Put bluntly, NATO’s current strategy resembles the proverbial carrot
and stick. NATO’s enlargement offers the inducement of member-
ship (the carrot) as a way to encourage peaceful transformation and
integration into a larger European security community. NATO’s
transformation, into a conflict prevention and management organi-

decade of U.S. preponderance of power and no competitor in sight in the short- or
mid-term. There are convincing arguments that, failing a major U.S. blunder, the
“unipolar moment” is here to stay for the foreseeable future. (William C. Wohlforth,
41; David A. Lake, “Ulysses’s Triumph: American Power and the New World Order,
Security Studies, 8:4, Summer 1999, pp. 44–78.)
zation, provides the coercive component (the stick) that can be used to enforce peace and deter aggression in and around Europe.

**NATO’S TRANSFORMATION**

NATO’s emphasis on collective and cooperative security is the core of its continued relevance in contemporary Europe. NATO’s transformation is not a fundamental reorientation, since NATO has always had elements of collective security and a vision of lasting and peaceful order in Europe based on democratic political systems and shared security. But during the Cold War, the presence of a clear external military threat to NATO member states made NATO’s collective security elements secondary to its deterrence and warfighting roles. The end of the Cold War brought a series of NATO decisions, beginning in London (1990) and culminating in Brussels (1994), through which NATO moved to downplay its warfighting elements and instead emphasize its collective security elements. NATO’s agenda now includes conflict prevention and, in the words of NATO’s 1991 Strategic Concept, promotion of a “zone of stability and security” in and around Europe.

NATO’s current role is illustrated by its involvement in the former Yugoslavia since 1993, which has emphasized peacekeeping and peace enforcement while retaining, in a residual form, the traditional mission of deterring potential military threats to NATO members. In short, to remain relevant and continue to play a role in shaping European security, NATO reinvented itself in the 1990s as an institution for dealing with the perceived security problems in contemporary Europe.

The transformation serves U.S. interests in that NATO remains the primary mechanism for a U.S. leadership role in European security. As such, NATO gives the United States a means of influencing the security evolution in Europe and enhancing the U.S. ability to project power to other areas important to the U.S. national interest, such as

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7 NATO’s founding document, the Washington Treaty, has specific language along these lines. Numerous NATO documents throughout NATO’s Cold War history (for example, the Harmel Report) also made references to NATO’s non-military goals. For a discussion of collective security and NATO, see David S. Yost, “The New NATO and Collective Security,” *Survival*, 40:2, Summer 1998, pp. 135–160.

8 For the text of NATO’s 1991 Strategic Concept, see http://www.nato.int/docu/basics.htm.
The Planning Context

the Middle East. Moreover, NATO does all of the above not by way of a domineering hegemonic application of U.S. power, but in the context of a mutually beneficial mechanism that serves the interests of all NATO members.

The new orientation has been given expression in NATO’s 1991 and 1999 Strategic Concepts. Each of these represents a culmination of years of negotiation among members on NATO’s direction. Absent a major political shock that would revolutionize the security environment, the fundamental course for NATO’s role and evolution in the Europe of the early 21st century is in place. Complex organizations with a multitude of members and an emphasis on consensus do not change course easily. Having chosen to be an instrument of peacekeeping and conflict prevention, NATO is likely to persist in emphasizing its collective security role for the foreseeable future. Some setbacks in implementing this role may lead to a reexamination of the tactics, but only repeated setbacks are likely to lead to a reexamination of the strategy itself.

This is not to say that the collective defense aspects of NATO will go away. For one, these aspects play a conflict-preventing role by keeping the security community intact and by deterring the emergence of potential challenges to NATO. But these aspects also play a crucial role in NATO’s peace operations. Almost paradoxically, the collective defense core will remain essential to providing the deterrent and the military muscle needed to make NATO peace enforcement and peacekeeping effective. NATO’s integrated command arrangements, its common procedures and doctrine, and the trust and bonds developed over decades of cooperation are an irreplaceable force multiplier, and if coercive application of power is needed, they will ensure that the requisite military capabilities are provided in a politically effective multinational fashion.

**NATO’s Current Strategic Concept**

The 1999 Strategic Concept provides the institutional justification and direction for NATO’s further development and is likely to remain the main blueprint for NATO’s evolution during the next 10 to 15 years. The Concept identifies the security of member states in a
broad fashion, seeing it as being potentially at risk from “crisis and conflict . . . [that can affect] the Euro-Atlantic area.”

According to the Concept, a variety of internal problems in countries that are not NATO members could present potential NATO security threats:

The security of the Alliance remains subject to a wide variety of military and non-military risks which are multi-directional and often difficult to predict. These risks include uncertainty and instability in and around the Euro-Atlantic area and the possibility of regional crises at the periphery of the Alliance, which could evolve rapidly. Some countries in and around the Euro-Atlantic area face serious economic, social and political difficulties. Ethnic and religious rivalries, territorial disputes, inadequate or failed efforts at reform, the abuse of human rights, and the dissolution of states can lead to local and even regional instability. The resulting tensions could lead to crises affecting Euro-Atlantic stability, to human suffering, and to armed conflicts. Such conflicts could affect the security of the Alliance by spilling over into neighbouring countries, including NATO countries, or in other ways, and could also affect the security of other states.

The presence of nuclear arsenals; the global proliferation of nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons; and the spread of advanced weapon technologies in general are also significant NATO concerns.

The 1999 Strategic Concept clearly states that actions short of a military attack on a NATO member can trigger a NATO response:

Alliance security interests can be affected by other risks of a wider nature, including acts of terrorism, sabotage and organized crime, and by the disruption of the flow of vital resources. The uncontrolled movement of large numbers of people, particularly as a consequence of armed conflicts, can also pose problems for security and stability affecting the Alliance.

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10 Ibid., paragraph 20.
11 Ibid., paragraphs 21–23.
12 Ibid., paragraph 24.
In support of NATO’s residual collective defense function, the Concept justifies the continued need for NATO in terms of the potential for a long-term emergence of a military challenger. Although the Concept does not mention any country explicitly, Russia is the most plausible (if not the only) candidate for such a role:

Notwithstanding positive developments in the strategic environment and the fact that large-scale conventional aggression against the Alliance is highly unlikely, the possibility of such a threat emerging over the longer term exists.\textsuperscript{13}

The broad definition of security threats does not mean that NATO will react militarily to every conceivable internal problem in a non-member country in Europe, western Asia, or northern Africa. However, the Concept does justify and explain the process for addressing such issues and gives NATO the prerogative to decide whether to act. By combining a broad definition of security with a linkage between the security of partner (i.e., non-member) states and that of member states, NATO has assigned to itself an all-encompassing mandate in the security realm in and around Europe.

The relevance of a document such as the 1999 Strategic Concept to dealing with a particular crisis is indirect. In the event of an actual crisis, the political decisions made in the major NATO capitals—not simply the Concept—will determine whether and how NATO reacts. However, the Concept effectively limits the choices available to the major member states for responding to crises; it has, in other words, a “tying of hands” effect. Having established a specific set of tasks and concerns for itself, NATO must deal with these adequately if it is to maintain credibility. Thus, military threats to a NATO partner state, cases of armed reprisals against minority populations in a state near NATO, and even the existence on NATO’s periphery of weak states with corrupt regimes and a prominent role for organized crime—all of these amount to security issues of concern to NATO, as defined by NATO itself.

\textsuperscript{13}Ibid., paragraph 20.
Problems in NATO's Transformation

NATO's transformation has raised questions about the appropriateness of a military alliance reorienting itself to project power for purposes of conflict prevention and conflict management outside its member states. Most of all, the transformation has heightened NATO's collective action problem. The secondary and discretionary nature of security threats that lead to peace operations provides an incentive for individual members to "free ride" (contribute nothing) or "easy ride" (contribute little) in NATO peace operations, leaving other members to take on bigger roles (and costs). This collective action problem is not new, but in its current manifestation, it is more acute and troubling. For an organization such as NATO, which acts on the basis of consensus and trust and relies for its effectiveness on the foundation of a collective defense commitment, the greater incentives to free or easy ride call into question NATO's long-term viability and cohesiveness. Moreover, NATO's adversaries are bound to exploit the more acute elements of the collective action problem.

Through its transformation, NATO has adapted to the new security environment in Europe and has remained not only relevant but dominant in the realm of European security. However, in the course of its adaptation, NATO has put at risk some of the essential characteristics that underpinned its effectiveness for four decades. The heightened collective action problem does not necessarily mean that the transformation was a poor strategic choice for the United States, since the alternative—refusing to adapt to the new strategic environment—might have led to NATO's eventual demise and, even

16Barry Posen has argued that Milosevic's strategy during NATO's Kosovo operation was precisely along these lines. That the strategy failed this time does not mean it will fail the next time. (Barry R. Posen, "The War for Kosovo: Serbia's Political-Military Strategy," International Security, 24:4, Spring 2000, pp. 39–84.)
17However, the claim that NATO surely would have fallen apart had it not transformed itself (in other words, that NATO faced a choice of "transform or perish") is not borne
more important, to a smaller U.S. role in shaping the European security environment. The path of transformation has been chosen; NATO will need to prove that it can overcome its acute collective action problem.

**NATO'S ENLARGEMENT**

The process leading up to an enlargement decision involves multiple complexities, especially in relation to the criteria used to select new members. Moreover, from a defense planning standpoint, NATO’s specific enlargement strategy and process present further complications, some of which are inherent to the vision of an enlarged alliance. These two topics are addressed here in turn.

Enlargement is a complementary, rather than a necessary, component of NATO’s post–Cold War transformation. Just as NATO has adopted many collective security elements in order to deter conflicts in areas on its periphery, so too has it set on a course of enlargement in order to institutionalize democratic and market reforms in the un-integrated areas of central, eastern, and southern Europe and thereby increase overall security. Enlargement is thus best seen analytically in terms of its intended role in shaping the security environment in Europe.  

In this sense, enlargement capitalizes on NATO’s attraction for many former communist states by establishing a set of behavioral incentives for new and prospective members’ domestic and foreign policies. Upon evidence of a country’s institutionalization of NATO’s membership criteria (or, in other words, completion of the transition process), NATO—in theory—will offer full membership and integration. The enlargement study that NATO issued in 1995 introduced a

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host of criteria that prospective members are to meet prior to accession, including the following main conditions:

1. A functioning democratic political system (including free and fair elections and respect for individual liberty and the rule of law) and a market economy.
2. Democratic-style civil-military relations.
3. Treatment of minority populations in accordance with Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) guidelines.
4. Resolution of disputes with neighboring countries and a commitment to solving international disputes peacefully.
5. A military contribution to the alliance and a willingness to take steps to achieve interoperability with other alliance members.19

To ensure that new members do not use NATO membership to gain advantages in bilateral relations with neighbors, NATO requires new members to commit themselves to keeping the door open to further enlargement.20

The fact that NATO has elaborated pre-accession criteria does not mean that a country is guaranteed accession by meeting all of them. NATO made clear that these criteria establish only the pre-conditions for consideration for membership and that the act of inviting a state to join ultimately remains a political decision to be made by NATO members:

Decisions on enlargement will be for NATO itself. Enlargement will occur through a gradual, deliberate, and transparent process, encompassing dialogue with all interested parties. There is no fixed or rigid list of criteria for inviting new member states to join the Alliance. Enlargement will be decided on a case-by-case basis and some nations may attain membership before others. New members should not be admitted or excluded on the basis of belonging to some group or category. Ultimately, Allies will decide by consensus

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20Ibid., paragraph 30.
whether to invite each new member to join according to their judgement of whether doing so will contribute to security and sta-

In effect, NATO is asking aspiring members to meet almost entirely non-military criteria just to be considered for admission. In other words, NATO is using the widely shared aspirations for long-term security of the former communist states to encourage those states to make the transition from authoritarianism and communist autarky to democracy with a market economy.

It is important to keep in mind that neither enlargement nor the use of political and shaping imperatives is new. Similar motivations were behind West Germany’s accession to NATO in 1955 and Spain’s in 1982. But the current, far-reaching pre-conditions imposed on new members stand in contrast to the Cold War era’s lack of any conditions on new members (other than the consensus of existing members). They did not exist for rounds of enlargement (Greece, Turkey, West Germany, Spain, and East Germany\(^22\)) that took place prior to NATO’s publication of its enlargement study in 1995. NATO focused on collective defense during the Cold War, so the political imperatives behind enlargement were secondary to military considerations. In short, the Washington Treaty’s Article 10 sufficed:

> The Parties may, by unanimous agreement, invite any other European State in a position to further the principles of this Treaty and to contribute to the security of the North Atlantic area to accede to this Treaty.

NATO’s evolution toward a role entailing both cooperative and collective security means that political imperatives (an environment-shaping agenda of democratization and integration) and non-military stipulations are driving NATO’s current enlargement. The pre-conditions NATO imposes on aspiring members lead to intense scrutiny of aspiring members’ extent of compliance. Ironically, several long-standing members would certainly not meet the current

\(^{21}\)Ibid., paragraph 7.

\(^{22}\)The absorption of East Germany into NATO through the back door of German unification in 1990 represents a unique path to NATO enlargement.
criteria for admission (Greece and Turkey most of all, and possibly others). Nothing indicates better NATO’s transformation and shift in focus than the difference between the Cold War and post–Cold War criteria for and process of admission.

**Reality of the 1997–99 Enlargement**

NATO not only established pre-admission criteria for new members, it also reserved explicitly for itself the right to determine whether an aspiring member met the criteria. Interpreting how a country has fulfilled the criteria is a political process, one that was illustrated during the first round of post–Cold War enlargement in 1997–99. Although an enlargement decision is said to be based on consensus among all existing members, the preferences of the major NATO members carry more weight than those of the smaller members. Thus, in the run-up to the invitations issued at NATO’s 1997 Madrid summit, the U.S. preference for issuing invitations only to Poland, the Czech Republic, and Hungary carried the day. In other words, although the pre-admission criteria provide a measure of transparency in decisionmaking concerning the enlargement process, their being met in no way guarantees accession.

Strategic considerations, though acknowledged only implicitly as a basis for admission in NATO’s 1995 enlargement study, certainly played a role in the decision to invite Poland, the Czech Republic, and Hungary. U.S. interests in ensuring a successful transition in central Europe naturally focused on the largest and most-developed former communist countries closest to Germany, NATO’s central core in Europe. The contiguity of pre-accession Poland and the Czech Republic with NATO, and especially Germany (a major NATO country and the other prime mover, besides the United States, for NATO’s enlargement), influenced the decision to issue invitations to these two countries. Hungary, although not contiguous to a NATO country, had played an important role since 1995 in supporting NATO’s conflict management and peace operations in former Yugoslavia. For Germany, the main interest in enlargement focused

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23 Both Greece and Turkey fail on the basis of resolving disputes with neighboring countries (each other, most of all); Turkey also would fail to pass the requirements of democracy and civil-military relations.
on countries to its immediate east, so as to eliminate its “eastern frontier” status in NATO and thus lower its security risks and costs.

Most observers and analysts recognized the three countries invited in 1997 as the most advanced of the former communist states in their transition and reform process, and there was widespread agreement that all three had largely met the pre-admission criteria. Nonetheless, in early 1997, NATO had reached consensus only on issuing an admission to Poland.24 A few members remained uncommitted regarding the Czech Republic, primarily because of questions about its ability to contribute much (militarily or otherwise) to NATO. Hungary elicited even greater skepticism because of its minorities’ problems with neighboring countries and its questionable potential for contributing militarily. The ultimate decision to issue invitations to the three countries emerged only after intense intra-alliance bargaining,25 which even involved subjects not tied to enlargement, such as reorganization of NATO’s command structure.26

Idiosyncratic considerations were also present in the decisionmaking process. Public opinion in support of specific countries differed in the various NATO member states. Such considerations included widespread sympathy for two of the countries, Poland and the Czech Republic, because of the tragic histories of their past 50 years. They also included sympathy for the anti-communist movements and/or uprisings in all three of the countries, perceptions of cultural similarities, and the existence of long-standing ties with these countries. While not central, such considerations constrained the debates in the major NATO countries and thus, at least indirectly, influenced the outcome.

24Author’s conversation (March 1998) with a then (1997) high-ranking U.S. official to NATO. For an argument for and a detailed discussion of why only Poland deserved an invitation, see Vojtech Mastny, “Reassuring NATO: Eastern Europe, Russia, and the Western Alliance,” Forsvarsstudier (Defense Studies), Norwegian Institute for Defense Studies, No. 5, 1997.

25All the southern European NATO countries, as well as a few others, supported the candidacy of Slovenia and Romania. This preference arose not necessarily from any expectation that Romania would be invited to join, but out of concerns that the enlargement focus was too northern and too German-centered.

26Author’s conversations (March 1998, March 2000) with two U.S. officials then (1997) based at NATO.
As illustrated by this first round of enlargement, the pre-conditions for admission narrow down the field of potential candidates by eliminating countries that obviously do not qualify. But strategic considerations, alliance bargaining, and even idiosyncratic national preferences influence the decision to issue an invitation for membership to a specific country. It is impossible to ascertain quantitatively the importance of the various factors in the decisionmaking process, but it is important nonetheless to recognize that the process is essentially political—i.e., does not stem from a clear threat but, rather, is based on an environment-shaping agenda of democratization and integration—and that a variety of factors enter the decision calculus. The fact that non-military considerations dominate the decisionmaking process underscores the idea that enlargement, as currently conceived by NATO, is not a response to realist formulations of threat. Instead, it stems from NATO’s transformation into a conflict management organization and a tool for the reintegration of Europe.

Implications of NATO’s Enlargement Strategy

From the perspective of improving regional security and advancing democracy in the former communist states in central and southern Europe, the NATO enlargement process has had the desired effect.27 For the new members, the pre-conditions formed an important motivation for signing the Hungarian-Romanian treaty (1997), the evolution in Polish civil-military relations that took place in 1996–97, and stepping up structural reforms in all three countries to make their armed forces more compatible with NATO. Even for the countries that aspired to join NATO but were not invited in 1997, the need to meet the pre-conditions has had the desired effect, as evidenced by Romania’s signing of treaties with Ukraine and Hungary28 and its

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27 This is not to say that NATO’s system of incentives was the only one present: The EU’s setting out of similar criteria for EU membership certainly contributed to the effect, and there were domestic pressures, varying in intensity depending on the country, in the same direction. But from the policy standpoint of the EU and NATO countries, the similar criteria established by EU and NATO amounted to two sides of the same coin and created a powerful incentive system in favor of advancing peaceful evolution and democratization in the unintegrated part of Europe.

28 As one scholar put it, “When the theoretical possibility of membership [in NATO] changed to an achievable goal, the governments in Budapest and Bucharest modified
shift in how it treats ethnic Hungarians in Romania, as well as by Slovenia’s increased attention to contributing militarily to NATO. Even in Slovakia, an aspiring country that NATO disqualified for failing to meet the pre-conditions, the missed invitation contributed to a backlash against leaders with authoritarian proclivities that then toppled them from power in the next elections.²⁹

However, the shaping strategy underlying NATO’s enlargement has two main complications. The first is the basic assumption that the behavioral regime imposed on a country by the pre-admission criteria will persist once that country becomes a NATO member. In other words, admission is tantamount to recognizing that the new member has institutionalized the reforms and no longer significantly differs from long-time members in its domestic practices and its foreign policy underpinnings. This assumption may not necessarily hold true. While it is still too soon to assess whether this assumption is valid for the three members that acceded to NATO in 1999, there are some indications of potential problems, at least in the case of Hungary. Hungary’s defense spending, as measured by a percentage of gross domestic product (GDP), has remained low since its accession despite Hungary’s pre-accession pledges to increase it.³⁰

Furthermore, unilateral Hungarian activism on behalf of Hungarian minorities in neighboring countries increased after accession—for example, the Hungarian prime minister linked the issue of ethnic Hungarians in Voivodina (northern Serbia) with a settlement in Kosovo in the immediate aftermath of Operation Allied Force. The first issue calls into question Hungary’s commitment to making a contribution to NATO; the second introduces the uncomfortable


³⁰Hungary agreed to raise its defense spending to 1.8 percent of GDP by 2001, which is still well below the 2.0 percent median in NATO. Depending on the method of calculation used, Hungary’s defense budget is either slightly (1.7 percent, according to official NATO figures) or substantially (1.3 percent, according to SIPRI) below the targeted level. This issue is covered in more depth in the next chapter.
question of whether Hungary is using NATO to advance its perceived national goals in a bilateral dispute.

The other and potentially more important complication with respect to the shaping strategy is the divergence between NATO’s need to engage Russia and the historically understandable concerns about Russia that many of the aspiring members have. NATO’s motivations for enlargement stem not from a perceived Russian threat, but from a desire to reintegrate Europe and to establish an incentive structure for the former communist states of Europe to encourage them to undertake internal reforms that will lead to a more democratic and secure continent. Although NATO’s 1999 Strategic Concept retains language implying some concern about the potential for Russia to threaten Europe militarily, NATO has gone to great lengths to engage Russia in military cooperation and partnership to ensure that the concerns do not come to fruition.

Russia has cooperated with NATO, albeit reluctantly, but opposes NATO’s enlargement and transformation. This opposition stems from various causes. Many in the Russian foreign policy elite have not reconciled themselves to the loss of empire and drop in international status and maintain a deep-seated “enemy image” of NATO that is rooted in the four decades of the Cold War. In addition, a persistence of zero-sum thinking and either a lack of understanding or a mistrust of the extent of NATO’s post–Cold War transformation have led to the Russian perception that NATO’s enlargement and preeminence in Europe (combined with the low likelihood that Russia will be able to join NATO) will keep Russia from playing a role in European security. NATO’s “encroachment” into Slavic-inhabited areas has concerned Russians who feel they have special rights in these countries or who think in terms of “civilizational conflict”; other Russians fear that the issue of NATO will dominate Russia’s relations with the major NATO countries, thereby detracting from the cause of reform in Russia.31 Although opinion polls have consis-

tently shown that the Russian public does not see NATO enlargement as a threat or even as an important issue, Russian elites across the political spectrum, for a variety of reasons, have been largely united in viewing NATO enlargement as non-beneficial to Russia. 32

The need to engage Russia, largely seen as important by NATO’s Cold War–era members, is much less popular among the former communist states aspiring to become members, according to public opinion surveys. 33 These states aspire to NATO membership because they see it as a way to ensure their long-term security, as a political expression of their sense of “civilizational” belonging, and as an official stamp of approval for their transition process. This is especially true of states that were formerly satellites of the USSR and thus have emerged only recently from five decades of direct foreign domination or foreign-imposed authoritarian regimes. Moreover, those countries that were under foreign-imposed regimes were forced to pursue economic and social policies that, often for the first time in history, differentiated them from what are now considered their “Western” neighbors. 34 When the 50 years of foreign domination is viewed as a five-decade interruption of their “normal” political and economic development, it is not surprising that both the elites and the general publics in these countries have greater concern for long-term security than do those in long-standing NATO states. They view

32 It is important to note that it was NATO’s war over Kosovo that galvanized Russian public opinion against NATO, something that discussions of NATO enlargement could not do for several years. (Vladimir Shlapentokh, “The Balkan War, the Rise of Anti-Americanism and the Future of Democracy in Russia,” International Journal of Public Opinion Research, 11:3, Fall 1999, pp. 275–288.)


34 For example, prior to World War II, the standard of living was higher in the Czech lands than in Austria, Estonia was at a level of development similar to Finland’s, and Bulgaria and Greece were at a similar level. Moreover, these pairs of countries shared a common history and experienced no “Western” vs. “Eastern” differences prior to Soviet domination. While catching up will be hampered by the large differences in levels of affluence between the former communist states and the wealthy EU countries, the progress made already by “star pupils,” such as Poland and Estonia, shows that with proper political conditions in place, the former communist states can make up lost ground quickly. Economic projections show that at least some of the central European states have the potential to be at the then EU average levels of affluence (as measured by per capita output) by 2030. (Andrzej Brzeski and Enrico Colombatto, “Can Eastern Europe Catch Up?” Post-Communist Economies, 11:1, March 1999, pp. 5–26.)
NATO membership as righting a historical wrong and as a major step in integrating into the “West” and erasing the 50 years of differences that arose between them and their neighbors outside the communist autarkic model. Quite aside from the specific impact of this lengthy communist rule, these states have limited experience with full national sovereignty in the modern era. This too leads to greater concern with security than is exhibited by NATO countries that have been secure for decades.

Other than Albania and the states of former Yugoslavia (which tend to focus on security threats from each other), the former communist states aspiring to NATO membership are more concerned about the possible reappearance of a security threat from Russia than are the long-standing NATO states. In countries whose history of conflict with Russia pre-dates World War II, security concerns are magnified. Although perceptions of a potential Russian threat in the near- or mid-term exist only perhaps in Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia (which lost their sovereignty altogether and were forcibly annexed to the USSR for over four decades) or in Ukraine, general concern about the long-term prospects of the transition going on in Russia, nervousness over the unpredictability of the Russian evolution, and general wariness regarding the consequences if the Russian transition were to falter are shared by all the former communist states. Most U.S. analysts share the attitude of caution and uncertainty toward Russia’s evolution into a democratic country, and these views are

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evident in the hedging elements in U.S. policy toward Russia. However, such concerns are magnified in the former communist states because of their proximity and their historical experiences during the 20th century.\textsuperscript{36}

The effect of these perceptions of insecurity has been to make the former communist states of Europe generally less interested in or understanding of NATO’s post–Cold War transformation. In the words of a former deputy chief of the Polish mission to NATO:

Speaking honestly, we have rather mixed feelings [concerning the 1999 Strategic Concept], because we really would like to enjoy membership in “traditional” NATO. For half a century, we in Poland were denied stability and security that was enjoyed, for example, in the U.S. At least for a few years we would like to enjoy peace and security and simply feel confident under the nuclear umbrella. But it has turned out that immediately after accession to the alliance we had to begin discussing seriously the changes within and the transformation of the alliance. Many politicians [in Poland] do not like such a situation. The reason is understandable, for we would like to have a feeling of peace and security and we did not want to enter an organization in the midst of a metamorphosis.\textsuperscript{37}
The elites and publics in some of the aspiring member countries wish to join the “old” NATO; some even see NATO’s transformation as window dressing for its “real” (i.e., anti-Russian) functions. While they do not necessarily see a military threat to their countries in the near- or mid-term, they do see NATO’s collective defense function as crucial to their long-term security. Ironically, such views parallel the Russian skepticism toward NATO’s transformation. The divergence in motivations between the new and aspiring members and most of the Cold War–era members has implications for the adherence of new members to NATO’s strategy for engaging Russia and for the participation of new and potential members in NATO conflict management efforts and peace operations. It will not be easy for NATO to square aspiring members’ (historically understandable) concerns about Russia with NATO’s need to engage Russia in cooperative relations and partnership.

DEGREES OF NATO COMMITMENT

NATO’s transformation into an institution with more collective security functions and its diminishment of the sharp differences between Article 5 and Article 4 missions have created complications for defense planning. By defining security in more-inclusive terms, closely linking the security of NATO members with the security of non-members in Europe, and explicitly denoting some countries as future members, NATO has intentionally blurred the line dividing members and non-members. The basic, treaty-stipulated distinction between the U.S. commitment to “alliance members” and the U.S. commitment to “close partners” remains, but because of NATO’s transformation, the United States now may be seen as having extended an implicit security guarantee to many non-member states. The degree of this implicit NATO security guarantee varies with the level of interdependence established with NATO countries through membership in the EU, as well as with geography and the likelihood of future NATO membership. What this all means is that there are now “gray areas” of commitment and thus future-planning uncertainties, such as what roles specific partner countries are to play in NATO and in NATO’s potential operations.

The nature of the gray-area commitment relates to a country’s membership in a NATO “outreach” entity, the EU, or the OSCE. There are
three outreach entities. One of them, the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC), is a consultative body set up as a forum for deliberations on security issues in Europe and former Soviet space; another, Partnership for Peace (PfP), is a military cooperation program between NATO and non-NATO countries. In makeup, the memberships of EAPC and PfP (coterminous with the exception of Tajikistan) are similar to the membership of the OSCE, which is the most inclusive organization devoted to European security. Membership in EAPC and PfP is open to all European (and former Soviet) countries that adhere to basic UN principles of inter-state relations and wish to cooperate with NATO. PfP states that are singled out by NATO as possible future NATO members are allowed to engage in a regular set of interactions and receive assistance through the third outreach entity, the Membership Action Plan (MAP).

EU membership is largely coterminous with that of NATO Europe and, in practice, grants non-NATO countries a virtual presence in NATO through what is a deep level of political and economic integration with the NATO Europe states. Table 2.1 lists the memberships of the European countries in the various security-related institutions as of November 2000.

**Categorization of Commitments**

The member states of NATO and EU and the states on track to membership in the two institutions (based on EU’s invitations in 1997 and 1999, and NATO’s establishment of MAP in 1999) form the outlines of what, according to current consensus among EU and NATO members, a “united Europe” might look like at some indeterminate point in the future (see Figure 2.2). There are some oddities—the isolated Switzerland, Russia’s Kaliningrad enclave, NATO protectorates over the proto-state Bosnia-Herzegovina and non-state Kosovo, and, until recently, the pariah state FR Yugoslavia (Serbia)—but the overall outlines are clear. Other than Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia, the vision of a unified Europe stops at the former Soviet border. While NATO has attempted to engage and reassure Ukraine so as not to magnify its sense of vulnerability at being outside this area, the line’s clarity is stark from the perspective of which European countries are and are not on track to membership in Europe’s main security and political-economic organizations.
Table 2.1
European Membership in Main Security-Related Institutions

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>NATO</th>
<th>EU</th>
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<th>EAPC/ PFP(^b)</th>
<th>OSCE(^b)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Others(^c)</td>
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</table>

\(^a\)In this column, X = invited to EU accession talks in 1997; XX = invited to EU accession talks in 1999.

\(^b\)EAPC, PFP, and OSCE also include the two North American NATO members (United States and Canada) and the post-Soviet states in Asia: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan (EAPC only), Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan.

\(^c\)Andorra, Cyprus, Holy See, Liechtenstein, Malta, Monaco, and San Marino.
It is important to keep in mind that placing a country on track to NATO membership (i.e., in MAP) is only the expression of a commitment. The rationale that gives rise to this expression is the perception that the country will be part of a “future integrated Europe.” Thus, for example, because there is a consensus opinion among EU members that Latvia is part of the vision of the “united Europe” being constructed by the EU, and because the EU and NATO have
agreed to keep membership in the two organizations largely coterminous, NATO sees its security interests closely intertwined with those of Latvia. This has led to Latvia’s being placed in MAP, and MAP is simply a mechanism for preparing Latvia for accession to NATO at some indeterminate point in the future. If a threat to Latvia were to develop prior to Latvia’s becoming a NATO member, then, subject to the specific circumstances and nature of the threat, NATO would be likely to assist Latvia. The very act of putting a country on track to NATO membership is meant to deter threats from arising in the first place. The more explicit the guarantee, the greater the likelihood that the commitment will be met; the very knowledge of this fact serves as a deterrent to the rise of threats.38

The vision of a unified Europe amounts to a major delineation of NATO’s gray-area commitments. The differences between these commitments can be categorized, with differentiation based on the degree of integration with current NATO members. Figure 2.3 shows how the different levels of commitment overlap in terms of membership; Figure 2.4 illustrates the decreasing levels of NATO security commitments to members of the various institutions.

In Figure 2.4, the first group, or innermost area, is formed just by NATO members and thus is not a gray area: A clear, treaty-bound U.S. commitment to collective defense constitutes the basis for planning requirements in this area. This commitment entails proper preparation for the collective defense contingency, no matter how unlikely such a contingency currently may appear. Since the U.S. commitment to the Cold War–era NATO members has been demonstrated over five decades, it now requires mostly the continuation of

38The underlying principle is one of “audience costs,” meaning that leaders in the democratic states that make up NATO’s membership face great domestic pressures (and suffer major costs) if they do not honor international commitments. Consequently, democratic leaders have incentives to honor such commitments and can be expected to do so more than leaders in non-democratic countries, where open political discourse is proscribed. (James D. Fearon, “Domestic Political Audiences and the Escalation of International Disputes,” American Political Science Review, 88:3, September 1994, pp. 577–592; Alastair Smith, “International Crises and Domestic Politics,” American Political Science Review, 92:3, September 1998, pp. 623–638. For validation of Fearon’s model of domestic audience costs, see Peter J. Partell and Glenn Palmer, “Audience Costs and Interstate Crises: An Empirical Assessment of Fearon’s Model of Dispute Outcomes,” International Studies Quarterly, 43:2, June 1999, pp. 389–405.)
regular NATO training activities and an emphasis on new members’ compatibility with established members. The new task is to make the commitment real to the members that joined in 1999—Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic. In this sense, U.S. forces need to assist the new members with integration so that 10 to 15 years from now there will be no meaningful difference between these member countries and others (e.g., Greece and Spain) in terms of the quality of their membership in NATO and NATO’s ability to defend them. Equally important is to emphasize the new members’ compatibility for NATO’s more likely missions of conflict management and prevention and peace operations. The success attained in integrating the new members’ militaries into NATO will determine the success of enlargement at the political level. At stake is the credibility of

Figure 2.3—Overlap Representation of NATO Security Commitment with Respect to European Security Institutions
NATO’s collective defense commitment and the principle of non-differentiation within NATO.39

The second group in Figure 2.4, which is formed by EU members not in NATO—Sweden, Ireland, Finland, and Austria—carries implied NATO security guarantees. Because of the largely coterminous membership of NATO and the EU, a threat to the territory of a non-NATO EU member would involve the major European NATO states through the “back-door” commitment implied by their being members in both organizations. The close integration of EU members, including a deepening common security and foreign policy stance, as well as deepening military cooperation within the EU (over and

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above the military cooperation within NATO), makes it inconceivable that the major EU members that are also NATO members would not act militarily, if need be, in support of a non-NATO EU member. The responsibilities go beyond NATO membership, as the major NATO and EU members have larger shared economic and political interests in addition to the treaty-specified collective defense responsibilities. How such a commitment might become a NATO matter is the provision for security consultations under Article 4 of the Washington Treaty. But whatever the form that NATO support might take, EU membership carries with it an implicit NATO security guarantee only slightly less credible than an Article 5 commitment. Some of the EU gray-area differences eventually may be erased—Austria, Finland, and Sweden have had internal debates on NATO membership for almost a decade, and given further internal political shifts or evolution of the international security situation, one or more of these three countries might seek NATO membership in the next decade.41 All of the non-NATO EU countries are PfP members, which allows for substantial military cooperation, whether for NATO support of the country in the case of a threat or, more likely, for NATO-led peace operations. In any event, NATO has a stake in developing military links with the countries in this group, prioritized on the basis of military assets and exposure to hypothetical military threats.

In the third group are PfP countries recognized by NATO to be on the path toward membership—i.e., the MAP countries. There are nine of these: Slovenia, Slovakia, Romania, Macedonia, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Bulgaria, and Albania. The United States and NATO have singled out these states as important to NATO and capable of full integration at some future point, an act that of itself provides a “soft” deterrent to any attempt to intimidate these countries. While there

are no guarantees that any of the MAP countries actually will attain membership, the group does represent the set of former communist countries that conceivably might become NATO members in the next 10 to 15 years. By participating in PfP, MAP countries gain access to a mechanism of military cooperation with NATO. Indeed, the premise behind MAP is that the time to begin implementing changes in the militaries of aspiring member states (changes designed to integrate them into NATO) is before, rather than after, accession, which was not the case for the three states that joined in 1999.42 Most constraints on the extent to which MAP states can cooperate with NATO stem from the MAP states’ own (primarily budgetary) problems. NATO has an interest in encouraging continued transition, reform, and cooperative international behavior in these countries, as well as the buildup of military capabilities sufficient to ensure national sovereignty and deterrence and participation in NATO-led peace operations. Some MAP states are likely to join NATO in the not too distant future and/or NATO may be called upon to guarantee their borders even before accession. These are two good reasons to start planning long-term military links with these countries, prioritized on the basis of current and projected military assets, exposure to hypothetical military threat, and strategic importance to NATO.

The fourth group contains the non-MAP European PfP countries: Ukraine, Switzerland, Russia, Moldova, Croatia, and Belarus. Although no countries in this highly diverse group are on track to NATO membership, NATO has an interest in deepening its cooperation with them, especially in peace operations. Because of their large size and their importance to maintaining a benign security environment in Europe, Ukraine and especially Russia stand out in this group, and NATO has established special bilateral relations with both.43 In the long-term, some countries in this group may emerge

42 This is not to say that far-reaching changes had not taken place in the militaries of the three states that joined in 1999. However, specific steps aimed at integrating the three militaries into NATO did not begin on a full scale until accession was guaranteed. For an analytical review of the considerations behind MAP, see Jeffrey Simon, “Partnership for Peace (PfP): After the Washington Summit and Kosovo,” Strategic Forum, No. 167, August 1999.

as candidates for NATO membership. Like the MAP countries, these countries have access to a mechanism of military cooperation with NATO by way of PfP. The constraints on the extent of that cooperation vary greatly, from primarily political and self-imposed in the case of Russia and Belarus (and Switzerland), to mainly budgetary in the case of Ukraine and Moldova, and to NATO’s own conditions in the case of Croatia. Just as is true for the MAP countries, NATO has a stake in encouraging the former communist states in this group to continue their internal reform processes, to engage in cooperative international behavior, and to participate in NATO-led peace operations (with the last issue also applying to Switzerland). Especially to encourage closer military ties in the future, NATO has an interest in long-term military cooperation with the countries in this group, prioritized on the basis of strategic importance to NATO and military assets.

The final, fifth group in Figure 2.4 comprises the Asian PfP and EAPC countries: Georgia, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. This group is of comparatively less interest to NATO, although the countries of south Caucasus (Georgia, Azerbaijan, and Armenia) are more important than the central Asian countries because they border NATO member Turkey. NATO has an interest in supporting the continued sovereignty of all these countries, but even in the long-term, they will remain at best NATO partners in peace operations. Since these countries are members of EAPC, they may appeal to NATO if threatened. So far, however, NATO has shown reluctance to become en-

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44 NATO’s founding document, the Washington Treaty, contains geographical restrictions on NATO’s potential membership. Article 6 specifies membership as limited to European and North American countries, while Article 10 limits the applicability of NATO’s membership invitations to European states. Turkey’s special status as a country located in both Asia and Europe necessitated special wording to recognize that all of Turkey, not just its European part, is covered by the treaty (Article 6). NATO’s stated geographical limits are subject to change, just like any clause in the Washington Treaty, but the strong sense of NATO’s organizational identity with Europe (and North America) would make that a lengthy and difficult undertaking. For these reasons, as long as NATO continues to limit its membership to European and North American states, the non-European states will not qualify for membership. In a very different security environment, this situation could change quickly. (U.S. Army wargames in the 2025 time frame have dealt with U.S. forces supporting the defense of Georgia and Turkey, but distant speculation such as this falls outside the scope of this report.)
gaged in the south Caucasus and central Asia in any meaningful form. Nevertheless, NATO does have an interest in encouraging internal reform and democratic development in these countries and in assisting their efforts to build militaries that are compatible and capable of cooperating with NATO.45

Two countries fall out of the architecture sketched out above: Bosnia-Herzegovina and FR Yugoslavia (Serbia). Bosnia-Herzegovina, if it emerges as a viable state, may join PfP in the next 10 to 15 years. As for FR Yugoslavia, Serbia’s internal evolution will dictate its future extent of cooperation with NATO.

**Gray-Area Commitments and Future European Security Trends**

The overlapping-areas categorization of NATO’s security commitments has important implications for defense planning, especially in relation to possible variations in future European security trends. The priorities outlined above are based on the assumption that the current main security trends in Europe will continue. Looked at using the framework provided by uncertainty-sensitive planning, these trends become the basis for a "no-surprises" future:46

- The continued prominence of NATO as the leading security institution and of NATO’s involvement in conflict prevention and conflict management.

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46Uncertainty-sensitive planning is a planning tool whose key feature is a distinction between the core “no-surprises” environment, which is based on a continuation of current trends, and changes that may result from two types of uncertainties: “scheduled” (or recognized) uncertainties, and major systemic “shocks” (largely unexpected events that change the entire playing field). Delineation of the uncertainties may lead to the formulation of appropriate strategies: (1) a core strategy for a no-surprises environment; (2) contingent substrategies for dealing with recognized uncertainties; (3) hedging strategies that might deal with shocks; and (4) shaping strategies designed to bring about desirable futures. Uncertainty-sensitive planning is especially appropriate for long-term planning in Europe, since no clear-cut threats are on the horizon but long-term uncertainty about European security still exists. (Paul K. Davis and Zalmay M. Khalilzad, *A Composite Approach to Air Force Planning*, RAND, MR–787–AF, 1996, pp. 17–19.)
• The further deepening of the EU as it takes on increased security functions and succeeds in creating at least the semblance of a “European pillar” in NATO.

• The continued gradual integration of the European former communist states into the political and security framework of NATO and the EU.

Continuation of these three trends in itself is central to the fulfillment of the overall U.S. strategic goals in Europe, which stem from the overarching global U.S. “engagement and enlargement” strategy pursued since the mid-1990s and upheld in every major U.S. strategy statement of the past five years. If the strategy is successful, NATO’s collective defense functions will remain an important residual providing cohesion and a sense of purpose to the alliance, but NATO’s primary function will be to shape the environment, especially by promoting continued peaceful evolution in the unintegrated area of Europe.

It is entirely plausible that the no-surprises future will come about. However, a number of plausible shifts in emphasis, or branches, in the no-surprises security environment could occur over the next 10 to 15 years. Without fundamentally changing the basic environment, such shifts could alter the direction of trends so that over the longer term, the future might look quite different from the original no-surprises future. Such shifts could take various forms:

• A decrease or an increase in NATO’s conflict prevention and conflict management roles, which could cause NATO either to de-emphasize its missions beyond current members’ territory and return to its former focus on collective defense functions, or to pursue greater activism and interventionism in non-member states.

• A decrease or an increase in the pace of EU integration, which could lead to a greater EU security identity (and a potentially

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greater EU role as a mechanism for ensuring security in and around Europe) or to slower development of EU defense capabilities.

- A decrease or an increase in the integration pace of the European former communist countries aspiring to NATO and/or EU membership.

Defense planning must recognize the many ways in which the no-surprises future could change. If some of the recognized uncertainties come about, they could have an exponentially increasing effect on the likelihood and pace of enlargement, leading to a multitude of variations in enlargement paths and the commitments they entail. Moreover, the specific effect on enlargement would be difficult to gauge ahead of time, unless the specific circumstances leading to the branch point’s emergence were known. If NATO decided to step up the pace of enlargement, it would likely relax some of the membership criteria outlined in its 1995 enlargement study, which would lead to quick accession of many, if not most, of the nine MAP states. Such an evolution would have to be driven by a sense of threat (either political or military) that currently does not exist and is not now expected to develop. The threat’s specific nature would dictate which countries would be first in line to join.

In addition to shifts in emphasis, high-impact but low-probability political shocks could derail any or all of the three main trends of the no-surprises future security environment. Such possibilities include

- NATO’s lapse into secondary relevance and importance because of a major divergence of security views between NATO’s European and North American members.
- A reversal of EU integration processes because of some major event—for example, an economic depression and the consequent, differing national policies for dealing with its effects.
- The ascendancy to power in several former communist countries of nationalist forces that see the EU and NATO as threats to their sovereignty.

While none of these shocks seems particularly likely to happen, historical experience teaches humility. In 1985, few could have pre-
dicted that in the space of 15 years, Europe would witness the unification of the two German states, the mostly peaceful breakup of the USSR, and the entry of Poland, the Czech Republic, and Hungary into NATO. Should a major systemic shock come to pass, it will affect much of the earlier discussion about enlargement.

**Implications for Military Planning**

To sum up, the process of NATO’s enlargement and cooperation with non-members is politically driven in that it seeks to shape the European security environment in conditions involving no specific threat. This process has far-reaching military implications:

- Some of NATO’s obligations are straightforward, including the tasks it needs to perform with respect to new members as delineated in the Washington Treaty, and the tasks it may engage in with the fourth (non-MAP European PfP) and fifth (non-European PfP and EAPC) groups in the levels-of-commitment categorization (see Figure 2.4).

- The nature of cooperation and planning with the countries in the third (MAP) group and to a lesser extent the second (non-NATO EU) group is complex, multidimensional, and unclear even though these countries are the ones to which NATO has extended implicit and conditional security guarantees. Even though the pace and extent of military cooperation with these countries are murky, NATO could be called upon to assist these countries in responding to unexpected contingencies in the next 10 to 15 years.

- The situation calls for core strategies designed to ensure that the MAP countries can safeguard their sovereignty (by building a minimum credible deterrent through a combination of NATO assistance measures and making optimal use of scarce defense resources in a NATO context). It also calls for hedging strategies focused primarily on the possible need to assist MAP countries if there is a shift in the no-surprises future.

Through numerous everyday activities, the U.S. armed forces, both continental United States (CONUS) and Europe-based, play a crucial role in implementing the core strategy and shaping the environment
so as to advance the no-surprises trends. They also play an important role in implementing the U.S. hedging strategy—an insurance policy against major shocks—that relies on the continuation of NATO’s collective defense functions. To illustrate, seven of EUCOM’s eleven strategic objectives pertain to shaping the environment, and three deal directly with NATO’s transformation and enlargement: (1) maintain, support, and contribute to the integrity and adaptation of NATO; (2) help prepare the militaries of invited nations to integrate with NATO; and (3) promote stability, democratization, military professionalism, and closer relationships with NATO in the nations of central Europe and the Newly Independent States. United States Air Forces in Europe (USAFE) plays an important role in implementing the U.S. shaping strategy and can assist greatly in advancing U.S. policies toward the new members and MAP states through bilateral training exercises, PfP, staff exchanges, aircrew exchanges, and pilot training in USAFE aircraft. In this context, the pace of enlargement, and the consequent clarification of security guarantees and their attendant obligations, is a major determinant of the type and extent of cooperation between NATO (and specifically the U.S. armed forces) and the MAP states.

The next chapter explores in detail the mechanics of the enlargement process and presents a framework for anticipating how the process may play out for specific MAP countries.

49 The latest (2000) Annual Report to the President and the Congress by the Secretary of Defense reemphasizes the shaping role of the armed forces as part of the overall “Shape, Prepare, Respond” national strategy. For the full report, see http://www.dtic.mil/exsec/adr2000/.