

Wolfgang Zellner, Hans - Joachim Schmidt and Götz Neuneck (eds.)

The Future of Conventional Arms Control in Europe

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Since the end of the Cold War the debate over conventional arms control has been on the global agenda many times. When the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE Treaty) was signed by twenty-two NATO and Warsaw Pact member states in 1990, the issue was of significant importance given the fact that it was the only way to ensure balance and parity between the two blocs. With the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact the circumstances changed and the existing Treaty faced various difficulties. *The Future of Conventional Arms Control in Europe* provides a detailed analysis of conventional arms control and disarmament since they were introduced during the 1990s, and thus is very useful material for understanding this matter and the role of global actors in it. Through twenty four essays, and from different points of view, the authors provide analyses of the role of the CFE Treaty and reasons for its decreased relevance today. Moreover, based on knowledge and experience in the sectors that are relevant for arms control, they also give recommendations which could help improve the security concept.

In the first chapter, *The Relevance of Conventional Arms Control in the Current Strategic Environment*, the authors analyze the role of the arms control regime, its strengths and weaknesses. The opening essay, written by Alyson J. K. Bailes, focuses on the ways and means to avoid the unnecessary use of force. Even though arms reduction was introduced almost two and a half decades ago, there are still countries which have not begun this kind of transformation and for that reason Bailes argues that this concept is still relevant. The changes are happening on an everyday basis and thus it is unlikely to expect that the regime, introduced in the 1990s, could be of the same relevance twenty years later. On the other hand, the arms control regime cannot be created in a way that overcomes all possible transformations of the system. Hence, Bailes argues that it should be possible to update and adjust the arms reduction

acquis in order to preserve the agreed principles in new circumstances. This was not the case with the Agreement on Adaptation of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (ACFE) that was signed but never came into force. According to Hartmann, ACFE was never given a proper chance, while on the other hand NATO's creation of a global system of nuclear missiles in the Czech Republic and Poland definitely "undermined the cooperative security system in Europe" (Zellner, Schmidt and Neuneck 2009: 56). Therefore, this author points out that its ratification as well as improvement of relations with Russia is of crucial importance. The next essay, *Considering the Political Meaning of CFE in 2009*, continues to deal with the relevance of the CFE. The author, Craig Dunkerley, argues that its continuous implementation and multilateral character are its key features and the reason why it still matters. However, according to Zagorski, the intensification of security cooperation could have a better impact than arms control but given the fact that this kind of approach cannot be established between NATO, the EU and Russia, the author argues that arms control still has a significant role in the relations between the West and Russia. However, unlike Russia and NATO members, maintaining the CFE regime is more relevant for weak countries. Besides the link between the mentioned regime and its signers, Akcapar (ibid: 118) points out the importance of understanding the relation between the state and the law. Moreover, he argues that "political elites often interpret the laws the way which is most suitable for them but this is not the point of signing agreements". Taking into account the fact that the regime is in the process of eroding, Akcapar offers three options for the future. The first one is to leave it to die, the second is to give Russia all it seeks, and the last one is to try to salvage the process by employing a number of tracks (see ibid: 130). Like Akcapar, Camille Grand also provides recommendations for the CFE regime. She sees the reasons for the lack of progress in benign neglect, new Russian assertiveness, the division between NATO members regarding Russian demands and the lack of involvement of other state parties. However, with the cooperative approach, not forgetting the importance of the CFE regime and by considering the Russian proposal for a European Security Treaty which can be redefined, actors can make the CFE regime relevant on the political agenda of the world.

In the second chapter, *The CFE Regime – the Way Ahead*, the authors touch upon the current position of the CFE regime and suggest the

possible solutions for its progress. In the first essay, Gregory Govan argues that the CFE could come back on the scene as a respectful regime only by preserving its oft-cited *acquis*. But in order to create a regime which could be applicable under new circumstances, it is important to include missile defense, responses to terrorism and other transnational threats. On the other hand, according to Chernov (ibid: 184), the process of revival would be very difficult to achieve, given the fact that the CFE is in the worst position since it was signed and the reason being the different perception of its importance. The US and NATO perceived the CFE Treaty as a tool which could serve their strategic geopolitical goals, while on the other hand Russia saw it as insurance that would help protect its vital security interests under the new circumstances. However, according to Champenois it is not important to find "the guilty one" but to see what the options for the post-CFE regime are. He offers two scenarios - the first one is to start the ratification of ACFE while the second one would be bypassing it. Arms control cannot exist in a vacuum, so it is important to add new elements, such as the involvement of other participants, a review of the list of armaments, the preservation, modernization and updating of transparency and the confidence regime. Moreover, according to McCausland it is also important to take into account the quality and quantity of conventional armaments as well as their impact on European security. On the other hand, the reason why there is still no reliable, comprehensive and integrated security environment within the OSCE area, as Kulebyakin sees it, is in state policies which, from his point of view, are directed towards ensuring their own interests and thus undermining a system of global security.

To better understand the European security environment, it is important to analyze the key components of the CFE and this is the main focus of Crawford's essay *Conventional Arms Control and CFE*. By comparing the two versions of the Treaty, the author detects various differences between them, while the mentioned treaties also had a different impact on the various countries. Therefore, the last three essays explore their impact on the Baltic Sea region, Moldova, Georgia and the South Caucasus. According to Rosians, by offering membership to the countries of the Baltic Sea region, NATO and the EU created a beneficial environment for them. At the time, arms control and confidence building measures worked well, but Russian suspension of the CFE Treaty undermined the

existing situation in the Baltic Sea region and beyond. The situation in Moldova remained unchanged. Russian troops did not withdraw from Moldova's soil which made the situation more difficult. In the Georgian case, according to Patarai, the establishment of the CFE regime did not significantly contribute to the security and foreign policy. This was a result of undeveloped security policy as well as of the fact that other states were more focused on Russia than on the CIS countries and their interests.

The third chapter, *Conventional Arms Control in Europe: Options for the Future*, touches upon the reasons that led to the undermined position of the CFE and offers recommendations for the future. According to Richter (ibid: 347), the first step in making a list of measures that can contribute to a successful CFE regime is to detect the reasons for the failure of the previous negotiations and the underlying different political interests. Actions of NATO and Russia significantly undermined the CFE regime as well as the ratification of its adapted version, but according to Dunay, the parallel process in which Russia would delay the suspension and other states would ratify the ACFE could put arms control back on the agenda. However, it is also important to analyze the regime from the regional perspectives and therefore in the next three essays the authors focus on regional instabilities, risks as well as on the sub-regional agreements that have been successful. Zellner compares arms control at the strategic and sub-regional level and points out that ACFE can enter into force and can be further developed. He sees the abandonment of the bloc-to-bloc approach as well as it being a system of regional limitations and sufficiency rule as its main achievement. By comparing the changes on the regional and sub-regional level, as well as taking into account the violent conflicts that have occurred, the author concludes that conventional arms control has to have a sub-regional dimension in order to remain relevant. Moreover, the role of the EU in this context is also significant even though, according to Hans-Joachim Schmidt, it still has not developed a common strategy for conventional arms control and military confidence-building. Besides, it is important to take into account that the environment and circumstances change on a daily basis and that, as a result, the development of new weapons and technologies becomes an expectable outcome. Neuneck argues that new information and communication technologies (ICTs) are contributing to the development of new weapons, such as High Energy Lasers and non-lethal weapons (NLW) but it is questionable what effect

these new kinds of weapons can have on political stability and existing conflicts. For that reason, the author points out that in the 21st century it is necessary that arms control take into account technological dynamics, while actors should limit the use of dangerous weapons. The role of tactical nuclear weapons is also of significant importance, especially in the relations between the US and Russia. Kelleher and Warren, in the last essay of this book, analyze the possible solutions for reaching “zero” of TNW. Even though they are providing steps that could contribute to the reduction of the TNW, the authors conclude that the control of this type of weapons is not a priority, but rather a contributing factor to European security and arms control.

In order to understand contemporary international relations, it is important to take into account the events that shape and change them and this is exactly what the book *The Future of Conventional Arms Control in Europe* provides to its readers. Through multi-dimensional analyses of the CFE Treaty and its adapted version, this book offers an overview of the relations between the West and Russia that have had an impact on the present situation in the security field. Therefore, even though it was published in 2009, it can be perceived as an important read for everyone who wants to know and understand international relations of the present times.

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