Preface and acknowledgements

The unification of Germany and the dissolution of the Soviet Union nullified the oft-remarked upon geopolitical and strategic certitude that had evolved after 1945. The dissolution of the Soviet Union, in particular, erased the geopolitical demarcation of the eastern boundary of the 'West' and the southern boundary separating greater Europe from the Middle East. Similarly, the Soviet-American competition had produced a *de facto* distinction between the geopolitics of Asia and the geopolitics of Europe. Eurasia, as a geopolitical designation, lost the currency it had enjoyed in the early twentieth century owing to the consolidation of the internal and external Soviet imperium, the post-civil war consolidation of China, and the Atlantic orientation of postwar American foreign policy.

Eurasia remains a rather ill-defined geostrategic space in two respects. First, any line of demarcation along its southern periphery can be as easily claimed as a part of the northern periphery of the Middle East. Second, the accent placed on the Asian or the European in Eurasia will perforce reflect an individual's mental map, which is in turn shaped by idiosyncratic variables (intellectual habit and national origin) and substantive ones (the nature of the security threat examined and the membership of the regional institution(s) engaged in the critical task of security governance). It is our hope that *Limiting Institutions?* makes a contribution to the debate over the source and nature of the security threats facing the European security order in the early twenty-first century and the role formal institutions can play in the task of regional (and by extension global) security governance, however Eurasia is eventually delimited.

The chapters in this book took final shape after draft papers were presented at an international conference sponsored by the Lyman L. Lemnitzer Center for NATO and European Union Studies at Kent State University. The conference, 'Limiting Institutions? The Challenge of Eurasian Security', was held on 28–29 September 2001. We initially

planned to address the emerging need for new research and analysis of the Eurasian region, particularly the requirements of security governance, when our discussions to hold the conference began the preceding September. It became quickly evident that the meeting's significance heightened in the aftermath of 11 September 2001, but we also had to consider cancelling the conference owing to the widespread (and understandable) reticence to board an airplane so soon after the attack on the Pentagon and the destruction of the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center. When we asked the conference participants whether we should postpone or even cancel the event entirely, they all agreed the conference needed to go forward as scheduled. *Limiting Institutions?* is the product of that meeting.

Mention must be made of individuals, other than the authors, who contributed to the conference's success. Lawrence S. Kaplan, director emeritus of the Lemnitzer Center, who has vigorously maintained his productive relationship with it, offered a characteristically stimulating luncheon address, 'Reflections on the Lemnitzer Center's Relevance to the History of the Atlantic Alliance'. Participants also benefited greatly from the insightful and timely observations delivered by Ambassador Charles Dunbar (retired) in his evening presentation, 'US Policy in Eurasia and Beyond'. Thanks are also owed to a number of individuals who served as panel chairs and discussants, including Andrew Barnes, Boleslaw Boczek, Patrick Clawson, Joseph H. Danks, Hanna Freij, Jonathan Helmreich, John Logue, Steven Oluic, Argyrios Pisiotis and Mark R. Rubin.

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