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### **Evaluating NATO enlargement since the end of the Cold War**

Date: June 15, 2023

Host Organization: Brookings

Keynote Speaker:

James Goldgeier, Visiting Fellow - Foreign Policy, Center on the United States and Europe

Joshua R. Itzkowitz Shiffrin, Associate Professor - School of Public Policy, University of Maryland

Jim Townsend, Adjunct Senior Fellow - Transatlantic Security Program, Center for a New American Security

Susan Colbourn, Associate Director - Program in American Grand Strategy, Duke University

Moderator: Peter Baker, Chief White House Correspondent - New York Times

Evaluating NATO enlargement since the end of the Cold War involves assessing its impact on various aspects of international security, regional stability, and the dynamics within the Alliance itself. One of the primary motivations behind NATO's enlargement was to extend security guarantees and deter potential aggression against new member states. Evaluating this aspect involves analyzing whether the enlargement has effectively enhanced the security of both existing and new member states, and whether it has deterred potential threats. Assessing the impact of NATO enlargement on democracy and the rule of law in newly admitted member states is crucial. Has NATO's conditionality and support for democratic reforms facilitated the consolidation of democratic institutions and norms in these countries? Examining the level of democratic governance and respect for human rights in new member states can provide insights into this aspect.

NATO enlargement presented integration challenges for new member states, such as adapting to NATO's structures, interoperability, and military standards. Evaluating the progress made by new members in these areas, as well as the support provided by existing member states, can shed light on the effectiveness of the integration process. NATO enlargement has had a significant impact on relations with Russia. Analyzing the nature of this impact, including potential escalatory or cooperative dynamics, is crucial. Evaluating the level of trust, conflict resolution efforts, and communication channels between NATO and Russia can provide insights into this complex relationship. NATO enlargement has influenced the dynamics of transatlantic relations. Assessing the role played by the United States in driving the enlargement process and its impact on transatlantic cooperation, burden-sharing, and overall alliance cohesion is important. Evaluating NATO's enlargement in the context of other regional security organizations, such as the EU, helps understand the broader geopolitical implications. Analyzing the potential overlaps, complementarity, or competition between these organizations can provide insights into the evolving

regional security architecture. Assessing whether NATO enlargement has contributed to stability and conflict resolution in regions where new members have been admitted is crucial. Examining the impact on regional tensions, unresolved conflicts, and security dilemmas can provide insights into the Alliance's role in promoting peace. Evaluating the perception of NATO's credibility and effectiveness as a security organization after its enlargement is essential. Analyzing the confidence of member states, public opinion, and the Alliance's ability to address emerging security challenges can shed light on this aspect. Reflecting on the lessons learned from past enlargements, evaluating the criteria, conditions, and potential challenges of future enlargement is important. Assessing the implications of potential new members in the Balkans or Eastern Europe and their impact on regional stability and security is crucial for future decision-making. By considering these key points, evaluating NATO enlargement since the end of the Cold War can provide a comprehensive understanding of its achievements, challenges, and potential areas for improvement.

From the perspective of Russia, evaluating NATO enlargement since the end of the Cold War has been a source of concern and contention. Russia views NATO enlargement as a direct security threat to its borders. The expansion of NATO's military presence closer to Russian borders is seen as a potential encroachment on its sphere of influence, potentially undermining its national security interests. There is a perception that NATO has reneged on its promises not to expand further eastward. NATO enlargement is viewed by Russia as an attempt to alter the balance of power in Europe and establish Western dominance. Russia sees NATO enlargement as part of a broader strategy aimed at encircling and isolating Russia. The expansion of NATO's influence in Eastern Europe and the Baltics is viewed as an attempt to weaken Russia's regional influence and limit its strategic options. Russia believes that NATO enlargement has limited its ability to influence events in neighboring countries. It's important to note that these points represent the perspective of Russia and may not reflect the views of all countries or observers. Evaluating NATO enlargement requires considering diverse perspectives and engaging in a nuanced analysis of the geopolitical dynamics involved.

Analytical Questions:

What are the economic and financial implications of NATO's enlargement for both existing and new member states?

How has NATO's enlargement influenced the defense capabilities and military readiness of newly admitted member states?