Revisiting and eventually adjusting, though certainly not revising the European security architecture

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Introduction
After the curtain had fallen and the gate had opened, Europe soon found itself engaged in an architectural debate. Those debates, mainly in the first half of the 1990s were characterized by genuine shared interests and curiosity of all states in the Euro-Atlantic area. It was necessary as the actors were standing there helpless. The old Cold War system was moribund and there was no clear idea what to build in its stead. There were four major underlying factors that made debates about a new security architecture necessary.

• Institutions disappeared in the East, the doubling of institutions (first of all doubling between NATO and the Warsaw Treaty) came to an end. The former members of the latter became de facto non-aligned but many of them soon appeared with aspirations to get closer to western institutions and eventually integrate into them. The former non-Soviet Warsaw Treaty member-states were small or medium size without exception. It meant they wanted to leave their historically uncertain status behind and did not want to be exposed to the blowing wind of history any longer. Integration meant to find a place and settle in a new framework.

• It was obvious that western institutions had to reconsider their Cold War function. It was the clearest in the case of NATO which was deprived of a well-defined adversary. Although it has survived the landslide change of European security it is still debated where it would be going in the years to come. The European Communities that had very little to do with East-central Europe and Eastern Europe before had to decide what to do about its eastern neighbourhood. It had to also invent an agenda that would no longer be confined exclusively to economic matters. The Council of Europe also had to consider whether continuing to focus upon individual human rights cases keeps it relevant or whether it should shift its attention to those major political issues, which are essential for democratic transformation.

• For a while it seemed all-European cooperation had a chance, and the only institution that reflected that, the CSCE, would gain central role in the emerging architecture. It was the organization that reacted the fastest to the changing reality and thus positioned itself fairly well for the change as of late-1990. Furthermore, it was extremely well positioned as the complexity

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of security problems were more apparent than ever and thus an institution with a comprehensive agenda could carry the hope to tackle them. The illusions of all-European cooperation are long gone and have given place to the adjustment (and expansion) of western institutions and the establishment of new organizations in the East of the continent.

- The post-Soviet space did not aspire to join western institutions upon the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Interestingly, it did not establish a web of consolidated institutions of its own either. This is noteworthy as for historical reasons states in the former Soviet area that were linked by statehood for many decades and often centuries should have been most prone to integration. The lack of integration was due to the one-sided western oriented policy of the leadership of the most important successor state, the Russian Federation in the early 1990s as well as to the absence of the democratic traditions of integration. The only organization that was established upon the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), was probably correctly characterized by the first President of independent Ukraine, Leonid Kravchuk as the ‘means of a civilized divorce’. Since the beginning of this century there has been some still inconclusive efforts to integrate but no longer with the chance to extend to the entire post-Soviet space.

The new architectural debate
The current European security architecture has been the result of an organic process and reflects an evolution of nearly two decades. It has accommodated most European states well. There are many states in the Euro-Atlantic area, which see no reason to embark upon a new architecture, sometimes not even upon a debate about it. It is undeniable, however that a certain dissatisfaction has remained and some states have expressed it regularly. The expression of dissatisfaction focussed usually upon concrete institutions and matters. The OSCE since 2000 has faced this particularly often. Claims concerning the inbalance between its various dimensions and thus the overemphasis on the human dimension and in that framework on democratic transformation with some emphasis on elections has reflected this.

The situation changed with the launch of the idea of a European Security Treaty by President Medvedev in June 2008. It started and continued as a vague idea that made it fairly difficult for states, organizations and observers to take a clear stance. It seems that tactical and strategic reasons coexisted behind the initiative. They could be summarized as follows:

- It was the most important and apparent reason to improve the European security situation for Russia: Stop the change of the European political status quo and, as necessary, reverse it, with particular emphasis upon the discontinuation of western institutions gaining further ground.
- It has offered a systematic expression of Russia’s dissatisfaction with the current situation and changed the level of analysis. Rather than continuing to