

NATO AT FIFTY: WIDENING AND DEEPENING

With this installment, the Atlantic Council continues the series of updates on events surrounding the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. So far, 1999 has been an eventful year for the Alliance, due in no small part to NATO's 50th Anniversary and the NATO-led air strikes against Yugoslavia. This update provides some insight into NATO policy vis-à-vis the Balkans, and recounts other recent events such as the enlargement of NATO, the Washington Summit held this April, and developments within the European Union.

The Accession of the Visegrad Three: March 13, 1999

At a ceremony in Independence, Missouri, home of President Harry S. Truman, whose leadership led to the Atlantic Alliance's creation in 1949, the former Communist Central European nations of the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland were formally admitted as new members into the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

This marked the fourth time in its 50-year history that NATO has accepted new members (Greece and Turkey in 1952, the Federal Republic of Germany in 1955, and Spain in 1982) and by doing so, increased the number of member states from 16 to 19.

This also marked the achievement of a much coveted goal of the Clinton Administration, which was adopted in 1993 when President Clinton met with the leaders of Poland and the Czech Republic, Lech Walesa and Vaclav Havel, respectively.

NATO Summit in Washington: April 23-25, 1999

Against the backdrop of the month-old Operation Allied Force in the Balkans, the heads of state and other key decision makers of the Alliance—including the three new members—held a summit in Washington. During the Washington summit, NATO members commemorated the Alliance's 50th anniversary and made a number of important statements on the Alliance's current agenda and future *raison d'être* for the 21st century. Two notable documents referenced in the final summit communiqué are the revised *Strategic Concept* and the *Membership Action Plan*, approved by the 19 NATO heads of state.

The Strategic Concept

In updating the 1991 *Strategic Concept*, NATO heads of state formalized the role of NATO as it faces new and changing threats in an increasingly uncertain geo-political environment. These threats pose a challenge to the North Atlantic community as well as its neighboring states. In drafting the *Strategic Concept* NATO acknowledged that the “alliance will be larger, more capable, and more flexible, committed to collective defense and able to undertake new missions, including contributing to effective conflict prevention and engaging actively in crisis management, including crisis response operations.” The *Strategic Concept* begins the task of establishing new priorities and objectives critical to the future of the Alliance as:

- (1) reconciling the European Security and Defense Initiative (ESDI) with NATO;
defining strategies for conflict prevention and crisis management in the new security environment;
building partnership, cooperation, and dialogue;
promoting arms control, disarmament, and nuclear non-proliferation to inhibit the spread of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) in Partnership for Peace countries and outside the NATO framework.

Membership Action Plan

At the Washington summit the 19 NATO member countries also pledged to maintain an “open-door policy” towards further expansion of NATO. The Membership Action Plan (MAP) lists five components of the accession process:

- Political and Economic Issues,
- Defense/Military Issues,
- Resource Issues,
- Security Issues,
- Legal Issues.

Aspiring nations will have to choose specific issues from the MAP list for discussion with NATO and will be required to draft annual programs for identifying projects geared to help them qualify for membership in the Alliance. The Alliance will respond with a report commenting on the progress toward the objectives delineated in the aspirants’ annual national programs. Other prerequisites for consideration for accession to NATO include participation in the Partnership for Peace program and support for the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council.

The European Union Summit in Cologne: June 3-4, 1999

A European Defense Identity?

On June 4, 1999, the leaders of the 15-nation European Union (EU) committed to develop a military arm for the first time in its 42-year history, with command headquarters, staff, and forces of its own for humanitarian and peacekeeping missions in future crises like those in Kosovo and Bosnia. At the EU summit, the European leaders declared: “The union must have the capacity for autonomous action, backed up by credible military forces, the means to decide to use them, and a readiness to do so, in order to respond to international crises without prejudice to actions by NATO.” It is planned that the previously dormant Western European Union (WEU), which has no historical affiliation with the EU, will be integrated into the EU’s institutional framework.

One Policy, One Actor

Demonstrative of the EU's commitment to creating a single Common Foreign and Security Policy for the Union, the leaders of the 15 EU member states have selected Dr. Javier Solana, the outgoing Secretary General of NATO, to be the first High Representative for Foreign Policy of the EU. His task will be to create a credible and sound European foreign and security policy framework.

On August 3, NATO leaders formally agreed that British Defense Secretary George Robertson will succeed Javier Solana as Secretary General of NATO before the end of the year.

Kosovo and the Balkans:

June 1999:

After an 11-week bombing campaign, in which NATO crews flew over 34,000 sorties and dropped over 22,000 bombs, the Alliance, with the help of senior officials from the European Union and Russia, succeeded in persuading Yugoslavia to agree to NATO's peace plan.

The peace plan, backed by the United Nations Security Council, called for the immediate withdrawal of Serbian military, paramilitary, and police forces from the province of Kosovo and the concurrent deployment of a NATO-led occupation force known as KFOR (Kosovo Force), all of which began shortly after the peace agreement in mid-June.

July 1999:

The steady Serbian withdrawal was complemented by the influx of British, German, and American components into Kosovo. Despite an initial dispute over the role of Russian forces within Kosovo, an agreement was brokered that formally integrated a Russian component into the existing NATO KFOR command structure.

The future of the ethnic Albanian Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) hung in the balance, with Allied and KLA leaders at an impasse regarding whether the KLA can remain politically active in the NATO-occupied province. The KLA agreed to disarm by September.

The European Union, Group of Eight (G8)¹, and the United States each drafted mid-and long-range aid packages for Southeastern Europe. All parties involved agreed in principle on the basic economic, humanitarian, and security frameworks necessary to ensure a lasting peace in the Balkans.

The EU initially vowed that it would provide the overwhelming majority of economic assistance to the devastated province, offering \$500 million, but the United States has since matched this offer announcing that it too would provide close to half a billion dollars in humanitarian and reconstruction aid to Kosovo.

Representatives of some 40 countries—not including Yugoslavia—held a summit in Sarajevo on July 29-30 to discuss guidelines for implementing the Stability Pact for the Balkans. In addition to the bilateral aid that the United States and the EU have pledged to Kosovo, the United States and its closest allies pledged an additional \$2 billion for ethnic Albanian refugees returning to Kosovo as part of the Stability Pact. The guidelines also call for the signatories to work towards regional agreements to overcome the causes of potential conflict. Furthermore, they call for free and fair elections in the countries of the region, for politics based on the rule of law, and respect for human rights and other freedoms. Lastly, the Stability Pact envisages the expansion of free-market economies and trade to foster cooperation within the region and with the rest of Europe.

Edited by Johann Fulks, Francesca Gerken, Elisa Moskowitz and Robert Rasmussen.

This bulletin is published by the Atlantic Council's program on NATO and European Security. For additional information, please contact Michael Stebe at (202) 778-4990.

¹ Group of Seven plus Russia.