Geopolitical upheavals in Europe after 1989 — Full text

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Introduction

The late 20th century was a time of major geopolitical upheaval in Eastern Europe. The fall of the Berlin Wall in November 1989 put an end to the Cold War and the divisions that dated back to the Second World War. The fall of the Communist bloc brought about the end of a bipolar world built around the rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union. Economic and military structures such as Comecon (the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance) and the Warsaw Pact were dissolved in 1991. The events of the late 1980s marked the beginning of improved relations between two parts of the continent that had long been divided. Political and economic reforms were carried out throughout Europe, providing favourable conditions for the creation of a market economy and the establishment of pluralist parliamentary democracies based on the rule of law. Success was far from guaranteed, however, as demonstrated by the violent end of the Communist dictatorship in Yugoslavia.

Western Europe was torn between the hopes born of détente and the anxiety caused by periods of tension. The new regimes soon declared their intention to turn to the countries of Western Europe for the necessary economic aid and assistance to facilitate the transition. The aspiration for ownership and modernity embodied by the European Union was a driving force behind the transformation of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe (CEECs). But the European Union, tasked with this historic mission, also had to work to offer these states the prospect of access to its area of peace and prosperity, along with the means and method that would open up this area for them. The disappearance of the iron curtain also paved the way for the reunification of Germany and then of the whole of Europe. In June 1993, at the Copenhagen European Council, the European Union enlargement process was officially launched. This process was unique in the EU's history because of the number of applicant countries and the considerable size of their populations. Europe's infrastructures — including the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), the Council of Europe and Western European Union (WEU) — also had to be enlarged and transformed so that they would be better suited to the new political order in Eastern Europe.

I. The Eastern bloc in the throes of change and the implosion of the Soviet Union

The political events and economic changes in Eastern Europe at the end of the 1980s radically altered the geopolitical situation in Europe and transformed existing institutions and structures. Aspirations to freedom, democracy and the defence of human rights, which had long been stifled by the authoritarian regimes of the Soviet bloc, were expressed more and more openly, thanks in particular to the reforms introduced in the Soviet Union by Mikhail Gorbachev and his policy of gradually opening up to the West.

On 11 March 1985, at the age of 54, Mikhail Gorbachev, an apparatchik of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU), was appointed General Secretary of the CPSU by the Central Committee. He aimed to carry out a root-and-branch reform of the Soviet system, the bureaucratic inertia of which constituted an obstacle to economic reconstruction (this was 'perestroika'), and at the same time to liberalise the regime and introduce transparency ('glasnost'), i.e. a certain freedom of expression and information.

In order to implement this ambitious policy successfully, Gorbachev had to limit the USSR's international commitments and reduce its military expenditure so as to curb the USSR's moral and economic decline. This resulted in a resumption of dialogue between the Americans and the Soviets concerning nuclear arms, with the signing of the three treaties: the Washington

Treaty (8 December 1987), which provided for the destruction of all Soviet and American intermediate-range missiles based in Europe; the Paris Treaty (19 November 1990) on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe, agreed between the members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) and the Warsaw Pact countries; and the first Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START I), signed in Moscow (31 July 1991), which provided for the mutual reduction of strategic nuclear weapons. At the same time, Gorbachev terminated Soviet involvement in other parts of the world, withdrawing from Afghanistan, where the Russian army was bogged down, exerting pressure on the Vietnamese to withdraw from Cambodia and restoring Sino-Soviet relations, withdrawing Soviet support for the Mengistu regime in Ethiopia and for Cuban troops in Angola, ending economic aid to Cuba and withdrawing Soviet troops from the island, restoring diplomatic relations with Israel and condemning Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. Gorbachev's policy of disengagement would be even more marked in Europe, with regard to the former satellite states of the USSR.

Although popular with the West, Gorbachev was far less so in his own country, where his reforms resulted in the disruption of the centralised planning system without the implementation of any real market mechanisms. This resulted in reduced production, shortages and social discontent, which led to strikes. This discontent could be all the more strongly expressed within the system of 'transparency'; all previously withheld information concerning the activities of the State and its administrative bodies could henceforth be disclosed and publicly debated. The lifting of the taboos imposed by the Communist regime, of which intellectuals and liberated dissidents took full advantage, allowed critical judgment to be passed on the history of the Soviet Union and on its political, economic and social structure.

A. The collapse of the Communist regimes in Eastern Europe

Mikhail Gorbachev's reformist policies in the Soviet Union merely served to encourage opposition movements to the Communist regimes in the Soviet bloc countries. Demonstrations became more frequent. Governments were forced to accept measures, recommended, moreover, by Gorbachev, towards liberalisation. However, these measures were not deemed to be sufficient.

Hopes of freedom, long suppressed by the Communist regimes in the countries of the Soviet bloc and in the USSR itself, were inevitably fuelled by Mikhail Gorbachev's attempted reforms in the Soviet Union and his conciliatory policy towards the West. It proved impossible to maintain reformed Communist regimes. They were entirely swept away by the desire for political democracy and economic liberty. Within three years, the Communist regimes collapsed and individual nations gained freedom, initially in the USSR's satellite countries and then within the Soviet Union itself. The structures of the Eastern bloc disintegrated with the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact and Comecon. The Soviet Union broke up into independent republics.

In Poland, economic reforms led to strikes in the spring and summer of 1988. The Solidarity movement called for trade union pluralism. During the Round Table negotiations, which enabled the gradual creation of the Third Polish Republic, the Polish Communist leaders recognised the social movement in April 1989. *Solidarność* was therefore able to take part in the first semi-legal elections since the Second World War. The elections, held on 4 and 18 June, saw the collapse of the Communist Party, and Tadeusz Mazowiecki became the first non-Communist head of government in Eastern Europe. He was appointed on 19 August 1989

and endorsed by an overwhelming majority by the Polish Sjem on 8 September 1989 as a result of a coalition between Solidarity, the agricultural party and the Democratic party. In December 1989, Lech Wałęsa, symbolic leader of *Solidarność*, replaced General Jaruzelski of the Polish United Workers' Party as President. The victory of the trade union's candidates in these elections triggered a wave of peaceful anti-Communist revolutions in Central and Eastern Europe.

In Hungary, demonstrations against the regime increased during 1987 and 1988. The Opposition became more organised, and reformers entered the government in June 1988. On 18 October 1989, the Stalinist Constitution was abandoned, and Hungary adopted political pluralism. Earlier that year, in May, the 'Iron Curtain' separating Hungary from Austria had been dismantled, which enabled many East Germans to flee to the West.

In Czechoslovakia, a programme of reforms inspired by those of the USSR was adopted in December 1987 but was not widely implemented. The regime became more oppressive and suppressed demonstrations in 1988.

In the German Democratic Republic (GDR), opposition to the Stalinist regime grew. Huge demonstrations took place, and increasing numbers of East Germans fled the country. The government would not consider any kind of reform, counting on the intervention of Soviet troops stationed in the GDR. Gorbachev, however, refused to help, having renounced Brezhnev's doctrine of legitimate intervention in fellow Communist countries. From that point on, the Communist regime crumbled. The Wall which had divided Berlin since 1961 came down on 9 November 1989, and East Germans were interested only in reunification with the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG).

The fall of the Berlin Wall had a significant impact. The collapse of the Communist regime in East Germany, which had gone ahead with the Soviet Union being powerless to put up any effective opposition, led to German reunification, an event which had a direct influence on the European integration process. In order to integrate a reunified Germany successfully into Europe, it was vital to strengthen the European Community by establishing a European Union which would include an Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) and a political union. This was the objective of the Maastricht Treaty of 7 February 1992.

The reunification of Germany further accelerated the demise of the Communist governments. In Czechoslovakia, the Opposition leader, Václav Havel, was unanimously elected interim President of the Republic by the parliament of the Socialist Republic on 29 December 1989. In the same vein, the anti-establishment Civic Forum movement won the first free parliamentary elections on 8 June 1990 and reappointed Václav Havel as President of the Republic in July of that year. In Hungary, the parliamentary elections held on 2 April 1990 resulted in the formation of the Democratic Forum government. On 9 December 1990, Lech Wałęsa became President of the Republic of Poland. In Bulgaria, a coalition government was formed on 7 December 1990, and a new Constitution was adopted on 9 July 1991. In Romania, following violent demonstrations, the Communist dictator Nicolae Ceauşescu was executed on 25 December 1989, and a new Constitution establishing pluralism was adopted on 8 December 1991.

This transformation proceeded, for the most part, in a peaceful manner. Nevertheless, in Romania, the revolution against the dictator Ceauşescu resulted in heavy bloodshed, and the fragmentation of Yugoslavia led to a long and bitter civil war.

These dramatic changes raised the issue of the reorganisation of Central and Eastern Europe. The former satellite states of the USSR, concerned with their security, relied on the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and, in particular, on NATO. In the Council of Europe, they found a support structure in which to defend democracy and human rights. They received aid from the European Community, the organisation to which they aspired to belong.

B. The break-up of the USSR

The collapse of Soviet Communism led to dislocation of the Soviet Union, sapped by an ideological, political and economic crisis. This in turn precipitated the break-up of the empire, both cause and effect of the end of Communism. The organisations specific to 'Soviet federalism' hastened the implosion of the Soviet Union despite being primarily intended to consolidate it. One after another the Soviet Socialist Republics (SSRs) proclaimed their sovereignty in the summer of 1991. In December of the same year, some of these republics, which had become independent in the meantime, redefined their respective links by creating the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).

1. The resurgence of national identities

The organisation of the USSR continued without any structural changes from 1956 to 1990. The Soviet federal State comprised 15 federal entities, the Soviet Socialist Republics (SSRs). As sovereign republics, they kept their own constitution and were divided into regions (or *oblasts*), except for Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia and Moldavia which had a unitary structure. Some federal republics (Russia, Georgia, Armenia, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan) contained Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republics (ASSRs) that enjoyed a degree of self-government. Furthermore, some territories in the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (RSFSR) itself and the SSRs of Tajikistan, Georgia and Azerbaijan were given the status of autonomous regions.

As long as the Soviet Communist regime was able to contain and control the civic and social demands of the peoples of the various SSRs, no one questioned the underlying need for the Union. The policy of the Party leadership naturally sought to maintain a cohesive whole, whereas each national group tried to obtain the most advantages. To achieve its aims, the Party leadership used the various resources at its disposal, granting loans and allocating varying degrees of cultural autonomy. At the same time it acted to repress 'exaggerated nationalism' if the central power loosened its grip. The national factor consequently encouraged decentralisation of power. However the Kremlin was careful to ensure that the limits set by the central power were not exceeded.

Until the mid-1980s Moscow repressed any movements deemed to be 'exaggerated nationalism', which sometimes degenerated into sporadic uprisings and civil war. When the process of democratic reform set in motion by Gorbachev undermined the central Soviet power base and its outposts in the SSRs, nationalist movements cited Articles 70 and 72 of the 1977 Constitution to back their demands for greater autonomy or even independence.

In the Baltic countries, which had been fought over for centuries by the Slavs, Germans and Swedes, and had been independent from 1920 to 1939, revolts occurred throughout the Communist era. Inspired by the hopes of independence voiced by the Eastern Bloc countries and encouraged by the establishment of a semi-democratic government in Poland,

demonstrations in favour of a return to independence were held simultaneously in the three Baltic countries between 1988 and 1989. Particularly violent demands also surfaced in the Transcaucasian republics, which recalled their past history of independence, sometimes spanning several centuries. When the national popular fronts first threatened to invoke Article 70 of the Constitution, they were really asking Moscow for an end to the dominance of the central powers and the RSFSR over the other SSRs.

Confronted with a difficult political and economic situation, Gorbachev endorsed the constitutional reform of 1 December 1988, which allowed multiple candidates for the next elections. The new Legislative Assembly, elected on 26 March 1989, consequently sought to restore the legitimacy of the central power and consolidate the Union. Two thirds of the Congress of People's Deputies were now elected by universal suffrage, with a secret ballot and several candidates. But the first free general election was marked by defeat for candidates sympathetic to Gorbachev and the election of radical and nationalist reformers. The arrival in the Supreme Soviet of representatives of national popular fronts, such as the *Sajudis* from Lithuania, revealed the scale of the disaster facing Gorbachev. The nationalists gained a formidable platform from which to promote their ideas of independence and national liberation. By allowing national movements to express themselves freely, the democratisation of the regime fuelled tension, which in turn caused unrest and even civil war between peoples nursing deep-rooted enmity, such as the Orthodox Armenians and the Muslim Azeris.

To thwart nationalist forces and secure the survival of the USSR in one way or another, Gorbachev tried to rally the republics around a new proposed Union. The new Union would serve as a basis for the renewal of Soviet federalism as part of an increasingly democratic USSR. The new Treaty was well received in the Central Asian republics, which above all wanted the economic support of the RSFSR and access to the markets of the USSR. In March 1991 Gorbachev called a referendum on the future of the Soviet Union in nine republics. The electorate voted in favour of the New Union Treaty. Armenia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Georgia and Moldova, governed by their respective national popular fronts, did not take part in the referendum. In April 1991, at the summit of Novo-Ogaryovo, Gorbachev and the leaders of the nine republics decided to speed up the establishment of the New Union Treaty. Gorbachev thought that if an initial group of SSRs signed the new Treaty it would encourage the other republics to follow suit.

2. The 1991 coup d'état

On 19 August 1991, on the eve of the signing of the Union Treaty by Russia, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, but before the six other republics in favour of reforming the Union had declared their support, a coup d'état took place in Moscow, launched by a group of conservatives who could not accept the risk that the USSR might break up. They decided to depose Gorbachev, who was on holiday in the Crimea at the time, replace him as Head of State by the Vice-President Gennady Yanayev, declare a state of emergency and restore censorship. Boris Yeltsin, who had been elected President of the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR by universal suffrage on 12 June 1991 with a large majority (53.7 % of the vote), thwarted the coup. He called for a general strike, rallying troops and leading demonstrations against the coup leaders. The latter were swiftly arrested.

Gorbachev returned to Moscow on 27 August after the failure of the coup d'état, but he did not regain his position of power. From then on it was Yeltsin who held all the cards. In June 1991 he had convinced the Russian Supreme Soviet to adopt a text proclaiming the

superiority of Russian law over Soviet law. On 12 June 1991, the day he was elected President of Russia, Yeltsin declared the sovereignty of Russia and resigned from the Communist Party. The party was forbidden in the army and state bodies, and he later had it suspended. Gorbachev resigned as General Secretary of the Communist Party. The RSFSR, a pillar of the USSR, distanced itself from the authority of the Kremlin.

Encouraged by the failure of the coup, the Congress of Deputies of the USSR granted substantial powers to the republics, the 'centre' only retaining control over foreign and defence policy. But the republics were increasingly reluctant to accept any limitation on their sovereignty. Central government having lost its authority, demands for independence were heard on all sides, rendering the ultimate break-up of the USSR inevitable.

Lithuania was the first SSR to declare its independence on 11 March 1991. Estonia and Latvia followed suit on 20 and 21 August respectively, during the attempted coup in Moscow. In the Caucasus, Georgia was the first to declare independence on 9 April 1991, followed by Azerbaijan on 30 August 1991 and Armenia on 23 September 1991. One after another the federal entities of the Soviet Union declared independence: Ukraine on 24 August 1991, Belarus on 25 August, Moldova on 27 August, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan on 31 August, Tajikistan on 9 September, Turkmenistan on 27 October and finally Kazakhstan on 16 December. Secession by Ukraine on 1 December 1991 and its refusal to sign the Union Treaty signalled the ultimate demise of the Soviet Union.

C. The creation of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS)

Gorbachev, still President of the USSR — having been elected on 1 March 1990 by the Soviet deputies after obtaining the necessary amendment to the Constitution — tried, in vain, to have a treaty of economic union adopted. On 3 December he issued a dramatic appeal to prevent disintegration of the Union. On 8 December, however, the Presidents of Russia, Belarus and Ukraine, meeting in Minsk, decided that 'the Soviet Union as a geopolitical reality and a subject of international law has ceased to exist'. They signed an accord establishing a Commonwealth of Sovereign States open to all the States of the former USSR. Gorbachev had no option but to endorse this solution. On 21 December, at a meeting in Alma-Ata, eight other republics joined the initial three. The Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) thus came to be established. It comprised 11 republics: Armenia, Azerbaijan (formal membership in 1993), Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova (formal membership in 1994), Uzbekistan (formal membership in 1992), Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Ukraine. Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Georgia refused to sign the Declaration of Alma-Ata. The same day, the 11 signatories informed Gorbachev that the USSR and his role as President had ceased to exist. Gorbachev resigned on 25 December.

1. The role of the CIS

The CIS is a loosely bound, inter-state organisation, comprising some but not all of the former SSRs of the Soviet Union. Following in the footsteps of the former Eastern Bloc countries, the Baltic States were determined to move closer to the West. The logical conclusion of this trend came with membership of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation and the European Union in 2004.

The CIS Charter, which sets forth the basic rules for its operation, was adopted in 1993. That

same year, the Member States signed an Agreement on Economic Union in order to develop economic and trade cooperation. In 1993 the increasingly unsettled political situation in Abkhazia and the region of Tskhinvali forced Georgia to apply for CIS membership.

Between 1994 and 1999 the CIS, with its headquarters in Minsk, was paralysed by tensions between Member States. Following a Russian initiative the executive bodies of the CIS were reformed in the first decade of the 21st century to give it renewed impetus. But most of the projects launched within the framework of the CIS have come to nothing. The 1992 Collective Security Treaty, which was signed by Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, purports to enshrine the military strength of the CIS. Its official aim is to combat terrorism and organised crime. But the Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO) is often seen as an instrument designed to guarantee Russian control over its 'near abroad'. Azerbaijan and Georgia, which signed the original Treaty, have left the CSTO. Uzbekistan also left, but, yielding to Russian pressure, rejoined the organisation in early 2006.

Despite the patent failure of the CIS, some former Soviet Republics maintain trade links through the Eurasian Economic Community (EurAsEC), established in October 2000 between Belarus, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. In September 2003 Belarus, Russia, Ukraine and Kazakhstan signed an agreement setting up a Common Economic Space.

Since its inception, several States have opted to leave the CIS prompted by fears of Russian interference in their domestic affairs. Ukraine gave up membership when it rejected the organisation's Charter on 22 January 1993. In accordance with the Charter, Turkmenistan applied for observer status within the CIS in 2005. But its application has been held up by the Council of Heads of State, so Turkmenistan is still officially a full member. On 14 August 2008, following the Russian intervention in Georgia and the conflict in South Ossetia, the Georgian Parliament voted to take Georgia out of the CIS.

2. The CIS and the legacy of the USSR

The CIS was originally also intended to settle the problems posed by the unravelling of the Soviet legacy (nationalities, territory, legacy of the Soviet state apparatus, etc.). In practice, the Russian Federation took over the Soviet legacy: the Kremlin, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, single command of strategic nuclear weapons, the seat as a Permanent Member of the United Nations Security Council, gold and diamond reserves, and oil resources. In return, Russia recognised the inviolability of frontiers with its partner states, which was important for countries with large Russian minorities (such as Ukraine and Kazakhstan). When the USSR collapsed, the borders between former SSRs were not officially disputed, but as soon as it started to disintegrate, some Autonomous Republics and Regions started demanding self-government or independence from the former SSRs.

Nationalist movements, unleashed by the break-up of the USSR and exacerbated by religious conflicts, sapped the independence of recently formed States, particularly in the Caucasus. Under the Constitution of the USSR, SSRs could secede from the USSR. But the individual constitutions of the SSRs did not grant similar rights to their Autonomous Republics and Regions. When the Armenian population of Nagorno-Karabakh, an autonomous region that was part of the SSR of Azerbaijan, proclaimed its independence, it dealt a serious blow to Armenia, suspected by the international community of providing the self-proclaimed republic with military logistic support. Sanctions were consequently imposed on Armenia, which,

although it did not officially recognise the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic, refused to condemn its incursions into Azerbaijan, prompting the fall of the regime in power. Heydar Aliyev, a former *apparatchik* and the new leader of Azerbaijan, agreed to negotiate with the separatists but to no avail. The conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh has become one of many unresolved conflicts in the Caucasus.

Since the independence of Georgia, the Abkhaz people have refused to accept the authority of the Tbilisi government, invoking the right of peoples to self-determination. In this they enjoy the support of the Chechens, themselves in conflict with Moscow for similar reasons, and also that of the Balkars and Kabards who want to establish a Republic of the Peoples of North Caucasus. The South Ossetians have been disputing their status as part of the Republic of Georgia since 1989. They want independence, to unite with the North Ossetians whose territory is inside Russia. This powder keg exploded again on 8 August 2008 when Georgia invoked the need to protect its territorial integrity and sent in large numbers of troops to restore the central government's authority in South Ossetia. This in turn triggered the intervention of the Russian army, which inflicted heavy losses on the Georgian troops. Georgia consequently left the CIS.
In conclusion, the downfall of the USSR has given rise to political reconstruction that has yet to be completed. Despite the efforts of Gorbachev, the break-up of the USSR was inevitable. Given the right of secession, it was also perfectly legal. The CIS emerged from the ruins of the Union. Though a confederate organisation, its real aim was to manage the cumbersome legacy of the Soviet empire. In practice, the Russian Federation is the successor of the USSR. The CIS, which was supposed to settle post-Soviet conflicts at an intergovernmental level, failed to do so. Nor has it succeeded in preventing the risks of 'Balkanisation' of the Caucasus, particularly as some parties see the CIS as a natural extension of Russia. From this standpoint, the CIS should be seen as a phase in the unfinished process of state-building undertaken by the Tsarist empire and the Soviet Union.

D. European Community aid to Eastern Europe

There was, of course, no question of the European Economic Community (EEC) admitting the countries of Eastern Europe until they were capable of participating in the Single Market. However, they needed help in developing a liberal economy and political democracy.

The first step was taken by Gorbachev, President of the USSR, when he decided to allow the Member States of Comecon to negotiate individual trade agreements with the EEC. In September 1988, Hungary did just that, followed by Czechoslovakia in December, Poland in September 1989, the Soviet Union in December and East Germany and Bulgaria in May 1990. These trade agreements had no more than a limited effect, abolishing quantitative restrictions on products imported by the EEC from the Eastern bloc countries, which, as a result of the crisis in the USSR, had seen their exports in that direction drastically reduced and were seeking outlets in the West. Within the EEC, however, there was already a surplus of those products that the East might export, such as agricultural products, steel, coal and textiles.

Accordingly, it was necessary to take further measures and to implement an aid programme. In response to a request made at the Summit of the seven industrialised countries (G7), which took place in Paris on 4 July 1989, the Community established the Phare programme (Poland and Hungary Assistance for the Restructuring of the Economy). In 1990, that programme was extended to all the countries of Central and Eastern Europe (CEECs). It comprised financial

aid for economic restructuring and private investment, as well as export credits and guarantees. As part of the management of Community aid to Central and Eastern Europe, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) was established on 15 April 1991. It was made responsible for the granting of loans for productive investment in the CEECs, which, in turn, were committed to applying the principles of multiparty democracy and the market economy and to promoting private and entrepreneurial initiative.

In addition to these emergency measures, and with a view to a new, larger Europe, the Community decided to establish specific links with the CEECs. On a proposal from the Commission, arrangements for association were adopted to benefit these countries: the 'Europe Agreements'. These Association Agreements were intended gradually to establish bilateral free trade in industrial products between the EEC and each of the CEECs, to develop industrial, technical and scientific cooperation as regards vocational training, the environment and structural reforms, and to establish guaranteed, multiannual financial aid. Institutional dialogue would enable views on political issues to be approximated. The implementation of the agreements would depend on the progress made with regard to human rights, multiparty democracy and economic liberalisation. Each of these bilateral agreements was managed by a Joint Council composed of delegations from the EU Member States and from the country in question. Europe Association Agreements, adjusted so as to take account of the situation in each country, were signed with Poland and Hungary (16 December 1991), Romania (1 February 1993), Bulgaria (8 March 1993) and, after the division of Czechoslovakia, with the Czech Republic and Slovakia (4 October 1993). On 1 March 1993, the four Visegrad countries (Hungary, Poland, Czech Republic and Slovakia) signed the Central European Free Trade Agreement with a view to strengthening ties between these countries and the European Union. In practice, however, relations between these countries and the European Union remained bilateral. Having benefited from trade and cooperation agreements, the Baltic States — Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania — also signed Europe Agreements (12 June 1995), with Slovenia following their example a year later (10 June 1996).

The aim of Europe Agreements was to prepare for the eventual accession of the CEECs to the European Union. The Copenhagen European Council (21–22 June 1993) confirmed that the countries that held associate membership might become full members of the European Union, provided that they fulfilled the given economic and political criteria: 'stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities, the existence of a functioning market economy as well as the capacity to cope with competitive pressure and market forces within the Union. Membership presupposes the candidate's ability to take on the obligations of membership including adherence to the aims of political, economic and monetary union.' The European Council drew up a list of the Central European countries that might accede to the European Union: Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Romania, Bulgaria, Slovenia, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.

Since applications for accession to the EU started to be made by the CEECs in the mid-1990s, the Phare programme mainly aimed to support candidate countries in the process of adopting and implementing the Community acquis and in preparing them for the management of the Structural Funds. During the period 2000–2006, the Phare programme was supplemented by the ISPA programme for the environment and transport and the SAPARD programme for agriculture.

Whereas the aim of the Phare programme was to help the countries of Central and Eastern Europe in their transition to a market economy and to consolidate democratic regimes, the Tacis programme was intended for the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), the

countries of the former Soviet Union. As opposed to the Phare programme, Tacis was a neighbourhood instrument, not a pre-accession instrument.

This Community aid programme was originally intended for the USSR. Following the Dublin and Rome European Councils in 1990, the European Communities adopted a programme of technical assistance for economic reform and recovery in the Soviet Union. When the Commonwealth of Independent States was created in December 1991, marking the end of the USSR, the European Communities decided to apply the financial instrument for technical assistance which had been devised for the Soviet Union to the CIS. The Community programme was therefore known as Tacis (Technical Assistance to the Commonwealth of Independent States).

The Tacis I programme covered the period 1991–1999. It took a sectoral and transversal approach, and the technical and financial aid granted under the programme was mainly intended for the restructuring of businesses and human resources and to ensure nuclear safety. In order to address the shortcomings of the first programme, the Council recommended in its new Tacis II regulation for the period 2000–2006 that a concentration of projects be carried out with a limited number of neighbourhood objectives so that the planning and monitoring of the projects would be more in line with the realities on the ground. Whereas the Tacis I programme was mainly managed at central Commission headquarters in Brussels, Tacis II tended to use European Commission delegations in the countries which had been granted the Community aid. Moreover, a cross-border programme (Tacis CBC) was established to improve contacts between adjoining communities. Tacis II also redefined its priorities: nuclear safety and institutional, legal and administrative reform were the priorities for the 2000–2006 programme. For the first time, an EU technical assistance programme was used as a conditionality tool following the Russian army’s intervention in Chechnya in 1999.

For the period 2007–2013, the European Union has established new external aid instruments. Phare and the other pre-accession instruments (ISPA and SAPARD) have been replaced by the IPA (Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance). The CARDS neighbourhood programme, which aimed to provide Community assistance to the countries of South-Eastern Europe so that they might participate in the process of stabilisation and association with the EU, was also absorbed by the IPA. As EU candidate countries, Turkey, Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, along with the potential candidate countries (Western Balkans), benefit from the IPA. The European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI) replaced the Tacis and MEDA neighbourhood instruments in 2007.

II. Reunification of a divided Germany

The collapse of the Communist bloc facilitated not only the emancipation of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe but also the reunification of Germany, which had been divided for nearly half a century.

The unconditional surrender of the defeated Nazi Germany took place on 7–8 May 1945. The Allies had jointly taken over internal and external German sovereignty and divided its territory into four occupation zones, with the Soviets in the East and the Americans, British and French in the West. Berlin was also divided into four zones. Whilst awaiting the completion of the Peace Treaty, the Allies decided to pursue a '4-D' policy aimed at demilitarising, denazifying, decentralising and democratising Germany. The Allied Control Council was given responsibility for governing the whole of Germany, but its decisions had to be unanimous, and each occupying country was autonomous in its zone. No decision had been made to divide Germany up into more than one State, but differences of opinion between the Soviets and the Western Allies regarding Germany were heightened by the start of the Cold War. The blockade imposed from 24 June 1948 to 12 May 1949 by the Soviet Union around the western sectors of Berlin, following the extension of monetary reforms and the introduction of the German mark (DM) in the western sectors of the city, forced the Allies to supply their sectors using an airlift. In 1949, the East-West rivalries led to the division of the area into two States: the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) in the West and the German Democratic Republic (GDR) in the East. Both German States secured only limited sovereignty, each being integrated into a bloc of other countries: the West with the Atlantic Alliance and the European organisations, and the East with the Warsaw Pact countries and Comecon. The two German States had developed opposing political regimes: liberal democracy in the West and Communist collectivism in the East. The Peace Treaty had not been signed, but, as victors, the former Allies of the Second World War retained their exclusive decision-making powers over German borders, German unity and the fate of Berlin.

The issue of reunification was raised when these two States were formed. In order to avoid the rearmament of West Germany, the Soviet Union proposed, several times, that Germany be reunified and neutralised — an idea which the West approved on condition that free elections be held, a condition which Moscow found unacceptable. In the West, Chancellor Adenauer deemed that reunification should take place by absorbing East Germany into the FRG, a free and prosperous country supported by the West, which could put pressure on the USSR. In the East, on the other hand, the GDR, with the support of the USSR, wanted to reunify Germany in accordance with the Socialist model. Opinions on reunification were further divided by the construction of the Berlin Wall, on 12–13 August 1961, to prevent Germans from the GDR from fleeing to the FRG. Although Adenauer and de Gaulle, President of the French Republic, had wanted to react forcefully to this violation of Berlin's status, Kennedy, President of the United States, and Macmillan, British Prime Minister, deemed that the 'balance of terror' created by the presence of nuclear arms in the East as well as in the West did not allow for policies based on force, and that détente with the USSR should not be compromised by opposing the consolidation of the GDR. This became the status quo in Germany and had to be accepted by all. For his part, de Gaulle sought to align himself with the USSR and to distance himself from the United States.

In these circumstances, the West German Government was also compelled to normalise its relations with the East, no longer to seek reunification which would benefit the FRG but to accept the division of Germany and to establish normal relations with the GDR. This resulted in the *Ostpolitik* (Eastern Policy) developed by the Social Democrat Willy Brandt, Foreign

Minister and Vice-Chancellor from 1966 and Chancellor between 1969 and 1974. The *Ostpolitik*, which put an end to the Hallstein Doctrine that advocated breaking off the FRG's diplomatic relations with any country that recognised the RDA, aimed firstly to appease the FRG's relations with Eastern Europe and the USSR and then to seek rapprochement with the Communist bloc. Even though the *Ostpolitik* caused much controversy in West Germany, especially among the Christian Democrats, the Brandt Government signed the Moscow Treaty with the Soviets on 12 August 1970, confirming the renunciation of force and the inviolability of borders; then, on 7 December 1970, it signed the Warsaw Treaty with the Polish, giving de facto recognition to the Oder-Neisse Line, imposed by Stalin to the benefit of Poland and to the detriment of the German peoples expelled from Silesia, Pomerania and East Prussia. Reconciliation between the FRG and the GDR was facilitated by the agreement of the four major powers on Berlin (3 September 1971), confirming their authority over the city and making relations between East and West Berlin more relaxed, despite the continued existence of the Wall; it was then concluded with the Basic Treaty (21 December 1972) aimed at establishing mutual recognition of both German States. The division of Germany was confirmed by the simultaneous admission of both the FRG and the GDR to the UN on 18 September 1973. The inviolability of borders was confirmed by the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) on 1 August 1975. From that moment on, the division of Germany seemed definitive.

With a view to improving international détente, there was a resurgence of the national ideal in the 1980s in both the FRG and the GDR. The development of trade and cultural relations between the two Germanys helped strengthen the feeling of belonging to a single nation. In the FRG, some intellectuals began to allude to an image of a reunified Germany at the centre of Europe which might act as a bridge between East and West. On 15 March 1984, Chancellor Kohl recognised this aspiration to unity and the need to find a solution. However, he later made it clear that Germany must remain in the Atlantic camp, the guarantor of democracy. He condemned anti-Western neutralism. The GDR's view was that reunification would take place when Socialism had triumphed in West Germany.

In May 1980, the Western powers confirmed that their objective was to see a reunified Germany with democratic institutions integrated into the European Community. But the debates in Germany on reunification caused anxiety among its European neighbours, who feared the strength of a unified German State and the renaissance of pan-Germanism. They would have preferred the two German States merely to develop good relations, at most in the form of a confederation. The French were acutely afraid that Gorbachev's policy of glasnost would persuade the Germans to accept neutralisation as the price of reunification.

A. The collapse of the GDR and the fall of the Berlin Wall

Although possible reunification still seemed far off, the unexpected collapse of the Communist regime in East Germany dramatically changed the parameters of the problem and paved the way for swift reunification to the benefit of West Germany.

Whilst Gorbachev was liberalising the Soviet regime and the movements opposed to Communism were gathering strength in Central and Eastern Europe, the German Democratic Republic (GDR) appeared to be an invincible fortress, solidly constructed by the Communist Party, which was supported by the army and the secret police, the leaders of which were set against any change and counted on the support of the Soviet troops stationed in the GDR.

Nevertheless, there was a growing wave of opposition, supported by the Protestant churches which, in the autumn of 1988, called for a ‘society with a human face’, and subsequently in 1989 for a liberalisation of the regime. Large numbers of opponents gathered for ‘Monday prayers’, protesting against the police state and calling for democracy. Reform groups advocated ‘Socialism with a human face’, a third way between the Stalinist Socialism of the GDR and the liberal capitalism of the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG). This, they claimed, would ensure the survival of East Germany rather than its absorption into West Germany. However, the reformers soon found themselves overtaken by events. A series of vast demonstrations took place, calling for freedom of thought, freedom of the press and freedom of assembly. The people of East Germany wanted more than simply a reform of the GDR and Socialism; they wanted a share of the prosperity enjoyed by West Germany, which had seen a massive influx of refugees from East Germany. They demonstrated in favour of a united Germany.

The East German Government, led by Erich Honecker, was counting on Soviet support to save the regime. But Gorbachev, wary of compromising his policy of rapprochement with the West, refused any sort of military intervention, and confirmed the fact to Helmut Kohl when he visited Bonn on 13 June 1989. Gorbachev tried to persuade the East German leaders to proceed with reforms, along the lines of perestroika. On 18 October, Honecker, who refused to yield, was stripped of his post and replaced as leader of the Communist Party by Egon Krenz, with Moscow’s approval. Hans Modrow, who was in favour of the reforms, became Head of Government. But it was too late. On 4 November, the new leaders were booed by a crowd of a million people gathered on Alexanderplatz in East Berlin. On 9 November, this led to the decision to authorise travel abroad. Immediately, thousands of people wanted to cross through the frontier posts in Berlin, which were forced to open up to the crowd. The demonstrators started to demolish the ‘Wall of Shame’. Several million East Germans visited West Berlin, the ‘shop window of the West’.

The following day, 10 November, the leaders of the GDR promised that ‘free and secret elections’ would take place in May 1990. However, continuing demonstrations forced them to bring the elections forward to 18 March. The Socialist reformers were defeated and the Christian Democrat Lothar de Maizière became Head of Government of the GDR. On 12 April, he declared himself in favour of a unified Germany within NATO and the European Community.

B. The international issue of German reunification

Reunification was not merely an intra-German affair. The status of Germany, and in particular that of Berlin, could be amended only with the agreement of the Four Powers who had forced Germany’s unconditional surrender in 1945. These countries might well be anxious about the formation at the centre of Europe of a State of 80 million inhabitants whose political, economic and financial importance was likely to upset the balance of power and threaten the stability that the division of Germany had helped to establish.

Consequently, Chancellor Helmut Kohl and his Foreign Minister, Hans-Dietrich Genscher, worked hard to reassure them. In his programme for reunification of 28 November 1989, the Chancellor confirmed that German unity would take place in the context of the European Community. He then promised that a united Germany would remain part of NATO and that reunification would be undertaken in close consultation with the Allies. The Strasbourg European Council (8–9 December) gave this plan formal acknowledgement: it approved the

unification of Germany on condition that the country was run in a democratic fashion, ‘in full respect of the relevant agreements and treaties and of all the principles defined by the Helsinki Final Act, in a context of dialogue and East-West cooperation … [and] in the perspective of European integration.’

However, despite these statements of principle, divergent attitudes set France and the United Kingdom, which were not in any great hurry to see reunification take place, against the United States, which was pushing for it to happen, and the Soviet Union, which was resigned to it happening in return for certain guarantees.

In the United Kingdom, there was persistent mistrust towards Germany, and the Conservative Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher, expressed her concerns. She declared that until the GDR and its neighbouring countries became democratic, she would rather that Germany remained divided. Integration into a European federation did not seem to her to be a viable solution since a reunified Germany would dominate its partner countries. She would have preferred the creation of a counter-balancing union comprising the United Kingdom, France and the United States, but she was unsuccessful; the Americans gave priority to their relations with Germany, and the French were attached to the Franco–German axis.

Hesitations also arose in France. A unified Germany might turn towards the USSR, despite the difference in political regimes, as had been the case with the German–Soviet treaties of 1922 (Rapallo) and 1939 (Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact). President Mitterrand would initially have preferred Germany to remain divided. He told Mikhail Gorbachev this in Kiev on 6 December. On 22 November, he announced a visit to the GDR, which took place on 20–22 December when reunification was a virtual certainty. Mitterrand had to accept it, but he subordinated German unity to European unification and to the strengthening of the Community institutions. Helmut Kohl responded to François Mitterrand’s uncertainty by confirming that German unity and European unity were two sides of the same coin. Mitterrand and Kohl agreed that a Franco–German alliance would boost the idea of political union in Europe.

It was the United States that provided the most active support to the West German Government, as the FRG represented its strongest partner in continental Europe. But the United States was aware that reunification ought not to weaken the cohesion of the Atlantic Alliance or jeopardise Gorbachev’s policy of openness towards the West. It therefore remained committed to Europe, a stance that reassured the United Kingdom and France.

In the Soviet Union, Gorbachev, who would have preferred Germany to remain divided with a reformed GDR, stated in January 1990 that reunification was inevitable and that he would accept this according to the old Soviet ideal of a unified and neutral Germany. Kohl, who met Gorbachev on 10 February, declared that neutralisation was unacceptable. This resulted in an impasse. Finally, the Soviet Union’s imperative need for Western economic and financial aid forced Gorbachev to relent. The President of the United States, George Bush, who had met Gorbachev on 3 December 1989 in Malta, promised him massive aid packages if he accepted the integration of the former GDR into NATO. For his part, Kohl promised to contribute to the financial cost of having Soviet troops stationed in the GDR. Lastly, the G7 group of leading industrialised countries, meeting on 7 July, came out in favour of providing economic aid to the USSR.

C. The European Community and East Germany

German reunification resulted in the enlargement of the European Community to the East. But it did not involve the accession of a new Member State through negotiations and treaties. It was simply the extension of the Federal Republic of Germany. Within the European Economic Community, trade between East and West Germany was already considered inter-German trade and was not subject to the EEC's common external tariff.

The Dublin European Council (28 April 1990) decided that the integration of GDR territory into the Community would be effective as soon as unification had been legally established and would take place without any revision of the Treaties, subject to transitional measures concerning, in particular, foreign trade, agriculture, structural policies and the environment. The *Länder* of the East, the economy of which was in ruins, would receive Community aid in the same way as the other disadvantaged regions in Italy, Greece, Spain, Portugal and Ireland had done. A 'Community aid programme' was implemented, with ECU 3 000 million being entered in the budget over three years, a fifth of the EEC's structural aid budget. But this was very little in comparison with the enormous requirements of the former GDR *Länder*, and the FRG was responsible for meeting these needs: reconstructing infrastructure, restructuring uncompetitive East German industry and providing aid for new construction and for cleaning up the environment. Each year, more than 110 000 million Deutschmarks would be spent, forcing the Federal Government to reduce spending, increase taxes and borrow funds in order to protect the currency.

Reunification brought few changes, however, to the Community institutions. The relative weight of Germany had increased: it now provided 23 % of the population of the Twelve (previously 19 %) and 30 % of GNP (previously 26 %). But German representation in the Commission, the Council of Ministers and the Court of Justice remained constant. Only the number of its MEPs had increased. The new *Länder*, which represented 18 million inhabitants, were entitled, initially, to send 18 observers to the European Parliament and, subsequently, to elect 18 Members, following the decision of the Edinburgh European Council (11–12 December 1992). This increased the number of German Members from 81 to 99. In return, at the 1994 elections, several extra seats were allocated, among others, to France, the United Kingdom and Italy, each of which saw the number of their Members increase from 81 to 87. Thus, from 1994 onwards, the European Parliament of the Twelve comprised 567 Members, instead of the previous 518.

D. The Treaty on the Final Settlement with respect to Germany

The definitive international status of reunified Germany was set out at the 'Two Plus Four Conference' which brought together the Four Powers, guarantors of the quadripartite status initiated in 1945, and representatives of the two German States. The Conference opened in Bonn on 5 May 1990 and ended with the 'Treaty on the Final Settlement with respect to Germany', signed in Moscow on 12 September.

The key question was whether or not NATO should be extended to include the GDR, a plan to which Mikhail Gorbachev was opposed. President Bush proposed that the USSR be provided with security guarantees. On 16 July, Helmut Kohl met Gorbachev, and they reached an agreement on the terms and conditions. The issue of borders was raised by Poland, which demanded definitive recognition of the Oder–Neisse Line. France supported Poland and made its agreement conditional on this demand being met. On 17 July, the Conference

adopted a ‘Declaration on the definitive nature of the borders of Germany’. Germany and Poland undertook to sign a treaty recognising their common border (subsequently signed on 14 November). Finally, the bargaining over the amount of the financial contribution to be paid for the withdrawal of the Soviet troops from the GDR and their relocation back to the USSR ended with the FRG agreeing to pay 12 000 million Deutschmarks, plus an interest-free loan of DM 3 000 million.

The Treaty on the Final Settlement with respect to Germany of 12 September formally recognised the fact that ‘the German people, freely exercising their right of self-determination, have expressed their will to bring about the unity of Germany as a state … [and] as an equal and sovereign member of a united Europe.’ It confirmed the definitive nature of the frontiers. United Germany would be free to join the alliance of its choice; as it happens, this was the Atlantic Alliance. NATO structures would be extended to the territory of the former GDR only after the departure of Soviet troops. Subsequently, NATO forces might be stationed there, but without nuclear weapons. Above all, the military capacity of reunified Germany had to be limited to 370 000 men, half the total of FRG and GDR troops. Germany had to abandon the manufacture and possession of atomic, biological and chemical weapons (the FRG having already committed to this in 1955) and to sign the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

The Unification Treaty, signed by the FRG and the GDR in East Berlin on 31 August, entered into force on 3 October 1990. Thus, in the space of less than a year, Germany had recovered its unity and its sovereignty. The Four Powers renounced the quadripartite status of Germany. Russian troops would withdraw from Germany by August 1994. Western troops would leave Berlin on 8 September 1994 but remain in Germany under the aegis of the Atlantic Alliance. Germany remained subject to the international status defined by the Treaty of 12 September 1990 and ratified by the second Summit of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (Paris, 19–21 November 1990), at which the sixteen members of NATO and the six Warsaw Pact countries signed the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe, which sought to establish parity between the conventional weapons arsenals of the two military alliances. This Treaty would lose its significance with the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact on 1 July 1991.

E. Chancellor Kohl’s role in reunification

During the swift process of German reunification in 1990, the Chancellor of the FRG, Helmut Kohl, was to play a key role, both at inter-German level, with the incorporation of the GDR into the FRG, and at international level, securing the agreement of the four former Second World War Allies and assuaging the anxieties of neighbouring countries.

The West German Government was initially doubtful as to the possibility of forthcoming reunification. The Government, like the people of West Germany, overestimated the solidity of the GDR. The West German Government was convinced that the Soviet Union, despite imposing reforms on the Communist regime in the GDR, would oppose the fall of the regime. Consequently, relations became more intense between the two German States. At this point, the situation began to develop rapidly. On 13 June 1989, during his first official visit to the FRG, Mikhail Gorbachev signed a joint declaration with Helmut Kohl confirming their good relations and their willingness to ‘work to overcome the division of Europe’. He assured the Chancellor that he had ruled out any intervention by Soviet troops in the GDR. It was above all the scale of the demonstrations in East Germany, the fall of Honecker and the flight of East

Germans towards the West that proved that reunification was becoming possible and even necessary. For the FRG, the most important thing was to stop the influx of refugees, whom it was having insurmountable problems in accommodating, by providing East Germany with the economic and financial aid which it required to retain its workforce.

Chancellor Kohl, however, remained cautious. On 28 November, without having consulted other West German politicians or the Allies, he put forward a ten-point plan to restore German unity. Although 'a unified German State remained the Federal Government's objective', it would be attained only gradually. In response to the proposal put forward by Hans Modrow for a 'contractual community' between the two German States, Kohl deemed that it was first necessary to develop inter-German relations. The FRG would aid the GDR in all areas, provided that the latter moved towards a system of pluralist democracy and the liberation of economic structures. The first step, therefore, would be the establishment of a confederal union.

But events snowballed, and Kohl realised that he would have to speed ahead. He proposed monetary union to the GDR, a step that contributed to the victory of the Christian Democrats and their allies, who were calling for rapid reunification, in the East German elections of 18 March 1990. On 18 May, Helmut Kohl and Lothar de Maizière signed the German Treaty on the Creation of a Monetary, Economic and Social Union, which entered into force on 1 July. The strong Deutschmark was introduced in the GDR and replaced the weak East German mark. Despite opposition from the Bundesbank, which considered the strategy unrealistic and likely to lead to inflation, the currency was converted on a one-to-one basis. Kohl had imposed this parity as he deemed it the only way in which to encourage East Germans to stay where they were. Economic and monetary union was, moreover, the prelude to political unity.

Reunification then took place swiftly by the simple expansion of the FRG to include the territory of the former GDR through the application of Article 23 of the Basic Law, which provided for the accession of new *Länder*, an article already invoked in 1957 when the Saar became German territory again. This procedure avoided the difficulties involved in creating a new German State with a new Constitution. As early as 31 August 1990, the Unification Treaty was signed in Berlin. The political and administrative regime of the FRG was extended to the five *Länder* of the GDR, with some adjustments to the borders (Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, Brandenburg, Saxony, Saxony-Anhalt and Thuringia), with Berlin as capital. The Treaty came into force on 3 October. The new *Bundesländer* elected their assemblies on 14 October. The elections to the Bundestag for the whole of Germany, which took place on 2 December, saw the success of the Christian Democrat-Liberal coalition and thus ratified the reunification of the country.

III. The Yugoslav conflict and European Community diplomacy

Whilst the break-up of the Soviet Union was relatively peaceful, the collapse of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia led to years of civil war that ended only with the intervention of the Western powers. In 1989, the Republic of Serbia announced its intention of creating a 'Greater Serbia' that would include the Serb minorities in Croatia, Bosnia and Macedonia. When Croatia and Slovenia declared independence in 1991, they were brutally repressed by the largely Serb Yugoslav federal army. The European Community at first declared a preference for the continuation of the Yugoslav Federation, which had been linked to the European Economic Community (EEC) by a cooperation agreement since 1980. The Twelve, divided, had to call on the United Nations and the United States, which played the leading role in the Yugoslav crisis. However, the European Union regained some measure of cohesion, with the adoption of an action plan for the former Yugoslavia initiated by France and Germany in November 1993. The war in the former Yugoslavia was a test of the common foreign and security policy (CFSP) provided for by the Treaty on European Union. It also highlighted the inadequacies of an independent military capability, whereas it was the European Union that provided most of the humanitarian aid.

A. The Yugoslav conflict

The Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia, proclaimed in 1945 by the Communist leader who was a symbol of the resistance against German troops, Tito (born Josip Broz; the name 'Tito' was adopted in 1934), comprised six Republics: Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro, and two autonomous provinces: Vojvodina and Kosovo. Tito had succeeded in maintaining this federal structure, despite antagonism between the different nationalities, through his authoritarian regime and the federal League of Communists, and by maintaining a balance between the Serbs and other ethnic groups. He had broken away from the Soviet Union and became one of the main representatives of the Non-Aligned Movement, thereby giving Yugoslavia great international prestige. After Tito's death in 1980, power was exercised by a collective presidency which had to cope with the deterioration of the economic situation (the failure of self-management Socialism) and, above all, the resurgence of interethnic conflict.

In 1989, Slobodan Milošević became President of the Republic of Serbia and confirmed his intention to create a 'Greater Serbia', encompassing the Serbian minorities of Croatia, Bosnia and Macedonia. The autonomous status of Vojvodina and Kosovo within the Republic of Serbia was abolished. Although the Communist Party — which became the Socialist Party under Slobodan Milošević in 1989 — remained in power in Serbia and Montenegro, it severed its links with the federal League of Communists in Slovenia and Croatia in February 1990. In April, reformers gained the upper hand in Slovenia, and a non-Communist Government was formed in Croatia following free elections. In July, Slovenia adopted a declaration of sovereignty. In September, Kosovo proclaimed itself a Republic. In November, free elections in Bosnia saw the defeat of the Communists. In December, Croatia adopted a new constitution that conferred on it the right to secede, and the Slovenians voted for independence in a referendum. On 20 and 21 February 1991, the Slovenian and Croatian Parliaments proposed the 'dissociation' of the Federation into several sovereign and autonomous States.

Finally, on 25 June 1991, Croatia and Slovenia proclaimed their independence and their 'dissociation' from the Yugoslav Federation, a proclamation that was rejected by the Federal

Parliament. On 27 June, the Federal Army, consisting mainly of Serbs, was ordered into Slovenia to take control of checkpoints on the Italian, Austrian and Hungarian borders. Violent conflict began. In Croatia, bloody confrontation took place between the Croatian police and Serb extremists, who were supported by the Federal army.

B. The vain mediation attempts of the European Community and the United Nations

Faced with the crisis, the 12 countries of the European Community made it clear that they would prefer the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, which had signed a Cooperation Agreement with the European Economic Community (EEC) in 1980, to remain intact. They feared that disputes over borders would constitute a dangerous precedent in Central and Eastern Europe and decided not to recognise the independence of Slovenia and Croatia. Then, when the fighting started in June 1991, they had to deal with the problem, since the UN deemed the Yugoslav crisis a domestic affair, while the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), in which the USSR was supporting Serbia, paralysed by the unanimity rule, had simply empowered the European Community to intervene.

On 29 July 1991, after attempting to secure a ceasefire and the suspension of declarations of independence, the Twelve declared the inviolability of the Federation's internal frontiers, a declaration that was rejected by Slobodan Milošević and the Croatian Serbs, who refused to be involved in an independent Croatia. Fighting intensified in Croatia, where Serbs were carrying out fierce bomb attacks on Vukovar. The Twelve organised a peace conference in The Hague which began on 7 September 1991 under the chairmanship of Lord Carrington, formerly British Foreign Secretary and Secretary-General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO). However, because of discord amongst the Twelve, they managed neither to force an end to the fighting nor to agree on a political solution.

In September, in an attempt to halt the fighting, the Netherlands Presidency of the European Community, supported by France and Germany, proposed sending a Western European Union (WEU) intervention force to the region, but the United Kingdom, backed by Denmark and Portugal, was opposed to any commitment of troops. The EEC Member States, unable to reach agreement on sending a European intervention force, called on the UN Security Council to intervene in November 1991. Moreover, France then called for a United Nations Emergency Force to be dispatched, but the Security Council did no more than impose an embargo on the supply of arms to Yugoslavia. However, its effect was to hamper the resistance efforts of the Croatians and the Bosnians against the Serbs, who were already extensively equipped.

On the ruins of the Yugoslav Federation, Serbia and Montenegro proclaimed the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (27 April 1992), in which the Serbs wanted to integrate the Serb-populated enclaves of Croatia and of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The UN and the EEC decided not to impose a military solution and cooperated to try to find a peaceful settlement in the former Yugoslavia. Following the continuation of the civil war in the former Yugoslavia and as a result of the ethnic cleansing which was being carried out, a United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) with some 15 000 members was created on 21 February 1992. UNPROFOR was initially only deployed in Croatia, since Milošević was opposed to the inclusion of Bosnia, where Serb militia, assisted by the Federal army, were beginning to besiege Muslim towns and cities, Sarajevo in particular, and to carry out raids to purge them of their Muslim population. A 6 000-strong UNPROFOR II was sent to Bosnia only in

October 1992; it struggled to enforce the truce and to protect humanitarian convoys.

With regard to resolving the conflict, the Carrington-Cutileiro Plan, submitted in February 1992 as a result of the peace conference held since September 1991 under the auspices of the EU, aimed to prevent war breaking out in Bosnia. The European proposal took into account the desire for independence already expressed by Slovenia and Croatia, and subsequently by Macedonia (15 September 1991) and Bosnia and Herzegovina (15 October 1991), abandoned the continued existence of a Yugoslav Federation but made recognition of the Republics conditional upon a general agreement on minority rights, guaranteed by a Court of Justice, upon the special status of certain regions and upon a common customs policy. Milošević refused the plan since he already controlled one third of Croatian territory. For him, the creation of UNPROFOR had the advantage of 'freezing' Serb conquests. And, above all, the Twelve were divided on the issue of recognition. German Chancellor Helmut Kohl, under pressure from the German public, wanted to move quickly on Slovenia and Croatia because of the affinity between these countries and German-speaking Europe, whilst France, fearing the extension of German influence and better disposed towards the Serbs, preferred to maintain some degree of Yugoslav unity; this feeling was shared by Spain, which was dealing with Basque and Catalan uprisings, and Great Britain, preoccupied with Northern Ireland.

On 16 December 1991, keen to demonstrate their solidarity in the run-up to the signing of the Treaty on European Union in Maastricht, the Twelve decided to recognise every Republic that wanted to be recognised as such, on condition that it respected human rights, minority rights and the right to arbitration. Proceeding in this manner, however, had the drawback of eliminating the previous global agreement between the parties that had been the subject of the peace conference. On 23 December 1991, Germany unilaterally recognised Slovenia and Croatia. It was followed, on 15 January 1992, by its partner countries after the conference's Arbitration Commission had decided that these two Republics satisfied the requisite conditions. In the case of Bosnia, the Arbitration Commission suggested that a referendum take place. That was duly held on 29 February and 1 March: the Muslim and Croat majority voted for independence, the Serbs abstained and declared a 'Serbian Republic of Bosnia', intensifying the war. Bosnia was recognised on 6 April. As a result of Greek opposition, however, Macedonia was not recognised until December 1993, under the name of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Even if the principles of the Carrington-Cutileiro Plan were accepted by the three ethnic groups of Bosnia and Herzegovina in April 1992, the proposals included in the peace plan were finally refused by the Bosniak leader Alija Izetbegović. From this point on, the conflict in Bosnia worsened.

As regards the Yugoslav crisis, which was a particularly complicated issue, the European Community had not managed to pursue a coherent policy, mainly because of divergences of opinion between the Member States, which augured ill for the common foreign and security policy (CFSP) to be established by the Treaty on European Union. The Community was forced to appeal to the UN, which henceforth played the leading role in the Yugoslav crisis, although not entirely satisfactorily. The peace conference became a joint enterprise between the EEC and the UN and was held in Geneva from September 1992 onwards as a permanent centre for negotiations, but to no avail. In January 1993, United Nations Special Envoy Cyrus Vance and European Community representative Lord Owen took over from the 'European' Carrington-Cutileiro duo. But on 18 June 1993, Lord Owen pronounced the Vance-Owen Plan — which provided for the division of Bosnia into ten semi-autonomous regions — 'dead'. Vance, who resigned from his post in April, was replaced on 1 May by the Norwegian Foreign Minister Thorvald Stoltenberg. The two mediators acted under United Nations mandate. From that point on, the European Community was excluded from the core of the

negotiations. It was on the initiative of the Owen-Stoltenberg duo that UNPROFOR's mandate was extended to include Bosnia. The number of UN peacekeepers (or 'blue berets') was subsequently increased. However, the Owen-Stoltenberg Plan was rejected on 29 August 1993 by the Bosniaks.

Finally, in November 1993, the European Union regained some sort of cohesion by adopting, on the initiative of France and Germany, an action plan for the former Yugoslavia (the Juppé-Kinkel Plan) which would underpin European diplomacy until the peace accords of 1995: territorial integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina and territorial concessions between the communities. The European Union provided most of the humanitarian aid, but it did not have its own autonomous military capacity. It was the European Member States, on an individual basis, that provided the contingents required for the UN peacekeeping forces and participated in the military action taken by NATO that forced the Serbs to yield. A 'contact group' made up of Germany, the United States, France, Italy, the United Kingdom and the Russian Federation was created in February 1994. On the initiative of this group, the negotiations for peace made rapid headway. However, Slobodan Milošević hampered the good progress of the negotiations by imposing an embargo on the River Drina. The Bosnian Serbs refused to continue with the negotiations in October 1994.

At the instigation of French President Jacques Chirac, the UN voted a resolution on 16 June 1995 creating a Rapid Reaction Force (RRF) tasked with supporting the UN peacekeepers in Bosnia. This provided the stability required to secure a ceasefire in October 1995 across the entire territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

C. The Dayton Agreement

It was the intervention of the Americans that eventually proved decisive; by assisting the Croatian army, they established a balance with the Serb forces in Bosnia, and their diplomatic intervention led to the peace conference which met in Dayton (Ohio) from 1 to 21 November 1995 and reached an agreement that was concluded in Paris on 14 December. The Dayton Agreement was a peace agreement that preserved the entity of the Bosnian state within its international recognised frontiers, with a reunified Sarajevo as its capital and comprising two entities: one Muslim-Croat (51 % of the territory), the other Serb (49 % of the territory). In order to ensure compliance with this agreement, President Clinton secured the Senate's backing to send 20 000 American soldiers to Bosnia. On 20 December 1995, UNPROFOR was replaced by IFOR (Implementation Force), a 63 000-strong multilateral force under the command of NATO, which included 20 000 US soldiers and was responsible for keeping peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The western Balkans would nevertheless continue to be a powder keg, but the presence of a multilateral Stabilisation Force (SFOR, which replaced IFOR) under US command, which was set up in November 1996 and renewed in July 1998, brought peace to Bosnia.

Yet other provinces of the former Yugoslavia descended into civil war. This was particularly the case for Kosovo, historically a Serb 'cradle' whose population consisted of 90 % Muslim Albanians who were in favour of independence or incorporation into Albania. Clashes in Kosovo between Albanian separatists and Serb forces increased in 1998. With mediation attempts proving unsuccessful, the European Union imposed sanctions and NATO launched a retaliation operation against Serbia in June 1998.

IV. The reshaping of Europe

At the end of the 20th century, Eastern Europe experienced political events and economic changes which radically altered the geopolitical situation in Europe and transformed existing institutions. The fall of the Berlin Wall in November 1989 speeded up the removal of exhausted Communist regimes. In Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia, in the German Democratic Republic (GDR), and in Romania and Bulgaria, authoritarian regimes gave way to elected pluralist coalitions. As it disappeared, the Communist bloc took with it the military structures of the Warsaw Pact and the planned economic system of Comecon. The former satellite states of the Soviet Union, keen to defend human rights and adopt the principles of the market economy, immediately turned to Western structures.

The Council of Europe, which those countries rapidly joined, acted as an antechamber to their membership of the European Communities, with which they were seeking to strengthen their relations. In addition, German reunification made it possible for the European Communities to be enlarged towards the East. As early as July 1989, at the Paris Summit of the Group of Seven (G7), the European Commission was given the task of coordinating the assistance provided by a certain number of Western donor countries. The European Communities also adopted a series of programmes giving financial and technical support to the countries of Central and Eastern Europe (CEECs). This support was intended to help them create the conditions for a market economy based on private property and enterprise.

Following the geopolitical changes in Europe after the end of the Cold War, some Central European countries, freed from the yoke of Communism, established political and economic structures with a view to developing regional cooperation and preparing for future accession to the European Communities. This approach led to the creation of the Visegrad Group and the Central European Free Trade Agreement (CEFTA).

The CEECs and the states that had emerged from the implosion of the Soviet Union also received support from the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), which, at the Paris Summit in November 1990, decided to take part in the management of the historic changes in Europe and to respond to the new challenges of the post-Cold War period by providing itself with permanent institutions and operational capacities. The CSCE expanded, and in 1994 it became the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), which sought to encourage the emergence of a European security identity.

The new democracies also established closer relations with the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), of which they would gradually become members. The CEECs regarded their integration into Euro-Atlantic military structures as a guarantee of their security and independence in the light of the attempts at interference made by the Russian Federation, the putative successor to the Soviet Union. As the European component of the transatlantic security system was reinforced, so NATO redefined its missions and its method of operation. The end of the Cold War and the transformation of NATO led the countries of Western European Union (WEU), awakening from their 30-year slumber, to strengthen the European pillar of the Atlantic Alliance and to turn WEU into the military arm of the European Union. At the same time, Germany, France, Belgium, Spain and Luxembourg formed the ‘Eurocorps’, which is regarded as the embryo of a future European army and can be made available to both NATO and WEU.

A. From the CSCE to the OSCE

Gorbachev's policy of opening up to the West and the emancipation of the countries of the former Soviet bloc paved the way for the construction of a 'Greater Europe'. This was begun in three areas: security, the development of democracy and economic integration.

The Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), which had met periodically since it was established in Helsinki on 1 August 1975, bringing together 35 countries — all the European countries (including the USSR) except Albania, plus the United States and Canada — was to offer a framework within which to welcome the countries created following the dissolution of the USSR. In accordance with the objectives set out in the Charter of the United Nations, the Helsinki Final Act laid down the 'principles guiding relations between participating states': sovereign equality for all States, renunciation of force, inviolability of frontiers, peaceful settlement of disputes, territorial integrity of States, non-intervention in internal affairs, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and the right of peoples to self-determination. With the signing of the Helsinki Final Act, the CSCE became active in three areas of security which were known at the time as *baskets*.

1) cooperation in the political and military field
2) cooperation in the economic and environmental field
3) cooperation in the field of human rights

The CSCE contributed to the détente between the two blocs and played a useful role in the progress of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the Communist countries, referring in particular to the third basket. It was, however, an organisation without permanent structures, which, at its periodic meetings, adopted declarations by consensus which had no value in law, although they did have some political impact, provided that oppositions between East and West were not too marked.

With the collapse of the Marxist camp, which strengthened the conversion to Western values (political pluralism, market economy, the primacy of law), the CSCE's role could increase. At the request of Mikhail Gorbachev, a revival took place that was intended to consolidate democracy and accelerate disarmament. The Summit of the Heads of State or Government held in Paris on 19–21 November 1990 adopted the Charter of Paris for a New Europe, recalling the principles of the Helsinki Final Act. The Charter welcomed the end of an 'era of confrontation and division' and proclaimed the desire to 'build, consolidate and strengthen democracy as the only system of government'. It was decided at the Summit to make the CSCE into a permanent institution, without extending its powers and responsibilities. This would be achieved at the CSCE Council in Budapest in December 1994 with the creation of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), which would be given a Council of Foreign Ministers, a Secretariat in Vienna, a Parliamentary Assembly and a Conflict Prevention Centre.

The OSCE was a useful framework — seen as a regional organisation of the United Nations — but had limited effect. Expanded to include the Republics of the former Soviet Union and the former Yugoslavia, it formed, with its 56 States, a vast and very mixed group, spanning Asia, Europe and the United States, and had difficulty reaching a consensus on important issues. At the same time, the OSCE was competing with other organisations such as the European Union and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation. It aimed to facilitate the emergence of a 'European security identity', which caused some dispute among its members. It sought to practise 'preventive diplomacy' in its handling of the crises and conflicts arising

from the dissolution of Yugoslavia and the USSR by sending in observation teams. In the context of the OSCE, and in agreement with the European Union, the Pact on Stability in Europe (21 March 1995) aimed to reduce the risks of tension arising from the problems of minorities and frontiers in Central Europe.

B. The Visegrad Group and the Central European Free Trade Agreement (CEFTA)

The Visegrad Group was created with the aim of moving away from Communism and implementing the reforms required for full membership of the Euro-Atlantic institutions. It was established on 15 February 1991 at a meeting attended by József Antall, Prime Minister of Hungary, Lech Wałęsa, President of Poland, and Václav Havel, President of Czechoslovakia, in the Hungarian town of Visegrád.

The origins of the Visegrad Group can be traced back to 1335, when John of Luxembourg, King of Bohemia, Charles I, King of Hungary, and Casimir III, King of Poland, met in Visegrád to strengthen relations and cooperation between the three kingdoms of Central Europe. The 1991 Visegrad Declaration is part of this tradition of cooperation between neighbouring countries with a common destiny. Following the division of Czechoslovakia into two separate States on 1 January 1993, the Czech Republic and Slovakia became the third and fourth members of the Group. The ‘Visegrad Triangle’ (Budapest, Prague and Warsaw) therefore became the ‘Visegrad 4’ or ‘V4’ (Budapest, Bratislava, Prague and Warsaw).

These four countries, with their geographical, cultural and historical ties and their similar views on the future of Central Europe after the collapse of the Communist regimes, developed close political and economic cooperation so that they would be better equipped to defend their common interests at European level. The Group’s active role was confirmed by the convening of a considerable number of Summits at various levels, in particular the meeting of the Prime Ministers, which takes place once a year in the country holding the Presidency of the Group. Each member country holds the rotating Presidency for a one-year period and is responsible for drafting an annual plan of action. The only permanent structure associated with the Group is the Visegrad Fund, which was set up in 2000 and has its seat in Bratislava; this is mainly intended for the funding of NGO projects and to promote intercultural exchanges between the member countries.

The concerted action of V4 rapidly contributed to the dismantling of the Warsaw Pact, the dissolution of Comecon and the strengthening of the transition process to democracy. One of the aims of the Visegrad Group was to stimulate trade between the signatory States. To this end, on 21 December 1991 in Kraków, the Heads of State or Government signed the Central European Free Trade Agreement (CEFTA), which came into force on 1 March 1993. This free-trade area, a showcase for regional cooperation in Central Europe, was gradually established over a five-year period and later extended to include the countries of South East Europe. Slovenia acceded to CEFTA in 1996, Romania in 1997, Bulgaria in 1998, Croatia in 2003, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in 2006, and Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro, UNMIK, Albania and Moldova in 2007. CEFTA was intended to be a transitional organisation which prepared countries for full membership of the European Union. Upon accession to the EU on 1 May 2004, the members of the Visegrad Group, along with Slovenia, left CEFTA. Bulgaria and Romania left CEFTA on 1 January 2007 when they acceded to the EU.

The arrival of Slovakia in 1993, a country with an authoritarian regime, hindered the efficient operation of the Group and led to a deterioration in its relations with the European Union. Instead of working together to defend their common interests during the accession negotiations with the EU, the V4 countries entered into competition with each other, vying for the favours of the European Union and for a possible speedy accession. The changes in leadership in the Visegrad Group countries in 1997 resulted in renewed cooperation within the Group and led to the signing of a new text on 21 October 1998 which sought to revive the cooperation process. This cooperation was particularly reflected in the accession of the members of the Visegrad Group to NATO in 1999. Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic then supported Slovakia, economically less advanced than its partners, in its efforts to accede to the European Union at the same time as the other members of the Group.

After their accession to the European Union, the Member States of V4 continued their efforts to speak with one voice within the EU. The Visegrad Group's priorities include the establishment of links with other regional organisations such as Benelux; addressing a number of common challenges (the emigration of their citizens to Western Europe and immigration from Ukraine and the Balkans to their regions); and the strengthening of their cooperation in the fields of energy, tourism and justice. V4 is also keen to improve its internal coordination so that it is in a better position to be able to influence the EU's guidelines. Finally, the Visegrad Group also hopes to serve as a model for the transition to democracy in the Balkan countries.

C. NATO

The countries of the former Warsaw Pact, concerned about the stability of their frontiers because of the revival of nationalism in Central Europe and a possible resurgence of Russian imperialism, needed a credible guarantee and found it not in the OSCE nor in the European Union but in the Atlantic Alliance and, through it, the United States. Czechoslovakia, Poland and Hungary — which, on 15 February 1991, formed the Visegrad Group (named after a small town on the border between Hungary and the Czech Republic) in order to coordinate the foreign policy of the three countries — asked to be formally integrated into NATO and affirmed, on 6 May 1992, that 'their long-term objective was full membership of NATO'.

For its part, the Atlantic Alliance had taken note of the profound transformations which had taken place in Eastern Europe and the 'London Declaration on a Transformed North Atlantic Alliance', which sought to establish a new type of relations with the countries of Central and Eastern Europe based on cooperation (6 July 1990). There was no question, therefore, of expanding towards Eastern Europe, since that would upset Russia. The Alliance adopted a new strategic concept. There was no longer a global military threat in Europe. The danger now lay in regional conflicts arising from economic, social and political issues as well as from those concerning defence. This resulted in the need, while still maintaining the potential for collective defence, to develop dialogue and cooperation in order to contribute — along with the other organisations — to the peaceful resolution of the crises which were threatening European security.

This resulted in the creation, on the initiative of the United States and Germany, of a North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC), which, on 20 December 1991, began to organise periodic meetings of Ministers, ambassadors and military experts to discuss defence and security issues. The number of Member States began at 25 (the 16 from NATO, Russia representing the USSR, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Hungary, Romania and the three

Baltic States). It expanded with the inclusion, in March 1992, of 11 other Republics from the new Commonwealth of Independent States, to which were added Albania and Georgia. There were 38 members in total. Cooperation developed in all areas and intensified against the background of the Partnership for Peace (11 January 1994), which aimed to establish a military cooperation relationship with NATO (planning, joint exercises) in order to improve the capacity to successfully carry out United Nations and CSCE/OSCE peacekeeping missions, through the setting up of combined joint task forces at international level. This Partnership, it was hoped, would play a crucial role in the process for the enlargement of NATO as now envisaged by the Alliance governments. This enlargement was to take place progressively, several years later.

D. A new impetus for the Council of Europe

Founded in 1949, the Council of Europe was primarily concerned with human rights and cooperation among the European States as regards social, cultural and legal matters. It had progressively welcomed all States which were committed to liberal democracy and political pluralism. Portugal and Spain were not able to join until after the collapse of their authoritarian regimes. Communist countries, by definition, were excluded.

Mikhail Gorbachev's policy of greater openness enabled Finland, which had kept its democratic regime in spite of a cooperation treaty which maintained its links with the USSR, to join the Council of Europe in 1989. Then, as soon as they had adopted democratic institutions, the countries of the former Eastern bloc were able to join: Hungary in 1990, Poland in 1991 along with Czechoslovakia (which was to split in 1993 to form the Czech Republic and Slovakia), Bulgaria in 1992, Estonia and Lithuania in 1993 along with Romania, in spite of that country's inadequate democratisation. Then, in 1995, it was the turn of a new wave of former Communist countries, the democratisation of which had been difficult or incomplete: Albania, Latvia (after it had provided assurances regarding the rights of its Russian-speaking nationals), Moldova, Ukraine and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

Some admissions were delayed and made subject to conditions. Russia, a candidate since 1993, was not considered by legal experts in the Council of Europe to be a constitutional state. However, France, Germany and the United Kingdom, in order to strengthen its ties with Europe, exerted pressure for it to be allowed to join. The Russian Federation was admitted in January 1996, in spite of the hardening of its attitude in the Chechen conflict and a failure to provide any real guarantees that it would respect human rights.

The entry of Croatia became possible in November 1996 only after the implementation of tangible democratisation measures. Other candidate countries, not yet fulfilling the preconditions, were granted 'special guest' status, which allowed them to send delegations to the Parliamentary Assembly without having seats on the Committee of Ministers: Belarus (formerly Belorussia), Bosnia-Herzegovina (which was to be admitted in 2002) and the Yugoslav Republic. The same status was granted to the Caucasian republics before they were admitted: Georgia in 1999, Armenia and Azerbaijan in 2001. They were regarded as part of 'Greater Europe', unlike the Asian Republics of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).

In this way, the Council of Europe found a new *raison d'être* becoming, as it did, a framework within which to welcome the new democracies of Central and Eastern Europe. Its

first summit of Heads of State or Government was held in Vienna, on 8 and 9 October 1993, formally to affirm its role in the consolidation of a democratic Europe following the collapse of the Communist regimes. In fact, the Council of Europe put in place several programmes to aid the development of institutions meeting Western standards as a reward for compliance with CSCE principles and the European Convention on Human Rights. In 1994, it drew up a Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, limiting itself to setting out principles and leaving it to each Member State to incorporate them into their legislation.

For the Eastern European countries, membership of the Council of Europe, albeit important in terms of political and legal principles, did not satisfy their desire for European integration. They considered the Council of Europe, therefore, as a sort of 'antechamber' for the European Community, which they clearly hoped to join very soon.

E. The regeneration of Western European Union

Established by the Paris Agreements of 23 October 1954, at the same time as the accession of Germany to the Atlantic Alliance, Western European Union (WEU) was the only European defence body, comprising France, the United Kingdom, Italy, the Benelux countries and the Federal Republic of Germany. But it was not equipped with any armed forces, so as to avoid overlapping with those of NATO, the only active defence operation.

However, the end of the Cold War between the two blocs presented Europe with the opportunity to assume a more active role on the international stage. In his report on European Union dated 29 December 1975, Leo Tindemans, Prime Minister of Belgium, suggested the holding of exchanges of views on defence matters. On the initiative of the French Government, steps were taken to 'reactivate' WEU, which had remained dormant for 30 years. Following the signing of the Single European Act, between 17 and 28 February 1986, which extended the sphere of foreign policy cooperation to encompass the political and economic aspects of security, the WEU Council adopted a 'Platform on European Security Interests' in The Hague on 27 October 1987. The Seven expressed their resolve 'to strengthen the European pillar of the Alliance'. Accordingly, it was not a matter of detaching European defence from NATO but of asserting its identity within the organisation. But to what extent? Differences of opinion separated France and Germany, who sought to strengthen WEU and equip it with defence capabilities, from the UK and the Netherlands, who feared that the USA would use the strengthening of Europe as an argument for a more widespread withdrawal of its troops which, in the long run, would weaken the common defence.

WEU still had no HQ or troops, but it wanted to play an active role in international crises, mainly by coordinating national activities such as minesweeping in the Persian Gulf during the Iran–Iraq war from 1987 to 1988, monitoring the naval embargo imposed on Iraq during the Gulf War from 1990 to 1991, and monitoring the embargo imposed on Serbia from 1992 to 1993.

The institution of the common foreign and security policy (CFSP) by the Maastricht Treaty conferred greater importance on WEU and raised the issue of its relations with the European Union. France and Germany felt that WEU should be an instrument of Political Union, its 'fighting force', and should be incorporated accordingly. The UK, supported by Italy, believed that WEU should be at the service of the EU but should also strengthen the European pillar of the Atlantic Alliance. Accordingly, it was decided that, at least during a transitional period, WEU would retain its autonomy. Declaration No 30 annexed to the Maastricht Treaty

lays down operational provisions for the organisation of relations between WEU and the EU on the one hand, and between WEU and the Atlantic Alliance on the other.

An operational role was finally conferred on WEU by the Petersberg (Bonn) Declaration of 19 June 1992; WEU member countries declared themselves ‘prepared to make available military units from the whole spectrum of their conventional armed forces for military tasks conducted under the authority of WEU.’ Besides military assistance for the common defence in the context of NATO or WEU, these military tasks could include humanitarian missions, peacekeeping, and the tasks of combat forces in crisis management. WEU member countries could also make armed forces with NATO missions available to WEU, after first consulting NATO.

To undertake this new role, WEU was enlarged to accommodate all the Member States of the European Union with different statuses according to whether or not they were members of NATO, as well as European members of NATO that did not belong to the EU. The seven founding countries of WEU were joined by Spain and Portugal in 1990 and by Greece in 1995. Iceland, Norway and Turkey, all countries outside the EU, became associate members through membership of NATO. Austria, Ireland, Finland and Sweden, the neutral European Union States, became simply observer countries, together with Denmark, despite the latter’s membership of NATO.

WEU’s structures were strengthened accordingly. The seat of the Council and the Secretariat was transferred from Paris to Brussels to allow for better communication with NATO and the European Union. A planning cell, in operation since April 1993, was responsible for maintaining the list of forces available to WEU and for preparing a strategy for their deployment. It had a satellite centre in Torrejón, near Madrid, responsible for monitoring the Earth to gather intelligence on weapons and crises. The Chiefs of Defence Staff of the member countries met twice a year, when they would formulate opinions on military strategies submitted to the Council. Paris remained the seat of the Institute for Security Studies, founded in 1990, and the Assembly of WEU, composed of MPs from member countries and serving as the organisation’s body for discussion and dialogue with the Council. Its activities included discussion of the annual report, submission of written questions, and voting on recommendations.

WEU’s operational capabilities remained limited nonetheless, as it possessed no permanent peacetime military structure. In times of crisis calling for the deployment of armed forces under WEU, either NATO HQ staff were made available to WEU or the latter organisation used its own staff. As for military resources, member countries promised to place their conventional armed forces at the disposal of WEU. A number of multinational defence forces have been formed: the Eurocorps (see below), Multinational Division (Central) (United Kingdom, Germany, Belgium, Netherlands), the Anglo-Dutch Amphibious Force, the European Operational Rapid Force ‘Eurofor’ (France, Italy, Portugal, Spain), the European Maritime Force ‘Euromarfor’ (with the same members), and the Spanish-Italian Amphibious Force. The emphasis here is very much on heterogeneous groups.

WEU’s power to act also relied heavily on its ability to make use of the resources of the Atlantic Alliance. This principle was recognised by the North Atlantic Council held on 10 and 11 January 1994, which sought to strengthen the European division of the Alliance by means of a ‘European pillar’. Yet it was only in June 1996 that the Council decided that ‘Combined Joint Task Forces’ (CJTFs) could be formed within NATO to serve operations placed under the political supervision and strategic command of WEU. European autonomy remained

limited, however, with NATO resources being restricted to infrastructure for air forces and telecommunications. The USA was the country capable of long-range intervention, by such means as aerial transportation of heavy cargo and satellite reconnaissance. Europe was therefore reliant on the USA, as it could draw on no such resources of its own to acquire strategic mobility capability.

The European Union was above all divided on the devising of a common defence policy and, accordingly, how to make use of WEU. France, Germany, Italy, Spain and Belgium saw this is a goal to be attained, whereas the United Kingdom, Denmark, and the 'neutral' countries that acceded on 1 January 1995 (Austria, Sweden, Finland) saw it only as an eventuality. That is why the number of interventions made by WEU remained low. In 1991, the United Kingdom opposed France's proposal to send an intervention force to Yugoslavia under UN command. In 1997, the refusal of the UK and Germany to use WEU during the crisis in Albania led a number of European countries, on the initiative of France, Greece and Italy, to embark on a humanitarian mission under Italian command (Operation Alba). As a result, WEU was not able to be used to carry out military tasks for maintaining or restoring peace ('Petersberg' tasks). Rather, it was limited to police operations: enforcing the embargo and minesweeping in the Persian Gulf during the Allied invasion to liberate Kuwait in 1990 and 1991; monitoring the embargo against the former Yugoslavia on the Adriatic and the Danube from 1992 to 1996, in cooperation with NATO and the UN; sending a police contingent to aid the EU administration of the city of Mostar from 1994 to 1996.

Where armaments are concerned, European cooperation appears essential in order to streamline manufacture, reduce costs and allow for the interoperability of equipment among different national forces. The Independent European Programme Group (IEPG), set up under NATO in 1976 and which succeeded in establishing just a few bilateral agreements between France and Germany, was incorporated into WEU in 1992, becoming the Western European Armaments Group (WEAG). In November 1996, the WEU Council adopted the Charter of the Western European Armaments Organisation (WEAO), whose activities again consisted in awarding research contracts, and which surely prefigured an actual European armaments agency. However, cooperation in this field remains hindered by the resistance of national industries (in France, by the manufacturers of the Leclerc tank, GIAT industries, and of the Rafale fighter plane, Dassault), and especially by the preference often given to American equipment.

F. The Eurocorps

The creation of a European defence force began with bilateral cooperation. Following a proposal put forward by Chancellor Helmut Kohl of Germany, a Franco-German Defence Council was established on 22 January 1988, and that led to the creation of a Franco-German Brigade effective from 12 January 1989. This is a combined unit comprising troops of both nationalities and is commanded alternately by French and German officers. It does not come under NATO command, a condition imposed by France.

In the wake of the Treaty on European Union, which established a common foreign and security policy (CFSP), President François Mitterrand of France and Chancellor Kohl decided at the Franco-German summit held in La Rochelle on 22 May 1992 to expand the concept of European defence and, starting with the existing Brigade, to create a Eurocorps open to other countries. They were joined by Belgium on 25 June 1993, Spain on 1 July 1994 and Luxembourg on 7 May 1996.

The multinational headquarters of the Eurocorps is located in Strasbourg. It has at its disposal, should the circumstances arise, five large units: the Franco-German Brigade (5 250 troops), the Belgian First Mechanised Division (9 600 troops), the German 10th Armoured Division (18 500 troops), the French First Armoured Division (10 300 troops) and the Spanish 10th Mechanised Infantry Brigade (4 500 troops). In total, there are more than 50 000 troops, equipped with the latest military equipment: tanks, infantry combat vehicles, anti-tank missiles, anti-aircraft guns and helicopters. Annual exercises allow the interoperability of these different units to be tested. Accordingly, the Eurocorps appears to be the blueprint for a future European army. While remaining independent, the Eurocorps can be made available to NATO (Cooperation Agreement of 21 January 1993) or to WEU in the same way as the other joint or multinational forces.

However, despite being operational since 30 November 1995, the Eurocorps has not yet been used in its entirety. Only a few officers from its staff and from the Franco-German Brigade have been made available to the UN security force in Bosnia since 1998. The Eurocorps does not form part of KFOR, deployed in Kosovo. KFOR is the second major NATO intervention in a peace-keeping operation in the former Yugoslavia, under United Nations mandate. It consists of national contingents drawn primarily from the main European countries which intervened in the former Yugoslavia under NATO command and using the Organisation’s resources. Deploying the Eurocorps remains a difficult process because of the unanimity required among member countries before deployment can take place and the heterogeneous nature of the equipment, as well as limited logistical resources and means of intelligence gathering and aerial transportation, the likes of which are available only to NATO.