



CENTRE FOR SECURITY COOPERATION
Cooperative Security Environment Pillar

ARMS CONTROL SYMPOSIUM

20-22 November 2012, Croatia

Introduction

In accordance with the RACVIAC 2012 Programme, the Cooperative Security Environment Pillar (CSE) organized and carried out the Arms Control Symposium, CSE-07-S in the period of 20 – 22 November 2012.

Venue

The symposium was carried out in RACVIAC facilities on the territory of the Republic of Croatia.

Purpose

The purpose of this symposium was to build on the experience of the last year's symposium and to present the latest developments in arms control, with the aim of presenting new perspectives on confidence-building measures for peace and stability in Europe. The symposium served as a platform for discussions on the fundamental role of arms control treaties as cornerstones of the European and South East European security in particular.

Summary of presentations and discussions

The symposium was addressed particularly, though not exclusively, to the countries of South East Europe (SEE). The participants were representatives of Ministries, political institutions and national authorities responsible for the implementation of arms control treaties, or experts in the field of arms control. The speakers came from national institutions/agencies and other relevant international organisations.

During the two working days, the speakers and participants were actively involved in what proved to be a very fruitful combination of presentations and discussions.

More specifically, the symposium highlighted that political stability exists if there is no reason to use force while military stability also means that there is no chance to win by using force. Conventional arms control had to aim at military stability by thwarting the likelihood of success of certain military options and that required a dynamic concept of arms control, i.e. control of the use of force, as opposed to a merely static counting of weaponry. Such a dynamic concept had to take into account the basic criteria of military operational planning, namely forces, time and space. Beyond the goal of reducing the likelihood of success of military options, arms (respectively: force) control should also provide for reducing the cost of military operations and their scope once they had started, i.e. it should aim at limiting operations also in the context of the need to assure human security. Consequently, arms control was a significant tool of the political concept of cooperative security. It did not just refer to technicalities of weapons holdings but to cooperation of military establishments.

Furthermore, it was stressed that arms control had to take into account the change of the character of conflicts during the last two decades: (1) from inter-state to intra-state conflict which involves the dominant use of SALW as well as guerrilla warfare tactics; (2) from large-scale armoured offensive operations to interventions with light but modern and more capable forces. Given these changes and a generally favourable security situation in Europe after large reductions compared to the time of the Cold War, today's most relevant arms control contribution to stability was transparency. Emphasis should be put on early warning and prevention of escalation. Today, logistics, communications, command and control were of equal or even more relevance to military capabilities than "TLE-counting."

In regard of the development of Confidence and Security Building Measures in Europe from Helsinki 1975 via Stockholm 1986/7 to the Vienna Document 1990/92 and its further modifications 1994, 1999 and 2011, it was noted that innovative elements were added to the document up to the early 1990s. However, since then the acquis was more or less maintained while only formal changes had led to further modifications. That showed that the basic requirements had been met. Further reducing the thresholds for notifications and observations of exercises and unusual force activities had no priority but had to be measured against the criteria of military significance.

Referring to the only sub-regional arms control agreement in Europe, namely the Dayton Article IV-Agreement, during the discussions it was pointed to the precedence of the CFE-Treaty but also to innovative elements such as the reduction of the artillery calibre threshold for notifications and limitations from 100 mm down to 75 mm. That showed how pertinent adaptations could make arms control relevant to the military realities in a region. Also the suspended Article II-Agreement included a number of innovative elements compared to the CFE and the Vienna Document with respect to light calibre weapons and military industrial facilities. In regard of the Dayton, V-arrangement recalled its objectives, namely imbedding a sub-region stricken with conflict in a wider regional scope of military stability. However, negotiations were influenced by the development of other stabilizing agreements and commitments of neighbouring countries at the time, namely the conclusion of the CFE Adaptation Agreement and the process of accession to NATO. Both had led to a certain hesitation of states to assume more parallel, redundant and potentially competing commitments, which had bound them to a sub-regional regime as opposed to pan-European arrangements. In this context, the different character of the Dayton V Concluding Document compared to the earlier DPA Art II and IV-Agreements was underlined: it entailed only suggestions and options for voluntary confidence-building measure as opposed to binding commitments.

Moreover participants recalled the basic rules of the Dayton II-, IV- and V-Agreements and their achievements. Also, they described the process of incremental changes leading to the transfer of ownership for the Dayton IV-Agreement to the Parties to the Agreement by 2015.

In addition, for maintaining military stability today, the soft aspects of force control as enshrined in the OSCE Code of Conduct had become of particular relevance since it would ensure value-based rules such as democratic control and ethic/legal behaviour of forces in peace and war in line with human rights and humanitarian law which aimed at limiting the scope of military operations.

During the discussion the point was made that in today's Europe the option of war was not completely obsolete, particularly in the context of sub-regional conflicts. Although smaller units had significantly improved capabilities within the concept of net-based operations, classical TLE referring to a combined arms ground-air battles as defined by the CFE-Treaty were not out of date in high intensity warfare scenarios (see the war in Georgia in August 2008). Therefore, it was still important to prevent destabilizing force concentrations in sensitive geographical areas, e.g. in close vicinity to NATO-Russia boundaries or in sub-regional and local conflict areas. Thereby, new capabilities such as rapid reinforcement and long-range strike options had to be taken into account. In this context, prevention of potentially successful military options was still an important objective for conventional arms control in Europe. This objective would certainly require a dynamic approach considering time and space as opposed to a mere TLE counting. It will be important to prevent the concentration of overwhelming military forces in a short period of time and to thwart sub-regional arms races where sub-regional arms control agreements such as the Dayton IV-Agreement do not exist. Only with such concrete limitations could trust be built and the political climate improved.

Following the symposium agenda, participants focused their presentations on the development of nuclear and conventional arms control efforts against the background of a changing politico-military environment since the Cuba crisis of 1962. Early attempts of détente (Harmel Report 1967) and arms control such as SALT I/II, MBFR and the CSCE Helsinki Accord 1975 had not yet overcome the Cold War but paved the way for ending the political division of Europe. In their view, it was the global financial crisis that finally led to the end of the bloc-to-bloc confrontation in 1989/90 and allowed for substantial arms control and confidence-building agreements such as the CFE Treaty and the Vienna Document. The implementation of these agreements was a success story. It had brought to an end the

military confrontation and dramatically improved the European security environment as well as NATO's strategic situation.

Now, NATO was in a period of rethinking future conventional arms control in Europe. In its strategic concept (Lisbon, October 2010) and the Document on the Defence and Deterrence Posture Review (issued during the Chicago Summit, May 2011) the Alliance had committed to conventional arms control in Europe based on the principles of transparency and host nation consent to the stationing of foreign forces. However, so far no coherent concept had been developed. Several important questions have yet to be answered such as its future objectives, geographical focus, means and tools, negotiation formats and the quality and scope of agreement(s) (political versus legally binding; one pan-European or a network of sub-regional agreements). Referring to the following presentation participants stated the academic world should contribute to the process and make suggestions to answer open questions.

Aligned with the symposium agenda was the discussion about the contradictions between legal arms control requirements and actual politics, while concern was expressed in regard of the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Some factions, respective parties, within BiH were not satisfied with the political results of constitutional developments and the status of the DPA Annex 1B Art II and Art IV-Agreements. That was particularly true with respect to the creation of unified armed forces. A new political argument which has gained strength through the elections two months ago supported the objective of disbanding these unified forces with the following reasoning: The basic goals of the DPA Annex 1B Art. IV-Agreement had been fulfilled; after sharp reductions the remaining unified forces were militarily insignificant, politically not necessary and still too expensive given the need for financial austerity policies; later on only professional internal security forces were needed without heavy weapons. Participants examined the view that such a political attempt undermined the Dayton Peace Accords: without armed forces BiH would be left with internal security forces organized by the political entities which would undermine the unity of the state as a whole and again lead to its political division.

In continuation of presentations and discussions, it was underlined that arms control needed adaptation to the changing security environment in the 21st century. Referring to the role of the international organisations, the OSCE still represented the best combination of authorities and capabilities to deal with future arms control arrangements such as the Vienna Document, Open Skies, SALW and excess ammunition. The international community should now put an emphasis on post-conflict situations globally in order to prevent excess weapons from falling in the hands of new adversaries and terrorists. In 2011 the United States had spent 142 mill \$ for the destruction of SALW and excess ammunition in 42 states. In future, the OSCE would have to export arms control experiences and mechanisms to areas outside Europe. In particular, North Africa and the Middle East where weapons were available in an insecure environment should be brought into focus. The control of SALW and ammunition had gained importance since these were preferred weapons for terrorists and guerrilla warfare.

An overview on the OSCE crisis management tools related to the human dimension (e.g. Vienna and Moscow mechanism) was given, as well as an overview of risk reduction, early warning, preventive action and peaceful settlement of dispute (Vienna Document, Berlin and Valetta mechanism, Court of Conciliation and Arbitration etc.). Most of these tools had been established in the early 1990s and invoked in a number of cases such as the conflicts in former Yugoslavia. The presentations also pointed to the case of the UAV-crisis in Georgia in 2008 when the risk reduction mechanism of the Vienna Document (Chapter III) was activated. Regrettably, the report had not been published but had been kept confidential.

The OSCE consensus principle was discussed controversially. While it lent more authority to the OSCE decisions than majority votes, it also hampered decision taking in crisis situations. However, there were already mechanisms established which allowed action by "consensus minus one". Furthermore, the CiO and the OSCE institutions by their mandates were in a position to carry out independent fact finding missions on the invitation by the states concerned.

Participants concluded that the issue of the OSCE crisis management mechanisms deserved further discussion during future seminars.

With regard to the topic on the future role of conventional arms control for the European security architecture, the lecturer concluded as follows:

1. Conventional arms control in Europe is still needed to create a pan-European security community that allows concentrating all energies on new security risks and challenges. While positive reassurances aim at common response to security challenges posed from outside, the need for negative reassurance arises if there are concerns about the strategic capabilities and intentions of partners within the security community. This is still the case in parts of OSCE Europe at regional and sub-regional levels where distrust in the intentions to use military capabilities for offensive purposes has remained. The fact that such risk perceptions are not generally shared by all participating States is irrelevant for developing security cooperation since perceptions are part of political realities and cannot be swept aside by persuasion; trust can be created only by concrete action. The conclusion is simple: arms control is relevant as long as participants of a security community deem it relevant even though not all participating States might share that view.

2. Risk assessments focus on long-term military capabilities rather than changeable political intentions. Prudently designed arms control instruments are suited to hedge such military capabilities. On the basis of reciprocal self-restraint they have the potential to contain geo-strategic ambitions that seek to ensure one's own security at the expense of the security of partners. Thus, arms control could be instrumental to creating a security community by providing negative security reassurances and by building trust if properly implemented.

3. New arms control regime should serve two main objectives: Maintaining pan-European stability and hedging sub-regional instability. However, the Cold War related bipolar balance of forces concept of the CFE Treaty of 1990 is outdated and has ceased to reflect realities in Europe. A new arms control regime should concentrate on prevention of destabilizing force concentrations taking into account modern military capabilities in the age of net-centric operations.

4. Arms control cannot be used as lever to enforce preferred solutions to protracted conflicts. It should serve as strategic reassurance against new geopolitical zero sum games and, thus, enable Europe to implement the security cooperation promised in the late 1990s. Only if the remaining territorial status conflicts are de-linked from overall geopolitical competition will they become solvable. And only if arms control is de-linked from political solutions to these conflicts will its revitalization and further progress become possible.

5. While political status discussions are carried out in the appropriate and established political form, arms control should contain sub-regional arms races, monitor the situation on the spot through transparency and verification and, thus, enable conflict prevention and crisis management. Special attention should be given to local and stationed forces, however, within a status-neutral approach towards parties to local conflicts. Such a concept implies a network of pan-European and special sub-regional arrangements which provide for differences in status.

Conclusions

The symposium met all of its planned objectives. All lecturers acted as highly profiled experts. They shared with the auditorium their competent experiences and practical skills.

The symposium was professionally organised due to the close cooperation among RACVIAC, the Federal Republic of Germany and the German Institute for International and Security Affairs.

All participants were actively involved in the discussions.

According to the participants' assessment, the symposium proved to be successful and efficiently organized.

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