

THE SPATIAL-TEMPORAL DIMENSION OF THE ALLIANCES NATO & CSTO

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Abstract: Despite being structural entities which have relatively recently emerged, the alliances have caught global attention and interest, in a relatively short time, this giving a very well confined place in the approaches of the great political-military strategists, at all levels. The history and evolution of the North-Atlantic Alliance are closely connected to the security environment as well as to the geopolitical and geostrategic reality, specific to a particular moment. The emergence of an alliance has led to the formation of a counter-alliance, meaning to bring a balance, even a fragile one on the surface.

Key-words: alliance, geopolitics, geostrategy, NATO, security.

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In the broad sense, an alliance is defined as an agreement between two or several groups in order to achieve common objectives; in the strict sense of the word, an alliance is a political agreement between two or several states based on a treaty by which the states agree to jointly act or help in certain circumstances (DEX¹).

At the principle level, the alliances allow the states to approach together common problems, within a collective decision-making process, even though some of the states, actually, divide instead of unifying². The multilateral international cooperation represents the basis of a new stable world system.

Therefore, we can undoubtedly state that *the alliances* are, in fact, the most important coordination and cooperation structures in the maximum security fields like political, military, social and even economic fields.

Conceptually, alliances are a structured assembly of participants, constituted based on an agreement, having a continuous activity in order to achieve common objectives, by coordinating resources and actions.

¹ Explanatory Dictionary of Romanian Language, Bucharest, 1998.

² See Germany's case, divided for 35 years, from 1955 until the fall of Berlin wall in 1990, between NATO (GFR) and the Warsaw Pact (GDR).

CHARACTERISTICS OF ALLIANCES

The states adhering to an alliance have the same interests, which can be geographical, political, military, economic etc.

Thus, the formation of some alliances at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century was stimulated by certain geographical-economic interests such as:

- the fight for the maintenance or conquest of some strategic points, such as *The Strait of Gibraltar* or *The Suez Canal*;
- the fight for the colonies, which ended up in the rapid division of Africa. France had North Africa (Algeria, Tunis, Morocco), England was present in Western Africa and Eastern Africa, Portugal had Angola and Mozambique, Belgium was active in Congo, Italy in Sumatra and Germany, later arrived, managed to get Togo, Cameroon, South-West Africa and a part of the Easter Africa;
- the Orient expansion. England was present in Hong-Kong and Burma, Portugal in Macao³, Germany in Jiaozhou⁴; France had the control over Cambodia, Conchinchina, Indochina, a.s.o.
- Russia wanted to have access to the Mediterranean Sea through the *Bosporus Strait* and *Dardanelles*, yet, in the same time, it wanted to block “the invasion” of the Westerners to the Orient;
- Austria-Hungary used to occupy the North of Italy from Milan to Trieste and administer in the Balkans, Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In the context of these geopolitical realities, the Triple Alliance is set up, made up by Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Italy. In this new geopolitical framework, Germany made sure it had the support of its allies in case of a possible attack from France, Italy hoped to solve the problems in North Africa, and Austria-Hungary won the resistance fight against the Russian expansionism. Yet, it remained unsolved the problem of the Balkans between Austria-Hungary and Italy, with repercussions on the future of the alliance.

The formation of an alliance calls for the formation of another alliance, an opposed one. Thus, as a response to the formation of the Triple Alliance, at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, the Triple Entente was formed, in three stages, made up of France, Great Britain, and The Russian Empire.

The answer to the formation of the alliance made up of the “Axis Powers” (Germany, Italy, Japan) was, in the first half of the 20th century, the emergence of the “Allied Powers” (Great Britain, France, USSR, USA, China).

After the Second World War, by defeating the Axis Powers, this alliance was disintegrated due to the opposed political conceptions of its members:” USSR – communist, France, Great Britain, USA – with obvious democratic view. Among the allies, these states become rivals. Yet, it was more serious the division of Europe into zones of influence belonging to the war winners. Thus, Europe is

³ The special administrative region of Macao (Àomén) of the People’s Republic of China, short form Macau or Macao, is a small territory on the Chinese Easter Coast. It is situated at 70 km South-West from Hong Kong and 145 km from Guangzhou. It is one of the oldest European colonies in China, dating back to the 16th century. The Portuguese government transferred the sovereignty of this region to the People’s Republic of China in 1999 and, currently, it is administered as a Special Administrative Region of the People’s Republic of China.

⁴ Jiaozhou, former German colony between 1898-1914, situated on the South Coast of the Shandong Peninsula in Eastern China.

“broken” into two very distinct political, military, economic blocks: Western Europe and Eastern Europe. The result was the creation of new alliances:

- Military: NATO⁵ and the Warsaw Pact⁶;
- Economic: Common Market and CMEA.

The political changes at the end of the ninth decade of the last century had as effect the disappearance of the alliances in the Eastern Europe, of the Warsaw Treaty and CMEA. The dissolution of USSR was added to this. Both processes produced obvious imbalances – especially because the majority of socialist states have subsequently become members of the North Atlantic Alliance.

In order to balance the new situation, at Russia’ initiative, which could see its political-military influence more and more weakened, in 2002, the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) was set up to which, apart the initiator, the following countries adhered: Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kirgizstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. The organization resembles NATO, at the principle level.

In the same geopolitical space there is, in an embryonic state, the formation of a political-economic-financial alliance, resembling in a way the EU.

Never in history, had two alliances been positioned geospatially so clearly.

All the alliances declare themselves “defensive”, but, gradually, one of them become offensive. It happened like this with the Triple Alliance, formed at Bismarck’s initiative, who had as declared purpose a defensive purpose, one of protection and defence in case of an attack from France or Russia.

Even nowadays, both NATO and CSTO manifest, at the declarative level, a purely defensive character. Russia considers that CSTO is *“the main instrument meant to counteract the regional challenges and the political-military and strategic-military threats.”*

An alliance lasts as long as the interests of one member or several members are not affected, or until when their common interests do not show divergence. An eloquent example for the first situation is represented by the alliance. “The League of the Three Emperors”, set up on 6 June 1873, between Germany and Russia, to which in 1874 Italy adhered, too, which is yet dissolved after 10 years due Austria-Hungary threatening Russia and the Alliance’s worry to Russia’s advancement towards the Indies.

In the case military confrontations between two alliances, they are dissolved after the conflict has stopped, as a result of its effects. An indicative example is the breaking up of the “Allied Powers” at the end of the Second World War, due to the political-ideological visions of the components states.

THE EVOLUTION OF ALLIANCES

As it is well known, any alliance (organizational entity) requires three existential levels: formation, evolution (expansion), and disappearance. If there can be issued different quite realistic point of view regarding the first two stages,

⁵ NATO (The North Atlantic Treaty Organization) is an international security organization, established in 1949, whose members are protected by political-military means, based on the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations and the transatlantic connections formed in time, a fact which represents the essence of peace and stability in its area of responsibility.

⁶ The Warsaw Treaty or the Warsaw Pact, officially named *Organization of Friendship, Cooperation, and Mutual Assistance* was a military alliance of the Eastern Europe countries which wanted to defend themselves against the threat perceived from NATO.

at least from the perspective of the staged evolution (from the furthest to the closest), the most diversified and unexpected can be the ways in which the alliance leaves the stage (break up, reorganization, abolition etc.).

The geographical and geopolitical position of the countries invited to adhere to different alliances is very important, yet, their economic-social situation cannot remain an ignorable indicator either. Either we speak about alliances providing security or about a common economic-financial market, no expansion has been made randomly, without the organization weighing from a quantitative and qualitative point of view the geopolitical and geostrategic, military, social economic, in the last years ecological advantages/disadvantages that it implies. For that matter, the evolution/expansion of an alliance requires a more laborious and complicated analytical process, from a political and juridical point of view, than the expansion itself.

Therefore, we can abstract that *the evolution of the alliances* is a linear one as long as the interests of its members are convergent. When there is a critical situation ("threshold"), the alliance is either dissolved or it has to choose a new course of development. It is the case of the "Allied Powers" which, after the defeat of the "Axis Powers" fell apart, other two new political-military alliances arise: NATO and the Warsaw Treaty.

THE JUSTIFICATION OF THE OFFENSIVE CHARACTER of some alliances was based on some complex considerations, fed by some ideologies.

The arguments, yet complex, can be dissociated in a series of geographical, historical, political, ideological order.

The geographical arguments result from the obvious tendency of some states to occupy new territories, justified by the lack of raw materials (Japan in the war against China) through the necessity of a higher geographical space (Germany – the theory of the virtual space), by recovering some territories once held by Italy, Austria.

Ideologically, the offensive character of the members of an alliance – and of the latter in its assembly – is based on the expansionist doctrine which consists in the expansion of the territorial base or of the economic influence achieved, usually, through military means.

Therefore, there were two ideologies, just as dangerous, which were at the base of justifying the offensive actions of some states and/or alliances.

One of these is the theory of the *vital space* or *Pan-Germanism*⁷ (Lebensraum) that Germany needed to create a Mitteleuropa⁸. According to this ideology, Germany had the right to incorporate some territories that it considered as being its own.

This way to see things was supported and even amplified by the theory of "species inequality" derived from Charles Darwin's "On the Origin of Species", the Germans considering by their Arian origin, superior to other nationalities.

The second ideology, just as dangerous, was *Pan-Slavism*⁹, which considered that the Russian nation has the mission to protect the Slavonians everywhere.

⁷ Political doctrine envisioning the unification of all the German origin populations in a single state (DEX-98).

⁸ Mitteleuropa is the equivalent of Central Europe in German language, referring clearly to the geographical, political, and cultural meaning.

⁹ The Pan-Slavism was a political movement which appeared at the middle of the 19th century which meant to unify all the slavic nations. The main attention was towards the Balkans, where the

The justification of an aggression tried to be motivated by “historical wishes”, as it was Mussolini’s case who motivated to occupation of Albania and Greece by the desire to rebuild the Mediterranean Roman Empire.

Russia used political-military arguments when it “asked for” the expansion of its zone of influence in the entire Eastern Europe (the contribution brought to the defeat of Hitler’s Germany, war damages). A new alliance was formed like this – through force, the Warsaw Treaty.

THE NORTH ATLANTIC ALLIANCE – a model of military alliance

The historical-geographical analysis of NATO’s context of emergence, as an international organization, from the perspective of the security environment, doctrine and strategic security concepts tackled by the Alliance during its six decades of existence, intends to be an evolutionary presentation of the constructive efforts made by NATO, in order to relate with the main state and organizational players of the most significant periods of its existence:

- **Cold War period**, characterised by *defence, discouragement and dialogue/ /detent* especially in the last two decades. “During the Cold War, Europe was divided into two blocks: one western-capitalist – *Western Europe* and one socialist-communist, dominated by USSR – *Eastern Europe*.”
- **the end of the 20th century** – a period marked by extremely important geopolitical event for Europe. “*The socialist block experienced, in the second half of 1989, an implosion that nobody had foreseen it to be so strong and in such a short period of time. It meant a break from the planned economy of former socialist countries. The phenomenon was possible due to the collapse of the Soviet Union, the last great empire in the history of humankind and its replacement with 16 independent republics. In this context, in Europe, there were profound geopolitical movements: the Berlin Wall falls and the two German states join in a powerful state; Czechoslovakia is divided into the Czech Republic and Slovakia (5 January 1993); Slovenia and Croatia (1991), Bosnia-Herzegovina and Macedonia (1992) detach one by one from Yugoslavia*” (JOSAN Nicolae, 2002, p.23).
- **the beginning of the 3rd millennium**, profoundly marked by the events of September 11th 2001, events which changed the vision of Western countries and of the USA concerning international security. “At the new millennium dawn, what the majority of military strategists and geopoliticians had foreseen, was made, a Unified Europe, a powerful North-Atlantic Alliance.”

The history of North-Atlantic Alliance

The historical-geographical context of NATO’s emergence, one of the most successful security organizations, requires a more detailed analysis, first of all from the perspective of important events of the moment. Therefore, the middle of the 20th century was dominated by the greatest and most killing continuous war in the history of humankind, *the Second World War*¹⁰- a generalized armed conflict, which

slavics from the South wherd by two great empires: Austria-Hungary and the Ottoman Empire. Pan-Slavism was used as a political tool both by the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union.

¹⁰ The Second World War caused the direct or indirect death of more than 70 million people, approximately 3% of the world population at the time. Moreover, many other people were badly wounded, they became life disabled due to fire weapons, classical or nuclear bombardments or due to the inhuman military and medical experiments they were subjected to.

destroyed the largest part of the globe. It was for the first time when a number of new technical inventions, including the atomic bomb, had been used on a large scale against both military and civil people. It has been estimated that this war cost more money and resources than all the other wars together¹¹. The war aftermaths, including the new technologies and the changes of the geopolitical, cultural, and economic arrangements were unprecedented. In this view, the post-war Europe was divided into Western and soviet spheres of influence. If the Western countries started reconstructing through the Marshall Plan¹², the Eastern Europe states became satellite states of the Soviet Union, adopting the methods of a planned economy and the policy of a single totalitarian party. This division was not official (Figure 1).

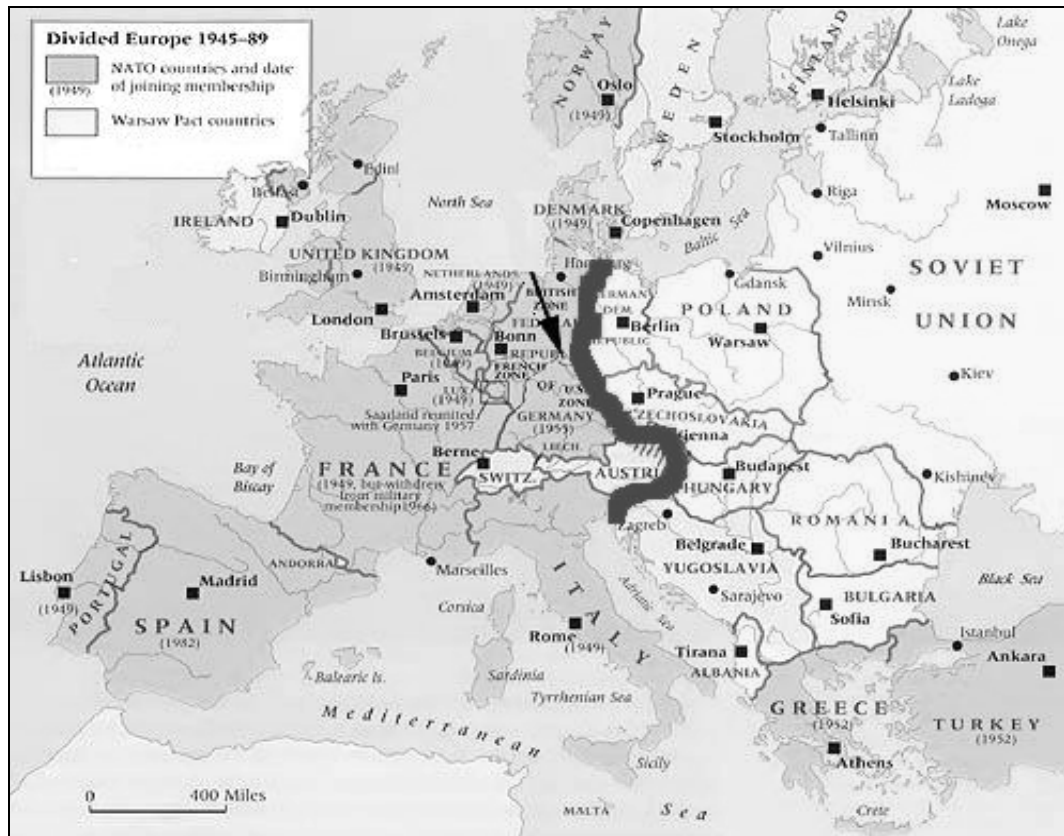


Figure 1. The division of Europe between the two military blocs specific Cold War: NATO (shades of orange), the Treaty of Warsaw (shades of yellow); (source: <http://ro.wikipedia.org/wiki/>)

Actually, there were no official agreements regarding the division of the spheres of influence, the relations among the victorious countries in the war becoming more and more tenses, the demarcation military lines, becoming, in the end, de facto country borders.

¹¹ 1,000 billion dollars at the 1945 rate, without considering the amounts of money spent on post-war reconstruction.

¹² *The Marshall Plan*, officially known as *European Recovery Program* (ERP), was the first reconstruction plan conceived by the United States of America and destined to European allies from the Second World War, (http://ro.wikipedia.org/wiki/Planul_Marshall), accessed October 2010.

The Western Europe countries partly became NATO members, while a part of the Eastern Europe countries allied with the Warsaw Pact¹³, these two political-military alliances being those which fuelled the cold war for more than four decades.

At the middle of the 20th century, the humankind was facing a series of complex situations which required especially two superpowers, the Soviet Union and the United States, but also the small and middle states, which were building different relations and references to this state.

In this context, the origin and evolution of the North-Atlantic Alliance, is required to be analysed and evaluated through a multitude of implications of the international relations which manifested in the conditions of the existence of bipolarity specific to the Cold War and in which the two superpowers acted according to the responsibilities conferred and assumed by the military supremacy, as well as by their global interests. After the Second World War, the relation between the two hegemonies of the bipolar world, emphasized by a mixture of complicity and rivalry, dictated and shaped, for a long period of time, the evolution of the international relations in Europe and in the world. Thus, especially in the second half of the 20th century, the states' political activity became more and more complex, the international relations, diplomacy, the security and defence policy achieved new shapes, the political, economic, and social transformations which took place having a direct influence on them.

In this historical-geographical, geopolitical, and geostrategic conjuncture, the roots of the North-Atlantic Alliance have to be located in the period following the Second World War, as an immediate reaction to the necessity to economically rebuild Western Europe and the North-American allies, and as a response to the more and more accentuated visibility of the expansionist manner of the Soviet Union. To all these was added the enforcement of some undemocratic forms (totalitarian) of governance, at the level of several states in the world, but especially in the Central and Eastern Europe area, as well as the repression of fundamental civil and human rights and freedoms.

Moreover, the compliance with the Charter of United Nations, with the promises made by the Western governments during the war to reduce their defence potential, in contrast with the obvious intention of the Soviet leadership to maintain their military potential to full capacity, corroborated with the obvious threats to the sovereignty of Norway, Greece, Turkey, and of other Western-European countries, Berlin's illegal blockade, started in April 1948 by the USSR, as well as the coup in Czechoslovakia in June the same year, represented the decision of five Western states – Belgium, France, Luxembourg, and Great Britain - to develop a common defence system by which they could counteract the ideological and political-military threats to their security. This initiative was capitalized in signing The Treaty of Brussels in March 1948.

Once this step had been made, the powers of The Treaty of Brussels initiated the negotiations with the United States and Canada for the creation of a North-Atlantic Alliance, based on security warranties and common commitments between Europe and North America, so that, by signing the Warsaw Treaty in

¹³ *The Warsaw Pact* or the Warsaw Treaty, officially named *Organization of Friendship, Cooperation, and Mutual Assistance* was a military alliance of the Eastern Europe countries and the Eastern Block which wanted to defend themselves against the threat perceived from NATO alliance (which was set up in 1949), (http://ro.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pactul_de_la_Var%C8%99ovia), accessed October 2010.

April 1949 the bases for the common security system based on a 12 country partnership (Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, Holland, Norway, Portugal, Great Britain and the USA), is laid, this being “ground zero” in NATO’s evolution.

Also, we should not forget the fact that in trade-off, as a consequence of the bipolarity imposed by the two super powers of the moment, the USA and the USSR, on the East there was the “*The Warsaw Pact*” or “*The Warsaw Treaty*”, aiming to coagulate the communist states around the USSR, in order to ensure a political-military power balance worldwide.

The Warsaw Treaty, officially named *Organization of Friendship, Cooperation, and Mutual Assistance*, was a military alliance of the Eastern Europe countries, which wanted to defend themselves against the threat perceived from NATO alliance. The treaty was initiated in 1955 by Khrushchev¹⁴ and signed at Warsaw on 14 May 1955 by the USSR, Albania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, G.D.R., Poland, Romania, and Hungary.

It can be said, thus, that the division between East and West achieved, in these circumstances, judicial and institutional consistency, in the same time, representing the beginning of the Cold War.

THE EXPANSION OF THE NORTH-ATLANTIC ALLIANCE

As it is well known, any organizational entity requires three existential levels: formation, evolution (expansion) and disappearance. If regarding the first two stages there can be different quite realistic points of view issued, at least from the staged evolution perspective (from furthest to closest), the most diversified and unsuspected can be the ways on which the organization leaves the stage (disintegration, reorganization, abrogation, breach etc.). Yet, we will concentrate on the second stage of the organization existence and we will refer to it further.

The geographical and geopolitical position of the countries invited to negotiations in order to adhere to different organizations is very important, yet, their economic-social situation is an indicator worth taking into consideration, too. Either we talk about security providing international organizations or about a common economic-financial market, no expansion has been made randomly, without the organization weighing from a qualitative and quantitative point of view the geopolitical and geostrategic, military, social, economic, ecological advantages/disadvantages that the it involves. Besides, the expansion of an organization requires much more laborious and complicated analytical process, from a political and judicial point of view, than the expansion itself.

The expansion of the North-Atlantic Alliance, as the emergence of this extremely important international security organization has never been made randomly, on the contrary, everything was carefully planned, organized, in small steps, yet certain and well oriented.

Analysing the entire expansion of NATO since origins (1949) to 2009 (Figure 2), we can distinguish two main expansion directions of the Alliance (Table 1).

¹⁴ Nikita Sergheevici KHRUSHCHEV, (17 April 1894 – 11 September 1971), led the Soviet Union after Stalin’s death. He served as First Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union from 1953 until 1964 and as Prime Minister from 1958 until 1964. During the Second World War, Khrushchev was a commissar having the rank of Lieutenant General.



Figure 2. The dimension of the NATO between 1949 (12 members) -2009 (28 members)
(source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Commons:Category:Maps_of_NATO)

Table 1. NATO expansion on main directions

NATO expansion direction	State invited to adhere	Adhering year
NATO expansion to the Mediterranean	Greece, Turkey	1952
	G.F.R.	1955
	Spain	1982
NATO expansion to the former Soviet Bloc	The Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland	1999
	Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia	2004
	Albania, Croatia	2009

The six waves of NATO expansion can be analysed from the perspective of two clear expansion intentions:

- NATO expansion to the Mediterranean, during the Cold War and capitalized into Greece, Turkey, and Spain adhering to it (an exception being GFR which was accepted in NATO as a replica to GDR entering, in 1955, the alliance of the communist countries, The Warsaw Treaty);

- NATO expansion to the former Soviet Bloc, which took place, obviously, during the Post-Cold War period, capitalized into the adhering of the majority of states members of the Warsaw Treaty, the 2004 wave being the most consistent in the history of the Alliance¹⁵.

These two main NATO expansion directions will further represent the object of our scientific approach, in order to be able to identify the Alliance's possible expansion intentions. During its existence, NATO adapted and continuously reshaped, successfully coping with the changes in the global security environment. The continuous transformation of the security environment requires that the answers to risks and threats be permanently adapted to its evolution trends. As long as the nature of the threats changes, the Alliance's answer must change, too.

¹⁵ In 2004 seven members states of the Warsaw Treaty, among them Romania, too, were accepted, this expansion bringing a number of states equal to that brought by the four waves of the Alliance's expansion from its establishment in 1949 to the beginning of the new millennium.

Each of the two NATO expansion intentions required, each time, the *updating* of the doctrinaire and conceptually strategic provisions of the North-Atlantic Alliance. Thus, *NATO expansion to the Mediterranean* by Greece, Turkey, and Spain adhering to it, was the basis of the launch of the strategic concepts specific to the Cold War period: *Massive Reprisal Strategy – 1953 and the Flexible Response Strategy – 1967*. The end of the Cold War and the opportunity of *NATO expansion to the former Soviet Bloc*, by The Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Albania and Croatia adhering to it led to significant changes in the NATO specific strategic-doctrine approach, by consecutively launching the *Strategic Concepts of Rome - 1991, Washington - 1999 and Lisbon - 2010*, and of the Political Guides launched at the summits in Prague - 2002 and Riga - 2006.

THE COLLECTIVE SECURITY TREATY ORGANIZATION (CSTO) – REPLICATOR TO NATO

CSTO (figure 3) is a security organization set up in 2001 on Russia's initiative, to be used in the case of "a big war in the region".



Figure 3: The Collective Security Treaty Organization.

(sursa: <http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/>)

CSTO guarantees the collective security of its members, the military cooperation among them, their territorial sovereignty, independence, and stability in the region, the fight against terrorism, mass destruction weapon proliferation and trans-border criminality.

CONCLUSIONS

The alliances enclose states manifesting joint interests, are initially defensive and last as long as one or several of the members' interests are not affected. The formation of an alliance triggers the emergence of other "situational balance" organizations.

NATO was and will be a vital security commitment, between Europe and the United States, equally appreciated by both parties, from all points of view (economic, social, military, strategic)

NATO emerged in 1949, developed during the Cold War, adapted to the post-Cold War period and considerably transformed and expanded at the beginning of the millennium.

CSTO is a recently emerged security organization and catalogued at the world level as a “NATO of the East”.

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