

Geopolitical Pluralism in the CIS: The Emergence of GUUAM

TARAS KUZIO

This article argues that the 12 states of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) are evenly divided into two groups that are grouped around Russia and Ukraine. The emergence of these two groups, one of which is decidedly pro-Western and pro NATO – GUUAM (Georgia, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan, Moldova) – is a sign of what Brzezinski defined as early as 1994 as geopolitical pluralism¹ has finally emerged in the former USSR. US policy, he argued, should be the consolidation of this geopolitical pluralism within the former Soviet Union as the means by which a non-imperial, 'normal' Russian nation-state would emerge with whom a 'genuine American-Russian partnership' could be secured. Brzezinski signalled that Ukraine was the key state that prevented the revival of a new Russian empire and therefore aided the consolidation of Russian democracy. One could add that GUUAM, as an organization led by Ukraine, should also therefore play a central role in US and Western policy towards the former USSR.

THE CIS: WESTERNIZERS AGAINST RUSSOPHILES

The CIS is divided into two major strategic foreign policy orientations – Westernism and Russophilism/Slavophilism.² Within these two currents in the CIS, foreign policy orientations are themselves subdivided into 'pragmatic' and 'radical' camps (see Figure 1). The overwhelming majority of CIS states are within the two pragmatic camps (Pragmatic Westernizers and Pragmatic Russophiles/Slavophiles). Only Belarus has a leadership which could be defined as 'Radical Russophile/Slavophile', promoting the creation of a Russia–Belarus union as the first step towards the revival of the former USSR.

The 12 CIS states are evenly divided into two groups within the two Pragmatic Westernizer and Russophile/Slavophile camps (see Figure 2).

The five members of GUUAM together with neutral Turkmenistan are squarely within the Pragmatic Westernizer camp. Three of these states

FIGURE 1
FOREIGN POLICY ORIENTATIONS IN THE CIS

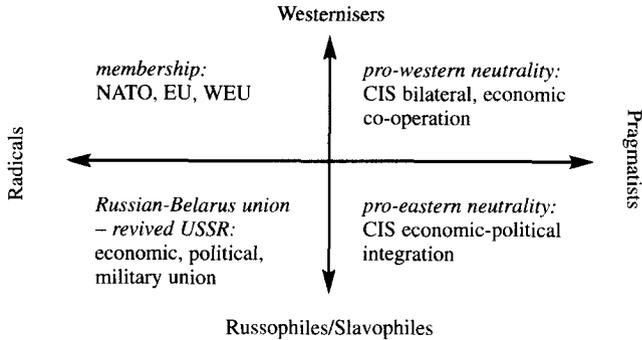


FIGURE 2
BALTS, GUUAM AND RUSSOPHILES



(Georgia, Azerbaijan and Moldova) all began their independence after 1992 with nationalist leaderships that attempted to promote Radical Westernizing orientations, in the manner of the three Baltic States. In all three cases this failed, ending in ethnic conflict and the loss of central control over separatist enclaves, forcing Georgia to accept Russian bases and Georgia/Azerbaijan to join the CIS. By 1993–94, nationalists were replaced in all three states by Pragmatic Westernizers.

The foreign orientations of the five members of the Russophile group within the CIS (the Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, Kirgizia and Armenia) are within the Pragmatic Russophile/Slavophile camp. Belarus is an additional radical Russophile member of this group. Tajikistan is a *de facto* Russian protectorate, Kyrgyzstan is a weak state which perceives China as more of a threat, Kazakhstan has a 50 per cent Russian-speaking population and Armenia, although led by nationalists, traditionally

perceives Turkey – not Russia – as its main threat. Russia has covertly supported Armenian irredentism in Azerbaijan.

Members of the pragmatic Russophile CIS group are not opposed to state sovereignty and therefore have not followed Belarus in joining its union with Russia, seeing this as renouncing independence. This marks a general trend within the CIS whereby only the communists support the Belarusian orientation because their base is also within the Radical Russophile/Slavophile camp in each state.

The division of the former USSR into three groups of countries depending upon their foreign policy orientations and attitudes to state sovereignty is directly related to their attitudes to integration and whether they view it as harming their sovereignty. A study of elites in four post-Soviet republics found that Georgia and Ukraine are particularly sensitive about threats to their sovereignty and both strongly oppose any CIS military co-operation. Kazakhstan and Belarus are more in favour of integration, although not completely at the expense of their sovereignty.³

The CIS is now evenly split between ‘two opposite economic and military and political blocs’ as follows.⁴

GUUAM (Georgia, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan, Moldova) and Turkmenistan: the *GUUAM* group consists of five countries established on 10 October 1997 in Strasbourg and expanded to include Uzbekistan on 24 April 1999 in Washington DC. All five are led by Pragmatic Westernizers who are united by a distrust of Russia and a desire for future (i.e. medium–long term) integration into European and transatlantic structures. Unlike the Baltic States, no members of the *GUUAM* group have been included within either the ‘slow’ or ‘fast track’ group of future EU members.

Turkmenistan, although not a member of *GUUAM*, has closer links to it than to the Russophile group due to its status of permanent neutrality and similar concerns about trying to circumvent Russian domination of outlets for its energy exports. The attitude of Saparmurad Niyazov, the Turkmen President, towards the CIS was similar to that argued by former Ukrainian President Kravchuk: ‘The CIS has fulfilled its mission of securing the peaceful disintegration of the USSR.’⁵

Russophiles (the Russian Federation, Belarus, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan): this group has close security, political and economic links with Russia either through bilateral relations (Armenia and Belarus) or through the CIS. Tajikistan is a *de facto* Russian protectorate, Armenia sees Russia as an ally against Turkey and Turkic-speaking Azerbaijan, while Belarus seeks to establish a close union with Russia as the precursor to a revived USSR. *Russophiles* tend to be pessimistic about their

chances of breaking out in their relations with the world outside the former USSR. A commonly held view, especially among the left within these countries, is that, in Belarusian President Alyaksandr Lukashenka's words, 'We are not needed anywhere else.'⁶ Unlike the GUUAM group, which looks to NATO for political-military security, the Russophile group within the CIS is largely distrustful of NATO and less interested in participation in Partnership for Peace (PfP). The 'Military Commonwealth-99' air defence exercises held near Astrakhan in August 1999, 'did not even conceal the fact that the military exercises in Kosovo prompted the theme of the exercises'⁷ (some exercises simulated US Tomahawk cruise missiles). Only Tajikistan within the Russophile group, with no air defence forces of its own, did not participate in these exercises while the Belarusian units were the largest⁸ (Belarus is the most anti-NATO country of the Russophile group). Ukraine, which only sent observers, ruled itself out from participating in such exercises. The number of personnel involved in the exercise (2,000) was double that of those who participated in the same exercise the year before.

The division of the CIS into Russophile and GUUAM groups has been defined as between, 'the advocacy of dreams and the advocacy of divorce ...'. Those CIS members interested in a 'civilized divorce' from the former USSR gravitate towards GUUAM while those who 'dream' of the Soviet past look towards Russia. The exception here, as always, is Armenia. GUUAM has merely institutionalized what always existed in the CIS from the moment it was created in December 1991 – a division between the supporters of the Russian idea of integration around itself (after the Soviet centre was removed) and the Ukrainian idea of 'divorce'.⁹

President Leonid Kuchma continued a strategic foreign policy consensus developed under his predecessor, Leonid Kravchuk, of restricting Ukraine's involvement within the CIS to bilateral economic issues.¹⁰ The Kuchma leadership did though go about achieving the same strategic objectives using different tactics:

...Kuchma discontinued open opposition to Moscow during protocol meetings, as was the case in Kravchuk times. Instead, it began to derail Russian ideas as early as on the level of experts, ministers, and prime ministers.¹¹

Ukraine's involvement within the CIS continued to be restricted to 'fake participation'. The Ukrainian parliament continued to refuse to ratify the CIS Charter and thus it is not *de jure* a CIS member. As no Associate Member status exists, Ukraine's involvement in the CIS was defined as merely that of a 'participant'. By mid-1998 Ukraine had signed only 130 out of 910 CIS documents and its parliament had only ratified 30 of these.¹²

Ukraine opposed the creation of CIS national symbols and believed that CIS bodies involved in political, military-technological, humanitarian, judicial, informational, environmental, regulation of conflicts or border issues should be abolished as they merely duplicated UN, OSCE, or other international organizations, with which Ukraine preferred to deal.¹³

Although Kuchma came to power in July 1994 with one of his declared aims as the 'normalization' of relations with Russia, Moscow refused to accommodate even the more 'pro-Russian' Kuchma until May 1997, when the inter-state treaty was finally signed between both countries. Under Kravchuk and Kuchma Ukraine's foreign policy was initially overly romantic in either a pro-Western (1991–92) or pro-Russian (1994–95) orientation respectively. Disappointed at not being able to immediately 'return to Europe' ('romantic Westernism' under Kravchuk) or 'normalize' relations with Russia on an equal basis ('romantic pro-Russianism' under Kuchma) led to a Ukrainian foreign policy by the late 1990s which was defined as neither pro-Western or pro-Russian – but pro-Ukrainian.

With the rise of Russian 'pragmatic nationalism'¹⁴ from 1993 to become the dominant ideology of Russian elites, Moscow's attitudes towards the CIS began to harden. Upon being elected, Kuchma's romantic pro-Russianism soon dissipated. Under Kuchma, Ukraine adopted a more pragmatic involvement and defence of its national interests in the CIS. This was coupled with a realization that this would be better served by joining together with other 'divorce-minded' Pragmatic Westernizing states into a body (GUUAM) which was not dominated by one country and could thereby face up to Russia together.

During the three years of growing disillusionment with the failure to 'normalize' relations with Russia (1994–96), during which Ukraine shifted increasingly westwards, Ukraine became the catalyst for the formation of GUAM. This group of like-minded states held similar strategic views of the CIS (defence of, and prioritization of, sovereignty as well as opposition to the creation of supra-national structures). This 'consultative group' brought about in Uzbekistan in April 1999, is keen to oppose Russia's promotion of Tajikistan and Kazakhstan in Central Asia. Turkmenistan, although not a formal member of GUUAM, is ideologically close to it and is developing its own gas pipeline through Azerbaijan–Georgia–Turkey in order to bypass Russia. GUUAM were drawn together over energy (the Transcaucasian energy corridor and reducing their dependency on Russian supplies), political factors (opposition to Russian-backed separatism) and a foreign policy which leaned towards integration into transatlantic and European structures (NATO and PfP, the EU). In a manner similar to the three Baltic States, Moldova and Ukraine within GUUAM seek EU membership (Russia and Belarus have expressed no interest in EU membership). All five

members of GUUAM find it easier as a group to pursue integration into transatlantic and European structures as a means of buttressing their security *vis-à-vis* Russia.¹⁵ Russia recognizes that whereas Belarus and Armenia see their security enhanced by co-operation with Russia, Georgia and Azerbaijan look to the USA, 'as the guarantor of their security, able to help them in the resolution of international conflicts'.¹⁶

GEOPOLITICAL PLURALISM IN THE CIS

Ukraine under the Pragmatic Westernizer President Leonid Kuchma has played a key role in nurturing the emergence of GUUAM as a regional counterweight to Russia within the CIS. Ukraine pioneered the preference for bilateral over multilateral ties within the CIS, believing that the latter would be only beneficial to Russia as by far the largest country in the CIS. An Azeri commentator believed that the resolve of Ukraine and Azerbaijan helped contain Russian pressure against them in 1992–94. During this period, Ukraine and Azerbaijan 'withstood the onslaught and not only preserved their independence but imparted confidence to others also'.¹⁷ This particularly referred to Moldova and Georgia. Ukraine's position within the CIS, developed under Kravchuk and refined under Kuchma, 'enjoys great support from Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan, and as far as non-CIS states are concerned – from the former Baltic republics'.¹⁸

During the first half of 1997, all four original members of GUAM were concerned about Western concessions to Russia on Conventional Forces Treaty flank limits. GUAM was launched on 10 October 1997 in a joint presidential communiqué issued in Strasbourg as part of the framework for the development of the TRASECA transportation corridor.¹⁹ Ukraine later joined with other GUUAM members and Turkmenistan in co-ordinating ship and rail transportation to avoid the payment of taxes imposed by Russia on Central Asian goods (the Poti–Odessa crossing between Georgia and Ukraine was opened in late 1996).²⁰ Although GUAM insisted that it was not directed against any state the Russian media immediately dubbed the new group as 'united by their complaints against Russia' and believed that it would evolve into an anti-Russian regional group.²¹

Military and security co-operation, although downplayed within GUUAM, is also developing. GUUAM members have denied that it will be transformed into a military-political alliance.²² Military co-operation among GUUAM members has a 'strategic character' because it ensures their independence, Azeri Defence Minister Safar Abiyev said.²³ Georgian Deputy Defence Minister Grigol Katamadze added, 'Military co-operation stems from the coincidence of strategic interests of its member states and is not directed against any other parties.'²⁴

Although eschewing the creation of a Collective Security Treaty (CST)-style body, military co-operation has developed between Ukraine/Moldova, Ukraine/Georgia/Azerbaijan, between GUUAM members and the US, and through NATO's PfP. Georgia/Azerbaijan/Ukraine unveiled a peacekeeping battalion in July 1999. Georgia's defence minister visited Ukraine in August 1999 with the purpose of discussing the deepening of military co-operation within GUUAM. GUUAM Defence Ministers met separately on the fringes of the 'Peace Shield-99' PfP exercises at the Yavoriv training ground in western Ukraine in August 1999.²⁵ Georgian officers are being trained in Ukrainian academies and it plans to gradually pull out its officers from Russian academies, where the costs are higher, in favour of US, NATO, and Ukrainian ones. From September 1998, co-operation has existed between the border troops of Ukraine, Azerbaijan and Georgia. The defence ministries of Azerbaijan and Georgia signed a memorandum in March 1999 on military co-operation within the framework of integration into transatlantic and European structures, including NATO and PfP. They proposed the establishment of a multinational GUUAM force within PfP to protect the security of their energy sectors.²⁶

On 21–22 January 1999, GUUAM launched joint peacekeeping units to protect oil transportation routes that could also be the first step in the direction of internationalizing peacekeeping in Georgia and Azerbaijan. GUUAM peacekeeping units would co-operate, 'within the framework of universally recognized international organizations'²⁷ (i.e. the UN, OSCE or even NATO). Ukrainian, Georgian and Azeri units held their first joint military exercise on 13–19 April 1999 in conjunction with the inauguration of the Baku–Supsa oil pipeline and Poti–Odessa railway ferry line (which can provide transportation for 108 freight carriers, including oil tankers destined for Ilyichevsk, Ukraine). The exercise was partly observed by the presidents and defence ministers of all three countries, as well as US and Turkish officials. The three platoon-size units practised pipeline protection against sabotage and commando attacks and simulated rapid intervention operations, helicopter-borne landings, and anti-terrorist combat. The more specialized unit in pipeline security was from Ukraine, which trained Georgian and Azeri units. The joint exercises were seen by Moscow as a 'highly unfriendly move aimed at creating a new military alliance' backed by the US.²⁸

The inauguration of the 830km oil pipeline from the Sangachal terminal on the Caspian Sea near Baku to the Supsa terminal on Georgia's coast (which includes four reservoirs with a capacity of 40,000 tonnes each) has tremendous symbolic importance for Azerbaijan. In the words of Azeri presidential foreign policy adviser Vafa Guluzade:

...this pipeline gives Caspian countries a reliable way to export oil without going through Russia. It is hugely important economically, but

even more important politically. Now, for the first time, we have direct access to the West, freeing ourselves from Russia after 200 years.²⁹

President Kuchma also defined the new route as the ‘backbone of (Ukraine’s) national security’. Georgian parliamentary speaker Zurab Zhvania defined the new route as vitally important for the entire GUUAM region stretching from Ukraine to Uzbekistan:

It gives us a chance to connect ourselves to each other and to the world in a way that keeps us free from political pressure or influence. I am talking about Russia, but also about Iran. They are not happy and I understand why. Our enemies understand the importance of this project better than our friends do.³⁰

Ukraine is the *de facto* leader of the GUUAM group.³¹ Many of the strategic characteristics of GUUAM were developed by former Ukrainian President Kravchuk (December 1991–July 1994) and continued in their essence by his successor, Kuchma. Despite the predictions made by some Western and Russian scholars when Kuchma was elected that he would turn Ukraine towards Eurasia, Ukraine under Kuchma has moved further westwards and divided the CIS into two equal groups. As D’Anieri points out, ‘...Ukraine’s policies towards the CIS have been consistent from Kravchuk through Kuchma in 1996’.³²

GUUAM should be seen as one of three regional groups through which Ukraine seeks to promote geopolitical pluralism in the post-communist world.³³ Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine hold similar views on security within the Black Sea region through the Black Sea Economic Co-operation Agreement (BSECA). The main country within the BSECA is Turkey – not Russia – and therefore GUUAM countries naturally gravitate towards it. Ukraine, for example, while opposing parliamentary ratification of the CIS Charter (because it sees a CIS with supranational institutions as a threat to its national interests) drew up a Charter for the BSECA (which is not perceived as a threat).³⁴

Ukraine and Moldova also look towards the Central European Initiative and the Central European Free Trade Agreement as a way of affirming their ‘central European’ (in contrast to Eurasian) identity. Azerbaijan has delegated Georgia as the state to represent the entire Transcaucasus in the Council of Europe. Ukrainian Foreign Minister Borys Tarasiuk believed that regional structures should harmonize their activities towards the goal of European integration.³⁵ Regional co-operation and integration into transatlantic and European structures are therefore viewed as part and parcel of the same strategic foreign policy.

The dividing lines between ‘Europe’ and Eurasia created in 1945 at Yalta were a major factor in placing countries ‘outside the natural context of

the evolution of European civilization', President Kuchma believed.³⁶ Ensuring that no new dividing lines were created as NATO and the EU expanded eastwards would prevent Ukraine and other GUUAM members being defined outside Europe and thereby within Russia's sphere of influence within Eurasia, Ukrainian Foreign Minister Tarasiuk argued.³⁷

Under President Kravchuk in 1993 Ukraine launched an initiative to establish a Baltic-Black Sea alliance of countries lying between Russia and Germany. Although the concept of an anti-Russian *cordon sanitaire* proved not to be popular, his successor, Kuchma, has continued to strengthen Baltic-Black Sea regional security by obtaining observer status for Ukraine in the Baltic Council.³⁸ On 10-11 September 1999, Ukraine sponsored in Yalta a conference entitled 'Baltic-Black Sea Co-operation: Toward an Integrated Europe in the Twenty-First Century Without Dividing Lines'. Attended by 22 countries, the conference aimed to lobby transatlantic and European structures to maintain 'open-door' policies for GUUAM countries, such as Ukraine. Of the GUUAM five only Uzbekistan's President did not attend the conference. This event also brought together the presidents of the three Baltic States and central-eastern European countries (Bulgaria, Slovakia, Poland, and Hungary). Russia pointedly only sent its Deputy Prime Minister.

Without Ukraine, it would be unlikely that GUUAM could resist Russian pressure in the CIS. Its four remaining members, one Ukrainian newspaper predicted, 'will fall under Russia like domino blocks'.³⁹ Clearly then, Ukraine has become recognized by both Russia and the West as the key to the question of whether a new Eurasian union will arise and, if so, end the post-Cold War era's 'unipolarism'. A joint Georgia-Ukraine declaration pointed to the 'emergence of an independent Ukraine which has changed the atmosphere in the entire (ex-Soviet) region', a factor which constitutes, 'one of the pillars of Georgia's own independence'.⁴⁰ President Shevardnadze expressed his belief that, 'Ukraine holds a truly unique place in the new European structure so the development of partnership with this great country is ever more desirable and important to Georgia'.⁴¹

Moldova and Ukraine have a long-standing relationship going back to 1992. In contrast to Russian covert and (in 1992) overt support for separatism as well as Moscow's refusal to remove its troops, Ukraine has long supported Moldova's territorial integrity. The Trans-Dniestr region has a larger number of ethnic Ukrainians than Russians, as does Moldova as a whole, and Ukraine therefore also has an interest in ethnic relations within Moldova (the separatist region was part of Ukraine during the inter-war years). A full-blown conflict in Moldova could spill over into Odessa *oblast*, where large numbers of Moldovans and Bulgarians live, and into Chernivtsi *oblast* (formerly northern Bukovina), where relations between

Romanians and Ukrainians are poor.⁴² Romania was the last country to recognize Ukraine's borders in June 1997 after many years of laying territorial claims to northern Bukovina.

Russia has long sought to obtain military advantages for itself in Moldova through the latter's ratification of the Russian-Moldovan protocol on mutual military assistance as the condition for the State Duma's ratification of the Russian-Moldovan political treaty which would recognize Moldova's territorial integrity.⁴³ This would *de facto* convert Russian peacekeepers in Trans-Dniestr into a forward Russian military base, a long-term Russian strategic objective in the CIS since the April 1994 presidential decree, which called for the creation of 40 such bases. Russia has stalled the 'undelayed, unconditional and orderly removal' of its troops from the Trans-Dniestr, despite resolutions by the OSCE to this effect.

The Russian executive and parliament are unanimous in urging Moldova to sign a military pact with Russia along the lines of those signed with Armenia and Belarus. The Russian executive provides financial subsidies to the Trans-Dniestr while the Duma refuses to ratify the Moldovan-Russian treaty and thereby recognize its territorial integrity. Moldova rejected this proposal as impossible under its constitution, which bans the stationing of foreign troops on its territory. Russia seeks to establish a relationship with Moldova which would end its Western orientation (and thereby GUUAM membership) by forcing it into consultations with Russia on security issues and participating with it against joint military threats (e.g. NATO).

If Moldova were to accept these Russian proposals, Ukraine would be hemmed in on two sides by members of the Russophile CIS group (Belarus-Moldova), representing a serious threat to its national security. Support for its independence and sovereignty is therefore a central factor in Ukraine's policies towards Moldova. Ukraine agreed to a transfer of territory with Moldova which would provide it with access to the Danube river and Black Sea for a terminal at Giuriulesti financed by the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development that would annually import 2.1 million tonnes of oil. The terminal is, 'considered one of the guarantees for the (Moldovan) state's independence...'.⁴⁴ In August 1999 Ukraine and Moldova signed six documents, including an Agreement on the Delimitation and Demarcation of the State Border.⁴⁵

While Ukraine unreservedly supports Moldovan territorial integrity, Russia continues to directly and indirectly prop up the Trans-Dniestr region (as it does Abkhazia). Both the Trans-Dniestr and Abkhazian leaderships reject federal arrangements and propose confederal unions of two 'states',⁴⁶ something unacceptable to both Moldova and Georgia (as it was to Ukraine when confronted with similar demands made by Crimean separatists in 1993-94).⁴⁷

Moldova, like other members of GUUAM, believes, 'it is very hard to find a complete understanding within the framework in the CIS'.⁴⁸ Vasile Nedelchuk, head of the Moldovan parliamentary commission on foreign policy, therefore proposed that it gradually withdraw from the CIS.⁴⁹ GUUAM would facilitate the transportation of alternative energy sources to Moldova from Azerbaijan through its new terminal. Moldova, like Azerbaijan and Georgia, also wants to 'internationalize' peacekeeping in its separatist enclave. In January 1997, Moldova successfully encouraged Ukraine to enter the peace process. Ukraine and Moldova signed a Customs Union and Ukraine continued to call for the withdrawal of Russian troops from Moldova. In May 1997, Kuchma accepted the Moldovan request to deploy Ukrainian peacekeeping troops in the Trans-Dniestr. At Ukraine's insistence, the Russian/Ukrainian/Moldovan/Trans-Dniestr Memorandum of Agreement provided for local autonomy, downgraded the role of the CIS in resolving the conflict, supported Moldova's territorial integrity, and called for the OSCE to play a more active role in conflict resolution in the Trans-Dniestr.⁵⁰

The first step towards internationalizing the Trans-Dniestr issue would be to bring in Ukrainian peacekeepers, who are regarded as more neutral and willing to seek a resolution of the conflict, than are Russian. On 16 June 1998 Ukraine and Moldova held their first joint military exercises 'South-98' which simulated the capture of a 'band of armed extremists' and the localization of ethnic conflict, actions with particular relevance to the Trans-Dniestr and Crimea regions. A Ukrainian paratroop company from its airborne forces located in Bolhrad and a Moldovan motorized infantry company participated in the exercises.⁵¹ In July 1999, Moldova and Ukraine agreed to establish a joint peacekeeping battalion that was also open to Romania, and based upon those units used in the June 1998 exercise.

In summer 1998, Ukraine finally agreed to send ten military observers and four vehicles as a symbolic presence in the Trans-Dniestr enclave. Together with Russia,⁵² Ukraine is one of the guarantors of a Trans-Dniestr settlement.⁵³ Moldova, in a manner similar to Georgia and Azerbaijan, sees Ukraine as impartial and a strong supporter of its territorial integrity (a policy which they do not ascribe to Russia). Hence, the preference of GUUAM members for Ukrainian – and not Russian/CIS – peacekeepers, preferably under UN or OSCE mandates. Another reason for this is Ukraine's successful resolution of Crimean separatism without violence. Other advantages in favour of Ukraine were defined as follows:

We are not burdened by imperial ambitions and a past dictatorship. We do not have to beg forgiveness for destroying other people's cultures. On the contrary, we remember only too well the methods of psychological pressure, creeping Russification, and large-scale

genocide of peasants and intellectuals. We do remember what dependence, slavery, and humiliation is. It is a bitter experience, yet it is ours. In essence, Ukraine is the only former Soviet republic, which has managed to protect civic accord and integrity. Namely for this reason, Ukraine has a special moral right – and what is more – a unique opportunity to act as an arbitrator, adviser, and mediator. Our neighbour (Moldova) currently wants us to play namely this role.⁵⁴

After the election of Eduard Shevardnadze to the Georgian presidency Georgia and Ukraine also developed long-standing relations. Georgia has recognized Ukraine's contribution in defending Georgia at all levels and in providing assistance, including vessels for its navy and border troops as well as free officer training in its academies.⁵⁵ Both states seek to defend their sovereignty and independence in the face of a perceived Russian threat in the CIS.

Azerbaijan has a long established relationship with Ukraine since the Kravchuk era when Ukraine sold it weaponry. This supply of Ukrainian weaponry to Azerbaijan continued under Kuchma.⁵⁶ Ukraine has also always supported its territorial integrity, as in the case of Georgia and Moldova. A protocol on co-operation signed between both countries' intelligence services stated that, 'our interests coincide. We are working in the same direction.'⁵⁷

Azerbaijan has long been frustrated at Moscow's support for Armenia and its unwillingness to resolve the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. A 'normalization' of Azeri-Russian relations has therefore hinged, in Baku's eyes, on Moscow's support for Azeri territorial integrity and the return by Armenia of military aid covertly received from Russia between 1993 and 1996 (as late as January 1998 Georgia intercepted weapons heading from Russian troops in the Caucasus to Armenia). The failure to resolve the Karabakh conflict is laid squarely upon Moscow for supplying these weapons to Armenia and establishing a tight military alliance with that country which, Baku argues, led to a more intransigent policy on the part of Erevan.⁵⁸

The first GUAM meeting chaired by Azerbaijan was held in Baku in late 1997 and was attended by deputy foreign ministers. They agreed to co-ordinate their interests within the CIS and abroad, particularly in the following areas – peacekeeping, conflict resolution, energy (creation of a Eurasian transport corridor), international organizations (e.g. NATO) and closer ties with the West. They drew up a plan to co-operate with NATO on the basis of a 16(NATO)+4(GUAM) framework. The adopted protocol laid out plans for international political co-operation, resistance to separatism, mutual support against regional conflict, a common approach on peacekeeping, the development of transportation routes and preparation for membership of transatlantic and European structures.⁵⁹

The CIS is seen by Central Asian states such as Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan as a framework 'for a transitional period' only. To balance this Central Asian states have undertaken to develop regional security on their own accord, as well as individually seeking co-operation within either GUUAM or the Russophile group of the CIS. Although Turkmenistan has an internationally recognized permanent neutral status (unlike Ukraine whose neutrality is not recognized), it has defined this neutrality in a manner similar to that of GUUAM as 'pro-Western'. Turkmen military officers have been trained in Ukrainian military academies in Kyiv, Kharkiv, and Sevastopol since 1993 with the first batch of 15 officers graduating on 20 June 1999.⁶⁰

In May 1999, Turkmenistan gave six months notice to Russia to terminate the operational group of Russian border troops and the following month introduced visas for other CIS states. This coincided with the establishment of military contacts with NATO, the USA, Israel and Turkey, contacts that were not defined as incompatible with its neutral status. This growing security relationship indirectly links it to the GUUAM group. The US has offered to train Turkmen military officers and to provide advice on reforming its military in bilateral assistance programmes. In the same month that Russian border troops were given advance notice, Turkmenistan signed an Individual Partnership for Peace Programme for 1999–2000 with NATO.

Uzbekistan has perhaps moved the furthest among these five states towards along the path of disinterest in CIS integration and suspicion of Russia. By the Kuchma era Uzbekistan had evolved towards Ukraine's position within the CIS: 'We have come to understand each other better and to look at many things from the same angle', Uzbek Prime Minister Utkir Sultanov said.⁶¹ Uzbekistan also began to oppose the CIS becoming a subject of international law or a regional organization, the creation of supranational structures (including the Customs Union, the over-blown CIS staff in Moscow), and the transformation of the CIS into a military-political bloc. Uzbekistan also disagreed with Russia's hostility to NATO enlargement, attitudes toward which should be decided individually, not collectively through the CIS. As with many sceptical CIS members, Uzbekistan also complained of the lack of the implementation of CIS decisions.⁶²

The CIS Interstate Economic Committee is, in Uzbek eyes, 'a voluntary association, not a federation, or a confederation, and there is no obligation to submit to majority decisions'.⁶³ Uzbekistan withdrew from the CST in spring 1999 complaining about anti-Azeri policies in the Trans-Caucasus when Russia covertly supplied \$1bn of arms to Armenia. Uzbekistan was also unhappy at the continued domination of Tajikistan by Russian troops.⁶⁴ Uzbekistan has cultivated a 'strategic partnership' with Ukraine, the other large non-Russian member of the CIS, and bilateral relations have grown after GUAM changed into GUUAM in April 1999.⁶⁵

GUUAM: COMMON NATIONAL INTERESTS

Ten major objections link the five countries of GUUAM in a strategic alliance. They share:

- (1) Their 'wish to oppose the dominant role of Russia';⁶⁶
- (2) Deprive the right of the CIS to represent them in international organizations (CIS officials should not have the status of international civil servants with diplomatic status, such as international civil servants in NATO, the EU, the UN and the OSCE;
- (3) Remove the CIS as a regional international organization;
- (4) Oppose the right of the CIS to resolve armed conflict within the CIS;
- (5) Recognize the impossibility of reforming the CIS, because any such reforms would threaten Russia's hegemony within it;
- (6) Acknowledge the failure of Russia and the CIS to resolve ethnic conflicts in the CIS;⁶⁷
- (7) Prevent the use of economic levers by Russia to obtain strategic objectives through the CIS free trade zone, the CIS Economic Council, the CIS Customs and Payments Unions;
- (8) Desire to integrate into transatlantic and European structures is seen as a way of breaking free from a long period of Russian domination by a country which in the post-Soviet era has still not abandoned its 'imperial ambitions' and desire to keep the CIS under its control. The main casualties of this Russian policy were Georgia and Azerbaijan;⁶⁸
- (9) Distrust of Russia's size and history which are unlikely to allow for an EU-type organization based upon equal relations. Moldovan President Petru Lucinschi complained that Russia's 'dominant' position in the CIS, 'gives rise to apprehension and even frightens off the members who fear to lose their independence and sovereignty in the process of integration'.⁶⁹ Therefore, those countries with a fear of Russian hegemony in the CIS gravitate towards GUUAM, which signals a gradual drifting apart of the former Soviet republics.⁷⁰
- (10) Support those states advocating a 'minimal CIS' and independent development outside its confines. As a Ukrainian commentator put it, 'The enlargement of GUAM is a clear example of how the CIS as an institution, which appeared as a consequence of the USSR's agony, is no longer needed by anybody.'⁷¹

In visits to Baku and Tbilisi during 29 June–1 July 1999 Ukrainian Foreign Minister Tarasiuk outlined seven further plans to formally institutionalize GUUAM. These are as follows:

- (1) GUUAM heads of state are to meet twice a year at summits of the UN, OSCE, CIS, etc.;

- (2) GUUAM ministers of foreign affairs, defence and energy are to meet twice a year;
- (3) Experts from GUUAM foreign ministries are to meet every two months;
- (4) Regular consultations at ambassadorial level within the framework of international organizations are to be held to co-ordinate their positions on major issues;⁷²
- (5) Permanent GUUAM co-ordination offices are to be established in each country to oversee political, economic and security co-operation;
- (6) Projects for transportation of Caspian energy to central Europe (particularly Poland) are to be promoted;
- (7) Peacekeeping in Georgia and Azerbaijan is to be internationalized under the UN or OSCE, and to which Ukraine would be prepared to contribute troops.

GUAM expanded to GUUAM at the NATO anniversary summit in Washington in April 1999, which did not go unnoticed in Moscow. In the joint GUUAM statement issued after their meeting on the side of the summit, they reiterated their desire to co-operate with NATO in PfP and the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC). They expressed their readiness to jointly promote the resolution of conflicts and crises on the basis of four factors:

- (1) Territorial integrity and inviolability of existing borders.⁷³
- (2) Rejection of 'aggressive separatism' and 'ethnic intolerance'.
- (3) Resistance to 'religious extremism'.
- (4) Prevention of arms supplies to conflict areas.

GUUAM supported the promotion of unimpeded trade and the creation of a Eurasian transport corridor. At the ceremony marking the growth of GUAM into GUUAM, Uzbek President Karimov complained that Russia, 'driven by imperial ambitions and strategic interests in Asia, seeks to thwart those projects' because they bypassed it.⁷⁴

SOVEREIGNTY AND TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY

A major factor uniting the GUUAM countries with common interests is their distrust of Russia as a country which has still not completely abandoned its 'imperialistic' tendencies *vis-à-vis* them and the former USSR. In many ways therefore, Russia remains a negative 'Other' for the Pragmatic Westernizers leading GUUAM countries. In the case of Ukraine, opinion polls in Russia show that a majority of the population do not recognize Ukrainians as a separate ethnic group and do not recognize Ukraine's 'historical right' to ownership of the Crimea and Sevastopol.⁷⁵

Unity in the face of Russian unwillingness to recognize their territorial integrity, sovereignty, and independence is a common theme uniting GUUAM countries. As Georgian President Shevardnadze admitted, 'We consider them (GUUAM) to be our friends and allies because they never treated Georgia's state honour and sovereignty in such an impudent manner.'⁷⁶ Shevardnadze was here referring to Russian covert support for Abkhazian and South Ossetian separatism; military over-flights without Georgian permission⁷⁷ and Russia's refusal to dismantle four military bases. Ukraine has, 'always supported and will continue to support measures carried out by Georgia to restore its territorial integrity', President Kuchma stated.⁷⁸

Georgia has a long record of disgruntlement with its 'strategic partnership' with Russia which, Georgia believed, was meant to help in the restoration of its territorial integrity and the development of its military potential (both of which have not occurred). Although Georgia was the first CIS state to legally facilitate a Russian military presence on its territory the Russian armed forces refused to grant it a share of the Black Sea Fleet and withdrew \$10bn of military equipment from Georgia. Of the 1,600 former Soviet military installations in Georgia, not a single one has been transferred to it, 'in a civilized, peaceful way and in a spirit of co-operation'.⁷⁹

Turkmen and GUUAM members strongly believe that control over their borders is an important symbolic affirmation of their sovereignty.⁸⁰ Valeriy Chkheidze, head of the Georgian border department, argued that, 'The state border is not simply a line, it is a political symbol of independence. But if one's borders are guarded by another state, speaking about full independence is, you will agree, somewhat awkward.'⁸¹ Russian border troops and military units had 'destroyed and plundered' everything before handing it over to Georgia, which Chkheidze defined as 'strategic partnership in action'. In contrast to Russia, 'Splendid relations have taken shape between Ukraine and ourselves, it is rendering us tremendous assistance and support. The United States' assistance has been and continues to be very active.'⁸²

Ukraine, the USA, Turkey and Germany have provided assistance to Georgia in establishing land and maritime border troops. This has included the supply of vessels from Ukraine, the USA and Germany and Turkish-Ukrainian training of Georgian border troop officers. The USA had allocated \$17 million in both 1998 and 1999 to bolster Georgian border troops, whose coastal guard began patrolling Abkhaz as well as Georgian waters on 16 July 1999. During July-August 1999, Russia handed over control of the Turkish-Georgian border in Adzharia to Georgian border troops who began patrolling it from September. In Abkhazia, on the other hand, Russian border troops handed over their installations to Abkhaz units.

In Shevardnadze's eyes, 'GUUAM is an association of states with equal

rights, determined to solve problems facing them by pooled efforts and consultations with one another.⁸³ The CIS, he believed, should focus upon implementing its decisions (here he was also referring to the Abkhaz conflict) rather being an instrument in the service of Russian hegemony (a common fear of GUUAM members). GUUAM members are frustrated at the inability or unwillingness of Russia and the CIS to resolve inter-ethnic conflicts. In summer 1999 Armenia and Azerbaijan, both frustrated at Russia's disinterest in resolving the Nagorno-Karabakh problem, began bilateral negotiations under OSCE auspices supported by the USA.

Four of the GUUAM countries had ethnic conflicts on their territories, three of which ended in violence and the *de facto* loss of these separatist enclaves to central control. In the Trans-Dniestr region of Moldova, Sovietophile, Russian-speaking separatists were overtly supported by the Soviet, and then from May 1992, Russian armed forces. Within Georgia the Abkhaz and South Ossetian separatists were covertly supported by Russia, with Russian military intelligence training Chechen volunteers who have an ethnic kinship with the Abkhaz.⁸⁴ Russia continues to encourage separatist sentiments in the Muslim enclave of Adzharia. In Azerbaijan, Russia covertly supplied Armenia with military supplies, mercenaries and expertise in its successful attempt at detaching Nagorno-Karabakh from Azerbaijan.

In Ukraine the Crimean separatist movement peaked during 1992–94, and has since been in terminal decline after the regional presidency was abolished in March 1995. Unlike Moldova, Azerbaijan or Georgia, where autonomy was either abolished or not granted, in Ukraine the Crimea was elevated from the status of an *oblast* (since 1945) to that of an autonomous republic. The December 1998 Crimean constitution enshrines Ukrainian sovereignty over the region.

Consequently, domestic conflict and difficult relations with Russia have brought GUUAM together for five interrelated reasons. First, Russia is perceived to be disinterested in resolving these conflicts (i.e. through respecting their territorial integrity and sovereignty), and is believed to have overtly or covertly supported separatists. Russian/CIS peacekeepers have therefore merely 'frozen' the situation on the ground in Russia's favour with four regions *de facto* independent of the central authorities (Nagorno-Karabakh, Trans-Dniestr, South Ossetia and Abkhazia). As Georgian Foreign Minister Irakli Menagarishvili said, 'the presence of Russian peacekeeping forces in Abkhazia serves to preserve the existing situation, is not conducive to a settlement, and contributes to maintaining the deadlock'.⁸⁵ Russian peacekeepers in Abkhazia have refused to reverse ethnic cleansing and assist in the repatriation of 250,000 Georgian refugees, are not advancing a political settlement, cement the Georgian–Abkhaz ceasefire line as a *de facto* border and encourage Abkhaz intransigence.

In Moldova, Georgia and Azerbaijan, the Russian executive-parliamentary leadership have proposed the same concept of 'common states' which would convert these three countries into weak, confederal entities with Russian forward military bases. Russian political groups and the military also encourage Ajarian support for such a confederal, 'common state' and encourage Ajaria Supreme Soviet Chairman Aslan Abashidze's Revival Union to challenge Shevardnadze's pro-Western Union of Citizens.

Second, GUUAM members *perceive* Russia to be behind the assassination attempts on Georgian President Shevardnadze and Uzbek President Islam Karimov.⁸⁶ Russian military intelligence (GRU) allegedly collaborated with the former Georgian Security Service head Igor Giorgadze in August 1995 and 1998 in assassination attempts on Shevardnadze for his pragmatic Westernizing policies and for seeking to withdraw from the CST.⁸⁷ Revaz Adamia, Chairman of the Georgian Parliamentary Commission on Defence and Security, implicated the Vaziani Russian military base near Tbilisi in the 1995 and 1998 assassination attempts on Shevardnadze and in illegal arms trade in the Transcaucasus. As Adamia noted, 'this has a very negative effect on our attitude to this installation'.⁸⁸ Georgia successfully managed to get the backing of the December 1999 OSCE summit to demand that Russia begin negotiations on the closure of its four bases in Georgia.

During the unveiling of the Baku-Supsa oil pipeline President Aliiev stated that when the oil contracts were signed in 1994 the 'special services of certain countries' organized a *coup d'état* and terrorist acts. Nevertheless, 'Despite the efforts of our adversaries, we carried out our plans.'⁸⁹ NATO offered to help Azerbaijan and Georgia protect the pipelines and to train Azeri officers at the NATO Defence College in Rome.⁹⁰

Third, Ukraine recognizes the geo-economic and geo-strategic importance of Azerbaijan and Georgia for economic and energy reasons (Russia's main leverage over Ukraine is through economic and energy factors⁹¹). GUUAM is therefore important to defend their economic-energy security and lessen their dependency upon Russia. The first supply of 50,000 tonnes of Azeri oil arrived in Ukraine in summer 1999.⁹² Ukraine had received no oil from Russia since December 1999. As President Kuchma stated on a visit to Baku:

How can one speak about strategic partnership? Do partners behave in this way? Russia is doing its best to force Ukraine to look for alternative sources of energy. If someone thinks we'll sit on a Russian syringe forever, this is a delusion. Azerbaijan helped us in this serious situation, showing its real partnership relationship with us.⁹³

Fourth, Ukrainian foreign policy aims to increasingly bring the conflicts

within the Trans-Caucasus and Moldova under UN and OSCE influence.⁹⁴ This would thereby 'unfreeze' Russian peacekeeping activities by granting autonomy to separatist territories while guaranteeing the territorial integrity of GUUAM member states.⁹⁵

Finally, GUUAM members seek to pursue multi-vector foreign policies based upon pragmatic economic co-operation within the CIS and political-military security with transatlantic and European structures, particularly with NATO.

RUSSIA, IRAN AND GUUAM

Armenia, Greece and Iran cemented a political alliance in July 1999 that, the Azeris believed, was a counter-axis to both the Azeri-Turkish and the Turkish-Israeli accords. Russia was interested in linking itself to the Armenian-Greek-Iranian axis. 'An alliance of GUUAM and Turkey would to a considerable extent smooth over the negative influence of the Russia-Iran-Armenia bloc', one Azeri commentator argued.⁹⁶ The Armenian-Greek-Iranian axis is therefore aligned to the Russophile bloc within the CIS (even though Greece is itself a NATO member).

Iran remained suspicious of Azeri irredentism towards the nearly 20 million Azeris living in north-western Iran. This region was occupied by the USSR during 1945-47, and is dubbed 'southern Azerbaijan' by the Azeri Popular Front (APF). This is strongly supported by the APF whose head, Abulfaz Elchibey, also heads the Movement for a United Azerbaijan. The APF seeks to liberate both Nagorno-Karabakh and 'southern Azerbaijan'. Iran has consistently supported Russia in its objections to defining the Caspian as an international sea rather than as an 'internal lake'. Iran has refused to open an Azeri consulate in Tabriz, capital of Iran's Azeri province. Ringleaders of the March 1995 pro-Russian rebellion by OPON security forces against Aliiev remain based in Iran where they have created an opposition political and paramilitary movement and begun inflammatory radio broadcasts to Azerbaijan.

Iran has also expressed concern over GUUAM's support for alternate energy export routes, internationalizing peacekeeping in the Caucasus and its detrimental effect upon the CST. Iran has faulted Uzbekistan for adopting policies that have led to a worsening of relations with Russia, and noted that 'Russia is not pleased with Uzbekistan's policy of drawing close to the West.'⁹⁷

Georgia refused to join the Greek-Armenian-Iranian axis unless Azerbaijan was also invited, which was not likely. The anti-Turkish/GUUAM orientation of the new axis was admitted by the Greek Ambassador to Armenia who warned that, 'the creation of an axis (Turkey-

Israel) will cause the emergence of a counter axis'.⁹⁸ As with GUUAM, members of the new Greek–Armenian–Iranian axis denied that it included any military component.

Russian observers see the West squarely behind their failure to re-integrate the CIS into a Russian-dominated geopolitical space. The rise of GUUAM, with direct Western and indirect NATO backing, merely serves to confirm their suspicions. Valeriy Litskai, Foreign Minister of the Trans-Dniestr, believed that, 'This union would have an anti-Russian character, and will offer the West a possibility to dismantle the CIS.'⁹⁹ Igor Ivanov, Russian Foreign Minister, therefore asks suspiciously why GUUAM was 'formed and exposed' during the NATO summit in April 1999.¹⁰⁰ He asks:

For what purpose is this organization being created, of all places, in Washington? To what ends is this organization being conspicuously formed against the backdrop of Balkan events?¹⁰¹

Russian identity was subsumed both within Tsarist and later Soviet state identity. With civic nation building within the confines of the Russian Federation still in progress Russian identity remains confused with that of the CIS, the former USSR or the east Slavic space. Russia therefore believes that the CIS – not the Russian Federation – is the key to it successfully re-emerging as a 'great power'.

GUUAM is the main external factor preventing Russia from utilizing the CIS as the vehicle to relaunch its 'great power' ambitions, because it is, 'pulling the former Soviet republics closer to Western or Western-oriented international and regional structures'.¹⁰²

The US, according to Russia, no longer sees it as a partner or serious threat in world affairs and their relations within the CIS are based upon rivalry where Washington seeks to thwart the rise of Russian influence.¹⁰³ Russian Deputy Prime Minister Valeriy Serov therefore believes that

The aim of Western policy in relation to the CIS is the formation of so-called geopolitical pluralism primarily by way of the active promotion of the formation of new power centres – first and foremost, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, and Azerbaijan. A complete struggle is arising for spheres of influence in the CIS countries ...¹⁰⁴

Russian Foreign Minister Ivanov explained former President Yeltsin's statement about 'fighting the Westerners' as meaning that, 'Russia rejects a unipolar world order and insists on a multipolar one because, in a multipolar world, Greater Russia must and will act as one of the centres of gravity.'¹⁰⁵ Such a Cold War view of the world implies spheres of influence and recognizes the centrality of the CIS to the revival of Russia as a 'great power'. The loss of GUUAM is seen as a failure in Russia's policy of CIS

integration. All GUUAM members attended the NATO anniversary summit (it was boycotted only by Russia and Belarus) which, 'demonstrated how Russia is losing its place in the world and in relations with even its closest neighbours'.¹⁰⁶

NATO policy in Kosovo and its indirect backing of GUUAM has spurred increased military integration between Russia and Belarus. Both sides agreed in April 1999, the month of the NATO anniversary summit, to strengthen joint air defences, create a joint military grouping, and co-operate in military production. To Russia, Belarus is therefore its 'anti-NATO outpost'.¹⁰⁷ The Russian-Belarus union was strengthened with the signing of an additional 11 documents on 28 April 1999, primarily on military-security issues (border troops, a joint security concept, defence co-operation, and co-operation between military-industrial complexes). Both countries are establishing a 'strategic alliance' opposed to NATO as the basis for the Russia-Belarus union.¹⁰⁸ Russia's growing security ties with Belarus were also developed with Armenia and Tajikistan and were likely to further push GUUAM away from the CIS Russophile group.

Russian domination of the Collective Security Treaty (CST) and CIS military co-operation has long been in evidence and has played a major factor in turning GUUAM countries away from this aspect of the CIS.¹⁰⁹ The CIS Defence Ministers Council, held after the CST air defence exercises in August 1999, opened to the strains of the 'Anthem of the CIS Defence Ministers Council' penned by hardline Colonel General Leonid Ivashov, head of the Russian General Staff's Main Department for International Military Co-operation.¹¹⁰ The provision of symbols for CIS institutions, such as the CST, is seen in a negative way by GUUAM members as evidence of the CIS's transformation into a supranational body.

Russian observers also astutely recognize that GUUAM remains a 'holding pen' for its members who recognize that they require further domestic advances in their 'quadruple transitions' before joining transatlantic and European structures.¹¹¹ Two well-known Russian security specialists believe the CIS is being 'artificially prolonged' until GUUAM members adapt to the world economy. They note these problems 'and problems that still require a cautious attitude towards Russia and consideration of its interests until problems are removed (the Russian factor in Kazakhstan and Ukraine, and the problem of Karabakh, Abkhazia, South Ossetia, the Dnestr region and Tajikistan)' will sustain it. Konstantin Zatulin and Andranik Migranyan indirectly link Russia's continued military involvement in these CIS states to continued Russian influence, although it is doubtful whether Kazakhstan and Tajikistan from the Russophile group can be included with other GUUAM members. Their main complaint rests in GUUAM members reaping economic advantages from Russia while not

preparing to make any concessions in domestic politics and refusing to limit their sovereignty in Russia's favour.¹¹²

Russia is, therefore, pointedly concerned that GUUAM could become an alternative to the CIS.¹¹³ Its openly 'pro-NATO sympathies' threaten a 'new regional geopolitical counterweight' to Russia and are a 'fifth column' in the CIS.¹¹⁴ Russian Foreign Minister Ivanov has continued the tough Russian foreign policy consensus towards the CIS which itself was one factor that led to the creation of GUUAM. Ivanov outlined three Russian strategic policies to the CIS as encompassing:

- (1) The pipelines for Turkmen gas and Azeri oil which bypass Russia are 'unacceptable' to Russia as they harm its interests and 'play the anti-Russian card' in the Caucasus;
- (2) Russia's four army and air force military bases in Georgia are in Georgia's interests;
- (3) The GUUAM group should not acquire a 'political-military character' which would be not in Russia's interests.

Russian policies in the Caspian and the Caucasian regions pushed Georgia and Azerbaijan towards Ukraine and led to the formation of GUAM. While refusing to withdraw from its four bases and internationalizing peacekeeping in Georgia, the Russian military has expanded its naval base in Astrakhan on the Caspian and in December 1998 created a Joint Grouping of Russian forces in Kaspiysk, Dagestan, which includes the 136th Motorized Rifle Brigade (Buynaksk).

In Armenia, Russia has replaced the outdated S-75 and S-125 with advanced S-300V surface-to-air missile systems with a range of 40–100km. Russia has also supplied advanced jet fighters and brokered the sale of eight Typhoon Chinese multiple-launcher missile complexes to Armenia.¹¹⁵ Three of these are reportedly targeted at Georgia's Supsa oil terminal¹¹⁶ and another four are based in Nagorno-Karabakh.

THE CIS MILITARY BLOC: NO TAKERS

Although Russia has long sought to create a functioning military bloc from the Collective Security Treaty (CST) established in summer 1992 to counter NATO enlargement and a 'US-dominated unipolar world', this has largely fallen on deaf ears. Nevertheless, all of the Russophile group are members of the CST, which symbolically, at least, remains the CIS security bloc.¹¹⁷ Belarus, though a strong supporter of the CST, does not allow its troops to be used outside Belarus in CST military activities. Georgia, Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan all left the CST in spring 1999 (which makes its title 'the Tashkent CST' rather defunct), seeing it as incompatible with their growing involvement within GUUAM.

Although a member of the CST, the Azerbaijani parliament had never ratified its membership and it had not taken part in CST activities. Georgia explained that, in contrast to the CST, co-operation with NATO 'answered the country's interests and the needs of military modernization'.¹¹⁸ Georgian State (Prime) Minister Vazha Lortkipanidze has openly declared that, 'the United States is our most important partner. To state this is simply to state a fact.'¹¹⁹ To this end, the US annually provides non-reimbursable assistance, it supports Georgian sovereignty and helps it to establish its own armed forces and border troops. He contrasted this with Russia, 'whose reactionary forces do not accept Georgia's independence, hamper its development, seek – sometimes with partial successes – to destabilize the country and thwart the settlement of the conflict in Abkhazia'.¹²⁰

GUUAM members remain opposed to their participation within the CST because they see it as part and parcel of Russia's strategic policy of the re-integration of the post-Soviet space. A key outline of this policy was the September 1995 Russian presidential decree 'On Affirming the Strategic Course of the Russian Federation with the Member States of the CIS'.¹²¹ This decree outlined a policy of seeking to create a common security-defence union with common political-military goals. Such a union would include Russian forward military bases, a unified system of border troops and protection (i.e. recognition of jointly patrolled CIS 'outer' borders and 'transparent' internal CIS frontiers), a unified air defence,¹²² and exclusive use of Russian/CIS peacekeepers (not the UN or the OSCE).

Russia's rhetoric on CIS integration and its demands for a sphere of influence in the 'near abroad' have faced the major problem of a lack of domestic resources, a weak state, crippled military and an unpopular image. Russia has not become the attractive pole around which other CIS states would integrate. The bombardment of the Russian parliament in October 1993, military intervention in Chechnya, support for separatism, domestic terrorism, and the economic-financial crisis have all served to present Russia as a highly unattractive 'negative other'. Consequently, Russia sees the West as looking increasingly towards Ukraine – not the 'Russian Titanic' – as its strategic partner in the CIS, a fact very different to the Russo-centric policies pursued by the West during 1992–93.¹²³

A Ukrainian security specialist within the National Institute of Strategic Studies (the think tank of the National Security and Defence Council) explained that whereas NATO was evolving from a military to a security structure, the CST was moving in the opposite direction. NATO, unlike the CST, was not, in his eyes, controlled by one country and each member had only one vote. NATO provided financial support to new members, again, unlike Russia within the CST (as most glaringly seen in the case of Georgia). 'Russia in this respect is trying to compensate for its internal

political instability with external military integration', he believed.¹²⁴ Russian specialists have not hidden their view that Russian-speakers in the CIS are a potential source of influence in favour of Russian strategic objectives 'Through the (CST) Alliance, Russia strengthens its influence in countries which have large Russian speaking populations and where it has its own interests.'¹²⁵ This puts added pressure upon countries with large Russian minorities, such as Ukraine and Moldova.

Russophile countries with security needs, such as Armenia and Tajikistan, have preferred to establish direct bilateral security links with Russia – rather than through the CST. The only strong supporter of a CIS military bloc is, not surprisingly, Belarus, whose anti-Western and anti-NATO rhetoric has at times been even embarrassing to Russia. Nevertheless, during the Council of Heads of Governments of the CIS in June 1999 when Belarussian President Alyksandr Lukashenko called for an anti-NATO bloc his, 'was a voice crying in the wilderness'.¹²⁶ The failure to create unified CIS armed forces was 'due to strong previously isolationist tendencies'.¹²⁷

Armenia and Belarus have been the most steadfast in their determination to build strong bilateral military relations with Russia. Russian pragmatists have recognized their inability to transform the CST into a viable security body after 1992 and therefore have focused their attention upon their two most reliable partners – Belarus and Armenia. These two countries, together with Russia, see GUUAM as a 'pro-NATO' grouping.¹²⁸

This perception was undoubtedly enhanced by Azerbaijan's offer to host Turkish/NATO bases. Ihtiyar Shirinov, chairman of the pro-government Azeri National Congress Party, believed that, 'Azerbaijan should join the NATO security system, conclude a treaty on military co-operation and mutual aid with Turkey, and obtain a NATO or Turkish military base stationed on Azeri territory.'¹²⁹ Armenia warned though that it would take adequate responses against such bases if they were ever established.

Both Azerbaijan and Georgia¹³⁰ have expressed an interest in joining NATO while Ukraine has hinted that it too might seek NATO membership in given circumstances. Armenia was one of the first CIS members to offer Russia military bases, now established on the basis of 18 bilateral agreements, and the first to hold joint military exercises with it.

The link between GUUAM and NATO, in Russian eyes, could not but have been solidified by the attendance of GUUAM members at the 50th anniversary NATO summit in Washington DC in April 1999, during NATO's bombardment of Serbia. During the summit another country, Uzbekistan, joined GUUAM. According to Russian sources, GUUAM members at the summit discussed military problems, including the resolution of ethnic conflicts in the former USSR in a similar manner to that undertaken by NATO in Kosovo/Serbia.¹³¹

Armenia's strategic alliance with Russia is 'deeply rooted'. Armenia borders two countries – Azerbaijan and Georgia – which are openly seeking NATO membership and therefore, in Armenian eyes, are using GUUAM to weaken the CIS. Vaan Shirkhanyan, Armenia's Deputy Defence Minister, believes that, 'We should be very cautious about the existence of this bloc and its possible development.'¹³² Armenia's air defence forces are drawn from Russia and the only functioning air defence forces are those within the Russophile group of CIS states (Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan).¹³³ Russian armed forces based in Armenia are there at no cost to the host state. Armenia/Belarus and Russia undertake close co-ordination and common military training. Belarus and Russia have gone further and established a unified group of forces stationed in the Moscow military district and Belarus which held joint military exercises in spring 1999.¹³⁴

Ukraine, together with other GUUAM members, only sends observers from its defence ministry, to meetings of CIS defence ministers.¹³⁵ On most occasions Turkmenistan has not attended them in any capacity while GUUAM members have either sent lower ranking officials from their defence ministries as observers or also not attended. The CIS Defence Ministers Council has *de facto* become a body to which only CST members pay homage with GUUAM members paying lip service to it, as they do to all non-economic activities within the CIS.¹³⁶

US AND WESTERN POLICY TOWARDS GUUAM

GUUAM members, in contrast to the Russophile group, do not see NATO as an 'aggressive' organization.¹³⁷ GUUAM congratulated Poland, the Czech Republic, and Hungary upon joining NATO, which they defined as a source of stability and security. GUUAM supports an 'open-door' policy for NATO while Russia explicitly backs a closed-door policy when it demands that NATO never enlarge into the former USSR. GUUAM, like the three Baltic states, therefore reject Russia's demand for a veto over NATO enlargement into the former USSR.

Georgia and Azerbaijan have both expressed an interest in joining NATO. Georgia's Ambassador to the Benelux countries admitted to his country's pragmatic westernism by accepting that he did not expect his country to qualify for NATO membership in the short term. What was important though was Georgia's 'strategic orientation'.¹³⁸

Ukraine has not ruled this option out altogether, either if the current geopolitical situation changes (i.e. a new Russian president adopts a more hardline policy towards it) or in the medium-long terms when domestic obstacles to current membership are removed.

All GUUAM members are active within PfP. Georgian President

Shevardnadze admitted that, 'we still have a long path to travel before being able to join NATO but it may happen sooner than we imagine'. PfP, to Georgia and Ukraine, represents a stage in the direction of NATO membership. Ukrainian and Georgian elites see this as a medium term objective. Azerbaijan has officially invited NATO to establish military bases on its territory in response to the expansion of Russian military cooperation with Armenia. Russia has complained that NATO's use of the Yavoriv training facility in western Ukraine was tantamount to establishing its first military base in the CIS.¹³⁹

GUUAM members supported NATO actions in Kosovo in spring 1999 and preferred to attend the NATO anniversary summit in Washington DC rather than join Moscow in condemning NATO at the 2 April CIS summit. Russia's special envoy on Kosovo, Viktor Chernomyrdin, first visited three GUUAM countries (Ukraine, Georgia and Azerbaijan) in his unsuccessful attempt at forging a united anti-NATO position on Kosovo.

Georgia has also alluded to similar policies that have taken place in the CIS to those the Serbs conducted in Bosnia and Kosovo. A quarter of a million Georgians were ethnically cleansed by Abkhazia and Russian peacekeepers in Abkhazia refuse to support the return of Georgian refugees. President Clinton agreed with President Shevardnadze that the 'crime committed in Abkhazia was similar to that in Kosovo' and that 'ethnic cleansing should not be left unpunished'.¹⁴⁰ Azerbaijan and Georgia have both welcomed NATO's reversal of Serbian ethnic cleansing in Kosovo and look to the Kosovo-UN/NATO brokered peace agreement (where Russia plays a subordinate role) as a future model for the Caucasus. NATO and the UN have sponsored the return of ethnically cleansed refugees to Kosovo, something not undertaken by Russia in Abkhazia.

Georgia's decision to seek NATO membership, President Shevardnadze believed, is a result of five factors:

- (1) US recognition of his role as Soviet Foreign Minister in ending the Cold War;
- (2) The change in the balance of power in favour of the West;
- (3) Georgia's 'return to Europe from which it had been torn away by force';
- (4) Affiliation with the West would enable Georgia to 'develop democracy, protect human rights, build a civilized country, guarantee our national identity and our independence';
- (5) Enhancement of its role as a 'bridge' linking Western Europe and Asia.

Although GUUAM has been unsuccessful in obtaining recognition at NATO as a regional organization (e.g. through joint PfP manoeuvres of GUUAM members), its members regularly issue joint statements at the Euro-

Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) at NATO headquarters. NATO has resisted recognizing GUUAM within the confines of its EAPC. Nevertheless, GUUAM commentators regularly stress: 'The geopolitical interests of the United States and its European allies coincide practically in full with the interests of the members of GUAM and the states of Central Asia.'¹⁴¹

Individual NATO members have been less reticent in forging and encouraging GUUAM ties, particularly the US and UK who have their largest European bilateral military programmes with Ukraine. In an August 1999 visit to the region US Secretary of Defense William Cohen visited Turkey, Ukraine, and, for the first time, Georgia. The Department for Military Policy and Bilateral Relations was established within the Georgian Ministry of Defence in September 1998. The main visits by the Georgian Minister of Defence during 1998–99 were to Ukraine and Uzbekistan within GUUAM, Russia, Turkey, Romania, and the USA. The USA – not Russia as it was initially envisaged in the early 1990s – is now the main financial benefactor to the tune of \$20 million in the development of the Georgian military. Captain Zurab Kvachadze, head of the new department in the Georgian Ministry of Defence, noted that, 'co-operation with America is developing at an intensive and growing pace'.¹⁴² A permanent 12-man Turkish 'co-ordination and control group' is established in Georgia's Ministry of Defence to support officer training. Georgia's main bilateral military co-operation programmes are with the USA, Germany, Greece, Turkey, and Ukraine.

US military assistance to Georgia underway, or planned, for 1999 included:

- delivery of two batches of six and then four Iroquois military helicopters and the training of helicopter crews;
- delivery of US coast guard cutters to strengthen Georgia's control over its borders;
- equipping Georgian border troops and air defence units with US control and communications gear;
- training of Georgian officers in US academies;
- holding the first US-Georgian ground troops exercise within PfP;
- the first Georgian unit trained to operate with NATO troops placed within the Turkish contingent of NATO in Kosovo. They followed the Azeri unit also under Turkish command in the Kosovo German sector.

The US-Ukraine bilateral military programme is the most extensive US programme in Europe under the US European Command. The strategic aim of this assistance remains to, 'support Ukrainian sovereignty, stability and independence'. To this end, the USA strives to help develop 'adequate forces' in Ukraine to defend itself and support out of country missions under

the UN or NATO. US assistance also promotes the expansion of links between Ukraine and Euro-Atlantic security, political, and economic structures 'to foster closer co-operation and integration'.¹⁴³ From an annual number of 50 events in 1995 this has more than doubled to 120 in 1999. To these ends the USA supports:

- increased regional co-operation, contact and trust – including within the context of GUUAM;
- an increase in Ukraine's interoperability with the US and NATO;
- Ukraine's participation in PFP (e.g. annual 'Co-operative Neighbour' and 'Co-operative Partner' exercises¹⁴⁴);
- bilateral US-Ukraine exercises within the 'spirit of PFP' (e.g. the annual 'Peace Shield' and 'Sea Breeze' exercises);
- the maintenance of a 'visible presence' in Ukraine to 'demonstrate the US commitment to Ukrainian independence and regional stability';
- the establishment of a Joint Contact Team Programme/Military Liaison Team on 17 March 1999 in the Ukrainian Ministry of Defence¹⁴⁵;
- the State Partnership Programme between the Kansas-California National Guards and Ukrainian armed forces;
- co-operation between US National Guard units and the Ukrainian Ministry for Emergency Situations;
- enhanced co-operation between the US Coast Guard and Ukrainian border troops.

In 1995–96 military contacts between the UK and Ukraine expanded to a high level with the signing of bilateral annual protocols on military co-operation that have been developed within the 'spirit of (NATO's) PFP of which Ukraine has been active member. The first such exercise took place in autumn 1996 and in May 1998 the 'Cossack Steppe', annual Polish-Ukrainian-British military exercises were held in the UK. The 'Cossack Express' exercise with the same three national forces was held during 20 September–4 October 1999 at the Yavoriv training centre near L'viv. These bilateral military programmes have focused upon five areas: officer military and language training in the UK, joint military manoeuvres, the development of direct ties between military units, education (e.g. civil-military relations) and encouragement for regional co-operation through, for example, the Polish-Ukrainian peacekeeping battalion. Ukrainian units are also serving side-by-side with their British counterparts in Bosnia-Herzegovina.¹⁴⁶ The Polish-Ukrainian battalion is now based in Kosovo under NATO command.

Bilateral security co-operation between the UK and Ukraine is now well developed; during 1995–99 Ukraine has represented the country with which the UK's Ministry of Defence has the largest bilateral programme. These

usually encompass up to 90 activities in each calendar year (in comparison, even *prior* to NATO's intervention into Kosovo in April 1999, the UK was only able to agree to six activities per annum with the Russian Federation). The only other western country that has a larger bilateral military programme with Ukraine is the US. Nevertheless, in Western Europe the UK's military programme with Ukraine is the largest, focusing primarily upon the armed forces but also increasingly upon the National Guard and Border Troops as well.

Turkey is a key ally of GUUAM within NATO and the Euro-Atlantic security community, with close ties to Moldova and Ukraine (through the Gagauz and Tatar communities respectively) and Georgia and Azerbaijan; it shares a border with both and a language with the latter. In addition, Turkey is the key player in the Black Sea Economic Co-operation Agreement which GUUAM countries see as an additional regional counterweight to Russian hegemony.

US and Western policy often aims to step in where Russia has not been forthcoming. The US has provided financial and technical assistance in the form of vessels to Georgia over the 2000–2005 period that will build up its capacity to defend its own borders, an important element in establishing its sovereignty.¹⁴⁷ Russia declined to give Georgia any ships from the portion of the former Soviet Black Sea Fleet stationed in Georgia.¹⁴⁸ The growing co-operation of NATO and the US with Georgia means that, 'the geography of Russia's military presence in the Transcaucasus is narrowing'.¹⁴⁹ Russia believed that NATO objectives remain to 'tie the world's oil resources to their nearest military bases'.¹⁵⁰

Since October 1998 Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova, Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan have been in the zone of responsibility of US Armed Forces European Command. Since October 1999, the four Central Asian countries and Kazakhstan have been within the American Central Military Command.

The US has supported Georgia's calls to internationalize peacekeeping under NATO with a UN mandate in the Caucasus if they and the Abkhaz agree to such a deployment. Turkey has also backed the creation of a peacekeeping force in the Caucasus as part of NATO's PfP.¹⁵¹ Both Azerbaijan and Georgia would prefer Ukrainian to Russian peacekeepers in their countries, preferably with UN, OSCE or NATO – not CIS – mandates.¹⁵²

CONCLUSION

The division of the CIS into two equal groups of Russophiles and GUUAM+Turkmenistan is a sign that geopolitical pluralism has finally emerged in the former USSR. Such a development should be both encouraged and welcomed by US and Western organizations and policy

makers. The Russophile group is led by Pragmatic Russophiles (Russia, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan) plus the radical Slavophile Belarus. The GUUAM (Georgia, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan, Moldova) group and Turkmenistan are led by pro-Western pragmatic elites who have common national interests that are increasingly diverging with those of Russia.

The continued existence of GUUAM is evidence that geopolitical pluralism has finally emerged in the CIS. The emergence of geopolitical pluralism and Russia's domestic difficulties signify that Russia is unlikely to revive as a 'great power' through the creation of a new union around itself. It is therefore in the West's interests to continue to promote geopolitical pluralism in the CIS through a more active bilateral and multilateral engagement with GUUAM and Turkmenistan.

NOTES

1. Zbigniew Brzezinski, 'The Premature Partnership', *Foreign Affairs* 73/2 (March–April 1994) pp.67–82. In late 1997 two Russian security specialists, Konstantin Zatulin and Andranik Migranian, admitted that Russia had to recognise that geopolitical pluralism had arrived in the former USSR. See Paul Kubicek, 'Russian Foreign Policy and the West', *Political Science Quarterly* 114/4 (Winter 1999–2000) p.566.
2. See T. Kuzio, 'Slavophiles versus Westernizers: Foreign Policy Orientations in Ukraine' in Kurt R. Spillmann, Andreas Andreas and Derek Muller (eds.), *Between Russia and Europe. Foreign and Security Policy of Independent Ukraine*, Contemporary History and Security Policy 2, Center for Security Studies and Conflict Research, Zurich (Bern: Peter Lang 1999) pp.53–74.
3. See P. Terrence Hopmann, Stephen D. Shenfield and Dominique Arel, *Integration and Disintegration in the Former Soviet Union: Implications for Regional and Global Security*, Occasional Paper 30 (Providence, RI: Thomas J. Watson Jr Inst. for Int. Studies, Brown Univ. 1997).
4. This was how the Armenian newspaper *Respublika*, 9 June 1999, defined it.
5. *Interfax*, 29 Jan. 1998.
6. *Interfax*, 8 Sept. 1999.
7. *Ukraina moloda*, 1 Sept. 1999.
8. *Belorusskaya Delovaya Gazeta*, 1 Sept. 1999.
9. *Ukraina moloda*, 3 July 1999.
10. President Lukashenko 'is shocked by the conduct of some of the ministers at the CIS Council of Foreign Ministers from GUUAM who were allegedly blocking the establishment of a free trade zone'. *Interfax*, 4 June 1999.
11. Vitaliy Portnykov, *Zerkalo Nedeli*, 8 May 1999.
12. DINAU, 14 July 1998.
13. Interview with Ukrainian Foreign Minister Tarasiuk, *Holos Ukrainy*, 3 Feb. 1999.
14. See Neil Malcolm *et al.*, *Internal Factors in Russian Foreign Policy* (Oxford: Clarendon Press 1996).
15. Interview with Volodymyr Muzyka, Head, CIS Directorate, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Kyiv, 27 Oct. 1999.
16. Cited from Stanislav I. Chernyavskiy, head of the fourth department of the CIS of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Mezhdunarodnaya Zhizn'* 1 (Jan. 1999).
17. *Zerkalo*, 27 March 1999.
18. *Ukraina moloda*, 23 July 1998.

19. See Richard Sakwa and Mark Webber, 'The Commonwealth of Independent States, 1991–1998: Stagnation and Survival', *Europe-Asia Studies* 51/3 (May 1999) pp.379–415; and Paul Kubicek, 'End of the Line for the Commonwealth of Independent States', *Problems of Post-Communism* 46/2 (March–April 1999) pp.15–24.
20. *Infobank*, 13 Feb. 1998.
21. *Rossiyskaya Gazeta*, 2 Dec. 1997, and *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, 3 Dec. 1997.
22. Comments by the Ukrainian and Moldovan Presidents, cited by ITAR-TASS, 18 Aug. 1999.
23. *Turan*, 21 Jan. 1999.
24. *Interfax*, 11 May 1999.
25. ITAR-TASS, 4 and 6 Aug. 1999.
26. *Turan*, 19 March 1999.
27. *Snark*, 19 March 1999.
28. *Segodnya*, 17 and 20 April 1999.
29. *Turan*, 16–19 April 1999.
30. *Iprinda*, 16–19 April 1999.
31. Ukraine, 'plays the role of a basic centre for integration of the post-Soviet space outside Russia and against Russia...', *Sodruzhestvo NG* 1 (Dec. 1997).
32. Paul D'Anieri, 'Dilemmas of Interdependence: Autonomy, Prosperity, and Sovereignty in Ukraine's Russia's Policy', *Problems of Post-Communism* 43/1 (Jan.–Feb. 1997) p.23.
33. GUAM is 'directly connected with the idea of the Baltic-Black Sea Union' as the latter 'organically incorporated' it. GUAM also supported the BSECA framework. See 'Shaping Ukraine's Regional Co-operation within GUUAM', Occasional Report, 1999, Centre for Peace, Conversion and Foreign Policy of Ukraine, Kyiv.
34. *Interfax*, 5 June 1998.
35. *Interfax*, 10 Sept. 1999.
36. *Financial Times*, 11 Sept. 1999.
37. *Ibid.*
38. The Yalta summit was wholeheartedly endorsed by Georgia's leadership. ITAR-TASS (29 June 1999).
39. *Zerkalo Nedeli*, 8–14 May 1999.
40. *Jamestown Monitor*, 30 Oct. 1997.
41. ITAR-TASS, 14 Sept. 1999.
42. Romanians in Chernivtsi *oblast* were the only ethnic minority in Ukraine to boycott the Dec. 1991 referendum on independence.
43. This was explained by Duma Chairman Gennadiy Seleznev on a visit to Moldova. *Jamestown Monitor*, 30 Oct. 1997.
44. *Holos Ukraïny*, 20 March 1998.
45. *Infotag*, 5 Aug. 1999, and *Interfax*, 18 Aug. 1999.
46. First Deputy Prime Minister Viktor Sinev of the Trans-Dniestr separatist enclave believes there is no alternative to statehood and that, 'Tiraspol must count only on itself and strengthen its own statehood', *Interfax*, 14 Sept. 1999.
47. On the Crimea see Ch. 3 in T. Kuzio, *Ukraine under Kuchma. Political Reform, Economic Transformation and Security Policy in Independent Ukraine* (London: Macmillan 1997) pp.67–89.
48. Interview with Moldovan President Petru Lucinschi, *Rossiyskaya Gazeta*, 19 May 1999.
49. ITAR-TASS, 2 Aug. 1999.
50. Sherman W.Garnett and Rachel Levenson, 'Ukraine Joins the Fray. Will Peace Come to the Trans-Dniestria?', *Problems of Post-Communism* 45/6 (Nov.–Dec. 1998) pp.28–30.
51. *Narodna Armiya*, 18 June 1998.
52. *Interfax*, 26 Aug. 1998; *Narodna Armiia*, 27 and 29 Oct. 1998; *Infotag*, 18 Nov. 1998.
53. ITAR-TASS, 23 Oct. 1998, and 11 May 1999. See also Garnett and Levenson (note 50). Translated in *Polityka i Chas* 1 (1999) pp.51–62.
54. *Ukraïna moloda*, 23 July 1999.
55. *Interfax*, 29 Oct. 1997. Ukraine provided Georgia with two guided-missile ships (NTV, 7 July 1999), allegedly paid for with US funds (*Dghe*, 12 July 1999). Georgia also obtained a missile cutter from Ukraine.

56. The Ukrainian Ministry of Defence and the Security Service formed a joint commission to examine Armenian claims that it was sending new tanks to Azerbaijan – not repairing old ones (*Interfax*, 14 Sept. 1993). *Kuranty* (15–21 Oct. 1997) reported continued Ukrainian deliveries of 150 tanks, 150 BMPs, 5 MIG-25s, 4 Smerch and 4 Uragan systems, 15 Gvozдика and 20 Akatsiya howitzers. See also T. Kuzio, 'Ukraine's Arms Exports' and 'Ukraine's arms exports continue to expand'. *Jane's Intelligence Review* 6/2 (Feb. 1994) pp.65–6 and 9/3 (March 1997) pp.108–10.
57. *Turan*, 5 March 1999.
58. *Interfax*, 28 Jan. 1998.
59. *Jamestown Monitor*, 25 Nov. 1997.
60. *Narodna Armiia*, 17 Feb. 1999.
61. *Interfax*, 17 April 1997.
62. President Islam Karimov on Uzbek TV (6 Jan. 1998).
63. *Rabochaya Tribuna*, 6 Jan. 1998.
64. RFE/RI Daily, 4 Feb. 1999.
65. *Interfax*, 21 May 1999.
66. *Belorusskaya Delovaya Gazeta*, 7 June 1999.
67. Kuchma complained, 'What kind of a commonwealth is it if we have a number of unresolved conflicts?'. *Reuters*, 27 March 1997.
68. *Zerkalo*, 27 March 1999.
69. *Interfax*, 28 Nov. 1997.
70. *Ukraina moloda*, 23 July 1998, wrote, 'In one word, we are too different to continue boiling in one post-Soviet pot and feel happy with it.'
71. *Den*, 27 April 1999.
72. 'Shaping of Ukraine's Regional Co-operation within GUUAM', Occasional Report, 1999, Center for Peace, Conversion and Foreign Policy of Ukraine, Kyiv.
73. Copy in the author's possession of GUAM statement to the EAPC Political Committee, NATO, 28 July 1998.
74. UNIAN, 26 April 1999.
75. This is more frequent than is usually imagined among former communist countries. The majority of Romanians and Bulgarians also do not recognize Moldovans or Macedonians respectively as separate ethnic groups. In these cases, and that of Ukraine–Russia, this does not necessarily translate into ethnic conflict.
76. *Radio Tbilisi*, 28 June 1999.
77. Russian military aircraft regularly fly over Georgia on their way to Armenia without first obtaining permission from Georgian Air Traffic control. Even when this was not granted Russian planes continued to trespass across Georgian airspace in February, March and June 1999.
78. *Zerkalo Nedeli*, 30 May 1998.
79. Interview with Zurab Zhvania, Georgian Parliamentary Speaker, on *Ekho Moskvy*, 21 April 1999.
80. See T. Kuzio, 'Borders, Symbolism and Nation-State Building: Ukraine and Russia', *Geopolitics and International Boundaries* 2/2 (Autumn 1997) pp.36–56.
81. *Obshchaya Gazeta*, 25 June–1 July 1998.
82. *Ibid.*
83. Interviewed in *Asaval-Dasavali*, 22 June 1999.
84. *Obshchaya Gazeta*, 22–28 June 2000.
85. Quoted from a speech to the Royal Institute of International Affairs, London (*Jamestown Monitor*, 17 Nov. 1999).
86. Interview with an anonymous head of a department, Ukrainian Foreign Ministry, Kyiv, 28 Oct. 1998. The Ukrainian Foreign Ministry 'resolutely denounced' the assassination attempt on Karimov (ITAR-TASS, 18 Feb. 1999).
87. 'Georgia Implicates Russian Security Official in Alleged Coup Plot', *STRATFOR Global Intelligence Update*, 28 May 1999. Shevardnadze blamed 'patrons and sponsors across the border, specifically in Russia' (*Reuters*, 24 May 1999) for the 1998 attempt. Parliamentary Speaker Zhvania accused Russian military intelligence (GRU) of operating out of the four

- Russian bases in Georgia and fomenting separatism (*Interfax*, 5 June 1999) and complained that those behind these attempts, 'find a certain degree of protection in certain circles in Russia' (*Ekho Moskvy*, 21 April 1999).
88. *Sakartvelos Respublika*, 20 March 1999.
 89. *Interfax*, 17 April 1999.
 90. *Turan*, 27 May 1999.
 91. See Paul J. D'Anieri, *Economic Interdependence in Ukrainian-Russian Relations* (Albany: State Univ. of NY 1999).
 92. On the second sitting of the Ukrainian-Azeri Intergovernmental Commission for Economic Co-operation see ITAR-TASS, 30 July 1999. See also Shemseddin Hadzhiyev, 'Na Osnovi Dalekosiazhnykh i Hlybokykh Interesiv', *Polityka i Chas* 6 (1998) pp.10-13.
 93. *Turan*, 17 March 2000.
 94. President Kuchma said as long ago as Dec. 1994, after the CSCE conference in Budapest, that peacekeepers in Abkhazia and Nagorno-Karabakh should be from the CSCE (now OSCE). See *Radio Ukraine*, 7 Dec. 1994. This was repeated by Kuchma when discussing Russian/CIS peacekeepers in an interview on Georgian radio (*Radio Iprinda*, 28 Oct. 1997).
 95. See V.O. Malianov, 'Problemy Rozv'iazannia Hruzyns'ko-Abkhaz'koho Konfliktu ta Natsional'ni Interesy Ukraïny u Zakavkazzi', *Stratehichna Panorama* 3-4 (1998) pp.68-71.
 96. *Zerkalo*, 27 March 1999.
 97. *Jamestown Monitor*, 9 Sept. 1999.
 98. *Zerkalo*, 10 July 1999.
 99. *Basapress*, 12 Dec. 1997.
 100. *Den'*, 6 May 1999.
 101. Vitaliy Portnykov, 'Moscow Upset that GUAM Became GUUAM', *The Day*, 12 May 1999.
 102. Stanislav I. Chernyavskiy, head of the fourth department of the CIS of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in *Mezhdunarodnaya Zhizn'* 1 (Jan. 1999).
 103. Alexei Arbatov in *Mirovaya Ekonomika i Mezhdunarodnyye Otnosheniya* 5 (1998).
 104. *Moskovskaya Pravda*, 2 April 1997.
 105. ITAR-TASS, 1 Sept. 1999.
 106. *The Day*, 12 May 1999.
 107. *Izvestiya*, 24 April 1999.
 108. *Izvestiya*, 29 April 1999.
 109. An Azeri commentator argued that, 'The processes under way in Russia today are a signal giving notice of the real dangers and, in this connection, demanding an acceleration of the integration processes within the GUAM framework with the further enlistment in this structure of the Central Asian countries' (*Zerkalo*, 27 March 1999).
 110. ITAR-TASS and UNIAN, 24-29 Aug. 1999. The anthem of the Russian-Belarusian union is that of the former USSR, minus its lyrics.
 111. The 'quadruple transition' is defined as civic-nation and state-institution building, democratization and marketization. See T. Kuzio, 'Ukraine: A Four-Pronged Transition' in T. Kuzio (ed.) *Contemporary Ukraine: Dynamics of Post-Soviet Transformation* (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe 1998) pp.165-80.
 112. *Sodruzhestvo NG* 1 (Dec. 1997).
 113. *Izvestiya*, 21 April 1999.
 114. *Segodnya*, 22 April 1999.
 115. China regretted the sale and recalled its military instructors, promising not to deliver further missiles to Armenia. See 'Baku Alleges Moscow Brokered Chinese Missile Sale to Armenia', *STRATFOR Global Intelligence Update*, 21 May 1999.
 116. 'Conflict Threatens Caucasus Pipelines', *STRATFOR Global Intelligence Update*, 15 June 1999.
 117. *Respublika Armenia*, 9 June 1999.
 118. ITAR-TASS, 19 March 1999.
 119. *Radio Tbilisi*, 21-22 May 1999.
 120. *Ibid.*

121. *Rossiiskaia gazeta*, 23 Sept. 1995.
122. Frank Umbach believes that a CIS common Air Defence Agreement would give Russia influence over the security and defence policies of the other members and undermine their national control. See his 'The Role and Influence of the Military Establishment in Russia's Foreign and Security Policy in the Yeltsin Era', *The Journal of Slavic Military Studies* 9/3 (Sept. 1996) p.486.
123. The Ukrainian government newspaper *Uriadovyi Kurier*, 12 Sept. 1998, republished an article from *Komersant-Daily* entitled 'Rosiiys'kyi "Tytanyk" topyt' SND. Na rol' novoho lidera Zakhid vysuvaye Kuchmu'.
124. Hryhorii Perepylytsia, 'Chy stane Tashkents'kyi pakt povnotsiynym viys'kovym soiuzom?', *Uriadovyi Kurier*, 25 May 1996.
125. *Vo Slavu Rodinu*, 26 Nov. 1997.
126. *Belorusskaya Delovaya Gazeta*, 7 June 1999.
127. *Vo Slavu Rodinu*, 26 Nov. 1997.
128. See Asim Mollazade, 'GUAM: Guarantor of protection and Integration in the Euro-Atlantic Space', *Zerkalo*, 27 March 1999.
129. *Turan*, 29 Jan. 1999.
130. A Russian commentary complained that Georgia had replaced its 'pro-Russian' Defence Minister with that of a 'pro-Westerner', David Tevzadze, and, like Ukraine, had invited NATO to establish a military mission in its Ministry of Defence (*Nezavisimoye Voyennoye Obozreniye*, 4–10 March 1999).
131. *Nezavisimoye Voyennoye Obozreniye* 16 (30 April–6 May 1999).
132. *Snark*, 5 May 1999.
133. Interview with Kazgen Sarkisyan, Armenian Defence Minister (ITAR-TASS, 7 April 1999). Ukraine's parliament has never ratified its involvement in the CIS Air Defence Agreement (*Vysokyi Zamok*, 21 May 1997).
134. *Nezavisimoye* (note 130).
135. ITAR-TASS, 25 March 1999.
136. *Zerkalo*, 22 May 1999.
137. See the views of Georgian President Shevardnadze in ITAR-TASS, 28 April 1999. On Ukraine see T. Kuzio, 'Ukraine and NATO: The Evolving Strategic Partnership', *Journal of Strategic Studies* 21/2 (June 1998) pp.1–30. An Uzbek commentary described NATO as working to preserve peace and stability, ensure security and find diplomatic solutions to conflicts (*Radio Tashkent*, 23 April 1999).
138. *Prime News*, 24 June 1999.
139. Yavoriv was the 'springboard for a NATO massive armour attack to the East', according to a Russian Ministry of Defence expert (ITAR-TASS, 11 Feb. 1999).
140. *Prime News*, 29 April 1999.
141. *Zerkalo*, 27 March 1999.
142. *Svobodnaya Gruziiya*, 2 April 1999.
143. Lt.Col. Frank Morgese, USEUCOM J5, 'U.S.-Ukraine Peacetime Military Engagement', paper given to the conference 'NATO: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow', Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, 9 Sept. 1999.
144. The 'Co-operative Partner-99' naval exercise in the Black Sea in June 1999 was attended by Ukraine and Georgia.
145. A NATO military mission has been based in the Ukrainian Ministry of Defence since March 1999.
146. Interview with Richard John, head of the Directorate for Central and Eastern Europe, Ministry of Defence, London, 12 March 1999.
147. *Iprinda*, 20 May 1999. On Ukraine see T. Kuzio, 'Border Troops rise to Ukrainian challenge', *Jane's Intelligence Review* 11/3 (March 1999) pp.23–6.
148. Ukraine supported Georgia's claim to a share of the Black Sea Fleet.
149. *Nezavisimoye Voyennoye Obozreniye*, 4–10 March 1999.
150. *Ibid.*
151. *RFE/RL Newslines*, 9 July 1998.
152. *Ukraina moloda*, 17 Sept. 1998 and ITAR-TASS, 3 April 1999.

