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**17<sup>th</sup> Workshop of the PfP Consortium Study Group  
“Regional Stability in the South Caucasus”**

**“What a ‘New European Security Deal’  
Could Mean for the South Caucasus”**

**– Programme and Workshop Outline –**

**18-21 April 2018**

**Minsk, Belarus**



## Purpose:

In 2012, the Austrian Ministry of Defence, through its National Defence Academy and the Directorate General for Security Policy, resumed the scientific work done by the PFP Consortium of Defence Academies and Security Studies Institutes in the South Caucasus. This initiative built upon a Study Group which began already in 2001 but was discontinued due to internal strife in the region in 2005.

Past workshops held since 2012 in Reichenau and in the wider region (Tbilisi, Istanbul, Kyiv, Chisinau, Varna) have demonstrated that the Study Group had established a broad academic basis and cohesion necessary to undertake more ambitious cooperative projects. In addition, as it has already proved in the recent past, the RSSC SG is an ideal “track-two diplomacy” tool that may enable an academic examination of original, and sometimes controversial, ideas which might inspire future political action. For example, in November 2014, the Policy Recommendations of RSSC SG10 on “Towards Europe?! Straddling Fault Lines and Choosing Sides in the South Caucasus” suggested that the international community should consider creating a new security architecture for the South Caucasus. The main thrust of such potential changes to the European security framework should rather aim at **adapting the regional security architecture to increase its consistency with the actual realities**. Given the increased urgency of addressing such a critical topic within the deteriorating strategic context of the EU’s Eastern Neighborhood, the Co-chairs thought that participants might be prepared to consider the need and feasibility of a “New Deal” on European security, and the role of the South Caucasus therein.

Owing to the worsening geopolitical climate, we deemed it urgent to consider avenues of relaxation of tensions by means of pro-active “track-two diplomacy” security dialogue. In particular, we thought that considering new ideas for restoring mutual trust between regional powers, without detriment to the political and cultural autonomy (meaning freedom of choice with regards to socio-economic and political arrangements and general liberty) of their borderlands, might be beneficial to regional stability. Trust must be founded on agreed principles, and confirmed through a formal agreement governing multilateral relations. International law is replete with such agreements, and lately, the canon of international law has been gravely affected by the unilateral maneuvering of great powers, without due concern for the security consequences in regions located in their common neighbourhood. Expediency has replaced careful and far-sighted policy-making. The RSSC SG has decided to take it upon itself to consider possible solutions to be presented to higher policy circles, leveraging the general impression that the current tensions can no longer endure, lest a cataclysm results from the current geopolitical confrontation between Russia and the West.

This workshop has two purposes: the first is to lead the representatives of the South Caucasus to better consider the role of their region as a unified force to help shape security outcomes that matter to them. The second is to consider developing, based upon a review of the reasons for failure of past attempts, a new workable agreement over European security, and to assess its potential implications for the South Caucasus region. Such a “New Deal” would govern Trans-Atlantic, European, and Eurasian relations within the context of a new European order resulting from a peaceful transformation process. This exercise should involve EU, US, Russian and Turkish representatives in addition to our South Caucasus participants.

Therefore, the co-chairs are convening a workshop entitled **“What A “New European Security Deal” Could Mean for the South Caucasus”** in Minsk, Belarus, 18-21 April 2018.

## **Partners**

- PfP Consortium of Defence Academies and Security Studies Institutes,
- Austrian National Defence Academy, Vienna,
- Directorate General for Security Policy at the Austrian Ministry of Defence, Vienna,
- Dialogue of Civilizations Research Institute, Berlin.

## **Topic Outline**

The promise of a “peace dividend” at the end of the Cold War has unfortunately not materialized over the medium and longer term. Rather, the pursuit of regime change by the West, and terrorists – on both sides of the former Iron Curtain – has distracted the policy-makers and the public from the need of cementing East-West relationships in Europe constructively. The nihilistic terrorism that has characterized the post-Cold War era is indeed a serious security problem, but arguably, it is not an existential threat. In fairness, and in principle, neither are the twin enlargements of NATO and the EU over the last quarter of a century. However, it can be argued that the never-ending conflict management across the European borderlands, precisely through these two instruments, as well as through Russian unilateral interventions in the ex-Soviet space, has been lacklustre. In particular, it has paid too little heed to the interests of the other party to the Russia-West equation, and, in general, this has resulted in making international law more brittle. More worrying is the trend towards fragmentation. The threat of fragmentation leads central authorities (either national or the headquarters of international organizations) in making zero-sum decisions; therefore the prospect for cooperative solutions to security problems becomes more remote. For regions caught in the middle, such as Eastern Europe and the South Caucasus, the influence of this or that pole of attraction – whether it be NATO/EU or Russia – increasingly becomes difficult to resist. International organizations, and states alike seek to bring some order to the incomprehensible chaos that has become the post-Cold War security environment, in the 2010’s.

The current security environment is characterized by an international legal regime which is in tatters, with key canons of arms limitation and disarmament agreements withering away. This has been chiefly the result of willful or accidental neglect of, and misunderstandings in, the relations among regional powers: United States, Russia, Turkey, the EU, and some prominent EU members. Much of this was due to prejudice, to ill-advised jockeying for position in a model of relations that started off as cooperative, to miscommunication and suspicious misinterpretation. The clarity, transparency and diversity of opinions brought about by the revolution in communications in the last 25 years is another promise broken.

The Great Recession of 2008-2009 has produced effects which our grandparents would recognize immediately. In many ways, the world we live in today resembles that of the last 1930s to a worrisome degree. With the benefit of hindsight, we can better analyse the features of the world we live in today, prepare and mitigate for the worst consequences we know can arise, thanks to past experience. Conflict will not bring solutions to the more pressing challenges of our time – only more challenges. Similarly, outdated paradigms, such as the reliance on security instruments designed for the late-20<sup>th</sup> century, must be revised, reformed, or, if the participants of this workshop so advise, completely replaced.

The 17<sup>th</sup> Regional Stability in the South Caucasus Study Group workshop aims at bringing together international experts to consider strategically and geo-politically the outline of an agreement on regional power sharing, that would cooperatively shape and regulate the European security environment: a “new deal” so to speak, to enable Europe and the East-West relations move forward. The South Caucasus, as part of the bridge between Russia and Europe, needs to

find its place within this discussion. The second aim of this workshop is to bring South Caucasus experts to define this role cooperatively. We hope that through this workshop, the diverse representatives of South Caucasus political authorities will see the benefit of strategic unity.

We urge the participants to this workshop to work together to create an outline for a new workable and inclusive agreement over European security, ideally one that would be most favorable to the South Caucasus region, which we will put forward to relevant decision-makers as authoritative statement from this Study Group.

### **Key questions**

- How did the European security change since the end of the Cold War (the big picture, with magnifying views on the South Caucasus)?
- How did the post-Cold War legal and institutional frameworks keep up with the ongoing structural changes of the power relations in Europe, and in the world?
- How can the political weight of the European states and institutions (EU, NATO, OSCE, EEU, CSTO) be assessed in a strategic era where power finds new definitions?
- What are the merits and the downsides of past proposals to reform the European security frameworks?
- What other realistic ideas to re-build/fix the European security order could be put on the table?
- How to further stimulate the resumption of a consistent and coherent European security dialogue?
- What are the prospects for reviewing the 40+ years old legal framework of the OSCE?
- What would it take to resolve the ongoing conflicts in Ukraine, Moldova and the South Caucasus while taking into account the legitimate interests of all parties (local players and regional powers)?
- What role could regional economic integration play in facilitating power sharing in conflict resolution?
- Is a “New Deal” on European security necessary today? How could it look like (key elements, and likely scenarios)?
- What would be the potential benefits, costs and risks of such a “New Deal” for the South Caucasus?
- Should regional powers decide behind the other European states’ back? Should regional powers jointly guarantee the indivisibility of European security?

### **PANEL 1: Assessments and Diagnoses on European Security and Regional Stability in the South Caucasus**

In this panel, speakers from the South Caucasus, as well as from the US and Russia, will be invited to assess the changes in European security since the end of the Cold War, and to diagnose the status and the dynamics of regional stability. The briefings/articles in this panel could focus on: the diverging perspectives in the West and in Russia over the implementation of the existing vs. developing new legal frameworks; the divisive interpretations of key security processes in Europe and in the South Caucasus, and of their impact on regional powers’ interests and policies; the misunderstandings regarding the goals and the roles of new (i.e. Eurasian Economic Union and the Collective Security Treaty Organizations) vs. older players (i.e. the OSCE, NATO and the European Union); the new security threats and challenges (terrorism, cyber, hybrid) and how could they be tackled more effectively. The general aim of the panel would be to identify the ensuing gaps between Western and Russian visions and understanding of changes in European security over the last 25+ years, with due emphasis on the South Caucasus regional stability.

## **PANEL 2: Re-introducing Predictability in Relations: International Law and other Tools**

International experts will be expected to elaborate in this panel on ways and means to bridge the existing gaps between Russia and the West on perceptions and visions of European security. With a view to restoring mutual trust, and re-shaping the legal and institutional frameworks of an *operational* (as opposed to new vs. old) European rules-based order. Why didn't past proposals to reform legal and institutional frameworks of European security (such as the Meseberg Memorandum, the NATO-Russia Council, the Medvedev Treaty) work? What new mechanisms to stimulate the resumption of a consistent and coherent European security dialogue could be imagined? What prospects are there for an adaptation of the Helsinki Final Act of 1975? Could we repair the international relations by repairing international law? Should we abandon or embrace certain principles of international law and state building in favour of regional stability (i.e. self-determination via independence or federalization)? What opportunities and mechanisms could be imagined to jointly tackling common security risks and threats: terrorism, energy, hybrid, immigration? How could the misunderstandings over missile defences and restoring the strategic balance of nuclear deterrents in Europe be overcome? What other tools to restore the predictability of pan-European security relations could be considered?

## **PANEL 3: From Never-Ending Conflict Management to Conflict Resolution and Regional Integration.**

There is probably no other tragic symptom of the struggling European security system in the post-Cold War era than the chronic persistence of unresolved conflicts, foremost in the South Caucasus. Fed from the ashes of the Soviet empire, the never-ending conflicts in Abkhazia, South Ossetia, Nagorno-Karabakh and Transnistria, have been so far effectively managed, but never resolved by the regional powers (US, Russia, and few European states). Since 2014, a mostly geopolitical conflict in Ukraine, potentially with de-stabilizing consequences for the whole European security system, was added to the list of Europe's unresolved conflicts. The aim of this panel will be to highlight the sources of ineffective conflict resolution enshrined in the existing European (legal and institutional) security arrangements against the background of competing European and Eurasian integration processes. Rather than addressing the historical aspects of those conflicts, or playing useless blame-games among their actors, the main thrust of this panel should focus on highlighting the causal determinism of a "new European security deal" for establishing more inclusive regional integration processes, and more effective international conflict resolution mechanisms. Case studies based upon one or more unresolved conflicts might be taken up by local or international speakers.

## **Break-Out Groups: Making a New European Security Deal Possible**

The process will include a keynote speech proposing a new European security model followed by parallel dialogues focusing on two or three methods to facilitate discussion on the proposal. Each discussion group will have a rapporteur who will report on the content and the outcomes of the dialogue, which will be subsequently integrated with the ensuing Policy Recommendations. As usual, discussions will take place under Chatham House rules, and no photos will be permitted during this session. The rapporteur's reports are then used to feed the interactive discussion that closes the proceedings.

## Programme

### Wednesday, 18 April 2018

till 18.00 Arrival of the participants

19.00 **Words of Welcome**

Andreas F. WANNEMACHER, Directorate General for Security Policy, Austrian Ministry of Defence, Vienna

**Official Dinner**

### Thursday, 19 April 2018

07.00 – 09.00 Breakfast

09.00 – 09.30 **Introduction to the Study Group “Regional Stability in the South Caucasus” and Administrative Remarks**

Benedikt HENSELLEK, Austrian National Defence Academy, Vienna

09.30 – 10.00 **Opening Speech**

Sebastian v. MÜNCHOW, George C. Marshall Center, Garmisch-Partenkirchen  
*Backsliding into Neo-Feudalism*

10.00 – 11.30 **PANEL 1: Assessments and Diagnoses on European Security and Regional Stability in the South Caucasus**

**Chair:** George NICULESCU, The European Geopolitical Forum, Brussels

Eduard ABRAHAMYAN, University of Leicester

Sadi SADIYEV, War College of the Armed Forces, Baku

Evgenii PASHENTSEV, Diplomatic Academy of the Russian Federation, Moscow

Vaso KAPANADZE, Independent Journalist, Tbilisi

11.30 – 12.00 Coffee Break

12.00 – 13.30 **PANEL 2: Re-introducing Predictability in Relations:  
International Law and other Tools**

**Chair:** Peter SCHULZE, Dialogue of Civilizations Research Institute, Berlin

Maya JANIK, Dialogue of Civilizations Research Institute, Berlin

Oktay TANRISEVER, Middle East Technical University, Ankara

Michael Eric LAMBERT, Black Sea Institute, Paris

Elena MANDALENAKIS, McGill University, Montreal

Alexander DUBOWY, University of Vienna

13.30 – 14.30 Lunch

14.30 – 16.30 **PANEL 3: From Never-Ending Conflict Management to Conflict  
Resolution and Regional Integration**

**Chair:** Frederic LABARRE, PfP Consortium, Garmisch-Partenkirchen

Ahmad ALILI, Centre for Economic and Social Development, Baku

Elkhan NURIYEV, Reconnecting Eurasia, Geneva

Boris KUZNETSOV, Centre for International and Regional Policy,  
St. Petersburg

Rustam ANSHBA, Abkhaz State University, Sukhum/Sukhumi

Danu MARIN, Foreign Policy Association of the Republic of Moldova, Chisinau

Alexander RUSETSKY, Caucasus International University, Tbilisi

16.30 – 17.00 Coffee Break

17.00 – 18.30 **Keynote speech**

Peter SCHULZE, Dialogue of Civilizations Research Institute, Berlin  
*A New European Security Model*

**and Interactive Discussion**

**Moderation:** George NICULESCU, The European Geopolitical Forum, Brussels

## Friday, 20 April 2018

07.00 – 08.30 Breakfast

08.30 – 10.00 **Break-Out Groups: Making a New European Security Deal Possible**

**HELSINKI Group**

**Chair:** Frederic LABARRE, Pfp Consortium, Garmisch-Partenkirchen

**Rapporteur:** Dzhoni MELIKYAN

**MALTA Group**

**Chair:** George NICULESCU, The European Geopolitical Forum, Brussels

**Rapporteur:** Greta WAGNER

**MESEBERG Group**

**Chair:** Peter SCHULZE, Dialogue of Civilizations Research Institute, Berlin

**Rapporteur:** Sophie CLAMADIEU

10.00 – 10.30 Coffee break

10.30 – 11.00 **Reports on Breakout Group Discussions**

11.00 – 12.15 **Plenary Session: Interactive Debate for Policy Recommendations**

**Moderation:** Frederic LABARRE, Pfp Consortium, Garmisch-Partenkirchen

12.15 – 12.30 **Conference Close**

12.30 – 13.30 **Lunch**

13.30 **Departure to Side Programme**

## Saturday, 21 April 2018

**Individual Departures**