

WORKSHOP ON CHALLENGES OF A COMMON SECURITY POLICY IN EURASIA



CHALLENGES OF A COMMON SECURITY POLICY IN EURASIA

Narrative Report - AEPF & IPB Conference, 23-24 September 2019, Berlin

The workshop was attended by representatives of peace movements, researchers, civil society stakeholders and academics.

(For more detailed information: <https://www.ipb.org/events/workshop-on-challenges-of-a-common-security-policy-in-eurasia/>).

We sum up the outcome of the workshop.

The workshop centred on the conviction that a renewed and re-imagined Common Security policy and architecture are urgently needed.

Why we are recalling Common Security and the Paris Charter?

There is an urgent need to recall the positive ideas and outcomes generated from the Palme Commission Report on Common Security (1980-82) that proposed a new security architecture and promoted détente and arms control negotiations from 1980s.



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The key points of the Common Security document:

- (i) re-conceptualizing security, as “interdependence”, “joint responsibility” and “security for” instead of “security against.”
- (ii) The task of Willy Brandt was common solutions and contextualizing that security has to be inclusive (President Brezhnev was engaged, and his representative Georgi Arbatov from USSR, plus representatives from NAM minus China) and was unanimous
- (iii) It was different than ‘Collective Security’ that was practiced as one system against the other. But the key in Common Security was to use the realities and convince enemies to make agreements not to go for war.
- (iv) Proposed a basic lowest common denominator on common security through arms control, a nuclear free zone in Europe, spiral down nuclear threats and maintain balanced reduction and by cooperation between nations; A nuclear free path in Central East Europe and Nordic region; nuclear freeze, no first use. This was acceptable to many states.
- (v) Recognized need for multilateralism. Strengthening UN collective security procedures. Transferring some powers to multilateral agencies like the UN and OSCE.
- (vi) Moral and political pressure of NPT on Third World. Asked for safeguards of human rights, legitimising humanitarian intervention. Thus, broadened the concept of both threats and security, so non military threats. It thus lay the groundwork for more expanded reports like The Human Security Commission and Reports (1994).
- (vii) Spoke directly to state power advocating a basic minimum, used a framework between realism and idealism.



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In the same context we recall the Charter of Paris and the promise of the 1990 meeting of the OSCE. This Charter signed as the Cold War (After Soviet disintegration) ended, was signed by 57 countries of the OSCE. It stated that since the division of Europe into confronting blocs was at an end, logically then, the vision and politics should be one where security is indivisible. However EU did not hold to its promises and with the march of NATO to the East the politics of confrontation continued.

The Workshop agreed that a return to Common Security and the Charter of Paris and OSCE coincide with Chapter VI of the United Nations on disarmament, and economic and civil human rights for all; with Goal 16 (peace and security) and 17 (partnership) of the Sustainable Development Goals, accepted by all nations, with human security and support the goals of climate change movements.

Since the OSCE has 57 member countries, including all former countries of the Soviet Union, Mongolia, Turkey and relations with ten more countries including Korea and Japan, it is possible and strategic to have one organisation that will accept Common Security.

The one organisation that is opposed to the OSCE is NATO. The OSCE does not cover nuclear weapons.

Further EU countries are also militarised and need to come back to the peace process, strengthen the regional process and the UN. This workshop thus calls for a new Palme Commission and the peace movement must be part of this.



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Peace Movements and Common Security

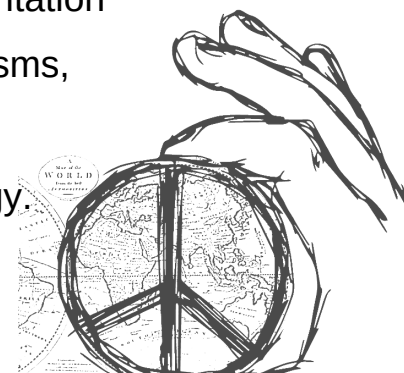
The gap between peace movements and states for peace needs to be filled. Peace movements cannot keep away from the new Palme Commission.

The Common Security (Palme Commission) Report was based on realist approach. It was part of the politics of the state. So peace movements could support it, but not be part of it. So the first task peace movements currently is to re-activate the Palme approach and engage with those actors that can support it. So belief in arms control. Second, for civil society to support a common approach.

Common Security is not just the past, but the future (Katherine MP) Challenge is how to overcome tendency to marginalize peace movements. The question was also raised of the 'simple peace movements' that NATO could be simply dissolved. So the tactic for the alternative was to create a alternative security architecture in Europe and let it reach out to Asia and others. It was emphasised that currently capitalism continues to rise at the cost of, and in contradiction with the environment and climate. Risk of nuclear weapons use is unacceptable.

The current situation and its impact on peace, security and people

Currently it is undisputable that there exist at least six interdependent crises of (i) International economic and social production processes; (ii) fragmentation of social cohesion, (iii) rise and election of nationalist authoritarianisms, (iv) crises of multilateralism and disregard of international law, (v) almost irreversible climate catastrophe, (vi) destruction of ecology.



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These crises have led to anxieties amongst large sections of people who have supported the easy solutions offered by the Far Right and targeted migrants, increased Islamophobia and all forms of racisms. Most states have increased their defence expenditure, as they build threat perceptions. Simultaneously there is an increased militarisation (of civilian institutions); building many new walls, physical security mechanisms and weaponisation as responses to basic human needs (Forthcoming Report on Walls, TNI).

Even while most national security documents from the EU, Russia, China, US state that the major security threats are from declining environment, climate, terrorism, etc, yet the nuclear/arms control treaties are collapsing. There was a quasi nuclear weapons free zone in East Europe, but with the end of the INF this has collapsed. Currently the argument of Michel Klare (2018) 'This is not your mother's Cold War' indicates the looming threats of violent conflagration.

Threats of nuclear and arms use have been speeded up. Example the ease of taking nuclear war decisions.

The problematique remained that NATO and the EU are designed to be forces of war and insecurity (tuned primarily towards Russia), opposing the forces of peace and human security.



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Asia

The detailed discussion on Asia raised several general and specific issues, especially the role of China, the Korean peace process, South Asia tensions and common security for small states:

In East Asia the situation is critical since it is the frontline between USA and China. The trade war by the US on China is a continuum of military war by the US. This is dangerous as economic war has become part of military war. The US sees China as the principle enemy, (and Russia as a subsidiary one). Chinese actions in the South and East China Seas of sending patrol boats and seizing Islands, threatening oil rigs of Malaysia, Philippines, Vietnam and others is part of Chinese method of supremacy. Chinese actions are violations of the International Law of the Sea and in violation of the International Tribunal judgments from The Hague.

Some analysts argued that China in the 1970's had the goal of self-reliance but now has an expansionist logic. At the same time China is the only country in the UN which for 40 years has not imposed unilateral sanctions, no first use of nuclear weapons, is not part of any military bloc; has not demonized the US; resolved most border conflicts except with India. China uses 'common security' language. However Chinese response to others is strategic defence because they are surrounded by US military bases, that create "Island chains" from Korea, Philipines, Japan, and Indo-Pacific Command.



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China has combined uneven and contradictory developments within, with features of under development but also autonomous capital accumulation and 'catching up'. Further China's rhetoric of 'peaceful rise' is also the rise of an expansionist China.

The discussion on the Hong Kong movement showed that it was essentially on retaining autonomy within the paradigm of 'One state two systems'. The movement was to maintain the Basic Law of Hong Kong and in opposition to laws being proposed like extradition, and sedition and was not as China said about 'independence' or foreign inspired.

Analysts present showed that the BRI is unfolding as part of the Chinese development model. The BRI plan is assisting China to become tributary empire, but also is a geo-strategic response to US encirclement.

It was however projected that any US-China rivalry will be a naval conflagration as China cannot match the US navy.



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The smaller states who are caught between the emerging powers like China, India, Japan and others, were 'balancing' and seeking the best option between these powers. They could opt for Common Security.

The ASEAN countries thus have 'fluid' and balancing responses/ alliances.

Nepal for instance has to balance between two powerful neighbours.

The politics of the Rakhine State in Myanmar is caught also in geo politics.

While China is driving politics with a view to BRI, but peace process is supported by EU.

Some of these states could opt for Common Security approach.

The negotiations between Trump and North Korea are the opposite of Common Security, in that it is more about politics than peace. European civil society needs to support humanitarian aid to North Korea.

Azerbaijan was another example, where there were some internal peace processes.

Ulan Bator process in Asia is vaguely about Common Security.



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The Challenge of current geo politics of Asia:

- (i) The bipolar security complexes of post war decades have transited to multiple, fragmented security complexes with additional militarized actors and rivalries like China, India, Pakistan, Japan, Turkey.
- (ii) Regional conflicts have global geo political spillovers, example Afghanistan, Syria etc.
- (iii) Many states, are immune to civil society actions and ignore international peace and other movements.
- (iv) Majoritarian authoritarian/populist leaders globally prefer to ignore and disconnect the real human security threats from climate to equity to justice.
- (v) Non state actors and illegal trafficking from ISIS, Taliban and others have to be seriously taken by alternate groups because a mass of people believe the Right wing's narrative and diffusion of Islamophobia and migrants.
- (vi) There are fewer progressive elected representatives and policy makers who will push alternate and common security reports into policy making realm.



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Europe

The workshop was of the view that the US remains the most hegemonic and militarized country and its approach to international politics endangered human security. It was shown that US militarization is linked to both the military industrial complex and dark money from the gun lobbies like the NRA as well as corruption in politics. The critical education that was the foundation of liberal views in the 1960's in US universities has ended. It appears the Brezinski's theory that 'the problem is there is too much democracy', has gained popularity with some classes. Since education debt is high, political activity is low. The military is the most respected institution in the US. All this contributes to the decline of the US.

The resurgence of militarism in the West post 1990's, it was argued is on account of NATO expansion to the East, as NATO reneged on its promises to the disintegrating Soviet Union. Many internal developments in Russia are on account of such geo-strategic developments.

The EU industrial policy is a massive drive for militarization for profit. The EU is no longer a common project. The supremacist ideology was pushed back after World War II, but is now on the rise again.

The European Defence Fund is in the name of efficiency but is increasing militarisations and diverting money from social sectors to defence. Concerns were raised that in Europe the construction of threats is threat from others including migrants.

So there is a urgent need to de-construct these approaches.

Behaviour of politicians get support from that part of society which is toxic.



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Challenges for Common Security:

Re-imagined Common Security is the basis of an alternative and new epistemology. This approach would outline what are the real and multiple threats to security? We can use the Critical Studies approach. We argue for a security not based on fear and arms, but bottoms up and feminist analysis of interdependence (Tickner). Since security is not neutral, we will not be able to convince those who have a realist/ subjectivist/ military-industrial state approach.

Need to talk to women and youth in peace processes. Being flexible about moral issues. Re talk to states who violate human rights also. Dialogue as part of the structure. Need to engage Russia and China.

Common Security is a rule based system. It facilitates the move from a politics of fears, threats, walls, and confrontation. For Asia move from balance of power diplomacy (which is de-stabilising Asia) to a non nuclear and de-militarised response through the ASEAN. Common Security in Asia will have to pressurize India, China, Japan and Pakistan to find common, non militarised solutions. This is possible by joining of small states.

Non-violence works approach. International Arms Controls Treaties, like the one in Iran is deeply flawed and need to be re-looked at.



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It was argued that the multiple crises needed non market solutions. The Global Green New Deal was a positive proposal, endorsed by several political formations already. Proposals for a 'New politics of Détente' by way of a re-worked Common Security were seen as offering alternatives. Common Security was seen to have a strategic role in de-escalating rivalries, in re-building trust, limiting militarisms.

Cyrance Vance's argument was correct when he stated in 1982 in the Prologue to the Common Treaty: "No matter how many weapons a nation develops, no matter how strong its armed forces become, they can never guarantee its freedom from attack." Common Security in Europe will have to defy US power.

Common Security already has an international basis. It however requires deepening relation with global commitments, for example link the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 1 to 15 on poverty, climate, development are inexplicably linked with SDG 16 (Peace and Justice) and Common Security to SDG 17 on Partnership. Tactics will be to get those parties who can be committed to it,(Transform, Corbyn) The tactic of getting support from the Church and other religious groups and step by step approach is acceptable.



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Some specific Recommendations

- Withdrawal of foreign bases.
- Get major Asian powers to a Common Security (including Japan) grid.
- Common Security cannot be national security. As every national security has a repercussion.
- Common security is a strategy for a joint survival.
- Common security in Europe will have to defy US power
- The US-China rivalry and India-Pakistan tensions are threats to small countries.

- Restoration of the INF Treaty and extension of the New START Treaty combined with efforts to bring China and other nuclear powers into these treaties.
- A universal halt in deployment of new nuclear weapons and their delivery systems.
- Eliminating launch on warning systems and first strike nuclear doctrines.
- Credible steps toward fulfilling the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty's obligation for good faith negotiations for the complete elimination of nuclear arsenals.
- Reaffirmation and updating the Conventional Forces in Europe Treaty.
- Multi-lateral negotiations to reduce the risks of attacks on computer technologies and networks, especially those of nuclear-armed states.
- Fulfillment of the provisions of the Minsk II agreement.



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In Conclusion

A Statement from the workshop was released (link at: <https://aepf.info/AEPF-IPB-Berlin-Conference-Statement>)

In addition it was advocated that for the peace movements, there was a need to create a global inter-Party network on Nuclear Ban Treaty and Common Security.

For example, (this started in the German Parliament with 2-3 MPs joining with ICAN movement. This has to spread to all responsible parliamentarians.)

Need for the Eurasian Left to have a strategy against militarisation and construction of knowledge.

Peace movements need to deepen discussions and seek independent answers from the Government. Further, they should see which governments are helpful for peace.

Russia must be engaged and for that NATO expansion to Ukraine and Georgia stopped. Nuclear free corridor in Nordic States.

Governments try to hide the link between military companies and ecology.

Peace movement has to be hand in hand with climate justice and just trade.



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Références:

Charter of Paris available at:

<https://www.osce.org/mc/39516?download=true>

Joseph Gerson at:

<https://aepf.info/After-the-Post-Cold-War-Era-Joseph-Gerson>

Call for a Re-imagined Common Security, Statement of AEPF/IPB at:

<https://aepf.info/AEPF-IPB-Berlin-Conference-Statement>

OSCE at:

<https://www.osce.org/mc/39516?download=true>

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