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Policy brief

The NATO–Russia Council: Its Role and Prospects

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This report is based on meetings at NATO from May 2012 to July 2013 with officials from national delegations and the International Staff who are involved in various capacities with the NRC.

The NATO–Russia Council (NRC) is seen by many as the natural vehicle in which to pursue relations between NATO and Russia, to address serious policy differences and to explore areas of cooperation. In view of the expectations that accompanied its creation this is not surprising. In replacing the Permanent Joint Council¹ (PJC) the NRC was designed to introduce greater flexibility as the basis for a more equal and more effective partnership.

The NRC has not provided the qualitatively new relationship that was hoped for. It has made a considerable contribution as a forum for the exchange of views on topical issues and has facilitated progress in several areas of practical cooperation and mutual benefit.

However, it has not been effective in dealing with the more sensitive and controversial issues which challenge the NATO Russia relationship, it has not changed the mistrust and suspicion that permeate and continue to define the relationship, and it has not answered the question concerning Russia's place in Euro Atlantic structures.

Assessing the future prospects for the NRC presents three questions: Can the NRC's potential be better used to overcome the challenges to the relationship? Are the limitations of attitude and structure which constrain this potential too profound? What can be done to make the NRC more effective and more relevant?

This report attempts to answer these questions by assessing the role and potential of the NRC. It examines the early development of relations between NATO and Russia, the significance of NATO enlargement, the signing of the NATO-Russia Founding Act and the creation of the PJC, and the NRC as a more flexible arrangement. It describes the NRC's achievements as an organisation and through its working groups. It assesses the limitations imposed by both attitude and structure; its potential and the various national views; and finally looks at its future prospects.²

1 The Founding Act between NATO and the Russian Federation was signed in Paris. France on May 27. 1997. It created the Permanent Joint Council (PJC).

2 This paper was completed before, and does not take account of, the agreement between the United States and Russia on the destruction of Syrian chemical and biological weapon stocks which many hoped would signal an improvement in relations with Russia.

NATO-Russia Relations Post-Cold War

Relations between Russia and NATO were established shortly after the fall of the Berlin Wall and the fragmentation of the Soviet Union when Russia took its place in the newly created North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC). Early contacts were cordial but wary, and included initial signals of interest from President Yeltsin³. Tensions began to appear, however, with the announcement of NATO's Partnership for Peace (PFP) Initiative. NATO not only saw a continued role for itself, but was intent on taking in new members. The process of enlargement, however, left Russia firmly on the outside.⁴

Initial resentment over NATO's continued existence, and subsequent enlargement seemingly at Russia's expense, underpinned the portrayal of NATO as an "unfriendly" organisation whose military activities move steadily closer to Russia's borders – and counter its own efforts to control its "near abroad". Efforts by NATO to improve relations with Russia have had to contend with this basic suspicion and mistrust.

The NATO-Russia Founding Act, Paris 1997

The NATO Russia Founding Act signed in Paris in 1997 was a natural extension of the efforts to leave behind the divisions of the Cold War. It was also due to the recognition by NATO members of the implications of the enlargement decision for the NATO-Russia relationship and an effort to minimise these effects.⁵

The result was the creation of the PJC comprising the then 16 NATO members and Russia.⁶ The emphasis on "jointness" reflected the goal of doing things together. However, the qualifying clauses suggest an awareness of the difficulties involved in engaging NATO members collectively in a partnership with Russia (See footnote 5).

3 These included a written communication from President Yeltsin formally declaring Russia's intention to seek membership in NATO.

4 This view was summarised by a member of the Duma, Vyacheslav Nikonov, who during a private dinner in Moscow remarked "so that's it, you have decided your future and it is without us. You have closed the door". Dinner with the author, Moscow. 1994.

5 For a discussion of the centrality of enlargement to the development of the NATO-Russia Founding Act see "Opening NATO's Door" by Ron Asmus. Columbia University Press. 2002

6 The PJC would "provide a mechanism for consultation, coordination, and to the maximum extent possible, where appropriate, for joint decisions and joint actions with respect to security issues of common concern. The consultations will not extend to internal matters of NATO, NATO member states or Russia." NATO Russian Founding Act, Paris, May 1997.

The PJC functioned reasonably effectively and was useful for exchanges of information and discussions of issues of mutual concern.⁷ Russian officials, however, were frequently critical that it remained “a discussion club” rather than moving to the elaboration of joint decisions.⁸ The basic problem was that the NATO members operated as a collective entity and in discussions with Russia presented a common front. This was, in fact, a “one to one” relationship that did not allow Russia the opportunity to influence NATO decisions. The position was summed up as “a voice not a veto”, although the voice was hardly heard as Russia remained outside the NATO decision making process.

Cooperation at the political level was paralleled by military to military contacts⁹ and also at the parliamentary level.¹⁰ While significant in their own right neither had any discernible effect on prevailing Russian attitudes towards NATO.

NATO–Russia relations were hampered by the perceived slow withdrawal of Russian forces from Eastern Europe and former states of the Soviet Union, notably Moldova – continued to this day – and Georgia, further complicated by the conflict in 2008, and by the wars in Chechnya. Relations were put under serious strain by NATO’s military intervention in 1999 against Serbia over Kosovo. Russia criticised NATO’s action and suspended participation in the PJC.

This interruption was short-lived. Events reinforced the need for a positive relationship. The 9/11 attacks on the United States demonstrated the common challenge of global terrorism, and with a second round of NATO enlargement looming, it was agreed to upgrade relations with the creation of the NATO-Russia Council in Rome in 2002.

The NATO-Russia Council, Rome 2002

Neither NATO nor Russia viewed the PJC as adequate to the task of creating a more positive relationship in the new strategic environment. Both agreed on the need for a framework

7 It was, however, a cumbersome mechanism with the chairmanship shared by a troika, comprising the NATO Secretary General, the Russian Ambassador to NATO and an Allied Ambassador by rotation.

8 See the minutes of the meeting of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly- Russian Federal Assembly Joint Monitoring Group. Moscow 4-6 March 1999. NPA AS 70 JMG/RUS(99).

9 Between NATO’s Military Committee and the Russian General Staff. There was also cooperation on the ground between NATO and Russian armed forces in Bosnia and Kosovo which worked relatively smoothly, with the exception of the episode at Pristina airport.

10 Following the recommendations in the Founding Act parliamentary relations were established between the Russian Parliament and the NATO Parliamentary Assembly (NPA) and special joint groups to monitor the work of the PJC and later the NRC. Russian parliamentarians continue to participate regularly in a wide range of Assembly activities.

that permitted greater flexibility and practical cooperation.¹¹ The question was what sort of framework would achieve this.

Among NATO members there was a lively debate as to whether a new framework would complement or replace the PJC. Some members were determined to retain elements of the PJC while others insisted on a clean break with the existing arrangements.¹²

The result was agreement to replace the PJC with a Council of 20 equal and independent partners.¹³ It was hoped this format would avoid the problems of the PJC in which Russia was frequently faced by the fait accompli of a common NATO position. As later discussion will demonstrate this endeavour was only partly successful.

The Rome declaration emphasised NATO's member states as being the partners with Russia rather than the organisation itself.¹⁴ The distinction between NATO as an organisation and its individual member states is fundamental to the nature of the Alliance and to understanding the functioning of the NRC. NATO is both an organisation of members committed to collective defence who consult regularly on that defence and also 28 independent voices and sets of bilateral relations. In the context of the NRC the distinction signalled the intent to provide greater flexibility through each partner speaking on a national basis.¹⁵

The launching of the NRC was hailed as the beginning of a qualitatively different relationship and a "true strategic partnership". Press reports had even suggested that Russia was being given a seat at the NATO table or that the new Council would replace the North Atlantic Council (NAC). While erroneous these interpretations reflected the basic dilemma in seeking a new relationship with Russia; how to create a "true" or "equal" partnership without giving Russia a role in NATO's policy and decision making process? This dilemma remains.

11 See the interviews with Ambassador Dirk Brengelman Chairman of the NRC Prep Com and Ambassador Alexander Grushko Russian Ambassador to NATO. NRC Website, <<http://www.nato-russia-council.info>>, Feb 05 2013.

12 According to officials this argument was only resolved by the then Secretary General Lord Robertson reciting to the meeting the entire Monty Python "dead parrot" sketch, with the PJC as the parrot in question.

13 A unified chairmanship, entrusted to the NATO Secretary General, would replace the cumbersome Troika structure.

14 In fact the opening language in the Founding Act refers to "NATO and its member states, herein referred to as NATO and Russia"; so the distinction is made. Nevertheless, the several references to "member states" in the Rome Declaration are unlikely to have been accidental.

15 Ambassador Grushko has recalled that the statement that members of the NRC were acting in their national capacities was bracketed until the very last minute, demonstrating that this was a controversial step. Interview. NRC Website. *Ibid.*

The initial phase of the NRC between 2002 and 2008 saw the identification and implementation of a wide range of projects of mutual interest, several of which are discussed later in this paper. Officials look back at the initial years of the NRC as a constructive period in which national views were freely expressed. A brief survey of this period demonstrates the many pressures which the relationship has to contend with (see Appendix 1).

Expectations for the relationship were dashed by Russia's military action against Georgia, which fulfilled the worst fears of many NATO members concerning Russian willingness to use force to secure its interests. For them, Russian actions placed a serious question mark against the principle of partnership and cooperation.

Despite the universal condemnation of the Russian action Alliance members continued to see the need for a NATO Russia relationship. However, when the work of the NRC was re-established it was with a substantially streamlined and reorganised work plan.

Organisation

The NRC meets at different levels ranging from Heads of State and Government, normally within the context of NATO Summits; Foreign and Defence Ministers, at the twice yearly NATO meetings; Ambassadorial level, normally monthly at NATO; and the various working groups.¹⁶ Delegations are seated alphabetically and decisions are taken by consensus.

Working groups were established on subjects considered of mutual interest and concern to NRC members.¹⁷ These groups work at their own rhythm and agree to their own annual work plans and agendas. They are attended by the national delegations at NATO, reinforced by capitals when necessary.

The work of the NRC is overseen by a Preparatory Committee (the Prep-Com). All 29 countries are represented, participating on an equal basis. The Prep-Com prepares the work plans for the various meetings of the NRC and oversees progress on these plans.

Achievements

The most satisfactory reports of the workings of the NRC are from those areas of clear mutual interest and benefit where cooperation has resulted in practical application and

16 Summits and Ministerial meetings are chaired by the NATO Secretary General, Ambassador meetings normally by his Deputy and working groups by NATO's International Staff.

17 Under the streamlined agenda adopted in 2008 the working groups were reduced and consolidated; not always resulting, according to NATO officials, in the most coherent grouping of subjects. See Appendix 2.

implementation and which do not concern issues related to NATO's internal business.¹⁸ As is discussed later it is not always easy to maintain this separation.

The group on counter terrorism – said to be one of the most successful – involves the sharing of information and experiences in dealing with various aspects of terrorism including the lessons learned from recent terrorist attacks. This work includes a project aimed at developing technology that enables the stand-off detection of explosive devices in public places and systems of mass transportation such as metros.

The operational sub-group on Afghanistan has focussed on counter-narcotics training for Afghan police rather than wider Afghanistan operations. According to officials it has been difficult to find operational areas of discussion and cooperation which the Allies would be willing to discuss openly. However, NATO has used the NRC format to brief Russia on its view of the situation in Afghanistan, and for its part Russia has provided its expert assessments, focusing particularly on the security situation in the north. There are, however, severe limits on even the exchange of information, due to classification, as Russia is not a troop contributor to the International Security Force (ISAF). These difficulties demonstrate the problem of overlap between NRC activity and NATO's normal business.

Another sub group exists specifically for the purchase of Russian helicopters and associated spare parts, and for the training of pilots and maintenance personnel for the Afghan army: a NATO trust fund has been established for this purpose. This project is said by officials to be an example of where the NRC can work effectively where there is clear common interest and mutual benefit.

Officials note that a side benefit of this NRC activity is to familiarise Russian officials with the problems of working with an Alliance based on consensus yet whose members are still able to apply their national restrictions to commonly agreed policies.

More concretely Russia has asked to participate in the meetings of the 50 ISAF contributors. This has been resisted by some allies on the grounds that it would provide privileged access to NATO's decision making and shaping process; these allies argue that the progress of the sub group does not warrant a higher status. Others suggest this could set a precedent that other partners might seek to follow. This again shows the problem of separating areas of cooperation from what is seen as NATO's internal business and, as is discussed later, of associating Russia with NATO processes.

18 For discussion of the distinction between the respective successes of NRC work in "political dialogue" and "practical cooperation" see "NATO-Russia Relations: Toward a "Strategic Partnership"?" Isabelle Francois. The National Defence University (NDU). 2012

NATO's Afghanistan focus is increasingly on the transition process and the redeployment of ISAF out of Afghanistan by the end of 2014. As a result there is scope for a more intense exchange of information, as Russia will be able to provide an important transit route out of Afghanistan.

Counter-terrorism and Afghanistan are two examples of the practical benefits of cooperation achieved through the NRC framework and there are others.¹⁹ They reflect cooperation in fields which are relevant to the security interests of the parties and the new threat environment.

In principle the NRC is a forum for political dialogue at all times and on all issues.²⁰ It is used to facilitate exchanges and discussions on issues of particular concern – for example, the situations in Syria and North Korea – as long as all NRC members agree inclusion on the agenda. It is also used for briefings and discussions on issues such as the Medvedev proposal on European security architecture, on NATO's Strategic Concept and on the results of the Chicago Summit. These exchanges are said to be effective in providing information and clarifying specific policy positions. However, according to officials they rarely go beyond the repetition and confirmation of set positions. They are in the words of one official "declaratory rather than consultative".

Several of the NRC working groups deal with issues that relate directly to defence and what can be termed hard security.

The working group on **Defence Transparency, Strategy, and Reform (DTSR)** has separate groupings on conventional and nuclear forces. The principal focus of the group on conventional forces was initially on defence reform. Nations provide briefings on their individual defence programs, white papers, and reforms. Officials describe these as useful for providing information. They note, however, that the quality of the presentations varies widely, expert attendance is not consistent, and as a result the in depth discussions many would like to see occur infrequently.

With the collapse of the CFE regime and Russia's return to large- scale, combined nuclear and conventional military exercises, transparency has become an area of great concern

19 For Russian views on the cooperative efforts see the comments of Foreign Minister Lavrov "We have a lot of good specific projects aimed at the increase of efficiency of anti-terrorist cooperation in combating piracy, maritime search and rescue, combat service support. I think there are rather good opportunities in the sphere of military and technical cooperation as well. Minister Lavrov also suggested adding cyber security to NRC cooperation. See *Foreign Policy News*, 25 April 2013 The proposal to add cyber security was not agreed as it is an issue on which the NATO allies have yet to decide a common position.

20 "We underscore that the NRC is a forum for political dialogue at all times and on all issues, including where we disagree." NRC Joint Statement. Lisbon Summit 20 Nov 2010.

to NATO members and the subject of discussion in the NRC. Military transparency is also seen by several countries as the best opportunity to engage Russia in discussions on arms control and disarmament.²¹

Russian reactions to proposals to discuss military transparency have not initially been encouraging. Explanations for this negative approach include the official Russian line that such engagement can only begin when all factors are taken into consideration; the view that as a result of Western openness Russia has little to gain from cooperation in this field; and the suggestion that Russia's military reorganisation and concomitantly furious pace of military exercises – according to officials “the largest reorganisation and most intense period of exercises since the end of the Cold War” – has, in the words of one official, “induced an allergy to transparency across Russia's MOD”.

The DTSR group was used for the discussion of a German paper on a Common Space of Trust (CST). This aimed at making a concrete offer to Russia to reinvigorate transparency through various measures, including the pre-notification and discussion of planned military exercises. This paper was initially introduced and discussed in the DTSR. There were substantial bilateral discussions between Germany and Russia and German expectations were initially high.

However, despite these discussions Russia rejected even its limited scope – which discussed unilateral offers of transparency without reciprocity and over only past exercises, not upcoming ones, as is the DTSR's mandate. Russia was not alone in its opposition. Several allies were nervous about the way the proposal was formulated and negotiated, the lack of reciprocity as a core principle, the impact on the DTSR mandate, and the implications of the paper for the effort to modernise conventional arms control in Vienna.

According to NATO officials this episode provided several lessons: the difficulty of pursuing unilateral transparency; of new initiatives negotiated bilaterally and without full NATO participation; and, most discouraging, the low priority Russia currently places on military transparency.

The NRC Nuclear Experts (NUCL) working group during its existence²² was successful in organising meetings to improve transparency, with an emphasis on safety and security. Activities included a series of nuclear weapon accident and incident response demonstration

21 NATO officials frequently reflected frustration with what they termed the persistently negative Russian response to NATO's arms control proposals which one national official described as “like playing tennis with someone who refuses to hit the ball back, and then complains you are not serving fast enough!”

22 It was merged with the DTSR during the reorganisation in 2008

visits, organised by the four NRC nuclear powers, providing insight into their nuclear safety and security procedures set against real-time disaster scenarios.²³

A similar follow-on NATO sponsored exercise was proposed including a NATO non-NSNW-basing member hosting the exercise in order to demonstrate the breadth of Alliance response capacity. However, political disagreements with Russia and among Allies precluded progress; the Russia-Georgia conflict in July 2008 then put paid to any further exercises.

These activities were particularly significant because they facilitated cooperation in an area – safety and security of nuclear weapons – which remains a priority issue for all members.²⁴ Moreover, they represented involvement by the NRC in nuclear affairs in a context that does not intrude on the more sensitive side of nuclear weapons policy – which remains in the category of bilateral relations or belongs to NATO's internal business.

The work of the DTSR Nuclear Experts has involved seminars on the nuclear doctrines of the nuclear powers.²⁵ The most recent took place in The Hague, July 2013. Participants remarked on the frankness of the discussions by the four nuclear powers of their respective doctrines. These events contribute to creating greater transparency and understanding.²⁶ There are limitations, however, concerning what the nuclear powers are prepared to see discussed at 29; neither the US nor Russia want their bilateral negotiations discussed in this format. According to national officials Russian officials have on occasions indicated a preference that discussions of nuclear issues and forces are limited to the nuclear powers.

Missile Defence, it is repeatedly said, overshadows all aspects of the NATO–Russia relationship and has featured prominently in NRC discussions at several levels. The consultation between the US and Russia is essentially bilateral. The US keeps allies fully informed on latest developments, including the recent decision to cancel the fourth phase of the European Phased Adaptive Approach (EPAA).

The NATO missile defence project falls into the category of internal NATO business and is discussed at 28. The project involves merging the EPAA with the initial plans for theatre missile defence. An interim operational capability was announced at the Chicago Summit and the steps required for fully operational capability are being examined. These involve

23 The first was conducted by Russia (Avaria 2004); with the following exercises in the UK (Senator 2005), the US (CAPEX 2006), and France (DENUX 2007).

24 A senior NATO official regretted the end to these activities. In his words 'it makes sense for the professionals involved in this business to know each other.'

25 France is outside NATO's Nuclear Planning Group and High Level Group but participates in the meetings of DTSR Nuclear Experts.

26 A senior NATO official stressed the importance of these activities in creating the environment in which bilateral nuclear discussions and negotiations can be understood.

issues such as the priorities for protection and the consequences of interception, both of which have complex technical and political dimensions.

The much sought after cooperation between NATO and Russia on missile defence is handled within the **NRC Working Group on Missile Defence**. The major differences between Russia and NATO and between Russia and the US on missile defence are well known. The NRC has been used at various levels to discuss these differences, with, thus far, no meeting of the minds and little progress.

The working group has attempted to develop the aims and principles of cooperation, but has not advanced beyond the discussion of generic aspects and principles. The group is considering the proposal to create joint centres on data fusion and planning operations; also the development of a transparency regime for the exchange of information about the current respective missile defence capabilities of NATO and Russia. Cooperation was achieved on a computer based exercise. The results of the development of a transparency regime have not been agreed. However, NATO officials have noted that Russian officials are interpreting the exercise as supporting the Russian preferred joint approach.

Russia asked to be an observer at all NATO discussions on Missile Defence. As these discussions are very much Alliance internal business and conducted at 28 this request was refused.

Arms Control, Disarmament and Non Proliferation (ADN): The NRC framework is used to raise key arms control issues, particularly at senior levels. However, it is said that these exchanges rarely go beyond the exposition of well-known positions and only recently have begun to stimulate sustained debate. The involvement of the NRC working group ADN is constrained by the specific nature of the issues. Negotiations on strategic nuclear arms are bilateral between the US and Russia and those on conventional forces are handled under the auspices of the OSCE in Vienna. Non-proliferation is handled in many venues.²⁷ Several efforts by NATO members to raise the question of non-strategic nuclear weapons (NSNW) have been rejected by Russia following the now familiar line of conditionality and the prior settling of other factors.

The scope for the involvement of the NRC in ADN topics has to be seen in the context of the functional and political difficulties which confront NATO's involvement in these dimensions.

27 Especially the First Committee of the UN and the established meetings of other global non-proliferation regimes (for example, NPT, BTWC, CWC).

ADN is the prerogative of individual members. NATO as an organisation is not directly involved. It can play a role in the coordination of national policies in certain areas²⁸ – to the degree that members are willing for it to do so.

The attitudes of NATO members to the different dimensions vary considerably. All members support the policies designed to constrain proliferation; most members are in favour of arms control negotiations as a component of security, at least in principle; views on disarmament, however, are mixed. Some members seek a higher profile for NATO in disarmament policy, while others believe that this is not an appropriate subject for an alliance committed to collective defence.²⁹ These differences have been accommodated, but not completely reconciled, by the creation of a new NATO Committee.³⁰

The new Committee will play a role as an advisory body on forming positions regarding NATO-Russia transparency on NSNW; and second, as a forum in which the US can consult with its allies on the full range of US-Russian strategic stability topics, including the bilateral negotiations with Russia on nuclear strategic forces, if and when these recommence.³¹

Following the tasking in the Deterrence and Defence Posture Review (DDPR)³² the new Committee is examining what reciprocal actions would be expected from Russia. Its focus is on developing specific step by step transparency measures. The Committee will work closely with the High Level Group (HLG)³³ which is also responding to a DDPR tasking to look at NATO's nuclear sharing arrangements, "including in case NATO were to decide to reduce its reliance on non-strategic nuclear weapons based in Europe".³⁴ This association provides a form of linkage between NATO's force posture and its arms control aims.

28 Such as reinforcing global norms, sharing ideas on how to support international meetings related to the regime, or discussing potential future treaties and agreements

29 As some allies point out this is contrary to the consistent engagement on the issue by the Alliance since the Harmel Report of 1967.

30 The full title is "the Special Advisory and Consultation Committee on Disarmament, Arms Control and Non Proliferation." In its advisory role it is chaired by the International Staff and in its consultation role by the US. Its terms of reference were only finalised after what was described by one official as a "bruising six month battle that left some delegations traumatised by the very mention of the word consultation".

31 This role would be similar to that played by the Special Consultative Group in the 1980's during the INF and START negotiations and the initial talks on NSNW that led to the 1990 Presidential Nuclear Initiatives.

32 The DDPR tasked the appropriate committees to look at, "What NATO would expect to see in the way of reciprocal Russian actions to allow for significant reductions in forward-based non-strategic nuclear weapons assigned to NATO." NATO Official Text: DDPR 20 May 2012.

33 The HLG meets at 27 and is chaired by the US. France does not participate.

34 The DDPR para 12. *Ibid.*

The next stage, following the specific reference to the NRC³⁵ in the DDPR, will be to engage Russia at the official level.³⁶

However, as noted earlier, Russian officials have shown “active disinterest” in Alliance proposals for dialogue and engagement on NSNW transparency, and remain dismissive in their official responses. Those hoping for positive Russian reactions to NATO proposals are reduced to noting that “at least they did not say no”. Moscow watchers continuously sift Russian statements for signs of a change of attitude. However, there is a general agreement that a change of approach will only come when the Russian President decides it is time. For the moment NATO has to balance the enthusiasm among its members for measures aimed at improving transparency and Russia’s unwillingness to reciprocate.³⁷ The most recent meetings of the NRC have, according to NATO officials, shown positive signs of a Russian willingness to reengage.

It is difficult to predict when NSNW work settled in the new NATO Committee will be brought into the relevant NRC working group, as mandated by the DDPR. The efforts to discuss nuclear transparency measures will be an interesting test. If these issues are discussed at 29 in the NRC format a NATO position will be developed first through the new NATO Committee.

It is equally unclear to what degree the NRC will be involved in nuclear arms control and nuclear weapons-related issues in general.

35 “The allies look forward to continuing to develop and exchange transparency and confidence building ideas with the Russian Federation in the NATO-Russia Council, with the goal of developing detailed proposals on and increasing mutual understanding of NATO’s and Russia’s non-strategic nuclear force posture in Europe.” The DDPR *Ibid*.

36 The work on identifying these transparency measures is being supported by what are termed “Track 1.5” meetings the first of which was held in Warsaw; it was sponsored by the Polish and Norwegian governments but attended by NATO officials, experts, academics and retired government officials. Academics have defined three different “tracks” of diplomacy – Track 1 is official, state to state dialog. Track 2 is unofficial dialog, without government representatives. Track 3 is conducted purely by civil society. Track 1.5 describes diplomacy among lower-profile official and retired or other affiliated, but unofficial, representatives.

See the post-conference Report on the Warsaw Workshop: Prospects for Information Sharing and Confidence Building on Non- Strategic Nuclear Weapons in Europe. PISM. Warsaw. May 2013.

37 For a thorough discussion of the state of play concerning Transparency measures see the Report “Confidence building on tactical nuclear weapons: What’s on the table?” by Anne Finger and Oliver Meier. The Institute for Peace Research and Security Policy. Hamburg May 2013.

There is a common assumption that the NRC is the natural vehicle for discussions with Russia of nuclear weapons policy.³⁸ Certainly the meetings of the NRC at senior levels can be used for general exchanges. However, the involvement of the ADN working group is more difficult to see. Nuclear arms control negotiations are bilateral negotiations between the US and Russia; there is also a NATO dimension as the US will consult with its Allies through the new Committee.

Then, potentially at least, there is the broader dimension of the NRC. It is at this point that the bilateral dimension enters the picture. Beyond the exchanges on doctrine, it is not clear whether and to what degree the nuclear powers will want nuclear weapons policy discussed at 29. The reference in the DDPN indicates US willingness to have the question of transparency of NSNW's discussed in the NRC. However, this will be on the basis of an agreed NATO position. The Russian approach to the issue remains negative. In addition, as noted earlier, Russian officials have expressed doubts about discussing nuclear issues among non-nuclear countries. France, for traditional reasons, is also reticent to see nuclear issues included on the agenda.

Two things are clear. The question of reductions in NSNW's – if and when it arises – as opposed to their transparency – is for the US foremost, in consultation with the 27 Allies concerned. Second, if transparency is discussed in the NRC format, the Allies will ensure a common position at 28 through the new Committee.

Discussions in the ADN working group on global arms control, disarmament, and non-proliferation (and counter-proliferation) are less controversial. The NRC is a natural format to pursue these issues, most of which enjoy general support, and few of which require an Allied position to be contemplated beyond this general support. The agenda of the ADN working group is extensive, as it contains in the words of one official "everybody's favourite arms control projects".

Conventional arms control (CAC) has resurfaced as an issue in Euro-Atlantic security. At first sight this would appear to be an appropriate topic for the exchange of ideas in the NRC. Russian officials persistently point to what they perceive as an imbalance in conventional force capacities in Europe allowed by the CFE regime. There have been tentative signals of support for relooking at the overall conventional arms control regime – although with

38 For example, the conclusions of a recent Wilton Park conference report suggested that the DDPN concluded that "the NRC is the correct setting for further discussions with Russia regarding nuclear matters." In fact, the DDPN reference to the NRC is specific to the issue of transparency for non-strategic nuclear forces. See "Deterrence, assurance and reductions: rebalancing the nuclear order", Wilton Park Report, WP1175

the often repeated caveat that Russia believes that CFE is “dead”.³⁹ For NATO members, CAC is an activity discussed among all participating states in the OSCE framework with coordination through the High Level Task Force (HLTF)⁴⁰.

Conventional military transparency could represent a good starting point for engagement with Russia. However, officials note that the state of modernisation of Russia’s armed forces may be a limiting factor in Russian engagement, especially when taken in the context of the high level of natural transparency allowed by the NATO allies, versus Russia’s increasing opacity in its military affairs.

As is discussed later the NRC would seem a natural place to exchange views on what is required to restore a degree of transparency and predictability to the state of conventional forces in Europe. But the experience with the German CST paper is not encouraging.

The transparency of exercises through notification and inspections has a topical resonance. Both NATO and Russia held major exercises during the course of 2013.⁴¹ NATO officials briefed Russia in the DTSR on the NATO exercise “Steadfast Jazz” and Russia was invited to observe parts of the exercise. Among NATO members there is an active debate whether their offers should be conditional on reciprocation.

Russia provided a detailed briefing on the planning for ZAPAD 2013 at the meeting of the NRC on July 24th. Deputy Defence Minister Antonov described NATO’s exercise as having “the chill of the Cold War” creeping from it; and compared it with Zapad which, he said, was aimed at combating terrorist and illegal armed groups infiltrating the territory of an ally, Belarus⁴². Despite this criticism, the briefing was well received by NATO officials and again seen as a sign of a new willingness by Russia to cooperate. These activities will continue to provide a test of Russian willingness to reciprocate in transparency measures.

39 According to NATO officials during the NRC meeting on July 24 2013 the Russian Deputy Minister of Defence Antonov emphasised that in Russia’s eyes the CFE Treaty was dead and Russia would not return to it.

40 The HLTF was created in the Halifax Declaration in 1986 and comprises officials from national capitals. For discussion of the role of the HLTF see the authors report on the future of Conventional Forces Arms Control in Euro-Atlantic Security.

41 NATO will hold “Steadfast Jazz” in September 2013 to rehearse plans to defend the Baltic States and Poland. It is the first and long awaited Article 5 exercise in the Baltic region. Russia will hold its annual large scale strategic exercise “ Zapad 2013” in the same region, also in September. Prior Zapad and other Russian exercises (Kavkaz 2012) reportedly involve the combined use of conventional weapons augmented with battlefield nuclear weapons against an aggressor “alliance”. According to officials NATO has not exercised the use of nuclear weapons in field exercises in decades.

42 Presentation of Russian Deputy Defence Minister Antonov. Speaking Notes. The Permanent Mission of Russia to NATO 24 July 2013.

Limitations and Constraints

The NRC is frequently referred to as an “all-weather” vehicle for any problem affecting NATO-Russia relations. However, these references frequently take little account of the limitations which constrain its effectiveness. These lie first in the prevailing political attitudes and lack of shared values between NATO members and Russia; and second, in the inherently unequal nature of the NATO–Russia relationship.

The prevailing political attitudes continue to be dominated by the mistrust and suspicion forged in the post-Cold War period. Initial Russian antagonism towards enlargement has been exacerbated by resentment at the so called “broken promises” that it involved. This is the accusation that NATO had gone back on a commitment made in the early 1990’s not to extend its membership or related military infrastructure eastwards.⁴³

What was said, what was intended, and what was heard, or misheard, remains a question of dispute. However it continues to provide a foundation for mistrust.

The rhetoric of the official documents agreed by NATO and Russia in the Founding Act declared that the era of adversarial relations is over.⁴⁴ Russian statements, however, persistently suggest otherwise.⁴⁵

It is also important to note that NATO’s internal deliberations have been stiffened by the inclusion of members whose recent history and proximity to Russia tends to make them

43 This accusation was made forcefully by President Putin at the 2008 Munich Security Forum. It has been rebutted by those NATO and US officials’ familiar with the talks during that period as a confusion of agreements made in the context of German unification, that German armed forces would not be stationed in the former GDR for a certain period. For a detailed analysis see chap. 9 “Germany Unified and Europe Transformed”. Philip Zelikow and Condoleezza Rice. Harvard University Press. 1996.

The situation is complicated by the lack of written documents on the Russian side to substantiate the charge. Russian officials’ claim that notes were not taken at the meeting or meetings concerned. In a recent interview Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov also referred to “oral” promises. Interview. *Foreign Policy News*. 29.04.2013.

It is also worth noting that in 1990-91 membership of NATO for the newly independent states was not entertained as a serious option except as a gleam in the eye of certain CEE leaders. This would also make a commitment of this nature unlikely.

44 “NATO and Russia do not consider each other as adversaries” The NATO Russia Founding Act. 1997, *Ibid*.

45 The Russian perception has been summarised by Foreign Minister Lavrov “Russian military doctrine says that we see a danger not in NATO as such, but in NATO trying to play a global military role...not NATO as such, but this intention to grab everything. And second- again not a threat but a danger – we see in NATO expansion accompanied by moving infrastructure closer to our borders.” Interview.*Ibid*

suspicious of Russian intentions and less willing to accept Russian statements at face value.⁴⁶ They are inclined to see the desire of other members for better relations with Russia as wishful thinking; a scepticism which they believe is borne out by developments in both Russia's foreign and domestic policies.

The limitations, however, are not just the result of attitude but also structure. The creation of the NRC as a Council of equal members cannot circumvent the inherent asymmetry of the relationship. As emphasised earlier, NATO comprises 28 independent voices. But it is one collective voice on those issues where the members reach agreement on the basis of consensus. Russia is a single country and as a NATO partner is associated with certain NATO activities; but is not part of the NATO decision making process. This asymmetry has consequences for the range and content of deliberations in the NRC.

It means that certain security and defence issues agreed by NATO members by consensus are considered as NATO's internal business. If they are discussed by the NRC NATO members will speak with a single voice, which obviously limits the scope of subsequent discussions. This means that some issues in the NRC are for free discussion among the 29; others are for 29 but the 28 will speak as one. Some issues will not achieve consensus to be included on the NRC agenda because they are "NATO only" or are bilateral.

There is no formal definition of what constitutes NATO's internal business. The most appropriate formulation would suggest that it is any issue judged by the members as affecting the security of the Alliance and its core function of collective defence. As one official noted "the more sensitive the issue, the more some members insist on coordination and unity".

Inevitably grey areas exist where discussions in the NRC format can wander into "NATO only" territory or where policy areas overlap. However, NATO members are vigilant to safeguard the sanctity of NATO decision making. Russian involvement in NATO's collectively agreed policies represents, in the words of one official, "a thick red line" for all members.

The 28/29 issue raises the question of pre-coordination by NATO members. Coordination by NATO members on issues not related to common defence is contrary to the spirit of the NRC. Obviously, however, the North Atlantic Council discusses issues which will eventually come to the NRC agenda. But officials stress that every effort is made to keep discussions at 29 free on the appropriate topics. They also distinguish between formal and informal

46 This "stiffening" did not go unnoticed by the Russians. In 2007 a senior Russian official lamenting the loss of constructive spirit that he claimed had characterised the early years of the NRC confided to a senior NATO official "we used to fear NATO in Latvia; now we fear Latvia in NATO."

coordination. One noted that consultation and coordination is central to NATO's existence – "its life blood" – and another that "no one can prevent a phone call". Moreover, a variety of internal "informal" groupings exist at any one time on various subjects which also provide ample opportunity for informal consultation.

Others acknowledge that a degree of pre-coordination takes place but minimise its significance. They note the difficulty NATO normally faces in getting consensus on any issue and insist that Russia is well aware of the diversity of views within NATO on any single issue through other channels including bilateral relations.⁴⁷

NATO officials also note that there are occasions during NRC discussions when Russian officials will ask if there is a NATO view – either, as one official noted, "for clarity or mischief making".

In the final analysis it would appear that the question of pre-coordination among the 28 for NRC discussions is handled pragmatically. Efforts are made within the NRC to sustain the principle of independent and equal contributions. In this sense the NRC facilitates the expression of different views within the Alliance. However, the existence of an agreed NATO position on certain key issues is a fact of NATO life; as is the need to guard the process by which those decisions are reached.⁴⁸ Maintaining this distinction is seen as the price of sustaining the NRC. The general view is that it is impossible to conceal the 28/29 problem; better to accommodate it through a degree of pre-coordination, and move on.

Potential

It is evident from the foregoing that the NRC provides an important, some would say indispensable, forum for discussions and exchanges among members of NATO and Russia on questions of security in the Euro-Atlantic region. It has facilitated the provision of information, greater transparency and a range of cooperative efforts in specific areas of common concern and practical application.

47 The former Lithuanian Ambassador to NATO (and current Foreign Minister) Linas Linkevicius has commented on this problem, "I remember how strongly opposed many NATO allies were to the pre-coordination of Allied positions before going into NRC discussions. However I also remember how Russia sought to make full use of internal NATO differences to split the Alliance." Ambassador Linus Linkevicius. See: http://www.europeanleadershipnetwork.org/building-trust-in-the-nato--russia-relationship-what-nato-can-offer-by-linas-chicago-forum_308.html

48 Fencing off issues where NATO will speak with one voice means, in effect, that the NRC continues to face the problem that confronted the PJC. "The parrot", it would seem, is far from dead!

The uniqueness of the NRC is that it brings together Russian and NATO leaders and officials at the working and higher political levels. While the NRC is outside the formal NATO decision and policy making process its activities allow Russian officials a closer view of the workings of the Alliance. Likewise, it allows NATO officials to see the problems of working with Russia and the different perspectives, preoccupations and methods that this involves. The significance of both dimensions should not be underestimated. NATO officials point to their own difficulties in understanding Russian working procedures. They also point to the problems facing Russian officials who need to adapt to and develop the habits of multilateral cooperation and understanding built up by the Alliance over the years.

The value of such cooperation is self-evident and stands on its own merit. However, the larger question is whether this cooperation contributes to the building of trust and confidence which has to be the basis of a genuine NATO Russia partnership. Does it “percolate” in terms of ideas or “spill over” in terms of atmosphere into other more sensitive areas of discussion? Views within the Alliance differ. Some members question whether the original premise that regular interaction would contribute to building trust and confidence was correct. Have the 20 years of regular contacts made a difference to the way the Russian foreign and defence establishment view NATO policies? Looking at current Russian policies many would answer in the negative.

Other members, however, prefer to take a different approach. Rather than questioning the original premise they prefer to ask whether enough has been invested and in the correct areas. Have national capitals been sufficiently engaged?

Despite the positive aspects of its work officials acknowledge that the NRC has not achieved the commitment to joint decisions that were considered essential to an equal partnership. The free discussion of 29 partners is submerged on certain issues by a single NATO voice but also by Russia’s sharply diverging approach to the international environment. The first reflects the reality of NATO’s functioning as an Alliance of collective defence; the second reflects equally the reality of Russia’s current approach. Their combined impact is to change the nature of the discourse and limit the effectiveness of the NRC as a forum to deal with the most sensitive and controversial security issues.

Nevertheless, the importance attached to NATO–Russia relations determines that a framework designed specifically to shape that relationship is needed. With all its imperfections the NRC is the reflection of that need. It provides an institutional framework irrespective of existing tensions. There is no enthusiasm among officials to create new institutions; what is needed, they say, is simply the political will by the members of the NRC to engage fully and exploit its potential. Both its potential and its limitations lie in the gift of the members themselves.

National Views

Among the 28 NATO members, as one would expect, views on the effectiveness of the NRC and its prospects vary considerably. Some countries are prepared to push the envelope on achieving more cooperation at 29. The US, Germany, France, Italy and Spain are often mentioned as enthusiasts; “engagement is investment” as a senior official noted. Others are not so sure. The more recent members – in particular those formerly within the orbit of the Soviet Union – tend to be more sceptical on the benefits of cooperation with Russia and on the future prospects of the NRC.⁴⁹ Proximity and history are huge influences in this debate.

The NRC is seen by all members as a complement to their respective bilateral relations. For some it is an opportunity to demonstrate the diversity of views within NATO. For others, however, it is the reverse and the opportunity to correct any impression of disunity.⁵⁰ Some Allies are reluctant to use the NRC framework because it involves watering down long standing policies in order to reach consensus with a Russia “that does not share their values”; others fear that using the NRC risks “losing control” of the issue concerned. Another national representative noted that his country placed more emphasis on bilateral relations because progress in the NRC was often blocked.

For some Russians, cooperation with an organisation seen as a regional and global threat, sits uneasily. However, the NRC represents a window on the NATO process and Russian officials participate actively in the various working groups. But the NRC is not an entrée to a full vote on NATO policy and decision making processes and NATO members are determined to keep it so.⁵¹

Nevertheless, Russia looks for opportunities to achieve closer association, as in the case of the request for special status in the discussions on missile defence and on Afghanistan. NATO officials also note that Russia is looking at the other partnership arrangements NATO has developed in what is termed 28 plus one format as being more interesting than the NRC.

49 See for example the views of former NATO Ambassador Linas Linkevicius, “Frankly speaking, too much time, resource, and effort has gone in for very little result while underlying contradictions in the relationship remain.” See Linkevicius, *op. cit.*

50 As one Ambassador noted, “the NRC helps demonstrate to Russia that we are united despite what it might hear bilaterally”.

51 As one official commented “Membership in NATO has its responsibilities and therefore its own exclusive privileges. A Russia that signed up to those values and responsibilities would be welcome to enjoy those privileges”.

The goal of achieving closer “association” with NATO processes remains the central dilemma for Russian policy makers.⁵²

Closer association might be possible in those areas where the Alliance does not need to speak with a single voice, as is the case of several working groups. However, the term “association” could be interpreted as participation in the development of policy decisions and a seat at the table. In current conditions this remains a non-starter. Nevertheless, for those who seek increased cooperation, the concept of association merits further exploration.

It would seem that Russia is not entirely satisfied with other aspects of the relationship. Russian officials frequently express dissatisfaction with what they see as a lack of seriousness given their proposals or positions. The proposal to hold a high level conference on European Security in Moscow which was received without enthusiasm by allies is a case in point.⁵³

The collective nature of NATO adds another dimension as it perpetuates an exclusiveness – associated with the obligations of membership – which the rhetoric of equality in the NRC context cannot disguise. The “28 plus one” dimension is never far away.⁵⁴ This is a reflection of the unequal nature of the partnership but also, NATO officials would add, to Russia’s adversarial approach on many issues.

Prospects

In looking at the potential and future prospects of the NRC some members argue that a true partnership of equals can only happen through a convergence in fundamental standards and values.⁵⁵ In the meantime and despite its shortcomings the NRC remains the appropriate vehicle to advance relations between NATO and Russia; providing an essential degree of continuity to a difficult and complex relationship.

52 It was also highlighted by former Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov during the meeting of the European Leadership Network in Warsaw, June 2012. He noted that cooperation on what he termed “regimes” could be a way to achieve this. Some NATO officials remain wary that these efforts represent an attempt to disrupt NATO’s ability to act in the international sphere

53 However, in the aftermath of the conference NATO officials were critical of its organisation and content – “seriousness is a two way street” one official commented. Russian officials have subsequently confirmed that the conference will be an annual affair.

54 According to NATO officials, during one meeting of NRC Foreign Ministers Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov remarked that he felt more like a guest than a full member of a Council of equals.

55 In the words of one NATO official this would mean “a sea change in Russia’s conduct in the international system nearer to the EU and NATO norms of behaviour”.

The challenge is to enhance its relevance. This will mean working around its limitations by encouraging greater flexibility in current approaches. This could mean Russia easing its critical attitude to all things NATO and NATO members adopting a less rigid attitude to what constitutes internal business. Unfortunately, in current circumstances neither is likely.

Nevertheless, it should be possible to increase NRC involvement in the more sensitive and immediately relevant areas such as NSNW transparency and other, longer-term efforts at confidence and security building. The focus on transparency and confidence building should be tailor made for the NRC and its' brief to improve transparency and openness. Moreover, engaging Russia on this dimension is seen as a crucial step towards the larger goal of building a system of mutual security in the Euro-Atlantic region.⁵⁶ These discussions would have a bearing on NATO's collective defence arrangements but need not trespass on internal business and consensus territory nor, therefore, require a single voice.

It may be possible to broaden the NRC agenda to include other areas of common concern where a unified NATO position is not needed. Certain regional issues of mutual concern would lend themselves to multilateral discussion in the NRC format – the Arctic is an obvious, and too often ignored, example. Cooperation on these matters, to be substantive, would need to go beyond general discussion and statements of intent to more systematic study, as done by the working groups. However, reaching consensus on extending the scope of the NRC in this manner will not be easy. Nevertheless, the broader the agenda of cooperation and dialogue the greater the possibility that work at the periphery will influence attitudes at the centre.

Promoting the NRC and NATO-Russia relations is a task that extends beyond the purview of governments alone. The trust and confidence necessary for a true partnership has to be built at all levels, formal and informal, official and unofficial, government and civil society. Whatever the level, these efforts will have to confront a familiar conundrum. Dialogue, to be effective, requires a degree of trust; and trust is built through dialogue. Creating the required synergy between the two is the challenge and requires time, patience, and perseverance.

56 See the multiple proposals on this subject in "Building Mutual Security in the Euro-Atlantic Region", 2013. Report prepared by The Nuclear Threat Initiative (NTI), the ELN, the Munich Security Conference (MSC) and the Russian Council on International Affairs (RIAC), available at: http://www.europeanleadershipnetwork.org/building-mutual-security-in-the-euro-atlantic-region-report_516.html

Appendix 1: The NRC 2002–2008

Paul Fritch, Head of the Russia Section on NATO’s International Staff during this period, provided the following comments on the work of the NRC during its initial period. In addition to showing the progress made these also indicate the different and often unrelated pressures which impact and influence its work. They demonstrate the robustness of the relationship.

The “Honeymoon”: May 2002 – March 2003

This period was characterised by good-faith efforts by all sides to build the new structures and fill them with meaningful substance, as well as optimism that “big-ticket” achievements, such as – NATO-Russia agreements on WMD proliferation, what was then called “theatre missile defence », and even CFE – were within reach.

The Iraq War: March 2003 – December 2004

The initial period of optimism was ended by the war in Iraq. The war was an enormous distraction within the Alliance as Allies took very different positions. After this period of what is best termed “infighting” Allies had little time or energy left over for seeking creative new avenues for co-operation with Russia. This period also saw several small “slights” that had a lasting negative impact on the NRC. These included NATO’s refusal:

- to organise an NRC Foreign Ministerial meeting, including the seven new Allies, on the day of the April 2003 enlargement ceremony,
- to consider a joint statement at 27 underscoring the intention of non-CFE Allies to seek accession to the adapted Treaty when possible;
- to put Georgia on the agenda of the December 2003 NRC Foreign Ministerial meeting, although it took place days after the Rose Revolution and was obviously the highest-priority security issue of the day, and although then-Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov had personally mediated Shevardnadze’s departure and had offered to provide a detailed briefing to NATO colleagues.

This period also saw the departure of Lord Robertson as NATO Secretary General, who was a steadfast champion of NATO-Russia relations.

The Rebuilding: December 2004 – December 2006

This was a low profile but effective period in the relationship, and the closest it ever came to “normalcy”. The NRC generated little high-level interest from senior leadership at NATO and in capitals, but it nevertheless achieved a remarkable amount at the working level. This productive – if low-profile – period began with a potential crisis over the Orange Revolution in

Ukraine (resolved in large part through surprisingly forceful language in the December 2004 NRC Ministerial Statement), and included:

- Russian accession to the NATO/PfP SOFA (Status of Forces Agreement).
- The adoption of the first NATO-Russia Action Plan on Terrorism,
- Russia contributing forces to Operation Active Endeavour (the first-ever contribution from a non-Ally to an Article 5 operation),
- Several large-scale TMD, CEP and maritime rescue exercises;
- And the launch of the NATO-Russia Counter-Narcotics Training Program for Afghanistan and Central Asia.

The Reassessment: December 2006 – August 2008

This period saw an increased focus by Allied leadership on the growing disconnect between domestic developments in Russia and the lofty rhetoric of the NRC, louder voices from the new Allies, and calls for a fundamental reassessment of the relationship to coincide with fifth anniversary of the NRC (May 2007). This period was characterised by a concentration of the NRC on practical co-operation on Afghanistan (transit/over flight), equipment for the Afghan National Army, counter-narcotics training and the development of the “streamlined agenda,” which reformed the NRC’s working group structure.

This period ended with the Russian military intervention in Georgia in August 2008.

Appendix 2: List of NRC Committees and Working Groups

The Committee on Science for Peace and Security

Working Groups

The NRC Operational, Defence and Cooperation Working Group. (ODC)

Sub-Group on Afghanistan

The NRC Defence Transparency, Strategy and Reform Working Group (DTSR)

The NRC Arms Control, Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Working Group (AD)

The NRC Missile Defence Working Group (MD)

The NRC Civil Emergency Planning and Protection Working Group (CEP)

The NRC Working Group on Cooperative Airspace Initiative (CAI)

Ad Hoc Working Groups

The NRC ad hoc Working Group on Logistics (LOG)

The NRC ad hoc Working Group on the Terrorist Threat to the Euro-Atlantic Area (TER)

About the Author

Simon Lunn is a Senior Associate Fellow for the European Leadership Network (ELN). He served as Secretary General to the NATO Parliamentary Assembly 1997–2007 following 8 years as the Deputy Secretary General where he initiated and implemented the Assembly's program of partnership and assistance to the parliaments of Central and Eastern Europe.

From 1983–1989, he was Head of Plans and Policy on NATO's International Staff and was involved in all aspects of NATO defence planning. He was also a member of the High Level Task Force on preparations for the Conventional Forces Europe (CFE) negotiations.

Between 1979-81 he worked at the US Congressional Research Service writing reports for Congress on NATO strategy on the 1979 INF decision. He also participated in the Senate hearings on the ratification of SALT II.

During the 1970s, when he was Director of the North Atlantic Assembly's Defence Committee he worked extensively on the role of nuclear weapons in NATO strategy.

He has a BA (Hons) in History from the University of Wales and an MA in War Studies from Kings College, London University. He attended the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst 1960–62 subsequently serving as an officer in the British army. He is currently a Senior Fellow at DCAF in Geneva and a consultant with NTI in Washington DC.

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