4. Regional security cooperation in the former Soviet area

ALYSON J. K. BAILES, VLADIMIR BARANOVSKY and
PÁL DUNAY

I. Introduction

The use of regional organizations for purposes of security cooperation has increased worldwide since the end of the cold war.[1] Traditionally devoted to avoiding conflict and limiting military tensions between neighbours or to combining their forces in other forms of positive cooperation, such communities have had to address a further range of new threats after the terrorist attacks on the United States on 11 September 2001. Aside from several overlapping organizations in the wider Europe, the tendency for such groups both to multiply and to elaborate their agendas has been plain in Africa, South-East Asia and Latin America (at both regional and subregional level). Analysts and policymakers have also increasingly noted that the regions generating the sharpest security problems—including dangers of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction—are those that lack such structures for cooperation or where neighbouring states are linked only by negative dynamics.[2]

A chapter in the *SIPRI Yearbook 2006* proposed some universal criteria for judging the efficiency and legitimacy of security-oriented regional mechanisms.[3] The authors identified four broad types of role—not mutually exclusive—that regional organizations could play in the context of security: (*a*) avoiding, containing and resolving conflict within the region; (*b*) pursuing practical military cooperation, including in non-zero-sum contexts such as international peace missions; (*c*) promoting reform, democracy and good governance in the defence and security field or more generally; and (*d*) tackling

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[1] For details and for a fuller explanation of the assumptions and definitions underlying this chapter see Bailes, A. J. K. and Cottey, A., 'Regional security cooperation in the early 21st century', *SIPRI Yearbook 2006: Armaments, Disarmament and International Security* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2006), pp. 195–223.

[2] E.g. the current US National Security Strategy argues specifically that the USA's relations with other 'centres of global power' must be supported by 'appropriate institutions, regional and global, to make cooperation more permanent, effective, and wide-reaching'. It states that 'this regional approach has particular application to Israeli–Palestinian issues, the conflicts in the Great Lakes region of Africa, and the conflict within Nepal'. The White House, 'The National Security Strategy of the United States of America', Washington, DC, Mar. 2006, URL <http://www.whitehouse.gov/nsc/nss/2006>, pp. 36 and 16, respectively.

[3] Bailes and Cottey (note 1).

functional issues, including the so-called new threats and other challenges arising in the borderland between security and economics. They suggested the following tests for legitimacy and effectiveness, based on observation and actual policy discourse rather than theory: '(*a*) whether cooperation is coerced and hegemonic; (*b*) whether it posits a zero-sum relationship with the outside world; (*c*) whether it is rigid or static (or adaptable and capable of growth); (*d*) whether it is artificial and superficial; and (*e*) whether it is efficient in terms of management and resource use'.[4] Tests based on the type of structure or degree of institutionalization were deliberately avoided, since these features should be adapted to regions' specific needs. SIPRI has examined a number of regional structures and evaluated them from these standpoints.[5]

This chapter applies this new analytical approach to three explicitly security-related constructs existing in the former Soviet space—the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), and the grouping of Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan and Moldova called the Organization for Democracy and Economic Development–GUAM (hereafter referred to as GUAM)—together with the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), which links some members of those groups with China (see table 4.1 in section II, below). All these groups tend to be poorly known outside their region and are often exposed to normative criticism both outside and in some parts of that region. The three Russia-led groups (the CIS, the CSTO and the SCO) are often seen in the West as aiming at a kind of neo-Soviet hegemony, implying coercion and undemocratic practices;[6] their opposition to terrorism and insurgency is interpreted as a common agenda of isolating and crushing minority elements; and strategically, they are viewed as an essentially zero-sum effort to balance Western groupings or to obstruct US and Western influence. It is widely assumed that all four groups suffer from rigid, artificial forms of governance and low levels of efficiency and output. The present account explores such judgements and normative questions, to which these organizations deserve to be subjected as much as any others. The answers are sought in a historical perspective and in the light of factual, dispassionate reporting and analysis.

The next section of this chapter provides the historical element by sketching the background to the emergence of the first post-Soviet regional grouping, the CIS, and the subsequent development of the CSTO, GUAM and the SCO. Sections III–VI evaluate the CIS, the CSTO, GUAM and the SCO, respect-

[4] Bailes and Cottey (note 1), p. 215.

[5] See Adisa, J., 'The African Union: the vision, programmes, policies and challenges', *SIPRI Yearbook 2003: Armaments, Disarmament and International Security* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2003), pp. 79–85; Hollis, R., 'The greater Middle East', and Rosas, M. C., 'Latin America and the Caribbean: security and defence in the post-cold war era', *SIPRI Yearbook 2005: Armaments, Disarmament and International Security* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2005), pp. 223–82; and Bailes, A. J. K. et al., *Regionalism in South Asian Diplomacy*, SIPRI Policy Paper no. 15 (SIPRI: Stockholm, Feb. 2007), URL <http://www.sipri.org>.

[6] In June 2006 US Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld also called the SCO's security values into question by accusing the members of considering the accession of Iran as a full member at a time when it was causing proliferation- and terrorism-related concerns. Dyer, G. and Yeh, A., 'Iranian president to cause a stir at security summit', *Financial Times*, 14 June 2006, p. 3. See also section V below.

ively, against the five criteria proposed above. The conclusions are presented in section VII.

II. Background: basic realities of the former Soviet area

The break-up of the Soviet Union was neither adequately prepared nor seriously negotiated. Most of the political actors that were directly involved had very vague ideas (if any) of what would take the place of a single state that had covered one-sixth of the globe. Against such a background, it is not surprising that the emerging picture of regional security cooperation has its chaotic and controversial features. It has, in fact, developed in multiple formats that are set out and compared in table 4.1. The main factors shaping the evolution of security cooperation in the post-Soviet area since 1990 may be summarized as follows.

Force of inertia. For a certain period after the collapse of the Soviet Union, the inertial effect of a former common security space continued to influence the newly independent states, despite their formal independence. When the CIS was hastily proclaimed at the end of 1991 to replace the Soviet Union,[7] the idea of maintaining common armed forces and a joint military potential was considered workable. The same inertia—underpinned by economic, historical, societal, cultural and psychological factors—persisted well into the 1990s and beyond, but it could not indefinitely provide a driving force for promoting regional security cooperation in fast changing conditions.

'Former Soviet Union minus the Baltics'. The post-Soviet space was from the beginning divided into two areas. Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, the three Baltic states, disengaged from the rest of the post-Soviet territory in a more radical way than any others, as clearly seen in their non-membership of the CIS. Conversely, they set their sights on joining the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) far earlier than, for instance, Georgia or Ukraine and were duly admitted as members of both NATO and the European Union (EU) in 2004.

Cooperation between antagonists. In some cases, the prospects for regional security cooperation were blocked or seriously undermined by disputes inherited from Soviet or pre-Soviet times, with the potential to cause open conflict—notably in the case of the dispute between Armenia and Azerbaijan over the autonomous region of Nagorno-Karabakh in south-western Azerbaijan. Sometimes, political and military interference in conflict areas by Russia in the early 1990s technically contributed to 'freezing them', but this was hardly perceived as neutral by Azerbaijan, Georgia or Moldova, shaping the understanding of and attitudes towards Russia's regional leadership (see also section V below). All this affected the membership of such security-

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[7] The CIS was founded in Dec. 1991 to replace the dissolved Soviet Union. Today Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, Tajikstan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan are CIS members (Turkmenistan withdrew its membership and became an associate member in Aug. 2005). On the group see URL <http://www.cis.minsk.by>. See also section III of this chapter.

related groupings as were created: thus the antagonists Armenia and Azerbaijan could participate in the group that developed out of the 1992 Collective Security Treaty (Tashkent Treaty)[8] only so long as this structure had little practical meaning. It started to be consolidated after 2002, when Azerbaijan decided to discontinue its membership. Similarly, Azerbaijan's participation in the GUAM grouping precludes Armenia's membership. The fact that both Armenia and Azerbaijan have continued to participate in the CIS says much about how weak this organization is in the security area.

A strategically heterogeneous space. The heterogeneous character of the former Soviet area not only undermines region-wide security cooperation but also promotes the development of smaller and cross-cutting groupings that may overlap or directly conflict with each other. The resulting scope for dissipation of effort may be illustrated by the fact that Russia and the Central Asian states are committed to cooperating against terrorism within three different frameworks: the CIS, the CSTO and the SCO.

Russia's predominance. The predominance of Russia in the former Soviet area (even if it is eroding) represents the most powerful independent variable within the post-Soviet space. Not only is Russia by far the strongest state in terms of size, military forces and economic potential, but it also has the strategic character of a 'hub' to which former Soviet states are joined by a more strategically significant relationship than any pair of such states can have with each other. The practical implications of these facts for regionalism are, however, neither straightforward nor predetermined: some neighbours accept or even seek Russia's 'paternalistic' lead, while others defy it almost on principle (see '*Politics first*' below).

The search for self-identification. In the slow but steady process of defining their separate identities, the former Soviet republics have often realized that their new state security agendas are dissimilar, perhaps conflicting, and becoming more so over time. Even a grouping as relatively tight as the CSTO embraces countries with such different geopolitical and security environments as Belarus, on the one hand, and Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, on the other. Different needs are of course compatible with cooperation, but they will gradually erode any structure that does not effectively recognize and accommodate them.

Politics first. The former Soviet area consists of a number of recently formed and still self-shaping states where security decisions may often reflect volatile political circumstances rather than sober analysis and experience. Russia's own strategic thinking, for example, is shaped by three broader political motives: (*a*) to ensure the country's sustainability as a sovereign political entity, (*b*) to neutralize possible hostile developments in adjacent territories

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[8] The Collective Security Treaty was signed at Tashkent in 1992—initially by 6 states, which were later joined by 3 others. It entered into force in 1994. For the treaty see URL <http://dkb.gov.ru/start/> (in Russian). In 1999 Azerbaijan, Georgia and Uzbekistan refrained from prolonging the treaty, which thus retained 6 participants (Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Tajikistan). In 2002–2003 these states decided to institutionalize their cooperation on the basis of the treaty and establish the Collective Security Treaty Organization. Uzbekistan joined the CSTO in 2006.

and (*c*) to promote its broader international role (even if in a considerably reduced format compared with the Soviet Union). Russia's political reading of these imperatives affects its attitude to regional security options at any given time. For instance, the vision of the CIS as a vehicle for consolidating Russia's 'zone of influence' has provided a strong incentive for developing it further; but any suspicion that other partners are only using the group cynically to gain access to Russia's resources and military assistance on the cheap will drive Moscow towards limiting its investment. In practice, Russia has a persistent tendency to relapse into bilateralism when handling either friends (e.g. Belarus) or particularly tough opponents, thereby further complicating and undercutting the significance of the regional groups to which it belongs.

Other former Soviet states seem to prioritize political considerations in a similar way. For instance, the leaders of the Central Asian states supported the 'new breath of life' given to the Collective Security Treaty in the early 21st century partly for the political motive of stopping the syndrome of 'colour revolutions' (non-violent protests against governments with a specific colour as their symbol) spreading further. Overall, a vicious circle may develop whereby a lack of concrete security substance in regional cooperation increases the temptation to sacrifice utility to politics, which in turn keeps the whole phenomenon of regional security cooperation in the former Soviet area at a largely superficial level. At any moment, changing political circumstances could force a 'correction' of present relationships in one direction or another. (It is fair to note that this syndrome of a high declaratory stance combined with limited and fragile practical underpinning is a pattern that can be traced in multilateral activities in the Eastern bloc far back in the communist period.)

Ongoing reconfiguration. Patterns of cooperation among the former Soviet states have also been unstable over time for more substantial reasons, as the security perceptions (and self-perceptions) of actors continue to evolve. By 2006 Russia had basically overcome its economic, political and psychological post-imperial traumas, with high energy prices currently playing heavily into its hands. The leadership in Moscow has become much more self-confident and expects other international actors to recognize Russia's centrality within the former Soviet area. There are at least three factors, however, operating in the opposite direction: (*a*) the continuing different circumstances of the states in the area make it harder to establish a permanent and efficient form of cooperation; (*b*) some former Soviet states see Russia's reviving power as damaging their interests and are trying to find ways of counterbalancing it; and (*c*) influences from outside the former Soviet area seem set to become more significant than in the first decade after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Paradoxically, therefore, even as Russia sees an upswing in its power, it has to face more serious challenges from states in its neighborhood than it did only a few years ago. For other CIS states the corresponding challenge is how to maintain a delicate balance in the relationships that they need to develop with Russia, among themselves and in a broader geopolitical context.

Table 4.1. Membership of security-related groups involving the post-Soviet area, as of January 2007

	CIS	CSTO	GUAM	SCO[a]	NATO/EU[b]
Established	1991	2003	1997	2001	1949/1951
No. of members	12	7	4	6	26/27
Russia	x	x	–	x	–
Europe					
Belarus	x	x	–	–	–
Moldova	x	–	x	–	–
Ukraine	x	–	x	–	–
South Caucasus					
Armenia	x	x	–	–	–
Azerbaijan	x	–	x	–	–
Georgia	x	–	x	–	–
Central Asia					
Kazakhstan	x	x	–	x	–
Kyrgyzstan	x	x	–	x	–
Tajikistan	x	x	–	x	–
Turkmenistan	x	–	–	–	–
Uzbekistan	x	x	–	x	–
Baltic states					
Estonia	–	–	–	–	x
Latvia	–	–	–	–	x
Lithuania	–	–	–	–	x

CIS = Commonwealth of Independent States; CSTO = Collective Security Treaty Organization; GUAM = Organization for Democracy and Economic Development–GUAM (Georgia–Ukraine–Azerbaijan–Moldova); SCO = Shanghai Cooperation Organization; NATO = North Atlantic Treaty Organization; EU = European Union.

[a] China is the 6th member of the SCO.
[b] For the full membership of the EU and NATO see the glossary in this volume.

External factors. External factors play a considerable role in motivating, organizing and structuring post-Soviet regional security cooperation. To mention only a few: Russia's anti-NATO sentiments have been central to much of Russian policy thinking and policymaking in this area. Second, Russia's real, perceived or anticipated hegemony within the CIS has triggered attempts to establish alternative structures, such as GUAM, that may be oriented towards other international poles of power. Third, the motives bound up with a new 'great game' in Central Asia are not entirely absent from developments in the CSTO and the SCO. As the post-Soviet area becomes more interdependent with and exposed to other actors and influences, this trend can be expected to become even more prominent.

III. The Commonwealth of Independent States

The CIS emerged in December 1991 in the context of the demise of the Soviet Union and still brings together 12 of the 15 post-Soviet states. While its primary usefulness originally lay in easing the process of the dissolution of the Soviet Union, it was also expected to promote the new states' eventual positive integration. The former aim was basically successful, but the latter has been much less so—at least, at the pan-CIS level.

Institutional structure[9]

In the CIS institutional structure, the Council of Ministers of Defence (CMD) is the key body focusing on security issues. It was established in February 1992 as the tool of the CIS Council of Head of States to address issues of military policy and cooperation. Its sessions are held as need arises, normally at least once every four months.[10] CMD activities were intended to be supported by two institutions: a Secretariat for bureaucratic needs and a Headquarters for coordination of military cooperation of the CIS member states. The latter was supposed to bring together top military representatives and attain a formal status that was equal to, or higher than, the status of the General Staff of the host country (Russia). In the event, only some CIS countries took part in the activities of the Headquarters, with Ukraine as the most notable absentee. When Kazakhstan called for the abolition of the Headquarters in 2004, Russia reluctantly supported the proposal.[11]

Some elements of security-related multilateralism at the CIS level have survived, however: for example, functional bodies under the auspices of the CMD such as the Military–Technical Committee, the Military–Scientific Council, and the Coordination Committee on air defence issues and others. In practice, the influence of the Russian Ministry of Defence is predominant in all these bodies and most of the staff of the Secretariat, especially at top levels, are Russian military personnel. The same is true of the CMD, where Russian chairmanship was accepted as the only realistic solution.

United air defence

The most important remaining functional element of CIS military–political activity is the United Air Defence System (UnADS), with 10 of the 12 CIS

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[9] On the structure of the CIS see URL <http://www.cis.minsk.by/>.

[10] E.g. the CMD meeting in Nov. 2006 considered 15 questions touching on a common (joint) communications system for the armed forces, peacekeeping, united air defence, social protection of the military, topography and hydro-meteorology services, etc. See Russian Ministry of Defence, 'Soobscheniye ob itogakh zasedaniya Soveta ministrov oborony gosudarstv-uchastnikov Sodruzhestva Nezavisimykh Gosudarstv v gorode Breste 23 noyabrya 2006 goda' [Notification of results of the meeting of the Council of Ministers of Defence of states participants of the CIS in Brest on 23 November 2006], 29 Dec. 2006, URL <http://www.mil.ru/info/1069/details/index.shtml?id=19944>.

[11] The Headquarters in fact ceased to exist at the end of 2005; many of its functions had been transferred in practice to the CSTO and others were absorbed by the CMD Secretariat.

members.[12] For 2006, for example, 292.6 million roubles (about $10.8 million) were allocated by the CIS Council of the Heads of Governments for these purposes.[13] Large-scale UnADS exercises have been organized every two years since 2001. The most recent exercise, held in 2005, was carried out for the first time under a unified command. As an example of a lower-scale exercise, a training event in October 2006 involved the command systems of eight countries and over 100 aircraft and helicopters.[14]

The effectiveness of the CIS UnADS is, however, tending to decline. From the late 1990s Georgia and Turkmenistan have ceased to participate in practice; some others, such as Ukraine and Uzbekistan, prefer to interact directly with Russia's Main Air Force Headquarters. Kazakhstan competes with Russia by offering Ukraine and other CIS member states its own training fields for launching air defence missiles and holding exercises also in non-CIS contexts. Ukraine's participation in the UnADS is also being downscaled as it could represent a complication in the context of Kyiv's growing, if still cautious, cooperation with NATO. So long as Russian radars remain on Ukrainian soil, Ukraine is demanding more money from Russia for services rendered.[15]

Russia continues to try to maintain the viability of the UnADS. In June 2005 the CMD debated the next five years of its development and agreed to set up three regional sub-groups with headquarters at Astana (Kazakhstan), Minsk (Belarus) and Rostov-on-Don (Russia). However, the scheme continues to suffer from competing forums for cooperation. The CSTO offers a prima facie more viable context for air defence cooperation given its smaller membership; and there are significant bilateral links between member countries, as in the case of Russia's supply of S-300PM air defence systems to Belarus in the context of plans for the two countries to create a joint air defence.[16]

[12] Formally, only 2 CIS states—Azerbaijan and Moldova—do not participate in the UnADS. 'Sostoyanie i perspektivy razvitiya ob'edinennoi sistemy PVO gosudarstv-uchastnikov SNG' [Current state and perspectives of development of the joint air defence system of CIS member states], URL <http://old.mil.ru/articles/article12935.shtml>.

[13] 'Resheniye o vydelenii assignovanii na sozdaniye i razvitiye obyedinyonnoi sistemy protivovozdushnoi oborony gosudarstvuchastnikov sodruzhestva nezavisimyh gosudarstv v 2006 godu' [Decision to allocate funds for the creation and development of the United Air Defence System of members of the Commonwealth of Independent States], 25 Nov. 2005, URL <http://www.pravoby.info/megdoc/part0/megd0097.htm>.

[14] 'Zavershilas komandno-shtabnaya trenirovka organov upravlenia i dezhurnikh sil ob'edinennoy sistemy PVO gosudarstv SNG, v kotoroy bili zadeistvovany bolee 100 samoletov i vertoletov' [Command and staff training of control bodies and duty forces of United Air Defence System of CIS countries, in which over 100 aircraft and helicopters were used, completed], *Rossiyskaya Gazeta*, 19 Oct. 2006, URL <http://www.rg.ru/2006/10/19/ucheniy-anons.html>.

[15] ITAR-TASS (Kyiv), 'Ukraine: defense minister says Russia not paying enough for radar sites in Crimea', World News Connection, International Security and Counter Terrorism Reference Center, US Department of Commerce, 23 Dec. 2005.

[16] 'ODKB sostoyalas kak mezhdunarodnaya organizatsia, zayavil Lukashenko' [CSTO succeeded as an international organization, says Lukashenko], RIA Novosti, 23 June 2006, URL <http://rian.ru/politics/cis/20060623/49956051.html>.

Peace-support missions[17]

In the 1990s, the prospect of CIS peacekeeping activities was discussed widely in political and analytical circles. Today, the only extant peace-support mission is the CIS Peacekeeping Forces in Georgia.[18] The mandate of this mission to the secessionist republic of Abkhazia, composed solely of Russian military personnel, is endorsed by the United Nations. For the Government of Georgia, the CIS label on these forces is only a fig leaf for Russian involvement; for Russia, it is a legitimate point of reference in any discussion of the region's future. When Georgia calls for the withdrawal of Russian forces, Russia replies that the CIS presence could only be ended by a CIS decision (which requires unanimity, giving Russia a veto). CIS involvement in this instance has thus become an important political shibboleth for both Georgia and Russia and has the potential to further aggravate their relations.

Overall, the direct relevance of the CIS to maintaining security in its region has little obvious logic today. Future political or peacekeeping ventures in the name of the CIS are not inconceivable, but they would depend first and foremost—in the Georgian and other cases—on a transformation of political relations with Moscow, as well as on the CIS offering comparative practical advantages that are hard to identify at present.

The anti-terrorism agenda

The CIS started to develop a role in anti-terrorism, both on a political level and in terms of coordinating efforts, even before 11 September 2001. In June 1999 the members signed the Treaty on Cooperation among the States Members of the Commonwealth of Independent States in Combating Terrorism;[19] in 2000 they adopted the first CIS Programme for Combating International Terrorism, and further documents were approved at later summits (in 2001, 2003 and 2004).[20] The CIS members coordinate their efforts regarding accession to and implementation of basic UN anti-terrorist instruments and incorporate their provisions in national legislation.

In 2000 the CIS Anti-Terrorist Centre was created, with a special branch in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, that is designed to focus on anti-terrorism activities in Central Asia. It conducts anti-terrorism exercises, analyses and monitors terrorist threats, and trains anti-terrorism unit instructors. The August 2005 CIS summit meeting adopted a Concept and a new Programme of Cooperation for Combating Terrorism and other Extremist Activities.[21] In particular, an

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[17] The Russian word 'mirotvorchestvo' does not differentiate between peacekeeping, peace-support and peace-enforcement operations (unless specific modifiers are added).

[18] Two other missions are operated by CIS members on a bilateral basis; see appendix 3A in this volume.

[19] For the treaty see URL <http://untreaty.un.org/English/Terrorism/csi_e.pdf.>.

[20] All the essential documents and agreements (from 2000) on CIS counterterrorism activities are available at URL <http://www.cis.minsk.by/main.aspx?uid=7216>.

[21] On the Concept see URL <http://cis.minsk.by/main.aspx?uid=4294> and on the Programme see URL <http://cis.minsk.by/main.aspx?uid=4006>.

agreement is foreseen on information exchange in the area of fighting terrorism and a treaty on combating terrorist and other extremist activities. The CIS Interparliamentary Assembly is working on a model penal code for these issues.[22]

Overall assessment

The CIS has a remarkable output in terms of documents but a much less impressive practical impact. The organization's overall political weakness may also doom its security dimension to a decline in the medium term. Applying the five evaluative criteria set out in section I, one may arrive at the following judgements.

First, Russia's hegemony is a basic fact in the CIS, also because of the lack of any significant counterbalance. However, it is noteworthy that Russia's hegemony in most cases cannot be translated into coercion with respect to its partners. They can escape by the common practice of non-participation in CIS decisions. This raises the more general question of whether Russia's policy fits the 21st century understanding of productive, 'everybody wins' security cooperation or whether it leaves open only the alternatives of dominance and inefficiency. Second, the CIS's weakness makes it hard to ascribe to it a zero-sum relationship with the outside world, but it does not achieve productive interactions either, whether as an institution or for its member states. Third, as regards adaptability, it is remarkable that the CIS has survived so long in spite of the serious political controversies among its members. However, its practical response to new challenges must be considered disappointing. Whether or not to call it artificial—the fourth criterion—is less simple. The objective grounds for CIS-wide security cooperation do exist, but the organization is unable to mobilize this potential. As a result it shows exactly the features attributed to 'hollow' groupings by the generic analysis referred to above: uneven levels of enthusiasm, rapid tailing-off in activities, failure to engage with outside actors, and so on. Lastly, the efficiency of CIS management is commensurate with its declining political significance.

IV. The Collective Security Treaty Organization

The CSTO has a very similar security agenda to that of the CIS but currently looks more sustainable and efficient, in effect becoming both the successor to and a 'hard core' within the latter, older group. The Collective Security Treaty was signed by six states on 15 May 1992, with a clause on mutual assistance in case of external aggression as its central element. Initially, it lacked practical substance and some parties dropped out when a protocol on continuation of the treaty was adopted in 1999. The decision for a 'new start' was taken at

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[22] Brief information (in Russian) on different versions of the model penal code on fighting terrorism is available on the CIS Interparliamentary Assembly website at URL <http://www.iacis.ru/html/?id=66&nid=8>.

the 10th anniversary of the treaty, in May 2002, by its six remaining participants (Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Tajikistan), which became the founders of a new structure, the Collective Security Treaty Organization.[23] The statute of the CSTO entered into force in September 2003.

To a certain extent, the project of the CSTO seems to have been inspired by the NATO experience, as reflected even in their similar names but more importantly in aspects of their development and structure (a mutual assistance treaty, followed by an open-ended process of building 'hardware' infrastructures around it). Like NATO, the CSTO is governed by a system of political and military institutions. The political branch includes the Council of Ministers of Defence (CMD), as in the CIS; the Council of Ministers for Foreign Affairs; and the Committee of Secretaries of Security Councils. The top military body is the Joint Headquarters, headed on a rotation basis by the Chiefs of General Staff or analogous national bodies. The entire structure is headed by the Collective Security Council (CSC), at the level of heads of state of member countries. The practical management of the organization is carried out by the CSTO Secretary-General.[24] While such mirror-imaging says little about the CSTO's real significance compared with that of NATO, it does seem that the main lines of military cooperation between Russia and its post-Soviet partners are being reoriented from the CIS framework towards the CSTO.

Areas of cooperation

The decision to create Collective Rapid Deployment Forces (CRDF) was taken by the parties to the Collective Security Treaty as early as in May 2001 because of the menacing situation in Central Asia, linked with developments in neighbouring Afghanistan. By 1999–2000 anti-government fighters had penetrated into Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan and challenged the regimes of those countries. Standing forces were mooted in that context to allow effective action against eventual external or domestic threats to security. At present, the CSTO is reported to be planning for the deployment of two groups of forces in case of war—in the East European Strategic Directorate (comprising national units of Belarus and Russia) and in the Caucasus (Armenia and Russia).[25] No information is available on whether this is supported by operational planning, training, and so forth. In June 2005 the decision was taken to develop the CRDF further, notably by establishing a Central Asian force group. This would strengthen CSTO military potential in the region, raising total CRDF strength in Central Asia from the current level of 4000 personnel to about

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[23] See note 8.

[24] This position has been held by Nikolai Bordiuzha, former Secretary of the Security Council of the Russian Federation, since Apr. 2003.

[25] See e.g. 'Nikolai Bordiuzha: ODKB perehodit v kachestvenno novuyu fazu svoego razvitia' [Nikolai Bordiuzha: CSTO goes to a qualitative new phase of its development], ANN, 18 Sep. 2006, URL <http://www.annews.ru/news/detail.php?ID=26235.html>.

11 000.[26] The 4000 CRDF personnel serve in 10 battalions, with Russia and Tajikistan providing three battalions and Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan two battalions each. The air force component of the CRDF is deployed at the Russian base in Kant (Kyrgyzstan), which was designated as a CSTO installation in 2003.[27] The CSTO has developed further plans to strengthen military cooperation 'up to 2010 and beyond'.[28]

Politically, the real and perhaps increasing significance of these plans still lies in the context of regimes' concerns about possible colour revolutions in Central Asia. All the CSTO member states seem to agree that both tasks— outward-oriented defence and inward-oriented stability—will be best served by developing interoperability, increasing power-projection capabilities, and the like.

In June 2004 the CSC adopted a conceptual document on the peace-support activities of the CSTO. Preparation of a formal agreement on peace-support activities is reportedly nearly complete.[29]

Collective air defence activities seem to be gradually being transferred from the CIS to the CSTO framework, although the practical difference this makes is limited. The creation of a united air defence system is part of the CSTO 'coordination plans'. These also include the development of a joint system for identifying threats related to biological and chemical weapons. For this purpose, the CMD has established a Coordination Committee of commanders of chemical, biological and radiation protection forces and services. The CSTO also holds military exercises on a regular basis.

Military–technical cooperation is perhaps the most efficient tool for consolidating the CSTO, since it is based on low-price deliveries of weaponry and military equipment by Russia to other member states. Initially, this principle was applied only to deliveries for units ascribed to collective rapid deployment forces, but since early 2005 it has been extended to all supplies destined for CSTO countries. Russia also uses this tool in its relations with its CIS partners in general, but the CSTO member states enjoy priority treatment. Russia has reportedly decided to be even more responsive to their demands in the case of emergencies and urgent requests.[30] In November 2004 the CSTO announced its intention to move military–technical cooperation to a qualitatively higher level, and in June 2005 the member states started to form an interstate commission for the purpose—in effect superseding an earlier CIS commission

[26] Panfilova, V., 'S uchetom strategicheskogo znachenia' [Taking into account strategic significance], *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, 25 Sep. 2006, URL <http://www.ng.ru/courier/2006-09-25/17_strategy.html>.

[27] 'Russian Air Force chief to inspect Kant airbase', 14 Feb. 2006, World News Connection, National Technical Information Service (NTIS), US Department of Commerce; and Lachowski, Z., *Foreign Military Bases in Eurasia*, SIPRI Policy Paper no. 18 (SIPRI: Stockholm, June 2007), URL <http://www.sipri.org>.

[28] Interfax-AVN (Moscow), 'CSTO military commanders convene in Moscow', 2 Nov. 2006, World News Connection, National Technical Information Service (NTIS), US Department of Commerce.

[29] See e.g. 'Post-Soviet collective security group to be transformed-sec-gen', RIA Novosti, 24 May, 2006, URL <http://en.rian.ru/russia/20060524/48573945.html>.

[30] Interfax (Brest), 'Russia to supply CSTO states with arms—defense minister', 22 Nov. 2006, World News Connection, National Technical Information Service (NTIS), US Department of Commerce.

that had been abolished for its ineffectiveness. The new commission is further tasked with coordination of national research and development as well as the organization and financing of the joint development of weapons and military equipment.

The CSTO seems to have done more than the CIS to combat illegal drug trafficking, thanks partly to its smaller group of members, half of which lie directly across major drug routes. The CSTO's efforts are focused on the areas adjacent to Afghanistan, above all in Tajikistan. A large-scale multilateral operation aimed at intersecting drug-traffic routes was carried out in November 2004. In 2004 a special structure—the Coordinating Council on Psychotropic and Narcotic Substances Circulation Control—was established within the CSTO to deal with the illegal circulation of drugs, and a working group on Afghanistan was set up in 2005. There are also plans to create some further anti-narcotic structures and a special counterterrorism organ.[31]

The CSTO has become more active in developing counterterrorism measures. In April 2004 it endorsed the establishment of an international anti-terrorist media forum as a non-governmental structure dealing with informational support for the struggle against international terrorism. In June 2005 it was decided to prepare a CSTO list of terrorist and extremist organizations.[32] In August 2006 the CSTO conducted its 'Rubezh-2006' exercise (an annual exercise that this time was held in Kazakhstan), with a scenario tailored to anti-terrorist requirements, and in September the CSTO task force took part in a joint command and staff exercise, 'Atom–Antiterror', in Armenia that was organized by the CIS Anti-Terrorist Centre.[33]

Political positioning

The CSTO is taking steps to promote its international visibility. In December 2004 it became an observer at the UN General Assembly. For some time, Russia has promoted the idea of 'direct working contacts' between the CSTO and NATO, suggesting that this would be a convenient format for discussing the problems of the post-Soviet geopolitical space.[34] Afghanistan has been suggested as another possible focus for joint CSTO–NATO efforts, and Russia

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[31] 'Nikolai Bordiuzha: ODKB perehodit v kachestvenno novuyu fazu svoego razvitia' (note 25). On plans for the creation of a counterterrorist structure see 'ODKB planiruet sozdat Anteterroristicheskiy komitet—Nikolay Bordiuzha' ['CSTO plans to create an Antiterrorist Committee—Nikolai Bordiuzha'], RIA Novosti, 13 Feb. 2007, URL <http://www.rian.ru/defense_safety/20070213/60659625.html>.

[32] 'V "terroristicheskie spiski" ODKB popala 21 organizatsia' [21 organizations are in CSTO 'terrorist lists'], REGNUM, 22 June 2006, URL <http:// www.regnum.ru/news/661766.html>.

[33] See e.g. Dmitriyev, O., '"Rubezh-2006": "Krasnyie", "siniye" i "korichnevyie"' ['Rubvesh-2006': the 'reds', the 'blues' and the 'brown'], RIA-Novosti, 23 Aug. 2006, URL <http://www.rian.ru/ analytics/2006082353040763.html>; and Interview with then head of the CIS Counter-Terrorist Centre Boris Mylnikov, '"Atom–Antiterror": garantiya bezopasnosti' ['Atom–Antiterror': a security guarantee], *Krasnaya Zvezda*, 26 Sep 2006, URL <http://www.redstar.ru/2006/09/26_09/1_01.html>.

[34] 'Russia: Lavrov terms direct working contacts between CSTO, NATO promising', Tashkent, 21 Oct. 2005, World News Connection, National Technical Information Service (NTIS), US Department of Commerce.

has offered to develop a joint programme for training the staff of anti-narcotics bodies. On NATO's side, however, these ideas have failed to provoke an enthusiastic reaction. The explanation seems to relate to overall trends in Russia's relations with the West, as well as Westerners' understanding of the political functions of the CSTO. The CSTO is viewed not only as a tool in the hands of Moscow, but also as a means of consolidating the autocratic regimes in member states.[35]

Overall assessment

Those post-Soviet states that are interested, for various reasons, in regional security cooperation seem to prioritize the CSTO for this purpose. The CSTO has a more compact composition (now 7 member states, as against 12 in the CIS) and is more homogeneous politically, due to the non-participation of such 'Western-oriented' countries as Georgia and Ukraine. Again, the Collective Security Treaty as the basic instrument of the CSTO is by definition concentrated on security issues, whereas the CIS is a general-purpose structure. As an institution that is only five years old, the CSTO shows fewer symptoms of erosion and fatigue than the CIS does at present. Finally and perhaps decisively, Russia as a key player in both frameworks seems to have made a choice in favour of the CSTO. It is worth the effort for Russia to try to turn the CSTO into a more efficient organization, given its more loyal and controllable nature. The CIS can be held in reserve, but with minimal cost and political effort.

According to the five evaluative criteria, the CSTO could be characterized as a structure with a huge predominance of one country but also with a clear predisposition among the smaller participants' regimes to accept a certain security paternalism on the part of Russia. In other words, hegemonic cooperation is welcomed rather than imposed in the CSTO. Defining the CSTO's relations with its external environment in zero- or non-zero-sum terms has little meaning, especially since the CSTO's efforts towards international positioning have basically failed. The CSTO's adaptability has not been tested, but it looks capable both of growth and of moving into new spheres of activity. An attempt to bring together the security agendas of such countries as Armenia, Belarus and Tajikistan may seem artificial, but Russia's centrality as security provider (whatever security might mean in this context) operates here as a consolidating factor. CSTO efficiency has not yet been tested in the field.

[35] Tellingly, Uzbekistan joined the CSTO in 2006—after President Islam Karimov's forceful suppression of Uzbek opposition (including the 2005 Andijon incident), the spectacular cooling of his relations with the West and his reorientation towards Russia.

V. GUAM

In 1997 four states that had strained or remote relations with Russia—Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan and Moldova—formed the GUAM group.[36] In the beginning it was a routine diplomatic tool for ad hoc rapprochement of its members' positions in a broader multilateral framework—for example at the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). The group's evolution towards more regular consultations was crowned in 2001 with its Charter, adopted in Yalta, Ukraine,[37] which upgraded the status of the group by defining goals and spheres of cooperation and setting up its institutional structure.

The colour revolutions that took place in Georgia (2003) and Ukraine (2004–2005) provided the impetus for relaunching GUAM as a framework linking the new political regimes. At the May 2006 Kyiv GUAM summit meeting, the participants formally transformed the existing framework into the Organization for Democracy and Economic Development–GUAM and adopted a new Charter.[38] In the new organization, the top level is formed by the Council, operating in various formats. Summit meetings are held every year, and the foreign ministers meet at least twice a year.[39] The Committee of National Coordinators is a working body that meets, on average, every four months. Seven working groups have been set up to promote cooperation in various areas: economy, trade, transport and information technology, among others. Other structures have been established, such as a Business Council and Parliamentary Assembly. The functions of a future secretariat are fulfilled by the GUAM information office in Kyiv.

Russia as a point of reference

What made the GUAM group special from the outset was that four of the CIS countries for the first time founded a security structure that would operate independently of Russia, potentially challenging the latter's overwhelming preponderance in the region. GUAM may not proclaim an anti-Russian orientation, but it looks essentially inspired by the idea of forging an alternative to Russia in the CIS area. Pointers in this direction include the fact that all the GUAM countries have foreign policies that diverge from

[36] An informal alignment of Azerbaijan, Georgia and Ukraine existed from late 1996, with Moldova moving closer to it. An unofficial 'group of four' emerged in May 1997 in the course of discussions on redefinition of the flank zone of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe. Lachowski, Z., 'Conventional arms control', *SIPRI Yearbook 1998: Armaments, Disarmament and International Security* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1998), pp. 501–17. GUAM's formal structure was established in Oct. 1997, when the presidents of the 4 states held a meeting during the summit of the Council of Europe: see URL <http://www.guam.org.ua>. In 1999 Uzbekistan joined the group, making it the GUUAM, but it left in 2005.

[37] For the 2001 GUUAM Charter see URL <http://www.guam.org.ua/224.472.1.0.1.0.phtml>.

[38] See the Kyiv Declaration on Establishment of the Organization for Democracy and Economic Development–GUAM and the Charter (Annex 6 to the Protocol of the CNC GUAM), 23 May 2006, at URL <http://www.mfa.gov.az/az/guam/2006_CNC_0426_protocol_attach08_Kyiv Declaration_last_Eng.pdf>.

[39] About 20 meetings (in various formats) took place in the 7-year period 2000–2006.

Russia's, and Russia views them with growing suspicion, the more so as Moscow's relations with the West become increasingly strained. The positions coordinated among GUAM members openly contradict Russia's approaches, notably on the 'frozen conflicts' in the former Soviet area where there is scope for a real diplomatic confrontation between GUAM and Russia. In addition, the cycles and trends of domestic political developments in Russia and in most of the GUAM countries do not coincide. Uzbekistan joined GUAM and withdrew from the Collective Security Treaty as its alienation from Russia deepened in the 1990s; it returned to the CSTO when it moved back politically towards Russia in 2005.

GUAM's attempt to escape Russia's political zone of gravity has been underlined by symbolic actions linked with West-led events: for instance, the April 1999 GUAM summit was held in Washington, DC, at the same time as the NATO summit there. Indeed, GUAM has been supported by the USA and the EU, a fact that can readily be interpreted by Russia as part of their attempts to penetrate into the CIS area and to challenge Russia's influence there. For Russia, all these factors confirm the 'original sin' of GUAM, its anti-Russian political orientation and the corresponding motives of its external supporters (or, as Moscow may see them, its instigators). On the converse logic, this is the precise advantage of GUAM for its participants, which can thereby operate more independently in the international arena.

Policies. The security-related agenda of GUAM has two major focuses: (*a*) conflict settlement and stability promotion, and (*b*) counterterrorism and anti-crime activities. To address the problems in these areas, GUAM member states have tried a number of options: making common assessments (as a rule, in the form of joint statements), coordinating approaches within broader multilateral structures, and developing—tentatively—common tools. The attention paid by GUAM to conflict settlement is natural since all its member states are either actual or potential parties to separatist conflicts in the former Soviet area. Georgia faces breakaway provinces in Abkhazia and South Ossetia, Azerbaijan has its frozen conflict of Nagorno-Karabakh, Moldova cannot exercise sovereignty over its Trans-Dniester region, and Ukraine faces a latent separatist tendency in the Crimea. Not surprisingly, appeals for the political settlement of unresolved conflicts have been the most regular component of joint statements adopted by GUAM from its early days; and the idea of establishing GUAM peacekeeping forces has been under discussion since 1999.

In 2005 it was decided to concentrate GUAM's conflict-settlement efforts on the Trans-Dniester region. While this was clearly in Moldova's interests, the leading role in revitalizing the issue was played by Ukraine. The new Ukrainian leadership, born of the Orange Revolution of 2004–2005, saw here an attractive opportunity to raise the country's international profile and to consolidate its position as a leader of GUAM. The resulting 2005 Yushchenko Plan for resolving the Trans-Dniester problem was not formally launched under the auspices of GUAM, but was clearly associated with the group of

like-minded GUAM states.[40] Similarly, it was in the spirit of GUAM (and with the noteworthy political support of the EU and the USA) that Moldova and Ukraine tightened their customs controls around the Trans-Dniester region in March 2006. There were some suggestions of breaking Russia's monopoly on peacekeeping in the region by deploying Ukrainian peacekeepers there and involving the OSCE in monitoring the border regime. Discussions on the establishment of a peacekeeping battalion and special GUAM police forces began in the spring of 2006; the idea was approved by the GUAM defence ministers in August 2006, and the political decision was taken at a meeting of the ministers of foreign affairs in September 2006.[41]

In a broader sense, GUAM seeks to change the format of conflict settlement hitherto prevailing in the former Soviet area, and it implicitly or openly blames Russia for the lack of progress. According to GUAM's logic, such efforts should aim at re-establishing the territorial integrity of concerned countries rather than maintaining the status quo of fragmentation. GUAM members also want the process to include a more international element that would include the EU and the USA. The political push for GUAM peacekeeping in conflict zones has yet, however, to bear practical fruit, so the GUAM countries' most visible (and politically relevant) achievement is the common diplomatic position they have been able to maintain, notably at the OSCE[42] and the UN.[43]

Counterterrorism policies at the level of GUAM are rather limited—mainly because of the hitherto relatively low level of terrorist activity in the GUAM states. The general framework is the Agreement on Cooperation among the Governments of GUUAM Participating States in the Field of Combat against Terrorism, Organized Crime and Other Dangerous Types of Crimes, signed in 2002.[44] In September 2006 the GUAM member states organized the first special meeting of counterterrorism experts in Baku; it was announced that such consultations and other forms of practical counterterrorism cooperation would be carried out regularly. Promoting interstate coordination and informa-

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[40] The plan was put forward in May 2005 by Ukrainian President Viktor Yushchenko, but it was not accepted by Russia or Trans-Dniester. Russia was reported to have had its own plan for resolution of the Moldova problem. 'The plan of victory over Moldova', *Kommersant Daily*, 8 June 2005.

[41] ITAR-TASS (Kyiv), 'Ukraine suggests setting up GUAM peacekeeping unit', 30 May 2006, World News Connection, National Technical Information Service (NTIS), US Department of Commerce.

[42] E.g. the GUAM states presented a united front at the OSCE Ministerial Council meeting of Dec. 2005 in Ljubljana, Slovenia, in discussions on the withdrawal of Russian forces from Georgia and Moldova in accordance with the Istanbul summit decisions of 1999 (see chapter 14 in this volume). Moldova spoke as the chair of GUAM as well as a directly involved country.

[43] In 2006 the GUAM countries managed to get the issue of frozen conflicts in the former Soviet area on the agenda of the 61st session of the UN General Assembly—in spite of Russia's opposition. This was considered as a diplomatic defeat for Russia as well as a manifestation of GUAM's growing political solidity. During the session, the foreign ministers of the 4 countries held a meeting to discuss frozen conflicts (significantly, in the presence of a US State Department official and without any Russian representative).

[44] The agreement is available at URL <http://www.mfa.gov.ge/index.php?lang_id=ENG&sec_id=130&info_id=1927>. The background to the acronym GUUAM is given in note 36.

tion exchange has been defined as a goal.[45] To ensure better information exchange, the GUAM member states have decided to develop an International Information and Analytical System that will be operated by the GUAM Virtual Center for fighting terrorism, organized crime and narcotics trafficking. The launch of a national branch in Kyiv in May 2006 by the Security Service of Ukraine was promoted by the GUAM–US Framework Program of Trade and Transport Facilitation, Ensuring Border and Customs Control, Combating Terrorism, Organized Crime and Drug Trafficking, in effect from 6 December 2002.[46]

Overall assessment

The record of GUAM is controversial above all because of its clear political and—in practice—oppositional rationale, which may be a strong driving force for the development of the group but at the same time raises the most serious obstacles to success. For example, Uzbekistan's hasty moves into and out of GUAM[47] demonstrate not only Uzbekistan's own volatility, but also the reasons for doubt about the solidity and permanence of GUAM's political base. Even GUAM's four core members by no means constitute a homogeneous political, economic or strategic space: the members' territorial location, geopolitical challenges, opportunities and priorities all differ. Domestic trends are also dissimilar, and prospects for practical integration are bleak.

Since the commonality of the participants is so vague, GUAM may easily be superseded (and overshadowed) by broader political alignments. A case in point is the Community of Democratic Choice, which was set up in December 2005, when Kyiv became a meeting place for leaders and top officials from Estonia, Georgia, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Moldova, Slovenia, Romania, and Ukraine (member states) and Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, the EU, the OSCE and the USA (observers).[48] This new group could compete with GUAM if it manages to pursue its ambitious self-assigned task of promoting the interaction of democratic regimes within the Baltic–Black–Caspian seas area, with a hidden subtext of counterbalancing

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[45] Javadova, E., 'First meeting of experts of Special Service and law-enforcement bodies of GUAM countries for fight with terrorism held in Baku', Trend, 18 Sep. 2006, URL <http://www.trend.az/index.php?mod=shownews&news=27821&lang=en>.

[46] Attempts to tighten border security among post-Soviet states face difficulties arising from the former internal character of these borders. They are often still neither clearly marked nor defended. The security stakes are, however, high, as shown by the fact that significant interceptions of smuggled nuclear material were made on the Georgian border in 2003 and again in 2006. On the GUAM Virtual Center and the GUAM–US Framework Program see URL <http://www.guam.org.ua/221.492.1.1.1.0.phtml>.

[47] See note 36.

[48] This constellation could be described as a 'GUAM plus' formula because it is bigger than the core group and includes many—but not all—of the Baltic, Central European and Balkan states. On the Community see Peuch, J.-C., 'Ukraine: regional leaders set up Community of Democratic Choice', Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, 2 Dec. 2005, URL <http://www.rferl.org/featuresarticle/2005/12/045ad9d6-04ea-41ac-9c8e-6501191f1cd8.html>.

Russia.[49] Finding common mission statements of a very general character seems to be considerably easier, however, than coordinating concrete actions.

A persistent obstacle to turning words into deeds is the fact that national concerns and interests tend to prevail over the common cause, even when facing such a clear common challenge as Russia. Noteworthy in this regard is the low-profile way in which GUAM has reacted to specific cases of Russia's assertiveness towards some of its members—recently including the stand-off with Ukraine over gas supplies and restrictions on imports from Georgia and Moldova. All four GUAM states have different dynamics in their own relations with Russia, and this seems to outweigh the incentives for a common approach. As a result, it is possible to make only cautious predictions about GUAM's future. The group's efforts at international positioning will most probably continue along current lines, focusing on likeminded neighbouring states,[50] the USA[51] and the Euro-Atlantic institutions. For GUAM, there would be some logic in counterbalancing this orientation by opening channels to Russia, but it is unclear what could be Moscow's motive to reciprocate. The chances of operationalizing GUAM's role in conflict settlement within the former Soviet area are not promising, although such a development cannot be excluded. Russia's opposition and the resistance of separatist regimes are the most serious obstacles. Lastly, it seems feasible for GUAM to get involved in debates and policymaking on energy security (prices, pipelines, stabilization measures, investments and so on) only as a secondary player.

On the basis of the five evaluative criteria, the following final assessment of GUAM may be offered. The group is by definition non-hegemonic, since it emerged as an antithesis to the Russia-dominated CIS. Its internal configuration is more balanced and its modus operandi is non-coercive. Second, in GUAM's relations with external partners, Russia would seem to be the object of a zero-sum policy. Third, the group's agenda is relatively vague, but by the same token not rigid: there is scope for adaptation and changes, albeit probably at the price of distinctiveness. Fourth, the group lacks strong unifying factors, apart from those related to Russia, which makes it relatively superficial. Finally, applying any criteria of efficiency seems inappropriate given GUAM's lack of tangible results.

VI. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization

The SCO was established by a declaration issued in Shanghai on 15 June 2001 by six states: China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbeki-

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[49] According to a Georgian participant in the Dec. 2005 meeting of the Community of Democratic Choice, 1 of its main objectives was to 'build an axis of democratic nations that do not want to remain within Russia's zone of influence'. Torbakov, I., 'Kremlin uses energy to teach ex-Soviet neighbors a lesson in geopolitical loyalty', *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, 2 Dec. 2005.

[50] E.g. the presidents of Bulgaria, Lithuania, Poland and Romania were either guests or observers at the GUAM summits of 2005 and 2006.

[51] The USA is the only external partner with which GUAM interacts in a special programme.

stan.[52] India, Iran, Mongolia and Pakistan have since become observer states with a right to attend high-level SCO meetings. Despite its relative youth, the group has maintained a fast tempo of action and development. On the world scene it has attracted both criticism and suspicion—notably from US quarters—and interest in the affiliation of additional countries such as Afghanistan. At the same time it is one of the least transparent and probably least well understood of the regional organizations with functions in the field of security. This section considers its distinctive characteristics, origins, structure, agenda and activities before assessing its performance from the point of view of both effectiveness and legitimacy.[53]

Characteristics and origins

The SCO distinguishes itself most clearly from other intergovernmental groups in the former Soviet area by the fact that it includes a large external power, China, and because potential new members also lie outside the former Soviet area. It covers one of the largest geographical areas of any regional organization, from the Polish border to Vladivostok and from the White Sea to the South China Sea and the border of Myanmar. Its six member and four observer states collectively possess 17.5 per cent of the world's proven oil reserves, 47–50 per cent of known natural gas reserves and some 45 per cent of the world's population.[54]

The group's origins go back to the long period of tension between China and the Soviet Union over their shared border, which became a multilateral issue with the independence of the Soviet Central Asian republics in 1992. In 1996 China, Russia and the three Central Asian states bordering on China—Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan—signed the Shanghai Agreement on Confidence Building in the Military Field in the Border Area, followed in 1997 by the Agreement on Mutual Reductions of Armed Forces in Border Areas.[55] These agreements set out substantial, detailed measures of military restraint and transparency along China's borders with the other four countries. This shared security regime formed the first multilateral bond between what came to be called the Shanghai Five, but the countries' relations were further stabilized by a series of bilateral agreements on frontier delineation, trade and

[52] Declaration on the Establishment of Shanghai Cooperation Organization, 15 June 2001, URL <http://www.sectsco.org>, Archive 2001.

[53] For a fuller study of the SCO, including perspectives from key participating countries see Bailes, A. J. K. et al., *The Shanghai Cooperation Organization*, SIPRI Policy Paper no. 17 (SIPRI: Stockholm, May 2007), URL <http://www.sipri.org>.

[54] For figures on oil and natural gas see US Department of Energy, Energy Information Administration, World Proved Crude Oil Reserves, 1 Jan. 1980–1 Jan. 2006 Estimates, URL <http://www.eia. doc.gov/pub/international/iealf/cruideoilreserves.xls>, and World Crude Oil and Natural Gas Reserves, 1 Jan. 2005, URL <http://www.eia.dc.gov/pub/international/iea2004/tble81.xls>; and for population data see US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), *The CIA World Factbook 2007*, URL <https://www.cia.gov/ cia/publications/factbook/rankorder/2119rank.html>.

[55] On the agreements see Trofimov, D., 'Arms control in Central Asia', Bailes, A. J. K. et al., *Armament and Disarmament in the Caucasus and Central Asia*, SIPRI Policy Paper no. 3 (SIPRI: Stockholm, July 2003), URL <http://www.sipri.org>, pp. 47–55.

cooperation. In June 2001 the same five countries plus Uzbekistan (which does not have a border with China) further institutionalized their relations by setting up the SCO, with the declared objectives of 'strengthening mutual trust and good neighbourly friendship among the member states; in political, economic and trade, scientific and technological, cultural, educational, energy, communications, environment and other fields; devoting themselves jointly to preserving and safeguarding regional peace, security and stability; and establishing a democratic, fair and rational new international political and economic order'.[56] The SCO's founding documents signalled the special interest of the member states in fighting what they defined as 'terrorism, separatism and extremism'.[57]

Structure

The SCO was designed essentially as an intergovernmental network driven by annual summits and by regular meetings of the heads of governments, foreign ministers and other high officials. Most observer states (except India) send persons of equivalent rank to high-level meetings. The most frequent working-level meetings are in security-relevant areas, today including, for example, information security experts, secretaries of national security councils and heads of supreme courts.[58] There are also some signs of a wish to bring together other sectoral representatives, such as speakers of parliaments (who met in May 2006 for the first time). Central institutions are sparse and small, consisting of a Secretariat set up in Beijing in 2004 with a permanent staff of 30 and an initial budget of $2.6 million, and the Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS). For 2005 the budget of the SCO was increased to $3.8 million.[59] Chinese Ambassador Zhang Deguang was the first head of the SCO Secretariat and was succeeded on 1 January 2007 by Bolat Nurgaliev of Kazakhstan, who will hold the post until 2009 with the new title of Secretary-General.[60] The remainder of the SCO budget is allocated to RATS, formally launched in 2004 and established in Tashkent after years of discussion among

[56] Declaration on the Establishment of Shanghai Cooperation Organization (note 52).

[57] These terms are found in the preamble of the Shanghai Convention on Combating Terrorism, Separatism and Extremism, adopted in June 2001 and available at URL <http://www.sectsco.org/html/00093.html>. Terrorism, separatism and extremism are called 'the three evils' by the Chinese leaders, as mentioned by Russian President Vladimir Putin. See e.g. the speech by President Putin 'SCO—a new model of successful international cooperation', 14 June 2006, available at URL <http://www.kremlin.ru/eng/text/speeches2006/0614/0014_type104017_107007.shtml>.

[58] 'The Heads of States support the initiative of Republic of Uzbekistan on holding regular meetings of National Security Council Secretaries of member states of the Organisation'. Tashkent Declaration of Heads of Member States of Shanghai Cooperation Organization, 17 June 2004, URL <http://www.sectsco.org/html/00119.html>. For the announcement see URL <http://www.sectsco.org/html/01108.html>.

[59] Lukin, A. V. and Mochulskiy, A. F., 'Shanhaiskaia organizatsiia sotrudnichestva: strukturnoye oformleniye i perspektivy razvitiia [Shanghai Cooperation Organization: structural formation and perspectives of development], *Analiticheskiye zapiski MGIMO*, vol. 2, no. 4 (Feb. 2005), p. 25.

[60] Joint Communiqué of the Meeting of the Council of Heads of Member States of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, Shanghai, 15 June 2006, URL <http://www.sectsco.org/news_detail.asp?id=938&Language ID=2>.

the countries involved.[61] RATS is responsible for information exchange and analytical work among the security services of SCO members. Its staff of 30 consists of seven each from China and Russia, six from Kazakhstan, five from Uzbekistan, three from Kyrgyzstan and two from Tajikistan.[62] One report has suggested that Russia has offered to contribute $0.5 billion to strengthen this aspect of the SCO organization, possibly with more elements of a military infrastructure.[63] The SCO's structure, staff and procedures are subject to a general, ongoing review.

More recently, the institutional structure has reflected a growing emphasis on economic cooperation, especially in the fields of energy and infrastructure. In October 2005 the members established the SCO Inter-Bank Association[64] and in 2006 the SCO Business Council, with an inaugural meeting drawing together 500 business people.[65]

Agenda

While the SCO's main *raison d'être* has been in the security field, it has not characterized itself (or acted in practice) as a military alliance comparable to NATO.[66] Russian President Vladimir Putin has 'publicly excluded any possibility of military operations conducted under the auspices of the SCO',[67] and it is significant that the first meeting of SCO defence ministers was not held until April 2006. The principal security agenda of the group is in fact twofold: the original Shanghai Five goal of mutual confidence building, stabilization and conflict avoidance (reflected in the continuing mutual inspections of border forces); and the countering of non-traditional threats such as transnational terrorism but also internal insurgency and dissent. Scope for confusion arises, however, from the fact that all members have a distinctly militarized approach to combating 'new threats' and that some of the SCO's most-reported activities have involved exercises using military forces in anti-terrorist or similar scenarios. These have included a China–Kyrgyzstan joint exercise in 2002, a multilateral exercise with all the members except Uzbeki-

[61] On RATS see Maksutov, R., 'The Shanghai Cooperation Organization: a Central Asian perspective', SIPRI Project Paper, URL <http://www.sipri.org/contents/worldsec/eurosec.html>, p. 11. See also China–Eurasia Forum (CEF), *CEF Monthly,* Jan. 2004, URL <http://www.silkroadstudies.org/new/docs/CEF/CEF_January.pdf>; and Huasheng, Z., 'The SCO in the last year', *CEF Quarterly*, July 2005, URL <http://www.chinaeurasia.org/Newsletter.html>, p. 10.

[62] 'The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation: internal contradictions', *IISS Strategic Comments,* vol. 12, no. 6 (July 2006), URL <http://www.iiss.org/stratcom>.

[63] Sysoev, G., 'ShOS v. NATO' [SCO v. NATO], *Kommersant*, 15 June 2006, URL <http://www.kommersant.com/doc.aspo?idr=520&id=682211>.

[64] The signing of the Agreement on SCO Interbank Cooperation was welcomed in the Joint Communiqué of the Moscow Meeting of the Council of Heads of Government of SCO Member States, Oct. 2005; see URL <http://www.sectsco.org/html/00648.html>.

[65] Wei, Y., 'Summit ascent: Shanghai Cooperation Organization charts its future', *Beijing Review*, vol. 49, no. 26 (29 June 2006), URL <http://www.bjreview.com.cn/06-26-e/w-1.htm>.

[66] Weitz, R., 'Shanghai summit fails to yield NATO-style defence agreement', *Jane's Intelligence Review*, vol. 18, no. 8 (Aug. 2006), pp. 40–43.

[67] Trenin, D., 'Russia and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization: a difficult match', *CEF Quarterly*, July 2005, p. 26.

stan in 2003, a large Chinese–Russian exercise in August 2005 that was observed by other SCO member states,[68] and a multilateral exercise hosted by Uzbekistan in 2006 that focused on the role of special forces and law enforcement agencies.[69] Russia will host another major anti-terrorist exercise close to its border with Kazakhstan in 2007. The SCO Convention on Combating Terrorism, Separatism and Extremism—adopted as one of the group's basic texts in 2001—provides, however, for multilateral cooperation in many different modes, starting with the pooling of relevant intelligence through RATS.[70] Given the less visible nature of such activities it is difficult for outsiders to judge how far they may have gone beyond a formalistic mode or whether bilateralism still prevails for really important purposes.

The other main area of SCO competence is economic, and here China has made the running, driven by an interest both in exploiting the regional market for exports and in securing new oil and gas supplies (plus reliable infrastructure to deliver them). In late 2003 Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao proposed to set up an SCO free trade area, and while this is currently a non-starter for the smaller members (which fear that Chinese goods will flood their markets) there is now an agreed objective of creating a zone favourable for the free movement of products, capital, technology and services by 2020.[71] An SCO forum for investment and development in the energy sector was set up in 2002, and in 2004 four working groups were established: on electronic trade, customs, inspection of goods and unification of standards, and investment cooperation. At the Shanghai summit of 2006, the SCO and the Eurasian Economic Community signed a memorandum of understanding on the improvement of energy and transport cooperation with the aim of facilitating regional trade.[72] On the face of it, the areas for cooperation that are most likely to satisfy all sides' economic interests are Chinese investment in the poorer parts of the region and the common financing of new energy and transport routes, but signs of tangible progress on either front are so far wanting. While some observers have expressed fear that the SCO will be used to create an exclusive energy cartel, observation of the tactics used by both Kazakhstan and Russia (by far the largest energy exporters) to play different clients off against one another makes this an improbable scenario for the near term, even if SCO structures could sustain such a large executive role. The reality remains that all the SCO members together are still not self-sufficient in the technology, investment resources or market potential needed to sustain the high growth rates that these essentially underdeveloped economies need.

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[68] For details see de Haas, M., 'Russian–Chinese military exercises and their wider perspective: power play in Central Asia', Clingendael Institute, Conflict Studies Research Centre, Russian Series 05/51 (Defence Academy of the United Kingdom: Swindon, Oct. 2005), URL <http://www.defac. ac.uk/colleges/csrc/documentlistings/russian/05(51)MDH3.pdf>.

[69] Weitz (note 66), p. 42.

[70] See note 57.

[71] Lukin and Mochulskiy (note 59), pp. 21–22.

[72] The Eurasian Economic Community was created in Oct. 2000 by Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Tajikistan and in 2006 joined by Uzbekistan. See URL <http://www.evrazes.com/>.

Overall assessment

Many assessments of the SCO go to the extremes either of painting the group as a malignant 'anti-NATO' one or of dismissing it as mere window dressing. Applying the evaluative criteria would lead to the more mundane conclusion that this group has its strengths and weaknesses, like any other. At the macro-level of security, the SCO (like the preceding Shanghai process) may have played its part in allowing the new China and Russia to coexist and manage their relations with the Central Asian states without open conflict. The SCO has not carried out active conflict management in Central Asia's own hot spots, nor promoted general defence reform, but it has apparently achieved some degree of coordination and interoperability among its members' forces and security services in regard to potential anti-terrorism deployments. It has developed joint policies in the related fields of homeland and functional security and has broached topics that are highly relevant to economic security, such as energy cooperation and infrastructure. The SCO's record is weakest, or downright negative, in respect to good governance and democracy building. All its members are authoritarian regimes, ranging from 'managed democracy' to dictatorship. The policies and tools developed in the name of SCO anti-terrorism policy could easily be used for suppression of all kinds (including the containment and persecution of elements claiming local autonomy). There is no chance in practice for the broader public of the member states to influence SCO proceedings or even, for the most part, to learn about them. As one writer concludes, 'the SCO is not a normative organization, and with an explicit focus on non-interference in domestic issues it is particularly appealing to the authoritarian regimes of the region'.[73]

Applying more detailed criteria of legitimacy and effectiveness, it is hard to say that membership of the SCO is coerced or that its style of operation is hegemonic. The power of China and Russia within the group constitutes a diarchy not dissimilar to patterns of cooperation in, for example, Europe and South America, although with the advantage steadily tipping towards China. Most of the current observer states have expressed interest in full membership and are held back only by the lack of consensus within the group on the merits of enlargement.[74] The Central Asian members are *demandeurs* in every dimension (except for Kazakhstan's oil and gas), but the SCO gives them symbolic recognition and equality and may actually help in their global policy of 'balancing'. The story of US bases in the area is instructive: the July 2005 Astana SCO summit demanded a timetable for the withdrawal of US forces and facilities set up in Central Asia for the first phase of the Afghanistan

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[73] White, A., 'Guiding the "near abroad"—Russia and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization', *CEF Quarterly,* July 2005, URL <http://www.chinaeurasia.org/files/CEF_Quarterly_August_2005.pdf>, p. 29.

[74] Despite US warnings and complaints before the 2006 Shanghai summit that the SCO might grant membership to Iran, the member states agreed there to leave the situation as it was *sine die*. The Central Asian states are against letting others in to share the possible economic benefits (and to complicate the agenda), while Russia will not admit China's favourite candidate, Mongolia, without progress on Iran.

conflict.[75] When Uzbekistan soon thereafter gave the USA notice of termination of its basing rights it looked like a story of cause and effect.[76] Yet Kyrgyzstan allowed the US base at Manas (not far from the Kyrgyz capital, Bishkek) to remain and eventually made clear that it was interested mainly in exacting a higher price.[77] It is arguable that Central Asian elites that want to develop their Western links in a balanced way are actually freer to do so as long as SCO membership demonstrates their 'loyalty' to partners closer by.[78] In all events, nothing further was said about the 'Astana principle' on foreign basing at the Shanghai SCO summit of 2006.

This last point is also relevant to a judgement on whether the SCO is zero-sum in its strategic relationship with the rest of the world. Chinese President Hu Jintao said that 'the SCO was designed to boost regional stability rather than oppose the US',[79] and given the reality of Russia's and China's fears both about each other and about risks of chaos in Central Asia and Afghanistan this reading should not be dismissed out of hand. What is clear is that it is the SCO's official and collective policy to oppose any 'monopoly and domination in international affairs'.[80] Its two largest members wish to maintain their own independence from the USA, to present themselves as alternative regional leaders and (to some extent) global powers, and to limit the manifestations or at least the consequences of a US strategic presence in their own backyard. At the same time, China and Russia have continued to seek accommodation with the USA in other contexts, such as solidarity against terrorism. The SCO has not in practice closed the way to extending the roles of the OSCE, NATO's Euro-Atlantic Partnership and the EU in Central Asia: all these are held back at present mainly by their own limitations and hesitations. The most clearly negative aspect of the SCO's relations with the world lies in the group's lack of cooperative relations with most other regional institutions (or with individual Western states).[81]

The SCO has shown flexibility by its rapid growth and creation of new networks and mechanisms. The issues still emerging on its agenda (such as energy and economic development in general) and the keenness of more states to join it suggest that its profile will continue to rise, while it is hard to see a conjuncture that would destroy it. If such a risk exists it lies in the general fragility of SCO members' efforts to contain changes and threats through repression and manipulation. The incident at Andijon, Uzbekistan, in May

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[75] See Declaration of Heads of Member States of Shanghai Cooperation Organization, Astana, 5 July 2005, URL <http://english.scosummit2006.org/en_bjzl/2006-04/21/content_145.htm>, section II.

[76] For details see Lachowski (note 27).

[77] The opening bid of Kyrgyzstan was to increase the rent from $2 million to as much as $207 million. Agreement was reached on $150 million 'in total assistance and compensation'. Sands, D. R., 'U.S., Kyrgyzstan reach deal on air base payment', *Washington Times*, 15 July 2006, URL <http://www.washingtontimes.com/world/20060714-100731-3908r.htm>.

[78] Maksutov (note 61), pp. 12–13.

[79] Dyer, G., 'Iran leader hits at intrusion in region', *Financial Times*, 16 June 2006, p. 4.

[80] Declaration of Heads of Member States of Shanghai Cooperation Organization (note 75).

[81] The SCO has concluded memoranda of understanding with the Association of South East Asian Nations and the CIS, and has received official observer status at the UN General Assembly.

2005 was just one reminder that such tactics increase the odds of a larger implosion in the long run, with broader regional repercussions.[82] For the SCO to play a more positive role vis-à-vis this most basic of Central Asian challenges it would need to mutate into an organization representing more than just its members' elites and helping to open the region for vital outside influences rather than blocking or profiteering from the latter. It would take an optimist to suggest today that the organization's flexibility extends that far.

The SCO fulfils its primary aim of conflict avoidance and peaceful dialogue among its members just by existing. On the same grounds, the input–output balance of the SCO as an institution can be seen as positive. What is holding it back, if anything, is its larger members' caution about depositing any substantial funds or other resources for the group's activities, plus the rudimentary nature of its central institutions.

VII. Conclusions

In many parts of the world, regional security cooperation among clusters of small and medium-size states has flourished. The regions around China and India have run into problems, conversely, because of one over-large state that has an antagonistic or hegemonic intent towards at least some of its neighbours. The success of several groupings that include the largest contemporary power of all, the USA, can be explained by special factors—the democratic and consensual nature of NATO, the North American Free Trade Agreement and the Organization of American States, and the existence of powerful balancers such as China in such Pacific-region frameworks as the Asia–Pacific Economic Cooperation group.

In this perspective, the three security-related groupings in the former Soviet area, and the SCO linking China with this region, form a unique set. They have survived with at least minimum levels of efficiency despite the highly asymmetric weight of Russia—although it is no coincidence that the SCO, where China balances Russia, is the most vigorous—and despite, or even because of, the non-democratic or imperfectly democratic nature of the regimes of its member states. These aberrations make it tempting for contemporary analysis to dismiss all four of the groups surveyed in this chapter as serving no real purpose, or only a negative one. It would also be easy to class all except GUAM as old-style ventures closest to cold war models such as the Warsaw Treaty Organization or the short-lived Sino-Soviet alignment after 1945.

It is easy to diagnose such views as superficial but harder to challenge them with confidence due to the lack of independent, especially Western, research on these four groups and to their own opaqueness. Nonetheless, the analysis in this chapter goes far enough to suggest that matters are more complicated. In

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[82] On this incident, in which Uzbek security forces fired on demonstrators in Andijon, see e.g. Tarzi, A., 'Afghanistan: inconsistencies in the state of the war on terrorism', Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, URL <http://www.rferl.org/featuresarticle/2005/07/ef308e31-84dd-478d-a2c8-fb6440433939.html>.

the first place, any simple diagnosis of Russian coercion is undermined by the fact that the CSTO has a consensual character, that Russia's own lapses into bilateralism or selfishness are a major limiting factor, that increasingly pro-Western states such as Georgia and Ukraine have stayed in the CIS, and that the anti-Russia GUAM grouping is the most lacking in concrete results of all. Second, while only GUAM is in any sense pro-Western, defining any of the other groups simply as 'anti-NATO' would be misleading because important parts of their motives and agendas are basically self-regarding: notably, stabilizing Sino-Russian relations, avoiding open war between Russia and its former Soviet neighbours, formally recognizing the latter as sovereign and giving a framework for Central Asian balancing acts. These are not all bad things, either, for international peace and security.

Where the CIS, the CSTO and the SCO clearly deviate from Western expectations is in placing stability above considerations of democracy, openness or human rights and even treating respect for human rights as a threat to security. On the other hand, this has not prevented them from having elements of a characteristically 21st century security agenda, notably in the fields of counterterrorism and the drugs trade, while the SCO takes a well-conceived— if self-interested and barely consensual—approach to economic development. None of the groups has an impressive ratio of output to input, but the balance might be corrected by reflecting on problems that they may be avoiding by their mere existence. In that light, it would be too hasty to set limits to their survival or even to pick winners among them. At present they mark a kind of organizational frontier (even if soft and fluctuating) between the sphere of full Western institutional control and a differently run East Eurasian space. It cannot be ruled out that their leaders' skills will be equal to maintain that state of affairs for some time to come: or even—although it would take an optimist to bet on it—that inner political transformations could convert at least some of the groupings into instruments for more benign and non-zero-sum ends. The remaining alternatives would seem to be either the gradual extension of West-based institutions' authority across Central Asia or a period of renewed lack of structure or actual disorder, perhaps with Russia–China accommodation surviving on a narrower bilateral basis.

Of course, no full judgement can be made on such groups except by considering their interaction with the wider world of security. Thus far, the CIS, the CSTO and the SCO have deviated from global norms by having no ties, or only a relation of rivalry and distrust, with other regional communities. At bottom this only symptomizes the lack of a clear, stable and positive security accommodation between China and Russia themselves and with the Euro-Atlantic community, or indeed between them and their non-Western neighbours in West, South and South-East Asia. If these four groups were really strong there could be concern that they might stand in the way of resolving this question, but precisely because of their state-driven and politically contingent natures they can hardly be counted as a major hindrance. Perhaps the best thing that can be said about all four organizations is that, just

as hypocrisy can be seen as the homage that vice pays to virtue (François de La Rochefoucauld), they have given some of the world community's less democratic states an opportunity to learn about the multinational and integrative methods that offer the best hope of mastering the world's security problems in future.