RUSSIA IN EUROPE

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Presenter: Zdzisław Najder
Commentators: Hans Christian Krüger, Alexandr Vondra, Andrei Kolosovsky

Stemplowski

We have distinguished participants here who will open the discussion on Russia in Europe, and we shall start with the main presentation by Professor Zdzisław Najder of the University of Opole, Poland. He is a former Director of the Polish Section of Radio Free Europe, former adviser to the Prime Minister Jan Olszewski, and perhaps more interestingly a leading authority on Joseph Conrad. Afterwards we will have three commentators.

Najder

Well, first I want to thank the organizers for having invited me to this conference. I feel greatly honoured by this fact. As the Ambassador has already revealed, I am neither a diplomat, nor a former diplomat, nor a government official, nor a former government official, nor even a professional political scientist. I'm a publicist and former member of the opposition, both underground and over ground. As such I am accustomed to contest conventional wisdom and not to express satisfaction, but rather to grumble. My grumbling will be presented in a simplified form of points to facilitate discussion, and I shall close with five questions which I consider open.

Russia in Europe is vital. Russia today is a presidential autocracy with only very weak elements of civil society. The masses—the public—evidently support authoritarian methods of government. Vladimir Putin is very popular. His political support is not structured like the support of leaders in Western democracies. This means that it does not rely on a party or even on a movement. His support is not based on a definite ideology, like the support of many dictators. The unifying slogans in Russia are for a strong

Russia, efficient economy, and order. The special services form Putin's practical power-base. The attitudes of the Russian political class are centred around a vision of Russia as a great power with a decisive international influence.

It is important to look at the immediate internal problems which Russia and Putin have faced, first dealing with economic collapse. Even now, with a very impressive growth of 7% of GNP, Russia is at only about 75% of its GNP of 1990. By the end of last year personal income per capita was back to the level of 1998. The second internal issue is the war in Chechnya. The central government has exhibited zero tolerance for self-determination within the territory of the Russian Federation. Then there are problems of unrest in neighbouring post-Soviet Caucasian republics, where Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan are all autocratic regimes without civil liberties. In the first, a modicum of stability has been assured by the presence of a Russian armoured division.

There is also the problem of Kaliningrad. The Kaliningrad enclave is the most absurd territory in Europe. It's borders and its population have no historical or ethnic justification, indeed none whatsoever apart from the will of the winning powers of the Second World War. It is also an economic absurdity. Finally, there remains the issue of the Ukraine, whose independence is considered in Russia be an aberration and an act of betrayal. Opinion polls keep confirming this opinion.

The main international challenge for Putin is how to secure economic cooperation with the West without political adjustments at home. There was an excellent study on the nature of reforms in Russia by Françoise Thom in the *Defence Nationale* of April last year. This study argued that all political and economical reforms in Russia after 1890 have been imposed from above and are not due to the pressure of demands from below, as happened in Central Europe, in Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Romania.

Yeltsin from time to time appealed for popular support but Putin does not. Putin wins support not by promises to listen to the population, but by his promises to impose order from above. But then he is also the sole guarantor of the progress that has occurred in his country. What if Putin disappears? His reforms are strictly within the Russian imperial and Stalinist tradition. Putin's reforms are great changes and great dangers at the same time. He is opening Russia to the West, but on non-western terms.

The presence of fear in public life seems to be growing, whilst the judiciary is obviously docile, as the recent case of

Grigoriy Pasko, accused of treason for revealing what happens to nuclear refuse at Russian bases, demonstrates. Administrative, economic, and legal reforms are coupled with suppression of the independent media. Four days ago the last independent TV channel, TV-6, was closed. This is coupled with limitation on local self-government, with the growth of centralism in all domains, and with the suppression of democratic procedures. Power shuffles are resulting in increasing centralised control.

To conclude this part of my remarks I quote from Michael Emerson, Director of the Brussels Centre for European Policy Studies, who wrote about European/Russian relations before September last year. He said: "Russia would like to have a strategic partnership with the EU agreeing in official communiqués that this would be on the basis of common values. But it would also like to regain its dominant influence over the new system, playing by its own rules." The EU says: sorry, you cannot have it both ways. Then September 11th takes place, and I must say it surprised me how much surprise there was at Putin's reaction to the attacks on New York and Washington. What he did was to join the US in the struggle with international terrorism, and this allowed him to solve his most pressing problems.

First, Russia has acquired the status of a US ally, and by the same token international respectability, without any real changes. Russia's clout in Europe has been increased. Chechnya and the Chechens were put in the same category as the Talibans, or worse. I have to qualify that statement since I read in yesterday's "Herald Tribune" that both in London and in Washington representatives of the independent Chechen government were received by lower ranking officials. So, the case is not closed, but the Russian reaction was very sharp and shows how they understand the situation. They say that those contacts, "contradict the spirit of cooperation and partnership in both countries in acting against international terrorism".

Next, Putin is joining the Alliance against international terrorism to legitimise Russian military presence in the trans-Caucasus republics, which led to the growing isolation of the Ukraine on the international scene and allowed Russia to re-enter Afghanistan as an American ally. In short, Putin has obtained political and economic instruments to realize his goal, which is to make Russia an international power without any additional costs. In western eyes Russia's past has become, after September 11th, less important. We are dealing with a new Russia.

After September NATO has been sidelined by President Bush, militarily at least. NATO's general staff does not take

part in planning and executing military operations in Afghanistan and elsewhere. Therefore, NATO has become much less of a problem in Russian eyes. NATO itself reacted with plans of closer cooperation with Russia, even to the point of accepting it as a member, formally or practically. Not even 19 plus one, now we are talking about 20. Suddenly and paradoxically, international war on terrorism has resulted in NATO's resignation from its official ideology as an alliance based on shared values and institutions. For Russia this means that NATO has resigned from its implicit opposition to Russia.

Now, what has the United States obtained? This is not quite clear to me. Landing rights in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan would probably have been granted anyway for internal reasons. What is the value of Russian intelligence now at the disposal of the American Alliance, I don't know. In fact, American presence in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan legitimises both regimes there and Russia's preponderance over the region. From the Western perspective there are more contacts with Russia since Bush and Putin are seen as buddies. For the West Russia seems more attractive or at least predictable and the criteria of cooperative relations have mellowed. Conerns over human rights and freedom of opinion have been deflected.

On the European scene, Russia's closer relations with the EU cannot be any longer seen as directed against the US. However, there is a view from East Central Europe which is quite different, even if this difference is, for a variety of reasons, rarely expressed by our politicians. We keep asking ourselves: does a non-imperialist Russia exist? Does it exist not in declarations, but in reality? We haven't seen it yet. This still needs to be proven.

The Russian Deputy Foreign Minister speaks in Paris about the necessity to consider Russian interest in the process of EU enlargement. Other expressions of Russian's intent to establish stronger influence on its "near abroad" are repeated. In the end there are audible murmurs in East Central Europe about another Yalta. Both history and the internal realities of Russia are much more important to the CEEC states than to the European Union. These internal realities in Russia seem at the moment to be almost totally ignored from the perspective of Washington.

For East Central Europe the United States is the unquestioned world leader. But if the leader of a coalition resigns from certain fundamental principles, it must be disturbing. Evident US unilateralism, which includes sidelining NATO, increases this distress. Therefore the closer Russian cooperation with the US and other Western countries becomes, the more worrisome it may appear in

East Central Europe. There is a paradox here. The emergence of a Russia that is friendlier with the West may turn out to be a destabilizing factor, for three reasons.

First, this shift is not coupled with any democratic changes in Russia. On the contrary, we depend solely on the will of the leader. Secondly, this move will increase uneasiness about Russia among its immediate neighbours. Thirdly, it will undermine trust in the United States, as America seems ready to sacrifice its self-proclaimed principles and the interests of other people for the sake of its own short-term interests.

Now for my five questions.

One, is this centralized phenomenon, this centralized, personalized autocracy really a precondition of economic and administrative reform in Russia? Two, what were Putin's other options after 11th of September? My third question: was it necessary for President Bush to accept Russia as a full fledged ally without any conditions? My fourth question: what western guarantees can the East Central European countries see in their face-to-face meetings with Russia? Finally the last question: does the present form of Russian-West cooperation strengthen the forces and chances of liberty and democracy in Russia or not? Thank you for your attention.

Stemplowski

Thank you very much. Certainly that introduction has provided a lot of material for comment. I now call upon Herr Hans Christian Krüger, Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe. The floor is yours.

Krüger

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, and ladies and gentlemen. It is a real pleasure and an honour to be here with you today. I would like to focus primarily on the Council of Europe's contribution to Russian integration into Europe. But firstly I would like to congratulate the organizers for this important conference, for taking the initiative, particularly in the aftermath of the horrendous attacks of the 11th of September. I am very grateful that I can present to you some of the experiences of the Council of Europe.

The aim of the Council of Europe is to promote greater European unity through cooperation in a wide range of fields on the basis of the shared principles of pluralist democracy, human rights, and the rule of law. The gradual integration into the Council of Europe of all European states that have opted for these principles has been a key

element in building and enlarging an area of democratic security since the end of communism in Europe. Forty-three countries have now joined our organization, and four others have applied for membership. One of these, Bosnia and Herzegovina, has just this week received the approval from the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, and will no doubt accede to the Council of Europe within the next months.

Other countries, like the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, are likely to follow later this year. The United States, Canada, Japan, the Holy See, and Mexico are observer states. The Council cooperates closely with the European Union, the OSCE, NATO, and other international organizations for the same goal of creating a free, united, and peaceful Europe. The Council has been instrumental in helping and encouraging the new democracies on our continent to manage their difficult transition to pluralism and the rule of law. Since 1989, 19 former communist countries have joined our organization. They are benefiting from the Council's extensive programs to develop and strengthen democratic stability in order to meet basic Council of Europe standards and take their place in existing European structures.

We also hope that the countries that join will include Belarus, which will hopefully engage in democratic reforms and thus will be able to join the Council of Europe in the coming years. Regularly delegations from the Parliament and the opposition are coming to Strasbourg during the sessions of the Parliamentary Assembly and are developing a multitude of contacts. Last week the Minister for Information gave evidence before the Parliamentary Committee of the Parliamentary Assembly concerning the new law on freedom of the press in Belarus, which they are going to submit to scrutiny to the Council of Europe experts. Of course, whether afterwards they will follow the advice that is given by the Council of Europe expert is another question. One of the countries asking for accession is Monaco. It is deliberating over the necessary political and constitutional adjustments in order to prepare for accession.

So, eventually the Council of Europe will be the only true pan-European institution on this European continent. Back in 1989, our organization opened up to the countries of Central and Eastern Europe which chose to follow the path leading to democracy and the institution of market economies. In the same year, Russia (at that time still part of the Soviet Union) started its journey to draw nearer to the Council of Europe.

Russia made the strategic choice of joining this common European project and working towards the realization of Winston Churchill's dream. This gave us all the historic

chance to strive for a greater unity between all of the Council of Europe's member countries, stretching now from Reykjavik to Vladivostok. The process began on the 6th of July 1989, when President Gorbachev addressed the Parliamentary Assembly in Strasbourg and described the Council of Europe with its values and principles as a main partner in his concept of a common European home. It received strong confirmation when President Yeltsin addressed the Second Summit of the Council of Europe in October 1997, and told his fellow Presidents and Prime Ministers, and here I quote: "We are now poised to begin together a new, greater Europe, free from dividing lines, a Europe where no state will impose its will on others. A Europe where big and small countries are equal partners, united by common democratic principles." Finally, it received confirmation also from President Putin in his famous speech before the German Bundestag in Berlin on the 25th of September. He said, and I again quote, "Today we must state firmly and finally, the Cold War is over!" A bit later he said, "I can state definitely that the main objectives of Russia's domestic policy are, first and foremost, to guarantee democratic rights and freedoms, a decent standard of living, and security for the people."

It was exactly six years ago yesterday that the Parliamentary Assembly recommended to the Committee of Ministers that the Russian Federation be invited to become a member of the Council of Europe. The Assembly's opinion was based on the assurances given and commitments accepted by both the Russian Government and Parliament to fulfil the requirements for membership of the Council of Europe. In other words, they agreed to apply the principles of the rule of law and of the enjoyment of all persons within Russia's jurisdiction of human and fundamental freedoms, and to collaborate sincerely and effectively in the realizations of the aims of the Council.

Today, six years after gaining Council of Europe membership and despite ten years of reform, Russia still has to overcome political, economic, and social fears. Russia's economic transition is facing many problems. Development of the country is not just a question of economic success, but also depends to a large extent on the spiritual and physical health of the nation. Many questions have yet to be resolved or reformed. So, what are the main problems? Where do they lie?

First, there is that age-old mistrust of the State. The suspicions felt by citizens is a feature inherited from the past. The efficiency of the State depends on the effectiveness of the political, legal, and administrative mechanisms designed to uphold public interest. This is the

challenge of strengthening Russia as a modern state. This is also a question of the functioning of the Federation. Relations between the federal and regional levels of government must be adapted in accordance with democratic principles. Separation of powers is a mandatory condition for the success of Russia's administrative transformation. People's confidence in the state must also be strengthened. This involves the protection of citizens' rights and includes judicial reform based on a clear legislative basis. Court rules must be clearly stated and complied with. Changes are also needed in the field of law enforcement, including the penitentiaries. I might insert here that I know that many, many complaints are being brought before the European Court of Human Rights from Russian citizens against Russia. I think compared to many other countries we are seeing a very high number of complaints. We have not, however, had any judgment from the court yet in relation to a Russian case. So we are not yet in a position to answer the question of whether they are going to execute the Court's judgments. Whenever we speak with the Russian authorities on this, they of course confirm regularly the clear intention of Russia to abide by the judgments of the Court. But it is one thing to say it and another thing to do it. We will be interested to see happens.

Finally, there is a need for further administrative reform. This should not be limited to staff structures. It must focus primarily on the functions and style of work of administrative bodies at all levels of government. These prerequisites to improve the functioning of the state are reflected in the large-scale cooperation developed with the Council of Europe over the last ten years. Constitutional changes, legislative, judicial and law enforcement reforms, administrative practices, education, culture – all of these areas are all part of this cooperative assistance.

The Clemency Commission, which was at one time chaired by Anatoly Prestafkin, has been abolished by a decision of President Putin in favor of Clemency Commissions to be set up in the different subject areas of the Russian Federation. Mr. Prestafkin has now been made Special Advisor to the President. Our interest, of course, was mainly to see to what extent this has improved the fight for the abolition of the death penalty and the ratification of the Sixth Protocol to the European Convention on Human Rights, which should abolish the death penalty in Russia. We also want to see to what extent it has improved the law reform that must be done insofar as prison sentences for petty offences are concerned, as these lead to the overcrowding in Russian prisons which has been a subject of concern for this Clemency Commission. The answers to these questions

can't be given at the moment, but it will be interesting to follow exactly how the new prison reform and law reform will be implemented.

Let me finally touch upon one of the most sensitive issues in the last ten years of Russian history. Unfortunately it is not just an issue of the past, but a present and future one as well. I am of course referring to the place of the Chechen Republic within the Russian Federation. The Council of Europe condemns all forms of terrorism. It has expressed appreciation for measures taken so far by Russia's federal authorities in the legal and administrative fields and with regard to economic and social reconstruction to improve this situation. The continuing restoration of the judiciary in the Chechen Republic has also been noted with satisfaction.

However, in order to improve the situation greater and more rapid progress is needed in combating human rights' violations, in restoring the rule of law, and in achieving political and economic reconstruction. The Council of Europe's most tangible contribution has been its assistance in the setting up of the Office of the Special Representative of the Russian President for Human Rights in Chechnya, who is Mr. Vladimir Kalamonoff. Council of Europe experts have participated in its work for over a year now. Their mandate has just been renewed until the 4th of April 2002. Until the return of the OSCE Assistance Group to Chechnya in the summer of 2001, these experts were the only foreign representatives of an international organization permanently working and living in Chechnya. This should also be seen as a sign to the Chechen population that Europe cares about them.

And what is the situation today? The Council of Europe is still present in Chechnya, but it has made it clear that it is only prepared to remain if allegations of human rights violations which are brought to the Office of the Special Representative are properly followed up by the judicial authorities. The Council of Europe has also appealed to the Russian authorities to investigate thoroughly all allegations of fabrication of evidence, and to bring to justice any law enforcement officials found responsible for such acts.

A week ago, the Secretary General, Mr. Schwimmer, was invited by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe to negotiate with the Russian authorities for our continued presence in the region. The Parliamentary Assembly, which held a major debate on the situation in Chechnya this week, is playing an outstanding role in helping to achieve concrete steps towards a political solution to the conflict in the Chechen Republic. But then so does the Russian State Duma. The Assembly and the

Russian State Duma together have set up a Joint Working Group, in particular to stimulate the process of finding a political solution. The reaction of this group has made it possible to react more effectively to applications and complaints in the field of human rights in Chechnya. As a result, the Federal forces' command structures are taking more immediate follow-up action on alleged human rights violations.

In the framework of the Joint Working Group's second consultation on concrete steps toward a political solution to the conflict in the Chechen Republic that was held on 28-29 of November of last year, it was decided to establish a broadly based Consultative Council under the aegis of the Joint Working Group. This would include representatives of all socio-political forces, and representatives of the official bodies of the Chechen Republic and of the federal authorities. The role of this Council is to make recommendations and proposals first and foremost on demilitarization and on the establishment of conditions permitting the development of democracy.

The setting up of this Consultative Council and its call for peace negotiations without preconditions is a genuine breakthrough in the search for a political solution. The Council of Europe will continue to follow and support this process closely. There is no doubt that a long-lasting solution to the Chechen problem has to be a political solution based on common European standards. The search for such a solution is a considerable challenge, but Russia's Council of Europe membership means we are able to face this challenge together.

Russia's membership in the Council of Europe has clearly given our organization the momentous task of building a greater Europe without dividing lines, where its citizens can live in peace, security, and freedom. By joining the Council of Europe in 1996, Russia made a strategic choice for Europe. This choice has given the whole continent a historic chance to work for greater unity. Russia is no longer the symbol of a divided block as we once saw it. On the contrary, Russia today is considered to be one of the key elements for a peaceful future for the greater Europe. I thank you for your attention. I will be very interested to hear comments, because my presentation differed from that of Mr. Najder. Thank you.

Stemplowski

Well, it is only proper for the commentators to differ a little bit from the main presenter, and it is a pleasure to ask Ambassador Alexandr Vondra to present us with another perspective.

Vondra

Good morning. First of all let me thank you for inviting me. Originally I was invited to speak yesterday on NATO enlargement, which has been my subject of interest for more than seven years; however, because we in Prague had some internal meetings of our Ambassadors I could not come earlier than yesterday evening. So, I found myself being located into the midst of the Russian debate, about which I am not a specialist, nor do I consider myself to be a specialist. So, let me just make a few comments about what has been said and fill in with some of my own thinking.

Number one: reform. This was one of the most important goals for everybody in Russian leadership, beginning with Gorbachev and later when Yeltsin was in power. I think that now there is a certain concern among some of those who are studying the attempt to implement the reform strictly in accordance with the Western or Central and Eastern European example, that this was a failure because there were various limits to reform in Russia. These limits concern the size of the country, its geography, and most important its lack of a market economy tradition.

Being in Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Hungary I gained some experience with the market economy and the people. There was a certain element in those societies which remembered the previous systems — perhaps stronger in Central Europe, and weaker in Southeastern Europe - but there was also a very solid nucleus of what is normal middle class society in any western society. In Russia I think that they lack this as a result of their historical development. Dr. Najder spoke about this sort of thing - having reform from above, or implementing reform from below.

Yet in my eyes it's not so simple and I would not argue that in the West or in Central Europe the reform was made just from below, while in Russian autocracy it was made only from above. Even in our country we needed a certain vision, we needed a certain program, and we needed certain political institutions. The support from below was, of course, very important. However, the measures, vision, legislation and all that side of things had to come from above, with the support from below. So, I think that in the Russian case the lack of the traditional middle class support, plus the lack of institutions of democracy, such as political parties or a primary ideology that can act as the impetus for a cause, is one of the reasons for that failure.

Now we can start to see that the development of the Russian economy is proceeding in a better way than five years ago. Why is this? First, it is because of a certain time delay after the shock. Due to the enormous size of the task

in Russia, I think that the rewards came a little bit later. Of course, there are other influences, and I think that the increase in oil prices also played a very important role. It would be very interesting to speculate on the Russian gross economy in the next year or after two years if the oil prices were to decline.

My second idea concerns the debate on the "near abroad". Of course, there is no doubt that any country in the world has an interest in its stability, and part of the program of the Russian leadership after 1991 was to prevent disintegration. I think that on one hand we have to consider this concern as a legitimate interest. There are two ways to guarantee stability for those countries which are traditional powers. This can be seen in the way that naval powers achieve their goal by balancing global interests or regional schemes. I think the classic pattern is exemplified by Britain throughout history. In addition there are the continental powers, and Russia is not the only continental power that is trying to achieve this in the zones around it.

I mention this just to illustrate that it is nothing extraordinary. Of course, we who happen to be in the neighbourhood of Russia have to be very, very, very careful. Many examples have been mentioned, such as the Ukraine, which is a traditional headache, especially for Poland. The development of these countries is very much related to the stability of those countries which are located near and abroad, and again Ukraine is a very, very good example worthy of more extended discussion.

You all perhaps remember the debate about the gas pipeline routes in the past two or three years, where Poland was fighting for Ukraine's independence more than Kiev itself. Kiev gave up the battle while Warsaw was still fighting for the gas pipeline routes, which would guarantee Ukrainian independence. This is a very important issue, and I can only hope that it can be somehow resolved in cooperation with the European Union. I think that it can be achieved together with the integration of Poland and Lithuania into the EU.

I think that it is more and more important, especially in light of the September 11th attack, that there be a potential common interest between Russia and the West. The lack of human rights in accordance with Western standards, mentioned by our colleague from the Council of Europe, together with the strong tendency toward an autocratic regime, could lead the current stability to become transformed into total instability. In this case the area would become another problem area, as we can see now in Afghanistan or in Tajikistan. So we need to pay attention to the possibility of cooperation between the West and Russia,

between the US and Russia, and between NATO and Russia. For example, we might want to go for some formal partnership for peace, plus whatever.

My third remark is about power status and the cooperation between Russia and the West in general. Sometimes we have a tendency to see Russia, in the light of the past, as a big superpower. Other times we have a tendency to marginalize Russia to the size and significance of a country like Belgium. The tendency in the future should be towards seeing Russia more and more as it really is, which is something in-between.

On the other hand, Russia will hopefully begin to see the West through more realistic glasses too. I think a very good example could be the Russian approach to NATO enlargement. In the 1990s it produced very sharp rhetoric, which was very counter-productive, generating even more interest among the Central and Eastern European countries in joining NATO. It created more fear and a greater desire to be anchored in the West. Yet there is another side to this as well. I remember discussing this subject in the early 1990s with people like Chokin and Kosaroff, and my question was: are you able to join NATO and to accept NATO as it is - are you able to accept the US control? The response, of course, was no.

So, I think that we now have a more realistic approach on both sides. But the idea of Russia joining NATO or the EU in the foreseeable future is unrealistic, so there must be something else. As regards NATO the events in September have helped to set the agenda, generating common interests on both sides. Today there are the talks about reaching a new form of relationship. I think from my perspective, as well as from that of most of the Central and Eastern European countries, it is really important for those who are members of NATO to make a decision about what is important in this new agenda, such as fighting terrorism. The substance of NATO is based on collective defence and I do not see the possibility of this working with 20 countries involved.

The answer to these questions, such as the territorial one and the military one relating to collective defence, has to be found by NATO itself. The cooperation between the EU and Russia has to distinguish what is possible and what is in the interest of both sides. To summarize, I think we are in a better situation than we were a few years ago with regard to Russia, but we have to be realistic. To be seen in the sun with the Russian president or to swim together somewhere does not necessarily guarantee progress. Those smiles and the new approach are not going to be immediately transformed into a more friendly and cooperative approach

within the Russian bureaucracy. The current discussion on how to shape this new region into a new reality demonstrates that it won't be easy. On the other hand I think we can achieve something.

Stemplowski

Thank you very much. It is now time for our third commentator, Mr. Andrei Kolosovsky.

Kolosovsky

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I thank very much the organizers of this conference for the invitation. It is a real pleasure and honour to be in this group. As I am now in a very personal capacity, let me just give some personal remarks on some of the things that have already been said here. In the ten years since 1991 there has been dramatic change in Russia. We have some experience as to what we can expect from the developments in Russia as regards its relations with the West, and as to what is better not to expect so as not to be too disappointed. There was some discussion in the West sometime ago that there was a great window of opportunity in 1991 and 1992 for building democracy in Russia and for building very close relations between the West and Russia, so many ask how the West used this opportunity.

I think the more important question is not how the West used the opportunity, but how the Russian people and Russian society used this opportunity. One of the lessons I have learned from these ten years of building democracy is that it is pretty easy to crack democracy from the outside, or to crack democracy from the top with force. It's almost impossible to build democracy from the outside or the top. It must be a more or less a natural process. The attitude toward this process is certainly a very crucial element. I don't want to minimize it, but the process has to go on by itself.

President Putin is what Russia got as a result of this opportunity, and Russia has really had to build a market economy and a democracy. He was not imposed by force or by somebody from outside. Certainly there were medium-level manipulations during the elections, but that's the case in practically all elections to a greater or lesser extent. But there was some kind of a consensus around which the so-called Russian elite and Russian people gathered. His record is certainly mixed, but I must confess that it is better than was expected by more liberal or democratically-minded people, both inside the country and those on the outside. It is still an open question how much of a real long term view and long term vision he has for

Russia. Certainly some people around him have a pretty clear liberal and democratically-oriented vision of what he should do to the economy, the judicial system, and in some other areas.

There are also many practical steps in the sense of adopting laws and introducing new rules. Will these rules work? Will these laws work? We still don't know. It's still a hope. It's also the basis for some opportunity. There have been certain developments that were pretty bad, and I would say that the role of the prosecutor's office and the role of some special services raise a lot of questions. What is also disappointing is that, whether he wished it or not, President Putin can continue what Yeltsin did in his last years, what I would call the creation of a political desert in Russia. There are no real political parties. There is no real political interplay. There is some among the new middle class and among the business people, but not at the very top and not very much. Even with all the reports of how all the groups in society support Putin—how they adore him—we shouldn't be misled. There are different group interests inside the country and they are struggling between each other all the time. There is a lack of consensus even at the top on many major issues concerning where to go and how to go. There is a legacy left over from the Yeltsin government which created, in practice, a system where there is a very complex and transparent system of great financial currents which in many cases involve government officials, but are out of the control of the government itself.

The size of this economy is incompatible with the official budget and with the official finances. It is difficult to manage because there is a huge economic interest vested in this system, and it's not very easy to break it. I would say that some of the steps that were taken look like they were aimed at trying to do something within this system, which can be pretty detrimental in the long run for the process of building democracy. But I think they were motivated not so much by a lack of desire, in principle, to build democracy, but just by the desire to attend to some immediate needs.

As regards the relations with the West after the 11th of September, I think we have to be realistic even in the face of such dramatic events. Life and the world will not change overnight. Russia will not become Belgium, or France, or Germany overnight, and it will not become a member of NATO or the EU just because it supported the US in its war against terrorism. I think for both Putin and for the government, the 11th of September marked a crucial point where crucial choices were made. These choices were not evident in the words used, but rather in the actions taken to aid the US. The Russian military, the Russian elite, and

the outside world were told that sometimes what is bad for the US is also bad for Russia.

I don't know how useful and valuable the practical help that Russian intelligence and other official institutions provided the US government was, but I think this statement and this decision was important by itself. Also important is the fact that Russia admitted that it is not a superpower anymore. Its attitude toward what the Americans were doing in Afghanistan and America's interaction with the Central Asian Republics and with their allies really proved that perceptions are changing there. This can also be seen in some minor things that were happening in Russian foreign policy, like the statement on the base in Cuba.

Furthermore, for the first time in many years the withdrawal of troops from Moldova was started, which started with fighting with the local Russian enclave government and their paramilitary forces. That Russia is trying to pursue its own interest at the same time is normal for international politics. I think it is unrealistic to expect that they would not try to do that. On the issue of Central Europe I wouldn't worry too much, and I think the visit to Warsaw was to some extent the proof of this. We have heard pretty mild reaction from Russia on the missile defence developments. Certainly there was some reaction and that is quite natural, although it doesn't mean that everything is going fine.

However, that is the not the message I'm trying to bring. The message that I'm trying to get across is that it is a long process. It will be unwise to repeat again the very rapid vacillation from great enthusiasm to quick disappointment about the new relations with Russia. This only has the effect of creating a sense of rejection in Russia and amongst those in Russia who are interested in real integration with the Western economy and with the Western system. I must admit that it's still an open question to what extent different parts of the Russian business elite and the Russian bureaucracy are really interested in this. This long process will also be a process that needs to involve most of them in this new aim of closer integration. Will this help internal development of Russia? I think yes.

I think the only way to be consistent is to not have high expectations, but to press and to move in this direction. We should move little by little, all the while persisting. The economy is the key to this in several senses. First of all I think that the economic integration and development of Western businesses inside Russia will inevitably bring adjustments in the judicial system, in the political system, and in the overall political and business culture in Russia.

The other factor in the economy is that sometimes the Western governments try to deal only through the Russian government, and expect to get results that way. I think the creation of conditions for Russian business to be integrated and of the conditions for them to deal with Western business and Western governments directly are very important factors in bringing the Russian economy closer to what is more or less universal, at least in the West. By that I mean closer to the universal rules of a market economy — the rules of the game. Afterwards that will bring political and other results.

So, those are the major points that I wanted to discuss and I urge everyone once again to look at the developments in relations between Europe and Russia and between the Western countries and Russia as a good opportunity. Try to use it, but do not expect too much. Don't jump from one mode to another too quickly. Thank you.

Stemplowski

Thank you very much. We turn now to the first speaker in the general debate, Stanisław Ciosek, Policy Adviser to the President of Poland

Ciosek

Today we are discussing an issue of key importance to our continent. The subject has been aptly formulated: "Russia in Europe". It's a good thing no question mark has been added thereto, even though many Russians themselves continue to raise that question as part of their unending, centuries-old debates and dilemmas. I was able to witness that during my Moscow sojourn in the hot years between 1989–1996. This is a standard topic in the discussions of Russian intellectuals and one that has yet to be conclusively resolved. To me, a stranger from outside, although a close outsider from the east of Europe (now referred to as Central Europe), all that seemed strange and anachronistic. Especially since before my very eyes Europe and the whole Western world were penetrating Russia with their whole kit and caboodle of positive and negative phenomena. I had to listen to an amazing range of anti-Western views, assurances about a distinct Russian soul and Russian pride. This came from representatives of the Russian élite, nattily attired in British suits and smart Italian ties, smelling of superb French cologne, driving German-made cars and sending their youngsters to American schools. A split personality? Metaphysics? Messianism? Yes, a bit of all those, but that is a way of life which in that country surprises no one. Together with the collapse of the Soviet empire, Russians have been subjected

to the natural, aggressive processes of globalisation. They have suddenly become participants in a world they had neither known nor understood, having been raised to oppose it, even though they have now taken a fancy to it. At least the elite have. But globalisation and reforms have also shown their bad sides to a part of Russian society. Physically Russia is already in the outside world, precisely in Europe. Culturally it has been there for quite some time. From the economic standpoint, it is bound by the horrendous amount of capital it has invested in Western banks, not to mention the Western economic behaviour it practices.

Up until recently, however, the issue of its political orientation had remained an open question. The leaders and elites of Russia realised perfectly well the lamentable shape their country was in. Suffice it to recall the evaluation offered by then Prime Minister Putin at the start of his term: developmental degradation, plus 70% of the country's technical assets depreciated and worn out. There existed full awareness that without the involvement of capital and technology from the outside world there could be no improvement. But things were confined only to technology and capital. Where all the rest was concerned — values, moral norms, and standards of civilisation expressed in terms of political orientation — everything was to remain native, distinct and Russian. Yet another third road, that Russian metaphysics shaped over the ages as I have already mentioned, was re-emerging once again. But in the present generation of pragmatic Russian politicians there developed an awareness that such a road led nowhere, that Russia could not afford to submit to yet another historical experiment. It had paid too high a price for the previous one. It was that Russian metaphysics and the fear of its possible politically negative internal consequences that prevented the issue from being clearly and categorically put to the Russian public.

A turning-point occurred in the wake of 11th September 2001. The civilisation to which a pragmatic elite wanted to lead Russia had itself come under attack. President Putin's reaction was lightning-swift and spontaneous. He got on the phone to President Bush and declared a community of interests and threats. That was not only a coldly calculated gesture, but an act that publicly reaffirmed an option that had been chosen earlier. An occasion that was at once noble and tragic had arisen. It was not the terrorist attack on the United States that caused a major shift in Russian policy. That event merely unleashed tendencies that had been building up for some time, and not only under Putin's rule. Those tendencies were identical to what had caused

the disintegration of the Soviet Union and what had constituted the essence of social, political, and developmental processes under Yeltsin, although they had not been clearly defined. The essence of those processes was the historic defeat of a system, which the Russians, or rather the Soviets, had practised for most of the past century, coupled with the equally historic decision to adopt what had enabled other nations and states to prosper and flourish.

The above remarks are in reply to the question frequently asked throughout the world, my country included: is what has happened to Russian policy after 11th September 2001 a tactical manoeuvre or a real, profound change of orientation? I clearly advocate the latter view. To use a rather bold metaphor, I believe that on 11th September not only the twin towers of the World Trade Center collapsed. That occurrence also marked the ultimate demise of the Soviet Union. Although the processes I mentioned above had been accumulating, up until then Russia had not been capable of clearly declaring its strategic orientation and identification with the goals and values of the Western world. For its part, the Western world did not really know what to make of Russia. We had all harboured our suspicions. There was encouragement and there were declarations, but whenever concrete issues were involved, everything came up against the lack of a clearly defined will on the part of Russia itself.

Today that will has been defined. It is no longer a question of whether Russia can be trusted and believed. Those are subjective issues. Russia clearly has no way out other than which it has declared and which it has in fact been implementing for years. That choice is the result of a conscious decision—one that had been thrashed out in the course of serious deliberations. But another choice had also existed. Russia could have positioned itself at the head of those five billion starving people. It did not do so, and I am convinced that no reversal is possible. In that sense, there is no longer any returning to the policies of the Soviet Union and the world's former divisions.

Globalisation, of which Russia is an object and, at times, also a subject and participant (something we in Poland somewhat fear), has already done a great deal to relieve all us politicians and Russia itself of the task. I don't know if you recall the story of Gulliver's travels. In the land of the Lilliputians he was tied down by thousands of tiny thread-sized cords. They had fed and feted him because they harboured no evil designs. But he was simply too large, so without knowing his true dimensions and just to be on the safe side they tied him down. I believe that is

precisely the method being used on Russia. Those threads are the economic, business, technological and other bonds. Perhaps the Russian Gulliver will not even have to be fed, because he can feed himself. He certainly has what it takes. Please note that something similar happened with the Germans after the war. And the Germans themselves desired it. It was within the circles of enlightened German intellectuals that the idea of European integration was born. In Russia's case, that is also being done by the above-mentioned processes of globalisation, including the direct communications among people, even in spite of the will of their politicians. Those threads are much stronger ones.

The phenomena I am discussing exist regardless of the subjective will of this or that leader, and are driven by a force other than politics or diplomacy. The 11th of September demonstrated the anachronism of our belief in the effectiveness of political and military instruments which our civilisation had used up till now. I am convinced that the leadership of the Russian state had also entertained such reflections with regards to its own separate capabilities. A community of interest usually emerges in stressful and oppressive situations. In view of the contemporary world's difficulties and conflicts, the coalition that emerged following the attack on the US would appear to be facing a fairly long future.

The fundamental question today is not "whether" but "how" Russia should be in Europe. In the immediate foreground, there are no fixed formats and structures as to how and when Russia will capable of enforcing the highest European standards. My own country is making a great effort and paying dearly with great consumer sacrifices by most of its people in order to decisively and unequivocally adapt to norms formulated here in Brussels. We want to be ready to join the European Union on time. We are doing all this regardless of the political orientation of successive governments. On that matter there is national agreement by a majority, even though the policy of doing without has been especially painful to the weaker segments of society.

Will Russia be ready for that? It has much more to do than the Central European region. On the basis of my own experience I can say one thing. For a while, directly before and after the collapse of the Soviet Union, I sent alarmist messages to Warsaw saying the Russians would not tolerate the daily poverty and shortages much longer. Recalling our Polish experiences, I predicted a social upheaval. Nothing of the kind has ever materialised. When I got to know the Russians better, I stopped sounding alarm-bells. This is a nation that has sustained unimaginable suffering and has

become resistant, durable, and self-sacrificing in the process.

The limits of endurance were not exceeded at that time, but does that mean that no such limits exist? An impatient, younger generation is coming to the fore which has had none of the old experiences. Russians need the hope, not of quickly catching up to the living standards of a common Europe, because that would be a deception, but the hope of a tangible improvement in their lot. That, of course, amid further efforts to achieve high European standards. Russians themselves want to move ahead regardless of whether or not the conditions have been set down somewhere in writing. For that reason, discussions with Russia will be very difficult. But they must be launched and prospects, hopes and stages must be formulated. That surely need not involve the kind of European Union or NATO connections binding on members of those organisations. But there must be a sense of community and alliance. Nothing can be ruled out. The point is simply that the integration process must also encompass Russia. How long that takes is an entirely different matter.

My country advocates the opening of the integration process to its eastern neighbours not for any sentimental reasons, but out of rational considerations. The best and least expensive form of one's own security, and hence European security as well, is to have friendly neighbours. Neighbours who have prospects for development and improving their situation. Neighbours who see what they possess as the source of their development. Europe should strive to achieve such a sense of neighbourhood, and Russia should want it as well. And that indeed seems to be what is happening.

Stemplowski

Thank you very much. This has opened up the debate and I have a list of speakers with the following names: Wiatr, von Moltke, Weinstein, Komisarenko, and Fuerth. We start with Professor Wiatr.

Wiatr

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The stereotype - that when you have two Poles you certainly have more than two views - is probably particularly true when Poles discuss the issue of Russia . When I listened to the very interesting introduction given to us, I agreed to some extent and disagreed with several other points. Certainly Russia is not a consolidated democracy. Whether she is an autocracy, I have doubts, and she is certainly not an autocracy in the conventional way in which the term is normally used. I would rather use

a less common term proposed a couple of years back by Guillermo O'Donnell, "delegative democracy". That is a system in which power is concentrated in the hands of the president, but the president is elected through a plebiscite-type of election and some elements of democracy, like a pluralistic party system and free press, are retained.

Anyway, this is a matter of terminology. It is true that Russia is not a consolidated democracy, and the obvious proof of this is that there has been no alteration of power in Russia since the fall of the Soviet Union. In this Russia differs from all post-communist countries of East Central Europe and also from the Baltic States. In all of these post-communist countries there has been at least one (and in several of them more than one) occurrence of power changing hands. That did not happen in Russia. It is also true that Russia's political life has been heavily distorted by the role of the oligarchs and the creation of political capitalists. Without idealizing the situation in Central Europe, once again Russia differs from Central European post-communist states in a negative way.

Having said all that, if we put ourselves back mentally ten years in time, how many of us would have predicted that there would be no communist counter-reformation, nor any kind of dictatorial regime — dictatorial rather than imperfectly democratic. I think that ten years ago many of us, including me, had much more pessimistic views about the future of Russia than the present realities. It is true that Russia has the problem with Chechnya and long ago I put myself on public record supporting the legitimate right of the Chechnyan people to freedom.

However, we should not judge Russia more harshly than we have judged other nations, including democratic nations, in similar situations. Is Russia behaving fundamentally in a different way than France did during the Algerian War for independence? I have doubts, and France was one of the great democracies. So we should ask for a change of policy in Russia for something that would correspond to the great act of President de Gaulle ending the Algerian tragedy by recognizing the right of the Algerian's independence. However, to single Russia out as some have done, including some people in Poland, as a lowly criminal because of Russia's way of handling the Chechnya situation, is wrong.

Then there are the questions of Russia and Europe, Russia and the West, and Russia and the United States. The question has been posed, and I am not sure whether it was rhetorical or not: Could President Putin have behaved differently on the 11th of September? If it was not a rhetorical question, my answer is yes, he could have behaved differently. Whether his alternative policy would

have been good for Russia is a different question. However he had a choice and I agree with Ambassador Ciosek that he could have made that choice, but I would go one step farther. That President Putin made the choice he made tells us a lot about the change not only in the mind of the present Russian leader, but in the minds of the new Russian elite. I think this is a change for the better.

This change shows that the old historical instinct of treating the West as an enemy and therefore siding with the enemies of one's enemy is gone, at least at the top echelons of present day Russia. This is a positive sign which should be responded to with the proper behaviour on the part of the Western nations, including those nations of Central Europe like Poland which have become members of NATO. These nations should collectively show to Russia that we understand that this change has happened in Russia, and has been demonstrated by President Putin on the 11th of September.

So, the interesting thing is not just what Putin did, but what his act tells us about the change in Russia. There are still a number of problems, and the main problem, I think, is not Russia and the United States, Russia and Western Europe, or even Russia and Poland. The main problem is Russia and what the Russians often call the "near abroad". This means those states which only eleven years ago were still part of the Soviet Union and which are now independent entities. Here I see two different situations, which call for two different answers. The first situation is the Baltic States. The three small Baltic republics are strongly independent minded and for reasons we must understand are fearful of renewed Russian pressure. To them we should offer our full support, whatever it may mean in our relations with Russia.

When I say we, I mean we — the integrated transatlantic community, including those states of Central Europe which are now part of NATO and others which aspire to be members of NATO. Even if it means costs in relations with Russia, on this point we should not compromise. This is a matter of principle, and also a matter of our interest.

Then there is the other category of countries which is far less simple — these include Belarus and the Ukraine. I happened to observe the presidential election in Belarus in 1994 and what shocked me then was a kind of rivalry between the two top candidates in which both of them would try to prove to the voters that he was more pro-Russian. So, when Lukashenko eventually won the competition by promising that if elected president he would persuade Russia to annul the treaty on the dissolution of the Soviet Union, something he did not attempt in the end,

it told me a lot about the spirit of the voters in Belarus. Ukraine is of course different and in Ukraine there are both strong pro-Russian tendencies, particularly in the Eastern part, and strong anti-Russian tendencies, particularly in the Western part.

But Ukraine is not in the same situation as, for instance, Poland. Therefore, our policy towards this country should be, to my way of thinking, based on the combination of two principles. One is that we stand for their independence to the degree to which they themselves stand for their independence. We do not impose on Belarus a policy of distancing herself from Russia if Belarus wants to be closer to Russia than she is today, but we will oppose by all means available any attempt to force Belarus to move in this direction. The same is particularly true of the Ukraine. Our first approach should be to guarantee to this country that they truly make their own decisions their own way. At the same time we should offer these countries contacts, opportunities, and economic and cultural incentives, and this is particularly important when the Eastern borders of the European Union will be between the present states of Central Europe and the Ukraine, Belarus, and Russia. At the same time, it is vital for the success of this policy that it is not directed against Russia. In other words, we must do it in coordination with Russia. That, of course, means that the condition for the success of this policy is a good working relationship with Russia.

This may be an over-optimistic picture of the future and I acknowledge that if I went a little bits toward the over-optimistic scenario this is in response to what I perceived as a very pessimistic scenario given to us by Professor Najder. I admit that had the main speaker presented a totally rosy picture of Russia, my comment could have been the opposite, but as it is, I think it is important for us to see not only the dangers but also the opportunities that we are presented with. We have been given a chance, a historical chance, and if we waste it, our successors will think badly about our political wisdom. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Stemplowski

Thank you very much. I'm weighing my optimism and my pessimism to judge whether we deserve our lunch at 12:00 if we continue with this debate, but we have to continue because otherwise we are going to lose a lot of valuable observations and I would appeal to the speakers to be as concise as it is possible. Ambassador von Moltke will be the next speaker.

von Moltke

Thank you very much. I will limit myself to a few remarks, having been involved in developing the NATO-Russian relationship over the last ten years, since 1991. Our general assumption in the past ten years, and this was not only true for NATO but for the policies of the European countries and the United States as well, has always been that we cannot create a zone of security and stability in Europe without Russia. Therefore, we have done everything to reach out to Russia - through NATO, the European Union, the OSCE, and bilaterally. I would agree with those who say that the glass is half full. I think we have achieved something, but we also have quite some way still to go.

When we negotiated the Funding Act it was built on the assumption that this is a building process. The idea was that we start with consultation and move to coordination, to possible joint decisions and joint actions. So, we embarked on a gradual process. Unfortunately, due to the Kosovo air operation it broke down, and we had a difficult time trying to restart it. However, now it's doing quite well and particularly impressive is the military cooperation in the Balkans. That is a very smooth and well entrenched cooperation and I think all the sides are quite happy with the achievements, although the political discussion remains a bit difficult.

As you know, we have been trying to re-launch the process by developing a scheme which involves all the 20 countries on a more equal basis. Let me add in parentheses that this was our idea when we negotiated the Funding Act. I was in charge of the negotiations, and I explained at least ten times to our Russian friends why this was the only way to go, and I tried to convince them that the Secretary General of NATO was not part of NATO, but just in the negotiations. In the talks he was the chairman of the discussions, which like all discussions in NATO he had to manage in order to come to a constant consensus. But anyway, Foreign Minister Primakov insisted on the Troika Concept . We still have it and I think this has been part of the problem.

I see good chances to move forward now, and we will choose to begin with some issues like terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. We will look at what to do about it, how to act against it, and what to do concerning chemical weapons, defence, biological weapon defence, and missile defence. So, we have quite a number of very practical and very concrete areas on which we can embark, and we have had quite substantive discussions on all these issues in the past. All the working groups within NATO, chaired by the international staffs, are groups of 20 where all the 20 countries sit around the table.

The idea of working in a group of 20 is not very new, but it will be quite a challenge to our Russian friends to bring themselves into discussions involving compromise and consensus building. I sense that in the foreign ministry, as well as in the defence ministry, the habit of this type of international policy has been not fully accepted and I think we will possibly have some problems to begin with. I'm not only looking at the Russian side, but I think it will be quite important that the Russian side understands the game of building consensus through compromise. Thank you.

Stemplowski

Thank you very much. Professor Weinstein.

Weinstein

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Perhaps a little review would be useful since I believe there are so many aspects to the relationship with Russia. There is the question of Russia in Europe and how that relates to various policies of not only NATO, but the Council of Europe, different European governments, and OSCE. Then we have the United States and its relationship to our European allies and friends and in turn our joint relationship with Russia, and with all this the subject can get terribly muddled. One thing that might be stipulated, on which I think we would all agree, is that the transition in Russia was very different.

I would perhaps add the transition in Russia plus a number of the other countries of the former Soviet Union, was really radically different for reasons that some previous speakers have already indicated. You were not dealing with historic memories going back to the 1940s and 1950s to the pre-communist world, you were dealing with a society which overnight had to transform. To begin transforming its economic structure, its political structure, its governmental structure, its legal structure, its moral approaches, its international processes, and virtually everything else about itself. I think it is fair to say that this process is historic and without precedent in the history of the world.

Under these circumstances, the first thing that should be said is that we've all done a lot, including our Russian friends, in a very short period of time, but we all began with various illusions. I tend to use a musical metaphor in discussing US policy toward Russia during this period. The United States sort of backtracks centuries. We went from a romantic perception of Russia in the early Yeltsin years (for that matter in the Gorbachev years the romanticism was even more acute). But how much change could we expect from Russia and how quickly could we expect that change? The romanticism gave way to classicism of sorts in the

diplomatic negotiation in the middle of the Clinton years. I'm sorry my friend Leon Fuerth isn't here because he was part of the reason for that more rational set of policies toward Russia that emerged in the aftermath of what we in the States called Yeltsin II, Yeltsin after 1996.

That in turn has given way to some rather baroque features of US policy toward Russia, which include looking into the souls of Russian leaders and visits to ranches in Texas and all sorts of additions to the politics of summitry with which we are now living. Under those circumstances it would come as no surprise to people in this room that if pushed to the wall I think most Americans who follow these matters would suggest that we really do not have an overall strategy for dealing with Russia at this particular moment. Fortunately our European friends, if not having an overall strategy, at least have some procedures and processes in place.

The discussion by Hans Christian Krüger of the Council of Europe, or the Council's response to Russia as it moves along, is very useful because it has been imminently practical. It has tried step-by-step to encourage what our psychiatrist friends would call 'behavioural modification' in Russia, with a complex system of rewards and punishments, or at least potential punishments. One of our Polish friends used the wonderful image of the Lilliputians and Gulliver, which I think is a classic image, but we probably should avoid that in discussing this with our Russian friends, other than my very sophisticated friend to the right over here.

So where does this leave us at this particular moment? How optimistic or how pessimistic should we be? I would second Andrei Kolosovsky's suggestions that we should think in the long term of societal change and that we should try to encourage that change where possible. This may mean moving outside Moscow and it may mean the types of developments that have been possible in Poland and in other Central European countries. These developments may include developing relationships with various regions and working with different media groups that are not in Moscow and which, as Ambassador Kolosovsky has indicated, have been badly suppressed. For those of you who have seen your *International Herald Tribune* today, there is an appeal by two Russian journalists to support the media in the regions where there are television stations and radio stations broadcasting freely.

Support for free information, for the freest possible information, is a critical element and we can all be useful in that regard. Similarly, support for the development of the institutions of the legal systems is an example of an area

where Europeans can be much more influential than we Americans. I hope that type of support continues.

Having said that, it seems to me that we have to keep in mind what the American writer F. Scott Fitzgerald once called the test of the civilized intelligence. He said that this was the ability to keep two opposed ideas in the mind simultaneously while retaining the capacity to function. Now, when Europe thinks about NATO, it only seems to keep in mind the notion that one wants to move into NATO as quickly as possible—this applies to virtually all of the Central European countries. But why? I think the answer is that there was a realization that we were dealing with a situation in which Russia could turn ugly with very short notice. That is certainly the premise underlying much of this speed with which this process has moved forward. The other idea to keep in mind simultaneously is the fact that one wants to keep Russia as engaged in this process as possible. As Ambassador von Moltke has indicated in a concrete and practical way, this has not diluted the purposes and the mission of NATO. In that connection I think I'm going to end by, if I may, by quoting a short passage from yet another person in this debate. It is written by a good friend of mine called Zbigniew Brzezinski, who wrote in the *Wall Street Journal* several months ago concerning this issue of NATO and Russia and Europe and Russia. He was talking about the change in President Putin's behavior towards the United States and towards the Western Alliance generally in the aftermath of the events of September 11th. He said:

"Perhaps Mr. Putin's sudden epiphany makes him now no longer wish to separate America from Europe nor to construct the strategic partnership with China, aimed at American's hegemony," - I would have said alleged hegemony - "nor to create a Slavic Union with Belarus and the Ukraine, nor to subordinate to Moscow the newly independent post-Soviet states, all of which he was actively pursuing until a few mere weeks ago. But imperial nostalgia dies slowly and it certainly lingers in the principle institutions of Russian power, notably the military and security forces, and among Russia's foreign policy elite. Its spokesmen have made it amply clear that in their view Russia's entry into the West should entail some significant concessions by the West, some of which could adversely affect the shared values and the viable consensual procedures of the Atlantic Alliance."

Now, I don't envy the task of NATO's Perm reps, some of whom who are with us this morning, which is to measure carefully whether some of these new proposals for supplemental ways of reinforcing the NATO-Russian

dialogue verge on exactly what Professor Brzezinski is suggesting. That is, diluting the ability of NATO to act decisively and independently of Russia if need be, in order to protect the vital interests of those who share the values which brought the NATO countries together. This is not an easy question. It is not simply a question of optimism versus pessimism, but one of measuring carefully the circumstances involving the relationship with Russia—of taking that temperature, if you will, on an absolutely regular basis. Thank you, Chairman.

Stemplowski

Thank you. It is now Professor Kominsarenko's turn.

Komisarenko

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Colleagues, let me first of all express my deep gratitude to Professor Allen Weinstein and my good friend Ambassador Ryszard Stemplowski for having invited me to this very important gathering. This session is dedicated to Russia and the European Union, but in fact there is a country in between, and it is the Ukraine. I think it's very relevant to talk about the Ukraine and its relations with Russia and with the European Union. You are well aware that the Ukraine, historically and geographically, belongs to Europe. It is also a country with huge intellectual and economic potential.

It is a country which has the fifth largest population in Europe and the biggest land mass (if we don't include Russia, which is certainly a Euro-Asian country). However, ordinary Europeans know almost nothing about Ukraine, except maybe Chicken Kiev, or the Chernobyl accident, or some soccer players who are playing for different teams in Europe. In 1990, the Deutsche Bank made an assessment of the capabilities and potential of all Soviet republics and found that the Ukraine had the biggest potential and the best perspective for independent economic development.

So where do we stand now, after 12 years of independence? Are we ready for Europe and is Europe (or will Europe ever be) ready for the Ukraine?

The Ukraine is in a very controversial and ambivalent situation which looks as a patchwork mosaic of positive and negative trends and developments. Until the year 2000 the Ukraine was the only former Soviet Union country that had failed to achieve a single year of economic growth during its years of independence. Its products and technologies are outdated and non-competitive, energy consuming, and material consuming. Privatisation did not bring in a flow of capital. State bureaucracy and the authorities became

obstacles for foreign investors, as well as for small and medium-sized businesses. Transparency International named the Ukraine as one of the most corrupted countries in the world. Surprisingly, the country is socially stable. There has not been any bloodshed during these years of independence. We have succeeded with a new currency which is very stable now with almost no inflation. This year we are facing unexpected economic growth, mainly due to the reforms launched by Mr. Ushekev's government two years ago. He has balanced the budget and has made several quick and very effective surprise reforms, mainly in the energy sector. This has saved about $4 billion a year for the country in the field of gas, oil, and electricity trade. The practices introduced into the government are still working and in the year 2000 we had 6% of GDP growth, whilst this year we have almost 12% of GDP growth. So, Ukraine has become a very reliable international partner.

I have a few words to say on the article written by Senator Lugar. I am very proud to say that exactly ten years ago I was lobbying for the Nunn-Lugar initiative to the President when I was Vice Prime Minister. The Ukraine implemented a very good initiative in getting rid of nuclear weapons as well as nuclear warheads and the ballistic missiles mainly targeted at the United States. The Ukraine became a member of Council of Europe, and we signed an agreement for partnership and cooperation with the European Union and a special agreement or partnership for peace with NATO. Ukrainian peacekeeping forces were and still are in some places in the world, such as Bosnia, Kosovo, Macedonia, and some other countries. Under the Clinton administration we became the third largest recipient of United States aid after Israel and Egypt.

So, what is the Ukraine? What does the enlargement of Europe mean for the Ukraine? In effect we now have mutually beneficial bilateral relations with our closest countries. We have very good relations with Poland, Hungary, Romania, and Slovakia, and we need to know if it will be a new barrier between our countries when the European Union comes to merge with the Ukraine.

During our conference I've not heard a discussion about globalisation - in fact all I've heard are several small mentions about the impact of globalisation. I think this issue is relevant not only for the Ukraine but for other countries which are present here. Unfortunately, because of a lack of time, I won't be able to talk about it, but globalisation may bring a lot of success in opening economies in the developing countries. At the same time, it can also bring a lot of threats if state regulations or

institutions, proper institutions, are not established in these countries.

So, I have mentioned the problems, but what are the solutions? What is the proper way for a better future for the Ukraine, Ukrainians, and actually for a larger or, if I may say it, a proper Europe? Considering that the cost of an enlargement to the Ukraine would be very high, we might say that technically it is not reasonable to accept the Ukraine into Europe. However, if we think strategically then the Ukraine conforms to all the necessary prerequisites, and I think ignoring this would represent a mistake for various political, economic, historical, and cultural reasons. Public opinion in the Ukraine is in favour of joining the European Union.

We have established a special office which is responsible for the Ukraine joining the European Union. Thus we see that the Ukraine will join Europe in the future, although we don't know when this future will come. Concerning our relations with Russia, I am always lecturing on the fact that the Ukraine can be a very good vehicle for Russia if Russia wants to be an open and democratic society. The Ukraine is much more homogenous, it's much closer to Europe, and it's much easier for the West to adopt. The West could help the Ukraine to become an open democratic society, and then the Ukraine could be a vehicle, or an example, for Russia. In fact the Ukraine is one of the few countries Russia can follow as an example.

Of course, the eleventh of September changed everything. I was watching CNN that day and when I saw those horrible scenes I thought that was the maximum damage they could inflict. I now think that in fact it was the minimum that terrorists could do. When they strengthen their framework and their logistic capacity, they could have a much more profound effect on the world economy and a more negative impact on the world. They have revealed themselves and now they are facing resistance from the United States, from NATO, and from other countries.

At the same time they changed the relations between Russia and the United States and NATO. While reading your newspapers and learning that similar networks exist in Indonesia, in Malaysia, in Singapore and in other countries, it seems that even if there does not exist a constructive or cohesive network of terrorism targeted against the world, we are still dealing with fanatics who cannot be deterred by any means. This requires some type of a world anti-terrorist network, and NATO may be the only organization which is constructed in a way that makes this viable.

We have been talking at length about Russia and Mr. Putin. Putin certainly became President by chance, by God's destiny, but as a medical doctor I think that psychologically he himself is looking for his place in history and he's looking for a place for Russia in history. He is looking for the world community to give him a chance to be integrated into the world's history in a way that Russia can be very important. The US alone, or even the US and Europe, cannot fight a global anti-terrorist network. This can only be done effectively when the Ukraine and Russia and other countries find their place in the alliance.

So just to summarize, I wish to say that Ukrainians see their future in Europe, but also in a Europe which will be looking much beyond Europe. We must create some type of super religion which will be common to the whole world. In certainly will not be a religion in the usual sense of the word, but we need some common values and some general ideas which can help to unite the world. Thank you.

Stemplowski

Ms. Heather Grabbe of the Centre for European Reform

Grabbe

We are a think-tank in London and I want to share an anecdote with you about what think tanks do in this whole question of Russia and Europe. Last year Vladimir Reskoff, who is one of the most active younger members of the Duma and whose constituency is in Siberia, came on a tour of Europe. He came to see us because he knows us quite well and he wanted to talk about Russia and the European Union because he wanted to set up a new organization in Moscow to try to promote Russia's membership in the European Union - to try to move Russia towards membership as fast as possible. We had a long talk with him about all of this and we tried to persuade him that actually membership was perhaps not the thing to aim for at this moment in time. Closer cooperation yes, but membership might be more difficult. We argued and debated, and had dinner, and debated again, and finally we came up with the clinching argument. We showed him the acquis communautaire. We read out parts of it to him, especially the more than 50% of it which is concerned with agriculture and some of the other parts of it which raise some serious problems for Russia in terms of institutions, the economy, and so on. In the end Vladimir changed his mind and he went back and instead he has founded a very useful centre for encouraging closer cooperation. I think it is instructive because he's one of the youngest, most dynamic, and most Western-oriented of members of the

Duma, and even he didn't really quite understand what EU membership is all about.

As Zdzisław Najder pointed out earlier on, there is a fundamental issue about the fact that the EU is not a development agency. Now the Turks have had a very nasty shock in the past year in looking at accession partnership and understanding the kinds of very deep changes to their legal order, the role of their military, and so on, that EU membership would actually involve. I think for Russia that shock would be much greater. So, we really need to look at another way of moving Russia closer to Europe and frankly that will be quite difficult for the European Union, because the EU has tended to have a rather binary relationship with countries. Either you are a candidate for membership or you're not — you're a third country.

If you're a candidate for membership, you're put on a certain kind of conveyor belt. It doesn't guarantee that you will arrive at your destination, but it gives you a certain relationship with the EU, a certain set of conditions, a certain way of behaving with regard to the EU, which is very different. Now, we need something between this zero and one approach, between nothing and the binary approach - this is how we must relate to Russia. We need to talk in much more detail about what that relationship should be comprised of. Everybody agrees that it's essential and that it's really important. I think the current candidate countries will become firm advocates of a more comprehensive and consistent policy towards Russia and that's a good thing for Russia. Russia will gain a lot from EU enlargement. In that sense there should perhaps be less concern on the Russian side.

I would suggest three things this relationship must comprise. The first is the economic dimension, which is after all the way the EU was founded. The common economic space idea is a very good one. Secondly, it shouldn't be a 'strategic' relationship. These are words which tend to denote a relationship that forgives all behaviour by those in power because it is so important to have that linkage. Here I would quote Vaclav Havel, who gave a very interesting speech in Bratislava in May last year in which he said, "We must not treat the Russians as children whose every whim, however dangerous, must be satisfied." Now you can argue with exactly what he means by this, but there needs to be an element of dealing with Russia as a grown up country, one which is not an exception to all the rules which are applied to the Central and East European countries or indeed to Turkey.

Finally I think there must be engagement at different levels. It is important that this is not just a relationship between

national capitals, and between Brussels and Moscow. There should also be a relationship with the Russian regions. We have to involve the Oblasts for example, which are already affected by the EU's visa policies. That's a really important side of things. We have to involve regional policy in terms of the countries like the Ukraine, as we've just heard. I also think there should be more engagement with Belarus at a more concrete level.

So, I think the policy for Russia has to be part of a policy for the whole of the EU's near and further abroad. At the moment we're still quite keen on discussing general principles. We haven't really talked very concretely about what that policy might include. Thank you.

Stemplowski

The next speaker on my list is Ambassador d'Aboville, who is the French Representative to NATO.

D'Aboville

I couldn't agree more with Ms. Grabbe concerning the Acquis Communautaire, which is not really the most appealing of documents. Looking at the EU's documents, it already has some policies which are related to both enlargement and the strategy towards Russia. The first one concerns the border areas. The border areas are vital for security, safety, and the working of a single market. There are areas which are neglected on both sides by the capitals. If you go to the border in Ukraine, the people on the Ukrainian side are looking more to Poland than they are to Kiev. Furthermore, the people in a small village on the Polish side are looking to the Ukraine rather than to Warsaw, for economic reasons. We can see how we need to join together. We need visa policies and the control of goods for sanitary and veterinary reasons, which is a big problem that needs to be resolved soon and which will involve a lot of original funding. That is my first point.

The second is that we will have an energy policy with Russia because part of the energy to Europe in the coming years will come through Central Europe, and Russia needs Europe not only to have a market, but also to modernize their networks. So this is a dimension which will be very important in the next few years. Coming back to the present topic, which was about engaging Russia in cooperation, including cooperation with NATO, I would really support my German colleague's view that we cannot work on the basis favoured by Mr. Putin. We need concrete engagement, and for that we need to know that this is not a tactical move. I think we all agree that it was because Russia didn't have so

many alternatives that it was prepared for its move before 11th September.

Furthermore, we need to realize that we are dealing with the Russian states, and Russian bureaucracy, foreign affairs, and defence. The idea that we could circumvent the Polish structure by going to provincial governors and so on is very nice, but there is a limit. The limit is precisely what our Ukrainian colleague said. If you want to have an economic transformation, you need a certain legal and internal order which allows the investor to be confident. One of the big issues in the next year between the EU and Russia will not be to push the acquis communautaire, but the kind of rule of law which is absolutely necessary for transformation investment. The experience of Central Europe, including Poland, has shown precisely that. It is only when there is a certain level of order and confidence in the rule of law that these cities can be transformed.

The most important element that we really have to take as an impetus is that we are serious about the role that we want to give to Russia in the international order. Russia will still continue to play the usual strategy. It will continue to play the bilateral strategy with the US, in spite of the ABM snub. They will continue to play the EU strategy, not in the form of a common house such as the OSCE, which has been pursued by the media for years, but there will continue to be a strategy. The most important element is: do we believe that Russia, with its GNP of never-land, with the coming democratic crisis, and with a lot of problems in society, is still a partner at the world level?

I don't believe that terrorism can provide a quick way to say whether we can agree with Russia, as Russia will never agree on a common definition for terrorism. We will never be completely convinced that the Chechnyan is a terrorist, even if we would not accept the comparison with Algeria. Even in the UN nobody is able, even after the 11th of September, to agree to a definition. Also terror is basically defined by a legal aspect, a police aspect, where we can cooperate to a certain extent but we cannot make NATO an organization for this work.

If NATO has to evolve, it is certainly not on the basis of an anti-terrorist organization. So, as Ambassador von Moltke said, we will have to decide very quickly what the relationship of NATO is to be. We will have enlargement where Russia is not involved but Russia is still a very important actor on the international theatre. For me, this is an issue which is not completely settled.

Stemplowski

Thank you very much. I would now like to ask the presenter to briefly summarize the debate.

Najder

I am relieved that my grumbling has been met with general tolerance, and I am happy to say that I have agreed with most of the remarks expressed in the debate, considering them rather an augmentation of what I have said rather than a contradiction. I will limit myself to six points.

I will start with Kaliningrad, because I omitted it in my main speech. Mr. Putin now says that within two years it may find itself an enclave within the European Union. He says that *we* have to do something about it. Until then he will oppose Lithuania entering the European Union.

Point two is on Chechnya. There was news today about the local Chechnyan police responding to the authorities recognized by Moscow. This police force complains about daily atrocities being committed by Russian troops. The problem is still burning.

Point three: Mr. Krüger offered us a list of postulates which members of the Council of Europe are supposed to meet. They are waiting and that's what I tried to point out, that we keep waiting. Well, not everybody is as patient as the Council of Europe. Some people are closer to the Russian border and get more nervous about it.

Now, the next point concerns what Ambassador Kolosovsky said recently, and what Ambassador Vondra had said before, that we shouldn't suffer from too many illusions. Well, that was precisely my point. I don't blame Russia and I don't charge Russia with having a different political tradition. I just try to describe it. We should have no illusions, but the expression "have no illusions" has a long history. When Alexander I, known as a liberal, met representatives of Polish nobility in 1859 he said something similar and it was a signal that we shouldn't have too many illusions about the possible degree of autonomy. Again, that was my message.

Professor Weinstein talked of worrying signals concerning cooperation with Russia. Well, I quite agree with him, and I will try to say something like he did in more simple way. We Poles are often charged with being anti-Russian. I accept the charge of suspicion, but not of animosity. I will end by quoting from our national prophet who said 70 years ago in his poem, *To My Russian Friends:* "I don't bite you, I bite your shackles." Well, how to bite without biting the person which is shackled is a very delicate problem. That was the task that was described by Ambassador von Moltke, Ambassador d'Aboville, and several others. It is our common task. Thank you.