

**KEYNOTE PRESENTATION BY MR. VLADISLAV CHERNOV,  
FORMER HEAD OF THE DELEGATION OF THE  
RUSSIAN FEDERATION TO THE VIENNA TALKS ON MILITARY  
SECURITY AND ARMS CONTROL, AT THE 2010 ANNUAL  
SECURITY REVIEW CONFERENCE**

Vienna, 15 June 2010

**Working Session III: The role and perspectives of arms control and  
confidence- and security-building regimes in building trust in the  
evolving security environment**

Mr. Chairperson,

I should like to thank the Kazakh Chairmanship and the Russian delegation for granting me the honour to address this conference and to set out my views on a number of questions concerned with ensuring military security in Europe.

I believe that I have been given this honour for two reasons. First, I happened to have accompanied the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE Treaty) throughout its entire life – from its drafting and signing in November 1990 to the third CFE Treaty Review Conference in June 2006, which in fact marked its breakdown. If opinions from people like me are still needed, then perhaps this is simply a sign that the affairs of the current generation of Vienna negotiators are not in the best shape.

Second, I have not worked for the government for two years now and so I can talk freely. It is my hope that the informal nature of my statement will prove useful in stimulating discussion among the delegations represented here.

For those of you who may be interested, I am currently working for the Russian Corporation of Nanotechnologies, establishing business contacts with partners from the United States of America and Canada. For your information, nanotechnology refers to the methods used in the manipulation of a substance at the atomic or molecular level to give it new tailor-made properties. To some extent this is reminiscent of the Vienna negotiation process: here too there are frequent attempts to manipulate small questions of little significance. The difference is that there is no change in the quality of relations and relevant agreements as the outcome. What is the problem?

In my opinion, the deadlock in the OSCE's work in the politico-military area is caused by a mentality that was expressed most graphically in a report by a professor at the last OSCE Seminar on Military Doctrine. You may recall that he divided all countries into

two categories – those who had won the Cold War and those who had lost. In the diagram he had drawn the victors ascending to the sky, to a paradise called globalization, whereas the fate awaiting the defeated was to be thrown into the abyss if they did not do what the divine voices from on high told them to. There is no doubt that for those who hold these views the Cold War is still not over. It will end for them when the victory receives a reward, the dimensions of which are seemingly incalculable. Russia, having given up its vital interests and lost the ability to effectively ensure its security in the face of growing threats and challenges, would have to pay a considerable portion of that reward.

I believe that the position taken by the United States and NATO on the CFE Treaty during the last eight years of its operation is based on precisely this philosophy. It was their persistence in wishing to use this key European security document for their own foreign policy purposes that struck a deadly blow to the arms control regime on our continent.

Recently, however, the global political situation has begun to change somewhat. I do not presume to judge here the reasons for or the extent of these changes. It is clear, however, that with the Obama administration in power in Washington key players in the international arena are endeavouring to highlight the positive aspects of our relations and restore the trust that has been lost. There are concrete results already – the conclusion of the new Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty, for example. I do not know to what extent these new developments have affected the OSCE and the institutions operating in its area. According to the public information which I now rely on, so far little is changing here, although perhaps it is not entirely like that. I would imagine that there is an intention both in NATO and within the OSCE to “reset” our relations, restore the lost balance of interests and reach a new mutual understanding on politico-military questions. However, this is likely to be hindered by the burden of old obligations and a commitment to positions that have not changed in many years and are therefore badly in need of review.

Starting everything afresh with a clean page is the usual way out of such situations. So I think that before we sit down at the negotiating table to revive the CFE Treaty regime, we need to determine whether we need conventional arms control in Europe in the current conditions and, above all, whether the Europeans themselves want this. I know from my own experience well enough that if a united Europe does not lend real support to this regime, shows no interest in developing and strengthening it, and once again leaves everything to the United States and Russia, we will not have a viable treaty structure to replace the previous Treaty.

As far as Russia is concerned, I hope that our partners have been able to convince themselves that it does not need the CFE Treaty regime more than others. Furthermore, many people in Moscow are fairly sceptical of the prospects of reviving it given the negative experience in the negotiations on this question over the last ten years.

I do, however, believe that there is still a chance of restoring the balance of interests in this area if we can all agree that conventional arms control in Europe should remain one of the ways of organizing the pan-European space at least with a view to preventing a new collapse, with all the consequences that would entail for security. After all, the CFE Treaty is the only legally binding document dealing with “hard” security and linking eastern and western Europe. It would also be worth preserving arms control in view of its future evolution, which could take on interesting forms if it is accompanied by an appropriate

transformation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Lastly, it is extremely useful for our armed forces, which gain the most valuable experience through interaction.

Naturally, these conclusions are hardly going to inspire everyone. Some participating States feel very comfortable with NATO's protection and show no interest whatsoever in arms control. I remember one delegation which used to speak at almost every meeting of the Joint Consultative Group. But as soon as that country became a member of the Alliance, our eloquent colleagues fell silent forever and are probably keeping quiet to this today. Others are concerned only with their own internal problems and they are indifferent to anything that is not connected with resolving these problems as quickly as possible. I understand this state of affairs. However, there are the highest strategic interests in ensuring European security in the broad sense of the word. I should like to hope that the limited national aspirations of certain countries will at least not hinder their realization.

Thus, if we agree that arms control is still necessary, let us take a look at what we can really count on in the negotiations for its revival. I believe that this question can be answered fairly precisely, given our clear understanding of the reasons that led to the suspension of the application of the CFE Treaty regime in 2007.

It is clear that the regime for the control of conventional armed forces can be restored only on the basis of the key provisions of the adapted Treaty, in other words national and territorial ceilings, information exchange and control. I am familiar with the position of our delegation as regards the lowering of the national ceilings for the NATO countries and see that the old discussion brought about by the expansion of the Alliance and the eastward advancement of its military infrastructure is continuing. I believe that the demands made by Russia are entirely justified and should be given serious consideration if there is to be any talk of restoring the balance of interests among the participating States. There has long been a need for an interpretation of the concept of substantial combat forces. Already at the time this term first appeared it made an extremely unfavourable impression on Russian experts in Moscow and Vienna and was seen by them as evidence of an unwillingness on the part of the Alliance to make real commitments to limiting the stationing of foreign forces on the territory of new member States. While such formulations still achieved their aims in the negotiations with Moscow in the political conditions that existed at that time, there is no chance of that today.

The flanks are a difficult problem. On the one hand, it is understandable that given the geography and significant differences in size of the territories concerned, countries sharing a border with Russia would want to deal not with the overall Russian ceilings, which are considerable, but with the regional subceilings in their areas. On the other hand, Moscow talks of discrimination, the expansion of the NATO presence in the flank zone and the threats to its security from the south. Ultimately, over the last two years the geopolitical changes that have occurred in the southern flank have been such that it is almost impossible for us to return to the previous system of flank restrictions. I know very well from my own experience how important the flanks are for some participating States, including those that have repeatedly shown their willingness to engage in constructive co-operation with Russia on arms control issues. I very much hope therefore that a compromise will be reached on the basis of bilateral agreements with Russia on mutual openness or restraint in the stationing of forces in the relevant regions outside the framework of a new treaty.

As for regional conflict zones, I have come to firmly believe that until the situation is resolved they could be removed from the sphere of arms control. A suitable level of military transparency in these zones needs to be ensured (and this is entirely possible) and the functioning of the relevant political mechanisms safeguarded, and they will remain a focus of the OSCE's attention, but they will not undermine a new agreement on conventional armed forces, as was the case with the CFE Treaty regime. The same thing could also be done with the territories of States in the area of application that have been reconstituted but have not yet received proper international recognition.

Mr. Chairperson,

After I returned from Vienna to Moscow I happened to be appointed ambassador-at-large and representative of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs for the settlement of the Georgian-Abkhaz conflict. I had an opportunity to participate in the agreement of the text of the last United Nations Security Council resolution reaffirming commitment to the territorial integrity of Georgia. This was in April 2008, and in August of the same year the Georgian forces attacked South Ossetia and all our efforts were in vain. I regret this since within the framework of the Geneva meetings there still were hopes for a continuation of the peace process.

In the course of my work in that position, I met with many Georgian diplomats and high-ranking officials. Among them were realistic, honest and intelligent people with whom we can and must discuss the future of our relations. I hope that these people's views will soon be transformed into Georgian national policy. Then we shall also begin bit by bit to restore the lost trust and lighten the burden created by the problems that have accumulated over the years. In my view, there is no other way to normalize our relations. I am convinced that neither arms control nor advisers from countries and organizations outside the region will be able to influence this process.

Mr. Chairperson,

In conclusion I should like to share some thoughts with you regarding future activities that could be undertaken by the parties to the negotiations. In my opinion, they could work towards a new adaptation of the adapted CFE Treaty and its subsequent ratification, since the time for the entry into force of the version of the Treaty signed in 1999 is already over. A new Treaty could be signed incorporating everything of value from the old one. If this does not happen either, we could try to translate the basic values of the CFE Treaty regime into confidence-building measures. Finally, we could do something completely different or perhaps follow my example and go into nanotechnologies. I can assure you that you will see a big difference.

It is my hope, distinguished delegates and Mr. Chairperson, that you remain optimistic even in the most difficult situations.

Thank you for your attention.