Wolfgang Zellner

The IDEAS Project: A Contribution to an OSCE Network of Academic Institutions

How We Came to Create IDEAS

Two years after the 2010 OSCE Astana Summit Meeting, the language of the "Astana Commemorative Declaration – Towards a Security Community" still sounds clear, bold, and forward-looking. In this document, the Heads of State or Government of the then 56 participating States committed themselves "to the vision of a free, democratic, common and indivisible Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian security community stretching from Vancouver to Vladivostok, rooted in agreed principles, shared commitments and common goals".[1] In paragraph eleven, they added further important qualifications: "This security community should be aimed at meeting the challenges of the 21st century and based on our full adherence to common OSCE norms, principles and commitments across all three dimensions. It should unite all OSCE participating States across the Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian region, free of dividing lines, conflicts, spheres of influence and zones with different levels of security."

Interestingly, the OSCE's discovery of the vision of a security community is paralleled by a renaissance of this idea in the academic sphere. Emanuel Adler and Michael Barnett's ground-breaking 1998 book "Security Communities", a constructivist reframing of the seminal 1957 work "Political Community and the North Atlantic Area" by Karl Deutsch and others, and more specifically Adler's essay on "The OSCE's security community-building model" have opened up a whole cosmos of broader conceptual thinking about Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian security that is still largely neglected by politicians.[2] Another major contribution to this strand of thinking is Charles Kupchan's 2010 book "How Enemies Can Become Friends".[3] If we compare and contextualize how the political and scholarly communities have dealt with security communities, two things stand out: First, the academic discourse starts a decade earlier than the political one. And second, both discourses have emerged when the political conditions for creating a Euro-

---

1   Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, Summit Meeting, Astana 2010, *Astana Commemorative Declaration – Towards a Security Community*, SUM.DOC/1/10/Corr.1, 3 December 2010, para. 1, at: http://www.osce.org/cio/74985.OSCE.

2   See Emanuel Adler/Michael Barnett (eds), *Security Communities*, Cambridge 1998; Emanuel Adler, Seeds of peaceful change: the OSCE's security community-building model, in: ibid. pp. 119-160; Karl W. Deutsch/Sidney A. Burrell/Robert A. Kann/Maurice Lee, Jr./Martin Lichterman/Raymond E. Lindgren/Francis L. Loewenheim/Richard W. Van Wagenen, *Political Community and the North Atlantic Area. International Organization in the Light of Historical Experience*, New York 1957.

3   See Charles A. Kupchan, *How Enemies Become Friends. The Sources of Stable Peace*, Princeton 2010.

Atlantic and Eurasian security community were substantially worse than they were in the early 1990s. History will show what this means for the chances of realizing this great vision one day.

The idea of a security community is a notion that *could* give guidance to states and societies at a time when almost all their energy is consumed by short-term crisis management. However, the message from Astana has not yet really arrived in most capitals. And even within the OSCE itself, the concept was not really debated seriously during 2011. This was the starting point for IDEAS – the Initiative for the Development of a Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian Security Community, a joint project of the Centre for OSCE Research (CORE) at the Institute for Peace Research and Security Policy at the University of Hamburg (IFSH), the Fondation pour la Recherche Stratégique (FRS), the Polish Institute of International Affairs (PISM), and the Moscow State Institute of International Relations (University) of the Russian Foreign Ministry (MGIMO). Our key concern was that the neglect of a vision as bold as that of a security community would not only represent a missed opportunity, but would seriously undermine the credibility of the OSCE as the only pan-European security organization.

In this situation, receiving the support of the foreign ministers of Germany, France, Poland, and the Russian Federation represented a major step forward. On 6 December 2011, they declared that "the four Ministers have asked four academic institutes to organize four workshops in Berlin, Warsaw, Paris and Moscow in 2012. These workshops will advance further the discussion on the future character of a Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian security community. The institutes are invited to present their final report and their recommendations to all OSCE participating States in Vienna in autumn 2012."[4]

Why This Format?

We have always perceived the IDEAS project as a contribution to a network of academic institutions as proposed by OSCE Secretary General Lamberto Zannier in his first speech in his new capacity in the Permanent Council on 4 July 2011:

> I believe we should explore the creation of a network of academic institutions – centres of excellence with an emphasis on researching issues on the OSCE agenda. There are excellent examples, such as the Centre for OSCE Research (CORE) at the University of Hamburg. Each participating State would designate a focal point for this network, thereby providing geographical balance. The aim would be to increase the visi-

---

4   *Joint Communiqué, Vilnius, 6 Dec 2011, Ministers of Germany, France, Poland and Russia launch a scientific network to pave the way for a Security Community in the OSCE area*, MC.DEL/16/11, 6 December 2011.

bility of the OSCE in each of the participating States, to stimulate debate and generate ideas and initiatives on Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian security for the OSCE to consider and, very importantly, to help us reconnect with the civil society.[5]

At the same time, it was obvious that we had to start with a smaller circle of participants if we wanted to complete a first study of the idea of a Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian security community during 2012. There were many ideas regarding the initial format. I remember that I would have preferred a somewhat broader approach with six or seven participants, but in the end I was convinced by colleagues that bringing six or seven institutes together would be too complicated for the limited time at our disposal. So we combined two existing formats – the Weimar Triangle consisting of France, Germany, and Poland, and a more recent triangle of Germany, Poland, and the Russian Federation – giving us the four IDEAS participants. However, it has always been clear that this constellation was an interim solution on the way towards a broader network of academic institutions.

The Conception of the Workshops

The IDEAS project started with four workshops in Berlin (March), Warsaw (May), Paris (June), and Moscow (July). The report was to be based on as broad a discussion as possible. The four workshops were therefore differentiated in two aspects: While all of them dealt with the general question of the key features of a security community, they each also addressed different working fields: arms control in Berlin, sub-regional conflicts in Warsaw, transnational threats and challenges in Paris, and all three of these issues together in Moscow. The workshops also aimed at addressing different target groups. While representatives from OSCE headquarters in Vienna and of the host country were present at every workshop, the Berlin workshop specifically aimed at including US participants, the Warsaw workshop focused on participants from Central Europe, the Paris one on Western Europe, and the Moscow event on a representative panel of Russian participants.

Although the number of participants in a workshop is itself limited – and with slightly more than 100 participants, the Berlin event reached the limits of what you can call a workshop – there was a clear intention to ensure that these meetings were as accessible and inclusive as possible. Thus, all the workshops were open to at least one representative from each participating State. And indeed, the Berlin and Moscow workshops, in particular, were each visited by some two dozen ambassadors from Vienna. In addition, the Irish Chairperson-in-Office designated Ambassador Lars-Erik Lundin his

---

5   OSCE, Special PC, *OSCE Secretary General Lamberto Zannier, Remarks in response to the "welcome" by Delegations*, 4 July 2011, p. 5.

representative at the IDEAS workshop series, and the Secretary General was also represented at each event.

Each workshop was opened by a high representative of the host country's foreign ministry. In Germany, this was Federal Foreign Minister Guido Westerwelle; in Warsaw, Undersecretary of State in the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs Bogusław Winid; in Paris, Deputy Director General for Political and Security Affairs in the French MFA Pierre Cochard; and in Moscow, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Alexander Grushko. Other experienced personalities also enriched the discussion, including former Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov (Moscow), NATO Deputy Assistant Secretary General Jamie Shea (Paris), the former Polish Foreign Minister Adam Daniel Rotfeld, and the Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the German Bundestag, Ruprecht Polenz. In addition, the members of the IDEAS team had the opportunity to conduct interviews in each capital with high-ranking representatives from the ministry of foreign affairs, the ministry of defence, and/or members of parliament.

All in all, the four workshops provided a good picture of the general status of the discussion on a security community and related issues. However, the discussion almost always remained within the limits of existing discourses and failed to open up new ones. From this it became clear that the report could not exclusively be built on the workshop input, but would need additional ideas generated by the four institutes.

What the IDEAS Report Was not to Be

Before the IDEAS team began drafting the report, it considered what the report *should not become*. To start with – and this was easy to agree – the report was not to be a completely utopian piece dwelling on how nice and peaceful life would be in a fully-developed security community some day. In the same way, an over-pragmatic approach that would not discuss any more far-reaching and bolder perspectives was excluded. We were also rather sceptical of any language that represented static concepts: The famous "European security architecture" is certainly the best known case in point. The frequently used term "roadmap", which suggests a well-known route towards a well-known goal, is another. The notion of "founding" a security community in an act of deliberate will was also (strongly) rejected. Rather we tried to think in terms of open and contingent processes. Later, the term "strategic uncertainty" became a key concept for this kind of thinking. And finally, we had to deal with a dilemma: From a number of conversations, it had become clear that there were two groups with contrary expectations: The first demanded concrete proposals and recommendations that would be useful for the OSCE. This would require a report focused tightly on OSCE issues.

However, representatives of the other group stated that a report limited to OSCE issues would be superfluous and irrelevant.

The IDEAS Report – Main Deliberations and Key Issues

Starting from the insight that there were two target groups that both had to be somehow addressed, we decided to divide the report into two parts: a more general analytical section, which goes far beyond the OSCE and treats the Organization only as one part of the whole (chapters 1 to 4), and specific recommendations on "What the OSCE Can Contribute to Building a Security Community" (chapter 5).

In the analytical part, we addressed four distinct, yet closely interlinked areas: the vision of a security community (or, in more sober terms the "key features of the objective"); arguments as to why the OSCE States would benefit from such a security community; an analysis of developments in the OSCE space, particularly during the last decade; and finally, a decalogue of guiding principles for a strategy towards a security community.

The Vision of a Security Community.

Formulating this mini-chapter, although it comprises not much more than a page, was by no means the easiest part of the whole exercise. It consists of a working definition of a security community and some additional qualifications. The definition reads as follows:

> This report proceeds on the basis of the understanding that a security community stands for a community of states and societies whose values, social orders and identities converge to such a degree that war among them becomes unthinkable. A security community means stable and lasting peace among states and within societies where there are no longer zones of different security, regardless of whether individual states belong to alliances or not.[6]

This definition already contains the notion of "convergence", one of the key terms of the report. There are only a few additional qualifications, but these are essential. One key insight is that there are "quite different – even contradictory" perceptions of what the key elements of a security community are – whether values or so-called "hard-security" issues. We deemed it necessary that all these elements and perceptions be included in a process towards

---

6   Wolfgang Zellner (co-ordinator)/Yves Boyer/Frank Evers/Isabelle Facon/Camille Grand/Ulrich Kühn/Lukasz Kulesa/Andrei Zagorski, *Towards a Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian Security Community. From Vision to Reality*, Hamburg, Paris, Moscow, Warsaw 2012, reprinted in this volume, pp. 409-433, here: p. 413-414.

building a security community. The notion of a process – long-term, open-ended – is a second essential qualification. It excludes the possibility that a security community is created by a single founding act. A third qualification is that a "security community is not an alliance directed against any outside state or alliance".[7] This is important because sometimes the scholarly literature equates the notion of a security community with military alliances such as NATO. And finally, it was vital to stress that the "process towards a Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian security community extends beyond the OSCE",[8] or, as formulated more strongly in the executive summary: "Building a security community in the OSCE area cannot be delegated to the OSCE alone."[9] Qualifications of this kind may appear simple. However, as starting points, they play a key role in shaping the whole of the subsequent argument.

Arguments in Favour of a Security Community.

This section, the shortest of the whole report, was definitely among the most complicated to draft, and required a great deal of discussion. This was not so much because there are no good arguments in favour of a security community; rather the difficulty was formulating these arguments so that they would apply to all the OSCE States. The range of the OSCE States is so broad – not just geographically but also in terms of their thinking – that it is difficult to bring all their diverse identities and interests together around a single concept. A good example is the "shared identity of Europeanness",[10] a term we included after long discussions. However, the question remains as to how far this can cover, for example, Kazakh or Tajik, let alone Canadian, identities. The same is true of more material interests: Different states in different regions of the OSCE space have different strategic options tied to adjacent areas outside the OSCE space. The relationship between these options and the goal of a Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian security community is complex. This kind of strategic uncertainty makes it impossible to forecast how a security community may develop. The only way the issue can be treated is in terms of gradual and contingent processes of increasing convergence.

Analysis of Developments in the OSCE Space.

Two main dangers were lurking in this key chapter of the report: painting too rosy a picture of the whole situation and – more fashionable among intellectuals – taking too gloomy a view. A balanced analysis of the situation is already made difficult by the nature of memory: Current affairs are much

---

7   Ibid., p. 414.
8   Ibid.
9   Ibid., p. 411.
10   Ibid., p. 414.

more prominent in mind than past developments that might have been more powerful in framing the overall picture. For this reason it was good to start the chapter on "Developments in the OSCE Space" with some very basic statements that are not made every day: "The greatest achievement of the last two decades is that a major war in Europe between states and alliances – the ever-present threat during the era of East-West confrontation – has become inconceivable."[11] We also took the view that "there are no more antagonistic or major ideological divides within the OSCE space".[12] In other words: We may have disputes and conflicts of various kinds, but all of them are solvable, at least in principle.

From this initial statement, we came logically to three fields of convergence among the OSCE States during the last two decades. First, we noted a "remarkable process of normative convergence",[13] in spite of many difficulties in implementation. This statement has attracted criticism on the grounds that the implementation of commitments is the key aspect of the normative dimension. While in no way underestimating the relevance of the actual implementation of norms, I would like to stress another aspect of the normative OSCE regime that backs our argument. This is a reference to the fact that the normative *acquis* of the OSCE is the only game in town; it is unrivalled by any other normative project, be it communism, sharia law, "Asian values", or whatever else. As long as all states declare their belief in this set of values, it can maintain and uphold a certain normative hegemony, even if the implementation of these norms is shaky (and non-existent in certain fields). The second area of convergence we noted – "convergence […] resulting from the membership of an increasing number of states in or their co-operation with other international organizations"[14] – is of critical relevance because its logical consequence is that any process towards a security community is a process of interaction and co-operation among many organizations, and not a matter for the OSCE alone. And finally we noted a trend of convergence related to co-operation on transnational threats, an observation that is frequently made in the course of the OSCE's everyday operations.

The other side of the coin concerns the growing number of well-known divergences that have emerged, particularly during the last decade, ranging from the unresolved sub-regional conflicts and the stagnation in arms control, via deficits in the observance of human rights and other human-dimension commitments, to the tendency towards a new institutional divide between integration networks in the West and in the East. Particularly worrying is that these disputes are not limited to isolated issues but have resulted in a resurrection of the security dilemma and zero-sum-game thinking. Thus, the "current situation in the OSCE space is ambiguous. Advances towards greater

---

11   Ibid., p. 415.
12   Ibid.
13   Ibid. p. 416.
14   Ibid.

convergence are paralleled by divergences preventing joint action. The main divergence is political and concerns a lack of cohesive policy approaches to many issues in various fields."[15] Consequently, the first step on the way towards a security community is the return to a practical co-operative security policy.

Guiding Principles of a Strategy towards a Security Community

While it is not possible to draft a detailed strategy of how to achieve a security community – the objective is too distant and the uncertainty of reaching it too great – it is possible to formulate some principles that might be useful in attempting to approach this goal. The first one we listed is that believing in (economic) interdependence is not enough. Rather it is necessary to take political action to reach political goals. That sounds simple – and is – but it is frequently neglected because of an exaggerated belief in the beneficial impact of interdependence.

Two other principles concern the need to increase convergence and decrease divergence over the long term, and the fact that maintaining this process is more important than quick fixes. This implies also that the "task is not to fix the *status quo*, but rather to manage the process of ongoing change".[16] This addresses the status quo fixation of a good part of current policies that look easier at first glance – the status quo is something known – but make it actually more difficult to address a future, many elements of which are yet unknown.

Again, two further principles address the need to deal with as many issues as possible and *not* to limit oneself to so-called game changers – key issues that it is believed will change the whole conflict constellation. The game-changer syndrome represents the desire to reduce the complexity of a situation by concentrating on one or two issues. Sometimes this is successful. However, it also bears the risk of the game changer becoming a spoiler if the issue is not resolved.

Another key to making progress is to find a good mix of elements from the old agenda inherited from the Cold War and the new agenda that has arisen in response to current threats and challenges. Some observers have taken the view that the reason why the "reset" of US-Russian relations has not been so successful was that it was mainly focused on elements from the old agenda. On the other hand, many legacy issues remain unresolved and need to be dealt with.

Finally, we proposed two principles related to modes of thinking and the need to approach these issues from a variety of perspectives. One is that it is important to desecuritize and even to depoliticize issues. Another is the

---

15   Ibid., p. 419.
16   Ibid., p. 420 (emphasis in the original).

need for the active engagement of not just states but also groups within societies, such as the epistemic, religious, and business communities.

Policy principles of this kind are necessarily general in nature. However, one may find that the success or failure of concrete processes frequently depends on whether these (and other) principles were applied or not.

What the OSCE Can Contribute to Building a Security Community

I shall not describe the IDEAS Project's recommendations to the OSCE in detail here. Most elements we recommended have been discussed in the OSCE community at one time or another – frequently without reaching agreement. Hence, it is not their novelty that might be decisive, but rather the achieving a consensus on their implementation. Resuming effective arms control, resolving the protracted conflicts, supporting stability in Central Asia and Afghanistan, and addressing transnational threats are familiar challenges. Encouraging reconciliation among states and societies has been an element of many OSCE activities over the last two decades, but could be done in a more focused way.

Two proposals concerning the human dimension were more innovative, namely improving the effectiveness of the OSCE's human-dimension events cycle and opening a dialogue with Muslim communities. The latter proposal was hotly debated by the IDEAS team, and opinions differed as to whether the OSCE might play a useful role in this area. And, of course, we stated our readiness to contribute to the creation of an OSCE network of academic institutions.

The Reception of the IDEAS Report in Vienna, Astana, and Brussels

On the invitation of Ambassador Eoin O'Leary, the Chairperson-in-Office's representative in Vienna, the four institutes had the opportunity the present the IDEAS report at an informal ambassadorial meeting at the Vienna Hofburg on 23 October 2012.

The reception was generally very positive. One ambassador called the report "forward-looking and pragmatic, solid work" and welcomed particularly the section on the creation of an academic network. Another agreed that efforts to broaden the academic network should be supported. A third said that the report showed the importance of track II initiatives, and needed to be followed up with the inclusion of other think tanks. However, he expressed doubt about the inclusion of an element of dialogue with Muslims. Still another speaker thanked the four institutes for their very impressive report. However, there was also criticism. One ambassador questioned whether we have really achieved normative convergence. There was also caution about

appealing to a notion of common Europeanness, rather than acknowledging multiple identities. The same speaker who made this point also perceived a bias to the disadvantage of the human dimension. And finally, one speaker stated that NGOs are not aware of the fundamental concerns of the OSCE. All in all, some 16 ambassadors took the floor. On the same day, CORE researcher Ulrich Kühn presented the IDEAS report at the conference "The OSCE Astana Declaration: Towards a Security Community", jointly organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the OSCE Centre in Astana, and the Kazakhstan Institute for Strategic Studies under the President of Kazakhstan (KazISS) in Almaty.

Finally, on 18 December, the institutes presented their report to the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) at NATO headquarters in Brussels. While the overall reception was as positive as in Vienna, and the need was underlined to work more with think tanks, a lot of questions were asked on the report and the way it had been produced: What could be the role of NATO and the EAPC in discussions of this kind? How was the report received by the OSCE? What understanding of civil society and NGOs do the authors of the report share? What are the personal experiences and lessons learnt of the drafters? On which issues did they disagree? In a frank atmosphere, Lukasz Kulesa (PISM), Wolfgang Zellner (CORE) and, connected by video link, Andrei Zagorski (MGIMO) from Moscow tried to answer all these questions.

Representatives of the four institutes plan to meet in early 2013 to discuss what form IDEAS should take in the future and which issues it should deal with. There is already agreement that the number of institutes involved should be considerably enlarged.