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Ministry of Foreign Affairs
of the Czech Republic



COUNTERING FRAGMENTATION AND POLARIZATION: RE-CREATING A CLIMATE FOR STABILITY IN EUROPE

Prague, 18-19 May 2017

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic (Czernin Palace)

Annotated Agenda

THURSDAY, 18 MAY 2017

18:30-19:15 Opening reception

19:15-19:30 Welcoming remarks

- **Lamberto Zannier**, OSCE Secretary General
- **Ivo Šrámek**, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic for Security and Multilateral Issues

19:30-21:00 **Night owl session - Distorted reality: Security implications of post-truth politics**

Political debates in many OSCE countries, including long-standing democracies, are nowadays increasingly framed by appeals to emotions disconnected from real facts. Many populists across Europe try to exploit grievances and insecurities of the electorate by twisting the facts or using outright lies. While this is not an entirely new phenomenon in politics, the spread of disinformation and myths in the digital era has reached an unprecedented pace and scale with the potential to significantly influence public opinion and political decision-making. This has substantial implications for politics in general and for security and stability in particular.



- What dangers does the phenomenon of “post-truth politics” pose for international security and stability?
 - How can the resilience of societies to resist and counter disinformation and myths be strengthened? What role should media play in these efforts?
 - How can governments and state institutions respond to this challenge without undermining fundamental democratic principles like the freedom of expression?
- **Ivan Krastev**, Chairman, Centre for Liberal Strategies, Bulgaria
 - **Mathilde Damgé**, Journalist, Le Monde
 - **Jakub Kalenský**, Member of East StratCom Task Force, European External Action Service (EEAS)
 - **Diana Rusu**, free-lance foreign affairs journalist, Romania
- Moderator: **Matthijs Berman**, Principal Adviser to the Head of Institution, OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media

FRIDAY, 19 MAY 2017

09:00-09:20 Welcoming remarks

- **Lamberto Zannier**, OSCE Secretary General
- **Clemens Koja**, Permanent Representative of Austria to the OSCE and Chairperson of the OSCE Permanent Council
- **Štefan Füle**, Special Envoy for the OSCE and the Western Balkans of the Czech Republic
- **Reinhard Krumm**, Head, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Regional Office for Cooperation and Peace in Europe

09:20-09:30 Introductory remarks

- **Pavel Bělobrádek**, Deputy Prime Minister of the Czech Republic

09:30-11:00 Opening session: The state of European security today and prospects for the future

The end of the Cold War was considered by many as the dawn of a new era of freedom, peace and unity in Europe. In the following years, however, it became clear that this was still an aspiration rather than reality. Today’s security environment in Europe is marked by uncertainty about the future and growing fragmentation and polarization. At the same time, both Europe and the world are facing security challenges of increasing complexity and interconnectedness that cannot be solved by any one country or organization alone.

- What are the main security challenges and risks Europe faces today?
- How can these risks be reduced? How can further deterioration of the security situation in Europe be prevented?
- What steps should be taken to put security and co-operation in Europe on a more stable basis?



- **Gernot Erler**, Special Representative for the OSCE, German Federal Foreign Office
- **Alexander Lukashovich**, Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the OSCE
- **François Heisbourg**, Special Adviser, La Fondation pour la Recherche Stratégique
- **William Hill**, Professor of National Security Strategy, National War College
- Moderator: **Marcel Peško**, Director of the Conflict Prevention Centre, OSCE Secretariat

11:00-11:30 **Coffee break**

11:30-13:00 **Parallel fears: Overcoming divergent threat perceptions**

The crisis in and around Ukraine has undermined fundamental principles of European security and renewed geopolitical confrontation on the continent. However, unlike in the past, the state of European security is no longer defined by two opposing blocs with contradicting ideologies. There are many more stakeholders and mutual relations are more complex, interconnected and interdependent than ever before. Current disagreements do not follow ideological lines and there is hardly any economic rationality behind them. Growing mistrust and confrontation in the OSCE region thus seem to be driven mainly by diametrically opposed security concerns and threat perceptions across the politico-military, the economic and environmental, and the human dimensions. This has negative repercussions for security and co-operation, particularly in countries that became independent with the dissolution of the Soviet Union but have not joined any integration model. They are left stranded in the middle of the renewed competition, with their security and economic status often contested.

- How can better mutual understanding of divergent security concerns and threat perceptions among the OSCE participating States be achieved?
- How can differences in security concerns and threat perceptions be reconciled? How can the perceived need of some actors to choose one side over the other be overcome?
- What steps should be taken to decrease mutual mistrust?
- What role can the Structured Dialogue Process launched at the 2016 OSCE Ministerial Council play in this regard?
- What economic and security arrangements represent a viable option for those OSCE participating States whose economic and security status is not clearly defined?

- **Maia Panjikidze**, Former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Georgia
- **Oleksandr Chalyi**, President of Grand Thornton Ukraine and Former First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine
- **Nadia Arbatova**, Head of the Department on European Political Studies, Institute for World Economy and International Relations (IMEMO)
- **Mark Galeotti**, Senior Researcher and Coordinator of the Centre for European Security, Institute of International Relations Prague
- Moderator: **Reinhard Krumm**, Head, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Regional Office for Cooperation and Peace in Europe



13:00-14:00 Buffet lunch

14:00-15:30 **Breaking a vicious circle: Countering fragmentation within and between societies**

Divisions are growing between countries and regions as well as within our societies. A growing sense of unpredictability and uncertainty feeds prejudices and fears of the future, which leads to a polarized and confrontational environment that undermines stability and co-operation. This in turn deepens the sense of insecurity, creating a vicious cycle. At the same time, the complexity and interconnectedness of current security challenges require more co-operation and collaboration than ever before. However, this is becoming increasingly difficult in today's polarized and fragmented security environment.

- How can these negative tendencies be countered?
- How can further fragmentation and polarization of politics be prevented?
- How can partnerships and coalitions be strengthened and deepened despite growing divisions?
- **Tomáš Zdechovský**, Member of the European Parliament
- **Claude Wild**, Permanent Representative of Switzerland to the OSCE
- **Magdalena Grono**, Program Director for Europe and Central Asia, International Crisis Group
- **Dejan Bojanic**, Vice-President, European Youth Forum
- Moderator: **Jan Haukaas**, Special Adviser, OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights

15:30-16:00 Coffee break

16:00-17:30 **The future of European security: How to create a climate for stability?**

Rules and principles that have been pillars of European security for decades are now being contested. The legitimacy of the liberal international order is being challenged and the world seems to be turning from multilateralism to multipolarism. Mistrust and confrontation have replaced dialogue and co-operation, deepening divisions and undermining stability and security. Many actors are searching for ways to reduce risks, remedy confrontational relations and return to co-operation in Europe. This appears difficult, even as the need to preserve and safeguard a stable and peaceful security environment in Europe is becoming increasingly urgent.

- What are the main pillars of a stable security environment in the OSCE region?
- How can the current situation be prevented from deteriorating further?
- What steps should be taken to ensure a stable security environment, strengthen co-operative approaches and avoid zero-sum thinking with negative repercussions for the OSCE region?



- How can the Structured Dialogue Process launched at the 2016 OSCE Ministerial Council provide stepping stones for a more stable and co-operative security environment in Europe?
- **Christian Strohal**, Special Representative for the Austrian OSCE Chairmanship 2017
- **Hynek Kmoníček**, Ambassador of the Czech Republic to the United States of America
- **Andrey Kortunov**, Director General, Russian International Affairs Council
- **Michael Kimmage**, Professor of History, Catholic University of America

- Moderator and closing remarks: **Lamberto Zannier**, OSCE Secretary General

