

### **Working Group 3 - Regional Security: Europe and NATO**

#### **Final Report**

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Our working group addressed the European security architecture, and the steps which are needed to be taken to restore a cooperative security environment. Over the past few years, relations between the United States (and more broadly between NATO) and the Russian Federation have deteriorated to a level where trust is missing, dialogue is deadlocked over many issues, and as a result of the quasi automatic escalation cycles of action-reaction the chances of an inadvertent accident or an unwanted conflict are higher than anytime since the end of the Cold War. In reflection to this difficult situation, the first session looked at 'European security – problems, threats, instruments'. The discussion tried to reveal the root causes of the renewed conflict between NATO and Russia, many of which date back to much before the crisis in Ukraine. In this regard, members of the panel mentioned that there were times when Russia's integration into the Western Alliance was a seriously considered option but the group had diverging opinion about the chances and the utility of this integration today. However, there seemed to be a consensus about the dangers of NATO's continued expansion towards the East, and the group advocated to freeze the membership negotiations with Ukraine and Georgia (at least until the relations normalize between the Alliance and Moscow).

From a broader perspective, it seems to be a fundamental challenge for European security that there are three regional organizations which have a mandate to address security issues – NATO, the European Union and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). Although they could potentially be part of the solution to the current problems, there seem to be overlaps and grey areas in the profile of these three organizations and the views were diverging about the right forum to address the security challenges in Europe. The OSCE is still a good venue where Russia is sitting together with the European states (and many other states – 58 states in total) but its profile over the past decades have shifted towards election monitoring and the promotion of democracy, and arms control issues have taken a backseat. With regards to NATO, participants of the panel raised serious questions about the fundamental purposes and the core mission of the Alliance in the current security environment and what roles it can take on to establish the tenets of cooperative security. The NATO-Russia Council could be a good venue to address the deepest concerns related to nuclear strategy, ballistic missile defense and conventional arms control but since the annexation of Crimea, negotiations have deadlocked and progress seems distant. Besides, based on their geographic location, allies also have a different view about the most imminent threats that NATO needs to address, and the current situation is a real test of alliance solidarity and cohesion. On top of the clear problems with the channels of communication towards Russia,

a trend seems to have emerged where international agreements and norms are regularly violated which led to a general absence of a security architecture in Europe. Several arms control agreements have already fallen victim to the renewed tensions and the remaining treaties are burdened with mutual allegations from the parties.

In order to overcome these difficulties, it is essential to identify those areas where common interests still exist, and where cooperation is still possible. With the end of the Cold War the ideological confrontation disappeared, the fundamental interest to avoid a nuclear war is common for all major powers, and they have several common challenges and enemies (like for example global terrorism) to fight against. Issues of mutual interest include addressing non-proliferation challenges, the joint fight against radical extremism and handling the migration crisis. Pugwash could advocate the establishment of a European risk reduction center, and the OSCE could also take up more emergency planning in its profile. Besides, Pugwash could also organize a regional security dialogue for European states to discuss the role of the three European security organizations – NATO, EU, OSCE – and how they relate to each other. This discussion should also address whether the 2% threshold line used in NATO circles for defense spending requirements is the right measurement, or whether there are better ways to secure the necessary funding for military capabilities that are truly needed for the security of member states. In this regard, allies should also be more transparent about how they spend this 2% and how that contributes to the overall defense architecture of NATO. Members of the group were also concerned that relaunching the dialogue between the West and Russia will require some sort of a solution to the ongoing crisis in Ukraine, and those European states which have a less tense relationship with Moscow might need to take initiative and reach out to Russia bilaterally to reestablish trust between the parties.

With regards to the issue of nuclear arms control, one of the most alarming trends over the past few years has been the lowered threshold for nuclear use. There are many factors that contributed to this dangerous outcome: 1) the trend to make nuclear weapons more useable by reducing their yield and shifting the focus to sub-kiloton nuclear options; 2) with the continued refusal of no-first use policy by the P3 and Moscow, nuclear doctrines allow for hazardous policies like the threat to escalate to de-escalate which could bring in the nuclear dimension at the early stages of a conventional conflict; and finally 3) the continued reliance on high alert postures requires nuclear weapons to be stationed at their combat bases, ready to be launched within minutes. In the meanwhile, in the domain of non-strategic nuclear weapons (NSNW) there is no transparency, the location of these weapons is still secret, and apart from the Presidential Nuclear Initiatives and the INF Treaty, they have so far escaped any further regulation.

To address these nuclear challenges, Pugwash could call for a discussion on the role of NSNWs in Europe, and identify the measures that could lead to the withdrawal of U.S. tactical nuclear weapons from the continent. To address the issue of NSNWs, the group also recommended to reconsider the stationing of NSNWs and advocate for removing them from their designated launchers and for bringing them back to central storage. More transparency would be needed on

past reductions - as a first step by clarifying what has been removed and destroyed in the framework of the PNIs and what remained after. Another idea to address the NSNW issue was to create a general ceiling for the next round of U.S.-Russian arms control negotiations. Putting strategic nuclear weapons and NSNWs in the same basket would make the negotiations more complicated and would require new types of verification but it would also bring the benefit of more flexibility where the United States and Russia could freely choose the desired composition of their nuclear forces. Additionally, the P5 should continue to work on a common vocabulary about weapon types and technologies which is a precondition of successful multilateral arms control efforts in the future. These discussions should also include an effort to define the concept of strategic stability, and the capabilities which are affecting it.

A common theme in the discussion about ballistic missile defense and the INF crisis was that both issues could be resolved if technical experts were called together. However, as long as the political leaders are not willing to solve these problems, the tensions will remain. In order to end the deadlock, Pugwash could facilitate a 'Track 2' dialogue for people with a technical background who could come up with concrete recommendations on these problems. With regards to the INF crisis, cooperative visits to each other could alleviate some of the concerns of both Russia and the United States. Observers could be sent to the United States to verify that the Mk-41 vertical launch system is not going to be used for offensive missiles. Monitoring ballistic missile tests could address many concerns related to the INF Treaty, and also to the ongoing deployment of the European Phased Adaptive Approach. From a European perspective, it continues to be imperative to save the INF Treaty, and allies on the continent should be more outspoken about the significance of it for European security. Apart from the INF Treaty, cruise missiles continue to escape any type of regulation which should be addressed in light of the ongoing modernization efforts of both Washington and Moscow. Armed drones have already raised a few concerns in Russia about U.S. compliance with the INF Treaty, and if the parties want to modernize the agreement or address this weapon system, dialogue is essential. In general, the group recommended that the deployment of novel nuclear weapons which are being developed for new missions and fall outside current regulations should be halted – as an example, the new Russian underwater drone submarine was mentioned. With its good track record in technical discussions, Pugwash should initiate an expert dialogue about these novel types of delivery systems such as drones, cruise missiles and UAVs. As Pugwash is already discussing these matters in its annual conferences, it should become more engaged in these debates.

With regards to conventional arms control, confidence building measures are essential to revive the CFE regime and the Vienna Document. A substitute for the CFE Treaty would be needed in Europe, and the Adapted CFE included a lot of constructive dialogue that the parties could build on. Conventional arms control in Europe remains a very political issue, and the lack of communication and trust has halted any progress over the past few years. A structural dialogue would be needed to regain momentum but unfortunately the new American administration has showed no interest in the issue so far. However, Pugwash could initiate a dialogue between military

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people and technical experts so that when the political climate becomes favorable, concrete recommendations would already be on the table. A huge challenge in this area is that we are losing institutional memory, and both sides are struggling to find the right experts who would understand the past regulations and could carry on the issue.

In the area of conventional weapons, the group also emphasized that certain weapons cannot be handled separately from nuclear capabilities. If one looks at conventional weapons in the context of strategic stability, it is clear that certain conventional capabilities were specifically designed to execute missions that were previously assigned to nuclear weapons. Acknowledging this link and factoring these capabilities into the strategic stability dialogue would bring some of these capabilities into the same basket with strategic nuclear weapons and NSNW. For example, every ballistic missile defense interceptor that has plausible strategic implications should be counted against the overall ceiling. Although these types of linkages almost ended the New START Treaty discussions, these linkages can no longer be ignored.

With regards to those conventional capabilities which do not necessarily fall in the above category, the political climate remains extremely difficult. However, this should not mean that Europe can dismiss conventional arms control - there is urgent need for a dialogue about it. In this regard, the CFE-type numbers and ceilings are becoming increasingly irrelevant in modern warfare, and we need to acknowledge that information and intelligence are becoming the primary drivers of forces today. Future warfare is more and more dependent on information processing, sensor technologies and cyber capabilities which require the involvement of technical experts, and Pugwash should make sure that elites understand the implications of these new trends, and there is an active dialogue between policymakers and experts.