

In relation to security, the CSCE conceived and developed confidence and security building measures. They are essentially mechanisms for mutual reassurance. They were designed to take the political sting out of routine military activities and in that context provided means for enhancing transparency and predictability. Equally important they projected an ethos of cooperation, and instituted a habit of cooperation, into the competitive field of the quest of states for security, capitalizing on shared interests and thereby contributing substance to the concept of common security. The challenge of the CSCE in the times ahead will be its ability to shape a process of transforming the concept of common security into a system of collective security.

Security in the era of the Cold War was essentially defined in terms of the classical categories of protection against trans-border military attacks. In a very real sense it remained a chimera unattainable for any states; nuclear weapons and the means of their long-range delivery had blown the roofs off the territorial states, the post-Westphalian system was coming to an end. With the end of the Cold War, security assumed new dimensions involving the imperative of community building, transcending the territorial state, often and mistakenly referred to as the nation state, in order to contain the threat of inside and across-border ethnic strife and communal conflict. The CSCE also faces the challenge of containing and transforming such conflicts in the years ahead.

The CSCE constituted a process more than an institution. It attempted to link institutions rather than substituting for them. It linked the institutions of two competing orders in Europe. Now one of the two orders has for all intents and purposes disappeared. The Warsaw Pact and COMECON belong to the past. The states of Central and Eastern Europe seek association with, and preferably admittance to, the core institutions of the West -- NATO, the EC, the WEU and the Council of Europe. They seek security against the turmoil of the East as well as against the somewhat more remote risk of imperial reimposition. They seek security against the dangers of economic and ecological collapse as well as against the spectre of ethnically based nationalism. They seek prosperity through integration into the successful economies of the West, trying to overcome decades of retardation imposed by communist mismanagement. The