INTRODUCTION

Explaining NATO's Durability

THE PUTIN GOVERNMENT'S forceful annexation of the Crimean Peninsula in March 2014 sent shockwaves through the European security architecture. The events in Ukraine have been interpreted in Brussels as the single greatest challenge to post–Cold War European security and by NATO as a compelling reason for the urgent rejuvenation of the alliance's role in collective defense on the European continent. To critics of NATO expansion, events on the alliance's eastern flank provided evidence that Russia's security concerns have been at best underestimated and at worst willfully ignored. To proponents of the policy of enlargement, here was one of its key justifications—the protection of Eastern and Central European countries against future Russian aggression.

However recent events in Ukraine are interpreted, the ongoing dispute has been one more crisis in NATO's long, stormy, and turbulent history. The dispute over Egypt's renationalization of the Suez Canal in 1956, the tension within the alliance over US involvement in the Vietnam War, and the dispute over the Reagan administration's deployment of Cruise and Pershing missiles to Europe in the 1980s, all placed enormous pressure on NATO and its members. In the post–Cold War era the pattern continued. There were serious ruptures over alliance strategy and involvement in Bosnia in 1995, where NATO was criticized by some for not acting soon enough, and by others for getting involved at all. In Kosovo, in 1999, alliance air strikes against Slobodan Milosevic's forces, without a UN mandate, provoked a further barrage of criticism.

Perhaps the most serious crisis in NATO's history, the dispute over the US invasion of Iraq in 2003, shook the alliance to its core, threatening to drive an intractable wedge between the US and UK on the one hand and France and Germany on the other. The long and painful conflict in Afghanistan again placed the alliance under severe strain, prompting former US Secretary of Defense Robert Gates to warn that NATO faced a "dim, if not dismal, future" if European members

of the alliance continued to fall short on their commitments of troops and resources.[1] Donald Trump's unexpected victory in the 2016 US presidential election has also placed the alliance under pressure. The new president, who previously referred to NATO as "obsolete", has shown a reluctance in his first months in office to endorse the US commitment to Article 5, NATO's collective defense clause, and has reprimanded NATO leaders for not meeting defence spending targets.

Yet, perhaps against the odds, and in the face of these often-vehement criticisms, NATO has survived and continues to be at the very forefront of transatlantic security. The alliance has expanded to include seventeen new members since its formation, with thirteen of these joining since the end of the Cold War, and it is now operating with a host of new global partners in a much wider geographical area than was ever originally envisaged. The alliance has also become a central part of the transatlantic response to the new security challenges of a globalised world, in which transnational terrorist organizations and failed states present a real and continued threat to NATO members. NATO's operation in Libya in 2011 underscored its prominence in this new era, if not its effectiveness, and its troubled operation in Afghanistan has been one of the most vital multilateral security operations in history. NATO is still undoubtedly the most powerful alliance of states in the world and there are simply no competitors with anything like the same level of capability.

The task of this book is to explain this apparent anomaly. Why, despite the crises, criticism, tension, and disagreement, has the alliance proved so resilient? How has NATO confounded its critics, overcome its weaknesses, and remained at the forefront of international security? This analytical focus can be expressed more simply and succinctly.

WHAT EXPLAINS NATO'S DURABILITY IN THE POST–COLD WAR ERA?

This is the central question that this book addresses, and it is an important question. The post–Cold War environment was distinctive in several respects. The US emerged from the Cold War as the world's only superpower with no geopolitical or ideological competitor in sight. At the same time, the world was subject to deepening globalization, a process of growing interconnectedness between societies, institutions, cultures, and individuals. The focus on NATO in the post–Cold War era will thus help shed light on how an alliance was able to evolve and adapt in conditions that were very different to those in which it was created.

NATO'S HISTORICAL NARRATIVE(S)

NATO has been in existence for more than seventy years. It is the oldest military alliance in the world and without a doubt one of the most studied in world history. What then is a useful theoretical or methodological approach to explaining the durability of an organization that spans such a long period of history and which has been involved in so many of the world's most consequential events?

Many authors have turned to international relations theory to look at NATO's historical evolution and this book pays some regard to those approaches. The three dominant theoretical approaches within the discipline—realism, liberalism, and social constructivism—all have important things to say about alliances, and provide contrasting explanations of why they are formed, how they change, how they respond to adversity, and why they last.[2] But while each of these frameworks has made a contribution, no single theoretical framework is able to fully explain the subject of international relations. The discipline of international relations is prone to creating intellectual silos that diminish rather than enhance our understanding of a particular subject. As K.J. Holsti has argued, "The search for a single, authoritative theoretical or epistemological stance is likely to be harmful for the generation of reliable knowledge in the field."[3] Marc Trachtenberg makes a similar point, claiming that "Theory can be misused. If you rely on a certain theory, you run the risk of seeing only what that theory says is important or of trying to force the evidence into some preconceived theoretical structure."[4] If we only look at an issue from one conceptual viewpoint we could seriously limit our ability to explain the subject matter. As is demonstrated later in the book, approaches to NATO that are too embedded in one particular theoretical approach have misread or ignored important dynamics that help explain the alliance's survival and have been guilty of trying to make theory fit the evidence rather than the other way around.

Theoretical eclecticism is another option—looking at the issue at hand from the viewpoint of a variety of theories. This kind of approach has gained some traction within the literature and theoretical plurality has helped to provide a fuller and more nuanced picture of NATO's role in the post–Cold War era.[5] But the challenge of looking at NATO's entire post–Cold War history while simultaneously considering the assumptions of a number of different theories is beyond the scope of this text. To do full justice to theory *and* history is a difficult task and there has been a propensity across the NATO literature to look at isolated periods of NATO history or particular events and not join

up the historical "dots" that fully explain NATO's experience. There are few (if any) accounts of NATO that draw from its entire post–Cold War history in extrapolating the sources of its strength.

Instead of a theoretical approach to the research question this book adopts a "historical narrative" approach. It traces NATO's post–Cold War "story," starting with NATO's entry into a new security environment in the early 1990s and ending with the influence of the Obama administration, the conflict in Ukraine, and the rise of the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS). This historical narrative approach is based on considering a series of interconnected events, processes, and decisions in the period after the Cold War and identifying common and consistent dynamics that have held the alliance together through one of the most turbulent periods of world history.

There are a number of reasons why the book takes this approach. First, historical narrative has undergone a renaissance in recent years as a method to understand complex changes in the international environment, not least because the study of international relations (and policy making) has too often been disconnected from history. In this respect the book takes an approach that is intended to avoid some of the ahistoricism of the post–Cold War literature on NATO. A number of authors have contributed to this renaissance. Geoffrey Roberts, for example, describes a "turn to history and narrative in the study of international relations,"[6] arguing that "IR theoretical concepts and postulates need to be buttressed and validated not just by example-mongering or selective empirical sampling, but by specific stories about the evolution and development of international society."[7] Ian Clark has similarly argued for an approach to the study of world events that connects theory and history and bridges the divide between historians and IR scholars. A "middle position" is needed, he says, "drawing upon both the insights of history and political science."[8] Marc Trachtenberg, one of the pioneers of narrative analysis, has utilized both political science and historical approaches to studying international affairs and has claimed that "studying history can help theorists see things they might not otherwise see."[9] This book follows the approaches of these scholars in attempting to find common ground between history and theory.

Second, considering NATO's historical development and its overarching post–Cold War narrative may allow us to better appreciate how the alliance has changed. NATO is a long-lasting alliance–it has been around for more than sixty years—but is has also proved to be a "tough" organization, resilient to internal pressures and also to changes in its external environment. Durability is defined in the Webster's dictionary as, "The state or quality of being durable; the power of uninterrupted or

long continuance in any condition; the power of resisting agents or influences which tend to cause changes, decay, or dissolution; lastingness." NATO has survived great changes in the international system and is operating now in a very different world to that in which it was created. It has also been resilient in the face of these changes—it has resisted its critics, confounded those that predicted that it would dissolve, and, crucially, it has changed so that it is continually relevant. To examine NATO's overall post–Cold War history allows us to better illuminate the concept of "durability" and allows for a more comprehensive and accurate analysis of the alliance's historical trajectory.

Relatedly, NATO members, as will be demonstrated, have exhibited a sense of historical attachment to the alliance and to each other during this period. These kinds of dynamics are often not captured by case studies of isolated periods of NATO's history or indeed some of the theoretical approaches to international relations, which assume fixed patterns of state behavior across time and space. NATO members have been through turbulent times together and share a certain loyalty to one another. This sense of history and the loyalty gained through sustained social interaction is palpable and directly relevant to the issue of NATO's durability. The common bonds formed within NATO over the many years in which it has been at the forefront of international security are likely to have structured and influenced NATO's actions in ways that only a broad historical examination of NATO can reveal.

Another strength of a historical narrative approach is that it can consider a number of different "levels of analysis" from which to interpret the issues and simultaneously consider both "agency" and "structure" in determining the sources of NATO's durability. There may well be individual leaders who have had a significant impact on the durability of the alliance in the post–Cold War era, such as the NATO Secretaries General. There may also be certain NATO member states that have had a more significant role than others in galvanizing the alliance during difficult times. Similarly, the structure of the international system may have had a telling impact, particularly with respect to the transition away from bipolarity at the end of the Cold War. By examining NATO's durability through a historical lens that accounts for both micro and macro drivers of the alliance we may be able to avoid the perils of "reductionism."

Finally, we are at an important historical juncture for NATO, with the end of the ISAF mission in Afghanistan, the resurgence of geopolitical rivalry on NATO's eastern flank due to the conflict in Ukraine, a marked deterioration in the security environment on NATO's southern flank, including the rise of ISIS, new proposals for an "EU Army," and the ascension of a president to the White House who has caused

serious concerns in European capitals over the US commitment to NATO. By providing a commentary on NATO's overall historical trajectory, while at the same time extrapolating the sources of its durability, it is hoped the book makes a timely contribution to debates on the alliance's future. It may also help policy makers understand how to draw on NATO's historical strengths in preparing the alliance for an uncertain future. In other words, at a time of multiple international crises, reflecting on the alliance's historical strengths may provide a pathway to *keeping* the alliance strong.

THE ARGUMENT

The overarching argument advanced by this book is that there are two competing but interrelated explanations of NATO's ongoing role and its durability, which constitute contrasting historical narratives in and of themselves.[10] The first is connected to liberal and institutional approaches to international relations: NATO's durability hinges on the importance of its political values and commitment to democracy, the effective management of domestic/democratic politics and public opinion in NATO member states, and the institutional adaptation of the alliance to a changing security environment. Within this narrative NATO's identity as a democratic club and the social/historical bonds that exist between its members have helped to galvanize its membership behind common security goals.

The second narrative is a less idealistic (and more realist) one: NATO is a military alliance based on power politics that has responded to the shift in polarity after the Cold War, confronted new threats that have galvanized its members, and provided military capabilities that have been instrumental in responding to those threats. NATO's trajectory according to this second explanation has largely been shaped by its most powerful members, and particularly the United States, whose leaders have consistently and consciously chosen to work through NATO in furthering US interests.

These two historical narratives appear repeatedly in NATO's post–Cold War history and provide contrasting explanations of NATO's durability. However, they are not competing ones. In the words of Barry Buzan and Richard Little, they should be seen "not as alternative, mutually exclusive, interpretations, but as an interlinked set of perspectives, each illuminating a different facet of reality."[11] As is shown in this book, NATO's durability is best explained by the *convergence* of liberal democratic values and national interests in the post–Cold War era. NATO has been a durable organization because it has simultaneously been

able to protect and advance its members commitment to democracy while reconciling their often-diverging national, regional, and global interests. At times in NATO's history the realist narrative emerges more prominently, such as recently over the alliance's response to Russian aggression on its eastern flank, and sometimes the liberal narrative gains the ascendency, such as during the early 1990s in respect of the decision to enlarge the alliance. Yet almost always in NATO's post–Cold War history the two narratives are present side by side.

To be clear, this is not an argument that dwells on old debates between realism and liberalism. To quote Marc Trachtenberg again, "an intellectually sterile 'war of the isms' that never seems to get anywhere"[12] is not what this book is aiming for. Rather, this book seeks to provide the most accurate possible account of NATO's durability while being mindful of (but not tied to) the theoretical literature on alliances. It looks at how debates about NATO have sometimes become dichotomized, entrenched, and disconnected from the reality of what the transatlantic community of states has experienced over the last twenty-five years, and it attempts to move beyond intra-disciplinary divides to find common ground between theory and history.

CHAPTER OUTLINE

In explaining NATO's durability in the post–Cold War world the book is divided into five chapters. Chapter One begins by exploring the Cold War foundations of NATO before moving on to contextualize the "new security environment" of the 1990s and its impact on the alliance. The changing international structure—from a bipolar system to what was perceived to be a unipolar system—had an effect on NATO at this time, but so, too, did the growing impact of globalization. The first Gulf War, a traditional geopolitical conflict in which NATO played an important role, also affected the alliance's trajectory, even though it disguised the emerging reality of the 1990s—that intrastate violence not interstate conflict became the main challenge facing NATO in this all-important decade. The chapter also provides an analysis of the decision to enlarge the alliance to take in three new members in 1999: The Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland. This decision was NATO's bedrock in the post–Cold War era and, as the analysis will show, was based on both geopolitical and democratic considerations.

Chapter 2 examines NATO involvement in the former Yugoslavia; first, in Bosnia in 1995, and then in Kosovo in 1999. Although these conflicts were closely related to the strategic rationale of the enlargement decision, it is necessary, for intellectual and analytical clarity,

to examine them in a separate chapter. As becomes apparent, this approach allows us to better distill why NATO became involved in the conflicts, the effectiveness of the NATO operations, and the broader implications of those conflicts for NATO's changing role in transatlantic security. As is shown, NATO's action in the two conflicts was triggered by a combination of outrage at the grave abuses of human rights in the two conflicts, but also by concerns over the implications of the conflicts for regional stability.

Chapter 3 moves on to examine NATO's post-9/11 experience. This was a testing time for the alliance and one of the most contentious periods in its history. At least to begin with, NATO responded to the attacks on New York and Washington with empathy, solidarity, and a determination to support the US in its response. But as the strategy of the Bush administration became clearer, and increasingly focused on Saddam Hussein's regime, a serious transatlantic rift developed. The chapter argues, however, that the rift was overcome quickly. The operational necessities of long drawn-out conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan, a reciprocal effort on the part of the European and American sides of the dispute to heal divisions, and the ongoing process of enlargement and institutional adaptation, which took on a new urgency in response to the shared threat from terrorism, all contributed to NATO's recovery.

Chapter 4 provides a detailed examination of the alliance's operation in Afghanistan, outlining the reasons for the Bush administration's initial reluctance to utilize NATO in ousting the Taliban from power, and then the growing political and operational pressures that developed for the alliance to take the reins of the UN mandated ISAF operation in 2003. Although the Afghanistan conflict is not fully over and its implications for NATO are not yet fully apparent, it is argued that NATO proved remarkably resilient in very trying circumstances, due in large part to the careful management of domestic politics within NATO member states, and the shared assessment of the threat of leaving behind a failed state.

Chapter 5 examines NATO's response to the changing security environments on its Eastern and Southern flanks between 2010 and 2015, including the alliance's response to Russian aggression in Ukraine and the unfolding situation in North Africa and the Middle East, including the NATO led operation in Libya in 2011 and the rise of ISIS. After the long and arduous mission in Afghanistan these dual threats have given impetus for the rejuvenation of the alliance's role in collective defense and highlighted the ongoing struggle for NATO to ensure its relevance in addressing globalized security challenges.

1 THE POST–COLD WAR ENVIRONMENT AND NATO ENLARGEMENT

AS NATO ENTERED INTO the post–Cold War period, the alliance faced new challenges and was forced to adapt to a changing strategic environment. The Soviet Union had collapsed, depriving the alliance of its main adversary, and debates raged in Europe and America about the ongoing viability of an institution centered on deterring a threat that was no longer there. NATO's role was put to the test in dealing with the fallout from the collapse of the Soviet Union and the ethnic, intrastate conflict in the former Yugoslavia, and the alliance went through a period of intensive institutional realignment during this period, the absorption into the alliance of a newly unified Germany, the absorption of France back into the military command structure, and late in the decade, the enlargement of the alliance by three new members, the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland, extending the border in which NATO operated 400 miles closer to Russia.

NATO clearly had a significant role in European and world politics in this period. What factors contributed to the alliance's durability in this new era, though, and how did the alliance demonstrate such remarkable resilience in the face of a world that was rapidly changing? These are the central questions that this chapter addresses. The chapter proceeds in three parts. First, it explores NATO's Cold War foundations and how they helped sustain the alliance in entering into the new strategic environment of the 1990s. This section also analyzes the interrelated effects of (a) the changing international "structure," (b) the impact of globalization, (c) the first Gulf War, and (d) the rise of intrastate conflict. Second, the chapter examines the process of institutional change within the alliance, the adoption of a new strategic concept, which was directly linked to this changing strategic context, and explores the "genesis" of the enlargement strategy. Third, the chapter examines in detail the debate over NATO enlargement, the pros and cons, and the reasons those in favor of the strategy prevailed. The chapter reveals the divides that began to emerge in this period between democratic and realist narratives about NATO.

It argues, however, that the decision to proceed with enlargement, and the strategic and political rationale behind it, demonstrates the convergence between liberal values and interests during this crucial early period in NATO's post–Cold War history.

NATO'S COLD WAR FOUNDATIONS AND THE "NEW SECURITY ENVIRONMENT"

NATO's durability in the post–Cold War era was clearly contingent on its *Cold* War history. That is to say, NATO's historical accumulation of experience influenced its ongoing trajectory. By the time the Berlin Wall came down in 1989 NATO had been in operation for more than forty years. The alliance had faced many and varied challenges, both external and internal, but it had survived, and in doing so had accumulated a great deal of valuable experience.[1] NATO was a larger alliance first of all, the members that joined during the Cold War—Turkey and Greece (1952), West Germany (1955), and Spain (1982)—had strengthened the organization and given it a wider geographical area of operation. The major Cold War conflicts and crises—the Korean War, Suez Crisis, Vietnam War, the decision by Charles de Gaul to leave the military command in 1965, the Cuban Missile Crisis, and President Reagan's contentious deployment of Pershing missiles to Europe in the 1980s—all served to influence and shape the organization's trajectory, inform its identity, and affect its operational capacity. The alliance had also become adept at resolving intra-alliance tensions during the Cold War. It had come through the storms of the Cold War and was perceived by many to have helped the West to emerge from this protracted conflict in a favorable position. Support for its ongoing role and a firm commitment to preserving the alliance in a very different strategic environment was contingent on such perceptions and on NATO's prior successes and failures. As Veronica Kitchen has argued, "Since détente, the allies had consistently presented their political community as something worthy of preservation for its own sake, rather than simply as a means to defence against the Soviet Union."[2] This commitment to NATO did not dissipate as the alliance entered the 1990s, even as the alliance's main adversary collapsed.

Additionally, the political and institutional influence of the alliance was evident as NATO entered into the post–Cold War era. That political strength was derived from the alliance's collective military strength, but it was also aided by NATO's strong institutional machinery and committee structures, including the North Atlantic Council (NAC),

which by the end of the Cold War had become a prominent political player in North Atlantic security affairs, the post of Secretary General, a position occupied by many senior transatlantic statesmen, and the existence of an internationally representative and highly competent secretariat. Other Cold War processes, such as the 1967 Harmel Review, solidified greater consultation procedures within the alliance and guaranteed the smaller NATO powers a voice within the organization. The alliance also provided institutional means through which the diverging strategic interests and goals of alliance members could be reconciled and overcome: for the Europeans, NATO had become a tool to influence US policies, particularly over policy approaches that caused concern, such as the strategy of "brinkmanship" in the 1950s and the nuclear escalation in the 1980s. On the military side, the Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE) had been established, a powerful military presence in Europe, along with major command posts in Paris, Oslo, Fontainebleau, Naples, and Virginia, with many other smaller posts. NATO had put down institutional roots that were not easy to tear up as the alliance entered into the 1990s and the foundations laid in the Cold War began to be influential in helping the alliance adapt to new issues and challenges.

THE CHANGING INTERNATIONAL STRUCTURE

The first and perhaps most obvious of these challenges was the changing distribution of power in the international arena. In the aftermath of these events many believed that the international system was moving from a bipolar system to, in the absence of any other great power to rival the US, a unipolar system. In fact, many scholars and critics believed that the US had "won" the Cold War and was now in an unparalleled position of strength. At least in military terms, this is amply documented.[3] The global influence of the US was no longer actively challenged either materially by the Soviet Union or in ideological terms. Communism had been largely discredited as a viable, functioning system by which to organize a state's politics and diplomacy, and democracy was perceived by many to be "on the march." This somewhat triumphalist way of interpreting the end of the Cold War was best articulated by Charles Krauthammer, who described this event as ushering in a "unipolar moment":

> The most striking feature of the post−Cold War world is its uni-
> polarity. No doubt, multipolarity will come in time. In perhaps
> another generation or so there will be great powers coequal

with the United States, and the world will, in structure, resemble the pre–World War I era. But we are not there yet, nor will we be for decades. Now is the unipolar moment.[4]

Krauthammer dismissed any new hope for multilateralism through the UN, suggesting that the US was in an unrivaled position to play a decisive role in conflicts globally. The main challenge or threat to the US in this new environment would be, Krauthammer argued, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD). Such weapons in the hands of "rogue states," such as Iraq and North Korea, would be the central focus of the US in a new era, and this way of thinking greatly influenced policy makers in America.

Such a view had clear implications for the US and its NATO allies— the idea that the world system had fundamentally changed from bipolar to unipolar had the potential to have a serious impact on the alliance's durability. The US might have decided that, given its new-found position of strength, it no longer needed its alliance partners and was no longer interested in being constrained by them. Likewise, the unity within the alliance might have suffered as a result of the US working increasingly outside of the alliance in conducting its foreign policy (a concern that was to resurface with the US response to 9/11, which is discussed in a subsequent chapter). The US might also have been expected to begin to refocus its international efforts on rising powers, and new states or new coalitions of states could have been expected to emerge to challenge the authority of the pre-eminent power and to seek to retain influence over their own regions, guarding against foreign interference and manipulation. In such a unipolar environment balancing behavior against the new "unipole" was a distinct possibility.

Conversely, it might have been expected that policy makers would recognize that the unipolar moment would be brief and that a unified American and European approach to security, institutionalized in NATO, would be the best way to insure against the emergence of new rival blocks of states, to best deter such adversaries during the inevitably brief transition away from unipolarity, and to balance against alternative power centers when they inevitably emerged. In this scenario, NATO's continuing role would be assured by the *expected* transition from bipolarity through unipolarity to multipolarity, not nullified by the illusory transition from bipolarity to unipolarity. In other words, NATO's essential utility would remain—in the immediate future the US may have needed the Europeans less in order to advance their foreign policy interests but inevitably a unified North Atlantic area was the best *long-term* approach.

Following this line of argument further, without NATO, and its consolidating and unifying influence, European states might have been more prone to be the ones balancing against the US themselves, in order to constrain a hegemonic power bent on influencing international relations in a unilateral fashion. Thus, by retaining NATO in the new era the US would guard against active balancing against its interests from within Europe and retain international legitimacy by working through the alliance, while the Europeans would maintain a channel of influence on US policy. It would also actively help to share the burden in responding to new threats and managing the transition toward a new era and it would keep Europe and America together in forging common solutions to international issues.

Clearly the change in polarity would influence the alliance but during the early 1990s it was not apparent exactly how this would occur. Moreover, the true nature of the post–Cold War era was contested. While it was the prevalent view in the US that America had "won" the Cold War, this narrative was not universally accepted. The influence of Gorbachev's personality and policies in bringing the Cold War to an end may have been equally or even more important. There was also a broader view that the cumulative degeneration of the Marxist–Leninist political system forced the Soviet Union to "opt out" of Cold War competition with the US. Another claim was that the advent of globalization in the early 1980s was perhaps the most significant contributing factor—external pressure from the Reagan administration converged with long-term internal pressures within the Soviet Union and this was behind the end of the Cold War.

It is not the place of this book to examine these questions in detail. What is important to recognize is that the understanding of the end of the Cold War, and particularly the US reaction to it, would be important in formulating foreign policy in these crucial years, and would potentially have a big effect on NATO. It is important when moving on from this broader conceptualization to ascertain, when looking at the evidence of this period, whether the dominant US understanding of the end of the Cold War and its implications influenced its foreign policy and its policy toward NATO, and whether the key players in NATO were compelled to act by the strategic rationale of a changing distribution of power in the international system.

THE IMPACT OF GLOBALIZATION

Also crucial to understanding NATO's durability in this period, and an aspect of the changing strategic environment that was in many

ways inseparable from the debates about polarity, was the accelerating influence of globalization on the alliance—a growing interconnectedness between peoples in a world in which traditional borders had increasingly less meaning. This process must be acknowledged both in ending the Cold War; as Robert Patman states ". . . the end of the Cold War was both a symptom and a cause of deepening globalisation,"[5] but also in respect of a potential rationale to keep NATO going in this period. The question must be: Did the process of globalization contribute in any way to its ability during this period of history to adapt and survive? Undoubtedly the answer to his question is yes—globalization presented NATO with many challenges, but also with a great deal of opportunity.

First, the growing awareness in Central and Eastern European states of the gulf in living standards and social well-being between them and their Western European counterparts, largely as a result of advances in communications technology, television, and the internet, led to a groundswell of momentum for change and to a direct desire to be brought under the Western umbrella. NATO membership was an integral step in that process. The security guarantee that the alliance could provide would enable them to concentrate on economic recovery and closer economic integration, give them access to new markets, bring about new trading relations with Western countries, and crucially, was seen as paving the way for EU membership. In other words, NATO was seen by the leaders of these countries as a means by which to acquire a great degree of security that would lead, in turn, to the economic growth that was required to provide for their citizens. Globalization thus contributed to a desire to get into the alliance and fueled the momentum toward the enlargement decision, and this is demonstrated and discussed in more detail later in this chapter in the context of NATO enlargement.

Second, globalization increasingly worried NATO in respect of the potential for the proliferation of WMD and particularly the potential for a growing trade in nuclear weapons and materials. NATO had been at the forefront of the political relationship between the West and the Soviet Union in managing nuclear weapons and materials through arms reductions talks, and these continued during this period, ensuring NATO an important ongoing role. In a changing world, where the Soviet Union and the US were withdrawing military support from their former proxies, there was a growing concern that countries would seek to acquire, through illicit channels, their own nuclear capability. NATO had a natural and profoundly important incentive to continue its involvement in this area of security during this period. This concern

was shared by all NATO members, especially after 9/11 when the focus on the type of proliferation shifted from state to non state actors.[6]

NATO, working through such well-established institutional mechanisms as the Nuclear Planning Group (NPG) and High Level Group (HLG), was in a prime position to take a role in this vital area of allied policy and began to help resolve strategic issues that emerged during this period between those NATO members who firmly advocated a retention of the nuclear umbrella, and those who advocated the removal of US missiles from Europe and the dismantling of deterrence. This was not an abstract debate. As NATO emerged into the new post–Cold War era decisions were being made and implemented that had a direct bearing on NATO's nuclear strategy and its nuclear role. The NPG was actively involved during this period (April 1989, May 1990, and May 1991) in endorsing a shift in emphasis within the alliance away from short range nuclear capabilities to longer range air-delivered capabilities more suitable to a globalized security environment.[7] In 1991, the Intermediate Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF) entered into force, which banned cruise and ground-launched nuclear missiles and established strict verification procedures. The British, in particular, were uneasy at this and wary of entering into arms reductions talks, seeing them as having the potential to erode the US nuclear guarantee in Europe.[8] As Sir Michael Quinlan stated, "the retention of nuclear weapons in smaller but still significant numbers on each side . . . will remain a prudent and positive element in the construction of a dependable international system."[9]

Connected to concerns about accelerated proliferation as a result of globalization, was the recognition within NATO that the alliance faced other threats, which were becoming increasingly global in scope and increasingly difficult to deal with alone. The Cold War had been a global struggle and events in Korea, Cuba, and Vietnam had a direct impact on NATO as an alliance. Yet the acceleration of globalization in this period presented new challenges and threats to NATO members that would lead it to refocus its efforts and its capabilities on a much wider geographical area. As the prominent American politician Senator Richard Lugar argued, NATO must "go out of area or out of business."[10] The alliance in this period increasingly found itself propelled toward conflicts and crises outside of its traditional area of operation—in Bosnia, in the first Gulf War, in Kosovo, in Iraq and Afghanistan after 9/11, and more recently in Libya. This has been a clearly identifiable trend in the post–Cold War era, and it is a trend that can be directly attributed to the impact of globalization and the globalization of threats to NATO members. That is not to imply that

NATO would automatically go down this road. In fact, the road toward a more global role, and particularly a role in out of area intrastate conflicts, has been very controversial and has presented very significant challenges for the alliance. Yet, this is the direction NATO has taken and to truly understand why all of these issues require analysis.

THE GULF WAR

When trying to broadly conceptualize this new era, and establish the root causes of NATO's onward viability, it is important to recognize the influence of the 1990 Gulf War. The conflict came with interesting lessons for the newly emerging security environment and important implications for NATO.

First, the successful US-led operation to oust Saddam Hussein's forces from Kuwait represented a new hope for multilateral solutions to international security issues. As President George H.W. Bush said at the time:

> Now, we can see a new world coming into view. A world in which there is the very real prospect of a new world order. In the words of Winston Churchill, a "world order" in which "the principles of justice and fair play . . . protect the weak against the strong. . . ." A world where the United Nations, freed from Cold War stalemate, is poised to fulfill the historic vision of its founders. A world in which freedom and respect for human rights find a home among all nations.[11]

The invasion of Kuwait by Iraqi forces was in fact greeted by condemnation from a wide-ranging and unified coalition determined to reverse the military action and repel Saddam Hussein's forces from the country. Importantly, the campaign to expel the dictator secured the authorization of the UN Security Council, which also initiated immediate economic sanctions. This was an example of cooperation and common purpose in the Security Council that had been sorely lacking during the Cold War and the ideological divisions that had paralyzed the Council seemed to be a thing of the past. The campaign also had the backing of many Middle Eastern states, most notably Saudi Arabia and Egypt. Operationally, the military action conformed to the parameters of the UN authorization exactly and precisely; the US-led coalition stopped at the Iraqi border, foregoing an opportunity to march on to Baghdad and take out Saddam's regime. It was the view of the Bush

administration at the time that such an extension to the campaign would not win UN backing and would jeopardize the broad alliance that had been established in response to the invasion. This was an example of the new unipolar power being restrained in the use of that power in order to preserve international support for and the legitimacy of American actions. This is why, for many, the efficiency with which the crisis was dealt offered a great deal of hope.

But what were the specific implications for NATO of the operation? Did the much wider cooperation and hope for the UN signal that there was no longer a need for NATO? When the events are more closely examined this is demonstrably not the case.

The US Permanent Representative on the North Atlantic Council at the time, William H. Taft, provides an analysis of the conflict and NATO's role in it that is particularly illuminating. He goes so far as to say ". . . this is a clear case of the old saying: if NATO had not existed, we would have had to invent it."[12] To those predicting the demise of the alliance, such words from a senior diplomat would have been difficult to explain away. Taft claims that the alliance was a useful forum in providing a consultative mechanism and the garnering of political support for US strategy. In other words, it was the perfect forum through which to get the European powers "on side." NATO ministers had met on August 10, 1990, in order to offer political support for the actions that were to be taken and it was agreed that additional military support would be forthcoming as and when required. It was also useful, as it had been during the Cold War, as a forum through which to share intelligence about the operation and for sharing and consulting on strategy. In a more practical sense NATO fulfilled an important role in providing important logistical support—air bases, refueling facilities, ammunition supply lines, access to ports for troops on their way to the Gulf, and medical support. Furthermore, troops from NATO countries fought together under a unified command and the history of NATO's planning and cooperation made the exercise much more successful, efficient, and effective. In response to critics who argued that the Gulf War was evidence that permanent institutionalized defense alliances were not needed and that "ad hoc" coalitions could do an effective job, Taft says that the success of the operation was at least in part attributable to the integrated military command structure not in spite of it.

An important precedent was also set in terms of the alliance partners working outside of the traditional area of operation of the alliance. This was an out of theater operation in which NATO allies actively participated and this set an important precedent for NATO's more global

outlook. A number of NATO countries sent forces to the Gulf, including the UK, France, and Canada. Although these deployments were not under NATO command they were supported by NATO infrastructure, and America's European allies contributed approximately 10 percent of the troops involved in the actions. NATO was thus simultaneously expanding its horizons to out of area operations but also reaffirming its traditional role as a deterrent to attacks on its members. Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty effectively meant, according to Taft, that Saddam Hussein was much more reluctant to attack Turkey because of the common commitment NATO allies had to Turkey's defence[13]; the Gulf War enabled NATO to actively reaffirm its commitment to one of its own members directly threatened by the Iraqi regime.

The first Gulf War thus had important implications for NATO. Far from signaling its demise the conflict reaffirmed traditional aspects of its utility while also strongly signaling some of its future potential.

FROM INTERSTATE TO INTRASTATE CONFLICT

The other important feature of the new strategic environment, one that is closely connected with globalization, and indeed one with a fairly clear causal link with the end of the Cold War and a change in polarity, has been the marked increase in the post–Cold War era of intrastate violence. That is to say, violence and conflict not between states but within states, often driven by identity and ethnicity. The first major conflict of the post–Cold War era may have been the Gulf War, a more conventional interstate conflict, but for a time this masked the true emerging reality of the post–Cold War era—that intrastate conflict would most test the US and its NATO partners in the 1990s. The prevalence of these types of conflict during this period is striking: of fifty-seven armed conflicts between 1989 and 2001, in forty-five different locations, all but three were within states.[14]

At least early in the decade there was hope, partly stemming from the successful operation in the Gulf, that the UN would be the prominent player in resolving these conflicts (even though there was no mention of intrastate conflict in the UN Charter and a norm against interference in the domestic affairs of states). This hope was writ large within the Clinton administration. As William Hyland writes, in relation to some of its principal players:

> They all agreed on the importance of the UN. Albright said the UN would be elevated to the centre of Clinton's new

internationalism: history would record that the end of the Cold War marked a new beginning for the United Nations. Lake agreed that one of the startling international changes was the growing involvement of the United Nations in peacemaking as well as peacekeeping. During the campaign Clinton had urged the creation of a UN Rapid Deployment Force that could be used for purposes beyond traditional peacekeeping, such as standing at the borders of countries threatened by aggression. Albright went further. Following Clinton's vague lead she supported creating a UN military capability for combat operations.[15]

Faced with the messy realities of dealing with the conflicts in Bosnia and Somalia, this view began to change.

The conflict in Bosnia is discussed in more detail in the following chapter, yet it is important to say here that there is little doubt that it elevated the relative importance placed on NATO vis-à-vis the UN considerably. In Somalia, moreover, disputes between the US and UN over strategy (such as over whether to disarm the warring factions), problems with "mission creep," and mutual recriminations between the two sides drove an intractable wedge between the US administration and the UN. This growing US–UN divide was exacerbated by the 1994 domestic elections in the US, where the Republicans, vehement in their criticism of ballooning UN peacekeeping costs, captured both houses of Congress. This contributed to reluctance on the part of the Clinton administration to invest much needed political capital in repairing the UN–US relationship[16] and led to the Clinton administration asserting in Presidential Decision Directive 25 that intervention would only be contemplated when the vital national interests of the US were at stake.[17] As Ramesh Thakur argues:

> The tragedy in Somalia . . . eroded domestic support for placing US units under UN command. A new Washington consensus emerged concerning peace operations: that the complexity of their tasks was beyond the institutional capacity of the UN to manage; that they were too dynamic and fluid for rigid criteria and guidelines to be of much practical use; that their relationship to US political and security interests were unclear; and that they relied on a degree of international consensus that the UN system was too divisive and fractured to provide.[18]

Gradually, a multinational security organization like NATO began to be seen as a more valuable tool for combating the security problems

caused by messy multisided civil conflict situations, such as Bosnia and Kosovo. The conflict thus prompted a move back toward a much more traditional view of security within the Clinton administration in which NATO, not the UN, would be the preferred partner. Globalization and the changing nature of conflict thus created new opportunities in the post–Cold War era for NATO to act.

NATO'S INSTITUTIONAL REALIGNMENT AND THE GENESIS OF THE ENLARGEMENT STRATEGY

The New Strategic Concept and Normalization of Relations with Russia

NATO was not to know that this would be the way international politics would develop in this period and its adaptation to this reality would be a long, painful, and disruptive process. Yet there were important early indicators of the alliance facing up to the challenges of the new security environment and actively planning for new challenges that were very different from defending Western Europe from a Soviet attack. As early as 1991 the alliance demonstrated an awareness that the environment had changed and that the end of the Cold War was creating new problems for former Eastern-bloc states, and for states farther afield, particularly in Africa. This emerging narrative was reflected in the alliance's 'Strategic Concept' of 1991, which stated that:

> Risks to Allied security are less likely to result from calculated aggression against the territory of the Allies but rather from the adverse consequences of instabilities that may arise from the serious economic, social and political difficulties, including ethnic rivalries and territorial disputes, which are faced by many countries in Central and Eastern Europe.[19]

In response to these new types of disputes, the concept recommended the alliance develop smaller rapid reaction forces that could deal effectively with such instability as and when it would arise. NATO was acknowledging that the security environment had changed and that there was a need to adapt the alliance to make it effective in this new era. The alliance at this crucial point in its history was not advocating a peacekeeping role or an interventionist role beyond its borders, and its mission continued to be defending itself and its territory against threats from instability, but, nevertheless, the new Strategic Concept was key in moving toward a NATO that was substantially altered in its focus in the years to come.