CHAPTER V

UKRAINE'S POLICY OF EURO-ATLANTIC INTEGRATION AND EUROPEAN SECURITY:
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Ukraine, being a large European state and a natural component of the Central and Eastern European region, in order to overcome its prolonged artificial alienation from other nations of the continent, in its foreign policy, announced in 1990, sought to establish direct political, economic, trade, and other kinds of relations with other states. Integration into the European and Euro-Atlantic structures, and to institutionalize its relations with the European Union and Western European Union (WEU), was therefore defined as a strategic goal. Ukrainians also perceive their European integration as an illustration of historical justice and a return to their historic, cultural heritage. Taking into account the economic advantages of integration into Europe Ukrainian experts defined Ukraine’s European integration as not only a moment of truth but also a well thought out pragmatic decision. At the same time, keeping in mind Ukraine’s sensitive geopolitical situation, the policy-makers regard cooperation with NATO, E.U. and WEU as a priority component of Ukraine’s national security. Importantly, perceiving Russia as a threat from the East, a break away from Moscow was defined by many Ukrainian politicians as a long-term top priority task. It was also stated that the ultimate goal of Ukraine’s national forces, headed by its first President Leonid Kravchuk, was to build an independent, sovereign, and European Ukraine, and, hence, to be free, first and foremost, from Russian and CIS influence.

All the above became exactly reflected during the presidency of Leonid Kravchuk. From the very first days of his tenure, the government of Kravchuk pursued a highly visible pro-Western but an anti CIS /Russian policy in terms of political and security matters. During the Kuchma administration these polices went far beyond establishing bilateral relations with immediate neighbours in a pragmatic manner and were formalized in the pursuit of entry into Central European institutions by forging closer links with such bodies.
However, as Central European institutions were clearly part of the 'master plan', they represented stepping-stones to membership of the more prominent European institutions. And, so far as Ukraine is concerned they pursued an objective with a vitality that belied Ukraine's status as a new and inexperienced country, unendowed with a tried and tested foreign ministry. It is also probably true to say that while in the days leading up to independence there was some confusion for the European leaders as to how to deal with Ukraine, though there is increasing recognition that an independent Ukraine is more than a transitory phenomenon. Moreover, the demands made on Ukraine since its independence to pay for its European integration have been far-reaching and extensive. The West wants Ukraine to consolidate its democracy, relinquish its nuclear capabilities, integrate more closely in Central and Eastern Europe's (CEE) regional organizations such as CEFTA, and pursue policies characteristic of a 'Western' state.

However, despite the numerous social blunders and discouragement, the Ukrainian administration had made vigorous and systematic efforts towards its institutional integration with Europe while simultaneously blocking, slowing or non-participating in the renewal of institutional ties amongst the states of the former Soviet Union. Apart from this, importantly, Ukraine also expressed its intention to play the role of a bridge builder in international relations linking Western Europe with Euro-Asia. And for this, Ukraine has been very active on the international scene and has ties with all of the significant inter-governmental organizations.

But all the Ukrainian efforts were less recognized by the West in the first half of the 1990s. However, with the decline of relations between Russia and the West, the latter's relations with Ukraine dramatically improved. From European security point of view, the West recognized the importance of Ukraine's independence and its territorial integrity. The West also acknowledged Ukraine as a 'strategic pivot', 'lynchpin' and as a 'keystone' of European security. But with the decline of Ukrainian economic reform, when Western assistance slow down, bitterness of relations with the West began. Later on political declarations from both sides for improvement of relations remained in rhetoric, and slowly Ukraine took an Eastern orientation in its foreign policy and came
closer to Russia. In spite of all these, Ukraine, however, could not give up its European ambitions and Ukraine-West relationship continued with many twist and turns till the end of Kuchma administration.

Here, an attempt has been made in this chapter to analyze Ukraine’s policy of Euro-Atlantic Integration in the context of its importance to European security and the security of its own. This chapter is divided primarily into three sections. Section I deals with Ukrainian security in relations to the West. Section II discusses the policies of Ukraine’s Euro-Atlantic Integration and Section III analyses the Ukraine-West relationship and the various causes of its failure and implications.

I. Ukrainian Security and its Policy of Euro-Atlantic Integration
The official version of a concept of national security for Ukraine was prepared by the state’s National Security Council in 1993 and discussed by the parliament in October of that year. A revised version of this concept was approved, narrowly, by the parliament in May 1995. The document stressed that accurate assessment of real and potential threats to national security was vitally important for the formation of an adequate development strategy for domestic and foreign policies. The main potential threats to Ukraine’s national security cited in this document were interference by other states in Ukraine’s internal affairs, territorial claims and other encroachments on Ukrainian sovereignty by other nations and the existence of separatist trends in some regions, along with the aggravation of inter-ethnic and inter-confessional conflicts (Concept of National Security cited in Goncharenko, 1998: 122).

Kiev perceives that outside interference in its internal affairs and violation of its territorial integrity constitutes one of the major potential threats to Ukrainian national security. So also, the domestic economic instability, together with external factors could have devastating consequences for Ukraine’s national security. Therefore, experiencing, Russia’s insufficient respect for Ukrainian independence, territorial integrity, sovereignty, interference in domestic affairs and its use of gas and oil delivery for political bargaining, and, above all, keeping in mind Russia’s imperial ambitions, Ukraine intends to have the
visage of a European country but not be part of the Eurasian community composed of CIS member states. And, thus, to get rid of all problems related to security, political and economic in nature, Ukraine tried to give priority to a westward orientation of its foreign policy aimed at eventual but distant integration into the Euro-Atlantic structures. Ukraine also defined it as a strategic goal. Taking into account the economic advantages of integration into Europe, Ukraine thinks of its cooperation with the EU, the WEU and NATO as a priority component of its National Security.

1.1. Ukrainian Security Concerns and the West
As the geo-strategic location of Ukraine has land and sea borders with nine countries of Central and Eastern Europe its territorial integrity and independence is interpreted by the West as an important element of common European security. Thus in a world of interdependence, the West (particularly US) acknowledged Ukrainian security in terms of the security of Central and Eastern Europe and European security in general and its own security in particular (Dubovik, 1999: 247). Relations with Ukraine, therefore seems to be crucial element in a broader US policy toward Europe. It is also widely viewed that a stable, secure, viable and friendly Ukraine is of great importance for the West. Then consolidation of Ukrainian democracy is accepted as a substantial component of the construction of a new European order and Atlantic community.

Because of its historical background, geo-strategic location, poor economic performance and other reasons, Ukraine faces an enormous number of threats of differing nature to its security which needs to be addressed along with the military and political sources of insecurity. Though there is no doubt that in the 1990s the most frequently mentioned topic was concerning Ukrainian security, but ironically instead of extending a helping hand to Ukraine to deal with these security problems, the West targeted Ukraine in terms of the country’s position on the nuclear weapons that it inherited from the former Soviet Union. Thus, denuclearization of Ukraine was upheld by the West as a precondition for political and economic support (Moroney 1998: 26). Ukraine was also portrayed as a menace to the nuclear non-proliferation regime, despite the fact that already in its declaration of sovereignty, passed on 16 July 1990; Ukraine set a principled
course for itself of becoming a nuclear free power. However, in the internal Ukrainian
debate that followed on the matter, it was rightly concluded that Ukraine was not capable
of fully controlling and maintaining the nuclear weapons on its territory. But the well-
grounded assumption was made that the nuclear-weapons stationed in Ukraine did not
provide the kind of deterrent that would safeguard the country’s security, rather
constituted an essential source of insecurity for it (Dubovik, 1999: 248). Since then,
Ukraine has taken several critical steps to become a good, perhaps even the premier
example of non-proliferation policies. Rejecting the idea of being the world’s third
largest nuclear power, it has ratified that strategic Arms Reduction Treaty I (START-1).
It also adhered to the Non-Proliferation Treaty NPT in the status of a nuclear free state.
Most important, it has disposed of all of its tactical and strategic weaponry. It has been
also demonstrating its persistent determination with respect to nuclear weapon questions
by supporting the Comprehensive Test Ban (CTB) idea.

However, the complexity of Ukrainian security shifted to US in the responsibility
that it had accepted when Ukraine became a nuclear-free state. As is known, the US made
two main promises to Ukraine that laid down the foundation for Ukraine’s nuclear
disarmament: financial assistance and security assurances. American financial assistance
for Ukraine’s nuclear disarmament has been of crucial importance. As Ukraine was not
capable of coping with this process, the US promised Ukraine with the relevant financial
and technical assistance to complete the process of safely dismantling and eliminating the
nuclear weapons that were stationed on Ukrainian territory. But the process of nuclear
disarmament is rather complex and cost a lot of money and the amount of money
committed by the US does not match the needs of the Ukrainian side. The prospects of
the allocation of additional sums to Ukraine for this particular purpose also look
somewhat clouded leaving Ukraine in financial insecurity.

As for security assurances, there is no basis to claim success in this area. Little
political support was found in the US for such a commitment and the existing assurances
remain irrelevant. For the US, in case of the emergence of some external threat to
Ukraine’s territorial integrity, political independence and security, it will initiate
consultations and take adequate measures for the peaceful settlement of the problem in accordance with the rules of international law and the principles of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) (ibid.: 249). Obviously, such a model of assurances does not look to be an effective one. On the contrary, it raises some doubt that the US would act decisively if a threat to Ukraine actually arose. Feelings of this sort were expressed by many observers at the very beginning of the discussion of American security assurances to Ukraine. The analysts contended that the US was not prepared for a scenario under which Moscow might try to use military pressure to draw Ukraine back into some kind of Russian-dominated political union (Goble, 1993: 86). However, the situation has altered somehow as the US has made clear on several occasions that it stands behind Ukraine’s national security and territorial integrity, though clear and concrete forms of security assurances have not yet been elaborated. Further, in subsequent years US policy to consolidate geo-political pluralism in the post-Soviet space goes in favour of Ukrainian security. Washington has rejected Russia’s idea of delineating American and Russian spheres of influence in the region as well as Moscow’s claim of alleged special rights, privileges and duties in the region. Instead, Washington decided to concentrate primarily on supporting the non-Russian New Independent states, with special attention to Ukraine’s interests.

Nevertheless, what is important for Ukraine’ security is that, the US has always upheld the principles of territorial integrity and the inviolability of borders and has applied these to the Ukrainian-Russian controversy about the Crimean Peninsula, and Ukraine expects Washington to maintain this stand.

1.2. Ukraine’s Security and the Atlantic Community

There is almost great consensus among the Atlantic community regarding the present and future of Ukrainian security. There are considerable differences however among the Ukrainians regarding their own security. The perspectives of some although, expressed from a Ukrainian standpoint, concede in most respects with those of the North Americans and West Europeans, the perspective of others do not. The consensus among the North Americans and West Europeans has several elements. First, Ukraine’s security is of
major concern to the Atlantic community as Ukraine poses a security dilemma for Europe as well as for itself. Second, in light of the significance of Ukraine’s security to the Atlantic Community, the community should treat Ukraine as an equal of Russia and seek to develop close relations with it. The US, as the most important Western actor for Ukraine, should make special efforts in this regard. Third, membership for Ukraine in NATO and the EU is not currently on the agenda. Indeed, Ukraine might never receive an invitation to join NATO as such and might eventually have to settle for just associate membership in the EU (Albright, 1999: 270).

Nevertheless, NATO and the EU have attempted to strengthen their interaction with Ukraine in ways short of offering membership through mechanisms like, Partnership for Peace (PFP) program, EU-Ukraine Cooperation Agreement, Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC), under NATO and NATO-Ukraine Commission. However, from Ukrainians’ point of view, some Ukrainians see partnership through all the above mechanisms with the Atlantic Community and particularly the US as a key factor in assuring Ukraine’s security. They also hold that Ukraine should try to persuade NATO to transform itself into a collective security organization and Ukraine would enter NATO, thereby becoming fully integrated into the European security system. But some other Ukrainians favour Ukraine’s integration into Europe with a difference. They approve of heightened interaction with the EU and NATO along with express reservations of various sorts about the Atlantic Community and the US in particular from the stand point of Ukraine’s security. They expressed their concern that the US have pushed for enlargement of NATO without taking adequately into account the negative effects that this enlargement could have on Ukraine’s security. As a result of such reservations, some Ukrainians suggests that Ukraine not rely primarily on the Atlantic Community to ensure its security. Their recommendations are First, Ukraine should stress on the establishment of a nuclear free zone, second, rational limitation of strategic contacts with super powers but exploitation of the expected political confrontation between the US and Russia to bolster Ukraine’s political position and security. Third, Ukraine should seek to build security partnerships with Central European countries especially Poland, that would act as a deterrent against both Germany and Russia. Fourth, Ukraine to maintain substantial
and efficient armed forces of its own and to take the lead in organizing a Central European ‘zone of stability and security’ or regional security system (ibid: 272).

1.3. The West: Kiev’s Ally against Moscow
From the very beginning of its independent existence, Ukraine has firmly perceived Russia as a threat from the East and so trying to develop close cooperation with the West for its political and economic security (Holovaty, 1995: 16). But Ukraine’s relations with the Western institution remain far from progress because of its domestic constraints in general and Russia’s opposition in particular. So integration of Ukraine into the Western security system, through entry into NATO is not yet in the agenda as Moscow could perceive such a step as a declaration of war on Russia by NATO.

At the same time, the US has promised Ukraine not to put its sovereignty at stake even if Russian stability depends on doing so. The US and the West regard Ukrainian independence as one of the most important guarantees of stability in Europe. Therefore, when Russia demanded a ‘special partnership’ with NATO and the EU that would take into account Russia’s status as a super power, the US and the West answered with the simultaneous establishment of a ‘special relationship’ with Ukraine. This step made it clear to Moscow that the Western community not only wants to avoid acting at Ukraine’s expense but also wishes to treat both states as equals. Despite all this, Ukraine still hopes for more definite security guarantees from the US and the West and fears to loose all promises of protection if NATO enlargement is confined just to Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic. The leadership in Kiev would like to see a continued American Military presence in Europe because it expects more support from the US than from European powers in case of a Russian aggression (Rahr, 1999: 132). Many Ukrainian politicians also do not differentiate between the superficial side of Western diplomacy and its actual contents, as there is a contrast between the apparent lack of conflict in Ukraine’s relations with the West and the frequent tension between the West and Russia.
1.4. Russia-American Competition for Influence and Ukrainian Security

Despite formal acknowledgement of Ukraine's independence and sovereignty at the highest level in Russia, the 'big brother' concept and other traditional imperial stereotypes still prevails there, preventing Russians from perceiving the new independent Ukraine as an equal partner in international relations. Thus efforts to include Ukraine in the Russian sphere of interest have been conducted through open pressure both economic by increases in price of energy, custom duties imposed on Ukrainian exports etc. and political through the rejection of border demarcation, opposition to a fair division of Soviet assets etc.

Apparently, these stereotypes and inertia of imperial mentality which are multiplied by the commonalities in the histories, cultures, economies and religions of Russian and Ukrainian nations will be exploited for many years to come by chauvinistic circles in Russia through anti-Ukrainian actions, non-recognition of Ukraine's state sovereignty, territorial integrity, and of its independent national interests. When Russia is behaving in such a manner, the American presence in Eastern Europe through the process of NATO enlargement is altogether unacceptable on the part of Russia. In such a juncture, the greater understanding of NATO leaders of Ukraine's strategic importance, their increasing shift towards Ukraine and above all, Ukraine's Western orientation through deepening of relations with Western institutions like NATO, multiplied Russian irritations towards Ukraine. These are also expressed in terms of increase in gas and oil prices, and through temporary suspension of supply of energy to Ukraine. In such an environment, the question of NATO's expansion into Central and Eastern Europe thus become the focus of special attention by European leaders, political analysts and public opinion. From the stand point of Ukraine's national security it becomes also important how this issue is to be resolved.

But unfortunately this issue and its possible consequences for Ukraine's national security have not attracted the necessary attention of their exports or the public in Ukraine. While Russian media regularly contributed very importantly to shaping Russian public opinion on the ways of NATO problem, the Ukrainian media have not produced
sufficient amount of publications on this topic (Koval, 1999: 146). Nevertheless, as this issue directly involves the national security interests of Ukraine, it became a matter of concern in the forefront of both Ukrainian public opinion and Ukrainian diplomacy in due course of time. And, the Ukrainian administration has taken into consideration the following influential factors that will determine its position on this issue: (1) Ukrainian foreign policy has a limited amount of freedom on this issue because of Russia's rigid position with respect to Ukraine (2) Ukraine has very remote prospects of becoming a full member of such an effective system of collective security as NATO. (3) It is not completely clear how the extension of NATO's zone of responsibility to the very borders of Ukraine will affect the security of Ukraine (4) The expansion of NATO's sphere of responsibility is not only a military but also a political action essentially conforms with the European integration process (ibid: 146).

However, all the factors of consideration make Ukraine confused in taking firm decisions. Because, on the one hand, facilitating European integration process and participating in it as an equal member completely goes with the national foreign policy interest of Ukraine, but, on the other, generates a strong reaction from Russian side by weakening its security and stability. Thus, taking into account its geopolitical position, its responsible role to strengthen regional security and its position in the line of buffer zone, Ukraine has expressed its stand on NATO enlargement. To Ukraine, enlargement of NATO should not be a spontaneous revolutionary and accelerated process; rather, it should be an evolutionary and extended process. In the transition period, special attention should be paid to the implementation of the PFP program and to opportunities for cooperation that it opens up for the participating states (Appatov, 1999: 241). So also, to Ukraine, strengthening of individual countries' national security through joining NATO should not damage the national security of other countries including Ukraine. And, above all, if NATO enlargement takes place, in short, it should help to strengthen the security of Central and Eastern Europe as a whole.

Moreover, most importantly in relation to NATO's eastward expansion, Europe is characterized by the parallel existence of NATO and the Tashkent Collective Security
treaty, which involves several CIS member states. In such a scenario, the West would like to see Ukraine, with one of the strongest armies in Europe and its significant radical anti-Russian political forces, as an effective barrier against Russia’s geopolitical ambitions. Russia, on the other, would like to support the pro-Russian political forces in Ukraine and a policy of economic pressure in order to keep Ukraine in its sphere of influence because the Ukrainian economy is highly integrated with the Russian economy.

2. Ukraine’s Policy of Euro-Atlantic Integration: Cooperation and Formation of Legal Ties

In order to stress its ‘European’ identity and to reduce the inevitable asymmetry, which is inherent in its economic and political relationship with Russia, Ukraine diversified its foreign policy from the very beginning and tried to integrate into various regional and European arrangements. To Ukraine these will assist in establishing its independent stand in the European international system. Further the Ukrainians viewed that these institutions have a complex role to play, as membership:

i. Represented a window to the West through which Ukraine could see the potential benefits that may increase gradually the pro-Western line;

ii. Provided contacts with countries that had trodden that path earlier, and hence could facilitate the process of Ukrainian membership of more ‘Western’ organizations;

iii. Enabled Ukraine to tap into the momentum built up by the Central European states in their attempts at integration;

iv. Could help to differentiate Ukraine from the old Soviet and Russian economic and political structures;

v. Contributed to the creation of a distinct political identity for Ukraine itself;

vi. By a process of association would allow Ukraine to benefit from the new identity created by the Visegrad group of essentially European states simply rejoining Europe after a period of absence; in other words, it represented a good opportunity for a short cut;
vii. Probably allowed Ukraine to demonstrate a commitment to the economic and political reform seen as a prerequisite by the main international financial institutions to the provision of aid and loans.

Thus, one of the major directions of such diversification Ukraine aims to make is towards building cooperation and formation of legal ties with the prominent European institutions. Moreover, through which Ukraine wants to be an integral part of the enlarged European economic, political and legal space are now discussed below.

2.1. Ukraine and the Central European Initiative (CEI)

In 1989, Italy, Hungary, Austria, Yugoslavia and subsequently Czechoslovakia came together to form the Central European Initiative. Later Poland joined it in July 1991. Apparently, the organization aimed to establish a platform for cooperation on political and economic issues in the region and thereby contribute to the stability of the region. An additional objective was also to facilitate the process of preparation undertaken by member-states for eventual entry into the European Union.

So far as this Central European Initiative is concerned, having the same aim and objective Ukraine sought to strengthen ties with it. And, in November 1992, Ukraine for the first time took part in a meeting of foreign ministers of the CEI states in Austria with the Kravchuk administration pushing hard for acceptance. Indeed, by June 1993, Ukraine had made an application for membership, which was rejected in November of the same year. The reason is that Ukraine’s economy is considerably less advanced than those of the Central European countries. Besides, most Central European officials also do not really regard Ukraine as a ‘Central European’ country culturally or politically. Thus, while broadly supporting Ukraine’s independence, the Central Europeans have been slow to embrace the latter’s opening moves, especially those regarding regional cooperation (Larrabee, 1996 156).

However, on the initiative of Italy, in March 1994, the notion of Associate Membership was mooted for Belarus, Bulgaria, Romania and Ukraine. The Associate
Membership was attained by Ukraine in July 1994 and latter that month representatives participated in the first meeting of the Association Council of the CEI. By the time, the organization had grown to include Hungary, Austria, Italy, Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Slovenia, Croatia and Bosnia – Herzegovina and subsequently Macedonia. Being aware of the dangers of an isolated Ukraine, and its growing importance in the region, in October 1995, the leaders of CEI agreed to extend an invitation to Ukraine to attend its next meeting. Later on in April 1996 in Austria the foreign ministers of the member states were authorized to accept Ukraine for membership. Eventually in June 1996 along with Albania, Bulgaria, Belarus and Romania, Ukraine became a full-fledged member.

2.2. Ukraine and the ‘Visegrad’ & CEFTA Group

Demonstrating the vigour with which Ukraine set about allying itself with the Central European institutions, it was virtually simultaneously pursuing other Western avenues somewhat closer to home, and in 1991 attempted to gain membership of the Visegrad triangle (now Visegrad “quadrangle”). Apparently, that organization was set up to coordinate the efforts of Poland, Hungary and the then Czechoslovakia in their interactions with European political and economic institutions, to facilitate financial and trade flows amongst themselves, and collaborate on issues of security and ecology. But in practice it was an attempt to escape from the sphere of influence still emanating from the East, and to demonstrate their commitment to ‘rejoining Europe’ (Wolczuk, 1997:42). However, the purpose of this organization was twofold: on the one hand, it avoided the accusation of interference in what Russia later termed as it’s ‘near abroad’, while, on the other, it precluded the possibility of the backward state of the Ukrainian economy affecting the chances of the Visegrad state’s application for European Union membership.

It was in this background that, in February 1992, Ukraine’s application for membership was rejected. Many Central European officials feared that Ukrainian membership would destroy the group’s cohesion and that it would add unwanted complications with Russia. They have thus reacted coolly to Ukrainian efforts to establish
closer institutional ties and were only able to invite Ukraine to short range economic bilateral cooperation and over-order trade within the so called "Karpati" Euro-region created in 19939 (Pirogov, 1995:39).

So far as CEFTA is concerned, Ukraine’s prospects for membership were heavily dependent on Poland’s patronage. But this Polish patronage took some time to appear, as Poland’s own prospects of participation in the regional process, namely membership of NATO and the EU, were in doubt. No other country also comes forward to aid in Ukraine’s efforts of entry into the CEFTA. Thus at the meeting of CEFTA members in Brno in 1995, when Slovenia was accepted as a member, a status by then being actively pursued by Bulgaria and Romania, Ukraine was left looking somewhat isolated (Wolczuk, 1997: 43). Ukrainian efforts to get in by the side door have also been frustrated. For instance, efforts to intensify trade between Ukraine and Slovakia could not happen owing to Slovakia’s Customs Union with the Czech Republic and the latter’s intention to gain entry into the EU free from unnecessary hindrances. However, with the signing of the Memorandum on the Liberalization of Trade between Ukraine and Poland in January 1997, Ukraine’s hope of membership of CEFTA increased. Poland had become supportive of Ukraine’s intention to join the Central European Free Trade Agreement, and by late 1997, a plan of entry, involving the conclusion of bilateral free trade agreements with existing members had been established (Wolczuk, 2003: 103). But as the remaining criteria for CEFTA membership were still stringent for Ukraine (like an association agreement with EU, membership of the WTO and free trade agreements with all CEFTA states), its hope to be apart of it remains a far cry.

2.3. Ukraine and the Council of Europe

The significance of membership of the Council of Europe to Ukraine can be best understood by examining Article 1 of the statute of that organization which states that:

"The aim of the Council of Europe is to achieve a greater unity between its member for the purpose of safeguarding and realizing the ideals and principles that are their common heritage and facilitating their economic and social progress " (Statutes of the Council of Europe cited in Wolczuk, 1997:44).
Quite simply, from a Ukrainian point of view, the reference to ‘common heritage’ of its members both defines and confirms Ukraine as a European state. Thus, owing to the organisation’s role in affirming Ukraine’s European identity and inheritance, membership was inspired with a particular significance. Following initial contacts in 1990, on 14 July 1992 Ukraine applied for membership and special status with the Parliamentary Assembly of the council was granted in the following September (ibid.:44). In July 1994, a political dialogue was initiated between the Committee of Ministers of the council and Ukraine, followed by the signing of a number of conventions of the council throughout 1994. The most important of which, was signed on 15 September 1995, that on the protection of ethnic minorities. Evidence as to the commitment with which Ukraine set about its task was provided by representatives of the Assembly, who, after a visit to Ukraine, reported “spectacular progress” in bringing the constitutional provisions and general legislation of Ukraine into conformity with the Council of Europe’s general principles (ibid: 44).

Keeping in mind the Ukrainian progress regarding the harmonization of Ukrainian legislation in relation to the conventions of the council, on 4 September1995, the political committee of the Council comes out in support of Ukrainian membership. Following this, on 8 September the committee dealing with relation of non-member states comes out by unanimous agreement on the recommendation for Ukrainian membership. During the 1995 session of the Parliamentary Assembly it was recommended that Ukraine be invited to join the Council of Europe and be allocated 12 seats in the Assembly. Finally, Ukraine acceded on 9 November 1995 becoming the 37th member of the organization.

2.4. Ukraine and the Western European Union
Owing to the increasing prominence of the WEU in terms of its relations with both the EU and NATO, links with the organization were pursued with a particular eagerness. But relations between Ukraine and the WEU remain limited to regular exchange of visits and information. In its Kirschberg declaration of 1 May 1994, the WEU Council of Minister agreed to grant ‘associate-partner’ status to countries that had concluded or were about to conclude association agreements with the EU. This included the six East European
countries, plus the Baltic States under the 6+3 formula (where the six are Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Bulgaria, and Romania and the three are Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania). But they did not include Ukraine on the ground that the former countries are considered potential future EU members whereas Ukraine in not.

However, this is no way dampened Ukrainian resolve and it was evidenced in June 1996, when President Kuchma, in his speech to the Assembly of the Western European Union, expressed dissatisfaction at the 6+3 formula and its implications of a new eastern border and stressed Ukraine's willingness to accept 'all the responsibilities of associate membership' (ibid: 45). Ukraine then argued that it should be granted associate membership status but the WEU has rejected the Ukrainian request by citing its neutrality and membership status in the CIS as incompatible with the WEU norms of membership (Larrabee, 1996: 154).

2.5. Ukraine and NATO
The development of relations between Ukraine and NATO began with Ukraine's participation in the work of the North Atlantic Cooperation Council, in January 1992, the institutional basis for cooperation between NATO and the countries of the Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union.

As Ukraine was searching for new possibilities to become a member of a pan-European Union, President Leonid Kravchuk never opposed the eastward expansion of NATO, and even Ukraine's future membership of this military alliance. Speaking at Columbia University, Kravchuk, said that 'The Best guarantee of Ukraine's security would be membership in NATO' (Kuzio, 1998:13). Such mentality of Kravchuk however, resisted Russian pressure for joint armed forces and, as a result; Ukraine created its own armed forces. Indeed, Kravchuk used Ukraine's original non-bloc neutrality status as a means in response to ongoing Russian pressure to accede to the Tashkent Collective Security Agreement. Importantly, using this strategy Kravchuk always aimed to keep the Tashkent CIS Collective Security Treaty at a distance while gradually increasing cooperation with Western security structures and leaving the door open for possible
eventual accession (ibid.:12). However, upholding this policy Ukraine on 8 February 1994 joined in the Partnership for Peace Programme (PFP) of NATO. And, in May of that year, foreign Minister Anatoliy Zlenko presented a document to the NATO Secretariat, which determines the aspects of Ukraine’s participation in the PFP programme.

Moreover, the document envisages close ties between Ukraine and NATO, first of all with regard to reform in the armed forces, officer training and joint exercises. It stipulates involvement of Ukraine’s military subunits in UN and CSCE (Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe) operation, open national defense and budget planning, democratic control over the military sphere and exchange of relevant information. “Membership in Partnership for Peace will enable Ukraine to build its armed forces on a new basis, approaching world standards and involve military subunits in various operations run by the UN and the CSCE which will enhance its authority” (Ukraine Signs Partnership for Peace, 1994 in SWB, SU/1918, D/1), said Yuriy Serheyev, the head to the information directorate at the Foreign Affairs Ministry, commenting on the signing of the document. Moreover, Ukraine considered the programme to be a timely and promising step in the right direction, which would help to adjust political and military cooperation with NATO on an equal and non-discriminative basis (ibid).

Nevertheless, the intensification of Ukraine’s relations with the West in general and with NATO in particular caused serious concern in Russia. In response to Ukrainian relationship of NATO, a senior Russian foreign policy adviser said that: “We would have to consider using their dependence on our oil and gas to do the greatest possible damage to the Ukrainian economy, causing destabilization by stirring up the Russians in Ukraine, especially in the Crimea, and greatly increasing military pressure over Sevastopol, which would lead to an international crisis of the first order” (Anatol, 1995:196-97).

So far as the above statement is concerned, there is no doubt that bringing NATO to the borders of Russia would result in the latter’s active opposition. This would
inescapably be followed by even harsher political and economic pressure on Ukraine, especially by inciting the conflicts in Crimea and Eastern Ukraine. Therefore, in the short term, in order not to lose its national independence, but to maintain internal political stability and territorial integrity, Ukraine preferred to continue its non-aligned status while developing bilateral cooperation with the countries of both NATO and the CIS. But its weakness toward the West leads it to develop close cooperation with NATO and EU Ukraine continued its participation in NATO’s PfP program. In its Individual Partnership Program (IPP), approved on 1 June 1995, NATO and Ukraine also agreed to cooperate in all 19 spheres of activity envisaged for the PfP (Potekhin, 1999: 156). These included cooperation in the field of readiness for civil emergencies and crisis management. Ukraine attached great importance to the PfP consulting process. Practical military cooperation between Ukraine, NATO member countries and other active participants in the PfP program also developed. But after the publication in September 1995 of NATO’s study on enlargement, new problems appeared for Ukraine. One possible concern is the deployment of foreign armed forces and even nuclear weapons on the territory of neighboring states and Russian reaction to the enlargement process altogether. Ukraine faced the problem of maneuvering between the West, to which it is very much attracted, and Russia, upon which it is dependent in many respects.

Under these circumstances, however, Ukraine has worked out a position on NATO’s plan to enlarge and to pacify Russian reaction. The main elements of these are (1) No country outside NATO should be given a veto concerning the alliance’s enlargement (2) As a country that took the unprecedented step of giving away its nuclear arsenal; Ukraine has the right to and does object to deployment of nuclear weapons on the territory of potential NATO newcomers. (3) Ukraine would prefer that the process of NATO expansion be gradual and implemented in an evolutionary, step-by-step manner. (4) Ukraine favors the continuity of cooperation between NATO and interested non-members. It assumes that NATO will keep its doors open for new applicants in the future. (5) Development of a partnership with NATO is the highest priority for Ukraine’s foreign
and defense policies, although Ukraine is not planning to apply for full membership at present (Dubovik, 1999: 255).

In accordance with this position Ukraine has lunched an initiative to create a nuclear free zone in East-Central Europe. But when the US has supported the idea of not the deploy nuclear weapons in the territory of new member countries of this region, Kiev again proceed to upgrade its relationship with NATO from the level of ‘deepened and extended’ cooperation to that of a ‘special partnership’. And on 9 July 1997, in Madrid, the NATO – Ukraine Charter on a Distinctive Partnership was signed instead of a charter on ‘special relationship’ (Alexandrova, 1997: 325). The signing of the charter was however turned to be a significant achievement for Ukraine. It had avoided isolation or, worse, being left to face Moscow on its own. Despite the fact that the charter lacked judicial force which the Ukrainians eagerly looking for, it was filled with political significance (Wolczuk, 2003: 108).

Broadly, the charter is split into five sections. The first section provides a context for the Ukraine NATO relationship, with a commitment to stronger and wider cooperation, and a distinctive relationship, which promotes stability in Europe. The second section outlines the principles of foundation of relationship, such as recognition of the indivisibility of OSCE area states, and respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of states. The third section delineates areas for consultation and military cooperation, while the fourth section outlines the practical arrangements for cooperation and consultation. The fifth section refers to the security assurances provided to Ukraine by the five nuclear powers on the former’s accession to the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and commitment of Ukraine and NATO to cooperate on crisis consultation mechanisms. In summary, the overwhelming benefit of the NATO-Ukraine relationship is the establishment of networks, which both institutionalize and personalize the West’s commitment to enhance what Horbulin has called Ukraine’s “role in ensuring European political and economic stability” (cited in ibid: 109).
However, the strength of Ukraine-NATO relations has undergone severe strain as a result of NATO’s actions in Kosovo, in March 1999. The Ukrainian Parliament both left and right wing was outraged and viewed it as an attack on a sovereign state. The parliament also unequivocally condemned the actions of the Western alliance, with the left wing strongly calling on the President to withdraw Ukraine from the PfP, as had Russia. The Communists, in particular, threatened to ‘re-examine’ relations with Russia and pushed for the withdrawal of Ukrainian ambassadors to NATO. Despite the intense pressure, the President remained steadfast in his commitment to continued participation in PfP and tightened ties with NATO, reiterating that ‘Ukraine needs military and other cooperation with NATO’ (ibid: 19).

However, undoubtedly, the NATO bombing created some problem with Ukraine. First, there is little doubt that NATO’s image as a stabilizing influence had suffered in the eyes of the Ukrainian public. Second, the probability of worsening of relations with NATO represented a threat to Kuchma’s multi-vector foreign policy strategy (ibid: 110). Nevertheless, Kosovo crisis put the relationship between Kiev and Brussels under severe strain. But, a year on, the relationship seems to have prospered with few long-term repercussions. Very soon Ukraine also became active in the PfP programs of NATO and put forth an embracing programme of cooperation with NATO in the form of presidential degree from 2001 to 2004 (Kuzio, 2003: 30).

As Ukraine understands that NATO membership is the first step on the path to EU membership, in an 11 September 2001 environment of NATO enlargement, Ukraine thought of to opt for NATO membership believing that it might less likely to cause problems in its relationship. Fortunately, NATO expressed its willingness to move Ukraine from the 2002 NATO-Ukraine Action Plan to a Membership Action Plan. But simultaneously, NATO Secretary General Lord Robertson warned that Kiev would have to display, ‘a sustained commitment to the implementation of political, economic and defense reforms’, and uphold human rights, the rule of law and freedom of media (ibid: 31). Further as a mark of their relationship in January 2003, Ukraine and NATO simultaneously released the NATO-Ukraine Plan of Action. But Kuchma’s very poor
reputation in the West make it sure that Ukraine will not be able to move from its Action Plan to a Membership Action Plan (MAP) until the post Kuchma era.

2.6. Ukraine and the European Community

The history of direct legal relations of Ukraine with the European Community is rather short and fairly uneventful. To start with one should recall that official relation between the European Community (EC) and the former USSR that included Ukraine were established only in June 1988, when the Joint Declaration on Mutual Recognition between the EC and the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (COMECON) was signed in Luxembourg. This paved the way for the conclusion, at the end of 1989, of a trade, commercial and economic cooperation agreement between the USSR and the EC. However, the collapse of the USSR, following the overwhelming pro-independence Ukrainian referendum of 1 December 1991, terminated a projected new broader agreement between the EC and the Soviet Union. But, at the same time, the landslide vote for independence of the Ukrainian people prompted the European Community to issue on December 2, 1991, a Declaration on Ukraine (Muravyev, 1993:18). This welcomed the democratic manner in which the referendum had been conducted and called for Ukraine to pursue an open and constructive dialogue with the other republics of the dying Soviet state in order to ensure that all existing international obligations were maintained.

The response of newly independent Ukraine to this document and similar acts of a number of other states was very rapid and constructive. On 5 December 1991, the Ukrainian Parliament adopted an “Appeal to the Parliaments and People’s of the World”, expressed its willingness to comply with all the main provisions of the EC Declaration (ibid: 19). But it has taken some time for the EC to accept the new realities, which emerged after the break down of the USSR. Therefore, the process of rapprochement between the EC and Ukraine has not always been totally smooth and, on occasion, has been fraught with misunderstandings. However, in the first half of 1992 the EC institutions adopted several decisions on the distribution of import and export quotas among the newly independent states formerly allocated to the Soviet Union (ibid: 19). Parallel to this, the EC also began re-allocating its economic and technical assistance to
the former USSR through TACIS (Technical Assistance for the Commonwealth of Independent States) programme, which aims at helping the recipients to introduce a system of trade regulation compatible with the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). Such a system will facilitate the subsequent integration of the CIS states into the open international system and, in time, further improvements in access to markets. Within the framework of TACIS, new initiative programmes have been signed with each of the former Soviet republics, including Ukraine reflecting their particular needs. Special emphasis is also placed on the sphere of privatization in Ukraine.

However, the most dramatic step made by the EC in its relation with Ukraine and other newly born states was the decision to reach an agreement on cooperation with each of them individually. On 6 April 1992, the EC Commission submitted to the EC Council of Ministers a directive on the negotiation of cooperation agreements with Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan and Ukraine, to replace the 1989 treaty, which was signed with the USSR on trade, commerce and economic cooperation. Nevertheless, some time still had to pass by before the EC and Ukraine began their first contacts aimed at the conclusion of such a cooperation agreement. This delay may be by several causes but both Ukraine and the EC have managed to reach many points of common interest. The rapprochement between them was reinforced by the talks between Jacques Delores (EC Commissioner) and the Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk in Brussels on September 14, 1992. This was the first meeting of the highest official from both sides.

In his address to the meeting Leonid Kravchuk praised the launch of TACIS and promised to base Ukraine’s cooperation with the EC on the principle of the CSCE Final Act (“Helsinki Accords”). Kravchuk and Delores signed a Joint Statement confirming the need to formalize by an exchange of letter the continuing mutual obligations of Ukraine and the EC under the above-mentioned trade agreements of 1989. They also expressed their intention to reach an agreement on partnership and cooperation. It was agreed to set up a Ukrainian permanent mission to the EC and a delegation of the EC Commission to Ukraine (Kravchuk in Brussels, 1992 in SWB, SV/1487, A1/1).
The first contacts between experts of both sides with a view to elaborate an agreement on partnership and cooperation took place in early December 1992. During this meeting the delegations reached an understanding on several important and complicated issues, like the problem of Ukraine's accession to the treaties concluded between the EC and the former USSR. This particular issue was resolved by an exchange of letter between officials of both sides. In the course of these talks the EC experts also presented the outlines of the future agreement on partnership and cooperation. However, the main aim of this new agreement was that it will provide for Ukraine a certain preferential regime in trade and will pave the way for the extension of Ukraine at a future date of the four freedoms: free trade in goods, free trade in services, and free movement of labour and free movement of capital. But it will not surpass Most Favoured Nation (MFN) status on the basis of Art VI of the GATT (Muravyev, 1993:18).

Moreover, the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) agreed on 23 March 1994 and signed by Kravchuk on 14 June 1994 reached its climax. Essentially this agreement was similar to the Association Agreements signed with the Visegrad states with the exception of the commitment to free trade. However, the conclusion of the agreement on Partnership and Cooperation opened up for Ukraine further opportunities in the sphere of economic system, her external economic relations and gradual integration with the world.

2.7. Ukraine and European Union (EU)

The EU-Ukraine relationship started with the signing of the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA), in June 1994. This relationship was consolidated by the approval of the European Union's common position on Ukraine soon after in November 1994. Thereafter, the pledge to support Ukrainian independence and sovereignty, endorsement of Ukraine's democratic transformation and efforts to maintain its economic stability and integrate with the world economy were outlined in the EU Action Plan for Ukraine in December 1996. Side by side a number of bilateral committees come up from the PCA such as: the EU-Ukraine Cooperation Council and all of its associated sub-committees, and the Parliamentary Cooperation Committee, suggested that the relationship was
prospering. On the part of the Ukrainians, the formation of the National Strategy on Ukraine's integration into the EU, signed in June 1998, and the creation of the National Agency for Development of European Integration, together with the establishment of an EU department within the Foreign Ministry, all seemed to suggest that Ukraine was gradually putting together an infrastructure through which ties would come to be consolidated. Then the establishment of formal ties was also accomplished through the desperately needed relative small-scale, economic assistance from the EU to Kiev. But Kiev’s anticipation that Ukraine’s role in contributing to the demise of the Soviet Union and blocking role in the creation of a viable replacement would create a wave of support in the form of loans, aid and closer ties from a grateful West failed to materialize (Wolczuk, 2003: 111).

The European response was mainly coordinated by the European Union on behalf of the G7 and G24 in collaboration with the IMF and the World Bank. Independently, the European Union has been one of the principal international donors to Ukraine, with ECU 3.9 billion having been provided between 1991 and 1998 in technical and financial assistance. It is also estimated that between 1996 and 1999, ECU 538 million of funds were channeled to Ukraine through the Country Action Programme from EU and G7 for Chernobyl and the interstate Nuclear Safety and Cross-border Cooperation Programmes (ibid: 112). However, for a country like Ukraine these were not large sum money. The grants, credits and loans that accompanied the establishment of formal ties have not prevented the emergence of damaging tension between the two from early on. Much of this is attributable to the actions of Kiev. First, Ukraine has pursued actions which are contrary to the provisions of the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA), as well as those of the rules of the WTO, with which PCA provisions were effectively harmonized. By introducing excessive and expensive certification on certain goods, of tariffs and certain excise duties, Ukraine was going back on its commitments to eliminate protectionist measures and progress toward the liberalization of trade. So also, policy makers of Ukraine miscalculated the damage of a reversal of liberalization would do to Ukraine’s wider objectives, namely membership of key international institutions, such as the EU and the WTO.
Secondly, Kiev became increasingly convinced that the EU was not exactly welcoming Ukraine with open arms. It’s complain was voiced from time to time in spite of the Interim Agreement (IA), which was signed by Kuchma in June 1995 with the EU. In addition, Ukraine also started comparing the economic support that provided by EU to Poland and to Ukraine. Kiev too believed that Ukraine remains deliberately excluded from the European integration process and ‘is not seen by the EU as a full and integral part of it’ (Parliuk, in Wolczuk, 2003: 113)

Thirdly, Ukraine has not lived up to the commitment to the ideals of democracy, the rule of law, the promotion of human rights, and the protection of minority interests, and showed a poor record on political and economic reforms. Most of the times the oligarchic centrist political forces, which control the government and parliamentary leadership and are allied to the executive, espouse the rhetoric of reform and integration into Europe but are unwilling to undertake the necessary domestic reforms to back up their support of EU membership (Kuzio, 2003: 28).

Apart from all these, Ukraine’s relations with the EU continued to stagnate, because of doubts concerning Kiev’s commitment to a functioning market economy, i.e. liberalization of prices and trade remain still distant goals; barriers to market entry are still prominent. Property rights, laws and contractual obligations are also remaining far from transparent. Most importantly, the disparity was felt often between the desire to integrate, and the steps taken to bring about integration.

However, EU is to some extent responsible for the failure of EU-Ukraine relations. The EU is thinking about how to support Ukraine’s reforms, while at the same time giving no promises that it will become a member of the EU. The EU has never expressed any interest in returning to the early 1990s formula in order to sign an Association Agreement with Ukraine. In the view of Brussels, the EU signed the agreements at that time in solidarity with new post-communist regimes and in a totally different era (ibid: 27). The EU has regularly also complained about ‘guns, drugs and
bugs’ and migrants moving from East to West through Ukraine. It has sought to stem this by tightening the former Soviet borders with Central-Eastern Europe. Another issue that prevents the EU in accepting Ukraine is also psychological because it is not still clear if the EU sees the Western CIS as part of ‘Europe’ or ‘Eurasia’.

Therefore, due to all these differences from both sides, EU-Ukraine relations find no progress, in spite of Copenhagen’s efforts of hosting a Ukraine-EU summit on 4 July 2002 to resolve the poor relations between Ukraine and EU. Moreover, from the standpoint of Kiev, membership of the EU formed the cornerstone of its emergence into the wider world. Ties with the EU were became a means of avoiding being sucked back into the economic and political orbit of Russia and the backwardness that it experienced. Ukraine also gets the facilities, the EU offered in terms of capital, technology and markets that could propel Ukraine rapidly to more towards modernity. Yet, it is irony to say that after a decade and more of independence Ukraine remains nearly as far beyond EU structures as it was at the start.

3. Ukraine-West Relations: Causes of its Failure and Successes
Ukraine-West relationship started with negativity as the West’s response to Ukraine’s efforts was less recognized. In the initial years of independence Ukraine was viewed by the West as an unwelcome addition to the world community of nations and no way counted Ukraine as a contributing element to Western Security. In geo-political terms, the West preferred to deal with one single de-facto power on security and economic issues and made its policies Russo-centric but simultaneously upheld a policy of de-nuclearisation of Ukraine. Therefore, during the first three years of Ukrainian independence, Ukraine-West relations were, to a large extent remain one sided of a triangular relationship involving Russia as well. However, after US-Russian relations began to cool by December 1993, the Western policy makers began to debate on the strategic significance of an independent Ukraine, on the basis of the suggestions of former national security advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski to promote ‘geo-political pluralism’ instead of a Russo-centric agenda in the former USSR (Brzezinski, 1994: 69). This debate coincided with the ratification of START-I and the NPT and ushered in to a
new era of Ukraine-West relations. From 1994 until the end of the decade Western support helped to secure Ukrainian independence, territorial integrity and sovereignty. By 1999 all of Ukraine’s borders were recognized by its neighbors and Russian-Ukrainian relations had also by the way considerably improved. A growing consensus among Ukraine’s elite’s too backed a foreign policy course aimed at deepening of cooperation and eventual integration with Trans-Atlantic and European structures.

However, Ukraine-West relationship could not turn to be an ever-lasting phenomenon. It has lost its vigor with the slowing down of Ukrainian economic reform and of corrupt vested interests in Ukrainian political system. Then up to the end of Kuchma’s second term in office (2004), Ukraine-West relations continued with the West’s ambivalent policy towards Ukraine, matched by Ukraine’s declaratory policy towards integration into Trans-Atlantic and European structures.

3.1. Development of Ukraine-West Relations
Since Ukraine became independent in 1991, its relations with the West have gone through many twist and turns, characterized by the West’s Ukrainian policy. The West’s policies changed from time to time in relation to Ukraine in terms of its visualization of security concerns. Ukrainian policies towards the West kept on changing its nature according to the internal and external pressures that it faced at different phases of its transitional development. Moreover, Ukraine-West relationship has passed through three distinct phases. The first phase started with independence and continued up to the end of Kravchuk’s tenure of President-ship. The second phase started with the election of Kuchma as President and continued up to the end of his first term. The third phase started with the re-election Kuchma for a second term and continued up to 2004.

In the first half of the 1990’s Ukraine was largely ignored by the West, because of its orientation towards Russia, but orientation towards the West occupies a central place in Ukraine’s multi-vector foreign policy approach. Relations with the West were seen in Kiev in terms of consolidation of Ukrainian sovereignty, independence and for shaping of Ukraine’s geopolitical identity. Yet, relations with the West turned to be a hard task
because of the warm relationship between Russia and the West and thus Ukraine-West relations did not go beyond a mere diplomatic recognition. Western policy on the post-Soviet space was focused on Russia, and the opinion prevailed in Western capitals that the result of the Russian transformation would almost automatically define the ultimate success/failure of transition in the other post-Soviet states, including Ukraine (Pavliuk, 2002: 82). Ukraine’s inheritance of nuclear weapon of the Soviet Union and its stand upon this issue on the contrary viewed by the West as an obstacle in the way to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Ukraine’s greater emphasis upon nation and state building and the security of the state, principally in relation to Russia, than economic and political reform contributed to Western indifference and skepticism about Ukraine’s prospects.

However, the geopolitical importance of Ukraine was recognized finally in 1994, in the face of Moscow’s assertive foreign policy and the growing instability in Russia. The beginning of a new Western attitude toward Ukraine was then started by the Trilateral Agreement, signed by Ukraine, Russia and the US in February 1994. Subsequently, Ukraine became the first Commonwealth of Independent States country to join the NATO Partnership for Peace program and to sign a Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) with the European Union.

The second phase of Ukraine-West relations started on the foundation of the changed attitude of the West coinciding with the election of Kuchma as President in June 1994. Kuchma’s decision to denuclearize Ukraine, to implement liberal economic reform, request for Western assistance for success of those reform and finally its signing of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty helped to crystallize the formulation of a new Western policy toward Ukraine. The decision on NATO’s eastward enlargement taken earlier in December 1994 further raised the Western stake in Ukraine and prompted an increase in political support and financial assistance to Kiev and above all transformed Ukraine into an important strategic ally of the West (Kuzio, 2003: 22). Ukraine’s promise to bring domestic reforms also let it to be closer with the international financial institutions like the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the European Bank for
Reconstruction and Development (EBRD). These institutions launched their assistance programs to Ukraine. Kiev in turn, began to feel confident and took advantage of Western political and economic support. By the fall of 1996, Ukraine had curtailed its unprecedented inflation, achieved microeconomic stabilization, introduced a new and stable currency and adopted a democratic constitution. On the other hand, the United States sought to support Ukraine both bilaterally in a ‘strategic partnership’ and multilaterally through NATO as a ‘lynchpin’ and ‘keystone’ of European security (Mroz, Pavliuk and Garnett in Kuzio, 2003: 22). Then, Ukraine became the third largest recipient of US aid and proved to be the most active CIS state within NATO’s PfP Program.

Ukraine's foreign policy further looked more impressive. It stepped on the course of ‘integration into all European and Euro-Atlantic institutions’ and declared future membership in the EU as the country’s ‘strategic goal’. Departing from initial concerns and fears, Kiev enforced NATO’s eastward enlargement and negotiated a Charter on Distinctive Partnership with the alliance (Olga, 1997: 325). Such assertive steps were further recognized by the West and the US and Canada became the strongest supporters of Ukraine. Relations with the US were officially upgraded to the level of ‘strategic partnership’. A joint working commission chaired by President Kuchma and Vice-President Albert Gore was set up to discuss and resolve various issues on bilateral agenda. Then the West increasingly recognized the sovereignty, integrity and stability of Ukraine as ‘a crucial factor’ and ‘a key component’ of regional and European stability and Security (The US-EU Joint Statement on Ukraine 1997 in Pauliuk, 2002:84). Independent Ukraine also came to be seen by many as a key to sustaining geopolitical pluralism in the CIS as a barometer of Russia's international behaviour (Garnett in Pavliuk, 2002: 84). At the same time, Ukrainian leaders seemed to start believing that this almost exclusive emphasis on Ukraine’s ‘strategic importance’ would inevitably guarantee Western assistance and forgiveness of Ukrainian failures.

However, all turns to be bitter with the development of political infighting and corrupt vested interests in Ukraine leading to stagnation on domestic reforms. By the end of 1997 and early 1998, it became evident that expectations and hopes for the pace of
transition in Ukraine had not been met. Yet, politically Ukraine still looked attractive and promising, constituting a stable and relatively democratic but having increasingly authoritarian tendencies. Thus, the West became exasperated by the widening gap between rhetoric and reality in Ukraine’s domestic and foreign policy (Kuzio, 2003: 23).

Under this backdrop Ukraine-West relations entered into the third phase in an atmosphere of parliamentary and Presidential elections of spring 1998 and fall 1999 respectively. When no major reform steps were taking place despite Western appeals and pressures to re-energize them, it was becoming increasingly clear that Ukraine’s problems were largely of a political nature. Then the persisting political tensions between branches and centers of power, inconsistent economic policies of two consecutive governments of Lazarenko and Pustovoitenko, non-transparent political processes, the lack of responsibility and accountability and corruption, and some other allegations on the inner working of the Kuchma regime were published in the Western media which finally worsened the international image of Ukraine. Still, the earlier hopes of the West that Ukraine might speed up its reform and move closer to its more advanced Central European neighbors were almost vanished. Losing patience, the West began to express mounting criticism and demonstrate growing bitterness with the state of Ukraine’s transition. The lack of reform, corruption and persisting problems with Western investors constituted the main issues in Ukraine-West dialogue.

Further the discloser of the Kuchmagate tapes scandal, murder of opposition journalist and increasing restriction on the media, sailing of Kolchugaradar equipments to Iraq in contravention of UN sanctions in Summer 2000, and Kuchma’s efforts to imprison Tymoshenko, a political opponent, all these developments further worsened Ukraine-West relations. So also in the matter of foreign policy, Ukraine’s constantly shifting and often-contradictory domestic and foreign policies gave an image of a country unable to decide its foreign orientations. Contradictory signals damage Ukraine’s credibility by giving it an image of an unreliable partner constantly wavering in every direction, one day pro-Western, the next pro-Russian (ibid.: 25).
On the other hand, disappointment towards the West was growing in Ukraine as well. Ukrainian leaders tended to blame the West for not understanding the complexities of Ukraine’s transition. In this context, it can be mentioned that while Kiev was putting increased pressure on the West, the Western response was getting weaker and weaker. Even the EU viewed Ukraine’s membership ambitions as nothing more than exaggerated demand.

However, the beginning of 2000 brought new political momentum and hope in Ukraine with the appointment of a new government under the pro-Western Prime Minister Viktor Yushchenko, who had a reputation as a reformer, and enjoyed the majority trust of the Ukrainian people. The Yushchenko government committed itself to long awaited reform policies like implementation of a balanced, cash-based budget; restructuring the country’s huge and non-transparent energy sector, focusing on increasing cash transactions; implementing agricultural reform fostering the growth of private production; and bringing more transparency into privatization. By the mid-2000, tangible results were achieved, and by the end of the year they exceeded even optimistic expectations. But not surprisingly, very soon the Yushchenko government came under sharp criticism and attack by powerful oligarchic groups, as its policies, especially in the energy sector, endangered the shadow interests. Friction between Kuchma and Yushechenko was also growing and soon became visible, even to outsiders. As a result, Ukraine did not achieve the necessary consolidation for sustainable development that would have enabled it to turn the corner. On the other hand, Prime Minister Yushchenko, whose appointment was attributed in part to Western lobbying, paradoxically did not receive much support in his new capacity. On the contrary, a series of negative articles appeared in The Financial Times blaming Yushchenko for mishandling IMF loans when chairing Ukraine’s Central Bank (Pauliuk, 2002: 87).

In such a period of stagnation of Ukraine-West relations, a dramatic change took place in the international environment due to the terrorist attack against the US. As the West is discovering new ‘geo-political pivots’ in the aftermath of 11 September, Ukraine
has almost disappeared from the radar screen of Western attention (ibid: 81). The EU also continued to be lukewarm in its response to Ukraine’s European aspirations.

3.2. Causes of the Failure of Ukraine-West Relations and its Implications
From the above discussion of Ukraine-West relationship it becomes clear that the relationship had not any substantial base, commitment or common problems to deal with but have individual interest of its own nature. It has been evident from the very beginning when it started with an unwelcome note of the West toward Ukraine. Though in the middle, the relationship showed some positivity like Ukraine’s nuclear disarmament in 1994, economic reform in 1995-96, NATO Ukraine partnership etc. overall the Ukraine-West partnership potential remain unrealized and end up in mutual unhappiness.

3.2 (a) Western Flaws
Despite all-embracing political support, the West has been unable to outline coherent strategic objectives towards Ukraine. The West merely knows what it does not want Ukraine to do and its support is a means by which to encourage it to not contemplate joining any new Russia backed union. It is indeed only half a policy. It does not answer the more fundamental questions of where Ukraine should fit into the newly emerging Trans-Atlantic and European security architecture. Apart from this, there are certain other Western flaws, which contributed to the unhappy ending of the partnership.

First, the West lacked a long-term commitment, comprehensive strategy and even a clearly articulated goal towards Ukraine. Despite the West’s stake in the final outcome of Ukraine’s transition and wide recognition that Ukraine was pivotal to regional and European security very few in the West displayed the long term commitment and sustainable practical action needed to help Ukraine to deliver desirable domestic change and overcome its geopolitical uncertainty.

Second, the US has tended to priorities geo-politics and security concerns over reform and democratic practices in Ukraine.
Third, the EU has showed its lack of strategic vision in relation to Ukraine and continues to view Ukraine and the CIS as a whole as ‘Eurasian’ and not ‘European’.

Fourth, Western financial assistance to Ukraine was lower than that provided to Poland and others. The often-repeated statements about support for Ukraine’s independence and sovereignty were hardly backed by a sufficient understanding of what was actually needed to consolidate the country’s independence. At the same time, Western assistance was largely directed to support the government but failed to help to build up and consolidate broader pro-reform and pro-European constituencies in Ukraine, as well as encourage Ukraine’s closer ties with Europe.

Fifth, the Western expectations from Ukrainian transition and the desire to see immediate and tangible results were unrealistic. Ukraine’s performance was usually measured against the progress of its neighbours to the West, although the latter had very different starting conditions.

Sixth, Western policy towards Ukraine has always been overshadowed by the ‘Russian factor’. Consciously or subconsciously, many in the West kept Russia in mind when dealing with Ukraine. Western attitudes in relation to Ukraine were shaped through the glasses of Russian domestic situation and Western-Russia relations (Pauliuk, 2002: 92).

Seventh, the EU and its member states’ policies towards Ukraine were particularly inadequate leading to the imbalance between Ukraine’s European aspirations and Europe’s response to them. Political and intellectual elites in the EU were very reluctant to consider Ukraine even a remote prospect for future membership in the EU. The EU was also extremely slow to recognize Ukraine’s European vision, let alone welcome it. No EU member states took the lead in forging closer ties with Ukraine; none lobbied for Ukraine in the EU. The EU altogether neglected the positive role it could have played as a catalyst to bring about domestic changes in Ukraine and to shape Ukraine’s geopolitical future (ibid: 93).
As a whole, the West’s Ukrainian policy turned out to be inadequate from the very beginning and reached to its climax at the very critical juncture of Ukraine’s transition in and after 2000. The West showed little ambition to provide the balancing power to Ukraine’s fragile pro-reform and pro-European forces against both domestic anti-reform groups and external Russian pressure.

3.2 (b) Ukrainian Flaws

Ukraine’s Europeanness ended with its amorphous and declaratory policies. The way Ukraine-West relationship comes to an end it seems that Ukraine is destined to be Eurasian. This has been reflected in Kuchma’s whim of the re-orientation to Russia and the normalization of Ukraine-Russia relations. Most importantly, Ukraine’s multi-vector foreign policy from Western to Eastern orientation and the adoption of a more confusing and ambivalent policy of ‘To Europe with Russia’ confused the Western policy makers (Kuzio, 2003: 33). Apart from this, there are certain other major failures on the part of Ukraine, which contributed, to the decline of Ukraine-West relations.

First, Ukraine showed its inability to effectively organize itself at home and deliver necessary political, economic ad social reforms. Its movement towards democracy and market economy was extremely slow, its policies were often declaratory and its willingness to change itself was often questionable. This slowness and indecisiveness on the one hand and complexity and uncertainty on the other became the main source of Western displeasure and frustration.

Second, Ukraine neither accepted its ‘return to Europe’ as a goal in itself nor as a tool by which it can modernize the country, establish a regulatory framework and successfully undertake its ‘quadruple transition’ (Kuzio and Moroney, 2001: 123).

Third, the Ukrainian executive always feared about the processes involved in European integration and hence focused only upon issuing declarations about its ultimate strategic objective, meanwhile did not address the question of how to reach this goal.
This is clearly seen in Ukraine’s failures to implement various agreements and treaties, and its preference for issuing only declarations and efforts to be settled into a comfortable ‘third way’ by keeping one foot in Europe and another in Eurasia. But this led to stagnation in Ukrainian reform process and became a cause of reduction of Western financial aid.

Fourth, the limited nature of its reforms due to its self-interest oriented bureaucracy, corruption, unstable legislation, over regulation of business activity, poor investment climate, arbitrary governmental interference and shadow influence of unfriendly vested interests, Ukraine remained of little interest to the West as an economic partner and investment market.

Fifth, Ukraine’s firm conviction that its geo-political position and strategic location in relation to Russia would work as a contributing factor for all time to come to get support of the West both politically and economically, proved to be wrong. Because though geo-political factors are important they are chargeable and have proved to be insufficient for the development of a long-term stable partnership with the West unless supplemented with a strong economic and financial Western stake in Ukraine. Thus, the EU, in particular, has paid less attention to Ukraine’s geo-political role, but more to its democratic development, business and investment climate and foreign trade regulations.

Sixth, Ukraine’s transition turned out to be much more complex and difficult due to its post independence diversities, the absence of a sufficiently strong national elite and the lack of vision by the country’s political leadership. Overtime, Ukraine’s poor transition performance resulted in an imbalance between the country’s European foreign policy ambitions, on the one hand, and the actual state of its economic and political transformations, on the other. This imbalance and Ukraine’s inability to advance European integration internally has especially harmed Ukraine’s relations with the EU, being the cause of irritation in Brussels and other Western European Capitals.
Seventh, the absence of a stable national consensus on foreign policy, as well as the lack of charismatic leaders and strong democratic constituencies, ultimately lead the country's foreign policy to a crisis and have become more confusing to both domestic elites, foreign governments and international organizations. Further, the discrepancy between domestic policies and foreign policy goals and constantly shifting objectives turned to be major factors in causing the US and the West to no longer treat Ukraine's foreign policy in a serious manner.

From the above discussion of the Ukrainian flaws that led Ukraine-West relation to bitterness it can be said that the main cause among the many is Ukraine's failure to reform itself and its reactive rather than pro-active policy towards the West.

3.2 (c) Implications
The way in which the Ukraine-West relations progressed and came to a closing point during the presidency of Leonid Kuchma has left behind certain implications to be considered both for the West and for Ukraine. So far as the West is concerned the failure of relationship has raised some fundamental questions like: Are the policy objectives and national interests of the US, NATO and the EU in relation to Ukraine being fulfilled?; What would be the policy measures of the West in Central and Eastern Europe in the absence of Ukraine?; and, Do the objectives of the West promote or curtail the development of geo-political pluralism in the post-communist world?

First of all the broken relationship has let the West to be aware of the loss of a strategic ally in relation to Russia in the Central and Eastern Europe. It has let the West to take pro-active foreign policy measures in the future in relations to Ukraine which would lead to a decline in Ukraine's 'third way' policy (neutrality non bloc status etc) and it would be a more reliable strategic partner for the West. The West also became aware of the nature of Ukrainian transition, nature of the elites, post independent complexities of Ukrainian society and thus do not wish to force Ukraine to under take its 'quadruple transition' if there is not domestic political will on the part of Ukraine's ruling elites. The changing relationship let the West to be more aware of the need to maintain and support
geopolitical pluralism and regional cooperation in the post-Soviet space through regional
groups such as GUUAM and narrow the gap between EU and NATO policies and
increase their coordination to achieve an overall, coherent Western policy towards
Ukraine. Finally, the implication of the broken relation necessitated to think of a fourth
phase of West’s relations with Ukraine that defines the West’s national interests in
Ukraine to move towards a qualitatively new stage of strategic engagement in the pursuit
of Ukraine’s integration into Trans-Atlantic and European structures.

So far as Ukraine is concerned, the implication of the soured relationships is far
greater. First of all without the support of the West Ukraine has lost all realistic prospects
for the ultimate success of its transition and an adequate international role. Second, Ukraine came under the influence of Russia. When the Ukraine West relationship was
suffering Moscow gained most out of Ukraine’s weakness. Russian leadership was fast
offered friendship to embattled President Kuchma, who was desperately looking for
political support. Then, the political rapprochement went hand in hand with increased
military cooperation and Russian economic presence in Ukraine. As questions remain
about Russia’s ultimate goals in relations to Ukraine different other questions were also
raised about what this shift might mean for Ukrainian sovereignty. Third, though Ukraine’s basic foreign policy interest remain the same, i.e. integration into Europe, it
has lost the vehicle and left in the no man’s land of ‘third waysim’ that has only served to
halt its ‘quadruple transition’ and institutionalize partial retrenchment leading it neither
moving forward to Europe like the three Baltic states, nor backwards, like Belarus,
towards Eurasia (Kuzio & Moroney, 2001: 124). Fourth, Ukraine remained far behind
the process of transforming its politics from the squabbling of a few vested interests into
a transparent, value based and issue driven mix of vibrant parties (ibid.:124).

In spite of all these immediate negative implications, the crisis has some
promising implications for Ukraine. First, the crisis has begun to awaken Ukrainian
society, which has made the first steps towards shrugging off its accumulated apathy and
indifference. Second, it has crystallized and facilitated structurisation of Ukraine’s
political spectrum, revealing the positions and interests of its main actors. Third, the crisis
has galvanized the emergence of relatively organized and broad non-leftist opposition — the opposition that gained invaluable experience of political struggle and coordination of its activities. Further, the dismissal of Yushchenko gave Ukrainian democratic and pro-European forces a long awaited and widely popular leader (Mostova & Rakhmania in Pavliuk, 2002: 96).

From the above discussion it has been very clear that though every kind of relationship and its success is always reciprocal, in the case of Ukraine West relationship much depends upon Ukraine to perform as it defines its national goal to be European (socio-economic, political, legal and culturally) and to uphold an European identity in the true sense of the term. But the political climate, which has been created by Kuchma, it seemed almost impossible to achieve, as Ukraine’s foreign policy is stalled and likely to continue to stagnate until the end of Kuchma’s second term in office in November 2004. On the other hand, the West is equally responsible to what happened to their relationship because there has always been a close and intrinsic link between Ukraine’s transition and Western policies towards Ukraine. Most of the time Western policy towards Ukraine has influenced the progress of Ukrainian transition and the formation of its foreign and security policy. But the way West had responded to Ukraine being declarative in its statements on Ukraine’s significance and its promises of support became very much clear that the West has lacked sufficient vision, long term commitment and the practical action needed to help a country like Ukraine. By the way, it is a matter of the West’s common sense that, despite knowing the current domestic uncertainty and poor international image of Ukraine, for good reasons what happens to Ukraine does matter to it.

Nevertheless, in relation to Ukraine’s search for a position in Europe, its Westward orientation of foreign policy can be seen on two levels: On the first level, the emphasis was placed by the political elites on Ukraine’s European heritage, culture, and history which represent their efforts in trying to create a European, or more precisely, a Central European identity. On a more manifest level, however, it represents a pragmatic way of trying to deal with the very real economic, security and political problems facing the states of the former Soviet Union such as the drastic economic decline that has
characterized their fate since independence. The European institutions for the Ukrainian elite represent beacon of hope and crucially, a source of financial aid or at least facilitating access to it. Implicit within this is also the growing realization that Russia is decreasingly able to provide the economic stimulus for recovery. This is also compounded by concerns as to the future Russian domestic political developments and prevailing attitude amongst the Moscow’s political elites as to how internal and international issues should be resolved. Passing through all of the above is the fact that Russia and its parliament in particular, are continuing to have difficulties in coming to terms with Ukraine as an independent entity (Wolczuk, 1997:39).

Moreover, finally it can be said that Ukraine’s strong desire to become an integral part of the enlarged European economic, political and legal space brought about little success as the Ukraine –West conflict continues to exist till Kuchma is in power. But it is well understood by many Ukrainian politicians that if the country wants to be an integral part of the larger European area, she must live up to common European standards. In other words, this possibility will be enhanced when the Ukrainian government has coped with its economic crisis, bring substantial economic and political reformation, built a democratic society, and strengthened its national statehood.