

Between the end of World War II and the 1990s, the basic pattern of the international system scarcely altered. Only with the resolution of the East-West conflict did a far-reaching and profound transformation process get under way. Tied up with this process were both fears and hopes, all of which proved illusory. In the event, this upheaval did not usher in a period of anarchic world *disorder*, characterized by proliferating conflicts and a potential for violence which could no longer be contained, but nor was it possible to shape things in the manner envisaged by those who felt that the time had come to establish a »world republic« in keeping with Kant's notion of »perpetual peace.«

In Europe, the end of the conflict brought about the dissolution of the order which, in the course of four decades, had developed into a complex system. At first, it appeared that the scene was set for a new multilateral and cooperative security system. In November 1990, the Charter of Paris for a New Europe was signed at the special summit of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE). The agreement took up the CSCE Process which since 1973 had been the main forum for all East-West peace, stability, and arms control efforts. In the Charter, the signatories from West and East committed themselves to democracy, the rule of law, respect for human rights, and the promotion of friendly relations, and endowed the CSCE Process with new structures and institutions.

There are many reasons why this extremely promising attempt did not bring Europe closer to a comprehensive and sustainable framework for peace, but instead fell rapidly from the political agenda, including Russia's weakness during the Yeltsin period, NATO expansionism, US unilateralism, and EU indecision. The increasing difficulties encountered in the cooperative handling and multilateral management of regional conflicts, in addition to recent developments such as those in Kosovo and Georgia, as well as problems in reaching consensus about arms and arms control, indicate new disparities and asymmetries in relations between Europe and Russia, but also between Russia and the USA. The danger of escalation increases with the number and intensity of acute conflicts. More and more often, circumstances and developments are perceived differently by EU member states and Russia, the classic security dilemma. The existing treaties and institutional mechanisms for dealing with such asymmetries of perception are increasingly proving ineffective and outmoded.

There is widespread unease about this situation, among both state and civil society actors. There is also a wide range of ideas and proposals,

varying in scope and provenance, on how to entrench peace in Europe. The most far-reaching political initiative so far has come from Russian President Medvedev, who has proposed not only a debate on concepts and implementation measures related to a new European peace framework, but no less than a recasting of the Helsinki phase of the CSCE Process, including the negotiation of a comprehensive security treaty, of which the Russians have presented an initial draft.

The major changes in the international order, as well as the question of the challenges likely to arise from it for a cooperative security system in Europe, which must take these transformation processes into account, were analyzed last year at the invitation of this journal, in coordination with the Russian journal »Vestnik Analytiki,« within the framework of a workshop attended by a number of prominent figures. Participants included high-ranking representatives of the German Foreign Office, the Russian Foreign Ministry, and MPs, diplomats, and experts from Western and Eastern Europe, the USA, and Russia. The contributions by Karsten D. Voigt, Rolf Mützenich, Sergei Kortunov, and Peter W. Schulze in this issue of INTERNATIONAL POLITICS AND SOCIETY were written with reference to this event.

In the course of the workshop it became clear that both Russia and the West consider the Russian modernization project to be of strategic importance for the prospects of a new European peace framework. In February 2010, the Institute of Contemporary Development (INSOR), which is close to the Russian President, published a study which laid out a vision for Russia in the twenty-first century, giving rise to some controversy there. The authors – under the leadership of Igor Jurgens and Yevgeny Gontmacher – call for far-reaching political, economic, and social reforms, including the acceptance of political contestation, the strengthening of participatory structures, and the reorganization of the security apparatus. With regard to foreign policy, even Russia's accession to NATO and the EU are being seriously considered as options for discussion. The great interest aroused even outside Russia by the INSOR proposals is indicated not least by an event held by the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung in March 2010, at which representatives of INSOR for the first time presented their reform project for discussion abroad. This issue of INTERNATIONAL POLITICS AND SOCIETY contains an exclusive presentation of the Russian institute's reform proposals in German.

Complementing the main focus, Regina Frey undertakes a critical reconstruction of the conceptual basis of gender budgeting. In addition, a

group of authors, with the participation of Elisabeth Klatzer, Gender Mainstreaming Councilor at the Austrian Federal Chancellery, looks at practical experiences of gender budgeting in Austria. Another contribution to this issue is dedicated to the ever topical issue of climate change: Jochen Luhmann critically evaluates the policy strategies with which a post-fossil fuel industrial society is to be achieved.