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## Contract 2015: A Conceptual Framework for Regional Security

The military order crafted from 1989-1992 at the close of the Cold War era through a series of gradual political compromises between East and West has run its course. Nevertheless, a modernized version of this architecture, with its concomitant security guarantees, should continue to serve Europe for many years, and it is in our interest to preserve its effectiveness and legitimacy. In order for these security guarantees to continue to achieve their primary objectives, it is necessary to craft a new field for common integration and interaction in the European security arena and create a regional security community that would guarantee a sense of mutual belonging amongst the nation states of a given region, thereby eliminating the danger of new conflicts.

Over the past few months, the questions of the emerging post Cold-War order and pan-European security system have returned to the fore in the United States, Russia, and Europe. The dominant theme of the past 20 years within the Euro-Atlantic sphere was the issue of European integration in accordance with the Western model and the attempt to consolidate Western alliances. We were well aware of what we wanted to achieve. However, this model has lost its dynamism and no longer offers any immediate new possibilities. The situation is analogous to the way in which gas loses its characteristic smell when it is evenly dispersed within a large volume. Over the past few years and over a large area, the security situation has been worsening. New challenges have arisen, the use of violent force has become a possibility once again, and the powers of provincialism, populism, and nationalism are again on the rise. A new, wide-ranging contract is necessary to make possible the type of co-operation adequate to the challenges of a global era.

The return to the question of pan-European security was hastened by the initiative of Russian President Dmitry Medvedev. The global strategy of US President Barack Obama should be a powerful wakeup call to Europe (if it has not already been one). This, however, is merely the tentative beginning of a wider debate and of broader changes, because Europeans are not yet ready to create a European security and defence strategy. Meanwhile, the Russians would happily sit out certain processes and separate the realization of their own aspirations from the issue of solving numerous difficult regional problems – problems that are priorities for their Western partners.

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Note: This text represents the personal views of the author and not the opinions of the Polish government.

In the Corfu Process, the OSCE has already begun an interesting debate on the future of European security, but this Organization is at once the broadest and the least visible international body in the region. NATO and some member states of the European Union have indeed taken up the issue of a new conceptual strategic framework, but only as seen from the point of view of the particular interests of these two organizations. The natural forum for a regional debate is the OSCE, if such were the collective will of its 56 participating States. The result of such a debate could be a conceptual strategic framework for regional security.

A conceptual strategic framework for regional security would be the solution to the problem of the shifting paradigm of world order 20 years after the end of the Cold War. This shift is borne witness to by an accumulation of events and a multiplication of symptoms. There is talk of a deficit of trust and the need to rebuild trust in Europe. A continent focused on organizing itself into a postmodern society was, until recently, supposed to be the model for the future of the world; similarly, the institutionalized thicket of European security was a unique example of how to properly heed the lessons of a tragic past, disfigured by the scars of total warfare.

But this phase has come to an end. Our task is now to re-order the huge region from Vancouver to Vladivostok in such a way as to be able to meet both regional and global challenges. It is imperative that Russia be a part of the European security system; otherwise it is easy to foresee a future of regional crises as well as the weakening of Europe's effectiveness on the global stage. The region requires new solutions that enhance and improve the original "contract" entered into in 1989-1992. It is in Europe's interest to be the main author of the "Contract 2015". There is no fundamental reason why European security should be merely a function of US-Russian relations.

In considering the debates amongst experts on the crisis of the international order that was crafted in 1990, it is impossible not to take up the most insightful of all analyses, that of John Ikenberry and Daniel Deudney.<sup>1</sup> This is a call for the West to get back to basics – to the letter and spirit of the peace accords that brought about the end of the Cold War. In their view: "The Cold War settlement was a hybrid, a mixture of Vienna-like great-power accommodation and Versailles-like liberal institutional building."<sup>2</sup> All this, while being respectful of the interests of the Soviet Union.

In my view, the settlement that ended the Cold War was a far cry from the model of the great international agreements of 1814/1815 and 1919, which managed to craft a wholly new international order. The settlement of 1990 closed the era of the Cold War as a *modus vivendi*, but had no ambition to create an architectural framework for new international institutions. The security architecture was not the result of a prior accord between the West

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1 Daniel Deudney/G. John Ikenberry, *The Unravelling of the Cold War Settlement*, in: *Survival*, No. 6, December 2009/January 2010, pp. 39-62.

2 *Ibid.* pp 44-45.

and the Soviet Union, but came about without any architect per se as the result of a spontaneous post-Cold War process of political change.

The West, convinced of the historical supremacy of the liberal democratic model, conducted a policy focused on the integration of Central, South-eastern, and Eastern Europe via NATO and the European Union. Deudney and Ikenberry do not question the spirit of liberalism that was the motivating force of integration, but they do treat the expansion of NATO as a mistake which went against the logic of the peace settlement. In their view, integration was not a bad thing, but its fundamental flaw was its short reach. It should, above all, have encompassed Russia itself.<sup>3</sup>

In this context, it is well worth recalling Boris Yeltsin's letter of August 1993, in which the Russian president demanded that Russian-NATO relations be placed, via political fiat, on a higher tier than relations between NATO and the Eastern European nations that aspired to NATO membership. Uninterested in joining NATO, Russia, by requesting a higher security status for itself and consequently a lower status for the nation-states "between" itself and the West, forced the hand of the Western Alliance and guaranteed that the West would be forced to pursue a pragmatic, liberal policy of step-by-step expansion. Integration with Russia was set aside, although not completely ruled out, and – contrary to what some may think – the process is more advanced now than it was in 1990.<sup>4</sup>

Twenty years after the end of the Cold War, the central challenge for regional security is the integration of Russia into the regional security system. It is the challenge of our time. Europe's strategic goal is to construct a more secure region in which the use of force and a hard-headed approach to international affairs decline and the modus operandi predominant in the North Atlantic sphere spreads throughout the entire region.

Poland and Central Europe (broadly defined) are the beneficiaries of the changes that took place in 1990. Poland has exploited the vagueness of the "Contract 1990" to its own strategic ends, but in order to strengthen its security, it must act intelligently with the aim of transforming the current status quo into a status quo with additional benefits. "Contract 2015" is my shorthand name for the terms of a new settlement on the adaptation of international institutions and the establishment of a co-operative security system throughout the entire Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian region. The construction of this type of contract, as complex and multifaceted as it would need to be, requires a shift in European and Euro-Atlantic thought.

The role of Central Europe in 2010 is and ought to be different from how it was in 1990. In the 1990s, the Central Europeans effectively redefined the previous contract, which had not guaranteed their place in the European

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3 Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 49-51.

4 The point here is not the current return to the subject of integration in discussions between experts and politicians in the West and in Russia, but rather to focus on the terms of debate, which are different now from what they were twenty years ago. Russia needs the West, and the West can ill afford to cultivate a view of Russia as an eternal foe.

security system. The role we currently play in this system enables us to cooperate in crafting the European security landscape.

The construction of regional security (a new open regionalism) requires us to consider the whole forest and not just a few of the trees; to find ways to break through institutional barriers (interlocking rather than interblocking); and to adopt pragmatic, non-hierarchical institutional forms of co-operation. Progress in this direction needs to be made within the framework of the three primary institutions responsible for European security: NATO, the EU, and the OSCE.

There are three main factors that favour the “Contract 2015”:

- 1) changes in the usability of force (military, political, and economic);
- 2) the regional and global security situation;
- 3) the need to redefine the politics of security.

### *Changes in the Usability of Military Force*

Europe and, to some extent, Russia, both entered the post-heroic epoch long before the current crisis. Afghanistan is the best proof of this. European - countries have smaller armies and are less eager to use them. More recently, NATO countries, including the United Kingdom, have also been reducing their military strengths. Europe and the United States are slowly ceasing to march in step. Europe’s power is almost entirely civilian, while the United States is still very much a military power. Moreover, at this stage, Europe is not capable of real defence integration.

In the global context, the use of force is becoming a far less effective tool than it has ever been. This is particularly true in the clashes between the West and a variety of different cultures and national identities (Iran, North Korea, Afghanistan, Palestine). However, the use of force still determines the fate of societies within the regional context (e.g. in the Southern Caucasus). Moreover any local conflagration could initiate a chain reaction of various dangerous developments.

It is extremely difficult to achieve any lasting change through the use of force. Rather, change results from an alteration in the identity of societies and states. Post-colonial states or weakened states are therefore particularly difficult to deal with. Consequently, the South’s resentment of the North is a key component of global tension.

The roots of the most pressing conflicts reach deep into the realm of national and ethnic identity, which makes it difficult to find any common interest in bringing them to an end. There is no alternative to bracing ourselves for long-term, patient initiatives in the spirit of co-operation and reconciliation, but this does require a change in our mentality. A dilemma exists here: Wherever force is not properly directed, chaos results – a breakdown of state

control over violence, for instance, may lead to a jump in organized crime such as trafficking in drugs or weapons – but the use of force often leads to a situation of perpetual anarchy and chronically weak states.<sup>5</sup> Force must be used extremely carefully as part of an integrated political solution rather than seen as a solution in itself.

The diminishing viability of the use of force is part of a wider issue – namely the constantly evolving definition of security. None of the three institutions mentioned above (NATO, the EU, the OSCE) covers the entire spectrum of security issues. NATO focuses mainly upon military and political aspects. The EU deals with the political sphere as well as small-scale military operations, civilian, police, humanitarian, and regional development, and modernization programmes. The changing balance of power in the realm of security policy has created an opening for the multidimensional soft-power that is the OSCE. The OSCE combines three dimensions: the politico-military dimension, the human dimension, and, the OSCE's weakest field of activity, the economic-environmental dimension. It is not clear, however, whether the nation-states composing the OSCE will invest politically and financially in this organization (one notes a distinct lack of desire on the part of participating States to increase the organization's budget in this time of economic crisis).

These days it is difficult to imagine conflict prevention or post-conflict reconstruction without the participation of financial and aid institutions. Under the current conditions of economic scarcity, it is vital to attempt to make better use of available resources and mechanisms. However, in spite of often good co-operation in the field, things have not always been encouraging in practice. No institution in the region is truly comprehensive in terms of being able to address the real needs for effective action across the entire cycle of a given conflict.

#### *The Security Situation – A Complex Picture*

The picture is complex because the security situation is still relatively positive, but more and more dangers seem to be appearing on the horizon. These are not dangers that threaten any one particular European state, but rather all of Europe at once. Twenty years on, conflict prevention and conflict resolution have been effectively replaced by conflict management. This is true both on a global scale and regionally. Our region has seen inter-state conflict as well as internal conflicts, there are also new conflicts brewing in Central Asia, the armed conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia is in danger of reigniting, and the possibility of new problems emerging elsewhere in Europe cannot be ruled out.

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5 Cf. Robert Cooper, *The Breaking of Nations. Order and Chaos in the Twenty-First Century*, New York 2003, pp. 86-88.

The war in Afghanistan continues and is unlikely to end in victory for the intervening forces. Potentially major conflicts and wars threaten to erupt between India and Pakistan, Iran and Israel, in the Middle East, and around North Korea.

These conflicts cannot be resolved by any one state – not even a superpower. At the same time, it is fair to say that just about all of the international institutions and alliances that aggregate and give a focus to the actions of superpowers and other states do not function effectively and are not adequate to the scale of the threats they deal with. There are simply too many challenges and too little political will.

The impulse of 1990 has burned out, and the conflict between North and South is draining the energy of the West (this is obvious when looking at, for instance, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) – good examples are the contention surrounding the proposed nuclear fuel bank or Iran's nuclear capabilities). Cultural differences make us incapable of coming to a mutual understanding, and it is this cultural and identity conflict that jeopardizes the mutual rational interests of North and South. The military and political effectiveness of the West is diminishing.

Europe does not have much time to lose. It should quickly organize its security on the basis of its own potential, guided by its own interests, yet without forfeiting its close ties to the United States. It should take steps to create a pan-European net of common institutions and regulations encompassing Europe, America, and a part of Asia.

#### *Goals of Security Policy – The OSCE and the Corfu Process*

A question worth asking as US President Barack Obama promotes a new world order in which Europe's role is essential, but not central, is whether it is possible for Europe, the United States, and Russia to work together to execute a regional security project that meets the challenges of the 21st century.

My answer is a careful one, because currently no one is ready to undertake the execution of a regional project of this kind. The United States has a global vision, Russia's actions are de facto a reaction to the evolution of the security system, and Europe's post-Lisbon Treaty "brain" is not yet in high gear. What is possible, however, is a prologue, the initiation of preparations for the first stage, paving the way for the next ten to 15 years, when the situation will mature towards the next stage. As things stand, the problem that must be taken up is, above all, the role of Russia in the realm of regional security.

In the postmodern age, one does not declare war, nor does one sign a lasting peace treaty. The construction of international order is an exercise with no beginning and no end. The Helsinki settlement was reached in the

darkest night of the Cold War and is now a fundamental part of the *acquis* on which the region rests. The flexible nature of the OSCE means that the Organization could be a modern harbinger of change that meets the challenges of the accelerated flow of contemporary history.

Hierarchical international systems, such as the one from the Cold War era, have their positive aspects, particularly from the viewpoint of the superpowers, which nurture their stability and ensure predictability. They are effective, albeit undemocratic. Free-flowing systems based on norms and principles are less effective and have a lower predictability factor, but are in accordance with the process of democratization taking place in international affairs.

The free-flowing nature and lack of precision in international affairs is something that our partners from the East cannot abide. They wish for precision and the crystallization of the reality of the moment; they wish to, in effect, freeze an insect in a stone casing. Russia wishes to negotiate its role in a hierarchical system, although Russia itself benefits greatly from the current free-flowing system. The West is generally satisfied with the existing security institutions. At this stage, a compromise is both necessary and possible between two extremes – total elasticity and utter rigidity – a middle-of-the-road deal that will improve communication, trust, and co-operation. This compromise could be based on a model of a regional security community rooted in the notion of variable geometry, in which dynamism would be brought under the control of institutional discipline.

The channel for dialogue on this subject (following the impulse given by Russian President Dmitry Medvedev and President Nicolas Sarkozy of France) arose within the OSCE, under whose auspices a dialogue on the subject of the future of European Security has been held under the working name of the “Corfu Process”. A similar channel for dialogue has also arisen within NATO. It is only a question of time (given the initiatives taken by German Chancellor Angela Merkel) until the EU also initiates a platform for a similar dialogue on the subject of security with Russia. It should be noted that the OSCE is the perfect forum for a post-Lisbon EU to hone its role and act.

An interim deal in response to President Medvedev’s initiative cannot be limited to the OSCE and its future as an instrument for security management. The question does not directly concern the future of the OSCE, but rather the crafting of regional security in the 21st century. The attempt to modernize the CFE Treaty and CSBMs will be crucial in this respect. Specifying the role of Russia in the entire European security system – consisting of NATO, the EU, the OSCE, and nation states which, whether through their own will or through coercion, are not members of these Western organizations – will be decisive.

At this moment in time, Russia’s main goal somewhat resembles the goal that it had during the Congress of Vienna of 1815 and, a few years later,

during the Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle in 1818: the construction of a system of European states among which Russia will be a key member – preferably one of the two or three dominant participants. However, the forms and methods of Russia's activity have changed over time. The return to a Cold War footing, which many in the West and in Russia predicted, never came about. It could not do so. However, the dream of the return to an antagonistic system (two scorpions in a bottle) is still alive and kicking among some elite groups both in the East and in the West.

The problem lies in the fact that Russia wishes to be one of the regulators of security on a regional scale, while simultaneously retaining its current level of influence over security within the sphere of the former Soviet Union. The West, on the other hand, wishes to regulate the security situation in Eastern Europe, but has no intention of inviting Russia to take part in the decision-making process on events west of the Bug.

Russia is seeking ways to accelerate its modernization, and antagonism with the West in the area of security is disturbing this process. Russia's attempts to reach out to the West often lack credibility. The incoherence of Moscow's foreign policy is demonstrated by the fact that it has recently proposed two mutually exclusive treaties. One is a major treaty, proposed to the heads of the OSCE participating States, the other is a non-aggression treaty proposed to NATO. Each has its own very specific and distinctly separate logic. The major treaty builds upon the heritage of collective security pacts and creates a superstructure over the existing military blocs. The smaller treaty proposes something akin to an idea from the Great Power accommodation dossier, whereby existing military blocs would be fully respected and preserved. Both treaties have the same leitmotif – they express Russia's dissatisfaction at being left out of the European (or "Western") security system.

The direction in which the region should be evolving is a reasonable cohabitation between divergent interests and values, subject to a gradual process of structuralizing and amalgamation. None of the existing structures can guarantee this process independently. It cannot be guaranteed by a game played between the great powers or by a single actor: whether the United States, the Russian coalition, or the EU coalition. The goal that remains unattainable under present conditions is the establishment of a macro-region that can be categorized as Eurasian-Atlantic. The internal coherence of such a region would make possible interaction and engagement with other regions, as well as the effective control of potential dangers. The mission of the OSCE is to act in a way that brings order to the region, as well as to determine broad new regional goals. One fundamental goal of this kind is the creation of an internal order of regional security and the establishment of a more just and democratic order in the area to the south of the OSCE space.

A year of intensive debate in the OSCE has framed the parameters of the discussion and identified the areas where differences persist. There is currently no certainty that we will be able to move forward towards the vision of



a Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian security community in the near future – taking up the challenge of creating a project for regional security on the basis of Helsinki, Paris, and Moscow, a project that will meet the aspirations of the current generation while at the same time being a sensible answer to the multiplying challenges of the 21st century. The treaty proposed by President Medvedev does not fulfil the criteria of a realistic project for improving European security. It is an interesting hybrid, which attempts to combine defence practices that, up to now, have been incompatible, namely common security and common defence. Thus President Medvedev's proposal does not bring adequate closure to the discussion but should rather be seen as a starting point.

The long-term strategic goal is to create a regional security community.<sup>6</sup> The framework of the Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian security community is fundamentally a result of the work of the ambassadors of the EU member states within the OSCE in Vienna. The preliminary conception of this undertaking was presented as an OSCE project for the region during an informal meeting of the OSCE foreign ministers in July 2010. The project also gained the acceptance of the United States. Russia had many questions about the idea, but was also clearly interested in it. However, a significant group of nation states from the region as a whole is not engaged in work on this project. They believe that efforts to create this future community is not tied to real progress in solving the existing security threats in the region.

A concept of regional security as developed by the OSCE would, of course, be different from NATO's strategic concept or the future security doctrine of the EU. It would take a broad view of regional security. "Contract 2015" would represent the first concrete steps towards realizing this concept. The concept would make sense only if it turned out to be possible to agree upon a framework for co-operation between the various European security institutions. Having the OSCE work in isolation would be pointless.

The future security community would be a system of defence with a large number of component parts: a code of principles, a treaty regulating conventional arms in Europe, measures for building trust (i.e. a modernized Vienna 99 Document), and an up-to-date human-security element. The security community would not be a new architecture or organization, nor would it be a permanent conference, but rather a platform upon which the region could be integrated along the lines of its new and renewed body of legal and political norms. It would not replace the existing guarantees (i.e. article V of NATO or article IV of the CSTO), but rather strengthen the trend towards co-operative security between European nation states. The political will of the

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6 Karl Deutsch defines a security community as "one in which there is a real assurance that the members of that community will not fight each other physically, but will settle their disputes in some other way". Karl W. Deutsch et al., *Political Community and the North Atlantic Area*, Princeton 1957, p. 5.

nation states composing NATO, the EU, and the OSCE would be indispensable during the process of its creation.

The imperative of reconstructing the regional order is not the result of some unrealistic fear of a re-emerging Russian empire, but is rather rooted in two essential rationales. The first can be found in the positive consequences of including Russia in the European system. This would enable us to work together to resolve conflicts from Georgia to Moldova (and Kosovo), not to mention the equally important fact of anchoring large Eastern European countries into this system. The second rationale is that the costs of keeping Russia outside the system are simply too high, both for us (due to the possibility that Russia could cause some sort of crisis), and for Russia (it would prevent Russia from accessing the means of accelerated modernization).

The best thing that the OSCE could do for Europe is to create the regional conditions for the further evolution of NATO and the EU towards cooperative security on the basis of the *acquis* of the OSCE. Ultimately, their evolution and the continuing changes taking place in Russian politics (rather than a transformation of the OSCE into a meta-OSCE) would enable the creation of a security space stretching from Vancouver to Vladivostok – a region of indivisible security. A “Contract 2015” crafted by the participating States of the OSCE would be a significant step in this direction.

The process of bringing a new sense of order to security policy in the region ought not to take place in a manner that exploits mutual dangers and constructs new external enemies in the form of China or the South. If this were to happen, the process would transform itself from an endeavour aimed at diminishing the threat of internal confrontation in the region into a kind of global confrontation between North and South.

A secure Europe is not something that can be taken as a constant given, and security itself is a psychological construct. Fear and historical complexes are not good advisors to heed. We need to work on our ability to nurture cooperation amongst ourselves, and on maintaining reasonable confidence in ourselves; for only on that basis can security be increased. Let us remember the words of Franklin D. Roosevelt: “The only thing we have to fear is fear itself.”