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NATO Enlargement in 1994 (NSC)

Set in January 1994. Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, many former Soviet states express interest in joining NATO.

Case Overview

In the years following the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, the role and purpose of NATO increasingly came into question. Some claimed that the organization, formed in 1949 to counter the Soviet Union and its nuclear weapons, was now obsolete. Others argued for a renewed and reinvigorated NATO in a post–Cold War world. Others still fell somewhere in the middle, acknowledging the importance of NATO's role in European security, but urging caution in dealing with a newly subdued Russia.

The president has called a meeting of the NSC in advance of an important NATO summit in Brussels. He plans to make an announcement detailing his administration's views on the prospect of NATO enlargement and has convened NSC members to advise him on the matter.

Guide

Global Literacy

Global literacy is the ability to understand and engage effectively in today's interconnected world. Today's interdependent global economy and geopolitical landscape connect America's interests more than ever to the actions and interests of other countries and their citizens. To ensure students understand this interconnected world, they need to be globally literate. Learn more about global literacy.

The United States plays a critical role in establishing and maintaining international order. This is particularly true in an increasingly globalized world. The range of foreign policy issues that require its attention is vast. The United States must consider foreign policy issues from conflicts in Afghanistan, Nigeria, and Syria to tensions with Iran and North Korea; from long-standing alliances to complex, evolving relationships with Brazil, China, India, Russia, and South Africa. Issues on the agenda range from the stability of global finance to the promotion of economic opportunity in low-income countries; and from climate to health to nuclear proliferation to terrorism. The United States has a vested interest in myriad world affairs. Further, issues such as immigration, trade, cybersecurity, climate change, and global health underscore the fading distinction between domestic and international matters.

U.S. leaders use a range of tools to pursue a foreign policy to safeguard national security and achieve U.S. goals:

- diplomatic: consultations and negotiations, treaties, defense and security agreements, resolutions at global and regional bodies such as the United Nations, and public diplomacy to promote U.S. views and culture
- economic: trade and investment agreements, tariffs, sanctions, embargoes, development assistance, loans for the purchase of U.S.-manufactured products, and sales of arms, equipment, and technology
- military: missile strikes, nuclear deterrence, ground force deployments, ship and submarine patrols, blockades, unilateral or partnered military exercises, foreign military training, and special operations forces
- unconventional actions: undertaken by the U.S. government and its proxies, such as training and assisting foreign intelligence services, supporting armed nonstate actors, private security contracting, and cyberwarfare

Effective policymaking requires a deft combination of these tools. To accomplish this, policymakers must clearly define U.S. interests. Policymakers then gauge the interests, resources, and motivations of foreign governments and nonstate actors. The U.S. intelligence community supports policymakers by collecting and analyzing a vast range of information, including satellite images, communications records,, and other data.
Foreign policy successes and failures are often associated with presidential decisions. Less explored is the decision-making system that helps the president make those critical choices and coordinate their implementation. This guide will help you understand the system through which the United States creates and implements its foreign policy.

To learn more about the NSC, check out these readings:

- "What is the National Security Council?," YouTube video, 2:28, posted by CFR Education, August 28, 2023.
- "National Security Council," The White House.
- David J. Rothkopf, "Presidents and the National Security Council," Interview by Bernard Gwertzman, Council on Foreign Relations, November 12, 2008.

Interagency Process

Regardless of the scale of the problem, a successful foreign policy–making process starts by defining interests and goals. Policymakers and their advisors then formulate policy options to meet those goals and consider each option's strengths and weaknesses. This process is challenging. In the best of times information can be unreliable or incomplete or an adversary's intentions can be unclear. Often a decision's consequences can be unknowable. Leaders frequently have to choose from a list on which every option is imperfect. Adding to this uncertainty is the complexity of the U.S. government's foreign policy machinery. Numerous agencies—each with its own interests and biases—seek to influence how policy is decided and carried out. It takes considerable effort to run a process capable of producing sound policy decisions.

The National Security Council (NSC) plays a critical role in this effort. Its mission is to help the president effectively use a variety of instruments—military, diplomatic, or otherwise—to forge policies that advance U.S. national security goals.

The NSC was created by the National Security Act of 1947. This act defined the NSC as an interagency body intended to "advise the president with respect to the integration of domestic, foreign, and military policies relating to the national security." The period after World War II was an age of expanded American interests and responsibilities. The NSC was expected to provide a place where the heads of federal departments and agencies could cooperate to develop recommendations for policies that would advance U.S. aims. The NSC and its staff were also meant to manage the policymaking process. This ensured that the president would receive a full range of advice and opinion from the departments and agencies involved in national security.

The NSC has evolved significantly over the years. The NSC has adapted to the preferences of successive presidents and the challenges they faced. Variables such as the attendees, the frequency of meetings, the manner in which information is passed to the president, the importance of consensus, and the relative dominance of the NSC over other government institutions have changed over the decades.

The NSC has evolved to comprise various interagency committees and a large staff to prepare analysis and coordinate policymaking and implementation. The NSC is at the center of the interagency process. This process is one through which relevant government agencies address foreign policy issues and help the president make and execute policy choices.

I. National Security Advisor

The national security advisor (formally assistant to the president for national security affairs) is at the heart of the NSC structure. The national security advisor's role is twofold: to offer advice to the president and to coordinate and manage policymaking. Because they have direct access to the president and do not represent a cabinet department, national security advisors are in a unique position. From this neutral perch they drive foreign policy decisions, manage the actors involved, and mitigate conflict throughout the decision-making process.

II. National Security Council Staff

The NSC staff consists of individuals from a collection of agencies that support the president, the vice president, and the administration. NSC staff members are generally organized into directorates that focus on regions or issues. The size and organization of the staff vary with each administration.

The NSC staff provides expertise for the variety of national security policy matters under consideration. It manages numerous responsibilities, including preparing speeches, memos, and discussion papers and handling inquiries from Congress on foreign policy issues. Staff members analyze both immediate and long-standing issues and help prioritize the agenda.

III. Committee Structure

Committees are at the core of policy deliberation and policymaking in the NSC. They fall into four categories:

- The highest level is the National Security Council itself. Formal NSC meetings are chaired by the president and include individuals named by the National Security Act of 1947 as well as other senior aides the president invites.
- The Principals Committee (PC) comprises cabinet-level officials who head major government departments concerned with national security, such as the secretaries of state and defense. The national security advisor traditionally chairs the Principals Committee.
- The Deputies Committee (DC) includes the deputy leaders of the government departments represented on the principals committee and is chaired by the deputy national security advisor.
- Interagency Policy Committees (IPCs) cover a range of regional areas and issues. Each committee includes officials who specialize in the relevant area or issue at one of the departments or agencies in the interagency system. IPCs are generally chaired by senior directors on the NSC staff. Much of the day-to-day work needed to formulate and implement foreign policy across the U.S. government happens at the IPC level.

This committee structure tackles both immediate crises such as an outbreak of conflict and enduring issues such as climate change. IPCs conduct analysis on an issue, gather views on it and its importance from various departments, formulate and evaluate policy options, and determine what resources and steps would be required to carry out those options. The Deputies Committee manages the interagency process up and down. It decides what IPCs to establish. and gives them specific assignments. It also considers information submitted by the IPCs before relaying it to the Principals Committee or the full NSC.

The Principals Committee is the highest-level setting, aside from the NSC itself, for debating national security issues. It consists of the heads of the NSC's component agencies. The Principals Committee is essentially all the members of the NSC except the president and vice president. Formal NSC meetings, which the president chairs, occur whenever the president sees fit. They consider issues that require the president's personal attention and a direct presidential decision.

The goal of this committee structure is to foster consensus on policy options or highlight where and why consensus cannot be reached. If officials at one level agree on an issue, it does not need to go to senior officials for a decision. This practice reserves the president's time and that of members of the Principals Committee for the most complicated and sensitive debates.

When a crisis erupts issues sometimes do not follow the usual path up from the IPCs. In these cases, NSC staff members and officials in government departments and agencies generally draft papers drawing on their expertise, available intelligence, and any existing contingency plans. Policy options are then debated and decided at the appropriate level. The policymaking process can also deviate from this model based on the preferences of each president.

For the purposes of this NSC simulation, you will role-play the NSC meeting with the assumption that the committees described have already done their jobs. Any critical information has already been passed to the highest-level decision-makers.

Presidential Decisions

When the president makes a policy decision, it can take the form of a verbal instruction recorded and shared with relevant departments and agencies. The president can also issue formal decisions in documents that lay out the administration's policy and explain its rationale and goals. These documents have gone by different names under different presidents. President Joe Biden issues national security memoranda and national security study memoranda. President Donald Trump issued national security presidential memoranda.

The president can also issue an executive order (EO). EOs are a more formal and public declaration of policy. In contrast, national security directives are generally directed internally to federal departments and are often classified. In the past, presidents have issued EOs for such purposes as facilitating sanctions against foreign individuals and establishing new offices in government departments to carry out foreign policy aims. For federal agencies, both national security directives and executive orders carry the full force of law.

Departments and Agencies

Although many executive branch departments and agencies are involved in foreign policy, the Department of State, the Department of Defense, and the intelligence community form the core of the foreign policy bureaucracy. The Department of the Treasury, the Department of Homeland Security, and the Department of Justice often play crucial roles as well.

Department of State

The Department of State conducts the United States' relations with other countries and international organizations. It maintains U.S. diplomatic presence abroad. The Department of State also issues visas for foreigners to enter the country, aids U.S. citizens overseas, and manages other programs to promote American interests. The secretary of state is the president's principal foreign affairs advisor and has a keen understanding of the United States' international relations. They are also well informed on the relationships between foreign countries, and the behavior and interests of their governments.

Department of Defense

The Department of Defense carries out U.S. defense policy and maintains U.S. military forces. It includes the U.S. Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force, as well as an array of agencies related to defense. The department employs more than two million military and civilian personnel and operates military bases around the world. The secretary of defense is the head of the department and the president's principal defense policy advisor. They also stay up-to-date on the security situation in foreign countries and the possibilities and implications of U.S. military involvement. The chairman of the joint chiefs of staff is the highest-ranking member of the U.S. armed forces and the president's top military advisor.

Intelligence Community

The U.S. intelligence community consists of eighteen agencies and organizations, including the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), National Security Agency (NSA), and Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), which gather and analyze intelligence.

Each of these agencies has its own mission; for example, the NSA focuses on signals intelligence (information gathered from communications and other electronic signals) and the Defense Intelligence Agency on military information. The director of national intelligence is the president's principal advisor on intelligence issues. They oversee this network of agencies with the aim of ensuring that they work together and deliver the best possible information to U.S. policymakers.

Department of the Treasury

The Department of the Treasury carries out policy on issues related to the U.S. and global economies and financial systems. The secretary of the treasury serves as one of the president's chief economic advisors and is responsible for addressing a range of economic concerns. The Treasury's ten bureaus, which include the U.S. Mint and the Internal Revenue Service, do much of the department's work, which ranges from collecting tax to printing currency and executing economic sanctions.

Department of Homeland Security

Created soon after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, the Department of Homeland Security works to counter and respond to risks to American security. It focuses on issues such as terrorism prevention, border security and immigration, disaster response, and cybersecurity. Familiar agencies within the department include U.S. Customs and Border Protection, the U.S. Secret Service, and the Transportation Security Administration. The secretary of homeland security oversees the department and advises the president on relevant issues.

Department of Justice

The Department of Justice investigates and prosecutes possible violations of federal law. The Department of Justice represents the U.S. government in legal matters and works more broadly to prevent and respond to crime. Agencies such as the FBI and the Drug Enforcement Administration are part of the department, as are divisions focusing on particular areas of law, such as national security and civil rights. Leading the department is the attorney general, who offers legal advice to the president and the heads of other departments.

Case Notes

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CFR Education simulations can be run for several days or weeks and include background readings, videos, and assignments to help students understand the situation and their roles.

Instructions

How to Run a CFR Simulation Role-Play

The Issue

Founded in 1949, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) has stood for decades as the world's foremost military alliance. Initially comprising the United States, Canada, and ten European countries, NATO connects the United States with

many of its closest allies. It has thus long been a critical instrument of U.S. foreign policy.

NATO was established as the Cold War set in between the Soviet Union and the U.S.-led West. The alliance embodied the concept of collective defense: its members pledged to defend one another from security threats. In particular, given the outsize strength of the U.S. military, NATO membership obligated the United States to defend its European allies from possible Soviet attack. In an extreme case, this defense could include the United States' using its nuclear weapons, placing the NATO allies under what is called the U.S. nuclear umbrella.

The Soviet Union never attacked a NATO state. It collapsed in 1991, breaking into an array of weak countries in deep economic distress. Even the strongest of them, Russia, posed little threat to the West. But as the Soviet threat dissipated, so did NATO's original reason for being. NATO leaders had to decide whether the alliance should survive—and if so, how its purpose and activities should evolve in this new era. One critical question, if NATO continued, was about enlargement: whether, when, and how it should admit new countries from Central and Eastern Europe.

This question sparked intense debate in the U.S. government and beyond. Shortly after President Bill Clinton took office in January 1993, the idea arose for what would become the Partnership for Peace (PfP), a forum for military cooperation between the alliance and countries from the former Soviet Union and Warsaw Pact. This idea gained support among U.S. officials, though they disagreed over whether to go further and outline a clear path for new countries to formally join the alliance in the foreseeable future. At stake was the future of a continent that had been plagued for eighty years by two world wars and a cold war.

DECISION POINT–*Set in January 1994.*

It is January 1994. In a few days, President Bill Clinton plans to attend a NATO summit in Brussels and to make remarks elsewhere in the city. Administration officials have agreed to coordinate with NATO allies to announce the PfP at the summit. However, allied leaders and those from central and east European states hoping to join the alliance expect the president to announce U.S. views on NATO's eventual enlargement as well. The president has therefore convened National Security Council (NSC) members to advise him on the matter. Two options are under consideration:

- Commit the United States to a policy of expanding NATO to central and east European states in the near future. Expansion would not be immediate; countries wishing to join would need years to meet various criteria, and some would likely be ready before others. Under this policy, however, the president would announce clear support for enlargement, along with the criteria and timeline, in Brussels.
- Avoid committing the United States to such a policy. Under this approach, the president would announce the PfP at the summit but not articulate clear support or criteria for NATO enlargement.

Background

NATO's Foundation

NATO arose from the political and economic shifts in Europe that followed World War II. Although the Soviet Union had been allied with the United States, France, and the United Kingdom during the war, postwar Europe fell into a stark division between a democratic West friendly to Washington and a communist East that looked to Moscow. The division solidified along ideological lines. Moscow's assertion of control over Eastern Europe served its ambition to maintain a foothold in Europe and spread communism throughout the world. The Western ideals of free market capitalism and democracy opposed this, and U.S. and west European leaders feared the threat of communism to democracies in Europe and elsewhere. It became clear that the Soviet Union was no longer a partner, as it had been during the war. It was instead a rival.

As tensions between the Soviet Union and the West rose, west European countries became worried about their security. The United States was also prepared to sustain a long-term presence in Europe. These factors drove the United States, Canada, and ten west European countries to establish NATO. The alliance's founding document, the North Atlantic Treaty, was signed in Washington, DC, on April 4, 1949. In Article 5 of the treaty, the allies "agree that an armed attack against one or more of them

in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all." Each also agreed to aid any other that was attacked. This notion of collective defense is the heart of the alliance. Because the United States was at the time the only nuclear-armed state among them, the allies came under the so-called U.S. nuclear umbrella. This security guarantee has always been a critical aspect of NATO's strategic position.

By its own account, NATO was formed for three purposes: to deter Soviet expansionism, to prevent violent nationalism from reemerging, and to encourage democratic norms and political cooperation in Europe. These purposes aligned with the views of U.S. and other NATO leaders that a continent of economically vibrant and militarily capable states, firmly linked with one another, could best resist communist expansion. NATO was also a vehicle to keep the United States committed to Europe's security. NATO's first secretary-general, Hastings Lionel Ismay of the United Kingdom, memorably put the alliance's aims succinctly: to "keep the Soviet Union out, the Americans in, and the Germans down."

NATO During the Cold War

NATO quickly began to fulfill its mission as both a military alliance and a political anchor of the U.S.-led Western order. One early area of activity was enlargement. Greece and Turkey joined in 1952, followed by what was then West Germany in 1955.

Eight days after West Germany's entrance, the Soviet Union and seven of its east European satellite states established the Warsaw Treaty Organization, an alliance better known as the Warsaw Pact. Soviet leaders intended the pact to be a counterweight to NATO and to strengthen Soviet control over the region. Like NATO, the Warsaw Pact was a nuclear alliance; the Soviet Union had tested its first nuclear weapon in 1949.

Given that any conflict between the Soviet Union and the West could escalate to nuclear war, military doctrine focused heavily on deterrence—the idea of preventing an attack by threatening retaliation. This approach was underscored by the concept of mutually assured destruction, premised on the idea that the United States and the Soviet Union each had nuclear arsenals large and reliable enough to destroy the other.

Throughout the Cold War, NATO retained an important political role. The 1967 NATO report "The Future Tasks of the Alliance" introduced a dual-track policy: the idea of both maintaining adequate defense and promoting political cooperation and dialogue. This line of thinking—broadening the organization's goals and approach to security—had a lasting effect on NATO's strategic vision. The report laid the foundation for the negotiation of the Helsinki Final Act, which offered inspiration and a legal foundation for later efforts to bring democracy and human rights to Soviet-dominated Eastern Europe. Meanwhile, NATO endured as a mechanism to support and maintain democracy in Europe. A newly democratic Spain joined the alliance in 1982, the first addition since West Germany.

Conclusion of the Cold War

In the 1980s, the Soviet Union began to face growing economic strain and civil discontent. Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev responded with two initiatives: perestroika (restructuring) and glasnost (openness). Perestroika aimed to reform the Soviet economy and political system by, for example, giving local governments more power and reducing the state's role in planning and directing companies' actions. Glasnost eased the strict social controls that Moscow imposed on Soviet citizens. Even with these reforms, the Soviet Union was far from a free market democracy. It was, however, inching in this direction.

These transitions took hold outside the Soviet Union as well, and communist rule began to crumble in Warsaw Pact countries. Civil society leaders throughout Eastern Europe had long campaigned, often under severe repression, to free their countries from Soviet domination. Gorbachev's reforms in the Soviet Union emboldened these democratic movements. In the late 1980s, Gorbachev allowed them to break through. In a landmark speech at the United Nations in December 1988, he announced that the Soviet Union would reduce its military presence in Eastern Bloc countries. The following July, he said that he would no longer prop up their communist governments. In other words, the Soviet Union would not use repression and force to impose its will, as it had long done. This so-called Sinatra Doctrine signaled that democracy was coming.

By mid-1990, all the formerly communist states in Eastern Europe had undergone democratic transitions. One of the most dramatic moments came, fittingly, in divided Berlin. On November 9, 1989, the East German government's spokesman announced, apparently unintentionally, that East German citizens could cross freely into the West. Within minutes, Berliners

used hammers and picks to start bringing down the wall that had divided their city since 1961.

It took less than a year for Germany to be unified, West Germany absorbing East. Critically, the entire country then became a member of NATO. Taking in the former East German territory in October 1990 was the alliance's first enlargement into the Eastern Bloc. Soviet leaders resisted this, pushing instead for Germany to have "associate membership" in both NATO and the Warsaw Pact. This initiative failed. Leaders did not view it at the time as the first step in a larger NATO expansion. Instead, they considered Germany a unique case. Either way, this event was a clear sign that NATO's role in Europe was to endure.

The addition of a unified Germany to NATO was a harbinger of the collapse of the Warsaw Pact. Shortly after East Germany left the pact in preparation for its unification with the West, other countries, including newly democratic Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary, began expressing a desire to withdraw from the organization and escape Soviet control. By July 1991, the Warsaw Pact had ceased to exist.

The Soviet Union itself would not exist for much longer. In August 1991, hard-line communists seeking to regain control of the state attempted a coup d'état. Although unsuccessful, the event undermined Gorbachev's power and strengthened the appeal of Boris Yeltsin, the leader of Russia's democratic movement. Fall 1991 brought declarations of independence from numerous Soviet republics. On December 25, 1991, Gorbachev resigned as leader of the Soviet Union, which then dissolved into fifteen separate and struggling states. Yeltsin became president of the main one, formally called the Russian Federation and commonly known as Russia.

In only a few years, Europe had undergone a radical transformation. The Soviet Union, the main adversary of the United States, had collapsed. Democratic governments were in power throughout Central and Eastern Europe.

Finally free to chart their own course, many newly independent east European countries were eager to cooperate with the West. NATO membership, and the security guarantee that came with it, seemed to be the perfect bulwark against any reassertion of Soviet dominance. In May 1990, President Vaclav Havel of Czechoslovakia had predicted that NATO could "become the seed of a new European security system." Two years later, Havel, Polish President Lech Walesa, and Hungarian Prime Minister Jozsef Antall announced their intention to seek full membership in NATO.

Role of the United States

Once in office, President Bill Clinton prioritized forming a strong relationship with Russian President Boris Yeltsin. He encouraged Yeltsin's efforts to reform Russia's economy and government, aiming to help the country build a stable democracy. In March 1993, newly appointed Secretary of State Warren Christopher called supporting Russia's transition to democracy the "greatest security challenge of our time." Later he would write, "Our assessment was that America's national interest lay squarely in supporting the process of reform—and that this was the key payoff of the end of the Cold War."

The Clinton administration's desire to consolidate the Cold War victory was not limited to Russia, however. On April 21, 1993, Clinton met several central and east European leaders in Washington. Among them were Vaclav Havel and Lech Walesa, both giants of the resistance to Soviet rule. At a press conference in June, Clinton recalled, "Every one of those presidents said that their number one priority was to get into NATO." The encounter, only three months into Clinton's presidency, left him favorably disposed to enlargement. However, enlargement was far from a sure thing as the Clinton administration settled in.

Opinion on NATO enlargement within the administration was not neatly divided. On one end of the continuum were those, such as National Security Advisor Tony Lake and several State Department officials, who supported enlargement as soon as possible. Those supporting prompt enlargement believed that outlining a timetable and criteria at the Brussels summit was essential to keeping Central and Eastern Europe on the path of democratic reform, even if it took time for new members to fully join the alliance. Others favored enlargement, or at least were open to it, but wanted a slower approach that did not include an early membership plan. This framework would leave time to solidify democratic reforms and address Russian concerns about NATO's expansion.

Opinions varied even among those unfavorable toward enlargement. Many officials, mostly leading figures in defense, did not want to close NATO's door forever, but did not want to consider the question anytime soon. Most notable among them were Secretary of Defense Les Aspin and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff John Shalikashvili. Aspin and Shalikashvili believed that from a military perspective, expansion would reduce NATO's effectiveness by making operations more unwieldy and consensus harder to forge. They also thought that extending a security guarantee to central European states did not serve U.S. interests.

Many opponents of enlargement in the immediate future also feared "jeopardizing the West's relations with Russia," as the scholar and former NSC staff member Charles Kupchan puts it. Moscow was too weak to prevent NATO enlargement, but it remained a nuclear power. Maintaining good relations was important. Doing so would advance Clinton's priority of supporting Russia's democratic reforms; a Russia angered by NATO expansion would be more likely to resist U.S. advice. Furthermore, some policymakers argued, enlargement would foster nationalism and resentment in Russia that could prove dangerous when the country became stronger down the road. Meanwhile, enlargement could undercut Yeltsin, a reformist leader who was building a warm relationship with Clinton. Finally, some opponents of enlargement said that adding new members to NATO over Russian objections would rebuild the dividing line that afflicted Europe throughout the Cold War. The new line would merely be further east. Proponents of enlargement countered that such a line would at least reflect the contemporary reality, not that of 1945.

Supporters of enlargement did not dismiss the need for constructive U.S.-Russia ties. Rather, they believed the administration could minimize and manage Russian apprehension by reassuring Moscow that NATO expansion was not a threat. As noted, some proponents believed a relatively long timeline for enlargement would help. Some also contended that enlargement would prevent a "security vacuum" from forming in central and eastern Europe, a vacuum both Russia and Western powers could be tempted to fill. By avoiding this competition, NATO enlargement could "in fact benefit Russia's relationship with the West," as Kupchan recounts.

Proponents of enlargement also argued that fully integrating former Warsaw Pact states would boost their movement toward democracy and prosperity. The clear prospect of NATO membership could prove an incentive for reforms over time. It would also, in some supporters' eyes, strengthen the Cold War triumph of American ideals and reinforce Washington's continued leadership and influence in Europe.

Amid these competing arguments, an idea called the Partnership for Peace (PfP) became the focus of debate within the Clinton administration. The proposal originated in the Department of Defense, whose leaders supported PfP as a useful initiative that could postpone discussion of NATO's enlargement. It was a military-to-military program intended to allow NATO countries to build defense ties with the countries of the former Warsaw Pact, including post-Soviet states such as Russia. These ties would operate between NATO and each country, not through the North Atlantic Cooperation Council. PfP would focus on military cooperation, joint exercises, defense reform, and cooperation on science and environmental issues. Many experts saw PfP as a win-win alternative to immediate NATO enlargement. The partnership would not be a military alliance, thus allowing Russia to come into the fold and reassuring it that NATO would not be a threat to its security. Because each relationship would be between an individual partner country and NATO, old enemies such as Hungary and Romania would not have to work together. And, more important, some proponents saw PfP as an eventual path to membership for those countries that did the most to upgrade their militaries, consolidate their democratic institutions, and strengthen their relationships with NATO countries.

Detractors, however, saw the partnership as a weak attempt to placate Russia. Many, including both U.S. and European politicians, thought it would either be ineffective at establishing peace and security or indicate that the Americans were too weak to stand up to Russia—or both. Despite these arguments, the Clinton administration came to a consensus on PfP over fall 1993. Officials agreed to advance it as part of the U.S. position at the Brussels summit in January 1994. However, doing so did not settle the disagreement within the administration over NATO expansion. Was PfP a substitute for enlargement in the coming years? Or should a clear path to NATO membership exist alongside PfP? As the summit approached, the debate churned on.

Preparation and Role-Play

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Instructions

Video: How to Run a CFR Simulation Role-Play

Roles Overview

Print these custom placards for use during your simulation. If you need to edit them, make a copy to your Google Drive.

Roles

President

The president is the head of state and commander in chief of the U.S. Armed Forces. They preside over National Security Council (NSC) meetings and listens to the advice and information presented by others. The president is not expected to be an expert on any single subject, but instead draws on the expertise of the NSC to analyze options and choose what they feel is the best policy to advance U.S. interests.

The president's goals are to

- select one or more policy options after considering the opinions and recommendations of NSC members; and
- balance and promote U.S. interests, with an eye toward both immediate goals and long-term foreign policy strategy.

Issues for Consideration

- What specific interests does the United States have in its relationships with Russia, with North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) allies, and with the countries of Eastern Europe?
- What specific interests does the United States have in the maintenance of peace and security in Europe, including the newly independent states of Eastern Europe? How should these interests influence the U.S. position on NATO expansion?
- What importance does NATO have for U.S. foreign policy and the U.S. position in the world? How should this affect the consideration of possible enlargement?
- What are the benefits, risks, and overall implications of extending a U.S. security guarantee (including the nuclear umbrella) to East European states?
- What was NATO's military and political role during the Cold War? How has this role changed since the Soviet Union 's collapse, and what functions might NATO best serve in this new environment?
- What are the costs, benefits, and risks that accompany each policy option open to the United States?
- What should the United States' strategic goals be in the wake of the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War? How would expanding NATO, or declining to expand it but advancing the Partnership for Peace, advance or hinder various possible goals?

Vice President

The vice president must be ready at a moment's notice to assume the presidency if the commander in chief is unable to perform their duties. Vice presidents can play a relatively active role on the National Security Council (NSC), serving as a general advisor and freely advocating their own positions during meetings. In particular, the president may ask the vice president to serve as an independent voice, untethered to any of the agencies represented by other NSC participants. The president may also ask about the interaction between the issue at hand and the domestic political situation, including in Congress.

The vice president's goals are to

- provide advice to the president on any topic, including those overlooked by other NSC participants; and
- understand the range of views in Congress and work to build congressional and public support for the president's chosen approach.

Issues for Consideration

- What specific interests does the United States have in its relationships with Russia, with North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) allies, and with the countries of Eastern Europe?
- What is Russian policy, formally stated or otherwise, on NATO expansion?
- What was NATO's military and political role during the Cold War? How has this role changed since the Soviet Union 's collapse, and what functions might NATO best serve in this new environment?
- What importance does NATO have for U.S. foreign policy and the U.S. position in the world?
- What is the range of attitudes in Congress and among the U.S. public on the possibility of NATO enlargement? What if any constituencies in the United States have a particular interest in this issue or especially strong views about it?
- How can the president best articulate a decision on NATO enlargement and communicate it to the American people, existing and potential NATO allies, and the world?
- What should the United States' strategic goals be in the wake of the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War? How would expanding NATO, or declining to expand it but advancing the Partnership for Peace, advance or hinder various possible goals?

Secretary of State

The Department of State maintains the U.S. diplomatic presence around the world, conducting foreign relations and using an on-the-ground perspective to generate country-specific knowledge. As head of the department, the secretary draws on this knowledge to present an authoritative view of the United States' bilateral relationships, the relationships between foreign countries, and the behavior and interests of foreign governments.

The secretary of state's goals are to

- serve as the president's principal foreign policy advisor; and
- analyze how policy options will affect the interests, reputation, and relationships of the United States.

Issues for Consideration

- What is the U.S. role in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)? What importance does NATO have for U.S. foreign policy and the U.S. position in the world?
- What specific interests does the United States have in its relationships with Russia, with NATO allies, and with the countries of Eastern Europe?
- What specific interests does the United States have in the maintenance of peace and security in Europe, including the newly independent states of Eastern Europe? How should these interests influence the U.S. position on NATO expansion?
- What is Russian policy, formally stated or otherwise, on NATO expansion? Has this changed over time?
- What is the range of views among other countries and organizations, including NATO countries and the Visegrad group, on NATO expansion?
- What was NATO's military and political role during the Cold War? How has this role changed since the Soviet Union 's collapse, and what functions might NATO best serve in this new environment?
- How, if at all, might the State Department's diplomatic efforts be required to support various policy options in this case, such as treaty negotiation with new allies or management of relations with Russia?
- How should the North Atlantic Treaty, especially its Article 5 obligations, affect U.S. consideration of NATO enlargement versus the Partnership for Peace (PfP)?
- What should the United States' strategic goals be in the wake of the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War? How would expanding NATO, or declining to expand it but advancing PfP, advance or hinder various possible goals?

Secretary of Defense

The secretary of defense is the principal defense policy advisor to the president, under whose direction they exercise authority over the Department of Defense. In National Security Council (NSC) meetings, the secretary analyzes the security situation in the relevant region and explains the likely implications of U.S. military involvement, both for the immediate crisis and for the United States' overall strategic position.

The secretary of defense's goals are to

- understand the options for and feasibility of any military action, as well as its possible outcomes; and
- identify ways to prevent the deterioration of a crisis to the point where it mandates U.S. military intervention.

Issues for Consideration

- What military obligations does the United States assume as part of its North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) membership, under the North Atlantic Treaty and any other instruments?
- What are the benefits, risks, and overall implications of extending a U.S. security guarantee (including the nuclear umbrella) to East European states?
- What specific interests does the United States have in the maintenance of peace and security in Europe, including the newly independent states of Eastern Europe? How should these various interests influence the U.S. position on NATO expansion?
- What are Russia's nuclear and conventional military capabilities, and how did these change after the Soviet Union's collapse? What threat, if any, does Russia pose to the United States and its allies?
- What was NATO's military and political role during the Cold War? How has this role changed since the Soviet Union's collapse, and what functions might NATO best serve in this new environment? Are NATO's military goals still relevant?
- How might expanding NATO membership affect NATO's military capabilities and operations?
- What should the United States' strategic goals be in the wake of the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War? How would expanding NATO, or declining to expand it but advancing the Partnership for Peace, advance

or hinder various possible goals?

Secretary of the Treasury

The Department of the Treasury carries out policy on issues related to the U.S. and global economies and financial systems. The secretary of the treasury, as head of this department, serves as one of the president's chief economic advisors. In National Security Council (NSC) meetings, they analyze the economic dimensions of foreign policy issues and weigh the potential impact of policy options on U.S. economic concerns, including growth, trade and investment, and the position of the U.S. dollar.

The secretary of the treasury's goals are to

- serve as a senior presidential advisor on economic policy; and
- determine how foreign policy options might affect the U.S. economy and financial system, the global economy, and economic relations between the United States and others.

Issues for Consideration

- What economic costs does the United States incur through its membership in North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)? How might these costs change if the alliance took on new members in Eastern Europe?
- What are the basic characteristics of Russia's economy? What have the main economic trends been since the collapse of the Soviet Union?
- What is the nature and scope of U.S. economic relations with East European countries, including trade, investment, and foreign assistance?
- What is the nature and scope of the U.S economic relationship with its NATO allies, including trade and investment? Is there any evidence that common membership in NATO affects these economic ties?
- What are the costs, benefits, and risks for the U.S. economy that might accompany enlarging NATO?

National Security Advisor

The national security advisor (NSA) has a special role in crisis management, serving as the "honest broker" for the national security policy process. Although the president makes final decisions, the NSA is responsible for ensuring that they have all the necessary information, that a full range of viable policy options has been articulated, that the prospects for success and failure have been identified, that any legal issues have been addressed, and that all members of the National Security Council (NSC) have had the opportunity to contribute.

The national security advisor's goals are to

- facilitate the president's consideration of issues by keeping the NSC discussion on track and guiding it toward concrete policy options; and
- build trust as an honest broker among the other NSC participants.

Issues for Consideration

- What was the military and political role of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) during the Cold War? How has this role changed since the Soviet Union's collapse, and what functions might NATO best serve in this new

environment?
- What importance does NATO have for U.S. foreign policy and the U.S. position in the world? How should this affect the consideration of possible enlargement?
- What are the benefits, risks, and overall implications of extending a U.S. security guarantee (including the nuclear umbrella) to East European states?
- What should the United States' strategic goals be in the wake of the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War? How would expanding NATO, or declining to expand it but advancing PfP, advance or hinder various possible goals?
- What interests does the United States have in the maintenance of peace and security in Europe, including the newly independent states of Eastern Europe? How should these various interests influence the U.S. position on NATO expansion?
- What are the most important factors for the president to balance when making a decision? What types of analysis would be most useful for other members of the National Security Council to present?

Chief of Staff

The chief of staff oversees the Executive Office of the President, which provides the president with support to govern effectively. This post has traditionally been home to many of the president's closest advisors. In National Security Council (NSC) meetings, the chief of staff ensures that the president has the necessary analysis on the full range of factors relevant to the case, including the U.S. political situation. They also guide the process of implementing and communicating presidential decisions.

The chief of staff's goals are to

- highlight the domestic implications of U.S. foreign policy choices; and
- develop strategies to carry out the president's policy and communicate it to U.S. and international audiences.

Issues for Consideration

- What are the major elements of the U.S.-Russia relationship? How have they evolved since the fall of the Soviet Union, and how do they compare with U.S.-Soviet relations during the Cold War?
- What is Russian policy, formally stated or otherwise, on the expansion of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)? Has this changed over time?
- What is the U.S. role in NATO? What importance does NATO have for U.S. foreign policy and the U.S. position in the world?
- What interests does the United States have in its relationships with Russia, with NATO allies, and with the countries of Eastern Europe? How are these interests likely to be affected by each policy option?
- What is the range of attitudes in Congress and among the U.S. public on the possibility of NATO enlargement? What if any constituencies in the United States have a particular interest in this issue or especially strong views about it?
- How can the president best articulate a decision and communicate it to the American people and the world?
- What are the costs, benefits, and risks for the U.S. economy that might accompany enlarging NATO?

Director of Central Intelligence

The U.S. intelligence community consists of agencies and organizations that gather and analyze intelligence to help policymakers formulate and implement U.S. foreign policy. In addition to administering the Central Intelligence Agency, the director of central intelligence oversees this network of agencies. They focus on providing the latest relevant information to National Security Council (NSC) members and articulating the capabilities and interests of the intelligence community.

The director of central intelligence's goals are to

-provide complete, accurate, and up-to-date information to the NSC on the situation under discussion; and
-serve as the principal advisor to the president and the NSC on intelligence matters.

Issues for Consideration

- What is Russia's current domestic political situation? What role does Russian nationalism play in both domestic and foreign policy? How might Russian policy toward the United States and its allies change should the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) expand?
- What was NATO's military and political role during the Cold War? How has this role changed since the Soviet Union 's collapse, and what functions might NATO best serve in this new environment?
- What are the primary interests, motivations, and goals of the major actors in this crisis, including existing NATO allies, possible new NATO members, and Russia?
- What should the United States' strategic goals be in the wake of the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War? How would expanding NATO, or declining to expand it but advancing Partnership for Peace, advance or hinder various possible goals?
- What specific interests does the United States have in the maintenance of peace and security in Europe, including the newly independent states of Eastern Europe? How should these various interests influence the U.S. position on NATO expansion?
- What are Russia's nuclear and conventional military capabilities, and how did these change after the Soviet Union's collapse? What threat, if any, does Russia pose to the United States and its allies?
- What are the costs, benefits, and risks that might accompany enlarging NATO?

Attorney General

The attorney general is the head of the Department of Justice and the chief lawyer of the U.S. government. The department represents the United States in legal matters, including by prosecuting violations of federal law. In National Security Council (NSC) meetings, the attorney general gives the president advice and opinions on the legal aspects of policies under consideration.

The Attorney General's goals are to

- consider the legal elements and implications of U.S. foreign policy options; and
- ensure that any policies decided by the NSC are in compliance with domestic and international law.

Issues for Consideration

- What are the legal considerations surrounding enlargement of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), including the possible extension of a U.S. security guarantee to East European states?
- What legal issues would arise were the United States called to undertake military action to honor its Article 5 commitment to NATO allies? What would the roles of the president and Congress be on this issue?
- What agreements or treaties, including those related to arms control, does the United States have with Russia? How should these agreements affect the debate over possible NATO enlargement?
- What military obligations does the United States assume as part of its NATO membership—under the North Atlantic Treaty or any other instrument?
- What are the costs, benefits, and risks that might accompany enlarging NATO?

Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff

The chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) is the highest-ranking member of the U.S. military and the principal military advisor to the president, the secretary of defense, the National Security Council (NSC), and the Homeland Security Council. The CJCS does not exercise command authority over U.S. troops. Instead, they work with the heads of the U.S. military services to provide advice to the president and other senior leaders.

The CJCS's goals are to

- serve as the president's military advisor on the NSC; and
- advise the president on specific military options and the corresponding risks, benefits, and implications.

Issues for Consideration

- What was the military and political role of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) during the Cold War? How has this role changed since the Soviet Union's collapse, and what functions might NATO best serve in this new environment? Are NATO's military goals still relevant?
- What military obligations does the United States assume as part of its NATO membership—under the North Atlantic Treaty or any other instrument?
- What are the benefits, risks, and overall implications of extending a U.S. security guarantee (including the nuclear umbrella) to East European states?
- How might expanding NATO membership affect NATO's military capabilities and operations? How should this factor into the U.S. policy decision?
- What specific interests does the United States have in the maintenance of peace and security in Europe, including the newly independent states of Eastern Europe?
- What are Russia's nuclear and conventional military capabilities, and how did these change after the Soviet Union's collapse? What threat, if any, does Russia pose to the United States and its allies?
- What should the United States' strategic goals be in the wake of the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War? How would expanding NATO, or declining to expand it but advancing Partnership for Peace, advance or hinder various possible goals?

U.S. Permanent Representative to NATO

The role of the U.S. permanent representative to NATO is to advance U.S. foreign policy interests within NATO. Reporting to the secretary of state, the permanent representative helps formulate and articulate the U.S. position on NATO security matters as well as U.S. policy toward NATO. At National Security Council (NSC) meetings, they outline U.S. policy toward NATO and potential opportunities for cooperation with NATO allies. They further advise NSC participants on the positions and actions of other NATO member states.

The U.S. permanent representative to NATO's goals are to

-advise the president and secretary of state on U.S. policy toward NATO the military or diplomatic actions the United States can or should take with NATO member states or the alliance as a whole; and
-promote the United States' interests and values within NATO.

Issues for Consideration

- What is Russian policy, formally stated or otherwise, on the expansion of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)? Has this changed over time?
- What is the U.S. role in NATO? What importance does NATO have for U.S. foreign policy and the U.S. position in the world?
- What was NATO's military and political role during the Cold War? How has this role changed since the Soviet Union 's collapse, and what functions might NATO best serve in this new environment?
- What specific interests does the United States have in its relationships with Russia and with its NATO allies? How are these interests likely to be affected by each policy option?
- How should the North Atlantic Treaty, especially its Article 5 obligations, affect U.S. consideration of NATO enlargement versus the Partnership for Peace?
- What role can or should NATO and its component parts, including the office of the secretary-general, play in this issue?
- How important is it for the United States to achieve consensus with NATO members on whether to pursue enlargement?
- What are the costs, benefits, and risks that might accompany enlarging NATO?

U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations

The role of the U.S. permanent representative to the United Nations (UN) is to advance U.S. foreign policy interests in the bodies and forums of the UN system.?Reporting to the secretary of state, the permanent representative helps formulate and articulate the U.S. position on all political and security matters under discussion at the UN. At National Security Council (NSC) meetings, they outline policy steps available to the United States at the UN and advises NSC participants on the positions and actions of other UN member states.

The U.S. permanent representative to the UN's goals are to

- advise the president and secretary of state on the diplomatic actions the United States can or should take at the UN; and
- promote the United States' interests and values at the UN.

Issues for Consideration

- What is Russian policy, formally stated or otherwise, on the expansion of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)? Has this changed over time?
- What specific interests does the United States have in its relationships with the United Nations, Russia, and its NATO allies?
- What role can or should the United Nations and its component parts play in NATO enlargement? Is the matter solely a regional issue limited to Europe or a matter of international peace and security? What difference does the distinction make for potential UN involvement?
- What actions aimed at reducing tensions between the United States and Russia are available to the United States at the United Nations?
- What was the United Nations' role during the Cold War? How has this role changed since the Soviet Union's collapse, and what functions might it best serve in this new environment?
- What are the implications of Russia's holding a permanent seat on the UN Security Council along with three members of NATO (the United States, France, and the United Kingdom)? What do these implications suggest about the desirability and feasibility of NATO enlargement?
- How important is it for the United States to achieve consensus with its fellow Security Council members on whether to pursue enlargement?
- How important is it for the United States and NATO to receive the backing of the UN Security Council for NATO enlargement?

- What are the costs, benefits, and risks that might accompany enlarging NATO?

General Advisor to the President

The general advisor offers analysis and recommendations that are unconstrained by the interests of any department or agency. They are tasked with providing a comprehensive assessment of the situation at hand and ideas for policy options that serve U.S. interests.

The general advisor's goals are to

- understand the breadth of the issue and outline its stakes for the United States; and
- advise the president on the range of policy options proposed by all NSC members.

Issues for Consideration

- What is Russian policy, formally stated or otherwise, on the expansion of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)? Has this changed over time?
- What specific interests does the United States have in its relationships with Russia, with NATO allies, and with the countries of Eastern Europe?
- What specific interests does the United States have in the maintenance of peace and security in Europe, including the newly independent states of Eastern Europe? How should these various interests influence the U.S. position on NATO expansion?
- What is the U.S. role in NATO? What importance does NATO have for U.S. foreign policy and the U.S. position in the world?
- What was NATO's military and political role during the Cold War? How has this role changed since the Soviet Union 's collapse, and what functions might NATO best serve in this new environment? Are NATO's military goals still relevant?
- What is the range of attitudes in Congress and among the U.S. public on the possibility of NATO enlargement? What if any constituencies in the United States have a particular interest in this issue or especially strong views? What do these circumstances suggest about the domestic political consequences of various responses?
- What military obligations does the United States assume as part of its NATO membership—under the North Atlantic Treaty or any other instrument?
- What should the United States' strategic goals be in the wake of the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War? How would expanding NATO, or declining to expand it but advancing Partnership for Peace, advance or hinder various possible goals?
- What are the benefits, risks, and overall implications of extending a U.S. security guarantee (including the nuclear umbrella) to East European states?

Guide to the Memorandum

All National Security Council (NSC) members except the president will write a position memo before the role-play. You can find more details about writing position memos under Student Resources. The president will write a presidential directive after the role-play. More details about that are also under Student Resources.

What is a memorandum?

- A memo is a formal, succinct written message from one person, department, or organization to another. It is an important form of formal, written communication in the workplace. A memo is generally short, to the point, and free of flowery language and extraneous information. A memo is typically informative or decision-oriented and is formatted in a way that helps readers quickly grasp the main points.
- In the NSC, memos consider, coordinate, and articulate policy options. They help analyze, evaluate, advocate, and channel those policy options and decisions within the bureaucracy.
- Memos also function as historical record. Many memos related to NSC discussions and presidential decisions are filed in government archives. Some are later declassified and released to help people understand how policy was devised at a given time in U.S. history.

Guide to the Role-Play

- There is no right or wrong way to participate in a role-play, but the better prepared you are, the more likely you will be able to advance a position effectively, and the more you and your peers will get out of the experience.
- Be patient during the role-play. Do not hold back from sharing your perspective, but be sure to give others a chance to do the same.
- Where there are competing interests, make the judgment calls that you would make if you were a government official, as informed by your earlier consideration of potential trade-offs. Ensure that the consequences of various decisions are carefully weighed.

Round	Timing	Objectives	Procedural Notes
One:	2 to 3 minutes per participant	1. Present initial positions to the president. 2. Investigate the nuances of the positions through questioning. 3. Clarify the central questions to be debated.	Each participant presents their position statement. If time permits, the president may ask questions to understand each NSC member's position and bring out the essential questions they wish to debate.
Two	30 to 60 minutes	1. Clarify the obstacles, risks, opportunities, and threats. 2. Evaluate the various positions on their merits.	This is the debate portion of the role-play, when participants can defend their recommendations against others' and identify potential areas of compromise agreement.
Three	30 to 60 minutes	1. Narrow the options to a few comprehensive and well- focused strategies that the president prefers. 2. Provide the president with clear recommendations (from NSC members), perhaps as a consensus or through a vote. 3. Arrive at a final presidential decision.	This round should start with the president's stating one to three preferred options to be fleshed out.

Wrap-up

Fuel a lively classroom discussion with simulations that put your students in the shoes of either the National Security Council or the UN Security Council.

CFR Education simulations can be run for several days or weeks and include background readings, videos, and assignments to help students understand the situation and their roles.

Instructions

Role-Play How-To Video

The Debrief

After the debate and deliberation close, the president will announce his or her decision, to be later finalized in the form of a written presidential directive. If time permits, you will participate in a debrief following the president's announcement.

Be active in this debrief. The role-play might seem to be the most challenging part of the experience, but the debrief is equally important. It will reinforce what you learned during the role-play exercise and refine your analytical skills. It will also force you to step out of your role and to view the case from a personal perspective. You will have the opportunity to discuss any

challenges you encountered as you worked through the discussion with your peers and how you felt about the final presidential decision.

The debrief will close with a reflection on the complexities and challenges of crafting foreign policy. This should help clarify your understanding of what you learned and answer any lingering questions. This exercise will also assist you in completing your final assignment, a written reflection.

What Actually Happened

On January 10, 1994, President Bill Clinton made a speech at a North Atlantic Council summit in Brussels, Belgium. He announced the creation of the Partnership for Peace, based on military cooperation, defense reform, and information-sharing, between European members and nonmembers of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). The partnership, conceptualized by U.S. military officials, was envisaged as a way to increase cooperation between former Soviet states and NATO.

More important, Clinton said the partnership would set in motion "a process that leads to the enlargement of NATO." At a speech in Prague two days later, Clinton went further, saying that "the question is no longer whether NATO will take on new members but when and how." With these statements, he affirmed that NATO would extend membership to former Eastern Bloc states, settling a question that had preoccupied NATO and U.S. officials since the collapse of the Soviet Union. Unlike the Warsaw Pact, which had been dissolved in 1991, NATO would carve a place for itself in post–Cold War Europe.

Yet the pace of enlargement was slow. The Clinton administration thought that moving too quickly would jeopardize the development of a cooperative relationship with Moscow and undercut U.S. support for reform in Russia. This in mind, Clinton avoided announcing an explicit timeline and plan for enlargement. In May 1997, NATO and Russian leaders met in Paris to sign the Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation, and Security, which was meant to serve as a road map for future NATO-Russia cooperation. Under the agreement, which noted that the two parties did "not consider each other as adversaries," the parties agreed to establish a joint council "to build increasing levels of trust, unity of purpose, and habits of consultation and cooperation between NATO and Russia."

In July 1997, three years after Clinton's landmark speech in Brussels, NATO formally invited the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland to join the alliance. Almost two years later, after the accession of the three countries was ratified by each NATO member's parliament, the countries formally became members of NATO. On March 16, 1999, their flags were raised at the NATO headquarters in Brussels.

How was the decision made?

Many important figures in the Clinton administration pushed for enlargement. The strongest support came from National Security Advisor Anthony Lake and U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Madeleine Albright, who would become Secretary of State in 1997. They believed that enlargement was necessary to provide stability to Europe and ensure the consolidation of democracy and free market economies in Eastern Europe. The outbreak of ethnic conflict in the Balkans following the collapse of the Soviet Union also gave enlargement a sense of urgency: many policymakers felt the need to fill the security vacuum in Eastern Europe and prevent any backsliding to authoritarianism or animosity towards the West.

Outside the halls of the West Wing, both domestic and international actors supported enlargement. Domestic public opinion of enlargement was strongly favorable, particularly in critical electoral districts in the midwest. There, large numbers of Americans of Eastern European descent, particularly from Poland, supported NATO enlargement The European member states of NATO, particularly Germany, were also strong proponents of enlargement, which they saw as a way to push NATO's eastern border—and thus their buffer against invasion—further east.

Skepticism about enlargement mainly came from U.S. military leaders, who did not want to overcommit U.S. military resources to the defense of Central and Eastern Europe out of concern that it would dilute NATO's effectiveness. Other critics, including former diplomats such as George Kennan, argued against enlargement for other reasons, including that it would

jeopardize the West's relations with Russia. Their arguments, however, were ultimately outweighed by the overwhelming support for enlargement elsewhere in the government.

What did the decision mean?

The decision to enlarge NATO sent ripples through domestic and international politics. In particular, NATO enlargement has had the most effect in three crucial areas: NATO membership, its strategic orientation, and its relations with Russia.

1. NATO Membership

The accession of the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland to NATO heralded a number of future expansion rounds. Shortly after they joined the alliance, a Membership Action Plan (MAP) was created, which provided a structured approach and specific guidelines for new countries wishing to join the alliance.

In 2004 seven new countries, including the three Baltic states, joined NATO, marking the first accession to NATO by former Soviet Republics. A third round of expansion added two new countries, Albania and Croatia, in 2009. Montenegro joined in 2017 and North Macedonia in 2020. In the wake of Russia's 2022 invasion of Ukraine, Finland and Sweden joined. Today, NATO has thirty-two members, covering almost one billion citizens. It has recognized three aspiring countries—Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, and Ukraine—that are currently pursuing membership.

2. NATO's Strategic Orientation

The decision to enlarge NATO after the disintegration of the Soviet threat was a harbinger of a new strategic orientation for the alliance. In a continuation of its dual-track policy, launched in the 1960s, NATO refocused its mission and expanded its political aims to ensuring European cooperation and democratic stability in its member states. Hans Jochen Peters, a German diplomat, argues that enlargement was a crucial component of this reorientation, by signaling that NATO was "adapting . . . to the new international strategic environment."

3. NATO-Russia Relations

In the two decades following NATO's decision to expand membership, Russia's relations with the West have been marked by disagreement, tension, and mistrust. But scholars hotly debate whether NATO enlargement caused this deterioration in relations—and if so, to what extent.

Some scholars argue that upon enlarging NATO, the alliance isolated Russia from the rest of Europe, framing the country as an outsider and adversary. George Kennan, author of the famous "X Article," famously called NATO enlargement policy "the beginning of a new cold war." Vladimir Putin has called NATO enlargement a "direct threat" to Russia's security and has often used it to partially justify Russia's aggressive foreign policy. Putin's strategy has been very effective, argues Charles Kupchan: "Putin essentially creates a political legitimacy that is grounded on standing up to the West."

On the other hand, some scholars argue that it was not NATO enlargement itself that damaged U.S.-Russia relations but something else along the way. Celeste Wallander, president of the U.S. Russia Foundation, argues that the state of the relationship is due to "the Russian leadership, under Putin, [rejecting] the entire project of integration, of globalization, of transparency." Proponents of this viewpoint emphasize the 1997 NATO-Russia Founding Act, in which both parties declared their commitment to a non-adversarial relationship, and the subsequent periods of relative cooperation that occurred before the 2008 Russian intervention in Georgia. (Russian leaders argue that NATO violated the Founding Act when it deployed troops to Central and Eastern Europe in 2016.)

Was it a good idea?

Even less agreement exists on whether NATO enlargement was the correct policy decision. Some think it was the right decision; others think it was the right decision but executed incorrectly; yet others think it was a disastrous mistake.

The late Ronald D. Asmus, who had served as deputy assistant secretary of state for European affairs, contended that NATO enlargement achieved its goals of stabilizing Europe and even argued that it was "partially successful in dealing with Russia." Kupchan, conversely, argues that in the end the costs of enlargement far outweighed the benefits, ultimately jeopardizing Russia's relationship with the West. Somewhere in the middle, Wallander claims that while NATO enlargement achieved its objectives of stabilization and democratization, a strategic mistake was made in discounting how Russia would react to the policy.

Ultimately, the decision to expand NATO membership resists a clear-cut assessment. Whether NATO enlargement was the right choice—whether it irrevocably damaged the West's relations with Russia or stabilized the European security environment or achieved something in between—it will fall to future generations to navigate NATO-Russia relations and set the course for NATO's future.

Reflecting on the Experience

The following questions are proposed to guide the discussion in the in-class debrief. This is not an exhaustive list and may vary depending on how your role-play exercise unfolded. If your class or group does not hold a debrief, these questions will nonetheless help you reflect on the role-play and write your policy review memo:

- Which issues received adequate attention during the role-play? Which, if any, received excessive attention or were left unresolved?
- Did the group consider long-term strategic concerns, or was it able to focus only on the immediate issue and the short-term implications of policy options?
- Which U.S. interests did the group or the president prioritize in the presidential directive and why? Were you comfortable with this prioritization?
- What techniques did you use to convince others that your policy position was the best option? What were successful strategies employed by others?
- What were the most significant challenges to your position? Did any make you rethink or adjust your position?
- Did your points cause anyone else to change their arguments or position?
- What political, economic, and other issues arose that you had not previously considered?
- If you could go back, what would you have done differently in presenting and advocating your point of view?

Written Reflection

The written reflection is your final assignment in the simulation. In the debrief discussion after the role-play, you and your peers went beyond the role you played and thought about the issue from a variety of perspectives. Now that the National Security Council discussion and debrief are behind you, you can consider whether you personally support your recommended policy given the full spectrum of arguments and considerations that arose. Shedding your institutional role and writing from a personal point of view, you will craft a policy review memo that outlines and reflects on the policy options discussed, incorporating and critiquing the president's decision where appropriate.

If you played the role of president in the simulation, your memo should still reflect your personal opinion. You can comment on the course of action you ordered as president, further justify it, write more extensively on the options you dismissed, or suggest and support alternate options.

No matter which role you played originally, take into account all you have learned. Your instructor or facilitator will want to see whether and how your understanding of the issue and of the policymaking process has evolved from that expressed in your

position memo.

More details about the written reflection are available under Student Resources.

Student Resources

Fuel a lively classroom discussion with simulations that put your students in the shoes of either the National Security Council or the UN Security Council.

CFR Education simulations can be run for several days or weeks and include background readings, videos, and assignments to help students understand the situation and their roles.

Instructions How-To Video

Reading List

Essential Resources

- "NATO Enlargement Case Study," YouTube, 5:43, posted by CFR Education, June 18, 2019.
- NATO Strategic Concept, 1949
- The North Atlantic Treaty, April 4, 1949
- NATO Strategic Concept, 1991
- United States Relations With the Soviet Union, National Security Directive 23, White House, September 22, 1989
- Memorandum of conversation between President George H.W. Bush and Manfred Woerner, secretary-general of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, February 24, 1990
- Rome Declaration on Peace and Cooperation, November 8, 1991
- Memorandum of telephone conversation between President George H.W. Bush and President Boris Yeltsin, November 30, 1991
- North Atlantic Cooperation Council Statement on Dialogue, Partnership, and Cooperation, December 20, 1991
- Memorandum of telephone conversation between President George H.W. Bush and President Mikhail Gorbachev, December 25, 1991
- United States Nonproliferation Policy, National Security Directive 70, White House, July 10, 1992
- Ronald D. Asmus, Richard L. Kugler, and F. Stephen Larrabee, "Building a New NATO," *Foreign Affairs*, September/October 1993, 28–40.
- Zbigniew Brzezinski, "The Cold War and Its Aftermath," *Foreign Affairs*, Fall 1992, 31–49.
- YOUTUBE PLAYLIST

Additional Resources

- Steven Erlanger, "Russia Warns NATO on Expanding East," *New York Times*, November 25, 1993.
- New York Times News Service, "Yeltsin Rips NATO Expansion," *Chicago Tribune*, December 10, 1993.
- Alexei Pushkov and Miroslav Polreich, "Building a New NATO at Russia's Expense," letter to the editor, *Foreign Affairs*, January/February 1994, 173.
- "Signature of the North Atlantic Treaty - April 4th 1949," YouTube video, 0:36, posted by NATO, January 6, 2014.
- "Why NATO? (1958) Reel America Preview Clip," YouTube video, 4:30, posted by C-SPAN, December 9, 2015.
- "President Bush Make Remarks Prior to Leaving for NATO Summit in Belgium (1991)" YouTube video, 3:47, posted by AP Archive, July 31, 2015

How to Conduct Research and Use Sources

Research and Preparation

- Draw on the case notes, additional case materials, and your own research to familiarize yourself with
  - the goals of the NSC in general and of this NSC meeting in particular;
  - the U.S. interests at stake in the case and their importance to national security;
  - your role and your department or agency, including its purpose and objectives in the government and on the NSC;
  - the aspects of the case most relevant to your role;
  - the elements that a comprehensive policy proposal on the case should contain; and
  - the major debates or conflicts likely to occur during the role-play. You need not resolve these yourself, of course, but you will want to anticipate them in order to articulate and defend your position in the NSC deliberation.
- Set goals for your research. Know which questions you seek to answer and refer back to the case notes, additional readings, and research leads as needed.
- Make a list of questions that you feel are not fully answered by the given materials. What do you need to research in greater depth? Can your peers help you understand these subjects?
- Using the case materials, additional readings, and discussions with your peers, weigh the relative importance of the U.S. interests at stake in the case. Determine where trade-offs might be required and think through the potential consequences of several different policy options.
- Conduct your research from the perspective of your assigned role, rather than the particular perspective of the person who currently inhabits that office. Make sure to consider the full range of U.S. interests at stake in the case, whether diplomatic, military, economic, environmental, moral, or otherwise. This will help you strengthen your policy position and anticipate and prepare for debates in the role-play.
- Consider what questions or challenges the president or other NSC members might raise regarding the options you propose and have responses ready.

Sources

- Consult a wide range of sources to gain a full perspective on the issues raised in the case and on policy options. Seek out sources that you may not normally use, such as publications from the region(s) under discussion, unclassified and declassified government documents, and specialized policy reports and journals.
- Remember: Wikipedia is not a reliable source, but it can be a reasonable starting point. The citations at the bottom of each entry often contain useful resources.
- Just as policymakers tackle issues that are controversial and subject to multiple interpretations, so will you in your preparation for the writing assignments and role-play. For this reason, evaluate your sources carefully. Always ask yourself:
  - When was the information produced? Is it still relevant and accurate?
  - Who is writing or speaking and why? Does the author or speaker have a particular motivation or affiliation that you should take into account?
  - Where is the information published? Determine the political leanings of journals, magazines, and newspapers by reading several articles published by each one.
  - Who is the intended audience?
  - Does the author provide sufficient evidence for their analysis or opinion? Does the author cite reliable and impartial sources?
  - Does the information appear one-sided? Does it consider multiple points of view?
  - Is the language measured or inflammatory? Do any of the points appear exaggerated?
- Take note of and cite your sources correctly. This is important not just for reasons of academic integrity, but so that you can revisit them as needed.
- Ask your teacher which style they prefer you use when citing sources, such as Modern Language Association (MLA), Chicago Manual of Style, or Associated Press (AP).

How to Write a Position Memo

- The first memo everyone (except the president) writes is called a position memo. It is written from the perspective of your assigned role. It presents a set of policy options for consideration by the NSC and recommends one of them to the president. The recommendation, or position, outlined in this memo is the one you will present during the role-play. (Keep in mind you may change your position as a result of the role-play discussion.)
- The position memo will help your fellow NSC members consider the issue efficiently and facilitate decision-making by the president. Equally important, it will help you clarify your understanding of the case by forcing you to identify the essential facts and viable policy options.
- If you have been assigned a specific role, remember that you are writing from the point of view of the department, agency, or office you represent, and not directly mimicking the policies or opinions of the person currently in that office (unless your instructor says otherwise). If needed, return to your case role description to understand the interests and position of your institution as well as goals of your role. Using the perspective of your institutional position, you will outline a set of options to address the crisis. Make sure you take into account the pros, cons, and ramifications of each policy option as it pertains to your role, institution, and as it is informed by your reading of the case materials and further research. Also, anticipate critiques of your proposed policy and incorporate your response into the memo. Doing so will help you prepare for the role-play.

Note: If you are assigned the role of president, you will not write a position memo. Instead, you will write a two-page presidential directive (PD) at the conclusion of the role-play. You will address the PD, which will follow a memo format, to the NSC members and inform them of your final decision regarding the policy option or options to be implemented (see below).

If your teacher has chosen to assign you the role of general advisor to the president, you will not need to write the position memo from a particular institutional position. Instead, you will have the flexibility to approach the issue from your own perspective, incorporating a comprehensive assessment of the crisis into your argument.

Click here to see a sample of a position memo.

How to Write a Presidential Directive

The format of the presidential directive is simpler than that of a position memo. A directive contains a record of the policy option or options that the president has chosen as well as the accompanying orders to various parts of the government with details on how to carry out these decisions.

- Start with a short paragraph describing the purpose of the memo. Everyone you are writing to was in the NSC meeting, so only brief context is needed.
- Explain in numbered paragraphs the decisions you have made, why you have made them, and any details regarding how you want the decisions carried out.
- Explain the communications strategy for the decision, considering both relevant foreign governments and the public. Also, consider that you may wish to keep certain elements of the decision secret from the public.
- Include any additional details before you sign.
- Be sure to include all the information necessary for NSC members to understand and carry out your intentions.

Click here to see a sample presidential directive.

How to Prepare for Role-Play

During the simulated NSC meeting, you will meet to debate and discuss U.S. policy options in response to the issues outlined in the case. Consistent with the NSC's mission to advise the president, you should raise the issues that are most important for the president to consider. This will enable them to make the most informed decision on policy options. Though you may or may not agree with this decision, your responsibility as an NSC member is to provide the best possible analysis and advice from the perspective of your role.

Role-play Guidelines

1. Stay in your role at all times. (Keep in mind that your role refers to the perspective and duties of the agency or department you represent, and not the specific person currently holding office of the role.)
2. Follow the general protocol for speaking.
    1. Signaling to Speak
        1. The National Security Advisor (NSA) will administer the meeting and should decide on a speaking order. Wait to be called on by the NSA.
        2. If you would like to speak out of turn, signal to the NSA, perhaps by raising a hand or a placard, and wait until the NSA calls on you.
    2. Form of Speech
        1. All NSC members (like the president in the following example) can be addressed as Mr./Madam/Mx. President or simply President [last name]. Before you begin the role-play, share which title you would like to use, and make sure to respect the title your fellow NSC members choose to use as well.
        2. Do not exceed predetermined time limits. If you exceed these limits, the NSA will cut you off.
        3. Frame your comments with a purpose and stay on topic. Remember that you must advise the president so that they can reach a decision on a precise policy question.
    3. Listening
        1. Take notes while others are speaking.
        2. Refrain from whispering or conducting side conversations.
        3. Applause and booing are not appropriate. Your words will be the most effective tool to indicate agreement or disagreement.

How to Write a Written Reflection

Guidelines

- **Subject (one short paragraph):** Offer a brief statement about the significance of the issue as it relates to U.S. foreign policy and national security. Provide just enough information about the crisis so that the reader can understand the purpose and importance of your memo. Be sure to include an initial statement of whether you agree or disagree with the president's decision.
- **Options and analysis (one paragraph per option):** Present and analyze the options discussed during the debate, deliberation, or debrief. Discuss their drawbacks, benefits, and resource needs. Be sure to acknowledge any weaknesses or disadvantages of the proposed options.

- **Recommendation and justification (several paragraphs):** Identify and explain your preferred policy option or options in more detail. Here, you can explain why you personally favor one or more of the recommendations that you initially presented or the president chose, or different options entirely. If you choose to support the options you presented in your position memo, make sure to justify why you feel yours is still the best position.
- **Reflection (one to two paragraphs):** Discuss how your position and the presidential directive are similar; if they are not, discuss how they are different. Use this section to give your thoughts on what the president should have included in their directive, or what you would have done differently. Remember, this is from your point of view; you are no longer advocating on behalf of a department or agency.

Click here to see a full example of a written reflection.

NATO Enlargement in 1994 (NSC)

Educator Simulation Guide

Global Literacy

Global literacy is the ability to understand and engage effectively in today's interconnected world. Today's interdependent global economy and geopolitical landscape connect America's interests more than ever to the actions and interests of other countries and their citizens. To ensure students understand this interconnected world, they need to be globally literate. Learn more about global literacy.

Case Overview

In the years following the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, the role and purpose of NATO increasingly came into question. Some claimed that the organization, formed in 1949 to counter the Soviet Union and its nuclear weapons, was now obsolete. Others argued for a renewed and reinvigorated NATO in a post–Cold War world. Others still fell somewhere in the middle, acknowledging the importance of NATO's role in European security, but urging caution in dealing with a newly subdued Russia.

The president has called a meeting of the NSC in advance of an important NATO summit in Brussels. He plans to make an announcement detailing his administration's views on the prospect of NATO enlargement and has convened NSC members to advise him on the matter.

Decision Point

In a few days, President Bill Clinton plans to attend a NATO summit in Brussels and to make remarks elsewhere in the city. Administration officials have agreed to coordinate with NATO allies to announce the PfP at the summit. However, allied leaders and those from central and east European states hoping to join the alliance expect the president to announce U.S. views on NATO's eventual enlargement as well. The president has therefore convened National Security Council (NSC) members to advise him on the matter. Two options are under consideration:

- Commit the United States to a policy of expanding NATO to central and east European states in the near future. Expansion would not be immediate; countries wishing to join would need years to meet various criteria, and some would likely be ready before others. Under this policy, however, the president would announce clear support for enlargement, along with the criteria and timeline, in Brussels.
- Avoid committing the United States to such a policy. Under this approach, the president would announce the PfP at the summit but not articulate clear support or criteria for NATO enlargement.

Learning Goals

CFR Education extended simulations use a variety of pedagogical tools to create an effective, meaningful, and memorable learning experience for students that builds their global literacy. Students will develop crucial skills such as critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity. Students will complete authentic assessments that feel relevant: instead of five-

paragraph essays and book reports, students will write policy memos and participate in a role-play of a meeting of a foreign policy–making body. There are no right or wrong answers in actual policy deliberations, and there are none here, either; students will walk away from this experience with an appreciation for the complexity of policy questions.

In this simulation, students will learn about the National Security Council, as well as meeting these learning outcomes specific to this simulation:

- Students will understand the origin and purpose of NATO during the Cold War, including its function as both a military and political alliance.
- Students will consider the debate that ensued following the collapse of the Soviet Union regarding the role NATO should play in a post-Cold War world.
- Students will evaluate policy options related to the enlargement of NATO into former Eastern bloc countries.

Concepts and Issues

Concepts

- Alliances
- Great power rivalry
- Balance of power
- Political and economic ideologies
- Multilateralism
- Negotiations

Issues

- Post–Cold War expansion of the European Union and NATO, and Russia's relations with these institutions
- U.S.-Europe and U.S.-Russia relations
- Balance of power in Europe
- U.S. support for democratic governance
- Current and future challenges in NATO and the European Union
- Collective defense obligations under the North Atlantic Treaty's Article 5

Policy Options: Educator's Guide

This section presents context, potential benefits and drawbacks, and other information about the policy options outlined in the case that you may find helpful as you guide the role-play and assess students.

Once in office, President Bill Clinton prioritized forming a strong relationship with Russian President Boris Yeltsin. He encouraged Yeltsin's efforts to reform Russia's economy and government, aiming to help the country build a stable democracy. In March 1993, newly appointed Secretary of State Warren Christopher called supporting Russia's transition to democracy the "greatest security challenge of our time." Later he would write, "Our assessment was that America's national interest lay squarely in supporting the process of reform—and that this was the key payoff of the end of the Cold War."

The Clinton administration's desire to consolidate the Cold War victory was not limited to Russia, however. On April 21, 1993, Clinton met several central and east European leaders in Washington. Among them were Vaclav Havel and Lech Walesa, both giants of the resistance to Soviet rule. At a press conference in June, Clinton recalled, "Every one of those presidents said that their number one priority was to get into NATO." The encounter, only three months into Clinton's presidency, left him favorably disposed to enlargement. However, enlargement was far from a sure thing as the Clinton

administration settled in.

Opinion on NATO enlargement within the administration was not neatly divided. On one end of the continuum were those, such as National Security Advisor Tony Lake and several State Department officials, who supported enlargement as soon as possible. Those supporting prompt enlargement believed that outlining a timetable and criteria at the Brussels summit was essential to keeping Central and Eastern Europe on the path of democratic reform, even if it took time for new members to fully join the alliance. Others favored enlargement, or at least were open to it, but wanted a slower approach that did not include an early membership plan. This framework would leave time to solidify democratic reforms and address Russian concerns about NATO's expansion.

Opinions varied even among those unfavorable toward enlargement. Many officials, mostly leading figures in defense, did not want to close NATO's door forever, but did not want to consider the question anytime soon. Most notable among them were Secretary of Defense Les Aspin and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff John Shalikashvili. Aspin and Shalikashvili believed that from a military perspective, expansion would reduce NATO's effectiveness by making operations more unwieldy and consensus harder to forge. They also thought that extending a security guarantee to central European states did not serve U.S. interests.

Many opponents of enlargement in the immediate future also feared "jeopardizing the West's relations with Russia," as the scholar and former NSC staff member Charles Kupchan puts it. Moscow was too weak to prevent NATO enlargement, but it remained a nuclear power. Maintaining good relations was important. Doing so would advance Clinton's priority of supporting Russia's democratic reforms; a Russia angered by NATO expansion would be more likely to resist U.S. advice. Furthermore, some policymakers argued, enlargement would foster nationalism and resentment in Russia that could prove dangerous when the country became stronger down the road. Meanwhile, enlargement could undercut Yeltsin, a reformist leader who was building a warm relationship with Clinton. Finally, some opponents of enlargement said that adding new members to NATO over Russian objections would rebuild the dividing line that afflicted Europe throughout the Cold War. The new line would merely be further east. Proponents of enlargement countered that such a line would at least reflect the contemporary reality, not that of 1945.

Supporters of enlargement did not dismiss the need for constructive U.S.-Russia ties. Rather, they believed the administration could minimize and manage Russian apprehension by reassuring Moscow that NATO expansion was not a threat. As noted, some proponents believed a relatively long timeline for enlargement would help. Some also contended that enlargement would prevent a "security vacuum" from forming in central and eastern Europe, a vacuum both Russia and Western powers could be tempted to fill. By avoiding this competition, NATO enlargement could "in fact benefit Russia's relationship with the West," as Kupchan recounts.

Proponents of enlargement also argued that fully integrating former Warsaw Pact states would boost their movement toward democracy and prosperity. The clear prospect of NATO membership could prove an incentive for reforms over time. It would also, in some supporters' eyes, strengthen the Cold War triumph of American ideals and reinforce Washington's continued leadership and influence in Europe.

Amid these competing arguments, an idea called the Partnership for Peace (PfP) became the focus of debate within the Clinton administration. The proposal originated in the Department of Defense, whose leaders supported PfP as a useful initiative that could postpone discussion of NATO's enlargement. It was a military-to-military program intended to allow NATO countries to build defense ties with the countries of the former Warsaw Pact, including post-Soviet states such as Russia. These ties would operate between NATO and each country, not through the North Atlantic Cooperation Council. PfP would focus on military cooperation, joint exercises, defense reform, and cooperation on science and environmental issues. Many experts saw PfP as a win-win alternative to immediate NATO enlargement. The partnership would not be a military alliance, thus allowing Russia to come into the fold and reassuring it that NATO would not be a threat to its security. Because each relationship would be between an individual partner country and NATO, old enemies such as Hungary and Romania would not have to work together. And, more important, some proponents saw PfP as an eventual path to membership for those countries that did the most to upgrade their militaries, consolidate their democratic institutions, and strengthen their relationships with NATO countries.

Detractors, however, saw the partnership as a weak attempt to placate Russia. Many, including both U.S. and European politicians, thought it would either be ineffective at establishing peace and security or indicate that the Americans were too

weak to stand up to Russia—or both. Despite these arguments, the Clinton administration came to a consensus on PfP over fall 1993. Officials agreed to advance it as part of the U.S. position at the Brussels summit in January 1994. However, doing so did not settle the disagreement within the administration over NATO expansion. Was PfP a substitute for enlargement in the coming years? Or should a clear path to NATO membership exist alongside PfP? As the summit approached, the debate churned on.

Running the Simulation

CFR Education extended simulations are project-based learning activities. Project-based learning (PBL) leads to better learning outcomes and improves skills, and is more fun than traditional instructional methods. The website that students will navigate throughout the simulation is divided into several parts:

In the **NSC Guide**, students will learn about the National Security Council, the body they will be simulating. Included are details on its history, how it works, who its major players are, and more. There is also a video interview with experts who have served on the body.

In the **Case Notes**, students dive into the actual situation they will be trying to solve in their simulation. At the beginning is a clear decision point: the question that students will debate during the role-play. This is followed by detailed background material and a discussion of the role that the United States plays.

Preparation and Role-Play includes details on the various roles students could take on, guidelines for the memorandum they will write (the student playing the role of president has a slightly different task), as well as an outline of how the discussion will flow during the role-play.

The **Wrap-Up** is an important part of the project and includes reflection questions and guidelines for reflecting in a class discussion and in a second memorandum. For historical cases, this section also includes a short description of how the decision point was addressed by policymakers in real life.

The simulation also includes **Student Resources**, which include a reading list to support research, additional directions and exemplars for writing assignments, and other tips students may find helpful.

Tips for Role-Play

Once students have read the simulation and prepared their position memos, here is how we recommend structuring the role-play:

Round	Timing	Objectives	Procedural Notes
One	2 to 3 minutes per participant	1. Present initial positions to the president. 2. Investigate the nuances of the positions through questioning. 3. Clarify the central questions to be debated.	Each participant presents their position statement. If time permits, the president may ask questions to understand each NSC member's position and bring out the essential questions they wish to debate.
Two	30 to 60 minutes	1. Clarify the obstacles, risks, opportunities, and threats. 2. Evaluate the various positions on their merits.	This is the debate portion of the role-play, when participants can defend their recommendations against others' and identify potential areas of compromise agreement.
Three	30 to 60 minutes	1. Narrow the options to a few comprehensive and well-focused strategies that the president prefers. 2. Provide the president with clear recommendations (from NSC members), perhaps as a consensus or through a vote. 3. Arrive at a final presidential decision.	This round should start with the president's stating one to three preferred options to be fleshed out.

Tips for the National Security Advisor
In Round 1, call on everyone for their opening statements, keeping to a strict time limit—if students have more to say, they can say it in Round 2. The president doesn't have a specific time limit, but you should keep things moving by not letting the president get bogged down on one issue or policy option.

In Round 2, students do not need to follow a prescribed speaking order; you can call on them as they raise their placards. Work to include everyone and prevent anyone from dominating. As debate goes on, remind students they can change their minds. If it will help move things along, help students see when they are agreeing with each other without realizing it. Feel free to pose questions or propose discussion topics if you feel that certain issues are not receiving adequate consideration. Ultimately, it's up to you to judge when Round 2 has run its course and it is time to move on to Round 3. You will want to move on when all policy options have been discussed and all of the president's questions have been answered. The room does not need to come to a consensus—every option just needs to have a fair airing.

In Round 3, ask students to make a final case for their positions. If, during the course of the discussion, some students seem to have coalesced into blocs, you could ask one student to present on behalf of the bloc. If consensus seems possible, you could work toward it; if not, just make sure each option has been clearly presented to the president. Remember, the NSC is not democratic and is an advisory, not decision-making, body. There is no vote, and the president does not need to choose the most popular option.

Tips for the President
Before Round 1, review all the position memos, if you can. During Round 1, as students are presenting their opening statements, you can ask questions to clarify or help draw out the differences between one policy option and another. Try not to get too deep in the weeds, though—that is what Round 2 will be for.

In Round 2, you can take a more active role. If you have concerns about a policy option, ask questions; if some policy options seem stronger than others, say so. If an element of the issue is not being discussed, raise it.

In Round 3, once you have heard all the policy options, it is all down to you. You should choose whichever policy option you think is best, or combine the strongest elements of several different options. Remember, the NSC is not democratic and is an advisory, not decision-making, body. There is no vote, and you do not need to choose the most popular option. Your decision must be made and announced before the wrap-up discussion, although the written presidential directive can come later.

Tips for Online Classes

We suggest conducting the role-play in three rounds, and that three-round structure is a helpful way to approach chunking the role-play for online learning as well. You can conduct each round synchronously or asynchronously.

In round one, participants present their positions.

- In a synchronous meeting, you can go through opening statements using videoconferencing software, allowing for live clarifying questions.
- However, this is probably the easiest round to conduct asynchronously. You could disseminate positions in writing by having participants share their position memos or write a summary for the purpose of the role-play. You could also have participants record a video of themselves delivering their opening statement and disseminate it for all to watch.

In round two, participants debate the various policy options.

- In a synchronous setting, you can simply run a full-class discussion for round two. If you need more structure or want to prod reticent participants, consider starting by randomly assigning students to breakout rooms, assigning each breakout room one policy option. After working through pros and cons, representatives from each breakout room can share out to kick off the general discussion.
- In an asynchronous setting, consider a discussion forum, with a thread for each policy option. Coach the National Security Advisor and President to be active in the forum, raising questions and responding to points.

In round three, debate begins to coalesce around the policy options that the president favors.

- This round can be approached similarly to round two, but the president should set the topics for breakout rooms or forum threads.

Flashpoints

This case offers no suggested flashpoints.

Case Assessment

1. Since the end of the Cold War, what interests has the United States had at stake in European security and in its relationships with Russia and European countries? How would you prioritize these various interests?
2. What were the motivations of U.S. and allied leaders in establishing the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)? In what ways did NATO mark a departure from past U.S. foreign policy? What role was envisioned within the alliance for the United States in particular?
3. What were the main events in the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War? What was the impact of these events for European leaders and citizens, and for the United States?
4. How have Soviet and, later, Russian leaders viewed the political changes throughout Eastern Europe in the early 1990s, and how have they viewed NATO's response? What might account for their perspective?
5. Why do many U.S. leaders and experts consider it important to maintain positive relations with Russia? How does this view play into the debate over NATO expansion?

NSC Assessment

1. What are the four categories of tools available to U.S. leaders crafting foreign policy, and what is the range of specific tools in each?
2. What is the interagency process and how is it related to the NSC system?
3. What are the various committees in the NSC system and how do they interact to drive U.S. policymaking and implementation?
4. What are the responsibilities of the national security advisor (NSA)?
5. What are the major departments and agencies involved in the U.S. national security and foreign policy–making process? What are their responsibilities?

Writing Assignments

Each CFR Education extended simulation involves writing assignments that help students think through policy options and reflect on their learning experience.

In NSC cases, there are three types of writing assignments.

- Before the role-play, everyone but the president writes a position memo.
- After the role-play, the president writes a presidential directive.
- As part of the wrap-up, everyone writes a written reflection.

Simulations (on the student-facing side) have instructions for written assignments, and samples for each of these writing exercises. You can also find sample rubrics below.

Samples:

- NSC position memo
- NSC presidential directive
- NSC written reflection

Rubric

Below are sample rubrics for your use in assessing the writing students will do as part of this extended simulation.

These are single-point rubrics. Jennifer Gonzalez, who writes the blog Cult of Pedagogy, has a great explainer, but the bottom line is that single-point rubrics are relatively easy for students to digest but still have all the advantages of giving structure to instructors' feedback.

NSC Position Memo Rubric

CONCERNS	CRITERIA	ADVANCED
What needs improvement	*What is expected*	*What is excellent*
	Subject and Background paragraphs • Briefly explains the significance of the issue in the context of U.S. foreign policy • Clearly identifies the central question • Does not summarize the case	
	Objectives bullet points • Lists several objectives of the department the writer represents • Objectives are grounded in knowledge of the role of the department • Objectives help to shape the analysis of options described in the next section	
	Options and Analysis paragraphs • Lists all options mentioned in the case • Lists other potential options • Analysis considers advantages, disadvantages, and trade-offs	
	Recommendation and Justification paragraphs • Clearly identifies a preferred option or options • Supports the choice with appropriate analysis • Explains why other options are less preferable • Written with the president as the intended audience	

CONCERNS	CRITERIA	ADVANCED
What needs improvement	*What is expected*	*What is excellent*
	Purpose • Provides context for the memo • Is succinct	
	Decisions • Clearly states the decisions made • Explains the decisions convincingly • Details how to implement them	
	Communications strategy • Contains an effective strategy for relevant foreign governments • Contains an effective strategy for the public	

NSC Written Reflection Rubric

CONCERNS	CRITERIA	ADVANCED
What needs improvement	*What is expected*	*What is excellent*
	Subject paragraph • Is brief • Places the issue in the larger context of U.S. foreign policy • Clearly states whether the writer agrees or disagrees with the president's decision	
	Options and Analysis paragraph • Discusses each option that came up during the role-play in discrete paragraphs • Weighs the advantages and disadvantages of each option • If options from the position memo are discussed, those options contain additional analysis	
	Recommendation and Justification paragraph • Makes a clear recommendation based on the writer's personal position • Supports the recommendation effectively	
	Reflection paragraph or paragraphs • Reflects on and critiques the president's decision • Is written from a personal point of view, not that of the assigned role	

Downloadable rubrics are available here:

- NSC position memo
- NSC presidential directive
- NSC written reflection