"Resetting the Reset Button with Russia:

Toward a Euro-Atlantic Confederation"

by Hall Gardner

Shadow NATO Conference III

May 14-15, 2012

I.   NATO: An Open Ended Expansion

In a talk in Berlin in June 1995, prior to the first wave of NATO enlargement in 1997, the Supreme Allied Commander in Europe, General Jack Galvin stated the following: "We won the Cold War, but we are losing the peace after the Cold War. There is no doubt in my mind about it. We do not think about the Russians enough, about who they are and what they are doing. We don't think much about the way they think of us… We should consider folding NATO into a bigger organization, without losing what has made NATO effective--- sustained political control over a collective military for decades… [We need] a whole new organization that brings the Russians on board."[1]

The US and NATO have gone in a much different direction than that proposed by General Galvin and a number of Cold Warriors. Instead of "folding NATO into a bigger organization… that brings the Russians on board," the Allies have expanded full NATO membership with Article V security guarantees to states throughout the former Soviet empire and up close to St Petersburg and Moscow and into the sensitive Black Sea region. In May 2012, the US Congress demanded that President Obama speed up the process of NATO enlargement to Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Montenegro, as well as to Georgia. [2]

---

[1] General Jack Galvin, "Closing Plenary Session" co-chairs Walther Leisler Klep and Robert Blackwill, America Council on Germany, Atlantik-Brücke Conference (Berlin: 17 June, 1995). See also, Hall Gardner, *Dangerous Crossroads* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1997).

[2] In May 2012, Senator Dick Lugar's NATO Enlargement Bill and Congressman Mike Turner's NATO Enhancement Act were intended to speed up the accession of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Montenegro and Georgia into NATO. They called on President Obama 'to provide a clear roadmap' at the Chicago Summit.

To those of us who have been thinking over the past decade "about the Russians… about who they are and what they are doing," Moscow's threats to deploy tactical nuclear weapons in Kaliningrad, Russian actions during and after the 2008 Georgia-Russia war, plus threats to use " to use destructive force pre-emptively… if the situation worsens" as warned by Russian Chief of General Staff Nikolai Makarov at the May 3rd 2012 missile-defense conference in Moscow in reference to NATO plans to deploy Missile Defense, and against the expansion of NATO infrastructure closer to Russian borders, should come as no surprise.

The two founders of American containment policy, arguably the two Americans who had the most experience in dealing with the Soviets/ Russians, George Kennan and Paul Nitze, strongly opposed NATO enlargement. Many know that George Kennan called NATO enlargement a "tragic mistake" and "the most fateful error of American policy in the entire post-Cold War era." Perhaps less known is the fact that Paul Nitze, the author of NSC-68, the document that sought to militarize containment, and that inspired the neo-conservative movement to build American defense capabilities throughout the Cold War, likewise opposed NATO enlargement. The Open Letter to the Honorable President Clinton, signed by Paul Nitze and other former Cold Warriors in 1997, raised a number of concerns that are still relevant today.[3] Later, in 1998 in a letter to Senator Patrick Moynihan, Nitze cautioned, "…the open-ended expansion being proposed for the alliance points toward increasing friction with post-Communist Russia for years to come."[4]

Later in May the Senate Foreign Relations Committee unanimously supported Lugar's bill. See NATO Watch Chicago Summit Media Briefings Series No.1 "NATO-Russia relations: managing the balance between cooperation and confrontation" (May 1, 2012)
http://www.natowatch.org/sites/default/files/Chicago_Summit_Briefings_-_No.1_NATO-Russia_Relations.pdf

[3] Open Letter to President Clinton (June 26, 1997): http://www.bu.edu/globalbeat/nato/postpone062697.html

[4] In a letter to Senator Moynihan, Paul Nitze warned: "NATO expansion distracts both us and the Russians from (the goal of lending political and economic support to the development of a democratic, market-oriented society in Russia.) Indeed, the open-ended expansion being proposed for the alliance points toward increasing friction with post-Communist Russia for years to come. Driving Russia into a corner plays into the arguments of those most hostile to forging a productive relationship with the US and its allies. It is not a sound basis for future stability in Europe, particularly when no current or projected threats warrant extending that alliance."
Congressional Record, vol. 144 Pt 5 (April 21-30, 1998), p. 6785.
For Paul Nitze's arguments, see Hall Gardner, *Dangerous Crossroads*, op.cit.

Yet official Washington seems to remain in a state of denial that NATO's open-ended enlargement—now combined with deployment of Missile Defense systems—lies at the roots of the *anticipatory* Russian backlash that has sought to block both Ukrainian and Georgian membership in NATO.[5] In the aftermath of the April 2008 NATO Bucharest summit, which had promised eventual NATO membership to Ukraine and Georgia, but which did not actually provide a Membership Action Plan, Moscow had hoped to check Georgia's future membership in NATO as an indirect consequence of the August 2008 Georgia-Russia war. In 2010 Moscow had sought to preclude NATO enlargement to Ukraine by extending the lease of the Russian Black Sea fleet at Sevastopol by 25 to 30 years.

In response to NATO enlargement and the extension of Missile Defense systems, coupled with the Pentagon's modernization of both strategic and tactical nuclear weaponry, Russian President Vladimir Putin has called for a major nuclear and conventional arms build-up that is ostensibly intended to prevent third parties from taking advantage of Russian domestic weaknesses and seizing Russia's vast resources.[6]

The irony is that such weaknesses include the near bankruptcy of the post-Cold War Russian military-industrial complex and the inadequacies of Russian military capabilities as revealed in Russia's August 2008 war with Georgia. Russia really cannot afford such a build-up. In addition, while a major arms build-up and strong nuclear capability might appear to represent a means for Moscow to sustain its sovereignty and territorial integrity in Putin's view, this position overlooks the fact that a significant arms rivalry can actually exacerbate socio-political tensions both within

---

[5] One can argue that the Russian backlash began with the first round of NATO enlargement, coupled with the war "over" Kosovo (fought without a UN mandate) and Russian intervention in Chechnya, in which the latter war was seen by Moscow as backed by a number of Sunni Arab states, if not also assisted by Georgia. See my arguments in Hall Gardner, *American Global Strategy and the 'War on Terrorism'* (Ashgate: 2007) and *Averting Global War* (Palgrave: 2010)

[6] "In a situation of global economic and other kinds of hardships, it may be very tempting for some to resolve their problems at others' expense, through pressure and coercion…. It is no wonder that we already hear some voices saying that it is 'only natural' that resources of global significance should soon be declared as being above national sovereignty.… We must exclude any such possibility, even a hypothetical one, with respect to Russia. This means that we should not tempt anybody with our weakness." Vladimir Putin, http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Europe/2012/0220/Fearing-West-Putin-pledges-biggest-military-buildup-since-cold-war

and among states outside a society, thus resulting in even greater domestic and international instability and insecurity.[7]

The real "threat" stemming from NATO enlargement is not so much that of a NATO-led attack, and the attempt to seize Russia's resources, as Vladimir Putin has insinuated, but the more plausible scenario that the US, Europe and its allies might purposely or inadvertently manipulate socio-political weaknesses within the Russian Federation or among its allies and encourage secessionist movements, for example. The real danger is that NATO and Russia could find themselves backing opposing sides in a direct confrontation involving two conflicting states, as could have been the case had NATO opted to support Georgia militarily versus Russia in August 2008.

To prevent a very dangerous situation from spiraling out of control, it is now time to "reset the reset button" with Russia and to explore Moscow's calls for a new Euro-Atlantic security pact.

II. "Resetting the Reset Button"

A strategy of "resetting the reset button" provides an alternative to that proposed by either neo-conservatives or neo-isolationists. A neo-conservative strategy seeks to confront Russia as "the geopolitical foe" and hence call the Russian bluff (or what is presumed to be bluff) in an effort to make Moscow back down and accept the American viewpoint, while a neo-isolationist strategy risks acquiescing to Russian pressures and demands in the belief that American power and influence are often more provocative than salutary. By contrast with both positions, however, an alternative, yet realist strategy, would seek to engage with Moscow in areas where Russian concerns appear to be legitimate, and thereby compromise or modify both NATO and Russian policies where possible.

Such an alternative, yet realistic, global strategy would seek to establish a Euro-Atlantic confederation much as George Bush Sr. and Mikhail Gorbachev had originally proposed toward the end of the Cold War, prior to

---

[7] On the insecurity-security dialectic, see Hall Gardner "Alienation and the Causes and Prevention of War" in *The Ashgate Research Companion to War: Origins and Prevention*, eds. Hall Gardner and Oleg Kobtzeff (Ashgate: February 2012).

Soviet collapse in 1991—a concept that has been brought back again by Russian President Dmitri Medvedev. In a speech in Germany in June 2008 just prior to the outbreak of the August 2008 Georgia-Russian war, then President Medvedev called for "unity between the whole Euro-Atlantic area from Vancouver to Vladivostok."[8]

Yet the August 2008 Russia-Georgia war split NATO opinion toward Russia down the middle.[9] This is effect made NATO policy toward Russian calls for a new Euro-Atlantic security order even more disjointed. It is consequently time to develop and implement an alternative strategy that can bring the Allies closer together in working with Russia. To prevent a new post-Cold War arms rivalry and to secure the entire Euro-Atlantic area from Vancouver to Vladivostok, an alternative global strategy—that could be initiated after the November 2012 US Presidential elections—would seek to "reset the reset button" and engage Russia in real power sharing.

Such an alternative global strategy should take the following five paths:

1) Continue on the missile defense path by working with Moscow to establish a system of joint NATO-Russian missile defense
2) Engage in a second security path in which NATO and the European Union would cooperate with Russia, Ukraine, as well as states in eastern Europe and the Caucasus, in the effort to build greater confidence building measures *on the ground.* This approach would require the establishment of International Peace Centers in Kaliningrad and Sevastopol. As an alternative to NATO enlargement to Georgia, this approach would seek to implement a "regional security and development community" in the southern Caucasus.
3) A third path would seek to develop a new American and European Union political-economic relationship with Russia as it enters the World Trade Organization.

---

[8] President of Russia, Dmitri Medvedev, Speech at Meeting with German Political, Parliamentary and Civic Leaders (June 5, 2008)
http://archive.kremlin.ru/eng/speeches/2008/06/05/2203_type82912type82914type84779_202153.shtml

[9] According the cables provided by Wikileaks, in the period August 12-13, 2008, EU and NATO members Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and the UK began to back proposals to suspend the NATO-Russia Council and to issue a Russia-hostile statement. But a Russia-friendly camp, led by France and Germany and including Greece, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Slovakia and Spain, blocked the effort. The EU Observer (December 12, 2010): http://euobserver.com/9/31400

4) In a fourth path the UN and Europe (with American and Russian backing) should take steps to resolve Greek-Turkish disputes over Cyprus and over eastern Mediterranean energy sources in the effort to stimulate trade and growth throughout the entire Mediterranean / Black Sea regions. This approach would require the establishment of a third International Peace Center on Cyprus.

5) A fifth treaty path, much as Moscow has requested, would discuss the diplomatic and legal questions surrounding a new geostrategic and political economic framework for the formation of a new Euro-Atlantic confederation that would solidify the Russian position as a legitimate and recognized member of a new Euro-Atlantic community.

In brief, in the effort to "reset the reset button," proposals for joint NATO-Russian Missile Defense systems should continue to move along one path, but in relationship to ongoing diplomacy over nuclear weaponry and weapons of mass destruction and the potential establishment of a "nuclear free zone" with Iran, Israel, Saudi Arabia, among other states. Proposals for closer cooperation between NATO, Russia and Ukraine by means of engaging in confidence building measures *on the ground* throughout eastern Europe, the Black Sea and the Caucasus need to move in tandem along another path. Proposals for a new political-economic relationship between Russia and the EU and between Turkey and the EU that would seek to open new and deeper trade relations with Russia and Turkey in the Black Sea region in particular—and thus attempt to surmount the Euro and global financial crisis— would move along the third and fourth paths. Proposals for a larger diplomatic accord establishing new Euro-Atlantic confederation from Vancouver to Vladivostok would require a fifth path.

III. Missile Defense

The concern raised here is that the present quest for a NATO-Russian accord on Missile Defense (which is already proving difficult to achieve) *must be engaged in simultaneously with efforts to achieve a more general geopolitical and geo-economic accord that brings the US, Europeans and Russia (plus Turkey) into much closer and direct cooperation*. NATO appears to be speeding blindly into the skies and into outer space by concentrating only on missile defense without seeing the larger picture. The fate of Euro-

Atlantic security cannot be relegated to mere technical questions involving military technology: The larger geostrategic and political-economic framework must be taken into account— in the effort to engage the Russian Federation on all possible levels.

Washington has argued that Moscow has no reason to fear US/NATO missile defense systems in that such systems are: 1) aimed at Iranian missile and potential nuclear capabilities; 2) such systems would never prove capable of countering Russian ICBM's in technological terms. American officials have argued, for example, that the NATO Missile Defense system could not stop a Russian missile attack on the United States over the Arctic, the most likely trajectory.

On the one hand, Washington has opposed a single combined European missile defense system that could put the security of some Alliance members in the hands of Russia. American spokespersons have likewise signaled that NATO could continue to build a missile shield even without an agreement with Russia.[10] On the other hand, Washington has sought transparency on its missile defense programs through exchanges at the NATO-Russia Council and by means of a standing invitation to Russian experts to observe and analyze missile defense tests. The US likewise engaged in joint NATO-Russia theatre missile defense exercises in 2012. Washington has furthermore recognized that Russia possesses radar or interceptor capabilities that are capable of enhancing the protection of NATO member states, thus recognizing areas where the two sides can cooperate.[11]

It has been speculated by NATO Deputy Secretary Alexander Vershbow that Russia could begin participating in NATO missile defense

---

[10] Global Security Newswire (May 14, 2012): http://www.nti.rsvp1.com/gsn/article/russian-minister-hints-use-short-range-missiles-against-nato-missile-shield/?mgh=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.nti.org&mgf=1

[11] Washington has proposed a NATO-Russia partnership involving two Missile Defense centers: The first center, the NATO-Russia MD Data Fusion Center, would pool data from NATO and Russian sensors to form a common operational picture of possible third-country missile launches. This operational picture would then be fed into the second center, the NATO-Russia MD Planning and Operations Center. The latter would also develop concepts of operations, rules of engagement and pre-planned responses for coordinated missile defense operations. See comments of NATO Deputy Secretary Alexander Vershbow, Global Security Newswire (May 7, 2012): http://www.nti.rsvp1.com/gsn/article/nato-head-rebukes-russia-pre-emptive-military-strike-remark/?mgh=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.nti.org&mgf=1

efforts in the time period just before the missile shield is fully built-out.[12] Possible regions for the deployment of joint NATO-Russia Missile Defense systems include: Azerbaijan; Armavir, near Russia's energy transit port of Novorossiysk, close to Sochi; and the enormous Sofrino-based Don-2NP radar facility Sofrino (near Moscow). Sea-based systems could be deployed in the Black Sea, possibly in cooperation with both Russia and Ukraine.

Yet despite the hopeful promise of possible compromise, Russian elites have questioned the reasons for the advance of NATO's military infrastructure and Missile Defense capabilities so close to Russian allies and Russian borders. The Netherlands, France, Germany, Spain, and closer to Russia, Turkey, Romania, Poland, have all agreed to host NATO Missile Defense assets.[13] As a general lack of trust has developed between Washington and Moscow after the US unilaterally withdrew from the ABM treaty in 2002 under George Bush, Jr.—without attempting to revise that treaty with Moscow's input—Russian elites have been concerned with the strategic uncertainties posed by advanced land-based and sea-based Missile Defense systems. Rightfully or wrongfully, Moscow has argued that the future-generation of US Missile Defense interceptors planned for deployment around 2020 could potentially possess the capacity to target Russian ICBMs.

Moscow is furthermore concerned that the process of NATO enlargement, coupled with the deployment of Missile Defense systems, is being accompanied by the modernization of both intercontinental and tactical nuclear weapons—in a nuclear modernization supported by Congress as a trade-off for President Obama to obtain Congressional backing for the New START treaty. [14] One major issue is that the Pentagon's

---

[12] Global Security Newswire (May 7, 2012): http://www.nti.rsvp1.com/gsn/article/nato-head-rebukes-russia-pre-emptive-military-strike-remark/?mgh=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.nti.org&mgf=1
Global Security Newswire (May 8, 2012): http://www.nti.rsvp1.com/gsn/article/putin-calls-firm-us-pledge-european-missile-interceptors/?mgh=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.nti.org&mgf=1

[13] Ivanka Barzashka, "Technical concerns: Why Russia worries about missile defense" *Bulletin of Atomic Scientists* (May 14, 2012) http://thebulletin.org/web-edition/features/technical-concerns-why-russia-worries-about-missile-defense

[14] Global Security Newswire (May 14, 2012): http://www.nti.rsvp1.com/gsn/article/russian-minister-hints-use-short-range-missiles-against-nato-missile-shield/?mgh=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.nti.org&mgf=1

multi-billion dollar modernization of the B-61 nuclear gravity bomb to provide it with enhanced precision targeting abilities could be used politically by Russia to justify its own heavy reliance upon tactical nuclear weaponry as an ostensible deterrent—that is, if neither side can eventually reach an accord that might reduce or eliminate such weaponry altogether.[15]

Furthermore, Moscow has a hard time explaining to its public that a nuclear armed Iran could represent a potential threat to Russia itself, as Washington has argued. In general, Moscow has seen a greater threat to Russian interests stemming from Sunni pan-Islamist groups supported by Saudi Arabia and the Gulf countries, more so than pan-Islamist movements supported by Shi'ite Iran. As the presumed need to deploy Missile Defense in Europe is related primarily to Iranian missiles—and potentially, Iranian nuclear weapons—a diplomatic settlement with Iran should concurrently reduce the need for such defenses, in Moscow's view. In support of US policy, Moscow has moved to sanction Tehran by banning the sale of S-300 surface to air missiles to Iran,[16] for example, but Moscow's support for other sanctions on Iran do not appear to be as strong as the Americans and Europeans would like those sanctions to be.

Here, it is clear that the US and Europe need to thoroughly coordinate diplomacy with Russia in a concerted effort to convince Tehran that a regional, if not global, arms rivalry is definitely in no one's interest. Yet to convince Iran to stop militarizing its defense policy will require arranging a geopolitical compromise between Saudi Arabia, Israel and Iran—a highly unlikely prospect at the moment. It is thus apparent that the US, Europe and Russia need to work together to quell conflicts that appear to be escalating throughout the greater Middle East—a difficult process given the complex diplomacy involved in engaging with Russia in the conflict in Syria, for example.

It is consequently important that the US recognizes that even an extremely costly Missile Defense system will not necessarily prove

---

[15] See Edmund E. Seay III, "Nuclear Dilemmas Remaining after Chicago" Nuclear Policy Paper No. 10 (Arms Control Association, May 2012); Wilbert van der Zeijden, Susi Snyder and Peter Paul Ekker, *Exit Strategies: The case for redefining NATO consensus on US TNW* (IKV Pax Christi April 2012); Global Security Newswire (May 22, 2012):: http://www.nti.org/gsn/article/nato-failed-change-nuclear-status-quo-experts/

[16] In 2010, Moscow banned the sale of S-300 missiles to Iran. BBC News (September 22, 2010) http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-11388680

sufficient to effectively counter Iran or other states—if the Russians are not in some way included in those MD systems. A degree of realism needs to prevail or costs could skyrocket.[17] Concurrently, Moscow needs to recognize that a number of countries on the Eurasian rimland have been developing missile, if not nuclear, capabilities, and thus an effective Missile Defense system in cooperation with the United States and NATO could eventually be in Russian interest.

If a NATO-Russian deal on Missile Defense cannot eventually be reached, however, Moscow could engage in a number of asymmetrical and subversive means to circumvent NATO Missile Defenses (assuming that such systems will actually work in real circumstances). The deployment of decoys and stealth systems could potentially fool Missile Defense systems, for example.[18] There is furthermore a real danger that the time table set for phased NATO Missile Defense deployments (potentially effective or not) could thoroughly alienate Russia, and lead Moscow to adopt an even more dangerous *preclusive* stance— as has been forewarned by a number of high level Russian spokespersons.

Yet the real dilemma is that the effort to cooperate with Russia on missile defense[19] will not prove sufficient without more extensive NATO-Russia cooperation on the ground throughout eastern Europe, the Black Sea region and the Caucasus…

---

[17] Senator Carl Levin on Missile Defense: "If speed is your hallmark instead of quality, you will pay for it, and you will pay for it through the nose: The threat we have now is either a distant threat or is not a realistic threat… To dissuade Iran from posing a missile threat, the U.S. must collaborate with Russia on defense systems." Cited in Bloomberg, "$35B Missile Defense Misses Bullet With Bullet" (August 3, 2011) http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2011-08-03/missile-defense-costing-35-billion-misses-bullets-with-bullets.html

[18] Global Security Newswire (May 18, 2012):: http://www.nti.rsvp1.com/gsn/article/us-announce-interim-missile-defense-capability-nato-summit/?mgh=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.nti.org&mgf=1

[19] For realistic proposals on Missile Defense cooperation with Moscow, Steven Pifer, *Missile Defense in Europe: Cooperation or Contention?* (Brookings Arms Control Series, No. 8, May 2012)

IV. Putting an End to "Open Ended" NATO Expansion

During the Cold War, the Soviet Union/ Warsaw Pact shared the Black Sea region with NATO-member Turkey. In the post-Cold War era, Soviet disaggregation has meant that Moscow must share the Black Sea with five other independent states, Turkey, Bulgaria, Romania, Georgia and Ukraine, plus a newly independent Abkhazia (supported primarily by Russia). The fact that Moscow now controls only a small part of the northeastern shores of the Black Sea—plus naval facilities at Sevastopol—has augmented Russian security concerns. As Russia's major energy export facilities lie at Novorossiysk, which is now hemmed in between the Ukrainian Crimea and Georgia, Moscow fears that NATO's "open ended" enlargement to Ukraine or Georgia could threaten its energy exports. In many ways, Russian security concerns in the Black Sea and Caucasus are at the roots of the present crisis.

An alternative strategy of "resetting the reset button" would be to establish a "regional security and development community" for the whole southern Caucasus region, but in cooperation with Russia. Thus, rather than pressing for the "full" NATO membership of Georgia, and for the strategic integration of Georgia back into NATO's integrated command as still advocated by NATO,[20] the US, Europeans and Russians would foster greater regional integration and provide security by extending security guarantees to both Georgia and the other states of the southern Caucasus. This approach could follow steps already taken for Ukraine after the latter agreed to give up its nuclear weaponry in 1994; Kiev then received *conjoint* security guarantees from the US, Russia, China, the UK and France.

Extending US and European security guarantees to the southern Caucasus states as a whole in conjunction with Russia—instead of extending NATO's integrated command to Georgia alone—would represent a means to stabilize and develop the whole Caucasus region. This alternative option would not split the region between Georgia, as a potential NATO member, versus Armenia, backed by the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO). Instead, such an approach would seek to create a regional confederation or Caucasus "regional security and development community" backed by overlapping NATO-EU-Russian security accords that which could be legitimized by the UN Security Council or the OSCE.

---

[20] Ronald D. Asmus and Bruce P. Jackson, "The Black Sea and the Frontiers of Freedom" *Policy Review* Hoover Institution (June-July 2004)

The key dilemma, of course, is to how convince Moscow to change its policy toward Georgia and the region. Kosovo's unilateral declaration of independence in February 2008 had initially provided Moscow with pretext to maintain Russian troops in the Transnistra, Abkhazia and South Ossetia, while supporting Armenia against Azerbaijan in the dispute over Nagorno-Karabakh. Yet Russian recognition of South Ossetia and Abkhazia in August 2008 has tended to alienate Russia's own allies including China and Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) as well as states in the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO). Russian recognition of South Ossetia and Abkhazia has furthermore provided ideological justification for those nationalist and ethnic groups that have historically opposed Russian imperialism and who might ultimately seek "independence" from Russia itself. Moscow's own actions consequently risk further isolating Russia from the world community and alienating a number of its own indigenous communities.

From this perspective, Russian diplomatic recognition of South Ossetia and Abkhazia (as ostensible response to Kosovo independence) have largely backfired. In addition, Russia might not want to support and subsidize these impoverished regions indefinitely. (This is particularly true for South Ossetia; Abkhazia, by contrast, is geostrategically more important, as it is located on the Black Sea littoral.) Concurrently, the indigenous people of these regions might not tolerate a permanent Russian military presence.

From this standpoint, there may still be room for compromise. One way to reach a compromise would be to *re-define* what is meant by "independence" and "territorial integrity." By re-defining the concept of "national independence," and by accepting power sharing arrangements among the differing peoples and regions, it may be possible for Russia, Georgia, South Ossetia and Abkhazia—as well as Armenia, Azerbaijan and Turkey—to live side-by-side in peace and mutual prosperity, while protecting the rights of minority communities in a larger regional confederation. (As will be argued, the bi-communal, bi-zonal approach being proposed for Cyprus might serve as a model for Georgia and the Caucasus.)

In other words, close political and economic cooperation backed by the US, EU and Russia could result in a new definitions of "independence" and result in new forms of "autonomy" linked in "confederation." As members of a larger confederation of the Caucasus, these regions could reach out for important security accords and trade/ border crossing

arrangements with both Russia and Georgia and other states that permit close cooperation. Georgia can then, in turn, claim that its "territorial integrity" remains intact, although not in the traditional sense of the concept.

In sum, the establishment of a Caucasian "regional security and development community" or confederation would require European and American supports and security guarantees in coordination with those of Russia. NATO-Russia Partnership for Peace peacekeepers could be temporarily deployed under a general UN or OSCE mandate in South Ossetia, Abkhazia, Transnistria, as well as Nagorno-Karabakh, among other disputed areas and "frozen conflicts." These temporary deployments would be similar to the 1995 Dayton peacekeeping accords for ex-Yugoslavia, and would work in coordination with, or else replacing, Russian/CSTO forces.

This approach could also help overcome the present impasse over the adapted Conventional Force in Europe (CFE) Treaty, from which Moscow withdrew in 2007 and from which the US withdrew in late 2011. The collapse of the adapted CFE treaty could potentially unleash a new conventional arms rivalry—if NATO and Russia cannot soon reach a new accord.

V. Three International Peace Centers

The establishment of three International Centers for Peace and Conflict Resolution in Kaliningrad, Sevastopol and Cyprus could represent an effective means to implement a new framework for Euro-Atlantic security and development.[21] These three International Centers could help coordinate Missile Defense, among other security issues; but they must also do more to bring the US, Europe and Russia into closer political and economic cooperation. The purpose of these Peace Centers is not to create a new bureaucracy, but to better coordinate the activities and goals of the differing international organizations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that already exist, and to minimize the redundancy of efforts where possible.

---

[21] Hall Gardner, "Toward a New Framework for Euro-Atlantic Security" Opinion, European Union Institute for Security Studies (January 9, 2012): http://www.iss.europa.eu/publications/detail/article/toward-a-new-euro-atlantic-security-framework/

Each of these International Peace Centers would accordingly work in conjunction with the NATO-Russia Council (or else a newly formed NATO-EU-Russian strategic Council[22]) and be legitimized by the UN or OSCE. Each Center could furthermore help coordinate the activities of the European Union, the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), NATO's Partnership for Peace (PfP), among other international organizations and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). Each Peace Center could find ways to develop confidence and security building measures, inspect weapons systems, deploy peacekeepers, engage in the joint NATO-Russian-European protection of energy transit routes, coordinate social and economic policies—in addition to engaging in the implementation of joint missile defense systems, where necessary. Each of these Peace Centers could engage in many possible roles, such as helping to counter terrorism, human trafficking and drug smuggling, among other illicit activities.

As Kaliningrad, Sevastopol and Cyprus each represent a key focal point of geostrategic and geo-economic contention, an International Peace Center in each region could significantly ameliorate tensions throughout the Euro-Atlantic community. An International Peace Center in Kaliningrad could help reduce tensions between Russia, Belarus, Germany and the Baltic states (as well as ameliorate Russian tensions with the European Union and NATO). An International Peace Center in Sevastopol could reduce tensions between Russia and Ukraine (as well as ameliorate Russian tensions with the European Union and NATO). An International Peace Center in Cyprus could reduce tensions between Turkey and Greece (as well as ameliorate tensions between Turkey, Israel and the European Union).

In effect, Kaliningrad would be neutralized so that Russia could not be able to threaten the deployment of tactical nuclear weaponry, for example, but neither would Kaliningrad be able to secede from Russia. Tensions

---

[22] See Hall Gardner « Vers un Conseil stratégique russo-atlantique ? » *Politique Américaine* (No. 13, Spring 2009) In 2010, Germany and Russia proposed a new EU-Russia political and security structure, modeled on the NATO-Russia Council. The EU-Russia Council, according to Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavarov, "would be empowered to make practical decisions in the sphere of crisis management, that is, peacemaking." But the EU and Russia still need to coordinate with the US and NATO–Russia Council as well as with the NATO-Ukrainian Commission. What is needed is a new Euro-Atlantic Security Council.

between Ukraine and Russia could likewise be ameliorated, so that Russia would not claim that it needed such a heavy naval and military presence in Sevastopol to protect its energy exports. Compromise between Greece and Turkey over Cyprus and energy sources in the eastern Mediterranean could lead to the expansion of trade throughout the Mediterranean and Black Sea regions, eventually helping Greece and the European Union to lift themselves out of the global financial crisis—and in cooperation with Russia now entering the World Trade Organization. A portion of the revenues from the vast energy sources found in the eastern Mediterranean could help finance the costs of conflict resolution throughout the region, including Cyprus, the Caucasus, if not Israel and the Palestinians. An international trust fund for conflict resolution and development could be established with funding from eastern Mediterranean energy sources.

Sevastopol Peace Center

In addition to assisting the deployment of NATO-Russian-led Partnership for Peace peacekeepers in the Caucasus under a general UN or OSCE mandate, as previously discussed, a Sevastopol Peace Center could assist in ameliorating relations between Russia and Ukraine in the dispute over the Russian Black Sea fleet based in Sevastopol. Such an International Peace Center could furthermore work with the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) organization to help develop the entire region.

Under President Viktor Yushchenko, Kiev had pressed Russia to withdraw from its major naval port at Sevastopol which Russia had leased until 2017. Yet, in April 2010, the government of Viktor Yanukovych extended the Russian Black Sea Fleet's basing rights in Ukraine beyond the 2017 expiration date, by another 25 years, with a further five-year extension option to 2047. Kiev then stated that its non-aligned status did not permit it to accept membership in either NATO or the CSTO. Yet the dispute between Kiev and Moscow is still not resolved: Critics have argued that Ukraine's non-aligned status does not permit the stationing of foreign forces on sovereign Ukrainian territory. The April 2010 deal with Moscow permitted the stationing of Russian naval and air forces.[23]

---

[23] On April 21, 2010, newly elected Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovych and Russian President Dmitry Medvedev signed an agreement to prolong the Russian Fleet's basing rights in Ukraine beyond the 2017 expiration date, by another 25 years, with a further five-year extension option to 2047. In effect, deal is a trade

Moreover, the extension of the lease of Russian Black Sea fleet to at least 2047 did not resolve the ongoing disputes between Moscow and Kiev over the Sevastopol naval base or over energy transit financing. Russia and Ukraine are still in a quarrel over gas pricing and debt financing. And Kiev and Moscow have not yet settled the dispute over passage in the Kerch straits and Sea of Azov that began in 2003. There was an incident in September 2011 in which Ukraine blocked the passage of Russian vessels in the Kerch straits.[24]

Nevertheless, apparently burgeoning tensions and disputes between Russia and Ukraine do not necessarily rule out the eventual possibility of close NATO-Russian-Ukrainian cooperation—particularly if Moscow is given a legitimate *droit de regard* through the NATO-Russia Council, but remains in cooperation with Kiev. A Sevastopol Peace Center would consequently seek to counterbalance Russian-Ukrainian relations, so that Russia would feel confident enough that it could reduce its heavy naval and military presence in the Crimea and elsewhere in the region. In such a way, Russia could maintain its legitimate right to defend its energy export facilities at Novorossiysk which are hemmed in between the Ukrainian Crimea and Georgia—while playing a more positive role in the development of the entire Black Sea/ Caucasus region.

A Sevastopol Peace Center could also participate in the establishment of a joint NATO-Russian missile defense system. Here, Kiev, like Moscow, has discussed possibility of cooperating on Missile Defense systems with NATO. The dilemma once again is how to counterbalance Russian and Ukrainian strategic and economic interests and how to concurrently maintain Ukraine's essentially neutral status.

Working with the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) organization, a Sevastopol Peace Center could likewise provide joint protection for energy transit from the Caspian Sea to the Black Sea. Such an

---

off to sustain Ukrainian financial solvency in exchange for Russian predominance (despite Kiev's "non-bloc" status). Critics saw this as unconstitutional; the constitution, they argued, did not permit the stationing of foreign forces on sovereign Ukrainian territory; yet the April 2010 deal permitted the stationing of both naval and air forces. Ukraine's "non-bloc" status had not been clearly defined or defended. See Ukrainian protest in parliament against the decision to extend the lease of the Russian fleet.
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7qsRaBFw-AA http://en.rian.ru/infographics/20100423/158718722.html

[24] Taras Kuzio, "Poor Ukrainian-Russian Ties Reflect Yanukovych-Putin Relationship"
Jamestown Foundation (September 30, 2011):
http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=38477

International Center could play a role much like the original European Coal and Steel Community in the effort to assure that energy passing through Ukraine from Russia and the Caspian Sea makes it to Europe and other destinations, and that the transit system is properly financed, so that supplies are not disrupted over economic questions.

Kaliningrad Peace Center

A Kaliningrad Peace Center, much like that in Sevastopol, could likewise provide for the joint protection for energy transit routes throughout the Baltic region, in addition to providing radar systems for joint missile defenses, as has been proposed by then President Dmitri Medvedev. In the effort to enhance confidence between Kaliningrad and its neighbors, a Kaliningrad Peace Center could engage in conventional force inspections and verify reductions/ eliminations—if NATO-Russian negotiations over nuclear weaponry in Europe (as recently called for by Poland and Norway) can be initiated.[25] A Kaliningrad Peace Center would, in essence, neutralize the enclave and ease Russian concerns that the *oblast* might attempt to secede from the Russian Federation.

An International Peace Center in Kaliningrad would additionally seek to soften the edges in areas where NATO has already enlarged adjacent to CSTO territory while concurrently creating new forms of NATO-Russia-CSTO cooperation.[26] One step to enhance confidence has been to engage in joint NATO-Russian over-flights through the NRC Cooperative Airspace Initiative in 2011.[27] Another way might be to form joint NATO-Russian

[25] See Edmund E. Seay III, "Nuclear Dilemmas Remaining after Chicago" Nuclear Policy Paper No. 10 (Arms Control Association May 2012); Wilbert van der Zeijden, Susi Snyder and Peter Paul Ekker, *Exit Strategies: The case for redefining NATO consensus on US TNW* (IKV Pax Christi April 2012). See also, Global Security Newswire (May 15, 2012): http://www.nti.rsvp1.com/gsn/article/poland-norway-call-tactical-arms-control-pact-russia/?mgh=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.nti.org&mgf=1; Global Security Newswire (May 11, 2012) http://www.nti.rsvp1.com/gsn/article/nato-should-use-summit-address-us-tactical-nukes-europe-experts-say/?mgh=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.nti.org&mgf=1

[26] Euro-Atlantic Security Seminar in Brussels, East West Institute (July 27, 2009): http://www.ewi.info/euro-atlantic-security-seminar-brussels-0

[27] See discussion of NATO-Russian relations: Isabelle François, *The United States, Russia, Europe and Security: How to Address the "Unfinished Business" of the Post-Cold War Era* INSS Transatlantic Perspectives 2 (Washington, DC: National Defense University: April 2012). Despite limited joint NATO-Russian overflights in 2011, Russian incursions into Baltic airspace since 2004 to test NATO air defenses have raised calls for a more permanent NATO air policing in the Baltic region. "Regular air space violations by Russian jets underline need for NATO air-policing over Baltic states" 15 Minute.lt (April 26, 2012): http://www.15min.lt/en/article/in-

brigades, much like the Franco-German brigade, with Russian forces serving in joint units with NATO and deployed on both sides of NATO-Russian lines.

An International Peace Center in Kaliningrad could also work to bring Kaliningrad into a more cooperative political-economic relationship with the European Union. By coordinating political, social and economic policies, a Kaliningrad Center would seek to control illicit activities, and deal with the visa question and other socio-economic issues—so as to better develop and reform the *oblast* with European Union and Russian backing and assistance.

Cyprus Peace Center

A Cyprus Peace Center (ideally situated in-between the Greek and Turkish Cypriot sectors) could help oversee security in the eastern Mediterranean. Such a center could mediate between Greek and Turkish Cypriots through the temporary deployment of UN-mandated NATO Partnership for Peace (PfP) peacekeepers acceptable to all sides. If the dispute can finally be mediated by the UN, the deployment of peacekeepers may be necessary to enforce a bi-zonal and bi-communal settlement that would involve swaps of property and territory. Such PfP peacekeepers would move in to fill the place of Turkish forces.

Interestingly, the situation in northern Cyprus (given Turkish occupation and recognition) is similar to that in Georgia as only a few countries back Russia's decision to recognize South Ossetia and Abkhazia.[28] From this perspective, the UN proposal of Kofi Annan for a bi-zonal and bi-communal approach to the Cyprus dispute could serve as a model for a resolution of the Georgian dispute with Abkhazia and South Ossetia. In such a way, progress over Cyprus could provide a face saving way out for Moscow to resolve the debacle over South Ossetia and Abkhazia, among other not-so-"frozen conflicts"—before they begin to unfreeze.

---

lithuania/regular-air-space-violations-by-russian-jets-underline-need-for-nato-air-policing-over-baltic-states-525-214189. Each side appears to up the ante!

[28] An International Peace Center in Sevastopol could build upon Turkish calls after the August 2008 Georgia-Russia war for a "Caucasus Stability and Cooperation Platform." The latter had been supported by France, but not by the US or NATO (which was divided after the war between pro- and anti-Russian positions)— in that the Turkish plan appeared to give primacy to Russia over Georgia.

Moreover, given disputes between Greece and Turkey over offshore energy resources near Cyprus, the role of this International Peace Center could also include protection of energy transit and resources for the benefit of all parties. In such a way, Greece could reduce its high level of defense expenditure and find new opportunities for trade and development, while at the same time restructuring its heavily indebted political economy.

Assuming compromise involving ways to share offshore energy wealth can be found, the costs of peacekeeping—plus potential compensation for aggrieved Cypriots, if not other aggrieved parties throughout the region—could be paid for by sharing some of the financial proceeds from energy production. This step could lead to the establishment of an international trust fund for conflict resolution/mediation and development.

Eventually, an International Cyprus Peace Center could assist in peacekeeping between Israel and the Palestinians, as well as between Israel, Lebanon and Syria—likewise assuming political (and social) settlements can eventually be found to these seemingly intractable conflicts. The possibility of successful mediation evidently appears highly unlikely, at least in the near future, given ongoing conflict in Syria, accompanied by American, Israeli and Saudi disputes with Iran—tensions that are perhaps most reminiscent of the Balkan Wars before World War I. Nevertheless, the reality that such conflict appears to be escalating throughout the so-called "greater Middle East" actually points to the greater necessity to achieve a NATO-Russian entente or alliance so that NATO and Russia can better coordinate policy and so that they do not end up on opposite sides of a given conflict.

In many ways, the Cyprus question represents one of the primary stumbling blocks to the formation of a new framework for Euro-Atlantic security and development. Steps toward a resolution of the Cyprus question could help head off a crisis in which Ankara has threatened to 'freeze' relations with the EU once Cyprus presides over the European Union in mid-2012. As Ankara is directly involved in security questions involving both the Euro-Mediterranean and Black Sea regions, the resolution of the Cyprus dispute could help bring NATO-member Turkey into a new relationship with both the European Union and with Russia. A Cyprus Peace Center could consequently serve as the starting point for a more concerted NATO, Russian, European and Turkish approach to Euro-Atlantic security as a whole.

By focusing on eastern European energy sources and seeking to open trade between northern Cyprus and Turkey and throughout the Black Sea region as a whole, the establishment of three International Peace and Conflict Resolution Centers in Kaliningrad, Sevastopol and Cyprus could help open up opportunities in the booming Turkish market combined with the opportunities to be provided by Russian membership in the World Trade Organization (WTO). This alternative approach could indirectly help revitalize Europe in the midst of financial crisis, while in turn boosting Europe's partnership with both the United States and Russia; it could also permit the US, Europe and Russia to better coordinate their foreign and security policies.

VI. Toward a Euro-Atlantic Confederation

The proposal to establish a Euro-Atlantic confederation does not represent an alliance against China, India, Iran and the developing world. Instead, such an "alternative realist" approach (which opposes both hardline neoconservative and acquiescent neo-isolationist policies) would seek to engage China, India, Iran and other rising powers where possible in the establishment of "regional security and development communities" in key areas around the world. This approach initially focuses on the eastern Mediterranean, Black Sea region and the Caucasus in the effort to ameliorate US-European-Russian disputes in those regions, but does not stop there.

Another necessary diplomatic approach would be to bring Iran into cooperation with its Arab neighbors and with Israel in the effort to convince Tehran that a conventional arms and nuclear weapons rivalry in the so-called "greater Middle East" is not in the Iranian interest, nor that of the region, nor that of the world. Engaging Tehran diplomatically may eventually require the extension of overlapping US, European, Russian and Chinese security guarantees to Iran.[29] If such an accord can eventually be reached with Iran, by way of concerted diplomacy designed to establish peace between Iran, its Arab neighbors and Israel, then the necessity to plunge full speed ahead with Missile Defense could be greatly reduced.

---

[29] See my argument, Hall Gardner, *Averting Global War* (New York : Palgrave, 2010)

In the meantime, however, regardless of what transpires with Iran, Washington cannot permit Missile Defense question to undermine relations with Moscow. It is crucial for the US and Europe to remain engaged with Russia in the formation of a larger Euro-Atlantic confederation—in that Moscow can assert significant diplomatic pressure on Iran in an effort to change its policies. There is furthermore little that can be accomplished in the Black and Caspian Sea regions without Russian assistance: A modicum of peace in many ways depends upon deeper cooperation with Moscow which can concurrently obtain advantages from a closer entente or alliance relationship with the US and Europe. The concern raised here is that a number of conflicts may soon escalate throughout the "greater Middle East" and elsewhere; it is consequently absolutely essential to sustain positive relations with Moscow, and to work in a concerted fashion in the effort to manage those conflicts and prevent them from widening, if possible.

If, however, the US and Europe cannot reach out or sustain more positive relations with Russia, in the formation of an entente or alliance relationship, there is a considerable danger that an alienated Russia could opt for an even tougher policy in the effort to break out of its perceived isolation and "encirclement." If the US and Europe cannot soon find ways to work in concert with Moscow to quell a number of burgeoning disputes, then it is possible that one or more of these conflicts could—and in the not-so-distant future—draw NATO and Russia into support for opposing sides.