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NUCLEAR ATTITUDES IN CENTRAL EUROPE

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I. INTRODUCTION

For more than 60 years, the nuclear attitudes of the four states of the Visegrád Group (V4)—the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia—was mostly influenced by the international security environment and the undertakings of the military alliances to which they belonged. During the cold war this influence was rather material: the Central European states were under the same military alliance and, as members of the Warsaw Treaty Organization (WTO), Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland were all covered by the Soviet nuclear umbrella. This, on the one hand, made it unnecessary to think of the nuclear option and, on the other hand, ruled out the possibility of engaging in nuclear developments. The dependence of the satellite states on the Soviet Union regarding conventional and nuclear energy helped to keep this situation unchallenged.

With the end of the cold war, the Central European states' nuclear attitude was shaped by a new political motive: the desire to belong to the West. The changed international security environment erased nuclear weapons and nuclear threats from the public, as well as political, thinking of these nations. Further, North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) membership—the debate on which included nuclear elements, but which received considerable support in public opinion polls—brought the states (including by then a separate Czech Republic and Slovakia) under the nuclear umbrella of a considerably different military alliance, thus the non-necessity and constraint of nuclear weapons featured again.

Inactivity in the nuclear weapons field was matched with activity in nuclear non-proliferation and in the verification of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, where the foreign policy of satellite states could move relatively freely even under the Soviet system.

SUMMARY

The nuclear policy of the four states of the Visegrád Group, both during Soviet times and since the end of the cold war, has been primarily influenced by, and dependent on, the military alliances to which they belong. Although the framework of the Warsaw Treaty Organization was significantly different from the procedures of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), there has been a strong continuity in terms of the non-nuclear pro-activism of the Visegrád Group. Since the 1960s Central European states have been quick to join the relevant arms control agreements and export control regimes. Active participation in this field was encouraged by the Soviet Union and is in line with the priorities of the European Union and NATO, which guarantees that the non-nuclear stance of these states is likely to remain firm in the future. Despite a few cases in which Central European states hold slightly different positions, they mostly think alike and the key determinant of their rather conservative and cautious behaviour seems to be their NATO membership.

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Since these were fields of common interest between the nuclear weapon states (NWS), the Soviet Union supported an active role by its allies. As a result, all the Central European states have become increasingly involved in non-proliferation and verification. These activities reached their peak around and after the democratic transition of Central and Eastern European states in the early 1990s. This coincided with the increasing importance of non-proliferation in the Euro-Atlantic integrations, which the former members of the WTO desperately wanted to be part of. This desire to belong to the West could partly explain why pro-active Central European states have become so cautious about NATO-related nuclear issues and why they generally represent a rather conservative viewpoint.

II. NUCLEAR ATTITUDES DURING THE COLD WAR

During the cold war the WTO provided a security framework for the whole region. However, other than the Soviet Union and its military leadership, WTO members had very little say in the guidance of security-related matters. For example, soldiers from Central European states never had access to concrete operational plans, they had predetermined tasks to fulfil that did not always match the equipment and training of a given state's army.[1] 'Military economic decision-making, direction and co-ordination were all done by Moscow.'[2]

The strongest element of the Soviet security system was the WTO's nuclear component. What exactly this security framework and the nuclear umbrella meant, however, was not always clear. The Cuban missile crisis showed that WTO members had reason to question whether the Soviet Union would defend them or withdraw in the face of a nuclear threat.[3] It was not an alliance in the Western sense, since it was a regime imposed on these nations, and it behaved more like an empire, directing the foreign and security policies of members from the centre.

While the WTO seemed to establish security among its members by stifling internal conflicts, it created new threats in which the member states were 'innocent', non-active players. Membership in the WTO automatically implied being exposed to the other cold war antagonist, NATO, and having little say in WTO policies. Yet the biggest threat to members proved to be the alliance leader itself, the Soviet Union. Apart from the imposed domination, the Soviet Union was involved in all the international military conflicts affecting the region between 1953 and 1968 (e.g. the 1956 Hungarian Revolution and the 1968 Prague Spring), even though no nuclear weapons were, or threatened to be, used in these conflicts.[4]

The WTO and the question of nuclear weapons

Prior to 1989 there was no real debate on nuclear issues, which were, together with other foreign and security policy issues, directed by the Soviet Union. As Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) non-nuclear weapon states (NNWS) and WTO members, Central European states were excluded from the nuclear weapon option. However, the Soviet Union reserved the right to deploy its own nuclear weapons on their respective territories, in order to protect its strategic interests in case of a nuclear war in Europe.

The deployment of Soviet nuclear weapons in Central Europe happened under considerably different circumstances than in the case of NATO. While United States nuclear weapon deployments were codified in bilateral nuclear-sharing agreements with host states, the Soviet Union did not ask its allies' permission and tried to limit their knowledge of the exact parameters of the deployment as much as possible. In the Eastern Bloc, nuclear deployments were not debated until the end of the cold war. Open discussions in the public and in the media—mostly limited to factual information—only started after the withdrawal of nuclear weapons had been completed and the Soviet Union was disintegrated.

The first official recognitions of these deployments came in 1990. In a June 1990 human rights meeting of the Conference for Security and Cooperation

[1] Kőszegvári, T., 'A magyar harci feladat a VSZ-ben. Merre kalandoztunk volna?' [The Hungarian fighting task in the WTO. In which direction should we have gone?], *HVG*, 12 July 1997, pp.70–73.

[2] Szemerkényi, R., 'Civilianisation of Armaments Industries for Social Development: Economic, Political and Technical Dimensions. The Central European Case', Paper presented at the FRIENDS International Seminar on Nuclear Disarmament and Conventional Arms Control Including Light Weapons, 28–30 Oct. 1996, Islamabad, p. 2.

[3] The Cuban missile crisis in Oct. 1962 was a 13-day standoff between the United States and Soviet leaders over the Soviet Union's installation of nuclear-armed missiles in Cuba.

[4] Dunay, P., 'Whence the threat to peace in Europe?', ed. I. Gambles, *A Lasting Peace in Central Europe?*, Chaillot Paper no. 20 (WEU Institute for Security Studies: Paris, Oct. 1995), pp. 40–60.

in Europe (CSCE) held in Copenhagen, the Soviet Foreign Minister, Eduard Shevarnadze, declared that 60 tactical missile launchers, more than 250 nuclear artillery pieces and 1500 nuclear warheads would be withdrawn from Central Europe—adding up to a total reduction of 140 launchers and 3200 nuclear artillery pieces by the end of the year.[5] These numbers were repeated by the Soviet Foreign Ministry spokesperson, Gennady Gerasimov, later that month.[6] In October 1990, as a result of these reductions, the Soviet Army Chief of Staff, General Mikhail Moiseyev, made a statement during a visit to Washington that the Soviet Union had withdrawn all nuclear weapons deployed in Hungary and Czechoslovakia.[7] This statement was later confirmed by the Speaker of the Soviet Ministry of Defence, who admitted that the Soviet Union stored nuclear weapons—in what it saw as insignificant quantities—in Central Europe in the framework of the WTO.

With the dissolution of the Soviet Union, a total of 3000 Soviet nuclear weapons were withdrawn from Central Europe and East Germany: 2100 warheads for ground forces and 900 for air forces (including Frog/SS-21, Scud and SS-23 missile warheads, nuclear artillery and nuclear bombs). The Soviet Union started the deployment of these weapons in the late 1960s and the majority of their nuclear weapons were stationed in East Germany (16 sites). There were also nuclear weapons in Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland but, due to a lack of sources, there is limited information about their stationing.[8]

Within the V4, Czechoslovakia seems to have been the first state to host Soviet nuclear weapons. Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union concluded two treaties, in August 1961 and February 1962, which entitled the Soviet Union to deploy nuclear weapons to the state's territory in case of an emergency. After the Cuban missile crisis, these treaties were replaced by a much broader arrangement: the Treaty Between the Governments of the USSR and CSSR on Measures to Increase the Combat Readiness of Missile Forces, which was signed in December 1965 by the Soviet Defence Minister, Marshal Rodion Malinovsky, and his Czechoslovak counterpart, Army-General Bohumir Lomsky.[9] The treaty served as the legal framework for the Soviet Union to station nuclear-tipped missiles in the territory of Czechoslovakia and to construct three nuclear storage facilities for Soviet nuclear warheads.

The stationing of Soviet nuclear weapons allegedly started in 1968 as 'brotherly assistance to help keep the communist hardliners in power'.[10] However, the stationing was kept as secret as possible and only after the cold war was it confirmed by the last commander of the Soviet forces in Czechoslovakia, Eduard Vorobyov. In 2008 the last Czechoslovak communist Chief of General Staff and the first democratic Defence Minister, General Miroslav Vacek, also admitted that Czechoslovakia had hosted Soviet nuclear weapons during the cold war.[11] These nuclear weapons were supposedly removed from the country in May 1990, followed by the withdrawal of the last weapons from East Germany between June and July 1991—the latest ones that were deployed in the region.[12]

According to documents released by the Polish newspapers *Dziennik* and *Gazeta Wyborcza*, Soviet nuclear weapon deployments in Poland began in 1970. These sources suggested that three sites in north-western Poland hosted Soviet nuclear weapons, which were planned for use by the Polish Army in case of a conflict with NATO.[13] By the mid-1980s the deployed arsenal totalled 178 nuclear warheads: free-fall bombs and ballistic missiles tipped with tactical nuclear warheads, pointed at Western European targets. The weapons were kept in the custody of Soviet troops. The Polish newspapers also claimed that during the 1960s the Soviet Union was seriously considering the option of invading Western Europe, in which case Poland would have been a primary site of nuclear

[5] Goshko, J. M., 'Shevardnadze Announces Withdrawal of A-Arms; U.S. Officials Unsure Whether Number of 1,500 Includes Cuts Previously Pledged', *The Washington Post*, 6 June 1990.

[6] Handler, J., 'Russian Nuclear Warhead Dismantlement Rates and Storage Site Capacity: Implications for the Implementation of START II and De-alerting Initiatives', Princeton University Center for Energy and Environmental Studies (CEES), Report no. AC-99-01, Feb. 1999, p. 40.

[7] 'Moiszejev bejelentése Brüsszelben: Magyarországon nincsenek többé atomfegyverek' [Moiseyev's announcement in Brussels: There are no nuclear weapons in Hungary anymore], Magyar Nemzet, 27 Oct. 1990, p. 5.

[8] 'Nuclear Notebook—Where the Weapons Are', *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, vol. 47, no. 9 (Nov. 1991), p. 49.

[9] Luňák, P., 'New Evidence in Cold War Military History—Planning for Nuclear War: The Czechoslovak War Plan of 1964', *Cold War International History Project Bulletin*, Fall/Winter 2001, no. 12/13, p. 297.

[10] Richter, J and Kalinina, O., 'Soviet nuclear arsenal in Czechoslovakia', Radio Praha, 27 May 2008, <http://www.radio.cz/en/section/talking/soviet-nuclear-arsenal-in-czechoslovakia>.

[11] Richter and Kalinina (note 10).

[12] 'Nuclear Notebook—Where the Weapons Are' (note 8), p. 49.

[13] Piotrowski, P. and Pompowski, T., 'Polska miała arsenał broni nuklearnej' [Poland had a nuclear arsenal], *Dziennik*, 12 Oct. 2007, <http://wiadomosci.dziennik.pl/polityka/artykuly/198972,polska-miala-arsenal-broni-nuklearnej.html>.

confrontation. By 1990 nuclear weapons had been withdrawn from Poland.[14]

In terms of uncertainties, the Hungarian case was no different to the others. Hungary signed a military agreement with the Soviet Union on 27 May 1957, controlling the legal conditions of the Soviet troops stationed in Hungary. The Commander of the Hungarian Missile Unit, Rtd General János Sebők, claimed that: 'if this agreement included the provision of the operation conditions of the missile units, no separate permit was necessary to bring in nuclear warheads'.[15] According to the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, the first Soviet nuclear weapons arrived in Hungary around 1974. This corresponds with the claims of General Sebők, who argued that his unit participated in a parade on 4 April 1975 with nuclear warhead-capable missiles.[16] He also added that Hungary had always been an operational area for the Soviet Union and that where there were missiles and missile launchers, there were also nuclear warheads.[17] There have been several claims regarding the location of the storage site, but most sources agree that it must have been somewhere around Tótvázsony and Kabhegy in the Bakony Hills, north of Lake Balaton.

Among the Central European states, the Hungarian Government was the first to request that Soviet nuclear weapons be withdrawn from its territory. In an interview with the Hungarian newspaper *Népszabadság*, the former First Secretary of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party, Károly Grósz, claimed that he asked for the withdrawal of the nuclear weapons from Hungary when he met Mikhail Gorbachev in Moscow in early July 1988.[18] He claimed that Gorbachev agreed and 'much later I was informed that this had been performed'. General Sebők dates the withdrawal to 27 June 1990, when the Soviet missile units departed.[19] Another source maintains that it was on 19 June 1990, when the last Commander of the Southern Army Unit, Lieutenant-General Shilov, left Hungary together with rows of well-covered trucks.[20]

In addition to the development and deployment of nuclear weapons, the Soviet Union also enjoyed a privileged position in handling nuclear weapon-related foreign policy issues—from which satellite states were mostly excluded. The Cuban missile crisis, the 'hottest' moment of the cold war, was a good example of how a foreign policy issue with a nuclear dimension was handled by the Soviet Union.

The most striking feature of the Cuban missile crisis was that not only the public but also the political elite in Central and Eastern European states were ignorant of events. Thus the socialist states were unprepared. On command from the Warsaw Pact Joint Armed Forces Headquarters, the advanced, ready-for-combat state was only gradually introduced in the relevant military units from 22 October 1962. The imminent threat of nuclear war was only very slowly realized by the political leadership, and the lack of information was also reflected in the press.

For the shocked and panic-stricken Central and Eastern European leaderships—which were only fully informed of events at a dinner in Washington on 30 October 1962, given by Anastas Mikoyan, the first Soviet troubleshooter for the communist ambassadors—'the fear of becoming involved in a worldwide nuclear confrontation automatically and involuntarily did not subside completely. On the contrary, it became the prime concern of Eastern European communist leaders'.[21] Among the political elite, the question 'Would they [the Soviet Union] have defended us if we were in such a situation?' was placed high on the agenda.

> They began to ask the Soviet Union for more guarantees of security against nuclear attack and for a greater voice in the planning of the Warsaw Pact nuclear strategy. Following the crisis, the Soviet Union and its allies endeavoured to coordinate their policies more closely and to synchronise their propaganda.[22]

[14] 'Nuclear Notebook—Where the Weapons Are', (note 8), p. 49.

[15] 'Nagyvázsonynál bújtatták az atomot?' [They were hiding the atom at Nagyvázsony?], *Népszava*, 23 Apr. 1991.

[16] 'Atomrakéták Magyarországon' [Nuclear missiles in Hungary], *Köztársaság*, 22 Apr. 1991; 'Szupertitkok' [Supersecrets], *Reggeli Kurír*, 3 May 1991, p. 7; and 'Észak-olaszországi célpontokra irányítva az ötvenes évek óta lehettek Magyarországon nukleáris rakéták' [There could have been nuclear missiles targeted on Northern Italian cities in Hungary since the 1950s], *Magyar Nemzet*, 25 Apr. 1991. Rtd General Béla Király put the date much earlier and claimed to have received information from international sources that the Soviet Union had deployed medium-range nuclear missiles in Hungary already in the mid-1950s. He argued that this was one of the main reasons given by the Soviet military leadership in 1956 against the military withdrawal from Hungary.

[17] 'They were hiding the atom at Nagyvázsony?' (note 15).

[18] 'Volt szovjet atomfegyver Magyarországon' [There were Soviet nuclear weapons in Hungary], *Népszabadság*, 22 Apr. 1991.

[19] 'Supersecrets' (note 16).

[20] 'Nuclear missiles in Hungary' (note 16).

[21] Radványi, J., *Hungary and the Superpowers. The 1956 Revolution and Realpolitik* (Hoover Institution Press: Stanford, CA, 1972), p. 140.

[22] Radványi (note 21).

Nuclear energy

During the cold war, the Soviet Union not only monopolized nuclear weapon-related issues but also established a one-sided dependency within the nuclear energy industry with most of its satellite states. The Soviet Union actively participated in the construction of nuclear reactors and it also provided nuclear fuel. As a result, Central European states introduced designs based on Soviet reactor technology.

In 1956 the Soviet Union offered each member state of the WTO a nuclear reactor and a fastener. Hungary accepted only the reactor, which was built in 1957–58 at the Central Research Institute of Physics (KFKI).[23] The only Hungarian nuclear power plant, situated in the town of Paks (100 km south of Budapest), was also supplied by the Soviet Union. The Paks Nuclear Power Plant provides almost 40 per cent of Hungary's total domestic electric power production. It has four pressurized water reactors of the Soviet VVER-213/440 type, which were connected to the grid in 1982, 1984, 1986 and 1987, respectively. The original electric power of each unit was 440 megawatts, later upgraded to 500.

On 14 January 2014 an agreement was signed between Hungary and Russia, stating that the Russian company Rosatom will expand the Paks Nuclear Power Plant and build two new VVER-1200 reactors.[24] Construction will start in 2015 and the first new reactor is expected to be completed by 2023.[25] In addition to these two Soviet designs, Hungary also built a 100-kilowatt training reactor at the Budapest University of Technology and Economics in the mid-1970s.[26]

Czechoslovakia started building its first nuclear power plant in 1958, which was a gas-cooled heavy water reactor at Bohunice (now Slovakian territory). It was completed in 1972 and ran until 1977. In 1972 the construction of two VVER-230/440 reactors was started at the same site and they were connected to the grid in 1978 and 1980. In 1976 the site expanded further with two VVER-213/440 reactors, which were concluded by the mid-1980s. In 1978 the construction of a new nuclear power plant started at a second site, in Dukovany (now Czech territory). The four VVER-213/440 reactors were designed by the Soviet Union and started operating between 1985 and 1987. A third site, in Temelin (now Czech territory), was established in 1982 and the construction of the Temelin Nuclear Power Plant started in 1987. The Czechoslovakian Government originally planned to build four VVER-320/1000 units at Temelin, but building of the third and fourth reactors was suspended after the regime change in 1990.

When Czechoslovakia split in 1993, the new Czech Government decided to finish the construction of the first two units at Temelin and in 2008 it announced the building of two additional reactors at the site (which was originally planned to be put into operation in 2013). For the Temelin 3 and 4 reactors, a public tender process was opened in August 2009 and discussions were started with three candidates in 2010, but the tender was cancelled in April 2014 and new bids are expected in early 2015. The Czech Republic currently has six operating reactors, four at Dukovany and two at Temelin, producing 32 per cent of the country's domestic electric power.[27]

After 1993 the Slovak Government was left with two reactors at Bohunice (of the original four, two were shut down between 2006 and 2008) and in 1998 and 1999 another two VVER-213/440 reactors were built at Mochovce. The construction of units 3 and 4 at Mochovce was announced in 2007 and they were expected to be operational by 2013. However, as a result of delays due to European Union (EU) stress tests, start-up is now planned for mid-2015 and the units will be connected to the grid in 2016 and 2017, respectively. The four units currently operational in Slovakia provide 55 per cent of the domestic electric power in the country. Slovakia already has plans for a new reactor at Bohunice, to be started and completed in the 2020s.[28]

[23] This research reactor underwent a thorough reconstruction at the end of the 1980s and is still in operation, although since 2012 it has been operated as part of the Center for Energy Research of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences.

[24] World Nuclear Association, 'Nuclear Power in Hungary', 12 July 2014, <http://www.world-nuclear.org/info/Country-Profiles/Countries-G-N/Hungary/>.

[25] World Nuclear Association (note 24).

[26] KFKI Atomic Energy Research Institute, 'Short Introduction of the Budapest Research reactor' <http://www.kfki.hu/brr/indexen.htm>; MVM Paks Nuclear Power Plant website, <http://paksnuclearpowerplant.com/>; and Institute of Nuclear Techniques, Budapest University of Technology and Economics, 'Training Reactor of the Budapest University of Technology and Economics', <http://www.iki.kfki.hu/radsec/irradfac/pub/Training_Reactor.pdf>.

[27] World Nuclear Association, 'Nuclear Power in Czech Republic', 31 July 2013, <http://world-nuclear.org/info/Country-Profiles/Countries-A-F/Czech-Republic/#.Uh5TVdLvh8E>.

[28] World Nuclear Association, 'Nuclear Power in Slovakia', 31 July 2013, <http://world-nuclear.org/info/Country-Profiles/Countries-O-S/Slovakia/#.Uh4_CtLvh8E>.

Poland holds the largest coal reserves in the EU, and has traditionally been a net electricity exporter, mostly to the Czech Republic and Slovakia. However, as a result of the growth of domestic consumption and EU environmental standards, Poland decided to introduce nuclear energy into its energy mix in 2005, aiming to have its first operational power plant by 2020.

During the cold war, the Eastern Bloc's nuclear industry was characterized by a relatively low awareness of environmental issues. The Chernobyl disaster on 26 April 1986 was a sad example of this.[29] After the disaster was officially confirmed, part of the hysteria was about food, especially the fresh vegetables that were coming into season. Another part was about the reaction of pregnant women, many of whom asked for permission to have an abortion in fear of having a disabled child. Moreover, the situation was worsened by the Soviet Union's way of handling the catastrophe—no information for several days, then hesitant acknowledgement and soothing explanations. In spite of this, the Chernobyl disaster did not generate a major dislike for nuclear energy in the Eastern Bloc.

In general, other issues like the deposition of nuclear waste or the privatization of the energy sector after regime change, unless they were coupled with a rise in the price of electrical energy, did not get much public attention in any of the Central European states.

III. THE POST-COLD WAR PERIOD

In spite of the ambiguities of the Soviet system, when the WTO dissolved many states in Central Europe were concerned about their national security and spoke of a 'security vacuum'. After decades of dictate, these states had to find a way to provide their own security, a very urgent undertaking considering the instabilities in the Soviet Union, the aborted coup against Mikhail Gorbachev in August 1991 and the civil war in Yugoslavia. They essentially had two options: (*a*) to join the Western security and defence institutions; or (*b*) to nationalize defence. Joining the Western integrations, however, was not a one-sided choice and resembled a catch-22 situation.

> the more instability there was in and around a country, and hence the greater its need to integrate in security institutions and seek security guarantees, the less likely it is that its quest for integration will be successful.[30]

Despite the growing instability in some neighbouring states, political, economic and security considerations all suggested that only the first option was viable for Central European states, and that they had to pursue Western integration no matter how difficult it seemed. This option was further strengthened by their old desire to belong to the West. In the early 1990s Central European states began to further pursue security guarantees within international organizations and they became increasingly involved in the activities of NATO's North Atlantic Cooperation Council, the Western European Union and NATO's Partnership for Peace. Parallel to these organizations, they also began to show more understanding for similar efforts by their regional partners. With NATO accession becoming a possibility, the option of creating national security systems was mostly limited to debates over the comparison of the costs of NATO accession.

At NATO's Madrid Summit in July 1997, three Central European states—the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland—were invited to negotiate membership in NATO, but the door was also 'left open' for others that wished to join (which e.g. Slovakia did in 2004). The desire to join NATO was also strengthened by public opinion: in the 1999 round of NATO enlargement, Hungary was the only state to organize an official national referendum on NATO accession, receiving 85 per cent of public support, but similar results were also shown by public opinion polls in Poland.[31]

Joining NATO brought the armed forces more into the limelight and it obliged the new members to reform their militaries, which also improved public opinion about the military.[32] The developments within the

[29] The Chernobyl disaster was a nuclear accident that was the result of a flawed reactor design and the mistakes of the plant operators. As a result of the steam explosion and fires, at least 5% of the radioactive reactor core was released into the atmosphere, contaminating the western parts of the Soviet Union and the eastern parts of Europe. Altogether 30 operators and firemen died as a result of the accident, and 134 people were diagnosed with acute radiation syndrome. World Nuclear Association, 'Chernobyl Accident 1986', 30 Dec. 2014, <http://www.world-nuclear.org/info/safety-and-security/safety-of-plants/chernobyl-accident/>.

[30] Dunay (note 4).

[31] 'Népszavazás 1997' [Hungarian referendum on NATO accession], 16 Nov. 2007, <http://www.valasztas.hu/hu/onkval2010/52/52_0.html>; and Mlyniec, E., 'Polish Public Opinion in Relation to Poland Joining NATO, as an Element of Regional and Social Safety', NATO–EAPC Fellowships Winner Papers 1999–2001, <http://www.nato.int/acad/fellow/99-01/mlyniec.pdf>.

[32] See e.g. Rózsa, E. N. and Rácz, A., 'The democratic soldier in Hungary', ed. S. Mannitz, *Democratic Civil-Military Relations: Soldiering*

army and the rearrangement of the armed forces raised a lot of sympathy, while the change of the cold war general staff and the new cadre of military leaders (who frequently appear in public) gave a good impression. However, although there have been positive developments, one crucial point remains: the finances. At present, none of the Central European states meets the 2 per cent NATO requirement for defence spending: in 2013 the Czech Republic spent around 1.1 per cent of its GDP on defence, Hungary 0.9 per cent, Poland 1.8 per cent and Slovakia 1 per cent.[33]

NATO's nuclear policy

As regards nuclear threats, Central Europe has never witnessed a direct confrontation between the WTO and NATO in its territory—it has never been directly threatened by nuclear weapons and the end of the cold war saw the threat of a nuclear war between the USA and Russia disappear entirely. In this sense, the security environment has not changed much since the NATO accession. In the last two decades, Central European states have still not seen a real nuclear threat from any direction, not even from Russia, which threatened to deploy nuclear weapons on its western borders in response to the NATO enlargement.

In terms of nuclear issues, probably the biggest change that Central European states had to get accustomed to was the considerably different guidance of defence policy under NATO, in comparison with the WTO. Under NATO, the security of member states is guaranteed through the positive security assurance of Article 5. An important element of this assurance is the nuclear component of the alliance, which serves as a deterrent against potential opponents of NATO. As NATO's latest Strategic Concept (2010) declared, this assurance is considered to be:

> the supreme guarantee of the security of the Allies . . . provided by the strategic nuclear forces of the Alliance, particularly those of the United States; the independent strategic nuclear forces of the United Kingdom and France, which have a deterrent role of their own, contribute to the overall deterrence and security of the Allies.[34]

In essence, this means that member states are under a nuclear umbrella that provides the same assurances for everyone. Furthermore, all NATO members are equally involved in nuclear decision making and strategic planning. In 1966 NATO established the Nuclear Planning Group for this purpose, which serves as a forum for defence ministers to review NATO's nuclear policy and decide over nuclear-related matters. As NATO requires a consensus in its policy decisions, it guarantees an equal say to all member states—again, a stark contrast to Soviet times. NATO regularly reviews the guidelines of its defence policy in its Strategic Concept, as well as issuing a more specific Deterrence and Defence Posture Review (DDPR) document.

When the Central European states joined NATO, the first nuclear-related question that emerged was the possibility of the forward deployment of US tactical nuclear weapons in the territory of new NATO member states. Russia tried everything in its power to prevent such a deployment and formulated harsh threats against it. However, the option of a Central European deployment did not receive much consideration in NATO circles. Under President Bill Clinton, the US administration continued the disarmament process for both strategic and non-strategic US nuclear arsenals and was not interested in 'upsetting' Russia in foreign policy issues. Moreover, NATO and Russia had already concluded the NATO–Russia Founding Act in 1997, which said that 'the member States of NATO reiterate that they have no intention, no plan and no reason to deploy nuclear weapons on the territory of new members'.[35] Despite this agreement, when the Central European states joined NATO, although not willing to host US nuclear weapons on their territory, they failed to explicitly reject this option.[36]

Besides their greater influence on nuclear strategy, another interesting realization for Central European

in 21st Century Europe (Routledge: London, New York 2012), pp. 142–66.

[33] North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), 'Financial and Economic Data Relating to NATO Defence', 24 Feb. 2014, <http://www.nato.int/nato_static/assets/pdf/pdf_topics/20140224_140224-PR2014-028-Defence-exp.pdf>.

[34] North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), 'Strategic Concept for the Defence and Security of The Members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation', 2010, <http://www.nato.int/lisbon2010/strategic-concept-2010-eng.pdf>.

[35] North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), 'Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security between NATO and the Russian Federation signed in Paris, France', 27 May 1997, <http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_25468.htm>.

[36] Rózsa, E. N., 'Hungary', ed. H. Müller, *European Non-Proliferation Policy 1993–1995* (European Interuniversity Press: Brussels, 1996), pp. 296–97.

states was connected to their relatively similar priorities in most security-related matters. When the 2010 Strategic Concept and the 2012 DDPR were drafted, states in the region were mainly of the same opinion, with only minor disagreements stemming from somewhat different threat perceptions and national interests.

As a result of their limited national defence capabilities, a priority for Central European states was to maintain the credibility of NATO's deterrence posture, with a strong emphasis on NATO's traditional collective security profile. States in the region seemed to share the fear that the DDPR process, mandated by NATO's Lisbon Summit in November 2010, might trigger undesired changes in NATO's military capabilities, the elements of which they considered essential without any exceptions. They were all cautious about dramatic changes in the deterrence mix and preferred maintaining the status quo.

While the Central European deployment of US tactical nuclear weapons would probably not have been supported by either the USA or the new members, Central European states still insisted that US tactical nuclear weapons, already deployed in Belgium, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands and Turkey, should not be withdrawn because it would hurt their security interests. As none of the Central European governments could name a specific opponent to be deterred by NATO's nuclear capabilities, US tactical nuclear weapons were primarily considered as a symbolic guarantor of the transatlantic link, a stabilizer between the USA and Russia, and a political tool to realize reciprocal reductions in the Russian tactical nuclear arsenal.

Regarding the question of negative security assurances, Central European states did not get involved in the debate, but they seemed to support the traditional viewpoint that NATO should not limit its nuclear policy by making a unilateral declaration. In the field of conventional forces, the Central European states all asked for 'visible assurances', while seeming pleased with the current NATO/US presence in their respective territories. Ballistic missile defence was perceived as an important guarantor of permanent US presence in Europe—although not as a substitute for any other component of the deterrence mix.[37]

[37] Durkalec, J., 'NATO Defence and Deterrence Posture: Central and Eastern European Perspectives', PISM Policy Paper no. 29 (The Polish Institute of International Affairs: Warsaw, May 2012).

Despite the consensus in all major fields, some minor differences came to light during the 2012 DDPR process. Among the four Central European states, Poland seemed to be more open to changes: (*a*) it was not entirely against the idea of implementing a negative security assurance in NATO's declaratory policy; and (*b*) it seemed to be a proactive player regarding the future of, for example, tactical nuclear weapons. Poland issued two initiatives, the first with Sweden in February 2010 and the second with Norway in April 2010, which advocated a step-by-step approach of 'transparency and confidence-building measures as well as balanced and mutual arms reductions', with the ultimate goal of totally eliminating tactical nuclear weapons from Europe.[38] The most probable explanation of its proactivity is the Polish threat perception of Russia.

In general, Central European states (especially Hungary and Slovakia) seem to agree that Russia is no longer an imminent threat (to their security) and that political and economic cooperation is in their best interests (especially given their dependency on Russian energy sources). Poland, on the other hand, is seriously concerned about the Russian threats to upgrade the Iskander missiles in the Kaliningrad Oblast in response to the deployment of NATO's ballistic missile defence system. In addition, Russia's suspension of the implementation of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE Treaty), its aggression in Georgia and in Ukraine, as well as its total lack of transparency, further strengthen these fears. After Poland, the Czech Republic seems to be the most sensitive about Russia's intentions (when the Bush administration announced its European ballistic missile defence plans, the Czech Republic was also a target of the harsh Russian rhetoric), whereas Hungary and Slovakia (probably due to their greater distance from Russia) seem to be less worried about the Russia threat.[39]

During the most recent events in Ukraine, conservative circles in Europe as well as in the USA have raised the idea of re-evaluating the NATO–Russia

[38] Bildt, C. and Sikorski, R., 'Next, the Tactical Nukes', *The New York Times*, 1 Feb. 2010; and Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 'Joint Statement by Foreign Ministers of Norway and Poland', Apr. 2010, <http://www.mfa.gov.pl/resource/d4985440-b85e-47ee-ba38-cb990ab7b3ba>.

[39] Durkalec, J., 'The Future of NATO's Defence and Deterrence Posture: V4 Perspective', ed. L. Kulesa, *The Future of NATO's Defence and Deterrence Posture: Views from Central Europe*, PISM Report (The Polish Institute of International Affairs: Warsaw, Dec. 2012).

Table 1. Central European states' accession to nuclear-related agreements and relevant international organizations

	Disarmament Committee	NPT	ZAC	NSG	CTBT	NPT AP	NATO membership	EU membership
Czech Republic	1960 (TNCD)	1968	1974	1976–77	1996	1999	1999	2004
Hungary	1969 (CCD)	1968	1974	1985	1996	1998	1999	2004
Poland	1960 (TNCD)	1968	1974	1976–77	1996	1997	1999	2004
Slovakia	1960 (TNCD)	1968	1974	1976–77	1996	1999	2004	2004

AP = Additional Protocol; EU = European Union; CCD = Conference of the Committee on Disarmament; CTBT = Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty; NATO = North Atlantic Treaty Organization; NPT = Non-Proliferation Treaty; NSG = Nuclear Suppliers Group; TNCD = Ten Nation Committee on Disarmament; ZAC = Zangger Committee.

Founding Act and the pledge not to deploy tactical nuclear weapons on the territory of new NATO member states. Although the V4 states were seriously concerned about the crisis in Ukraine—they issued a joint statement in which they condemned 'all action threatening the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine' and called for a peaceful solution to the conflict—they did not request any changes to NATO's nuclear strategy.[40] The NATO Secretary General, Anders Fogh Rasmussen, also reinforced this at a press conference on 19 May 2014 when he said that 'at this stage I do not foresee any NATO request to change the content of the NATO–Russia Founding Act'.[41]

Parallel to the crisis in Ukraine, the simultaneous nuclear strike exercises, the official US allegations that Russia is in violation of its obligations under the Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles (INF Treaty), the re-invention of the 'de-escalation' strategy by Russia, and the continuous threats regarding the Kaliningrad Oblast all reflected the deteriorating relations between NATO and Russia. However, NATO's Wales Summit in September 2014 still reinforced the nuclear status quo. Although the crisis in Ukraine constituted a serious concern for Central European states, it did not justify the reconsideration of the '3 no' policy of the 1997 NATO–Russia Founding Act—states in the region seemed to prefer to upgrade and increase the responsiveness of conventional capabilities (e.g. the Very High Readiness Joint Task Force), which are more appropriate for addressing situations such as that in Ukraine.

Accession to the EU

The Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia, together with six other states, joined the EU on 1 May 2004 (for Slovakia this coincided with its accession to NATO). In general, EU membership paved the way for taking part in the development of the EU position on non-proliferation and, as a part of a group with a bigger impact globally, it increased the standing of individual states. However, the second element of the 'twin enlargement' (i.e. joining the EU after the NATO accession) did not, in fact, cause any halt or rupture for the new members in their policies.

On the one hand, by then all of these states had been parties to the multilateral weapons of mass destruction (WMD) treaties and had joined the relevant export control regimes (see table 1). On the other hand, in the process of the accession negotiations all of them had cooperated with the EU, adjusted their policies

[40] Visegrád Group, 'Statement of the Prime Ministers of the Visegrad Countries on Ukraine', 4 Mar. 2014, <http://www.visegradgroup.eu/calendar/2014/statement-of-the-prime>.

[41] North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), Monthly press conference by NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen, 19 May 2014, <http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/opinions_109980.htm?selectedLocale=en>.

accordingly and incorporated EU standards into their national regulations, including the European Strategy against the proliferation of WMD adopted on 12 December 2003.

In any case, there had already been several precedents of the Central European states 'adapting' to and supporting EU joint actions, for example, in the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference and afterwards.[42] The simultaneous adoption by the European Council on 19 December 1994 of a community regulation and a joint action regarding the export of dual-use goods led to the harmonization of European controls on the export of sensitive technologies, particularly nuclear, and was also accepted and incorporated into Central European national regulations.[43]

In this regard, another important element of joining the EU was the adoption of nuclear safety standards. Through the Poland and Hungary: Assistance for Restructuring their Economies (PHARE) programme, as well as the later Instrument for Nuclear Safety Cooperation and the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance, potential new members of the EU were provided with technical and scientific expertise in order to advance safety standards in their nuclear power plants. In the framework of these programmes, many of the older, Soviet-designed plants were shut down in Central and Eastern Europe.[44]

As EU members, the Central European states are pursuing similar policies: they support the mainstream European point of view, participate in joint actions and activities, and initiate joint regulations in their national legal systems. With regard to the joint political action of sanctions, the Central European states supported and abided by the EU sanctions against Iran over its nuclear programme, in spite of the fact that they had embassies operating in Tehran, just as other EU members did (with the exception of the United Kingdom). However, following the 24 November 2013 nuclear deal, the Central European states have also sent high-level and economy-related delegations to Iran.[45]

On the margins of the Iran nuclear issue, there is a small difference between the V4 states. While the Czech Republic and Slovakia refused to take part in the training of Iranian nuclear experts, Hungary agreed to train Iranian nuclear safety authority staff. The training is part of an International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) project to help the Iranian staff to supervise the Bushehr Nuclear Power Plant. The Hungarian Atomic Energy Authority agreed to take this job on because the IAEA specifically asked the authorities of VVER-type nuclear power plants to take part in the initiative, and because Hungary believes that 'the safe use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes is a common interest'.[46] The IAEA considers education and training, in general, to be 'among the most important but underutilized tools for promoting disarmament and non-proliferation'.[47]

In most cases, being a NATO member and then joining the EU did not cause any problems for the Central European states, and there were no major tensions in their nuclear policies stemming from this twin membership. The V4 take part in the Non-Proliferation Working Group (CONOP) and the Global Disarmament and Arms Control Working Group (CODUN) of the EU, and try to constructively help the development of a common EU position on major arms control issues. There are, however, a few issues when implementing the EU non-proliferation standards and developing a common EU position on current arms control challenges that might seem contradictory to NATO membership and the US nuclear umbrella. This is why, from time to time, US officials accuse some European states of having 'two hats': one for the EU

[42] However, some Central European diplomats at the conference complained of an EU 'dictate', i.e. the Central Europeans were called on to support the EU positions but could not participate in the debates.

[43] Müller, H. (ed.), *Nuclear Export Controls in Europe* (European Interuniversity Press: Brussels, 1995), quoted in Grand, C., *The European Union and the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons*, Chaillot Paper no. 37 (WEU Institute for Security Studies: Paris, 2000), pp. 11–12.

[44] Lieberman, J., *New Nuclear Builds in Central and Eastern Europe: Safety Aspects*, PISM Policy Paper no. 32, (The Polish Institute of International Affairs: Warsaw, Dec. 2013).

[45] The Czech Republic is mostly dealing with humanitarian aid in Iran, see the Embassy of the Czech Republic in Tehran's website, <http://www.mzv.cz/teheran/en/news_and_events/index.html>. In Dec. 2013 Slovakia's Prime Minister, Robert Fico, and Foreign Minister, Miroslav Lajčák, held negotiations in Tehran, see The Embassy of the Slovak Republic in Tehran's website, <http://www.mzv.sk/tehran>. In Mar. 2014 Poland's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Radosław Sikorski, visited Iran, as did Hungary's Political Director of the MFA, Szabolcs Takács.

[46] Hungarian Atomic Energy Authority, 'Recent Developments in Nuclear Safety in Hungary', Apr. 2010, <http://www.oah.hu/web/v3/HAEAportal.nsf/A306ED7E62B0A3C6C1257C5C0036E2FD/$FILE/Recent_Developments_2010_1.pdf>.

[47] Toki, M. and Potter, W. C., 'How We Think about Peace and Security. The ABCs of Initiatives for Disarmament & Non-Proliferation Education', International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Bulletin 46/2 (Mar. 2005), <http://www.iaea.org/sites/default/files/publications/magazines/bulletin/bull46-2/46205295658.pdf>.

and one for NATO. However, this does not seem to concern the Central European states. It is true that joining NATO first meant that these states did not take on any initiative which they thought could hurt their transatlantic ties, but neither do they seem to prioritize one alliance over the other. When it comes to highly debated issues, the Central European states usually keep a low profile and try to support a position that is in line with the majority of member states and does not force them to choose one hat over the other.

In this regard, the most concerning issue is the discourse on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons. Starting with the 2010 NPT Review Conference, a group of governments intensified their efforts to outlaw nuclear weapons, based on the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of their use. Among the strongest European supporters of the initiative are Austria (an EU member), Denmark (an EU and a NATO member), Ireland (an EU member), Luxembourg (an EU and a NATO member), Norway (a NATO member) and Switzerland.[48] Although many other states might be sympathetic to the idea, the nuclear component of the NATO alliance (the nuclear sharing agreements and the positive security assurances) seems to be in conflict with the goals of the initiative so they refrain from supporting it.

Based on their strong Atlanticist commitment, the Central European states have developed identical positions, namely that outlawing nuclear weapons would be incompatible with their NATO membership and they do not, therefore, openly support the humanitarian initiative. Despite this careful approach, the V4 do agree that nuclear weapons should be eliminated in the long run (in line with NATO's 2010 Strategic Concept) but they look at the disarmament process in a broader context and favour a step-by-step approach.[49]

Continuity in nuclear energy dependence

As mentioned above, member states of the Eastern Bloc became dependent on the Soviet Union in terms of their nuclear energy supply—the Dukovany (1, 2, 3 and 4), Temelin (1 and 2), Bohunice (V1-1, V1-2, V2-1 and V2-2), Mochovce (1 and 2) and Paks (1, 2, 3 and 4) reactors were all Soviet designs. This meant that states in the region were obliged to buy the nuclear fuel assemblies from the Soviet Union. Despite the end of the bipolar system, this energy dependence has only partly changed, as shown in the case of Hungary.

During the cold war, nuclear fuel elements were produced in the Soviet Union, sold to its allies and then the spent fuel rods were returned to the Soviet Union for reprocessing (after five years of cooling in spent fuel ponds). In 1989, when the former socialist states introduced hard currency payments in intra-Comecon trade, several states built storages of their own—this solution was chosen by Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia and East Germany.[50] Hungary, on the other hand, decided that it would continue to return the spent fuel elements to the Soviet Union for reprocessing.

Between 1989 and 1998 a major part of the spent fuel from the Paks Nuclear Power Plant was sent back to the Soviet Union (and later to Russia). In the 1966 Hungarian–Soviet Inter-Governmental Agreement on Co-operation in the Construction and Operation of Paks Nuclear Power Plant and in the 1994 Additional Protocol, Russia pledged to accept the spent fuel, while Hungary pledged to purchase the necessary new fuel assemblies exclusively from Russia during the whole lifetime of the plant. According to the Hungarian Atomic Energy Authority, until then Hungary 'did not have to take back the radioactive waste and other residuals from the reprocessing of such fuel', despite the fact that the international practice of the 1990s had been that Russian authorities sent back the residual radioactive waste and other by-products of the reprocessing.[51] As Hungary did not have the capability to dispose of high-level, long-lived radioactive waste, the construction of an interim spent fuel storage was begun in 1993. Today, the Interim Spent Fuel Storage

[48] Joint Statement on the humanitarian dimension of nuclear disarmament, First Session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, 2012, <http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmament-fora/npt/prepcom12/statements/2May_IHL.pdf>.

[49] Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade official, Interview with author, 6 Oct. 2014.

[50] The Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (Comecon) was the economic organization of the Soviet Union, the Eastern Bloc and a number of socialist states around the world between 1949 and 1991. Its stated purpose was 'to exchange economic experiences, extend technical aid to one another, and to render mutual assistance with respect to raw materials, foodstuffs, machines, equipment, etc.' Curtis, G. E. (ed.), *Czechoslovakia: A Country Study* (Federal Research Division of the Library of Congress: Washington, DC, 1992).

[51] Hungarian Atomic Energy Agency, 'Republic of Hungary, National Report, Fourth Report prepared within the framework of the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management', 2011, <http://www.oah.hu/web/v3/HAEAPortal.nsf/6F5866DC74FA9B9CC1257C5C00369E44/$FILE/4th_nat_rep_JC.pdf>.

Facility at Paks allows the storage of spent fuel for a period of 50 years.

The Czech Republic and Slovakia built their own interim spent fuel storages somewhat earlier but, like Hungary, their cold war agreements with the Soviet Union on the construction and operation of their power plants also guaranteed that the spent fuel was sent back for reprocessing and the new fuel assemblies were purchased from the Soviet Union (and later from Russia) for the whole lifetime of most of the Soviet-designed reactors.

However, when the Central European states joined the EU, they were required to look for alternative fuel sources and some of the reactors are supplied by Western companies today. For example, in the Czech Republic, the Dukovany Nuclear Power Plant reactors are still supplied by Russia, but the Temelin Nuclear Power Plant decided to contract the US company Westinghouse to supply units 1 and 2. After the cancellation of the Temelin 3 and 4 tender, the Czech Republic is expected to pick a contractor for the new units in 2015 and it is not likely to choose the Russian-led consortium.[52]

Further, the current events in Ukraine have considerably strengthened the Polish society's perception of insecurity and provided significant support for energy independence, including a nuclear power capacity (most likely based on Western technology).[53] Hungary, on the other hand, has just recently concluded an agreement with Russia to build two new reactors at the Paks Nuclear Power Plant, which will guarantee a continued dependence on Russian fuel supply for decades to come—and, according to critics in the Hungarian opposition and in the EU, increase Hungary's political dependence on Russia.[54]

IV. NON-NUCLEAR PRO-ACTIVISM

The role of Central European states in nuclear non-proliferation

Nuclear non-proliferation issues are pursued in a responsive, cooperative and multilateral way. In this regard, the main asset of Central European states is that they are yet another 'actor' in the international non-proliferation regime. While usually in the mainstream of developments, the responsive nature of these states' non-proliferation policy was clearly evident when their main foreign policy aims were perceived to be at stake.

One example of this is the process of NATO accession, when Central European states failed to explicitly reject the possibility of the deployment of US nuclear weapons on their territory (although the USA had already made a promise to Russia to prevent this situation). Another example is when they refrained from supporting the proposal for a nuclear weapon-free zone (NWFZ) in Central Europe at the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference, in order to reflect their strong commitment to joining NATO.

The Polish Foreign Minister, Adam Rapacki, first proposed declaring Central Europe a NWFZ in 1957. He envisaged a zone, covering the area of Poland, Czechoslovakia, the German Democratic Republic and the Federal Republic of Germany, prohibiting both the stockpiling and the production of nuclear weapons.[55] Poland repeated the proposal again in 1969, although only aiming at a freeze on nuclear weapons. Later, in 1982, the Palme Commission suggested a battlefield NWFZ in Central Europe, with the potential to extend the zone to a corridor from the Baltic to the Balkans.[56] The key obligations were a complete ban on atomic demolition mines, nuclear artillery and missiles with a range of up to 1000 kilometres. Further, the proposal also contained obligations to eliminate storage sites for nuclear munitions and a cease on all manoeuvres that simulated nuclear operations.

[52] World Nuclear Association (note 27).

[53] Ćwiek-Karpowicz, J., *Poles' Perception of Energy Security and Nuclear Energy in the Midst of the Ukraine Crisis*, PISM Bulletin no. 110 (The Polish Institute of International Affairs: Warsaw, 25 Aug. 2014).

[54] 'Hungary approves 10 billion euro Russia loan for nuclear upgrade, *Nuclear Power Daily*, 23 June 2014, <http://www.nuclearpowerdaily.com/reports/Hungary_approves_10_billion_euro_Russia_loan_for_nuclear_upgrade_999.html>; and Thorpe, N., 'Hungarian MPs approve Russia nuclear deal, *BBC News*, 6 Feb. 2014 <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-26072303>.

[55] Maruzsa, Z., 'Denuclearization in Central Europe? The Rapacki Plan during the Cold War', *Öt kontinens* (Eötvös Lóránd Tudományegyetem, 2008), <http://www.coldwar.hu/html/en/publications/Online%20PublicationMar.pdf>.

[56] 'Common Security', Report by the Independent Commission on Disarmament and Security Issues (also known as the Palme Commission after its first Chairman Olof Palme), Simon and Schuster, New York, 1982, p. 147.

After the cold war, Belarus and Ukraine took over the initiative but their efforts no longer enjoyed the support of the Central European states. While the Central European states were active advocates of the idea under Soviet rule, they did not dare to support it in their quest for NATO membership. They feared that this would require a change in NATO's nuclear doctrine and that it would stand in the way of their accession.[57] As a result, plans to establish a sub-regional NWFZ in the middle of Europe disappeared from the global non-proliferation agenda.

Despite their failure to stand up for a Central European NWFZ, the states in the region proved to be successful in their non-nuclear pro-activism within the different international disarmament forums. The roots of this tradition can be traced back to 1960 when Czechoslovakia and Poland became members of the Ten Nation Committee on Disarmament (TNCD), succeeded by the Eighteen Nation Committee on Disarmament (ENCD). In 1968 all three nations (Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland) signed the NPT, and one year later Hungary also joined the ENCD successor, the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament (CCD) (see table 1).[58]

As a result, all these states have become increasingly involved in non-proliferation and verification issues. Since nuclear non-proliferation and verification were fields of common interest among the NWS, and there were not that many actors at the different disarmament forums, the foreign policy of the Central European states could move relatively freely to represent their own interests, sometimes even against the expressed interests of the Soviet Union or other WTO members.[59]

After 1989 these activities in non-proliferation and verification became more intense in the realization of the importance of such issues for the Euro-Atlantic community, and as such contributed to the aim of Western integration. The Central European states all signed the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) in 1996; they signed and ratified the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction (APM Convention); and they also played a constructive role in the new programmes of the IAEA, all signing and ratifying its Additional Protocol (see table 1). Following the same trend, these states also joined the main export control regimes—all joining the Zangger Committee in 1974 as well as the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) in 1977 (Czechoslovakia and Poland) and in 1985 (Hungary)—and they have created national export control systems that conform entirely to EU standards.[60]

Regarding the most debated issues within the export control regimes, the Central European states share the opinion of most of the EU states, for example, that India should be accepted as a new participant of the NSG. At present, India does not meet all of the criteria to join the group. However, it has already been exempted from the comprehensive IAEA safeguards requirement of the NSG in 2008, in order to pave the way for the USA to supply India's rapidly growing industry with new nuclear reactors. As well as an opportunity to sell nuclear reactors to India, major powers see an opportunity to get India to comply with the global non-proliferation goals, in exchange for these concessions. In this regard, the V4's position is primarily influenced by two factors: (*a*) India already follows the guidelines of the regime; and (*b*) India is becoming an increasingly strong nuclear power, thus it is better to have it within the group and officially guided by the NSG standards.[61]

V. CONCLUSION

Continuity or change in non-nuclear pro-activism?

Until 1991, Central European states, NNWS of the NPT and members of the WTO were not in a position to try to develop nuclear weapons, nor did they have the need to do so. Non-nuclear pro-activism, within the limits of their foreign policy as set by the Soviet Union, suited the propaganda of the Eastern Bloc well, yet gradually it developed into a conscious and increasingly independent dimension. Parties to the NPT since 1968 and members of the consecutive Committees on Disarmament, the Central European states became increasingly active in the different disarmament forums, as well as the verification and export control regimes. After signing comprehensive safeguards agreements with the IAEA, they also conducted a

[57] Müller (note 36).

[58] United Nations Office at Geneva, 'An introduction to the Conference', <http://www.unog.ch/80256EE600585943/(httpPages)/BF18ABFEFE5D344DC1256F3100311CE9?OpenDocument>.

[59] Gajda, F., Hungarian official in the field of non-proliferation between 1968–95, Interview with author, 8 May 1997.

[60] Müller, H and Prystrom, J. (eds), *Central European Countries and Non-Proliferation Regimes* (Polish Foundation of International Affairs: Warsaw, 1996).

[61] Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade official (note 49).

conscious, cooperative policy regarding the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

Based on these traditions, the changes that took place in Central Europe in 1989–90 resulted in three different developments. First, as a direct consequence of the new foreign policy orientation, conformity with Western priorities, among them nuclear non-proliferation, became increasingly important. This was supported by the Central European states' realization that the free flow of information and technology within the peaceful use of nuclear energy was a key interest. Therefore, they were very active within the NPT, the different export control regimes and in EU non-proliferation practices. These activities, while performed by a relatively limited group of experts and diplomats, have been carried out consciously and continuously, with the full support of the political leadership, both before and after 1989.

Second, public awareness, both of the military and the peaceful use of nuclear energy, started to increase as transparency in the decision-making process on such issues became more evident and the press revealed more information. The discovery that there had been nuclear weapons in the territories of these states caused a small-scale scandal in the early 1990s, yet the public remained disinterested and no longer saw it as directly relevant to them. Environmental concerns over the possible effects of nuclear energy have so far only appeared on a local or, at best, regional level and, even with the effects of the Chernobyl accident, they have not turned the public against nuclear energy.

Third, NATO accession generated a public debate with a nuclear dimension. Yet even the public's firm opposition to the deployment of nuclear weapons in the territories of these states could not alter the overall public support for NATO. That NATO accession had another side effect, namely that Central European states felt the need to reject even the consideration of a sub-regional NWFZ, thus breaking their previously unbroken non-nuclear pro-activist policy, was kept mostly out of the public sphere.

On the basis of the above, the future of the Central European non-nuclear stance still seems firm: rejection of nuclear weapons and promotion of nuclear non-proliferation—within the limits allowed to the states by the clearly recognized international realities. Within the field of the peaceful use of nuclear energy, these states will probably be at the forefront of activities, as they have been up to now. With regard to nuclear disarmament, the Central European position will probably vary from issue to issue. In some cases, such as a sub-regional NWFZ or the possession of nuclear weapons by the NWS, Central European states will be very cautious not to antagonize their allies, especially those who integrated them into organizations where decision-making processes provide them with a chance to formulate common nuclear strategy and guarantee an equal say at the negotiating table. In other cases, where no such interests are at stake, Central European states will probably continue to play a relatively active role.

Regarding their policies in the framework of the Western organizations, which all Central European states were aiming to join after the cold war, EU membership definitely helped to shape the thinking of these states on nuclear issues, and the V4 states have been constructive members in developing a common EU position on the most urgent matters. There are, however, a few questions on which even the European powers differ. In these cases, NATO membership seems to be a key determinant of the Central European states' position, and they have been trying to align their policies accordingly.

Although there are no institutionalized mechanisms to form a joint V4 position on non-proliferation and arms control, as a result of their common national security interests, the V4 states have developed identical positions on most of the key nuclear issues. These have included Iran, NATO's nuclear strategy and the question of withdrawing US tactical nuclear weapons from Europe, India's participation in the NSG, and the humanitarian initiative to outlaw nuclear weapons. Despite the lack of sub-regional mechanisms, the EU–NATO framework is not likely to change in the near future and the most important strategic interests will therefore remain the same. This almost guarantees that Central European states will continue think alike on nuclear issues in the foreseeable future.

ABBREVIATIONS

AP	Additional Protocol
CTBT	Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty
DDPR	Deterrence and Defence Posture Review
EU	European Union
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
NNWS	Non-nuclear weapon state
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NPT	Non-Proliferation Treaty
NSG	Nuclear Suppliers Group
NWFZ	Nuclear weapon-free zone
NWS	Nuclear weapon state
V4	Visegrád Group
WTO	Warsaw Treaty Organization
ZAC	Zangger Committee

EU Non-Proliferation Consortium

The European network of independent non-proliferation think tanks

A EUROPEAN NETWORK

In July 2010 the Council of the European Union decided to create a network bringing together foreign policy institutions and research centres from across the EU to encourage political and security-related dialogue and the long-term discussion of measures to combat the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and their delivery systems.

STRUCTURE

The EU Non-Proliferation Consortium is managed jointly by four institutes entrusted with the project, in close cooperation with the representative of the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy. The four institutes are the Fondation pour la recherche stratégique (FRS) in Paris, the Peace Research Institute in Frankfurt (PRIF), the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) in London, and Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI). The Consortium began its work in January 2011 and forms the core of a wider network of European non-proliferation think tanks and research centres which will be closely associated with the activities of the Consortium.

MISSION

The main aim of the network of independent non-proliferation think tanks is to encourage discussion of measures to combat the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems within civil society, particularly among experts, researchers and academics. The scope of activities shall also cover issues related to conventional weapons. The fruits of the network discussions can be submitted in the form of reports and recommendations to the responsible officials within the European Union.

It is expected that this network will support EU action to counter proliferation. To that end, the network can also establish cooperation with specialized institutions and research centres in third countries, in particular in those with which the EU is conducting specific non-proliferation dialogues.

http://www.nonproliferation.eu

FONDATION pour la RECHERCHE STRATÉGIQUE

FOUNDATION FOR STRATEGIC RESEARCH

FRS is an independent research centre and the leading French think tank on defence and security issues. Its team of experts in a variety of fields contributes to the strategic debate in France and abroad, and provides unique expertise across the board of defence and security studies.
http://www.frstrategie.org

PRIF Peace Research Institute Frankfurt — HSFK Hessische Stiftung Friedens- und Konfliktforschung

PEACE RESEARCH INSTITUTE IN FRANKFURT

PRIF is the largest as well as the oldest peace research institute in Germany. PRIF's work is directed towards carrying out research on peace and conflict, with a special emphasis on issues of arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament.
http://www.hsfk.de

IISS

INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR STRATEGIC STUDIES

IISS is an independent centre for research, information and debate on the problems of conflict, however caused, that have, or potentially have, an important military content. It aims to provide the best possible analysis on strategic trends and to facilitate contacts.
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sipri

STOCKHOLM INTERNATIONAL PEACE RESEARCH INSTITUTE

SIPRI is an independent international institute dedicated to research into conflict, armaments, arms control and disarmament. Established in 1966, SIPRI provides data, analysis and recommendations, based on open sources, to policymakers, researchers, media and the interested public.
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