

# CRS Report for Congress

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## NATO's Evolution Since July 1997: A Selected Chronology

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### Summary

The following chronology highlights major developments in NATO from July to December 1997<sup>1</sup>. The principal issues and themes include: 1.) renovation of NATO's integrated military command structure; 2.) development of the European Security and Defense Identity, or European pillar, in NATO; 3.) implementation of the Combined Joint Task Forces headquarters concept; 4.) the relationships of France, Spain, Greece and Turkey to NATO; 5.) the relationship between the Western European Union and NATO; 6.) NATO's peacekeeping mission in Bosnia; 7.) current NATO enlargement; and 8.) the NATO-Russia Permanent Joint Council.

### July 1997

2- The French Foreign Ministry issued a statement saying that the conditions France set for a possible return to NATO's integrated command have not been met despite some progress in creating a European Security and Defense Identity (ESDI) within NATO.

3- Spanish Defense Minister Eduardo Serra confirmed that a sub-regional command would be installed in the Madrid region when Spain enters NATO's command structure.

8-9- NATO leaders meeting in Madrid formally invited Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic to become NATO members. France and other allies had wanted the alliance to invite Romania and Slovenia as well.

8- Spain announced at the Madrid summit its readiness to participate fully in the alliance's new integrated command structure once agreement on it had been reached.

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<sup>1</sup> For more on NATO internal developments after July 1997, see Louis R. Golino, "NATO Internal Adaptation: The New Command Structure and the Future of the European Pillar," CRS Report 98-9 F. See also, Stanley R. Sloan and J. Michelle Forrest, "NATO's Evolution: A Selected Chronology from the Fall of the Berlin Wall to the Madrid Summit 1989-1997," CRS Report 97-725 F.

At the Madrid summit, Greek Prime Minister Costas Simitis and Turkish President Suleyman Demirel signed a declaration of commitment to develop “good neighborly relations” and resolve their disputes with each other by peaceful means. According to Simitis, this would amount to a non-aggression pact.

9- In a press conference following the Madrid summit, French President Jacques Chirac said that “France has no intention of increasing its contribution to NATO as a result of the enlargement.” He also said “Today NATO is in fact a peacekeeping body; a system designed to manage crises with far fewer means, both in terms of equipment and infrastructure. I can not see why this should cost more.” On the issue of France rejoining NATO’s integrated military structure, he said that France feels no pressure in its discussions with NATO and “...sees no landmark in the month of December that should impose anything.”

11- General Wesley Clark succeeded General George Joulwan as Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR).

22- The Western European Union (WEU) issued a declaration on its role in European security and its relationship with NATO and the European Union (EU) to be annexed to the final act of the EU treaty. In particular, the declaration says “...the WEU will develop its role as the European politico-military body for crisis management, contribute to the progressive framing of a common defense policy and carry forward its concrete implementation through the further development of its own operational role.”

29- A military exercise, “Cooperative Safeguard ‘97,” was conducted in which NATO and Partnership for Peace (PfP) nations helped evacuate civilian victims after a simulated earthquake in Iceland.

### **August 1997**

1- A NATO naval exercise, INVITEX, was conducted in the Mediterranean. It was designed to highlight the challenge of communications interoperability for the alliance.

27- French President Chirac addressed France’s corps of ambassadors at the Elysee palace and repeated his view that the Allied Forces Southern Europe (AFSOUTH) command should in the future go to a European officer. He also said the AFSOUTH issue would continue to shape France’s future relations with NATO and called for increased European defense cooperation, especially among European armaments industries.

### **September 1997**

2- French Prime Minister Lionel Jospin addressed France’s leading defense university, the Institut des Hautes Etudes en Defense Nationale, and called for a “profound renovation” of the alliance and “a real re-balancing of responsibilities between Americans and Europeans.”

10- NATO accession negotiations began with Hungary. On September 16 accession negotiations began with Poland, and on September 23, with the Czech Republic.

17- The North Atlantic Council was given a report by alliance military leaders on the NATO-led Stabilization Force (SFOR) operation in Bosnia in the aftermath of the municipal elections in Bosnia on September 13-14.

September 23- October 9- 14 NATO nations conducted Operation "Dynamic Mix 97" in the AFSOUTH region to practice deployment, re-deployment, integrated communications and ability to deal with simultaneous crises.

25-27- French President Chirac visited Moscow and during talks with Russian President Yeltsin called for "a major Franco-Russian partnership in the service of Europe" and stated that France's position on the Europeanization of the alliance is somewhere between the views of Russia and the United States.

26- NATO-Russia Permanent Joint Council (PJC) held its first ministerial-level meeting in New York. Foreign Ministers discussed their approaches to the situation in Bosnia and the work of the PJC through the end of the year.

29- Paul Quiles, Socialist Chairman of the French Parliament's Defense Committee, told *Defense News* that there is no reason for France to reintegrate with NATO "without a real discussion of the organization's objectives," and that there will be no ESDI unless Combined Joint Task Force (CJTF) headquarters can be used without American approval.

## **October 1997**

1-2- NATO defense ministers held an informal meeting in Maastricht, Netherlands that included discussions on internal adaptation and enlargement. French Defense Minister Alain Richard said France would not rejoin NATO's command structure this year but would continue to participate in the alliance through implementation of the CJTF concept, NATO defense planning with the WEU, and through new consultative bodies such as the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council. Richard also said there had been progress in establishing a NATO chain of command for WEU-led NATO missions and in assigning increased European responsibilities to the deputy SACEUR position, which is held by a European officer.

Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic presented their national defense plans to NATO. The Czech republic will increase defense spending in 1998 by 27% over the 1997 level to \$1.05 billion. By 2000, Czech defense spending is planned to be 2% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Hungary plans to increase defense spending, which is now 1.3% of GDP, by .1% each year until it reaches 1.8% by 2000-2001. Poland has a 15 year plan to increase defense spending by 3% more than the overall budget. Defense Secretary Cohen said European governments need to recognize that enlargement will have costs and rejected the view expressed by some Europeans that these costs can be financed simply by shifting current defense spending.

2- During the Maastricht meeting of alliance defense ministers, Spanish Defense Minister Serra and Portuguese Defense Minister Vitorino announced an agreement on the Canary Islands. According to the agreement, Spain's future sub-regional command and the Canary Islands will be under the SACEUR, while Portugal and the Azores will remain under the SACLANT (Supreme Allied Commander Atlantic).

7- Senate Foreign Relations Committee opened a series of hearings on NATO enlargement. On the first day of hearings, Secretary of State Madeleine Albright explained the Clinton Administration's plans for NATO enlargement and promised to ensure that European allies pay their fair share of associated costs. Additional hearings were held by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on pros and cons of NATO enlargement; NATO enlargement costs and burden sharing; NATO-Russia relations; and public views on NATO enlargement.

10- Spain and the United States renewed their bilateral defense pact signed in 1989 effective through May 4, 1999.

At a meeting of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg, France, Spanish Prime Minister Jose Maria Aznar and British Prime Minister Tony Blair held a meeting during which Aznar said Spain would not make any concessions on bilateral issues relating to Spain's claims to recover sovereignty over Gibraltar.

11- A North Atlantic Assembly meeting was held in Bucharest, Romania. Alliance parliamentarians noted the lack of progress in creating the ESDI, asked that work on the CJTF be finalized and hoped that the new NATO command structure plans would facilitate the inclusion of France and Spain. In addition, the parliamentarians said that the need for a post-SFOR NATO presence in Bosnia should be considered.

16- A Greek transport plane carrying Greek Defense Minister Akis Tsouhartzopoulos returning from Cyprus was approached by Turkish fighter aircraft over the Aegean Sea. This was the second such incident over a three-day period.

21- Secretary of Defense Cohen and Secretary of State Albright told the Senate Committee on Appropriations that NATO enlargement will cost less than previously estimated because the Administration's earlier estimate was based on the assumption there would be four, rather than three, new members. Cohen also said the military infrastructure of the three new prospective members is in better condition than previously thought. He added that the Czech Republic lags behind Poland and Hungary in military capability but is determined to reach the level of the other two states by 2000. Additional hearings were held by the Senate Appropriations Committee on the cost of NATO enlargement on Oct. 22 and 23. On October 21 and 29 the Senate Budget Committee also held hearings on NATO enlargement.

22- NATO Secretary-General Solana cautioned the United States not to use enlargement of the alliance to pressure the Europeans to increase their defense spending.

28- Military Chiefs of Staff of the WEU decided to form a military committee which will plan potential European military operations for humanitarian and peacekeeping purposes.

Spanish Defense Minister Serra said Spain and Great Britain would hold bilateral negotiations on the future of military bases and personnel in Gibraltar after the new NATO structure is announced.

**November 1997**

3- Greek Prime Minister Costas Simitis and Turkish Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz met during the Interbalkan conference in Crete, Greece but produced no significant progress in resolving the Aegean crisis between Greece and Turkey. The two leaders agreed nonetheless on the need to maintain a dialogue with each other.

5- NATO Military Committee sources told *El Mundo*, a Spanish newspaper, that defense of the Canary Islands will be assigned to the Mediterranean regional command of AFSOUTH based in Naples.

10- Fifth and final round of accession talks held between NATO and Hungary.

16-22 NATO conducted a land-based CJTF trial, "Allied Effort '97," in Munster, Germany. Spanish and French troops participated in the trial.

16- Hungarians voted in favor of NATO membership in a national referendum (with 85% voting yes to membership with just under 50% of qualified voters participating). The two other new members, Poland and the Czech Republic, do not plan to hold referenda.

17- Hungary sent a letter of intent to join the alliance to NATO Secretary-General Solana which was made public on November 20. NATO Secretary-General Solana said that receipt of this letter marked the official end of accession talks.

17-18- The WEU held a summit of its ministerial council of foreign and defense ministers in Erfurt, Germany. The council agreed to coordinate presidencies of the WEU and the EU beginning in 1999, and said that the WEU and NATO will work closely with each other in the event of a crisis situation to produce a coordinated decision on a military operation. Enhanced military cooperation was offered to Austria, Denmark, Finland, Ireland and Sweden, which are WEU observer states, as well as to Iceland, Norway and Turkey, which are WEU associate members, through participation in peacekeeping operations. Finally, the Western European Armaments Group (WEAG), a subsidiary organization of the WEU, agreed to work toward the development of a European armaments agency, and Sweden joined the WEAG.

24- Fourth meeting of the NATO-Russia PJC at ambassadorial level took place in Brussels. Ambassadors discussed NATO-Russia cooperation on peacekeeping efforts and progress in the Dayton peace process in the former Yugoslavia.

## **December 1997**

1- The NATO Military Committee, meeting in Brussels, announced that Greece and Turkey had reached an agreement on sharing control of military flights in the Aegean Sea area from sub-regional commands based in Larissa, Greece and Izmir, Turkey.

2- Great Britain agreed to de-link its bilateral negotiations with Spain over Gibraltar from NATO's efforts to produce a new command structure, which paved the way for an agreement on the new structure.

2- NATO's Military Committee discussed the alliance's ongoing SFOR mission in Bosnia, and General Clark, the SACEUR, said that the reconstruction of Bosnia could collapse and war could resume unless NATO maintains a peacekeeping force in Bosnia after June 1998.

2-3- NATO's Defense Planning Committee, Nuclear Planning Group, Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council in defense ministers session and North Atlantic Council in defense ministers session met in Brussels. These discussions were focused primarily on NATO adaptation, NATO enlargement and Bosnia. NATO Secretary-General Solana announced alliance agreement in principle on a new command structure that reduces the number of commands from 65 to 20 and will include Spain but not France. France abstained from the decision on the new command structure but did participate in the North Atlantic Council in defense ministers session.

Alliance leaders welcomed the conclusion of accession talks with Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic and approved NATO's study on the estimated direct, shared costs of integrating the three new members. The total cost for commonly funded items is estimated to be \$1.3-1.5 billion over ten years. The new members will contribute annually to NATO's common funds as follows: Poland 2.48% (\$44 million); the Czech Republic .9% (\$16 million); and Hungary .65% (\$11.5 million).

NATO-Russia Permanent Joint Council met for the first time in defense ministers session. The council reviewed developments in Bosnia, and the participants agreed that the experience the alliance gained there would be useful for enhanced NATO-Russia cooperation on crisis management.

9-10- The Bosnia Peace Implementation Council met in Bonn during which Carlos Westendorp, the international community's High Representative in Bosnia, called on Serb, Moslem and Croat factions to respect the Dayton peace process.

16-17 The North Atlantic Council in foreign ministers session met in Brussels and endorsed the December 2 agreement in principle on the new NATO command structure. Protocols of accession were signed between the alliance and Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic. NATO defense ministers approved politico-military guidance for NATO military authorities who are developing options for a NATO-led military presence in Bosnia after June 1998. NATO-Russia PJC held a foreign ministers ministerial meeting to review the activities of the PJC planned for 1998.