



Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

“The Indivisibility of Euro-Atlantic Security”

**Secretary General Marc Perrin de Brichambaut
18th Partnership for Peace Research Seminar**

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Excellencies,
Ambassadors,
Distinguished Participants,

It is a pleasure to be with you. The programme for this 18th Partnership for Peace Research Seminar is a relevant and stimulating one. Your discussions are welcome in the context of the ongoing discussions taking place at the Hofburg.

I would like to thank the NATO Defense College for the inspiration and hard work behind the Seminar. We are also grateful to the Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs and the Ministry of Defence of Austria. This event underlines -- once again -- the pioneering role that Austria plays in supporting an open and frank debate about European security. The seminar of May 8th last year Ambassador Kyrle referred to cleared some important ground for our discussions today.

I am especially pleased to be here, because the principle of the indivisibility of security has always been at the heart of the CSCE project. It is part of our collective DNA, written into all of the foundational texts and agreements between our participating States, as highlighted most recently in U.S. Secretary of State Clinton’s speech last week in Paris. The genealogy of the concept is worth considering as we open discussions at this Seminar.

In the history of CSCE and OSCE, “indivisible security” was conceived as one organic strand of a trinity of concepts interconnected. In the Helsinki Final Act, the participating States recognised the “indivisibility of security in Europe.” In the CSCE context, indivisible security meant that the security of each state of our region is inextricably linked with the security of every other state. Another way of putting this would be: Co-operation is beneficial to all participating States, while the insecurity in or of one participating State can affect the well-being of all.

A second leg of the OSCE approach has been that of “comprehensive security.” Since the CSCE’s beginnings, the comprehensive approach to security has encompassed three dimensions (initially presented as ‘baskets’). The politico-military, the economic and environmental and the human dimensions have been viewed as complementary, interconnected and interdependent. All three dimensions have been understood as equally essential to real, long-term security.

The third strand of the OSCE agenda has been the principle of “co-operative security.” In our context, this idea has emphasised the importance of OSCE co-operation with each other, with other international organisations and institutions, and with the OSCE’s Partners for Co-operation.

These three principles have been woven together by the participating States over time. The 1990 *Charter of Paris for a New Europe* declared that “security is indivisible and the security of every participating State is inseparably linked to that of all the others.” The *Charter for European Security*, agreed in 1999 in Istanbul, was designed expressly to contribute to the formation of a common and indivisible security space in the OSCE area, free of dividing lines and with comparable levels of security for all. The 2003 Maastricht *Strategy to Address Threats to Security and Stability in the 21st Century* declared that the OSCE “multidimensional concept of common, comprehensive, co-operative and indivisible security” was well-suited to tackle the security challenges of the new century.

If everything is so clear, and the participating States have long agreed to such well-developed concepts, why are we here? Why do we still need to debate the meaning of indivisible security?

It is true that the principles of indivisible, comprehensive and co-operative security have been reaffirmed by the participating States for over thirty five years, but the context in which they have been applied has changed significantly over this time. This is a first point to note.

New States have emerged, while others have disappeared. New groupings have formed and enlarged, while others have vanished. Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian security has changed radically since 1975. Security challenges have mutated and evolved, while new responses and tools have been developed.

The concept of indivisible, comprehensive and co-operative security was crafted during the Cold War – to set basic ground rules for the interaction of two politically antagonistic blocs, and to lay the ground for political dialogue, transparency and co-operation. This is not the place to tell the story of the period between 1975 and 1990. Suffice it to say, these principles proved useful in setting rules for the behaviour and interaction of States and for helping to ensure that dramatic change occurred as peacefully as possible.

The end of the Cold War changed that context. As the understanding that was expressed in the 1990 Paris Charter showed, Euro-Atlantic security was no longer seen as being comprised of different and separate systems or blocs, but seemed on the path toward unifying, with all States as parts of a single system. This seemed to some to be the promise of Euro-Atlantic security in the early 1990s.

In this light, “comprehensive, co-operative and indivisible security” came to imply much more than simply setting rules for the interaction of antagonistic blocs. It implied increasingly close co-operation, including through joint decision-making and joint action against commonly defined problems.

This leads to the second reason why a new debate has opened. In the view of some parties to the original discussion, security in the Euro-Atlantic area after the end of the Cold War failed to meet its initial promise. Specifically, some questioned whether the enlargement of NATO (and later also the EU) were compatible with the principle of indivisible security, while others (mainly those states directly involved in those processes) viewed them as fulfilling the promise of that principle.

It is worth recalling the language of paragraph 8 of the Istanbul Charter. The paragraph affirms that States will not strengthen their security at the expense of other States. In the same breath, participating States agreed also that every State has an equal right to security, including the “inherent right to be free to choose or change its security arrangements, including treaties of alliance, as they evolve.”

The language was the result of long deliberations and difficult compromise. A few years later, the compromise struck some of the original parties as not being fulfilled and as no longer satisfactory. In this view, indivisible security was not being respected in the Euro-Atlantic area. The OSCE space was becoming fragmented. States were seen to have access to unequal levels of security.

The other legs of the OSCE concept of security were also seen to be affected. The project of “comprehensive security,” according to some, was not balanced between the Dimensions. The OSCE role in building “co-operative security,” including on the basis of the 1999 Platform for Co-operative Security, never got off the ground.

For others, the practice of indivisible security has been challenged for different reasons – because of the difficulties facing political transformation in parts of the OSCE area, and because of the rise of challenges to basic principles of state behaviour and interaction. According to this view, the greatest obstacle to a single, indivisible security space in the OSCE region is an increasing divergence in the adherence to basic standards of democratic governance and respect for human rights.

Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

This is why it is so important to exchange views about the meaning of “indivisible security” today. Experience highlights at least two points about the concept. First, that it is part of a package, along with “comprehensive” and “co-operative” security. Second, that these concepts are organic and have proven adaptable over time - despite dramatic change and challenge.

At a time when divergent views have arisen on the state of Euro-Atlantic security, therefore, we should not be afraid to put these concepts once again to the test of open and honest debate. Only through constant discussion can they remain relevant and be reaffirmed by the Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian community.

What are the different perceptions of the indivisibility of security today? Where did they come from and how can they be resolved? How can States join again to reaffirm their commitment to basic principles? What processes are required to refresh the practice of co-operative, comprehensive and indivisible security in the Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian area? These are some of the questions that I hope this Seminar will address.

In this respect, I wish also to underline the importance of the Corfu Process.

The OSCE was the first Organization to respond to the Russian and French Presidents' calls for a renewed dialogue on basic questions of European Security. This dialogue started in 2008 under the Finnish Chairmanship. In 2009, under the Greek Chairmanship, OSCE Foreign Ministers provided fresh impetus to the dialogue during their meeting on the island of Corfu.

At the Athens Ministerial Council meeting, participating States adopted a declaration and a decision on the Corfu Process, which provides strong impetus for a new, OSCE-anchored dialogue on the future of European security. The Kazakh Chairmanship has started strong in its effort to bring this dialogue to concrete results. Themes are being clarified, and targets are being set.

This is not business as usual. In the history of the OSCE, there have been similar moments when the participating States needed a place to clear the ground to strengthen the foundations of pan-European security. Such moments occurred in Helsinki, in Paris and Istanbul. I believe that we may face a similar moment today. It is a demanding one for all participating States.

The Corfu Process can hold this promise. Twenty years after the fall of the Berlin Wall, our region can do with a fresh stock-taking. The OSCE community needs an open and ambitious dialogue to rebuild trust, to reaffirm commitments to basic principles, and to restore the basis for common purpose. Security *in* Europe and the security *of* Europe need this.

The OSCE is a natural forum for this dialogue.

Thank you for listening.