



Improving the Conditions of Success for the WMD/DVs Free Zone in the Middle East Overcoming the Core Challenges by Intercontinental Learning

Bernd W. Kubbig and Christian Weidlich
in Cooperation with Tadatoshi Akiba, Emiliano J. Buis, Edward M. Ifft, Tsutomu Ishiguri,
Robert A. Jacobs, Kwa Chong Guan, Tanya Ogilvie-White, and Dave Stewart

The goal of the SIX CONTINENT INITIATIVE is to provide experiences and ideas from successful contexts in terms of nuclear weapon free zones (NWFZ) and nuclear arms control/reduction measures. Given the difficult situation in general in the Middle East and in particular with respect to the difficult pre-Helsinki talks in Glion and Geneva, Switzerland, our approach is designed to offer (not to 'export' or even impose) incentives and broader perspectives for learning, i.e. for adopting and adapting experiences, successes, and opportunities. For the Middle East this implies giving up the traditionally fixed and non-compromise-oriented positions of various regional actors which lie at the heart of the difficult road to the Helsinki Conference where a zone free of nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons (WMD) plus their delivery vehicles (DVs) is to be discussed for the Middle East.

We see the SIX CONTINENT INITIATIVE as a complementary effort of assisting Ambassador Jaakko Laajava and his team in their impressive endeavor in making the conference in the Finnish capital happen, successful, and sustainable. We consider the conference process a necessary and vital element in a regional peace strategy aimed at reducing if not overcoming the specifically pronounced security dilemma in the region, defined as zero-sum thinking, unilateral arms build-ups, and intense threat perceptions. As an alternative, we suggest a cooperative security concept, which builds, among others, on the principles that real security cannot be achieved *against*, but

only *with* your neighbor(s) and that under certain circumstances, *fewer* weapons can mean *more* security.

Tackling Structural Stumbling Blocks by Inter-regional Learning

The ACADEMIC PEACE ORCHESTRA's year-long experiences in working jointly with colleagues from the conflict region in our Track II activities reveal that – politically diversified as regional experts are – they are skeptical of all proposals from outside their region aimed at inducing mental changes in their traditional thinking. The standard argument is that all regions are different from the Middle East and that any attempt at inter-regional learning may be misleading or only illustrative at best. An additional counter position is the following one: We have done everything to improve the situation in the Middle East – it is the other side which now has to deliver.

The SIX CONTINENT INITIATIVE in general and this POLICY BRIEF in particular are designed in a way that deals with structural stumbling blocks in order to make progress on the way to Helsinki. In addition, we intend to make the case for a zonal reduction/disarmament process as the nucleus of a cooperative security concept, i.e. in the sense that those developments, irrespective of their affinity to the situation in the Middle East, are not carved in stone, but are human made and, therefore, can be altered again. Each of the following points addresses one of the structural stumbling

Abstract

The SIX CONTINENT INITIATIVE is designed to offer incentives for intercontinental learning, i.e. for adopting and adapting arms control and disarmament experiences, successes, and opportunities, in order to support the efforts of establishing a WMD/DVs Free Zone in the Middle East. This POLICY BRIEF therefore addresses seven structural stumbling blocks: the fixation on the nuclear dimension; the management of trust; the "sequencing issue"; the "conceptual gap" regarding regional security and arms control; the lack of dialogue structures; the prejudice that nuclear weapons do no harm unless used; and, finally, the lack of empathy and patience. The experiences and measures discussed in this POLICY BRIEF may well expedite regional and international discussion of how to move forward towards zonal disarmament: as a vital element of a regional peace strategy, the planned Helsinki Conference represents the 'golden opportunity' to develop a (more) cooperative regional security concept, which builds on the principles that real security cannot be achieved against, but only with your neighbor(s) and that under certain circumstances, fewer weapons can mean more security. ■

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Bernd W. Kubbig is Project Director at the Peace Research Institute Frankfurt (PRIF) and an Adjunct Professor (Privatdozent) at Goethe University, Frankfurt. Since 1999 he has directed the program on Missile Defense Research International and since 2006 he has been coordinating the international expert group “Multilateral Study Group on the Establishment of a Missile Free Zone in the Middle East”. In 2011, he founded the ACADEMIC PEACE ORCHESTRA MIDDLE EAST and is the Editor of the POLICY BRIEF series. He specializes in U.S. foreign and security policy, especially on the Middle East, missile defense, and space.



Christian Weidlich is a Research Associate at the Peace Research Institute Frankfurt (PRIF) and on the staff of the ACADEMIC PEACE ORCHESTRA MIDDLE EAST as a Co-Editor of the POLICY BRIEF series. He holds an MA in International Studies/Peace and Conflict Studies from Goethe University, Frankfurt, and a BA in Political Science from Münster University. His research interests include arms control in the Middle East as well as military robotics and the automation of warfare.



Tadatoshi Akiba served as the Mayor of the City of Hiroshima, Japan, from 1999 to 2011. He was also the President of Mayors for Peace, a global network of mayors striving to achieve nuclear disarmament, from 2003-2011. In August 2010, he received the Ramon Magsaysay Award for his advocacy for nuclear disarmament, and in April 2013 he was awarded the Otto Hahn Peace Medal from the United Nations Association of Germany (DGVN) and the Governing Mayor of Berlin. He holds a PhD in mathematics from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Cambridge, MA.



Emiliano J. Buis is a Professor and Researcher in International Law, Disarmament, and Non-proliferation at the NPSGlobal Foundation's Regional Postgraduate Course, at the University of Buenos Aires, and at the Central University in Azul. He is an Adjunct Permanent Researcher at the National Scientific and Technological Research Council and a Global Fellow of the Carnegie Council for Ethics in International Affairs, New York. He was a Legal Adviser on non-proliferation, disarmament, and export control at the Argentine Ministry of Foreign Relations.



Edward M. Ifft is an Adjunct Professor in the Security Studies Program at Georgetown University's Walsh School of Foreign Service. He is a retired member of the Senior Executive Service and a Foreign Affairs Officer at the U.S. State Department. He has been involved in negotiating and implementing many of the key arms control agreements over the past 40 years, including the first and second Strategic Arms Limitation Talks and the first Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) as well as the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). He holds a PhD in Physics.

blocks and provides positive experiences which show how these challenges have been tackled in other contexts, times, and regions.

Overcoming the Fixation on the Nuclear Dimension

In general, we observe a fixation on the nuclear dimension of the Helsinki mandate; the biological and chemical components as well as the question of delivery vehicles are usually ignored. Egyptian diplomacy centers on nuclear disarmament and usually refers to the example of South Africa,

which unilaterally destroyed its nuclear arsenal. While this is of course true, it is more important to draw attention to the fact that South Africa in fact destroyed its entire WMD arsenal plus their delivery vehicles, i.e. nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons plus missiles, in the early-1990s.¹

The fixation on the nuclear dimension does not allow progress – the comprehensive WMD/DVs approach, however, makes full use of the wise Helsinki mandate and allows for constructive bargaining and actual compromise. The comprehensive South African example, which Israel usually dismisses as a role model because it was ‘so different’, for many experts remains the most likely technical model Israel might follow in the context of the establishment of a regional WMD/DVs Free Zone.² Therefore, our Israeli colleagues should directly work with South African experts on security-compatible transparency. The Egyptian diplomacy should make use of the Helsinki mandate and explore new opportunities of how the different categories of weaponry as well as related trust-building measures allow for comprehensive agreement – without losing sight of the nuclear dimension.

Guaranteeing a ‘Management of Trust’ between Competitors

This is another variation on the theme that ‘those zones and cases are so different’. Again, simplistic views can be avoided by identifying concrete transfer potentials: in the case of Argentina and Brazil, which have experienced a political rapprochement, the ‘management of trust’ is an important aspect. Both countries developed via the Brazilian-Argentine Agency for Accounting and Control of Nuclear Materials (ABACC) a cooperation model with an emphasis on verification, which provides much more than a framework for ‘neighbor-to-neighbor’ safeguards and mutual control at a regional level.³ The ABACC concept constitutes a ‘living proof’ of how the Argentine-Brazilian relationship developed into a successful way of overcoming historical differences. These experiences provide ample opportunities for inter-continental learning. Therefore, we suggest that the ABACC secretariat invites interested Track I and II actors from the Middle East to Rio de Janeiro and Buenos Aires and establishes an (in)formal but a continuous working relationship with them. The Facilitator



and his team should be involved in such a process as well.

Developing a Complimentary Approach to the Sequencing Issue of Confidence-building Measures vs. Disarmament

This traditional bone of contention reflects the more fundamental question whether the overall reduction of political tensions among and between states has to precede any arms control/initiatives. Israel and Egypt have struggled on this question at least since the Arms Control and Regional Security (ACRS) talks in the first half of the 1990s and the ‘sequencing issue’ has evolved into a guarantee for stalemate in any discussion on WMD disarmament in the Middle East. The nuclear arms control talks and treaties of the East-West context show, however, that it is not a question of either confidence-building measures or arms control tackling the weapons themselves. Both have been implemented in parallel.

In the East-West conflict there were few military contacts and almost no exchange of military information before the arms control process began. One very useful approach to building trust was a willingness to experiment and try to solve specific technical problems even before political agreement on these problems had been reached. Early in the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) process, other bilateral agreements were negotiated which were not directly related to SALT, but also involved security issues such as the Hot Line Agreement. These measures showed that cooperation was possible and mutually beneficial – and that confidence building and arms control go hand-in-hand.⁴

In addition, there is a great deal of experience regarding constraining and eliminating WMD and their means of delivery in both bilateral and multilateral agreements. This should be used to the maximum extent for establishing a WMD/DVs Free Zone in the Middle East. Most of the countries in the zone are already parties to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), and Biological Weapons Convention (BWC), and signatories to the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). With regard to the latter agreement, for about 18 years before there were even any negotiations on a CTBT, a group of scientific



Tsutomu Ishiguri is a Professor at the Kyoto University of Foreign Studies and the former Director of the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific. He organized numerous international conferences, including 19 UN conferences in Japan on disarmament, and played an important role in assisting Central Asian states in drafting the Central Asian Nuclear Weapon Free Zone Treaty, which entered into force on March 21, 2009.



Robert A. Jacobs is a Research Associate Professor at the Hiroshima Peace Institute and a member of the Graduate Faculty of International Studies at Hiroshima City University. He is an executive editor of the *Asian Journal of Peacebuilding*. His work is focused on the social and cultural effects of radiation exposures on individuals, families, and communities. He is the Lead Researcher of the Global Hibakusha Project that conducts oral history interviews in radiation-exposed communities around the world, primarily at nuclear test sites, sites of nuclear production, and nuclear accident sites.



Kwa Chong Guan is a Senior Fellow at the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies at the Nanyang Technological University, Singapore. He was the Co-Chair of the Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific (CSCAP) from 2010-2012, and continues as Co-Chair of the CSCAP Singapore National Committee. He is also an Adjunct Associate Professor at the History Department of the National University of Singapore. Kwa started his career in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs before moving to the Ministry of Defence.



Tanya Ogilvie-White is Research Director at the Centre for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament (CNND), Australian National University, Canberra. Previously, she was Senior Analyst at the Australian Strategic Policy Institute, Stanton Nuclear Security Fellow at the International Institute for Strategic Studies, London, and Senior Lecturer in International Relations at the University of Canterbury, Christchurch, New Zealand. She is co-author of “Slaying the Nuclear Dragon: Disarmament Dynamics in the Twenty-First Century” (University of Georgia Press, 2012), and “Nuclear Weapons: The State of Play” (CNND, forthcoming).



Dave Steward is a former South African diplomat. He was appointed Permanent Representative to the UN in 1981 and involved in the negotiations concerning Namibia's independence (1983-1985). He served as Head of the Communication Service, Chief Government Spokesman and was appointed as Director-General in the Office of President FW de Klerk in November 1992. Steward also held this position when de Klerk served as Deputy President under Nelson Mandela. In 1999, he co-authored de Klerk's autobiography and helped to establish the FW de Klerk Foundation and in 2006 its Centre for Constitutional Rights. Since then he has served as the Foundation's Executive Director.

experts worked on defining the seismic system that would be needed if there were a ban on nuclear tests. The results of this work were a great help when negotiations actually took place. Because this work was strictly scientific and not connected to any ongoing negotiation, it was essentially free from political intrusions. It would be advisable for the Facilitator and his team to consider the establishment of a similar technical experts group on the modalities of the WMD/DVs Free Zone. Well-developed regimes, and highly capable international verification methods and organizations already exist; these should be used to the maximum extent.

Box No. 1: Remarks by Christiane Hohmann, Head of the Division for Nuclear Disarmament and Arms Control, Federal Foreign Office of Germany



The question of how to advance the project of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery in the Middle East in general and the Helsinki Conference in particular is one of the dominant issues in the current NPT review cycle. We all agree that we have to make headway and that the conference should be scheduled rather sooner than later. However, at the same time we see lack of agreement on how to get to Helsinki. I cannot but commend the tireless efforts of the Facilitator and his team to convene the conference in Helsinki.

We all know: There are many tricky questions still to be sorted out. Many of these intricate questions are primarily questions for the states of the region to resolve in direct dialogue amongst themselves. Still, taking

one step back and looking at the issue from a different perspective can sometimes be helpful to overcome an impasse. A comparative approach of looking into lessons learned in regional arms control on a world-wide-scale provides valuable insights for the Middle East. Against the backdrop of our experience in Europe, I would venture to say that there is much to be learned from the East-West Conflict. We could even discuss whether the situation in the Middle East today might be even more daunting than what we saw in the early seventies in Europe. In Europe, the two blocks were still in conflict-mode, but at least willing to talk to each other. It was the strategy of Willy Brandt, the so-called ‘New Ostpolitik’, which partly paved the way for an understanding that non-talking was simply no alternative.

This fact, which is one prerequisite for moving ahead, has barely been recognized in the Middle East today. There is much more talking about each other, also in this NPT review cycle, than with each other. There seems also a desire to decide outcomes by fiat rather than negotiate them. In Europe, this approach did not work and I personally doubt that it would work today. However, the convening of the informal consultations in Glion and Geneva by Amb. Laajava was the cautious beginning of a direct dialogue among all states of the region – this might be a historical moment indeed. Time will tell. And there was new readiness to compromise on certain questions. All sides will have to be continuously prepared to enter into this endeavor with an open mind and a willingness to look for feasible ways to achieve the goal of a zone.

As far as *intra-regional* learning is concerned, Middle Eastern actors can draw upon lessons from the regional arms control/CSBMs-related achievements and failures. In the ACRS talks of the early 1990s Middle Eastern states had practical and generally encouraging experience in implementing CSBMs. Future talks on the WMD/DVs Free Zone therefore do not need to start from scratch: the ACRS Working Group led to important CSBMs even though they were not implemented. These included agreements on prior notification of military exercises and the establishment of three Regional Security Centers.⁵

Overcoming the “Conceptual Gap” regarding Regional Security and Arms Control

A variation of the issue of sequencing is the underlying question of whether the WMD/DVs Free Zone constitutes a tool for achieving more regional security or whether it is the ultimate goal. In the Israeli view, the zone cannot be reached without arrangements involving the major extra-regional powers and without having clear-cut facts on good inter-state relations which among others include the diplomatic recognition of all states and the settlement of controversial border issues. For the Arab states, and Egypt in particular, the establishment of the Middle East zone continues to be the ultimate goal, which overrides all other regional security issues and precludes further security dialogue or cooperation with Israel. This “deep conceptual gap [...] in the region on approaches toward regional security and arms control arrangements” was the main reason for the postponement of the Helsinki Conference in November 2012.⁶

Both the Israeli and the Egyptian/Arab view, however, miss the fact that the zonal efforts obviously seem to be the only issue area providing a forum for Israel, Iran, and the Arab states to meet. In fact, the informal preparatory consultations in Glion and Geneva have been the first direct talks between Israel, Iran, and (almost all) Arab states in 19 years, where the debate raises the question how to assess and concretize the basic and/or added value of the zone in terms of security and safety. Hence, their continuation in good faith remains “the only viable way forward,” as H.E. Amb. Lars Backström, Deputy Facilitator of the Helsinki Conference, concluded at the SIX CONTINENT INITIATIVE’S Side-Event in New York.

Strengthening of Sustainable Dialogue Structures as a Prerequisite for the Helsinki Conference

Building sustainable dialogue structures is never an easy task – whether for the Middle East, where such structures basically do not exist, or any other region. The example of the establishment of the Nuclear Weapon Free Zone in Central Asia offers ways to tackle this controversial issue in the Middle East. It shows how important it is to familiarize the different actors with each other, using all means available from informal



meetings via expert conferences to high-level negotiations.⁷ The Central Asian states have successfully taken a step-by-step approach working on the principle that the zone should be established on arrangements freely arrived at by the countries of the region. Therefore, the introduction of a habit of dialogue in the Middle East/Gulf should be useful. Experts from like-minded states and international organizations such as the United Nations should support the process to the greatest extent possible. At a later stage, the interested states could then prepare a compilation of elements (not a treaty text) for a future treaty-based zone in the region.

A second example for the perhaps greater attractiveness (and transferability) of less formal communication and cooperative structures can be found in the Asia-Pacific region. The Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific (CSCAP) with its study groups on regional security could work as a role model for creating cooperation-oriented forums in the Middle East. CSCAP, which is the official Track II mechanism of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Regional Forum, has been instrumental in establishing and maintaining dialogue about regional security issues since the 1990s, helping to raise awareness of shared vulnerabilities and build consensus on the need to address them. The organization's approach reflects the mode of communication that has evolved within the ASEAN since it was founded in 1967, which has come to be known as the 'ASEAN Way'.⁸

This ASEAN style of diplomacy differs from that of the West, which is perceived as 'formalistic' and focused on 'legalistic' procedures and 'Cartesian' argumentation. The ASEAN Way instead stresses patience, informality, pragmatism, and above all, unforced consensus. Over the years, CSCAP has slowly transformed a regional mind-set from an old security paradigm to a new cooperative security vision through institutional dialogue. This is arguably its greatest achievement, and is the most significant take-away from the CSCAP experience, since it shows that mental change in security matters is possible. In this respect, Middle Eastern actors may think about launching a CSCAP-type dialogue to discuss regional security challenges and could consider adopting an approach similar to the ASEAN Way to promote effective communication.

Disproving the Prejudice that Nuclear Weapons Do No Harm Unless Used

There is an immense toll taken on human beings and communities by the production and testing of nuclear weapons, even before their use is contemplated. Historically, the mere pursuit of a nuclear weapons program has resulted in sickness, mortality, and the long-term radioactive contamination of the environment. For each of the nuclear powers today, the programs of production and testing of nuclear weapons have led to devastated lives and communities even though the weapons themselves were not used. This history should help to facilitate the understanding that the mere pursuit of a nuclear weapon program results in casualties, illness, and environmental catastrophe.

The aspect of nuclear weapon testing was one of the main driving forces behind the establishment of the South Pacific Nuclear Weapon Free Zone by the Treaty of Rarotonga. From 1946-1958, the United States conducted atmospheric and underwater tests in the Marshall Islands and on Christmas Island; the United Kingdom conducted atmospheric tests from 1952-1957 on Australian territory; and France carried out nuclear detonations at its test site in the Polynesian atolls from 1966-1996. Besides being concerned with nuclear testing in their region and its vicinity, the regional states were also worried about the dumping of nuclear waste at sea, fearing to further increase the radioactive contamination of the marine environment.⁹ The same holds true for the establishment of the Semipalatinsk Treaty in September 2006 on the establishment of the Central Asian Nuclear Weapons Free Zone in the territories of Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Uzbekistan, and Kazakhstan. The governmental initiative – primarily driven by the ecological concerns of the states involved – could build on a powerful anti-testing campaign, known as the Nevada-Semipalatinsk Movement, which emerged in Nevada and Kazakhstan, home to the principal Soviet test site, in the 1980s.

In this respect, the establishment of a WMD/DVs Free Zone in the Middle East is essential to curbing the possibility of escalating nuclear tensions and threats of a nuclear conflict, however, real damage is inflicted on the earth and in human

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Box No. 2: Introductory Remarks by Michèle Auga, Executive Director, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung's New York Office



In many countries of the Middle East, the domestic political changes that began in 2011 have unsettled a number of long-standing regional arrangements. What quickly became labeled the “Arab Spring” developed into highly uneven transitions throughout the region: From a relatively peaceful transition of power in Tunisia over the resurgence of the military as the key power broker in Egypt, to full-fledged civil war exacerbated by international contributions in Syria. As a result of this highly volatile environment, new security challenges become piled upon unresolved issues such as the stalled Israeli-Palestinian peace process and the nature

and stage of the nuclear program of Iran. Against the backdrop of perceived and real security dilemmas that the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung became involved in what the 2010 NPT Review Conference called for: to hold a conference on the establishment of a WMD/DVs Free Zone in the Middle East. The Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung and its partners supported this endeavor on a number of occasions over the last three years. Throughout these debates, three themes stood out.

First, trust: It is one of the accepted principles for UN peacekeepers that their engagement is doomed to fail when there is no peace to keep. In a similar vein, can trust-building exercise build trust in a region where there seems so little of it? The way forward will certainly need new mutual confidence-building measures (CBMs). These can include discussions on conventional and non-conventional weapons and the creation of an organization that would be in charge of regional cooperation and security. In Europe this was done with the European Helsinki process, which ultimately led to the creation of the Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). While there have been some attempts in the past, including the civil society Conference on Security and Cooperation in the Middle East (CSCME) initiative, these efforts need to be significantly increased and developed.

Second, the question of sequencing: how realistic is it for nuclear disarmament to appear on the agenda as long as the question of peace between Israel and Palestine seems to overshadow everything? Here it was felt that it would be constructive to have parallel tracks: let us begin now with a serious discussion about the concrete steps for a WMD free zone in the region, despite the work needed towards a resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the creation of a new regional regime of peace and security.

Third, the role of actors from outside the region: much attention was given, for example the E3+3 talks with Iran, the abolition of Syria’s chemical weapons, and the consequences from the Ukraine crisis, and what potentially negative effects these could have for the destiny of a WMD free Middle East. But staying on the positive side, the parameters of a Middle East nuclear and WMD/DVs Free Zone can be based on and benefit from the treaties that have already been negotiated: The Treaty of Tlatelolco (Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean), the Treaty of Pelindaba (Nuclear Weapon Free Zone in Africa), the Treaty of Rarotonga (South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty), the Bangkok Treaty (Southeast Asian Nuclear Weapon Free Zone), and the Semipalatinsk Treaty (Central Asian Nuclear Weapon Free Zone). These experiences will be helpful in figuring out the technical and institutional measures necessary as well as developing constructive proposals for another Helsinki Process, this time on the WMD Free Zone in the Middle East.

testing of nuclear weapons should be central to the political agenda, including by emphasizing the urgent need to bring the CTBT into force, and by adding the environmental impact of nuclear weapons as an important dimension of the humanitarian discussion.

Tackling the Lack of Empathy, Patience, and Faith in Cumbersome Incremental Processes

Finally, another structural stumbling block that hinders progress on cooperative security arrangements in general – and the Helsinki Conference on WMD/DVs Free Zone in particular – is the empathy deficit. Bringing decades-long adversaries to stretch out their hands to one another will make it necessary to develop new tools, which combine the narrow military focus and emphasize the need for broad-based civil engagement. Two examples in this direction have been presented at the SIX CONTINENT INITIATIVE’S Side-Event: *Mayors for Peace* and the *World Peace Park* in the demilitarized zone (DMZ) on the Korean peninsula.

Mayors for Peace, which brings together mayors from all over the world, has worked over the past decade to create a world free of nuclear weapons together with other civil society organizations and individuals in addition to like-minded countries. In the Middle East, the initiative is encouraged by the fact that cities from Israel, Palestine, Iran, and other countries in the region are united in their pursuit of creating a nuclear weapons free world. For example, 56 Israeli cities are members including Jerusalem, Haifa, and Ashkelon as well as 28 cities from the Palestinian territories including East Jerusalem, Bethlehem, and Gaza. It is also impressive to see that 183 Iranian cities and 139 Iraqi cities have joined this initiative and so have many more cities from the region. These cities can create a broad base on which civil society can stand to demand that nation states work toward creating a WMD/DVs Free Zone in the Middle East. In order for this to succeed, more open discussions and exchanges of opinion in cities in these countries and regions must be encouraged. In fact, citizens working through and with cities can put tremendous pressure on national governments to accept such a mandate.

communities long before such weapons are even assembled and deployed. Therefore, the negative impact of the production and

At a Korea-related conference in early March 2014 in Seoul, one panel took up



a long-standing and creative project that could be significant for the future of the peninsula and surrounding areas: the establishment of a 'DMZ World Peace Park' between both Koreas. The idea behind this initiative is that the demilitarized area has been untouched by humans for nearly half a century, following its devastation during war. Nature's recovery has provided a sanctuary for native plants and animals – a laboratory for advancing scientific understanding of natural processes and for educating the world. Building such a Peace Park together, the two Koreas could rebuild common traditions and consider a common future. Scientific exploration, sustainable development and eco-tourism could profitably replace costly and dangerous military confrontation. Yet, the key factor remains diplomatically engaging the North. Most experts believe that the objective and scientific merits of the project would have a better chance of succeeding if it is launched by the North (the 'unwilling partner'). The transfer potential for the Middle East is vivid: its importance lies in transcending expert forums by creating 'civil oases' where people can reach out to each other and develop empathy.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This POLICY BRIEF has addressed seven structural stumbling blocks that so far hinder any progress on the way to convening the Helsinki Conference on a WMD/DVs Free Zone: the fixation on the nuclear dimension; the management of trust; the sequencing issue of confidence building and arms control; the "conceptual gap" regarding regional security and arms control; the absence of sustainable dialogue structures in the Middle East; the prejudice that nuclear weapons (and other weapons of mass destruction) do no harm unless used; and, finally, the lack of empathy, patience, and faith in incremental processes.

By tackling these stumbling blocks, this POLICY BRIEF has provided experiences and ideas from successful contexts in terms of NWFZs and nuclear arms control/reduction measures. It is meant to offer and not to 'export' or even impose incentives and broader perspectives for intercontinental learning. In this respect, the disarmament cases presented vividly show that the first steps towards successful results usually

Endnotes

1. South Africa was able to abolish its nuclear capability because the threat that had prompted its development had disappeared by the end of the 1980s. With the conclusion of the Tripartite Agreement between Cuba, Angola, and South Africa in 1988, the subsequent withdrawal of Cuban forces from Angola, and the collapse of the Soviet Union, South Africa's primary strategic threats had evaporated. In addition, President FW de Klerk's constitutional initiative in February 1990 had defused the main reasons for internal conflict and for tensions with South Africa's neighbors. For a detailed analysis of the motivations for and the technicalities of the comprehensive WMD/DVs disarmament in South Africa, see R.F. 'Pik' Botha, Dave Steward, and Waldo Stumpf (with a special statement by FW de Klerk) (2013) *Nuclear Disarmament in South Africa – Historic Events and the Lessons for the Middle East*, POLICY BRIEF NOS. 28/29, ACADEMIC PEACE ORCHESTRA MIDDLE EAST, Frankfurt: Peace Research Institute Frankfurt.
2. See Edward M. Ifft et al. (2013) *The Specific Verification Requirements of a WMD/DVs Free Zone in the Middle East – Lessons Learned from Existing Arms Control and Disarmament Treaties*, POLICY BRIEF No. 17, ACADEMIC PEACE ORCHESTRA MIDDLE EAST, Frankfurt: Peace Research Institute Frankfurt.
3. On the ABACC concept and its implementation between Argentina and Brazil, see Irma Argüello and Emiliano J. Buis (2014) *From Rio to Helsinki? Advantages and Shortcomings of the ABACC Concept and Its Possible Application in the Middle East*, POLICY BRIEF No. 32, ACADEMIC PEACE ORCHESTRA MIDDLE EAST, Frankfurt: Peace Research Institute Frankfurt.
4. This argument is outlined in greater detail in Edward M. Ifft (2014) *Confidence-building Measures and Arms Control in the Middle East – Offering a Different Perspective on the Issue of 'Sequencing'*, POLICY BRIEF No. 40, ACADEMIC PEACE ORCHESTRA MIDDLE EAST, Frankfurt: Peace Research Institute Frankfurt; see also Marc Finaud and Anna Péczeli (2013) *Modest Confidence- and Security-building Measures for the Middle East – No-first Use Declarations, Transparency Measures, and Communication Structures*, POLICY BRIEF No. 20, ACADEMIC PEACE ORCHESTRA MIDDLE EAST, Frankfurt: Peace Research Institute Frankfurt.
5. On the ACRS talks, see Emily Landau and Dalia Dassa Kaye (2012) 'Disarmament efforts in the region: lessons from the Arms Control and Regional Security Talks', in Bernd W. Kubbig and Sven Eric Fikenscher (eds) *Arms Control and Missile Proliferation in the Middle East*, London: Routledge, 27-38.
6. '2012 Conference on a Middle East Zone Free of Weapons of Mass Destruction (MEWMDFZ)', Press Statement, U.S. Department of State, November 23, 2012. Online, available at <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2012/11/200987.htm> (September 10, 2014). See also Bernd W. Kubbig (2014) *U.S./NATO Missile Defense in Europe – Implications for Iran and the Two Major Conveners of the Helsinki Conference*, POLICY BRIEF NOS. 37/38, ACADEMIC PEACE ORCHESTRA MIDDLE EAST, Frankfurt: Peace Research Institute Frankfurt.
7. Tsutomu Ishiguri (2014) *The Central Asian Nuclear Weapon Free Zone – Lessons Learned for the Helsinki Process*, POLICY BRIEF No. 41, ACADEMIC PEACE ORCHESTRA MIDDLE EAST, Frankfurt: Peace Research Institute Frankfurt.
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Further Reading

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begin with talking to one another. The Glicion/Geneva informal consultations constitute an important forum, but they are just the beginning of a sustainable dialogue. It is vital to continue all necessary efforts to convince regional states to participate in the Helsinki Conference. The crucial countries in the region are likely to do so only if that is compatible with their own security interests and if they have something to gain. A number of questions still need to be agreed upon, among them the agenda, the institutional framework, the format, and appropriate procedures. This, however, implies the Middle Eastern opponents giving up the traditionally fixed and uncompromising positions creating stumbling blocks on the difficult road to the Helsinki Conference and to the establishment of a WMD/DVs Free Zone.

Realizing that it took other regions decades to develop cooperative security structures, it will be central for the Middle East to empower regional actors and tackle the missing faith in incremental processes. In this respect educating especially young diplomats, academics, and journalists from the Middle East on conflict prevention, mediation, regional cooperation, and arms

control as well as disarmament approaches also continues to be an important task. These efforts could be coupled with the intercontinental learning activities whose benefits might help to develop specific curricula for those particular target groups. Reaching out to potential ‘agents of change’ would complement badly needed efforts to enhance regional norm building. All these *capacity-building endeavors* could and should start now, but they will pay off only in the mid- and long-term.

The experiences and measures discussed in this POLICY BRIEF may well provide impetus for regional and international discussion on how to move forward; they could even become part of the Helsinki initiative, which itself is a vital element of a regional peace strategy which aims at reducing if not overcoming the specifically pronounced security dilemma in the region. It still represents the ‘golden opportunity’ to develop a (more) cooperative security concept for the Middle East, which builds on the principles that real security cannot be achieved *against*, but only *with* your neighbor(s) and that under certain circumstances, *fewer* weapons could mean *more* security. ■

About the ACADEMIC PEACE ORCHESTRA MIDDLE EAST (APOME)

The ORCHESTRA is the follow-up project of the “Multilateral Study Group on the Establishment of a Missile Free Zone in the Middle East”. The ACADEMIC PEACE ORCHESTRA MIDDLE EAST is a classical Track II initiative: it consists of some 100 experts – mainly from the Middle East/Gulf, one of the most conflict-ridden areas of the world. The ORCHESTRA is meeting regularly in working groups (CHAMBER ORCHESTRA UNITS) on specific topics in the context of a workshop cycle from 2011-2014. The main goal of this initiative is to shape the prospective Middle East Conference on the establishment of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery vehicles agreed upon by the international community in May 2010. For this reason, these experts develop ideas, concepts, and background information in a series of POLICY BRIEFS which are the results of intense discussions within the CHAMBER ORCHESTRA UNITS. In this framework, the broader normative Cooperative Security Concept will be further developed, embedded, and institutionalized in the region. At the same time, the ORCHESTRA meetings serve as venues for confidence building among the experts. The networking activities of PRIF’s Project Group are documented by the ATLAS on Track II research activities in or about the Middle East/Gulf region. The Academic Peace Orchestra Middle East is supported by the Foreign Ministry of Norway, the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, the Friedrich Ebert Foundation, and the Protestant Church of Hesse and Nassau.

Editor/Project Coordinator: Adj. Prof. Dr. Bernd W. Kubbig

Co-Editors: Dorte Hühnert, BA,
and Christian Weidlich, MA.

Peace Research Institute Frankfurt,
Baseler Straße 27-31, D-60329 Frankfurt am Main,
Phone: +49-69-95910436, Fax: +49-69-558481,
E-Mail: kubbig@hsfk.de,
Internet: www.academicpeaceorchestra.com



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