Fault Lines between East and West: Which Levers Can Rebuild Confidence?

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ABSTRACT
Several regional fault lines will define the character of relations between East and West in the coming years. It is already evident that notably in the Baltic region, both NATO and Russia have squandered a great deal of confidence, which will have to be rebuilt elsewhere. East-West relations today are more about mutual perceptions, provocations, and interpretations of intentions than ever before. Most long-standing negotiation formats are dysfunctional. The risk of miscalculations is huge, but there is also potential to rebuild trust and recalibrate relations in certain areas of mutual concern.

Introduction

Never before in the history of East-West relations has there been less direct talk between the two sides. To be sure, there are no longer any tank divisions facing each other or large-scale military exercises being carried out. And while rearmament is taking place, it is not to Cold War dimensions. Yet the level of dialogue between Russia and the West has reached an all-time low.

Because neither Washington nor Moscow for various reasons no longer consider themselves integral part of the European security order, both of them do not feel obliged to abide by agreements that from their perspective are perceived as outdated and obsolete.

While the Russian leadership currently prioritizes the completion of the modernization programme of the Russian armed forces, the administration of US President Donald Trump does not push the arms control agenda either. It camouflages its lack of interest with talk about a “new era of arms control” that abandons the cold war era type of bilateral treaties and instead brings both Russia and China to the negotiation table\textsuperscript{1}. Europe, in turn, is deeply divided on all of these issues. While one group of states adheres to existing treaties and principles, such as the Paris Charter, the Budapest Memorandum, and the NATO-Russia Founding Act,

\textsuperscript{1}General Debate Statement by Thomas G. DiNanno, Deputy Assistant Secretary and Senior Bureau Official, Bureau of Arms Control, Verification and Compliance, US Department of State, UN General Assembly First Committee, 10 October 2019. https://www.un.org/disarmament/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/statement-by-united-states-gdOctober10-19.pdf.
others believe that these treaties are now void due to a changed global security environment and Russia’s transgressions in recent years.

Consequently, there is no existing framework for a new conventional arms control agreement that addresses pressing current security challenges. The modernization of the Vienna Document, the most comprehensive set of regional confidence and security-building measures (CSBM), has become linked to those negotiations and thus has become hostage to the deadlock (Charap et al. 2020).

After formally abandoning the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty in August 2019 (Borger 2019; US Department of State 2019), US President Trump announced in May 2020 that the United States would also withdraw from the Treaty on Open Skies due to alleged Russian violations. With regard to the INF Treaty, Washington still had on its side the majority of NATO member states, which jointly accused Russia of developing a new cruise-missile program that would violate the treaty. Russia in turn accused the United States of equal noncompliance and, similar to when the administration of then US president George W. Bush revoked the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty in 2002, the Kremlin had already been preparing for the US withdrawal. The US plans to abandon the Open Skies Treaty, on the contrary to the INF withdrawal, had not been fully anticipated and was met with consternation rather than approval by most Allies (Wright and Barrie 2020).

Yet, the very last pillar of the arms control architecture between the United States and Russia could start to falter as well. The New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START), which stipulated the obligations to reduce and limit strategic delivery systems, will expire in February 2021. Since there is hardly any leeway left for a renegotiation of the contract, Russia has repeatedly proposed a temporary extension without any preconditions, to which the United States have initially responded with reluctance. After several rounds of talks over the summer, Washington persistently insisted that China, not Russia, is a key to the reformatting of nuclear arms-control system. At the same time, it is obvious that China, until its military buildup and armament have not reached a level comparable to the other superpowers, will have little interest in joining such negotiations on arms control (unless there would be other incentives that so far have not been offered to them, see Kane and Mayhew 2020). Washington, in view of the US presidential elections in November, conditioned an extension of the treaty on changes to the New START verification system and acceptance of a freeze of nuclear warhead stockpiles. After initial

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4In the first group are those European states that still feel committed to multilateral organizations and regimes like the OSCE, for example Austria, Finland, Germany, and Switzerland; in the second group are mostly Eastern EU countries, for instance Poland and the Baltic states.

5The treaty enables participating states to conduct mutual unarmed aerial surveillance flights over the territory of other participants. Hereby it is supposed to enhance military transparency in the region and confidence between participating states. Regarding the history of the announced withdrawal, see Reif and Bugos (2019).

6The talk is mainly about the land-based cruise missile 9M729/Iskander-K (Goncharenko 2019).

7The Russian defense ministry and Chief of General Staff Valery Gerasimov accused the American side of violating the INF treaty by stationing missile-defense systems in Eastern Europe. The launch platforms, they argued, could also be used offensively to launch intermediate-range cruise missiles with nuclear warheads (Interfax Russia 2018).

8See also Statement of the Foreign Ministries of Belgium, Czech Republic, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain and Sweden on the announcement by the United States to withdraw from the Open Skies Treaty, 22 May 2020. https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/en/newsroom/news/joint-declaration-open-skies_2343892.

9While the United States and Russia are currently believed to possess about 6,000 nuclear weapons respectively, China only has roughly 300 (Reif and Bugos 2020).
refusal, Russia seems to have signaled partial consent to the freeze (Detsch and Gramer 2020). The dual crisis of the United States-Russia nuclear arms control and the conventional arms control regimes are closely intertwined. The firm distinction between nuclear and conventional weapons therefore does no longer correspond with contemporary realities. In fact, the same platforms are capable of delivering both nuclear and conventional warheads. Moreover, conventional precision-strike systems can challenge strategic stability in a way similar to nuclear weapons. This leads to the conclusion that problems of conventional and nuclear arms control should rather be addressed in combination today (Kulesa 2017). The original CFE treaty effectively came into being owing, among others, to the successful conclusion of the INF Treaty. Consequently, other traditional divisions between “soft” CSBMs and “hard” arms control can be considered outdated as well.

Mutual inspections and verifications, initially meant to be a core element of most arms control agreements (both conventional and nuclear), have been absent or carried out only sporadically in recent years. It is indisputable that neither side’s compliance can be entirely verified by reverting to these instruments. Yet, these arrangements for a long time served as an essential confidence-building tool. They could cease to continue soon.

Due to diplomatic silence, mistrust, a lack of military transparency and predictability, and a failure to properly resume negotiations on arms control, the arms race in sensitive regions has reached unprecedented levels. At the root of this escalation are distorted threat perceptions, provocations, and misinterpretations. The risk of further, more serious miscalculations is huge. Critical fault lines, besides the Baltics, include the Black Sea region, territorial conflicts in the post-Soviet space, the Middle East, Latin America, and the Arctic region.

This article begins by reviewing remaining viable negotiation formats between the East and West, before examining acts of mutual provocation in fault-line regions that have brought both sides to the current state of confrontation. Finally, the article discusses and proposes potential levers for a recalibration of East-West relations in areas of mutual concern.

**Current negotiation formats**

Talks on arms control and military transparency in Europe – disarmament is not even mentioned anymore – have seen no progress for a long time or have been abandoned because of a failure to produce results. While military strategists publicly and verbally rearm and thereby destroy confidence in some areas, trust needs to be rebuilt in others, namely those negotiation formats that persist between NATO and Russia. Besides sporadic summit meetings and bilateral US-Russian arms control talks as held in Geneva in summer 2019 and in Vienna lately this year two such formats survive: the NATO-Russia Council and the Structured Dialogue under the auspices of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).
NATO-Russia council

The NATO-Russia Council is a consultative body that was created to give life to the 1997 NATO-Russia Founding Act and play a central role in NATO-Russia relations. Despite still existing, however, it has little to be proud of today.

Initially, the council was supposed to convene twice a year at a ministerial level and monthly at the level of ambassadors. Military representatives were also meant to assemble once a month. However, over the years no regular session cycle has emerged, and the council never evolved from a purely consultative body into a quorate institution.

Moreover, work in the council has been suspended several times for long periods – the last time for more than two years because of the Ukraine crisis and Russia’s 2014 annexation of Crimea. This practice contradicts the intended purpose of the NATO-Russia Council, which was supposed to be “the most important forum for consultations between NATO and Russia in times of crisis or in any other situation that affects peace and stability.”

The opposite is the case today. Whenever NATO-Russia relations are in crisis or deadlocked, the work of the council is hampered or even interrupted. Since 2016, the council has convened only ten times and mostly on the ambassadorial level only. Although both sides have made efforts to resume a constructive exchange of information, recent sessions have been dominated by heavy verbal fencing and recriminations.

Structured dialogue under the auspices of the OSCE

Besides the NATO-Russia Council, there is another negotiation platform to discuss possible ways out of the conventional-arms-control crisis and other relevant issues. The Structured Dialogue, initiated by the German government during its 2016 OSCE chairmanship, is an informal working group that includes all OSCE participating states. It regularly convenes high-level foreign and security policy officials in the organization’s headquarters in Vienna. The dialogue is meant to be a platform for exploring preliminary questions on the potential resumption of arms-control negotiations (Schmidt 2017).

In 2017, expert workshops discussed military doctrine, the current posture of armed forces, and military exercises. In 2018, the Structured Dialogue continued with a mapping of military capabilities. The Belgian chairmanship laid particular emphasis on risk and threat perception as well as the minimization of risks. This work has continued in 2019 and 2020, when the Netherlands and subsequently Spain conducted the talks. The focus has been on the analysis of intended action as well as best practices in the answering of questionnaires during the annual exchange of military information.

The main purpose of the informal talks is to reestablish confidence between the parties, which has been gambled away elsewhere. Ceilings for new weapon systems, quotas for more effective observations and verification of unusual military activities, and transparency measures, particularly with regard to new military capabilities and

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8“Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security between NATO and the Russian Federation signed in Paris, France.” North Atlantic Treaty Organization, 27 May 1997. Last modified 12 October 2009. https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_25468.htm.

9“The OSCE Structured Dialogue”, Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, https://www.osce.org/structured-dialogue.
weapons categories, are supposed to improve security and stability in the OSCE region. The role of arms control for territories with a disputed status is also discussed.

**Mutual perceptions and provocations**

For the EU and the United States, Russia’s annexation of Crimea and intervention in the Donbas region of eastern Ukraine since early 2014 has caused a major rupture in relations with Russia. But this rupture had already taken place in Russia itself several years before. After the West failed to reach out to Russia in the pre-Putin period to jointly realize an inclusive security community based on equal and indivisible security, NATO enlargement to the East and the US deployment of antimissile systems in sensitive regions represented a historical turning point from the Russian perspective.

In the words of independent Russian military expert Aleksandr Golts, the world changed completely after 2013. In the old, now lost world, it had been possible to organize security by means of treaties and mutually reassuring confidence-building measures. In today’s situation, “military deterrence would be the primary way to warrant security” (MacFarquhar 2015). In other words, military deterrence became the order of the day.

The transatlantic alliance continues to improve the functionality of the NATO Very High Readiness Joint Task Force (VJTF). The main function of this force, besides reassuring the Eastern partners, is to be a mobile trip hazard that would hinder Russia if it attacks one of the Eastern NATO member states (Zapfe 2016). Since 2014 at least, Russia has been building up its military capabilities in its Western Military District. In addition, it has deployed radar units and the S-400 missile-defense system as well as Iskander-M short-range missiles in Kaliningrad oblast. All of these moves have threatened especially the Baltic countries and Poland.

What has become increasingly obvious is the difficulty for both Russia and NATO to abide by the basic principle of mutual restraint formulated in the NATO-Russia Founding Act and the 1999 Adapted Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE) Treaty. On the one hand, this principle means that NATO states committed not to deploy “substantial combat forces” on the alliance’s Eastern flank; on the other hand, Russia committed to avoid “dislocation of conventional forces” in Kaliningrad and Pskov oblasts.

In mid-2020 the Trump administration announced the withdrawal of approximately 10,000 American troops from Germany. Intended to punish Germany for keeping military expenditures below the NATO-agreed two per cent threshold, Trump also declared that part of the troops could be transferred to Poland and the Baltics (Spiegel Online 2020).

From the Russian perspective, NATO’s amassing of troops on the border with Russia is not a reassurance measure for the Baltic states, but rather part of a greater strategy of

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1 In addition, Russia periodically conducts exercises to test operational readiness (so-called snap exercises) in its Western Military District without the regular 42 days advance notification, as stipulated by the Vienna Document on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures (Richter 2016). In addition, by dividing up large-scale exercises, Russia from the NATO perspective undermines the principles of military transparency.

2 In fact, Russia suspended the implementation of the CFE Treaty in 2007 and stopped its participation in the Joint Consultative Group in 2015 after the ratification of the adapted treaty was linked to the withdrawal of Russian military deployments in Moldova and Georgia. De facto, this meant that Russia terminated its participation in the treaty.
confrontation with Russia, intended to punish Moscow for its actions in Ukraine (Richter 2016). Putin has repeatedly explained that Russia perceives the creation of new NATO military bases and infrastructure in places such as Poland as a direct threat, and that Moscow would react in an appropriate manner to such aggressive steps (President of President of Russia 2018). In addition to these tensions, both sides have massively increased military exercises on land and at sea as well as low military overflights across the other side’s sovereign territory.

The Baltic region holds the greatest risk for further confrontation in the long run, with Kaliningrad and Pskov oblasts among others representing border regions with vulnerabilities for both NATO and Russia. Nevertheless, there are other critical fault lines where military incidents can be provoked or accidentally occur. The incident in the Kerch Strait (connecting the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov) in November 2018, when the Russian coast guard fired on and captured three Ukrainian navy vessels attempting to pass through the strait into the Sea of Azov 12, displayed the legal vacuum that has existed since the annexation of Crimea. Moreover, the incident illustrated that in the case of a military escalation with Russia, Ukraine would be defenseless without external support.

Besides those isolated naval theaters in the Black Sea, the fault line from Transdniestria via Zaporozhie to the Donbas region remains another trouble spot, where Russia and Western actors would potentially support conflicting parties. The resurging Armenian-Azerbaijani border conflict gives reason to think of possible scenarios, including a direct Russo-Turkish confrontation (due to strategic alliances between Russia and Armenia and Turkey and Azerbaijan), with the possibility of further escalating into a NATO-Russian confrontation (Felgenhauer 2020). Other latent proxy conflicts are located in the Middle East (Syria and Libya) and Latin America (Venezuela).

With regard to the Arctic region, Russia seems determined to reinforce its defense line, for instance by including new missile systems in its 2018–2027 State Armament Program (Rossiyskaya Gazeta 2018). Observers expect that Russia is planning to enhance regional military security by implementing one or more anti-access/area-denial (A2/AD) zones in the Russian High North, similar to those in Kaliningrad oblast. Such zones are supposed to prevent an adversary from crossing or occupying an area of land, sea, or air. These areas are volatile almost by definition. Constant strategic demands for countering perceived threats in these regions mean high risks and an increased probability of accidents (Baev 2019).

**Levers for recalibrating East-West relations**

In the last five years, possibilities for readjusting East-West relations have decreased. Due to mutual distrust, no basis for further negotiations is left. Cooperation is possible – if at all – only on select issues, which are mostly interest-driven, for instance the fight against terrorism and cybercrime. On these topics, multilateral organizations, such as the OSCE, if at all reach joint declarations and resolutions.

During the time of bloc confrontation, negotiations on arms control served as the lowest common denominator to build confidence. This is today just as topical, because it

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12The strait and sea are in theory intended to be shared territorial waters of Russia and Ukraine.
remains “a tried and tested means of risk reduction, transparency, and confidence-building between Russia and the West” (Steinmeier 2016).

Nevertheless, it could also be helpful to identify specific levers that are central for the security-policy agendas of both sides. To find ways out of the state of confrontation and maintain the minimum objective of peaceful coexistence, empathy, especially for the security and threat perceptions of the other side, could be more useful than aggressive rhetoric and the drawing up of alarming scenarios.

Three areas of mutual concern that are in urgent need of a consensual approach are outlined below. These are the prevention or basic definition of hazardous military incidents, the promotion of initiatives to increase military transparency and build confidence in sensitive regions, and the fostering of a modus vivendi for states between the Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian security and value communities.

**Preventing and defining military incidents**

In the Euro-Atlantic region as a whole, but in particular across the Baltic Sea, an increasing number of dangerous incidents has been recorded, involving civilian and military vessels as well as aircraft of Russia, NATO member states, and third parties. The European Leadership Network (ELN), a pan-European nongovernmental organization, recorded around sixty such incidents between 2014 and 2015 alone (Kulesa, Frear, and Raynova 2016). Most were airspace violations or close encounters between US military vessels and Russian fighter jets.

Despite numerous bilateral treaties between Russia and individual states, concluded in Soviet times, a pivotal problem continues to exist: the lack of a universally valid agreement that minimizes the probability of such incidents or outlines measures to be taken if they occur (Kulesa, Frear, and Raynova 2016). Since such a treaty seems out of reach for the time being, military incidents and accidents should, if they cannot be minimized, at least be defined in a sensible manner. There is currently no breakdown or definition of what kinds of incidents qualify as “hazardous incidents of a military nature” as per the OSCE’s Vienna Document. Inspiration can be offered by the ELN, which has listed incidents including hazardous airspace violations, alleged near collisions between civilian and military aircraft, search operations of submarines suspected to be operating in territorial waters, and air-to-air intercepts and identification of aircraft in international airspace (Kulesa and Raynova 2018).

One positive step was taken by the International Civil Aviation Organization to establish the Baltic Sea Project Team (BSPT), a technical group in which concerned states, including Russia, participate with the aim to minimize the impact of military incidents on the safety of civil aviation. The BSPT has agreed on a number of technical recommendations, including the creation of a list of operational issues and incidents and the identification of suitable mitigation to reduce risks. The success of the BSPT process warrants consideration of whether it is replicable elsewhere, especially in the Black Sea (Frear 2018). Another example of how to address increased tensions and prevent dangerous military incidents in the naval domain by means of multilateral negotiations is the Agreement on Prevention of Incidents in the Caspian Sea of 2018 (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation 2018).
**Promoting regional measures to build confidence**

The high number of unusual military activities by both sides in the Baltic region raises the risk of unintended incidents or provocations. This risk is exacerbated by a lack of verifiable restraint, limited military transparency, and an absence of direct military-to-military contacts and cooperation in the region. All of this contributes directly to an increased threat perception and, consequently, to a higher risk of potentially erroneous assessments.

Contemporary political and academic debates have produced some concrete recommendations on how to deescalate the situation. They range from proposals for a Baltic security symposium (Kulesa 2018), to a NATO-Russia dialogue on military capabilities in the Baltic (Perthes and Meier 2017) and from a NATO-Russia/Baltic Contact Zone (OSCE Network 2018) to ideas about how to realize arms-control agreements on the sub-regional level (Richter 2016; Buszhinskiy and Shakirov 2019). There is currently no legally binding agreement that limits armed forces deployed to the Baltic region, on either the European or the Russian side. The information and verification regime in the CFE Treaty is not applicable here, because Russia has de facto terminated its participation and the Baltic States have never ratified the adapted agreement.

Nevertheless, the Vienna Document of 2011\(^{13}\), the only remaining confidence- and security-building instrument, allows signatories to abide by mutual commitments on military restraint – similar to the stipulations in the NATO-Russia Founding Act. Provisions outlined in Chapter X are supposed to encourage participating states to agree on additional bilateral and regional confidence- and security-building measures to deescalate tensions. The focus lies here on bordering regions, which means that the mechanism could be applied to various border regions covered by the document. Mutual transparency could be extended to both nuclear and conventional capabilities.

**Developing a new approach for divided societies**

The states that find themselves caught between a transatlantic orientation and a Russian-dominated sphere of influence have often been marginalized in the confrontation between NATO and Russia, but they have recently gained in relevance. The six so-called in-between states – Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine – have repeatedly become victims of a geopolitical tug-of-war in the past. This contestation has had a negative impact on the internal cohesion of these states and their societies, and made them susceptible to domestic unrest and social division. Since the Ukraine crisis began in November 2013, the loss of trust toward Russia weighs heavily in some of these states, but confidence in the West has also partly been disappointed (Babayyan 2016).

Whereas the prospect of joining NATO and/or EU was once a key factor in creating security and prosperity for Central and Eastern European countries, it has become a source of instability farther east, as the examples of Georgia in 2008 and Ukraine in 2014 have shown. In particular, the conflict in Donbas has illustrated that the core question at stake in the Ukraine crisis is not primarily whether Kyiv controls the region,

\(^{13}\)Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, Vienna Document 2011 on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures. https://www.osce.org/files/f/documents/a/4/86597.pdf.
but rather what constitutes legitimate Russian or Western influence in Ukraine (Charap, Shapiro, and Demus 2018).

This also applies to other territorial conflicts in the region. As long as there is no agreement on the regional order, neither Russia nor the West – let alone local actors – will be in the position to solve these conflicts peacefully. Both official and informal negotiations on the European security architecture invariably wind up in a dead end when talk about the regional order comes onto the agenda; the Corfu and Helsinki +40 processes but also the on-going Structured Dialogue, initiated under the auspices of the OSCE, illustrate this well. Moreover, any type of negotiation about a new security order in Europe that concerns the in-between states without including them risks being reproached for evoking a new Yalta (Charap, Shapiro, and Demus 2018).

Regional integration frameworks proposed today acknowledge that former transformation theories no longer apply to these states (see, for instance, Charap et al. 2019 and from a different angle; Kostiantyn and Umland 2017). There is a consensus that neither NATO nor Russia should be able anymore to pursue their ambitions unrestrictedly to expand their respective alliances. Regional initiatives are mostly directed against Russia, but they are also driven by a new sense of Euroscepticism and disappointment due to the failure of Western security guarantees, notably for Ukraine.

Surely, a prospective regional integration framework such as proposed by Charap et al. should be based on local ownership. It must be open to, and applicable for, those states that do not want to integrate in either a Western or Eastern security alliance. According to country-wide surveys\(^{14}\), this applies to majorities of the populations in Armenia, Moldova, and Azerbaijan. Only respondents in Ukraine and Belarus regularly say that they mostly favor one of the alliances – NATO in the former and the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) in the latter. This option could therefore provide a framework for a sovereign foreign and security policy orientation of these countries, accompanied by rules of engagement for how NATO and Russia deal with them.

Conclusions

East-West negotiations on conventional- and nuclear-arms control and transparency have hit rock bottom this year. Mistrust, distorted mutual perceptions, and numerous provocations from both sides have paved the way for a new arms race between Russia and the West, both domestically and in sensitive fault-line regions. The Baltic region has illustrated this like a burning glass. In addition, the risk of unintended hazardous military incidents and proxy military confrontation in third countries has intensified.

There is a dire need for more diplomatic and dialogue-based approaches between East and West, as many communication channels of the past have effectively been shut down. Formats like the Structured Dialogue under the auspices of the OSCE continue their work in a somewhat detached environment of high-level envoys to rebuild the trust that has been destroyed elsewhere. The prospect of success in the near future appears subdued. Although NATO and EU heads of state and government and officials continue to mention dialogue and deterrence in the same breath, it is military deterrence that

\(^{14}\)See, for example, regular polls conducted for the IRI Center for Insights in Survey Research, available online at https://www.iri.org/news-and-resource?type=1.
currently prevails. Furthermore, there still seems to be reluctance to address nuclear and conventional weapons and respective control issues in the same context. Thus, both sides proceed unchecked on their way to giving up the cherished principle of restraint, formulated in both the NATO-Russia Founding Act and the CFE Treaty.

Military factors that drive conflict and escalation between Russia and NATO today have turned to be mostly location-specific. While at the time of the CFE treaty, the main focus was on ceilings for national armament and overall conventional capabilities, the location of military activities is much more central to possible contingencies today (Charap et al. 2020).

There are nonetheless certain levers that hold the potential for confidence-building in view of the current course of escalating confrontation. These include joint discussions and work toward a definition of the kinds of incidents that qualify as hazardous and of a military nature. Another lever consists of potential negotiations on regional confidence-and security-building measures with a focus on sensitive regions, such as the Baltics. Finally, a common stance with regard to a prospective regional integration framework for the six Eastern European countries that mostly participate in neither NATO nor the CSTO appears to be indispensable to ensure a lasting peaceful coexistence.

The paper has attempted to demonstrate how inter-connected the above-mentioned issue areas are. Since all of them are crucial for the respective security agendas and therefore of mutual concern, they should not be viewed and understood in isolation from one another during future negotiations.

**Disclosure Statement**

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author.

**Notes on Contributor**

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