

# NATO's Role in Democratic Reform



Jos Boonstra



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As NATO has moved from being a primarily military alliance to seeking more political roles, it has become pertinent to consider its impact on democratisation. At first glance, it might seem incongruent even to deliberate on the democracy promotion relevance of an essentially military organisation. But, NATO's successive enlargements have often hinged on the fulfilment of democratic preconditions in aspirant members, while technical assistance provided under the Partnership for Peace (PfP) and other programmes has increasingly focused on the reform of civil-military relations. Assessment is consequently warranted of whether NATO has come to play any positive role in encouraging democratisation across different regions, or whether its impact on political liberalisation has been either marginal or even negative. This paper argues that support for democracy has increasingly infused NATO policies, but that the organisation's role in democracy promotion is circumscribed by strategic considerations; most often an indirect side effect of other aims; and most relevant to the niche area of defence reform.

The two rounds of NATO enlargement since the Cold War have resulted in ten new members from Central and Eastern Europe and are generally regarded as a success in terms of contributing towards democratic consolidation. Today, NATO is confronted with new enlargement challenges and a radically different strategic context. A new post-Cold War enlargement debate among NATO members is necessary. The three aspirant Balkan countries – Albania, Croatia, and Macedonia – are likely to receive invitations in 2008, and others from that region will probably join in time. In the Balkans, European Union (EU) and NATO enlargement are likely run in parallel, as was the case with earlier enlargements, with the EU supporting democratisation in general and NATO focusing on defence reform.

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In contrast, in Eastern Europe and the Southern Caucasus these processes will most likely not run in parallel. The EU is unlikely to offer countries from these regions membership talks any time soon whereas NATO might. This makes it important for the Alliance to discuss if it is willing to offer a Membership Action Plan (MAP) to Georgia and Ukraine. NATO will have to work without the beneficial democratisation aspects of the EU membership carrot also being on offer. Notwithstanding its 'open door policy', NATO needs a new enlargement debate that will not only assess if Georgia and Ukraine are welcome any time soon, but also if in the longer run the Alliance is willing to put substantial effort into making Armenia and Azerbaijan members, as well as think about countries from Central Asia. In this debate NATO will need carefully to weigh strategic objectives against democratic credentials.

NATO's core expertise lies in the defence area. Here it can make a contribution to democracy promotion in several countries and regions. In terms of organisational efficiency NATO compares favourably to the EU and the Organisation for Security and Operation in Europe (OSCE). This makes it tempting for it to do too much, which could result in overextended missions and objectives. With regard to NATO's practical work in democracy promotion, this risk exists in applying the holistic concept of Security Sector Reform (SSR). Although SSR has gained prominence and wide acceptance as a concept, NATO would be well advised to focus on what it is good at, namely the narrower issue of defence reform. The Alliance does not have notable expertise on promoting civilian manned security structures, although some of its activities and interests do touch on aspects of SSR, such as intelligence. And NATO stresses that in dealing with the threat of terrorism security agencies have become more intertwined, leading to a broader SSR approach to reform. But, NATO is still at its best in working on the organisation of defence, while a more intensive focus on broader SSR issues would risk duplicating the work of other organisations, such as the EU and OSCE.

Defence reform is an important driver in NATO's Partnership for Peace (PfP). Launched in 1994, with

former Soviet republics and Warsaw Pact countries, this has fostered military cooperation, built trust with former enemies and contributed significantly to stability in the Euro-Atlantic area.

However, the initially innovative character of PfP has faded. The Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC), which gives political guidance to PfP, has become less effective as a forum for dialogue due to differences between its members. Authoritarian regimes sit next to democracies. NATO's efforts in revitalising the Mediterranean Dialogue (MD) and setting up the Istanbul Cooperation Process (ICI) for the Middle East – both based on the PfP template – lack commitment and tangible results. NATO should consider restructuring its partnership policy so as to do away with current imbalances, and restructure these initiatives better to suit NATO and its partners' objectives. It will be difficult fully to change the current partnership catalogue, since both NATO and its partners have become attached to the various initiatives in operation. The current trend towards building new partnerships without reviewing and possibly terminating existing ones risks confusion. NATO should consider establishing one large partnership, based on the benefits of dialogue and covering all current partnerships. Subsequently, NATO could build smaller, more effective partnerships that would include democratic preconditions.

Not only the partnerships but also the tools used by NATO within PfP need to be revised and simplified. The number of plans and processes has mushroomed over the years. Some are related to membership, some simply to dialogue. Others refer to specific areas of defence reform or technical cooperation. One transparent menu from which partners could pick and choose in consultation with NATO would temper the growing confusion felt by partner countries.

## Democracy and NATO Enlargement

In the preamble of the North Atlantic Treaty it is suggested that democracy is essential to NATO, and that democratic values will be defended through collective security:

*The Parties to this Treaty ... are determined to safeguard the freedom, common heritage and civilisation of their peoples, founded on the principles of democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law.<sup>2</sup>*

For security reasons during the Cold War, in practice NATO members allowed less democratic and even authoritarian states into the Alliance. Portugal was one of the founding members, and Greece and Turkey joined three years later, in 1952; in different periods all of these states were ruled by fiercely anti-communist military regimes. Strategically, security imperatives outweighed the principles of liberty and democracy. Some critics doubt that NATO can be seen as based on a common commitment to democratic principles.<sup>3</sup>

But NATO has gradually become a community of democratic states. Only Turkey is regarded by Freedom House as less than fully democratic, whereas in 1980 one in four members were either 'partly or not free'.<sup>4</sup> For many observers and politicians, especially in Central and Eastern Europe, NATO's successive rounds of enlargement have played a crucial role in prompting democratic reform.

NATO's efforts in transferring democratic values and applying leverage for reform through conditionality are

<sup>2</sup> The North Atlantic Treaty, 4 April 1949, Washington DC, <http://www.nato.int/docu/basicxt/treaty.htm>.

<sup>3</sup> Helene Sjurgen (2004), 'On the Identity of NATO', *International Affairs*, 80:4; pp. 694 and 702-703.

<sup>4</sup> See [www.freedomhouse.org](http://www.freedomhouse.org). Also, the Chapter on NATO (pp. 73-90) in Edward R. McMahon and Scott H. Baker, *Piecing a Democratic Quilt?*, Bloomfield CT: Kumarian Press, 2006, p. 90.

strongest in the case of countries that have a clear membership perspective. Still, some would argue that the Central and Eastern European countries that applied for membership in the early 1990s were already committed to democracy well before the NATO membership carrot was offered. For Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary it was clear that they would eventually join NATO; the only open question was 'when'.<sup>5</sup> Applicant states were interested in the security benefits of membership, not in its effects on democratisation. Today, this is invariably still the case. Macedonia, for instance, hoped to obtain NATO membership during the 2006 Riga summit primarily as protection against the prospect of violence erupting as a result of decisions due to be taken on Kosovo's status. Macedonia is committed to democracy, would have been so without NATO's encouragement, and has sought membership with clear security objectives in mind.

NATO enlargement has always been a political and strategic decision, rather than a purely technical one. The 1995 NATO Enlargement Study states that:

*Decisions on enlargement will be for NATO itself [...] 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 [...] Ultimately, Allies will decide by consensus whether to invite each new member to join according to their judgment of whether doing so will contribute to security and stability in the North Atlantic area.*<sup>6</sup>

While applicants are obliged to report on progress in democratic consolidation through Membership Action Plan assessments, final decisions on enlargement also take political and strategic factors into account. Does NATO want to guarantee the territorial integrity of a state through article five? Can the state in question

contribute to NATO's capabilities? Will membership of a particular state enhance security in the region or might neighbouring states feel threatened by this country's membership?

Despite this, several factors have pushed NATO to attribute more importance to the democracy promotion aspects of enlargement. First, NATO needed a new purpose after the Cold War – following the much-cited suggestion that 'NATO should go out of area or out of business'.<sup>7</sup> Although this remark referred primarily to NATO's *geographical* remit, some in NATO saw promoting democracy – foremost in the defence area – as a means of NATO retaining relevance in *thematic* terms. Second, in practice non-democracies, like Belarus and (also for reasons not related to democracy) Russia, have been shunned. NATO did not admit undemocratic countries in its post-Cold War enlargement, and does scrutinise applicants' democratic credentials.

Third, the NATO carrot could be seen as powerful in the indirect sense, in terms of the argument that was frequently made that stability is necessary to the establishment and consolidation of democracy. It was in this regard that many new members stressed that the prospect of NATO membership was in some senses more immediate and potent than that of EU accession.<sup>8</sup> Some commentators argue that NATO's judgement of the democratic credentials of applicant countries informed the EU's assessment of compliance with its Copenhagen criteria. Fourth, it is argued that intensive contact with NATO, especially the prospect of membership, denationalised countries' defence strategies resulting in more stable relations among different states in Central and Eastern Europe, and thus better opportunities for democracy to blossom.<sup>9</sup> Finally, through consultations with NATO aspiring members became familiar with the business of defence reform, while at the same time seeking confirmation

<sup>5</sup> Dan Reiter (2001), 'Why NATO Enlargement does not Spread Democracy', *International Security*, 25:4; pp. 59-60.

<sup>6</sup> Study on NATO Enlargement issued by the Heads of State and Government participating in the Meeting of the North Atlantic Council, <http://www.nato.int/docu/basicxt/enl-9501.htm> (Brussels, 3 September 1995), Chapter 1.

<sup>7</sup> Senator Richard Lugar, Remarks delivered to the Open Forum of the US State Department, 2 August 1993, Washington DC.

<sup>8</sup> Zoltan Barany (2004), 'NATO's Peaceful Advance', *Journal of Democracy*, 15:1; p. 63.

<sup>9</sup> Rachel Epstein (2005), 'NATO Enlargement and the Spread of Democracy: Evidence and Expectations', *Security Studies*, 14:1; p. 63.

and approval from NATO with regards to progress made on such reform.<sup>10</sup> This gave NATO leverage in the domestic processes of democratisation.

In two rounds of enlargement ten new countries joined, and the process will most likely continue, albeit at a slower pace. Albania, Croatia, and Macedonia participate in MAP, and their membership is expected to be announced at NATO's 2008 Bucharest summit. It is unlikely that all three will have, at their time of admittance, democratic credentials as strong as those of the Central and East European states that joined in 1999 and 2004. In the still volatile south-eastern European region the prospect of integration seems to be a condition for stability, and not the other way around.<sup>11</sup> The primary goal of stability in the Balkans is likely to lead NATO to argue that offering membership to states in the region that are not yet fully democratic will help security and that this by extension will assist democratic reform. In this sense, future enlargement is likely to Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia, and perhaps an independent Kosovo.

In short, while there are good grounds for arguing that NATO has used enlargement to promote democratic values in aspiring members its impact specifically on democratisation has invariably been of a secondary order. The democracy-related entry preconditions set by NATO are not tightly defined. Final decisions on membership are essentially political and largely based on NATO's strategic objectives. The best argument for stating that NATO spreads democratic values through enlargement is the more indirect one of imagining what Europe, including the Balkans, would look like without an active NATO – most likely, less stable and less democratic.

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## The Role of NATO Partnerships

The variety of NATO partnerships has gradually increased. NATO is no longer a regional organisation but a global actor with broad security interests. As a result, new initiatives within partnerships have mushroomed to accommodate national and regional circumstances, while the partnerships themselves have become broader and less targeted. It is widely acknowledged that NATO needs to restructure its partnerships in order to make them more tightly defined and more effective. One option is to emphasise geography and maintain a regional approach with the aim of regional stability. That is, NATO would further promote regional cooperation and good relations between its partners. Or, the primary criterion could be the functionality of partnerships. This would compel NATO to downgrade the importance of broad partnerships such as PfP and engage in more effective ones on a country-by-country basis. Here, the Alliance would work with countries that have mutual interests in the fields of defence cooperation and countering security threats. Alternatively, NATO could centre its partnerships on the values of democracy and good governance. In this case, NATO could further herald its role as promoter of democracy through its partnerships.<sup>12</sup> These three options may not be entirely mutually exclusive, but priorities have to be ordered.

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid., p. 69.

<sup>11</sup> David Greenwood (ed.), *The Western Balkan Candidates for NATO Membership and Partnership*, Groningen: Centre for European Security Studies, Harmonie Paper 18, 2005, p. 106.

<sup>12</sup> These three 'external criteria' for reforming NATO partnerships are used by Carlo Masala and Katariina Saariluoma, 'Renewing NATO's Partnerships: Towards a Coherent and Efficient Framework', *Forum Paper*, NATO Defense College Research Branch, Rome, May 2006; pp. 32-34.

### Info box 1 A basic overview of NATO Partnerships

The **Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC)** is a forum that consists of the 26 NATO members and 23 partner countries from the Euro-Atlantic Area. The EAPC was created in 1997 and provides the overall political framework for NATO's cooperation with partner countries and the bilateral relationships developed between NATO and individual partner countries in the **Partnership for Peace (PfP)** programme that was set up in 1994. PfP is the framework through which NATO works on a practical basis with Albania, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Finland, Georgia, Ireland, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Montenegro, Russia, Serbia, Sweden, Switzerland, Macedonia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan. To do so NATO devised tailor-made PfP initiatives referred to as tools (see info box 2). The **NATO Russia Council (NRC)** was created in 2002 and brings together NATO allies with Russia to develop cooperation and use it as a forum for political dialogue. The **NATO-Ukraine Commission (NUC)** of 1997 is the forum through which NATO and Ukraine give political guidance to cooperation on a range of security-related subjects. It also discusses the extensive defence reform process in which Ukraine is engaged and its membership aspirations. The **South East Europe Initiative (SEEI)** was launched in 1999 during the Kosovo conflict. In this initiative NATO sought to contribute to regional stability in the Balkans. Former Yugoslav republics that were not yet PfP member participated in the programmes that are part of this initiative. The **Mediterranean Dialogue (MD)** of 1994 brings NATO allies together with Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia. It aims to contribute to regional stability and mutual understanding. In 2004, the MD was upgraded to a partnership increasing the possibilities for practical cooperation. The **Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (ICI)** created during the 2004 Istanbul summit offers countries from the broader Middle East practical security cooperation on a bilateral basis. To date Bahrain, Qatar, Kuwait, and the United Arab Emirates are ICI members. The last official partnership is the **EU-NATO** strategic partnership based on shared strategic interests, which seeks to make both international organisations complementary. Albeit not an official partnership yet, NATO works with several so-called **Contact Countries**. Australia, Japan, New Zealand, and South Korea cooperate with NATO in several areas and contribute to NATO missions (though often only financially).

\*Part of the information presented here is derived from NATO Public Diplomacy Division, *The Riga Summit Guide* and the NATO web site, [www.nato.int](http://www.nato.int).

PfP is the overarching mechanism that NATO has at its disposal for promoting democracy, as the framework documents suggest:

*This Partnership is established as an expression of a joint conviction that stability and security in the Euro-Atlantic area can be achieved only through cooperation and common action. Protection and promotion of fundamental freedoms and human rights, and safeguarding of freedom, justice, and peace through democracy are shared values fundamental to the Partnership.<sup>13</sup>*

More importantly, PfP is also the mechanism through which NATO helps partners in defence reform, partly consisting of the promotion of democratic civil-military relations (CMR). Of the different partnerships PfP also shows the largest variety among its members: some are partners with a membership perspective; others are neutral Western European states, such as Switzerland; and some are authoritarian regimes such as Belarus and some Central Asian states.

Initially, PfP membership was offered in 1994 to all former Soviet republics and European non-member countries. Later on, the Alliance sought to use PfP membership as a carrot to urge former Yugoslav republics to pursue democratic reform and align with international standards. This was the case in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), which was told that before joining PfP it had both to reorganise and democratise its defence structures and show full cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) in extraditing war crime suspects.

This second demand weighed even heavier on Serbia, which did not hurry to deliver prime war crime suspect, Ratko Mladic, to The Hague. This notwithstanding, Serbia stated that joining PfP was a national priority, and indeed made substantial progress in defence reform. A 'PfP-light', consisting of a Tailored

<sup>13</sup> Partnership for Peace: Framework Document, <http://www.nato.int/docu/basic/txt/b940110b.htm> (Brussels, 10 January 1994).

Cooperation Programme (TCP) also failed to yield tangible results, as the main indictees were still not handed over to the ICTY. At the November 2006 Riga summit NATO 'gave in', allowing both Serbia and BiH to join PfP. Conditionality had failed, and demanding democratic change through the withholding of PfP membership had been counterproductive. NATO concluded that in this case the importance of regional stability and the Alliance's strategic interest outweighed the desirability of continued pressure for democratic reform and international cooperation. It was reasoned that support for democratisation would be better served by inclusion rather than exclusion.

NATO is constantly confronted with the balance of priorities between, on the one hand, holding firm on democratic preconditions and, on the other hand, the desire to strengthen dialogue and defence cooperation. Often, NATO chooses to work with authoritarian regimes, in a low-key manner. PfP member Belarus is a good example. In other cases, NATO has chosen to suspend cooperation, as after the May 2005 massacres in Uzbekistan. (Here, advice and dialogue ceased, although Uzbekistan remained formally within the PfP).

In the case of Russia, NATO has not stressed democracy as an issue for dialogue. Indeed, cooperation has grown since the NATO-Russia Council (NRC) was established in 2002. Russia has increasingly used NATO as a platform to announce strategic plans and discuss global politics. The NRC works on many pragmatic security issues, such as defence reform (excluding democratic control), arms control, crisis management and counter-terrorism. For Russia, it is important that the NRC does not interfere with domestic affairs or issue opinions about partners' values.<sup>14</sup> This is why Russia refused to take up NATO's offer of initiating an Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP) – this PfP tool would impinge on domestic affairs, and create for Russia a sense of inferiority, while Moscow wants to be seen as an equal

partner. Russia has become more assertive and is less inclined constructively to work with NATO. The NRC risks becoming a political battlefield over Kosovo and missile defence plans.

Other post-Soviet countries did accept an IPAP within the PfP framework. Georgia was the first country to do so in 2004, and has since made progress towards meeting the plan's democratic obligations. According to NATO, 'The IPAPs are designed to bring together all the various cooperation mechanisms through which a Partner interacts with the Alliance, sharpening the focus of activities to better support their domestic reform efforts'.<sup>15</sup> For Georgians the IPAP is essential, since they are seeking membership. They have even applied NATO defence reform templates to other sectors of society seen as in need of reform. For others the arguments for participation vary. Moldova is neutral and, consequently, does not aim at membership. For Moldavians the IPAP is a way to attract assistance in reforming the armed forces, and part of Moldova's efforts to connect to the European mainstream, mainly integration into the EU. Under the heading 'democratic reforms, human rights, rule of law, and the fight against corruption', it commits itself to modify parliamentary regulations in order to meet European standards and to deepen dialogue between state institutions and civil society.<sup>16</sup>

It is impossible for NATO to demand that IPAP countries meet their targets and benchmarks in this field, or any other for that matter; nonetheless, democratisation is a substantial part of these bilateral programmes. Whereas some countries take the IPAPs seriously, others are less inclined to deepen their democratic reform process. Rather, they participate because of military cooperation advantages, or with other political benefits in mind. As one NATO official noted, Kazakhstan has become increasingly active recently, showing that it works on IPAP goals. It hopes to win the OSCE chairmanship in 2009, and needs to

<sup>14</sup> Stephen White et al., 'NATO: The View from the East', *European Security*, 15:2, June 2006; p. 168.

<sup>15</sup> NATO Public Diplomacy Division (2006), *The Riga Summit Guide*, Chapter 13, on NATO's partnerships, [www.nato.int](http://www.nato.int).

<sup>16</sup> Individual Partnership Action Plan, part II, 4, May 2006, Republic of Moldova.

show OSCE members – roughly identical to NATO and PfP members – that nominally it shares the democratic ideals of the organisation.

In countries that take part in the Mediterranean Dialogue and the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative, NATO does not push for democracy, according to a high-ranking NATO official. On the other hand, it does try tentatively to work with partners on institution-building, which, in turn, may be beneficial to democracy. The main areas of cooperation and issues under discussion in the ICI include advice on defence issues; military cooperation; coordination in fighting terrorism; non-proliferation of nuclear weapons; civil emergency planning; and border security.<sup>17</sup>

The Mediterranean Dialogue is somewhat more comprehensive in the issues it addresses but democratisation is not on the agenda. Mediterranean partners are mostly unwilling to democratise and do not liaise with NATO in the pursuit of membership. Their main interests are military cooperation and increasing defence capabilities and know-how. After the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001, some NATO members, principally the US, also saw a role for the Alliance in democracy promotion in the region. In 2004 the ICI was consequently established. Still, cooperation on reform has remained limited. It is also questionable how committed NATO is to enhancing its ties with Muslim countries. The focus of NATO's international staff is still firmly on Eastern Europe. NATO has few people on its payroll that speak Arabic or have extensive knowledge of Arab and Islamic regions.

There are several reasons why NATO's democratisation promotion role is limited in Muslim countries. First, NATO is regarded by many Muslims as an extension of US policies, driven by energy security. It is only in the case of the Balkans, where NATO came to protect Muslims, that the opinion is more favourable.<sup>18</sup> Second, NATO members in practice still

see cooperation with undemocratic regimes as desirable in order to safeguard stability.<sup>19</sup> Third, most, if not all, MD and ICI countries have a poor record of civil-military relations; different security services – including the armed forces – are closely connected to particular groups in the ruling classes. Democratic reform of these relations is seen as a threat to such regimes. For its part, NATO does not have meaningful leverage over reform, since Arab countries do not participate in the OSCE Code of Conduct, which sets basic standards in democratic control of security services. What is more, as mentioned above, NATO does not have financial incentives to offer. A last point relates to Israel, which also participates in the MD. NATO has avoided getting involved in talks on the Israel-Palestinian conflict. Moreover, many NATO countries believe that Israel's military superiority in the region is essential for its survival. NATO's assistance in democratisation of defence establishments, in conjunction with military cooperation and advice, would make the militaries of Arabic countries more effective and efficient. This is something that Israel does not want to happen. Regional stability and cooperation through dialogue in an essentially bilateral format prevail over democracy promotion in the MD and ICI partnerships.

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## NATO Operations

The third engagement NATO has with non-members is through military operations. NATO is engaged in a variety of operations where democracy is not an issue; for instance, in Darfur, where the Alliance assists the African Union's peacekeeping mission with strategic airlifts. In Afghanistan, where the ISAF mission is under heavy pressure from an insurgency movement, institutions need to be built from scratch, taking precedence over pristine democratic procedure. Differences exist within NATO moreover over whether

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<sup>17</sup> NATO Public Diplomacy Division (2006), *op. cit.*, chapters 16 and 17 on the MD and ICI, [www.nato.int](http://www.nato.int).

<sup>18</sup> Francis Ghilès, 'Bridging Cultural Divisions', *NATO Review*, 4, 2005.

<sup>19</sup> Fred Tanner, 'NATO's Role in Defence Cooperation and Democratisation in the Middle East', *The International Spectator*, 39:4, October-December 2004; p. 107.

to prioritise the fight against the Taliban or state-building. The Alliance has produced a NATO-Afghanistan Charter that contains many PfP elements – some related to democracy – which might be taken up when the situation is more favourable. Up to this point it is a hollow framework, according to one NATO official. Eventually it will be mainly civil society organisations that will implement the Charter through a range of projects.

The best opportunities for democratisation initiatives by NATO have been and still are in the Balkans. After the transfer of the SFOR mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina to the EU, Kosovo is the main area where NATO has a large peacekeeping mission. NATO had the opportunity to engage in the democratisation of security structures but its efforts were half-hearted in democratising and building the Kosovo Protection Corps (KPC) into a modern civil emergency capacity. The KFOR mission is essentially a military operation that leaves little space for democratisation work. Moreover, enthusiasm for working with the KPC and setting up initiatives to make it into a democratically accountable force depended on the particular KFOR commander in charge, and thus not on directives from NATO's civilian staff.<sup>20</sup> Arguably, this was a missed opportunity for NATO – although KFOR needed to remain impartial and could not fully support the KPC against the will of the Serb minority and Serbia.

It would be unfair to state that NATO deliberately distances itself from democracy promotion in countries where it is militarily active. Rather, the military personnel are simply not equipped to engage in democracy promotion and NATO members generally send and involve few civilians in these missions. Also, in most cases there are no frameworks in place, such as a partnership programme that gives guidance and provides coordination within NATO civilian structures. Operations such as the current one in Kosovo are mandated to provide security for civilians and stabilise the country. However, these are presented as

prerequisites for building democracy. Moreover, NATO does cooperate with other organisations that do have the task of engaging in democratisation. One senior political officer at NATO opined in this respect that NATO performs at its best on the ground in conjunction with the EU, the OSCE and others.

Unfortunately this cooperation is not as intense at a high-level or on an institutional basis. Cooperation – including some joint planning – between these democracy providers would be beneficial but has not got off the ground. As one expert in NATO quips, the EU and NATO are still like two elephants running through the same city without ever meeting. EU-NATO partnership currently does not go much beyond security cooperation, mainly through the Berlin plus arrangement which gives the EU access to NATO assets. Institutional streamlining in promoting values is almost non-existent.

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## Defence Institution Building

NATO does have a role in promoting democratic style civil-military relations in countries that are receptive to defence reform. In 1997 a NATO official gave an overview of what he saw as the denominators of democratic control of armed forces.<sup>21</sup> First, a constitutional and legislative structure with clearly defined responsibilities; second, clearly defined civilian control over the ministry of defence and the military establishment, with civilian officials of a government having key roles in both; third, substantive and detailed parliamentary oversight; fourth, transparency of decision-making; and, fifth, an informed national debate on security.<sup>22</sup> Civilian control denotes a

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<sup>21</sup> In this paper the concepts of democratic control and civilian control are used simultaneously. The reader should bear in mind that in the literature on civil-military relations differences exist between both concepts.

<sup>22</sup> Marco Carnovale, 'NATO partners and allies: Civil-military relations and democratic control of the armed forces', *NATO Review*, 2, 1997; p. 33.

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<sup>20</sup> Erik Petersen, 'The Kosovo Protection Corps', *CESS Occasional Paper*, September 2005, [www.cess.org](http://www.cess.org), p. 5.

situation where '[a]ll decisions of government, including national security, are to be made or approved by officials outside the professional armed forces, in a democracy, by popular elected officeholders and their appointees'.<sup>23</sup>

Democratic civilian control of military relations has increased considerably, especially in Eastern Europe. Three reasons have been suggested for this: first, military professionalism increased as a result of foreign education, which, in turn, led to a better understanding of the military's role in democratic society; second, militaries have learned over time that they are not equipped to solve all of a country's economic and social problems, and that the coherence, efficiency, and discipline of the military are better safeguarded by exclusion from politics; and, third, reform of civil-military relations is rather orderly and better manageable than, for example, reforming the economy.<sup>24</sup>

In this sense, NATO has assisted the process of change. Military officers from countries all over the world received training in the US and elsewhere. Also, NATO has been training officers from its partner countries in the NATO Defence College (NDC) in Rome and the NATO School in Oberammergau, and is currently even extending these efforts to North African countries and the Middle East. And the relatively manageable, self-contained nature of civil-military reform meant that there was not much opposition to reform plans from sectors other than the military. Thus, NATO could more readily influence military reform in partner countries.

While in the 1990s CMR was 'the only show in town', nowadays the concept has become somewhat blurred, even for NATO. The goal was to attain democratic style civil-military relations and civilian control. The subjects of attention in obtaining this goal were the armed forces in particular and the defence establishment in general. The process of democratising defence was

referred to as defence reform, but the latter is properly understood as broader in its aims and also encompasses technical reforms such as the downsizing and restructuring of the armed forces. These technical aspects of defence reform can be seen as contributing to increased democratic management of the defence establishment, since increased quality and appropriateness of the defence organisation often go hand in hand with establishing democratic control. However, the issue became more complex with the introduction of the holistic concept of Security Sector Reform (SSR), which has received widespread attention among both academic circles and international organisations such as the EU, OECD and UN, and includes, for instance, reform of police, intelligence and border control services. This concept is often attributed to NATO to describe work done in the field of defence reform with the goal of strengthening democratic control. But NATO is most concerned with military-political affairs, and while involved in some aspects of SSR has its niche in the defence sphere and not the various other parts of the security sector.

Because some NATO members were not enthusiastic about the Alliance's use of the term SSR the latest initiative taken by NATO in the democratisation of defence is called the Partnership Action Plan Defence Institution Building (PAP-DIB). This term is also somewhat misleading, giving the impression that NATO would only focus its efforts on the defence organisation while in fact institutions such as the parliament, the judiciary and civil society are also addressed. PAP-DIB was created by the EAPC during the Istanbul summit in 2004 and is the clearest and most straightforward initiative NATO has undertaken in the field of the democratisation of defence. The document outlines ten 'commandments' ranging from developing effective and transparent democratic control of defence to ensuring international cooperation and good neighbourly relations in defence and security matters.<sup>25</sup> Although it is an overarching concept of what NATO and PfP partners regard as a checklist of

<sup>23</sup> Richard H. Kohn (1997), 'How democracies Control the Military', *Journal of Democracy*, 8:4; p. 142.

<sup>24</sup> Samuel P. Huntington (1995), 'Reforming Civil-Military Relations', *Journal of Democracy*, 6:4; pp. 11-12.

<sup>25</sup> Partnership Action Plan on Defence Institution Building (PAP-DIB), <http://www.nato.int/docu/basicxt/b040607e.htm> (Brussels, 7 June 2004).

things needed to create democratic defence policy-making and control of defence, it is mainly designed for countries that have developed an Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP). In Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, and Moldova specific activities are set up to meet the PAP-DIB goals. Together with the OSCE Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security and the PfP Framework Document, the PAP-DIB initiative can be regarded as a regime aimed at both establishing and safeguarding democratic control of armed forces.<sup>26</sup>

PAP-DIB is often referred to as a part of the PfP tool kit (see box 2). This imaginary toolbox consists of a plethora of plans, procedures, processes and concepts. Some are obligatory, most are free to be made use of by all partners, while others are designed for specific states. Over the years the number of PfP tools has increased substantially. The whole mechanism has become difficult to comprehend for countries in the Euro-Atlantic area that seek closer ties with NATO. The proliferation of initiatives and acronyms in PfP is a result of NATO's promise to tailor its programmes to the specific needs of partners and the particularities of different regions. Moreover, to avoid the membership issue in programmes with countries where NATO was hesitant to commit itself to enlargement, new initiatives had to be designed. This was the case in 2002 when Ukraine was offered an Action Plan. A few years later an Intensified Dialogue with Georgia and Ukraine was added; both countries would have liked to be part of the MAP process, but NATO wanted to support reform and strengthen ties without granting MAP status.

<sup>26</sup> The Code of Conduct (Budapest, 3 December 1994) can be found at [http://www.osce.org/documents/html/pdf/html/4270\\_en.pdf.html](http://www.osce.org/documents/html/pdf/html/4270_en.pdf.html) and the Partnership for Peace: Framework Document (Brussels, 10 January 1994) on <http://www.nato.int/docu/basicxt/b940110b.htm>.

#### Info box 2

#### A basic outline of NATO Partnership for Peace 'tools'

The **Individual Partnership Plan (IPP)** is formulated every two years by individual partners in consultation with NATO, and is the basis of cooperation within PfP. The document makes clear the goals of partners' participation in PfP. In establishing an IPP partners can choose from an extensive menu of PfP activities, called the **Euro-Atlantic Partnership Work Plan (EAPWP)**, which consists of military exercises, official NATO visits, workshops and so forth. The **Planning and Review Process (PARP)** is a military-oriented tool based on NATO's own force planning system. PARP has two objectives. The first is to increase interoperability with partners so that they can contribute to training exercises and NATO missions. The second is defence reform aimed at making partners' defence organisation *appropriate, affordable and acceptable*. Most PfP countries have a PARP in place. The **Membership Action Plan (MAP)** is meant to prepare partners for membership and is not automatically offered to all those who show an interest. Neither does MAP status guarantee accession to NATO. It is meant to facilitate reform with NATO assistance and is a mechanism to monitor progress. Currently Albania, Croatia and Macedonia participate in MAP. The **Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP)** that was launched in 2002 is more in-depth than the IPPs and is meant for PfP countries that want to further their relations with NATO and step up their reform activities with the assistance of NATO. At this moment Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan and Moldova have IPAPs with NATO. Instead of an IPAP or a MAP, Ukraine has an annual **Action Plan (AP)**. The plan is meant to bring Ukraine closer to Euro-Atlantic structures through work on defence reform, but falls short of a clear membership perspective. Whereas the AP sets out long-term objectives, NATO and Ukraine also focus on short-term action in an **Intensified Dialogue (ID)**. This initiative has a strong emphasis on democratisation, defence reform and informing the Ukrainian public about NATO. Georgia too has an ID alongside an IPAP. The **Partnership Action Plan Defence Institution Building (PAP-DIB)** was launched by NATO in 2004 to work specifically with PfP members in the Southern Caucasus and Central Asia on building effective and democratically responsible defence institutions. PAP-DIB is not to be concluded on an individual basis between NATO and a partner, but should be seen as a concept with guidelines on the democratisation of defence structures. In any case, it is closely related to the IPAP process that NATO is engaged in with Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, and Moldova.

\*This PfP 'tool kit' is not all-inclusive, but it does sum up the most essential tools that NATO and partners have at their disposal and that can be related to democratisation of defence. Part of the information presented here is derived from NATO Public Diplomacy Division, *The Riga Summit Guide* and Susan Pond, 'Understanding the PfP Tool Kit', *NATO Review*, 1, 2004.

The MAP, AP and IPAP documents that individual partners agreed on with NATO all have clear references to democratic values in general, as well as more specific ones to democratic reform in the defence sphere. The documents have become increasingly similar and contain overlapping chapters. In the MAP and Ukrainian AP the first of five chapters deals with political and economic issues, including the level of democracy. Democratic control and defence policy-making are mostly part of the second chapter on defence and military issues. Progress is assessed by NATO more rigorously in the case of MAP than in the AP and the IPAP. Also, conditionality in MAP is much stronger than in the case of the AP and IPAPs because of the membership perspective it contains. Nonetheless, the IPAP documents represent a commitment on the part of the PfP member. They pave the way for NATO to criticise lack of progress, if necessary, through yearly assessments, while it can also offer assistance and influence the democratisation of defence. It is through consultation and cooperation with willing partners that NATO tries to gather enthusiasm for democratic change. Furthermore, the commitment of partners through an IPAP or other PfP tools also widens the prospects for other international organisations and a variety of NGOs that can refer to these programmes.

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## NATO Assets

If NATO uses several tools in PfP that also address reform of CMR, how then does the organisation go about assisting these countries in establishing democratic practices in defence? There is no straightforward answer to this question, since NATO's practical assistance in this field is diversified and somewhat confusing. The first reason for this is that the major part of the programmes is implemented by organisations that are not part of NATO structures, but support the Alliances' objectives. For example, the secretariat of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly is involved in training parliamentary staff of PfP countries parliaments. Another organisation that is

close to NATO though not a part of its structure is the Atlantic Treaty Association (ATA), which consists of civil society organisations in member states and partner countries that support NATO policy in general. These institutes are sometimes also active in education programmes.

Second, NATO does not have a substantial budget for democracy promotion, let alone the manpower to implement extensive democratisation programmes. NATO's civilian international staff is small in comparison with other international organisations active in this field. Also, its financial resources are limited compared with the EU's.

NATO members do have financial resources available that can be linked to particular PfP activities. Member states have different approaches to granting assistance to reforming and restructuring defence organisations in partner countries. The US contribution to democracy promotion in the NATO framework is substantial. Also very active in rendering support to reform and democracy promotion in the defence sphere with clear reference to NATO are Northern European members. South European Allies such as Spain and Italy focus their efforts more on partners in the MD and ICI. However, in this case democracy promotion is not on NATO's agenda and so assistance is negligible; the emphasis is on dialogue. Greece and Turkey are also active in supporting defence reform and focus their attention on the Southern Caucasus PfP members; Greece in Armenia, and Turkey in Azerbaijan and Georgia. These efforts are not particularly focused on the democratic aspects of defence reform, dealing more with the technical practicalities of reform and military cooperation. Lastly, the new NATO members such as the Baltic countries, Bulgaria, Poland and Romania have become democracy promoters instead of consumers of democracy assistance. Their niche is obviously transferring knowledge on how to implement the democratic reform of defence, having themselves experienced this recently.

NATO's international civilian staff in Brussels plays a leading role in the democratisation aspects of the

partnerships. Information from several interviews with representatives of such staff suggests that they have three main functions in this regard. First, NATO provides a conceptual framework – the PAP-DIB initiative, for instance – that is taken up by affiliated organisations, NATO member states and civil societies to pursue. Second, NATO international staff play a coordinating role and try to harmonise initiatives by nations and organisations that implement programmes. It is this function that is essential for NATO to play an influential role in promoting democracy. Boosting its coordination capacity would increase NATO's visibility in this realm, and would not require a large financial investment. Third, NATO delivers a part of the expertise by sending NATO experts to training initiatives and conferences.

The work done by NATO and its aides under the header 'democracy promotion in defence reform' can roughly be divided into three categories: (1) direct policy advice and assistance; (2) education and training; and, (3) research and awareness-raising. In the first field NATO staff play a significant role. Annually, NATO teams consisting of employees from different divisions visit the partner countries to assess progress made in the MAP and IPAP processes. The report written by NATO is eventually discussed with all the member states, which makes it a diplomatic issue in the last stages of the cycle. This process of assessments has significant advisory elements to it. Alongside this, NATO has liaison offices and advisory teams in several partner countries. The character of these offices is different between partner countries. In some MAP countries NATO advisory teams work on a day-to-day basis with the prospective member, while in a few IPAP states NATO has only provided limited funds to a local university or NGO to set up a small information centre.

Outside of NATO's structures, though most of the time in line with the PfP programmes, several national ministries of defence deliver tailored expertise to NATO partners. It is also the member countries that send experts to NATO advisory teams and missions abroad. However, there are NGOs and international organisations that provide direct assistance and advice

to NATO partner countries. Probably the most obvious example is the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF), which is primarily financed by the Swiss government and could be considered as the Swiss contribution to international peace and security.

The second field consists of education and training through the NATO Defense College and the NATO School. Both educational facilities proceed under NATO's military command, which results in only limited education on democratic CMR. Curricular attention to civilian control and democratic policy-making exists only subtly, between the lines. This sometimes causes irritation among NATO civilian staff that would like to see these educational facilities focus more on research, but especially on advancing the civilian elements of PfP programmes. Moreover, most member and partner countries mainly send military officers to these courses, whereas they are also meant for civilians working in the defence organisation and other security agencies. Alongside NATO's curricula, which are light on democratisation elements, there are also other educational institutes that are distinct from NATO though supportive of the Alliances' democratisation efforts. Most notable is the US-German funded George C. Marshall Center in Germany, which holds democratic defence institutions in high esteem and devotes attention to the subject in its research and curriculum.

In addition there are many smaller training initiatives by NGOs from NATO member states that do work under NATO auspices. One example is the Centre for European Security Studies (CESS), which trains both civilians and military officers on democratic practices in defence with funds from the Netherlands government. The donor designated this training effort in the case of the Ukraine as the Netherlands' contribution to a NATO development programme.<sup>27</sup> This sort of initiative where NATO and different training facilities aim at the same objectives need increased coordination. NATO is now in

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<sup>27</sup> The Starlink programme of the Centre for European Security Studies (CESS) in the Netherlands, <http://www.cess.org/programmes/current/view?id=5>.

the process of setting up an Education and Training for Defence Reform (EFR) initiative that should be the mechanism available to partner countries that want to implement PAP-DIB-oriented reforms. A careful start was made by representatives from NATO, training facilities and civil society called the 'Friends of PAP-DIB', which gather once in a while to coordinate their work and form a network of training facilities. A similar, older initiative is the PfP Consortium financed by the Marshall Center, which works in the 'spirit of PfP' and played an influential coordinating role in curriculum development.

Third, NATO's efforts in democracy promotion can also be placed under the header of research and awareness-raising. Here, NATO is active through the Public Diplomacy Division, which has funds available for research in its 'Security through Science Programme' and for awareness-raising through co-sponsorships of conferences, seminars and roundtables in partner countries. In the former case the emphasis is clearly on scientific research and less on qualitative approaches to democratisation of defence, while, in the latter, it states that 'NATO's information programme aims, in particular, to support public discussion in Partner Countries of a very wide range of security-related subjects to encompass NATO's contribution to European security, including democratic control of armed forces and the principles of defence reform.'<sup>28</sup> The main idea, both in research and supporting dialogue, is that civil society institutions from NATO allies intensively collaborate with those from partner countries. In this way NATO wants to strengthen security through cooperation and participation. More importantly in this case, however, is the fact that it wants to help build strong civil societies in partner countries that can contribute to defence policy-making and fulfil an informed controlling mechanism on a country's defence establishment.

In most cases the work of governments and civil societies of the North Atlantic area in the three fields

is intertwined with NATO's efforts of assisting to democratise CMR in partner countries. All joint efforts seek to bring these countries' defence structures in line with the Euro-Atlantic mainstream, using the NATO PfP format both as context and objective. In many cases it is difficult to make a clear distinction between NATO democratisation of CMR and what should be attributed to individual member states or NGOs. It is important for NATO primarily to play an initiating role through setting up frameworks and taking its coordinative task seriously. NATO depends on its members' willingness to contribute financially and practically in playing a role in democracy promotion, and its contribution is ultimately as powerful as its members desire.

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## The Riga Summit

Discussions relevant to NATO strategies and instruments were open for debate at the NATO summit held in Riga in November 2006. The three main issues on the agenda of the 26 heads of state were operations, defence transformation and NATO's political engagement.<sup>29</sup> In the first field the ISAF mission to Afghanistan overshadowed the whole event. Regardless of many warnings that NATO's future and even existence was at stake, many members were either hesitant or unwilling to pledge troops for the troubled Central Asian country. On a positive note agreement was found to remove a substantial number of the national procedural caveats which have made ISAF action in emergency situations less dependable. With regard to defence transformation some progress was made, although the summit was mainly used to announce the readiness of the NATO Response Force. The third area of political engagement included the issues of enlargement and partnerships. With respect to democracy promotion both in general as well as in the specific field of CMR the plans presented and

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<sup>28</sup> Co-sponsorship programmes with partner countries, NATO Public Diplomacy Division, <http://www.hq.nato.int/structure/oip/sponsors/intro.htm>.

<sup>29</sup> Jaap De Hoop Scheffer, 'Reflections on the Riga Summit', *NATO Review*, 4, 2006.

decisions taken were meagre. Although words like 'shared values' and 'democracy' were frequently used, they amounted to rhetoric, bereft of concrete initiatives. This contrasts with the Istanbul summit of 2004, which barely mentioned democracy, yet established the ICI partnership and the PAP-DIB concept.

With reference to enlargement no new invitations were extended although the 'open door policy' for European democratic states remains valid. The main issue for NATO in this field was Georgia and Ukraine. Both countries made radical changes in 2003 and 2004 installing governments that made democratisation and Euro-Atlantic integration top priorities. In the case of Georgia some allies, especially Italy and the US, wanted to offer a MAP. Their arguments were that Georgian membership would be strategically important because it would give the Alliance's members access to an energy-rich region and it would help Georgia consolidate its fragile democracy.<sup>30</sup> However, Georgia's relations with NATO strategic partner Russia deteriorated in 2006, and tension over Abkhazia and South Ossetia, both within Georgian borders, increased. In the meantime, elections were held in Ukraine, which turned back the clock on the Orange Revolution that had brought the pro-Western Viktor Yushchenko to power. For NATO the events in both countries – which put democratic consolidation on hold – were a blessing in disguise, noted one NATO official. Several members had resisted offering both nations a MAP and now had the arguments to postpone such a move. Nonetheless, NATO still needs to discuss if these countries are welcome in the mid-term and on what grounds: strategic importance or democratic credentials?

In the partnership section it was notable that BiH, Montenegro and Serbia were invited to join PfP. All three received partnership status at the same time in order not to create rivalries that could have adverse

effects on the reform process. It was only at the last moment and under US pressure that all members agreed to honour Serbia's bid. The demand that General Mladic should first be delivered to The Hague was dropped for the time being, in the hope that this gesture would positively influence the Serbs in electing democratic parties to power two months after the summit. Conditionality by NATO had failed; it now remains to be seen whether NATO can put Serbia's PfP membership to good use by influencing the country's further democratisation of defence structures. Montenegro was also a peculiar case, since it was offered PfP but could barely boast of armed forces or a proper ministry of defence to cooperate with. PfP should be seen as part of the Euro-Atlantic integration track Montenegro desires to follow. The small country is also an interesting case for NATO, which has a chance to help build democratically accountable defence structures from scratch.

NATO stated in Riga that it will 'fully develop the political and practical potential of NATO's existing cooperation programmes'. No new initiatives were agreed, despite internal discussion and studies suggesting that NATO should restructure its partnership policy so to make it better attuned to achieving NATO's objectives and easier to grasp for partners.<sup>31</sup> There were also voices that urged the establishment of a global partnership, and an end to the uncomfortable notion of 'contact countries'. Members of such a new partnership would include nations like Australia and Japan, which can boast consolidated and respected democratic practices and modern armed forces. The debate over NATO forging global partnerships is at an early stage, and not yet well thought through. The partnership policy will need to be fleshed out when NATO members start debating the creation of a new Strategic Concept – that the

<sup>30</sup> Julianne Smith (Principal Author.), 'Transforming NATO (...again). A Primer for the NATO Summit in Riga 2006', *Center for Strategic and International Studies*, November 2006, p. 20. [http://www.csis.org/media/csis/pubs/061114\\_nato\\_primer.pdf](http://www.csis.org/media/csis/pubs/061114_nato_primer.pdf).

<sup>31</sup> Illustrative here is a Polish exercise focusing mainly on PfP by the Centre for Eastern Studies, *NATO and its partners in Eastern Europe and Southern Caucasus*, CES Project 'NATO's new role in the NIS area' (Warsaw, December 2003) and more recently an extensive contribution focusing on all NATO's partnerships: Carlo Masala and Katariina Saariluoma, 'Renewing NATO's Partnerships: Towards a Coherent and Efficient Framework', *Forum Paper*, Rome: NATO Defense College Research Branch, May 2006.

Secretary-General hopes to have ready in 2009, to replace the outdated 1999 version.

The one new commitment connected to democratisation in the Riga declaration is focused on NATO training for and eventually in MD and ICI partners. With the launch of the Training Cooperation Initiative (TCI) NATO plans to establish a Middle East Faculty at the NATO Defence College and later on consider setting up a Security Cooperation Centre in the region. The proposal suggested by the US, Italy and Norway would also entail training military officers on democratic CMR.<sup>32</sup> This would be an interesting opening for addressing democracy and defence in a practical way, through training. But the proposal was vague on implementation and several NATO officials argue that there are neither the funds nor staff to move ahead with the Riga training proposals. There is no discussion in NATO on what the actual goals are in Middle Eastern and Mediterranean countries and how much it is willing to invest in these initiatives. So the Riga document can state that 'opening up for consideration those partnership tools currently available to EAPC countries to our partners in the MD and the ICI' is on the agenda, while little thought has been given to the practical follow-up.<sup>33</sup> Mechanisms such as IPAP and concepts like PAP-DIB seem not to be applicable to these regions for the time being.

In the case of NATO's operations in Afghanistan and Kosovo it is notable that the Alliance mentions democratisation. In Kosovo, NATO should indeed contribute to 'building a Kosovo security system that is democratically controlled'.<sup>34</sup> However, it will need the civilian capacity to do so, which it lacks at the moment. The KFOR mission is not well suited to address all the issues of CMR and democratic control. Most likely, Kosovo will gain a new – maybe independent – status in 2007, which, in turn, will make transforming the current KPC into a defence capacity an important challenge. When this becomes clear NATO should keep

its promise of assistance and might need to consider PfP inclusion. In Afghanistan the Alliance stated that 'the Afghan Government and NATO are working together to develop democratically controlled defence institutions'.<sup>35</sup> Its activities in this sense have been almost non-existent. It is the individual contributing nations that mostly work on building institutions; the US in particular has focused on the armed forces and defence establishment. In the event that NATO is able to stabilise Afghanistan it can also start to contribute to democratisation. A division of roles where the US would build and train the Afghan military and NATO would send advisory teams that assist in institution-building including CMR issues would be most beneficial.

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## Conclusions

There is much work to do for NATO in the run-up to the next summit in 2008, not least on the Alliance's own transformation. Next to the daunting Afghanistan mission new issues arise such as energy security and environmental issues. Nonetheless, in the field of democracy promotion through defence reform there is much unfinished business that needs attention. The enlargement process needs clarity on democratic credentials; the partnerships revision; and the operations success to lay the ground for democratisation. In all three engagements democratisation plays to different extents some role. NATO should pursue democratic civil-military relations reform assistance with the same intensity – and in some cases with increased attention – as it has done in the past while cooperating and finding the right division of labour with the EU, OSCE and many others. This should also be reflected in a new NATO Strategic Concept.

The post-Cold War enlargement with ten new members is generally regarded as a success. The

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<sup>32</sup> J. Smith (2006), op. cit., p. 23.

<sup>33</sup> NATO Riga Summit Declaration, 29 November 2006, Riga, point 13. <http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/2006/p06-150e.htm>.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., point 9.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., point 5.

subsequent democratisation of these countries is in large part attributed to NATO, especially due to the organisation's role in creating a stable environment and democratising civil-military relations. From this paper five different challenges can be distilled. First, NATO needs to discuss if it is, in principle, ready to enlarge to Georgia and Ukraine and, later on, to other IPAP participants. In this sense, strategic considerations and democratic credentials need to be weighed. In the partnership section NATO should decide to either invest in the MD and ICI including democracy or keep these initiatives at the current level of dialogue and limited military cooperation. Third, NATO would be wise to consider revising its partnership system to better adapt it to its own needs and partners' wishes. A simplified and more intelligible PfP toolbox would also be welcome. If NATO starts now, concrete steps could be made during the Bucharest summit in 2008. The fourth point touches on reform of CMR. Here NATO might consider expanding on the PAP-DIB initiative as a regime of what it sees as democratic defence management. It should not only apply to the Caucasus and Central Asia but also to applicant members and to MD and ICI partners that want to step up cooperation with NATO. Lastly and in connection to the latter point, NATO's coordinating capacity in bringing together governments, international organisations, educational facilities and NGOs to implement assistance, training, education and awareness-raising programmes in partner countries could be strengthened. Good work is

already being done at NATO HQ that could be expanded.

NATO democracy promotion is less than a mission, yet more than a positive side effect. Military missions, enlargement, and partnerships can be considered as missions, while democratisation is part of these to a different extent in each case. While it is true that security and stability lead to better possibilities for democratisation and both can be regarded as preconditions, NATO's efforts in democratisation do not amount simply to positive externalities. NATO demands democratic change from aspiring members and the Alliance actively promotes democratic CMR in partner countries. Today NATO faces different challenges than in the early nineties when enlargement ranked highly on the agenda. The organisation has become global and is facing new circumstances, challenges and difficulties. The will to survive and stay relevant through profiling itself as a political organisation and going 'out of area' also has risks attached to it. Only by placing democratic values at its core can NATO stay united and influential. Its strength resides in its ability to combine hard military action with soft power, through democratic ideas on how to run the business of defence. Strategic considerations sometimes override democratic interests. NATO should be careful not to compromise too much on democracy for the sake of strategy. After all, it is democracy that binds current and new members together, and that which makes the transatlantic Alliance tick.

## List of abbreviations

AP	Action Plan
ATA	Atlantic Treaty Association
BiH	Bosnia and Herzegovina
CESS	Centre for European Security Studies
CMR	Civil-military Relations
CoE	Council of Europe
DCAF	Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces
DR	Defence Reform
EAPC	Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council
EAPWP	Euro-Atlantic Partnership Work Plan
EFR	Education and Training for Defence Reform
ENP	European Neighbourhood Policy
ESDP	European Security and Defence Policy
EU	European Union
ICI	Istanbul Cooperation Initiative
ICP	Individual Cooperation Programmes
ICTY	International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia
ID	Intensified Dialogue
IPAP	Individual Partnership Action Plan
IPP	Individual Partnership Programme
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
KFOR	Kosovo Force
KPC	Kosovo Protection Corps
MAP	Membership Action Plan
MD	Mediterranean Dialogue
NATO PA	NATO Parliamentary Assembly
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NDC	NATO Defense College
NRC	NATO-Russia Council
NUC	NATO-Ukraine Commission
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe
PAP-DIB	Partnership Action Plan Defence Institution Building
PAP-T	Partnership Action Plan Terrorism
PARP	Planning and Review Process
PfP	Partnership for Peace
SEEI	South East Europe Initiative
SFOR	Stabilisation Force in Bosnia and Herzegovina
SSR	Security-sector Reform
TCI	NATO Training Cooperation Initiative
TCP	Tailored Co-operation Programme

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As NATO has moved from being a primarily military alliance to seeking more political roles, it has become pertinent to consider its impact on democratisation. At first glance, it might seem incongruent even to deliberate on the democracy promotion relevance of an essentially military organisation. But, NATO's successive enlargements have often hinged on the fulfilment of democratic preconditions in aspirant members, while technical assistance provided under the Partnership for Peace (PfP) and other programmes has increasingly focused on the reform of civil-military relations. Assessment is consequently warranted of whether NATO has come to play any positive role in encouraging democratisation across different regions, or whether its impact on political liberalisation has been either marginal or even negative. This paper argues that support for democracy has increasingly infused NATO policies, but that the organisation's role in democracy promotion is circumscribed by strategic considerations; most often an indirect side effect of other aims; and most relevant to the niche area of defence reform.

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