

THE STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS OF ROMANIA'S
BID FOR NATO MEMBERSHIP

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OVERVIEW

While much of the world has recently focused upon the Balkans, the Former Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) has received most of the attention. However, there is much more at stake in the Balkan region than just the FRY. The Dayton Accords of 1995, the 1999 air war in Kosovo and current NATO involvement in Macedonia proves that, while having been long ignored by the Western world, the entire Balkans has now become a focal point for the United States and its fellow NATO members, as well as their historical adversary, Russia. In its *Strategic Appraisal: 1996*, the Rand Cooperation stated that “security in the Balkans will also be directly affected by how well the other non-former Yugoslav post-communist countries—Bulgaria, Romania, and Albania—manage their transitions.”¹ This paper will discuss the historical context of Romania’s strategic value and employ the various steps of the Lockwood Analytical Method for Prediction (LAMP) as a technique to explore the effects that Romanian membership in NATO will have upon Romania’s neighbors.

Many conflicting issues surround Romania’s bid for NATO membership and the increasingly reciprocal support of the Alliance. Although Western observers in the early 1990’s dismissed Romania as a neo-communist backwater because of then President Iliescu’s strong communist past,² Romania has evolved significantly since then. Despite a historically poor relation with its minority populations, Romania’s leadership has made sincere efforts to appease these segments of its citizenship. In fact, it was President Iliescu who in September 1995 launched an initiative aimed at achieving a “historic reconciliation” with Hungary similar to those between France and Germany in the post World War II era.³ In October 1995, the extreme nationalist and anti-Semitic Greater Romania Party was expelled from the ruling coalition,⁴ further changing the political tides in Romania from apathy to acceptance of its ethnic minorities.

In spite of severe economic difficulties, Romania is also dedicated to converting its economy to an open market system. In 1993, Romania signed an association agreement with the European Union (EU) and the European Free Trade Association. In 1995, Romania applied for and received full-membership status in the EU, and in 1997, it became the sixth member of the Central European Free Trade Association. In 1997, the government, supported by the IMF and World Bank, achieved some success in implementing a plan of radical economic reform, with a

¹ Khalilzad, Zalmay, editor, *Strategic Appraisal: 1996* (Santa Monica, CA: Rand Cooperation 1996), 104.

² Ibid, 107.

³ Mattias Rüb, “Historische Versöhnung nach deutsch-französischen Vorbild,” *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, (Frankfurt, De: October 12, 1995).

⁴ “Bukarest bemüht sich um Image-Korrektur,” *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, (Zurich, Sch: October 30, 1995).

reduction in the current-account deficit and the liberalization of most state-controlled prices.⁵ In addition, to avoid the massive corruption that followed privatization in Russia over the past decade, the Romanian government has tried to spread ownership in the recently privatized businesses as wide as possible.⁶ While Romania still has a long way to go before reaching the economic goals necessary for NATO membership, Romanian leaders continue to carry out the changes necessary for integration.

Furthermore, Romania's obvious sacrifice in support of NATO sanctions against Serbia as well as the political risk of closing its airspace to Russian transport planes during the Kosovo crisis has won the gratitude and pledge of support from NATO members, particularly the United States. The IMF and the World Bank have both announced that they would assist in the reimbursement and approval of additional loans for all of the Yugoslav periphery nations that assisted NATO, which potentially will greatly benefit the Romanian economy. Moreover, Romania's largest trading partner, Italy, has declared that it is committed to the development of Romania's infrastructure, energy, and banking system,⁷ which are the areas that need the most improvement. Even more recently, former German Defense Minister Volker Ruehe (one of the original authors of the Alliance's eastward expansion) stated that NATO admission priority should be towards the Balkans, and not the Baltic states. According to Ruehe, an expanded NATO including Romania "would bring a clear and urgently needed gain of stability to the Balkans that have been shaken by crises."⁸ Romania therefore has the obvious support of several key NATO members and world organizations, and possesses a great potential to improve and qualify for NATO membership. Ultimately, Romania and other Balkan states will join NATO. As such, an understanding of the issues surrounding such membership, as well as the consequences, is essential for determining the extent of future NATO commitment in the region and the potential for conflict with key regional players.

Step 1: Determine the Issue for which the most likely future is to be predicted.

The issue for which the most likely future is to be predicted is the membership of Romania in NATO and the subsequent consequences such membership will have upon the key players involved and how these key players

⁵ The Europa World Year Book, Romania: Introductory Survey, (London: Europa Publications Limited, 1998), 2816.

⁶ Shook, Carrie, "Romania Rising," *Forbes Magazine*, (New York: Forbes, Inc., September 22, 1997), 129.

⁷ Rompres: Romanian Government press agency, <http://www.hq.rccb.osis.gov/cgi->, accessed 20 Mar 1999.

⁸ Schwennicke, Christoph, "Expansion of the Atlantic Alliance: Ruehe for Speedy Inclusion of Southeast Europeans in NATO," *Munich Sueddeutsche Zeitung*, FBIS translation, 3 February 2001.

will most likely react. Such membership is of intrinsically strategic value; NATO security in Southeastern Europe has dominated NATO's post Cold War mission, and the United States has also asserted that peace in the Balkans and subsequent NATO stability is a vital concern. NATO and the US have therefore increased their attention on future potential NATO members such as Romania. Furthermore, Romania is currently at a critical crossroads in its history; while it struggles to achieve democracy, both economically and politically, Romania's role on the international stage will continue to increase, and it has much to offer and gain by NATO membership. The geo-strategic location of Romania, its recent economic and political turmoil, historic and recent ethnic tension, and the impact NATO membership will have upon Romania's neighbors are all factors for continued peace in Romania and subsequent security in the Balkans.

Step 2: Specify the National Actors Involved.

Although Romanian membership will have far-reaching implications and affect other countries such as Serbia, Bulgaria and the Baltic states, the key players most affected by this issue are the countries of Hungary, Ukraine, Moldova and Russia.

Step 3: Perform an in-depth study of how each national actor perceives the issue in question.

Hungary

Hungarians are one of the largest ethnic minority groups found in Romania, located primarily in Transylvania. Transylvania, formerly a part of Hungary, was ceded to Romania at the end of World War II. Although able to peacefully coexist under Ceausescu's and previous regimes, the Hungarian population had become increasingly vocal during the early 1990's against Romania's historic mistreatment. According to the New York Times, "the nationalist quarrel between Hungary and Romania is typical of the ethnic conflicts that have bubbled to the surface in Central Europe since the fall of Communism. While rarely violent, it has been written off as one of those intractable hatreds history produces when ethnic and national boundaries do not match."⁹ In order to qualify for NATO and EU membership, however, both nations signed a treaty in September 1996 that guarantees the existing borders and ceases the Hungarian demands for independence within the Transylvanian region.¹⁰ Then Hungarian

⁹ "A Blow to European Nationalism," *New York Times*, October 14, 1996, A 16:1.

¹⁰ "Romania and Hungary Sign Treaty on Rights," *New York Times*, September 17, 1996, A 8:3.

Defense Minister claimed that “Hungary will take all possible steps to assist Romania in joining NATO in the shortest possible time; therefore, we are making efforts in our bilateral ties and within the Partnership for Peace programme, in which Hungary and Romania continue to be partners.”¹¹ Such steps on behalf of Romania and Hungary demonstrate how important each of these nations view NATO membership, and how they are committed to resolving their historical differences.

These early steps did not immediately solve the rising ethnic tension. In response to recurring anti-Hungarian sentiments in June 1999, Hungarian separatist leaders released a proclamation calling for the establishment of a regional government and parliament.¹² However, only a small minority holds this viewpoint, as most people in both nations support the treaty.¹³ Additionally, while President Constantinescu rejected the proposal, stating that Romania would never “accept ideas leading to the sovereignty, unity, or indivisibility of a Romanian territory,” he did accept the possibility of administrative autonomy, saying that a juridical framework already exists to support such a move.¹⁴ Romania has therefore made several important steps towards resolving the conflicts with Hungary. Hungary, as well as Transylvanian Hungarians, have so far decided to be patient for the most part and accept Romania’s attempts, understanding that Romanian membership in NATO will strengthen Hungary’s security. Romanian membership will also provide Hungary with strong recourses in further resolving ethnic conflict, as Romanian membership will be contingent, in part, upon how well it is able to resolve such disputes.

Moldova

One of the impacts that Romanian membership in NATO would have upon Russia pertains to the issue of nationalism in the Trans-Dniestr region of Moldova. As Russia looks upon Ukraine with its large Russian population as an integral member of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), Moscow would take any action that could potentially threaten Ukrainian alignment or sovereignty very seriously. With this in mind, it is therefore essential to understand the history of the region in order to comprehend how Romania’s membership in NATO could influence Russia.

The Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic was formed by Stalin at the end of World War II, mainly from land taken from Romania. As is often the case in the former Soviet states, Moldova’s border, in particular its

¹¹ Rompres News Agency, “Keleti: Hungary Doing ‘Utmost’ for Romania’s NATO Entry,” FBIS translated text, 7 October 1997.

¹² Global Intelligence Update for 9 June 1999, www.stratfor.com, accessed 10 June 99.

¹³ “A Blow to European Nationalism,” *New York Times*, October 14, 1996, A 16:1.

¹⁴ Global Intelligence Update for 9 June 1999, www.stratfor.com, accessed 10 June 99.

western border, does not follow ethnic boundaries. Today, Moldavians and Romanians are linguistically, historically, and culturally one nation and Romanians make up more than three-quarters of Moldova's population.¹⁵ A substantial portion of the Moldavian population favors union with Romania; however, a large Ukrainian and Russian minority are violently against such union. The Ukrainian and Russian populations (13.8% and 12.8% of Moldavian population, respectively),¹⁶ largely a result of Stalinist re-population tactics, currently co-exist in the narrow stretch of land located between the Dniestr River and the Ukrainian border.

After the abortive August 1991 coup in Russia and Moldova's subsequent announcement of independence, however, the minorities of Trans-Dniestr seceded from Moldova to form their own state, the Dniestr SSR. Throughout 1991 and 1992, fighting increased until the Russian 14th Army, stationed in the Dniestr region and sympathetic to the idea of Russian-Ukrainian independence, began to actively participate on behalf of the Russian and Ukrainian minorities. In fact, the commander of the 14th Army, Lt. Gen. Yakovlev, accepted the title of "Chief of Defense and Security of the Dniestr SSR," and supported his soldiers' active involvement.¹⁷ Yeltsin's efforts to maintain control of the 14th Army by placing it under his direct command largely failed until a joint Moldavian-Russian peacekeeping force was ultimately created, and the 14th Army began to curtail its involvement in the dispute. In mid April 1992, however, the foreign ministers of Romania, Russia, Ukraine and Moldova announced a short-lived cease-fire agreement, which set the stage for the eventual implementation of a joint Russian/Moldavian/Dniestr peacekeeping force. Eventually, the fighting ended, although relations have remained tense.

While the majority of Moldova is of Romanian origin, most want independence for Moldova, not reunification with Romania. This fact, brought to light after Moldova gained its independence, surprised the Romanian government, who thought that reunification would soon follow. This has forced Romania to reverse its original tactics of pushing reunification, and instead, delay these thoughts and focus on improving cultural and political ties with Moldova.¹⁸ In light of these many advances on Romania's sociological front, Romania has demonstrated its willingness to compromise in order to appease its minority groups as well as the international

¹⁵ Bugajski, Janusz, *Ethnic Politics in Eastern Europe*, (New York: M.E. Sharpe, Inc., 1994), 210-211.

¹⁶ Diller, Daniel C., "Russia and the Independent States," *Congressional Quarterly*, (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly, Inc., 1993), 279.

¹⁷ Ibid, 155.

¹⁸ Larrabee, F. Stephen, "Russia and the Balkans: Old Themes and New Challenges," *Rand/RP-641*, (Santa Monica, CA: The Rand Corporation, 1997), 399.

community. Additionally, sources within the Romanian government do not believe that these ethnic disputes will increase in severity, and subsequently will not pose substantial threats to Romanian NATO membership.¹⁹

Therefore, as Romania's government continues its commitment towards ethnic parity in the region with the goal of qualifying for NATO membership, further serious conflict and dissention between Romania and Moldova, as well as the Dniestr Republic, will most likely be avoided.

Ukraine

Like Moldova, Ukraine is paying the price for Soviet-era population policies of forced relocation. The USSR at the end of World War II had also created a Romanian minority in Ukraine by ceding the former Romanian regions of Bessarabia and northern Bukovina to Ukraine, and heavily populating Ukraine with ethnic Russians. Although the ethnic question is not as extreme as Moldova's, Ukraine, is nevertheless disconcerted over the situation, due to the increased national consciousness among the sizeable Romanian population within the Ukraine. Although little has been said of independence, Romanian membership in NATO could potentially provide further impetus to Romanian nationalism. Although the possibility is remote, if Moldova were to decide to reunite with Romania after its inclusion into NATO, then the Romanian part of Ukraine's population could potentially move towards reunification with Romania as well. The more likely Ukrainian response, however, will simply be to achieve closer ties with Romania through bilateral agreements focused on ethnical issues, as has been the case between Romania and Hungary or Moldova.

In addition to the potential of ethnic tensions between Romania and Ukraine, both nations have had a long-standing geographic dispute. With regard to this dispute, however, Romanian President Constantinescu declared shortly after his election that Romania was willing to make concessions in order to settle the dispute concerning Serpent Island in the Black Sea and its oil and gas potential.²⁰ On June 2, 1997, Romania signed a treaty in order to normalize relations, thus bolstering its transition to a strongly democratic society and therefore more eligible to join the NATO alliance. This treaty between Ukraine and Romania further strengthened Moldova's independence by confirming the existing borders of Moldova and Bukovina.²¹ The treaty also established a free trade zone around the shared border, linking both nations economically, although the issue of Black Sea oil and gas was only postponed

¹⁹ Personal interview, name withheld, Romanian government official, 23 July 1999.

²⁰ *The Economist*, "Romania's Painful Gamble," (New York, The Economist Newspaper Limited, 1997), 50.

²¹ *World News Digest, Facts on File*, June 19, 1997, (New York: Facts on File News Service, 1997), 441.

and not effectively decided.²² In January 2001, Ukraine signed a decree pledging closer cooperation with NATO, balancing similar recent agreements with Russia.²³ Ukrainian and Romanian relationships are subsequently improving because of both countries' desires of closer contact with the West, and will probably continue to do so.

Ukraine's increasingly close ties with Romania and particularly NATO have only served to exacerbate relations with Russia, however. Much of Russia's conflict with NATO expansion along its southern periphery stems from the varying perceptions regarding the relationship between Ukraine and Russia. Ukraine has its own language, culture and history, and views its independence with great regard; furthermore, it sees Russia as its primary threat and remembers all too well the time spent under Soviet rule. Russia, however, views Ukraine as essentially a kindred nation, with Russia as the senior partner. In addition to the strong cultural and ethnic ties Russia believes it has in common with Ukraine, Russia also recognizes the geo-strategic importance that close ties with Ukraine offers, and views any Ukrainian overtures towards the West with great concern. Depending on Ukraine's reaction to Romanian membership, Russia will most likely feel increasingly threatened, particularly if Ukraine continues to support closer ties to NATO. This fact, of course, serves as a constant reminder to Ukrainian policymakers, and therefore will potentially affect their decisions and ultimately Ukraine's response to NATO expansion.

Russia

The entire Balkan region has historically been a focus for Russian foreign policy. After the Crimean War in the 19th century, Russia actively strove to increase its influence in the Balkans as part of a growing rivalry with Austria and Germany. Additionally, it sought control of the Dardanelle's Straits, essential to its commercial and economic development,²⁴ as they allow access to one of Russia's few warm water ports. Additionally, this attempt to control the strategically important Balkans also gained favor with the growing Slavic nationalism in both Russia and the Balkans.

Although Russia's influence declined during the cold war with the advent of strong independent communist movements in Albania, Yugoslavia, and Romania, Russia has renewed its interest in the Balkans during the past decade. This shift in mid-1992 in Russian policy toward the Balkans has resulted in several objectives: the prevention of diplomatic isolation, avoid an open break with the West, and decrease pressure from both the

²² Ibid, 441.

²³ "Ukraine President Orders Closer NATO Cooperation," Reuters News Agency, 29 January 2001.

²⁴ Larrabee, F. Stephen, "Russia and the Balkans: Old Themes and New Challenges," *Rand/RP-641*, (Santa Monica, CA: The Rand Corporation, 1997), 389.

nationalists and the pro-Serb forces in the Russian parliament, among others.²⁵ However, Russia's main strategic objective in the region is to remain a key player and 'avoid diplomatic marginalization' by ensuring that all actions carried out in the Balkans are under UN approval, instead of sole NATO direction.²⁶ One of the most self-evident and recent events supporting this desire to retain some influence within the region is Russia's involvement on behalf of Serbia during the 1999 NATO defense of Kosovo. Russia, by attempting to play an active role as moderator in the conflict, and ultimately seizing the Pristina airport in Kosovo before NATO troops could arrive, demonstrate clearly that events in the Balkans do have a strategic impact today upon Russia.

If Romania achieves its goal of joining NATO, there will be far-reaching ramifications for Russia, mainly with regard to its relationship with Ukraine, as well as Russia's virtual removal from the Balkan sphere of influence. With the 1996 election of Emile Constantinescu, a pro-democratic, former geology professor, Romania has made changes that are even more positive in its sociological situation. For instance, President Constantinescu signed the Trans-Dniestr Pact on May 8, 1997, which ended the seven-year feud between Romania and Moldova. As part of the provisional agreement, Ukraine and Russia became guarantors, and the result was that Moldova would remain an independent state while the Russian peacekeeping force withdrew from the region. Although this portion of the agreement has not been fulfilled, since the Russian 14th Army retains control over the unrecognized Trans-Dniestr Republic,²⁷ the cease-fire has held.

However, Russia's recent policy towards Moldova has far-reaching strategic implications if Romania joins NATO. Romania has become increasingly wary of Russia's intensifying pressure on Moldova to join the CIS and grant Russia military basing rights there,²⁸ particularly in light of Russia's desire to establish a permanent military presence in Moldova. Such action is presumably to enforce the cease-fire in the Trans-Dniestr region and ensure the protection of the substantial Ukrainian/Russian population located in the region. However, with the rest of Moldova remaining strongly in the Romanian sphere of interest due to its potential reunification, such a move on the part of Russia would only add fuel to a potentially volatile situation.

This ethnic divergence will bring East-West frictions and the potential for conflict to the Commonwealth of Independent States' (CIS) doorstep, at a time when Russia already feels that NATO is intent upon expanding until it

²⁵ Ibid, 395.

²⁶ Ibid, 396.

²⁷ Personal Interview, name withheld, Romanian government official, July 23, 1999.

²⁸ Larrabee, F. Stephen, "Russia and the Balkans: Old Themes and New Challenges," *Rand/RP-641*, (Santa Monica, CA: The Rand Corporation, 1997), 399.

reaches Russian borders. Moldova's industry base is primarily located in the disputed region of Trans-Dniestr, and, coupled with the fact that it depends heavily upon trade with Russia and the Ukraine, it is economically oriented to the East. Conversely, Moldova remains linguistically and ethnically tied to the west, so Romania's potential as a NATO member may well prove to renew tensions in the Trans-Dniestr region, as ethnic Romanians lean westward and Trans-Dniestr minorities look eastward. Another potential consequence is a NATO peacekeeping mission to the region. With Romania as a NATO member, and should fighting resume over the Trans-Dniestr region and affect Romanian security, then NATO stands a good chance of deploying a peace-keeping force, much like it has in Bosnia, Macedonia, or Kosovo. Consequently, a NATO force would then be located upon the CIS border, which is likely to further irritate Russia and the CIS.

Yet another strategic impact Romanian-NATO membership would have upon Russia is an increased feeling of geo-political isolation. As seen in the NATO war against Serbia, the ability of NATO to persuade Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, and for a time, Ukraine, to agree to prohibit over flights to reinforce Pristina,

has driven home Russia's geopolitical isolation to the Russian military. The military understands that it is powerless to influence events in Central Europe but it also understands it can influence events along Russia's own periphery, in areas where the Russian military still has the upper hand and NATO and the U.S. are relatively weak. The pressure to reassert Russian power along Russia's periphery is extremely strong and will be hard to resist. That will increase tensions with the United States and decrease possibilities for accommodation.²⁹

Although Russia stated after the fall of Ceausescu that Romania was free to choose its own political orientation and that Moscow 'pledged support for any political system Rumanians decided upon,'³⁰ Russia will become increasingly concerned at NATO's eastward expansion, particularly if NATO accepts Romania into its alliance.

Perhaps the most obvious strategic impact Romanian-NATO membership would have upon Russia is its physical isolation from the rest of the Balkans. With Romania's borders extending from Hungary to the Black Sea, all land access and air corridors to the Balkans would effectively end, as demonstrated in the Kosovo conflict. Romania, from the East European point of view, is the geographical lynchpin to the Balkans, and of key concern to Russia.

²⁹ Global Intelligence Update, 3rd Quarter, <http://www.stratfor.com/services/giu/3q1999.asp>, accessed July 3, 1999.

³⁰ Bohlen, Celestine, "Moscow Promises to Back Rumania in its New Politics," *New York Times*, 7 Jan 1990.

However, in spite of their historical and recent concern for the region, the Balkans will not become a primary strategic focus for Russia in the near future. While Russia is concerned that NATO plans to expand its influence until it severs Russian influence in the Balkan region,³¹ Russia is more concerned about retaining its influence upon its immediate neighbors in the Caucasus and Baltic regions. While Romanian membership in NATO would have a strategic impact upon Russia by adding to its feelings of alienation from the West as well as forfeiting Russia's ability to play a role in the region, Russia lacks the economic resources to do anything about further NATO expansion in the Balkans.³² Romanian membership in NATO will therefore likely have a negative political impact upon Russian policymakers, and further strain relations between Russia and the West, but will most likely not result in actual conflict.

Step 4: Specify all possible Courses of Action for each actor.

There are three primary courses of action (COA's) available to Hungary, Ukraine, Moldova, and Russia. Each of these countries can react positively, encourage Romanian membership in NATO, and enjoy the probable, subsequent stability of such an event. Each of these European countries also has their own opportunities for NATO membership (or in Hungary's case, increased strength and security as an existing member), and therefore has much to gain from an optimistic reaction. A positive response would also encourage NATO to further invest in regional relationships and bilateral ties, with the ultimate goal of inviting these nations to become members of the alliance.

Conversely, each of these countries can react negatively to varying degrees. A negative reaction by Russia in this case is of the greatest concern. Although Russia's economy and military has seriously deteriorated over the past decade, Russia is still the strongest strategic and conventional power in the region, and is therefore in the best situation to apply negative pressure to Romania, its neighbors, and NATO. A negative reaction by Hungary could also cause potential internal conflict in Romania, particularly in the largely Hungarian-populated region of Transylvania. Any negative reaction by Moldova or Ukraine would likely not result in direct conflict, but definitely slow or halt NATO attempts of expansion in these regions.

³¹ Gamova, Svetlana, "NATO To 'Strengthen' Romania's Eastern Border," *Moscu Segodnya*, 9 Jul 99 page p 3, trans. FBIS, <http://www.hq.rccb.osis.gov/cgi>, accessed 20 July 1999.

³² Larrabee, F. Stephen, *Russia and the Balkans: Old Themes and New Challenges*, Rand/RP-641. (Santa Monica, CA: The Rand Corporation, 1997). 402.

The final option available to each key player is to remain effectively neutral, and maintain the status quo relationship. In Russia's case, a positive reaction is not likely, so the best NATO and Romania can hope and plan for is this COA. In all cases, however, a neutral response will at least provide Romania and NATO with a stable environment within which to develop their alliance, as well as provide for eventual improvements to regional relationships. As such, the positive/neutral reactions will be evaluated jointly for the purposes of this paper.

The COA's and their meanings are listed below:

1. Positive/Neutral Reaction (+)—Significant reduction in the potential for conflict, increased possibility of near-term membership in NATO. This reaction would also include any neutral or status quo reactions, as NATO will see any non-negative reaction as tacit acceptance of Romanian membership. As a neutral reaction would mean the current situation remains the same, i.e. no open conflict, such a response would ultimately favor Romania and NATO.

2. Negative Reaction (-)—Significant increase in the potential for conflict, little or no possibility for near-term membership in NATO. Negative reactions could include economic and political pressure by Russia, increased ethnic disputes with Hungary and Moldova, and increased border tensions with Moldova, Ukraine and Hungary. The direct threat of military force against Romania is unlikely, but could include any of the key players.

Step 5: Determine the major scenario within which the alternate futures will be compared.

NATO has begun to redirect its attention to coming up with a permanent solution for stability within the Balkans, as demonstrated by the application of NATO force against Serbia. Additionally, other developments in the Caucasus, such as the need for deciding upon a stable route for Caspian Sea oil exploitation, have resulted in further attention to the strategic value possessed by the East Balkan region. These factors culminated in the flurry of diplomatic visits to Romania from 8 July –15 July 1999. Secretary of State Albright, NATO Secretary General Javier Solana, and NATO Commander General Clark, among others, all visited Romania to express gratitude for their support of NATO during the recent Kosovo crisis, and in some cases, discuss the potential for Romanian inclusion. Svetlana Jovanovska, of the *Skopje Nova Makedonija*, summed up this recent attention by saying that

first with Bosnia, and now with Kosovo, southeastern Europe has become the security interest of the Euro-Atlantic partners. There are no dilemmas: Southeastern Europe is the unstable part of the European continent and must be stabilized. The European Union and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization are keeping watch so that the movements of this shaky area are not

transferred north, where they could threaten the security of Europe, which was achieved with so many difficulties. They also want to keep the Balkans, located geographically at important crossroads, within their own sphere of influence.³³

The most likely scenario in the near future, therefore, is NATO's continued expansion and the assumption that Romania will ultimately gain NATO membership. The only other potential major scenario is NATO deciding against further expansion and thereby denying Romanian membership. Not only is this scenario unlikely, it would also negate the need for an estimate of key player reactions and has been omitted from inclusion in the LAMP process of this paper.

Step 6: Calculate total number of permutations of possible alternate futures for each scenario.

$$X^Y=Z$$

X equals the number of courses of action.

Y equals the number of actors involved who have the same COA's available to each.

Z equals the total number of alternate futures available for comparison.

With two primary COA's and four key players, the total number of alternate futures is 16.

$$(2^4=16)$$

The following table (Possible Futures: Table 1) depicts all possible permutations involving these four key players and the two primary Courses of Action available to them. Found below are the abbreviations used in the Possible Futures tables (1 and 2).

+ =POSITIVE/NEUTRAL REACTION

- =NEGATIVE REACTION

³³ Joyanovska, Svetlana, *Skopje Nova Makedonija in Macedonian 9 Jul 99 p 1*, trans. FBIS. www.hq.rccb.osis.gov/cgi-bin, accessed 18 July 1999.

Step 7: Perform a “pair-wise comparison” of all alternate futures to compare their relative probability.

Possible Futures: Table 1

FUTURES	HUNGARY	UKRAINE	MOLDOVA	RUSSIA	VOTES
1	+	+	+	+	7
2	+	+	+	-	15
3	+	+	-	-	13
4	+	-	-	-	12
5	-	-	-	-	6
6	-	-	-	+	4
7	-	-	+	+	9
8	-	+	+	+	3
9	+	-	+	+	2
10	+	-	-	+	4
11	+	-	+	-	14
12	+	+	-	+	0
13	-	+	-	-	8
14	-	+	+	-	11
15	-	-	+	-	9
16	-	+	-	+	4

Step 8: Rank the alternate futures for each scenario, from the highest relative probability to the lowest, based on the number of votes received.

Scenario I: Romania joins NATO

Possible Futures: Table 2

FUTURES	HUNGARY	UKRAINE	MOLDOVA	RUSSIA	VOTES
2	+	+	+	-	15
11	+	-	+	-	14
3	+	+	-	-	13
4	+	-	-	-	12
14	-	+	+	-	11
7	-	-	+	+	9
15	-	-	+	-	9
13	-	+	-	-	8
1	+	+	+	+	7
5	-	-	-	-	6
6	-	-	-	+	4
10	+	-	-	+	4
16	-	+	-	+	4
8	-	+	+	+	3
9	+	-	+	+	2
12	+	+	-	+	0

Step 9: Assuming that each future occurs, analyze each alternate future in terms of its consequences for the issue in question.

Alternate future # 2: Hungary, Ukraine, Moldova sustain Romania's alliance with NATO while Russia reacts negatively.

Considering the fact that Hungary is already a member of NATO and both Ukraine and Moldova have attempted to draw closer to Romania and NATO via politics and military relations, these countries will most likely support Romanian membership in NATO. All three of these countries also still view Russia as a major regional threat, and by necessity have attempted to placate any potential Russian aggression by establishing economic and political ties with Moscow. However, they also recognize there is more to gain from the West than the East. With all three of these former allies now firmly supporting what Russia's views as its primary concern, Moscow will feel increasingly isolated and threatened. In this case, a negative Russian reaction is virtually inevitable. Ukraine and Moldova are most at risk, as they still depend on Russia for much of their energy and economy. Consequently, Russia could respond by cutting off oil and gas supplies, instigating economic embargoes, demand payment of past debts, and even deploying troops to these regions. In the past decade, Russia has taken these same measures against several of its neighbors when they have attempted to gain too much independence; namely, Chechnya, Georgia, Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan. Russia is therefore fully capable and willing to apply such negative measures, particularly if it feels threatened by NATO. Ultimately, the consequences for Romania will depend on how negative Russia reacts. As a member of NATO, Romania should be able to survive any political or economic pressures Russia may apply. Russian military intervention in Romania is highly unlikely, but could occur in Ukraine or Moldova. Should such intervention occur, the fact that Ukraine and Moldova have responded positively indicates their willingness to assume some risk vis-à-vis Russia, and would act as buffer for Romania. Furthermore, NATO membership would require an immediate response by Romania's new allies, thereby lessening any potential negative Russian reactions. Ultimately, the negative consequences for Romania are negligible; they have much to gain from Hungarian, Ukrainian and Moldavian support even if Russia reacts negatively.

Alternate Future #11: Hungary and Moldova sustain Romania's alliance with NATO while Ukraine and Russia react negatively.

Again, Hungary as an existing member of NATO will most likely support its neighbor's membership. With a history of ethnical conflict and a significant Hungarian minority within Romania, these two nations would benefit greatly if both are under the stabilizing confines of NATO. Relations would improve, as well as the situation for Romania's Hungarian minority. Moldova's large Romanian population (over 75%) would also benefit from Romania's alliance with NATO. Although the eventual possibility exists for Moldova to reunite with Romania, Moldova is currently most interested in retaining its independence from Russia. In view of the loss of the Transdnestr region due to direct Russian involvement, this is a real concern. Supporting Romanian membership would demonstrate Moldavian commitment to the West, and its independence from Russia. Ukraine, however, could determine that siding with the West is too risky at this time. Even though Ukraine wants to remain independent from Russia, there is a substantial Russian minority firmly supported by Moscow. Supporting Romania's membership would further alienate Moscow and possibly provoke Russia into action.

The consequences for Romania in this alternate future are somewhat different. The positive consequences of Hungarian and Moldavian support still apply; however, with a negative response by Ukraine, Romania has much more reason for concern. Most of Romania's northern border is occupied by Ukraine, thus giving Russia the ability to potentially threaten Romanian security. Past resolutions regarding border disputes would evaporate, and thus heighten tensions between the two countries. Trade with Russia and Ukraine would most likely diminish substantially, and Moldova as an ally would become increasingly isolated and threatened.

Alternate Future # 3: Hungary and Ukraine sustain Romania's alliance with NATO while Moldova and Russia react negatively.

Again, Hungary as an existing member of NATO will most likely support its neighbor's membership. Ukraine, a strongly independent nation, is very concerned about further Russian aggression and occupation; as such, support of Romanian membership would demonstrate their support of NATO expansion and their commitment to closer ties with the West and possible membership themselves. Moldova, however, could determine that siding with the West is too risky, particularly with a portion of their nation already having declared independence in the past decade (Transdnestr Republic). Furthermore, Russia's 14th Army is still occupying this separatist Republic, in

order to protect the predominantly Russian and Ukrainian population, and is in a strategic position to remind Moldova of Russia's vested interest in the region. With Ukraine and its large Russian minority leaning towards NATO, Russia would again feel threatened and respond negatively. Having the support of Moldova would only fuel any interventionist intentions held by Moscow.

Consequently, Romania's relations with Moldova would likely deteriorate, in spite of their close cultural ties. Russian influence would likely force Moldova to close its borders, further resulting in increased tensions between Romania and Moldova. With the Russian 14th Army occupying the nearby Transdnestr Republic, Romania could potentially go to a heightened state of military alert, and ask for NATO assistance. Such assistance would stabilize Romania for the near-term, but destabilize the rest of the region and result in even poorer relations with Russia.

Step 10: State the potential of a given alternate future to transpose into another alternate future.

The most likely alternate future to transpose is #2, the most likely future, where all key players besides Russia initially respond positively to Romanian membership in NATO. This future would most likely transpose to Future #4. In this case, Hungary supports a neighbor as a fellow member of NATO, and Ukraine and Moldova initially place their hopes of security and independence upon NATO eastern expansion by supporting Romania as well. However, as Russian reactions turn increasingly negative, Ukraine and Moldova begin to rethink their positions, particularly if NATO gives no signs of further near-term expansion and offers no reassurances of support against a negative Russian response. Russia sees NATO's cautious approach towards these two countries, and turns up the heat by turning it off (cutting its supply of gas and oil to Ukraine and Moldova). Russia also applies political and economic pressures in order to convince Ukraine and Moldova to sever their ties with the West. Ukraine and Moldova withdraw from Partnership for Peace and other agreements, assist Russia by closing their borders with Hungary and Romania, and permit the deployment of Russian "peacekeeping" troops within their borders.

Step 11: Determine the focal events that must occur in our present in order to bring about a given alternate future.

Focal events for alternate future #2:

Continuous, increased relations between Romania and Hungary, Ukraine, Moldova

Deteriorating relations between Russia and Hungary, Ukraine, Moldova

Focal events for alternate future #11:

Ukraine decides it is too vulnerable, and sides with Russia

NATO commits to further eastern expansion

Russia decides to “defend” the large percentage of Russian minorities in Ukraine

Moldova defers to its large ethnic Romanian population and firmly supports Romania/NATO

Russian concerns for security stemming from outside influences

Focal events for alternate future #3:

Moldova decides it is too vulnerable, and sides with Russia

Russia decides to use the location of its 14th Army in the Trans-Dniestr Republic as a means to influence Moldova

Ukraine decides to commit itself to the West and rely upon future NATO membership

Russian concerns for security stemming from outside influences

Step 12: Develop Indicators for the focal events.

Focal events for alternate future #2:

Indicators:

Continuous, increased relations between Romania and Hungary, Ukraine, Moldova

- **Increased trade/economic relations between these key player nations**
- **Decreased ethnic tensions, particularly in Romania**
- **Further tri- or quadrilateral military agreements/exercises**
- **No significant rhetoric by Russia against other key players**

Deteriorating relations between Russia and Hungary, Ukraine, Moldova

- **Decrease in trade/economic relations**
- **Further economic/political collapse in Russia**
- **Increased nationalist rhetoric by Ukraine, Moldova**
- **Russia takes hard stance against independent republics**

Internal/External factors

- **Increasing democracy/true market economy within Russia**
- **Delay or cancellation of US efforts to establish a National Missile Defense**

Focal events for alternate future #11:

Indicators:

Ukraine decides it is too vulnerable to Russia, and sides with Russia

- **Pacts of any kind between Russia and other key player nations**
- **Increased anti-NATO/US rhetoric accompanied by friendly rhetoric toward each other**

- **Internal friction within any key player country**
- **Increase in Russian-Ukrainian military exercises**

NATO commits to further eastern expansion

- **Increased NATO/US rhetoric concerning Balkan and European stability/security**
- **Increased regional tensions in the Balkans (Kosovo, Bosnia, etc.)**
- **Talks regarding Slovakian/Slovenian membership are renewed**

Russia decides to “defend” the large percentage of Russian minorities in Ukraine

- **Increased Russian nationalism in the region or elsewhere**
- **Large amounts of Ukrainian citizens emigrating from Ukraine**
- **Military buildup along the border**
- **Large-scale Russian military exercise close to Ukrainian border**
- **Diversion of civilian transportation/goods to the border of Ukraine**

Moldova defers to its large ethnic Romanian population and firmly supports Romania/NATO

- **Increased rhetoric in support of Romania/NATO**
- **Renewed interest in Romanian/Moldavian reunification**
- **Military/advisor support to Moldova from Romania**
- **Increased economic/political/diplomatic ties**
- **Increased amount of Partnership for Peace exercises/training**

Russian concerns for security stemming from outside influences

- **Delay or cancellation of US efforts to establish a national missile defense**
- **Economic and political stability in Russia**
- **Continued NATO expansion elsewhere (particularly in the Baltic states)**

Focal events for alternate future #3:

Indicators:

Moldova decides it is too vulnerable to Russia, sides with Russia

- **Regional friction between Romania and any of the key players**
- **Substantial lack of progress on border issues**
- **Moldova closes its borders with Romania**

Russia decides to use the location of its 14th Army in the Trans-Dniestr Republic as a means to influence Moldova

- **14th Army (in Transdniestr) conducts exercises**
- **14th Army goes to increased state of readiness**
- **Large amounts of Moldavian citizens emigrating to Romania, elsewhere**
- **Increase of troops/supplies into region; primarily by air/sea**

Ukraine decides to commit itself to the West and rely upon future NATO membership

- **US development/implementation of a national missile defense in Europe**
- **Military/advisor support to Ukraine from Romania**
- **Increased economic/political/diplomatic ties**
- **Increased amount of Partnership for Peace exercises/training**

Russian concerns for security stemming from internal/external influences; provides justification for countering NATO

- **Implementation of US/European Missile Defense**
- **Economic and political stability in Russia**
- **Continued NATO expansion elsewhere (particularly Baltic states)**

CONCLUSION

Romania, like many of its Balkan neighbors, has gone through dramatic changes this century. Involved in both World Wars, its economy, society, and government have been devastated repeatedly. After the communist takeover following World War II, Romania experienced a brief period of peace and stability, particularly during the immediate post WWII era, but again suffered after Ceausescu's rise to power. After the overthrow of Ceausescu and the fall of communism in general, Romania has struggled to make the transition to a Western democratic society. However, Romania has become increasingly committed to achieving an open market economy, and through multiple improvements in its foreign policy, treatment of minority groups, and political and military restructuring, has demonstrated its commitment to becoming a member of NATO.

While many of the European NATO members were supportive of the Romanian bid for membership during the first round of negotiations, the United States had strongly urged the postponement for the entrance of such countries as Romania, Slovenia, and Bulgaria.³⁴ However, with President Clinton's visit to Romania in 1998, during which he promised the Romanian people that they would become part of NATO, it is obvious that the United States has decided to seriously consider Romania as a member of NATO in the near future.³⁵ The *Krasnaya Zvezda*, the official newspaper of the Russian Ministry of Defense, states

It is noteworthy that Bucharest is in no way fazed by NATO's praise for virtually assisting in the aggression against the only one of its neighbors with which Romania has never had any conflicts and which it has always regarded as its traditional ally. 'Romania made a choice in favor of integration with NATO,' Andrei Plesu, head of the foreign policy department, explained, 'and any choice requires sacrifices.' In other words, joining the alliance conforms more with Romania's national interests than saving good relations with neighboring Yugoslavia.³⁶

Additionally, the article concludes that because of Romania's support of NATO in the Kosovo conflict, the West is now more aware of the geo-strategic value Romania offers NATO.

Indeed, but for the conflict in Kosovo, Bucharest would have had to wait who knows how long for its finest hour, in order to demonstrate in practice its loyalty to the alliance... For it is no secret that all the former arguments of the country's leadership about Romania's extremely advantageous geo-strategic position were only recently received in the West merely with polite interest, and no more than that. For a long time the economic reforms that were making no headway and also the political instability prevented Bucharest from showing itself as a worthwhile

³⁴ Kaplan, Robert D., "The Fulcrum of Europe," *The Atlantic Monthly*, (Boston: The Atlantic Monthly Company, September 1998), 28.

³⁵ Ibid, 28.

³⁶ Rompres: Romanian Government press agency, <http://www.hq.rccb.osis.gov/cgi->, accessed 20 July 1999.

candidate for the bloc. Now, thanks to the conflict in Kosovo, when geo-strategic considerations have come to the fore, its candidacy has acquired significantly greater weight.³⁷

In light of NATO's increasing involvement in the Balkans, it is therefore crucial that NATO understand the benefits Romanian membership would have, as well as the potential impact of such an alliance upon Russia, the primary regional counterpoint, as well as other key nations. Furthermore, as Romania has historically been of strategic significance to the Balkans, it is in NATO's best interest to accept Romania in order to resolve the long-term aspects of regional security.

³⁷ Rompres: Romanian Government press agency, <http://www.hq.rccb.osis.gov/cgi->, accessed 20 July 1999.

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