

The Guns Fall Silent

The End of the Cold War and
the Future of Conventional
Disarmament

Edited by

**Ian M. Cuthbertson and
Peter Volten**



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The Guns Fall Silent: The End of the Cold War and the Future of Conventional Disarmament

Ian M. Cuthbertson and Peter Volten, Editors



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Foreword	<i>i</i>
John Roper	
Introduction.....	1
Peter M. E. Volten and Ian M. Cuthbertson, Research Associate	
<hr/>	
I. Political Dimensions	
1. The Democratic Revolution in Eastern Europe and the Defense of Europe	11
Stephan Kux	
2. Force Structures, Force Levels and Force Deployments in a Changing European Strategic Landscape	31
Joachim Krause	
<hr/>	
II. Structures	
3. Doctrines and Force Structures.....	51
Major General Klaus Naumann	
4. The Interrelations Between Major Components of Defense Policy: Strategy, Operational Plans, Force Structure, Defense Technology and Weapons Systems.....	67
Andrei Kokoshin	
5. Prospects for Military Stability in a Deep-Cuts Regime	75
Paul Davis	
6. Reasonable Sufficiency, Non-Offensive Defense and the Problems of Maintaining Military and Strategic Stability in Europe	109
Alexander Konovalov	
<hr/>	
III. Controlling Technology	
7. Constraints, “Stabilizing Measures” and CSBMs.....	127
Heinz Gaertner	
8. The Impact and Control of Technology	141
Andrzej Karkoszka	

9. Conventional Forces and Stability in Europe: Some Thoughts on Force Structures, Qualitative Factors and Their Control.....	157
Ronald Mason	
10. Technology and Conventional Arms Control.....	165
Hans-Joachim Giessmann	
<hr/>	
Conclusion	183
Peter M.E. Volten and Ian M. Cuthbertson	
About the Authors	195
Biographical Sketches	197

FOREWORD

The Institute decided in 1988, as part of its Task Force on Seeking Security in the 1990s, to establish a Working Group on Conventional Arms Reductions and Stability, under the chairmanship of Professor Dr. Karl Kaiser of the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Auswärtige Politik, Bonn. Over the last two years the Working Group has held a series of meetings in both Eastern and Western Europe and this volume represents the culmination of its work.

It is hard to believe that when the Group first met in Budapest in the autumn of 1988, the MBFR negotiations were coming to their close, the mandate for the Vienna CFE negotiations had not been agreed, and the prospect seemed to be for a long and tortuous negotiation. There was also a great deal of pessimism on the ability of the 23 participant nations in the upcoming CFE negotiations to reach agreement on numbers and definitions of weapons, as well as their ability to verify any reductions which might be agreed upon. Since then, the question has become when there will be a CFE agreement, not if there will be one, and more and more attention is now being focused on the next stage in the reduction process.

The work of the Group has always sought to reflect this change in the outlook for conventional arms reductions. The Working Group brought together leading arms control specialists from both alliances, together with government officials and other disarmament experts, with the objective of including as wide a range of expertise as possible in the Group's meetings. The Group was successful in achieving this aim. There is no doubt that from the Group's initial meeting in Budapest, which for the first time brought together senior military commanders in operational posts in NATO and the WTO, an invaluable informal network was created among those involved in the area of conventional arms control. These informal contacts played a worthwhile part in facilitating the rapid progress which we have witnessed in both the formal negotiations in

Vienna and the informal consultation process between the various capitals involved.

The work of the Group has covered a wide range of topics, both those under negotiation in the Vienna talks and other important related issues such as military doctrines and the impact of new military technology on the conventional balance. The Group has also had to cope, during its short life, with the unprecedented changes which have taken place in the European military and political landscape, both within Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, and between East and West. This has presented the Group with a unique challenge, one it was able to meet successfully as its agenda adapted to take account of the new situation in Europe. In all of its work, the Group's objective remained consistent. It was always to identify common ground between the various participants in the Working Group, and develop workable approaches to the various issues under discussion, ones which could be used in both the policy debate in capitals and the negotiating process at the Vienna talks. The success of the Group may best be judged by the fact that many of the topics which it first discussed were later taken up in the negotiations themselves.

Without Karl Kaiser's sterling work in the initial activities of the Group the original and thought-provoking papers prepared for the five meetings of the Group, a number of which are published here, would not have been brought together. It is only by putting these papers side by side that it becomes possible to carry out a comparative study of the ideas they contain. Dr. F. Stephen Larrabee, as Director of Studies at the Institute for East-West Security Studies during the initial part of the Group's work, also made an invaluable contribution.

The Institute for East-West Security Studies would like to thank the Carnegie Corporation, the W. Alton Jones Foundation and the Weyerhaeuser Family Foundation for their generous financial support of the Vienna conference and of this publication. A special thanks is extended to Miriam and Ira D. Wallach for their generous contribution. The Institute is grateful to Peter B. Kaufman, Mary Albon, Charlotte Savidge, Jan-Willem Honig and Jonathan Bach for their hard work in producing this high-quality publication in such a short time.

I would also like to thank the various Institutes and organizations which have acted as hosts to the Working Group's meetings, the Hungarian Institute of International Affairs, the

Royal Institute of International Affairs, Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, Austrian Institute for International Affairs, and the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Without their support, holding the Group's various European meetings would have been all but impossible. Finally, I am particularly grateful to Ian Cuthbertson and Peter Volten who, not only as editors of this volume but in countless other ways, have ensured the effective and smooth working of the Group.

It is our hope that the forward looking ideas contained in this volume will contribute to both the early completion of the current negotiations and to future negotiations on conventional disarmament.

John Roper
Chairman, Working Group
on Conventional Arms
Reductions and Stability
Paris, May 1990

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Introduction

PETER M.E. VOLTEN AND IAN M. CUTHBERTSON

There is no doubt that Europe stands on the threshold of a major breakthrough in many of its longstanding security problems. Progress in the field of conventional arms control and disarmament has been more rapid and spectacular than anyone could have anticipated when the Vienna talks on Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) began in October 1988. The collapse of communist governments in Eastern Europe and the continued drive of the Soviet Union toward greater *perestroika* have forced both East and West to undertake a fundamental reassessment of their military security requirements. As a result of a series of major unilateral gestures, the Soviet Union has already begun to reduce significantly the level of its conventional forces stationed in Eastern Europe. Following a series of bilateral negotiations between individual East European states and the Soviet Union, Soviet troops seem set to be eliminated from the territory of a majority of the present Warsaw Treaty Organization (WTO) member countries. By the end of 1990, all stationed Soviet troops in Hungary will have been withdrawn. A similar agreement has already been signed between the Soviets and the new government of Czechoslovakia. It is unlikely that Soviet troops in what is now the GDR will long remain in any force on the territory of a reunited Germany. Even Poland, wary of a resurgent Germany and anxious to have the Soviet Union as a counterweight, is unlikely to be willing to act as host to what seems likely to be the only remaining concentration of Soviet stationed forces.

Each individual East European state has also dramatically reduced the size of its military forces and the amount of money it spends on them. Hungary has for the last three years been slashing its defense budget, cutting force levels significantly and reorganizing the remaining units of its armed forces toward a much greater emphasis on defense. Poland, the GDR and Czechoslovakia had begun to cut their military budgets

and reduce other forces even before the overthrow of their communist regimes. This process has received an even higher priority under new governments, as the depth of the economic crisis in the East has worsened and long-standing threat perceptions of NATO have been junked.

The West has responded to all of this by beginning to reexamine its own conventional military force levels, with the objective of identifying where it could make its own substantial cuts. All of this is happening independently of the process of conventional arms control negotiations, the CFE, whose original intention had been to explore the possibility of East and West undertaking just such force reductions. As a result of the upheavals in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, conventional arms negotiations are coming under pressure to speed up their work if they are to remain relevant to a process of reduction and restructuring already under way in both alliances.

It is becoming increasingly difficult to remember that only 18 months ago the CFE negotiations were regarded as the linchpin of the East-West disarmament process. The failure of the Mutual and Balanced Force Reduction (MBFR) talks had not induced great hope in any quarter, government or academic, for rapid progress in an area which was seen as far more complex than nuclear disarmament, both because of the multitude of military structures and weapons systems involved and the fact that it was a negotiation involving 23 countries, albeit grouped into two alliances. There was, however, quiet optimism in both East and West that substantial progress could be made, allowing—perhaps within three or four years—for a first CFE treaty which might include modest force reductions for all of the countries involved, in particular for the stationed forces of the two superpowers.

The changing international environment quickly showed that these aspirations were entirely too modest. Officials involved in the CFE negotiations both in their national capitals and in Vienna have largely failed to gauge correctly the mounting interest among both politicians and general publics in conventional force reductions, especially after the 1987 signing of the U.S.-Soviet treaty to eliminate intermediate range nuclear forces (INF). A strong Soviet desire to reduce the USSR's armed forces for largely economic reasons—a wish which was heartily shared by the other WTO states—was reinforced by a

recognition that it was unlikely that there would be any further nuclear disarmament in Europe unless first there were steps toward addressing what the West saw as the overwhelming asymmetrical advantage in numbers enjoyed by the Warsaw Pact in the area of conventional forces. These two factors did much to stimulate a number of Soviet unilateral initiatives, which had the effect of displaying Soviet good intentions in the area to a receptive public in both West and East. This in turn forced NATO countries, several of which had markedly different approaches to the issue of conventional arms control, to sit down and attempt to formulate a common position. This flurry of activity in both East and West has brought about a major change in the area of conventional arms control, a newly found interest in the subject by politicians. MBFR languished in the doldrums for years because there was never sufficient interest, in either East or West, to reach an agreement. At the same time, however, neither side had the will to end an ongoing disarmament negotiation no matter how futile it had become. The result was stasis. It is political leaders, not arms control negotiators, who have provided the momentum behind the new negotiations in conventional arms control.

Unlike in other areas, where governments have been content to leave arms control largely in the hands of specialists, the current conventional arms control process has taken on a symbolism which transcends that surrounding negotiations on other weapons, such as chemical weapons. Both East and West have engaged in a bidding war with public opinion, each seeking to show that it is more committed to achieving deeper cuts. The December 1989 Malta summit was perhaps the best demonstration of this phenomenon, with both the Soviet Union and the United States agreeing to force reductions and residual force levels well below those which were then under discussion in Vienna.

The overall result of all of this is that policy has often been made on the run. The size of reductions and residual levels has often been the result of political posturing rather than their military desirability or practicality. Questions of military strategy and doctrine have often been sidelined because of a heavy focus on quantitative rather than qualitative issues. The emphasis has been to shift toward "defensive structures" although little thought has yet been given within either alliance as to what these structures might look like. Military structures and

weapons systems have been treated in the abstract, in an attempt to define their individual offensive or defensive characteristics; this has so far avoided the much harder task of seeking an overall picture of an integrated military structure. The result has been a heavy focus on what is wrong with the current military balance in Europe and on what changes should be made to it, and a paucity of longer-term thinking. These changes are therefore to go ahead, without any clear picture of the long-term goal for the future of military power in Europe.

* * * * *

It was with an eye toward helping clear up some of this confusion and bringing a greater structure to the overall debate on conventional arms control that the Institute for East-West Security Studies held its annual conference in Frankfurt in October 1989. The deliberations of its Working Group on Conventional Arms Reduction and Stability now appear to have been remarkably farsighted. Starting from the then radical assumption that the CFE talks would be successfully completed within a year, the Frankfurt meeting set the stage for the Working Group's further reflections by focusing on the problems that might follow a first CFE agreement. It was agreed that the post-CFE negotiations would have to be expanded to include the 35 nations of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) in the search for an all-European security system. This need was prompted by indications of drastic change in traditional threat perceptions regarding the two alliances. The atmosphere of imminent change that pervaded the Frankfurt conference was underscored on the very first day by news of the fall of East German leader Erich Honecker. The extraordinary events that were to follow his ouster have confirmed the Working Group's prescience on the need to reform the European security structure, as well as to find new parameters for conventional arms control.

The Meeting of the Institute's Conventional Arms Reduction and Stability Working Group held in Vienna in early April 1990 focused its attention on the overarching alliance and security structures which are required both to channel the reduction and restructuring process and to constitute their ultimate phase. An underlying assumption of the meeting was that the continued development of democracy, as well as the success of economic reforms in Eastern Europe, comprised the

essential prerequisites for a satisfactory resolution of more narrow, technical military issues.

The central security problem which will face governments in East and West in the future is one of integration. How can Western and Eastern Europe, the neutral and nonaligned, the United States, a reunited Germany and—the most difficult one of all—the Soviet Union be integrated into a collective security system? Given the continued existence of a number of traditionally inimical forces and interests between countries, this process will inevitably give rise to fear and instability. Moreover, it is likely that the process of building a new security system will occur in the shadow of a still impressive residual Soviet military capability. After all, the Soviet Union seems set to retain a large nuclear arsenal, as well as the largest standing national conventional capability on the European continent.

The Working Group's subgroup on appropriate force structure and deployments for both alliances at lower levels of troops and equipment focused on the basic question of how to achieve forms of military stability that can exist independent of political developments. Participants agreed that the crucial factors were relative force levels, the geographical separation of forces, their character and their operational strategy. In a departure from the previously prevalent opinion, it was generally accepted that lower force levels can offer increased military stability. Moreover, the withdrawal of Soviet forces from Central Europe enhances NATO-WTO stability. The combination of smaller armies distributed over a larger area, however, led most experts to conclude that highly mobile forces are preferable to large static establishments.

But it was also noted that such conclusions are not without their contradictions. Mobility, for example, is easily associated with offense. A wide geographical separation of forces might lead to a perceived necessity for deep-strike capabilities which could also be seen as offensive and destabilizing. In the end, the group concluded that mutual confidence and trust are the determinants of stability rather than particular force deployments and structures *per se*.

The other subgroup's topic—the impact and control of technology on conventional arms negotiations—was forcefully presented as a major challenge to future arms control efforts. It was agreed that future military structures and their attendant weapons systems will differ far more qualitatively than quanti-

tatively, requiring a fundamental restructuring of traditional approaches to conventional arms control. The CFE I objective of removing as much offensive mobile firepower as possible will change as qualitative factors, including discussion of the capability of land forces, come to dominate any CFE II negotiations. Verification, the development of new confidence- and security-building measures (CSBMs) and new forms of constraint on national armies will characterize the next stage of conventional arms control. This second round must work toward building a multilateral European security structure if future conventional arms negotiations are effectively to increase stability in Europe.

This volume uses a number of the papers presented at the Institute's Conference in Frankfurt. In his chapter, Dr. Stephan Kux, Resident Fellow at the IEWSS, discusses the implications of democratization in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union for European security. He identifies as a noticeable trend the growing priority of national over collective security interests and the radically changing role of the Warsaw Treaty Organization. Dr Kux analyzes the military-technical, military-political and arms control implications of the collapse of the Warsaw Pact.

In "Force Structures, Force Levels and Force Deployments in a Changing European Strategic Landscape," Dr. Joachim Krause, a Research Fellow at the Foundation for Science and Policy in Ebenhausen, FRG, argues that arms control and arms reduction have to go beyond their traditional role of increasing military stability between two politically antagonistic alliances and instead become tools for forging a European security system (ESS). In the new ESS, economic and other aspects of security should increase in importance compared to the significance of military force. In this new situation, international organizations should also play an increased role.

Dr. Krause sees a reunited Germany in NATO as the best of the available options for the near future. NATO, however, must change, and he views the concept of "measured response" replacing the NATO catchword of "flexible response," recommending a calibrated approach as the best strategy for the gradual regression of current forces in Europe. Keeping a reunited Germany in NATO is especially important, Dr. Krause concludes, because it allows for rapid German reunification and significant reductions in the levels of armed forces in

Europe, "thus paving the way for the emergence of a new order."

Major General Klaus Naumann of the Federal Republic of Germany's Ministry of Defense seeks to identify criteria that characterize a defensive military doctrine and how these relate to force structures. The proposed criteria are: the availability and readiness of forces; the protection and preservation of territory; and the essentially temporal element of exhibiting self-restraint (e.g., a "no-first-use" declaration by NATO). These criteria should be reflected in the entire force posture of a country or an alliance—or, as General Naumann calls it, in a "macrostructure." Although technology and mobility—both of which can have offensive implications—cannot really be curbed, General Naumann sees scope for defensive emphases in other areas and especially in strategic command, control and communications capabilities and the integration of land/air operations.

Dr. Andrei Kokoshin, Deputy Director of the Institute for USA and Canada Studies in Moscow, stresses in his chapter the dominance of politics over military matters. He argues that the military cannot be blamed for its strategy if it lacks clear and informed guidelines from political leaders. He then elucidates recent Soviet attempts to construct a coherent, defensively oriented defense policy.

Like Dr. Kokoshin, Dr. Alexander Konovalov, Head of Section at the Institute for USA and Canada Studies in Moscow, points to the importance of reconsidering the political and military goals armed forces are designed to serve. Considering the present political environment, he sees as an immediate requirement for conventional arms control reductions a level which "preclude[s] the possibility of launching surprise attacks and sustaining major offensives." He identifies three key elements that ensure the success of major offensives: high mobility, high firepower and relative invulnerability. He then proceeds to identify a number of ways in which these elements can be scaled down.

Dr. Paul Davis, Director of the Strategy, Planning and Assessment Program at the RAND Corporation in Santa Monica, disputes one of Dr. Konovalov's arguments. In his analysis of military stability in a deep-cuts regime, he concludes that high mobility is a crucial requirement for success for a defender at low force levels. This and other requirements, however, Dr.

Davis does not yet see reflected in NATO's force posture, command and control and operational strategy. Despite reservations, he argues that stability is attainable with far smaller NATO and WTO forces.

Austrian Institute of International Affairs Research Fellow Dr. Heinz Gaertner's chapter on "Constraints, 'Stabilizing Measures' and CSBMs" is a provocative and thoughtful essay, arguing for a threshold for constraints on national military activities between 13,000 and 17,000 troops. Acknowledging the "new" threats to European security, primarily those stemming from nationalism and ethnic conflicts, Dr. Gaertner argues that "zones of confidence and security" should be created along the present national borders in Europe with limits on the size and frequency of exercises and mobilization capability. In addition, Dr. Gaertner maintains that the CFE talks should establish some sort of "escalation control" operations to deal with the potential escalation of regional conflicts.

Dr. Andrzej Karkoszka, Research Fellow at the Polish Institute for International Affairs, portrays in his essay on "The Impact of Technology" the utilization of new technology as the most important factor in raising the quality of military forces. The Soviet Union is already behind NATO in developing modern technologies, and this situation will only be compounded by its increasing economic difficulties. The concentration of the CFE on resolving quantitative asymmetries, argues Dr. Karkoszka, is leading to the aggravation of qualitative asymmetries. The situation that Europe must avoid, he maintains, is one in which those states which are more technologically advanced will enjoy a much larger degree of security than the others. In order to provide security to all the countries of Europe, Dr. Karkoszka advocates utilizing an institutionalized framework to deal with the problems of the development of military technology.

Sir Ronald Mason, Consultant at Thomson (UK) and a former Chief Scientific Officer in the Ministry of Defence in London, presents a detailed examination of the problems and promises of new technology in conventional arms control in his essay "Conventional Forces and Stability in Europe: Some Thoughts on Force Structures, Qualitative Factors and Their Control." Noting that future arms reduction negotiations will in all likelihood include all the participants of the CSCE process, Mason concludes that the central difficulty in the years

ahead will be determining the proper dimensions of national forces once the principle of parity between the two blocs no longer applies. Thus it appears that new technologies, whether manifested in new weapons or new forms of verification, will play a crucial role in the future of arms control. In conclusion, Mason sees confidence-building measures emerging as more important than force structures *per se*, and force generation as being at the center of future conceptual developments. Qualitative factors in arms control, in other words, will overtake quantitative aspects.

Dr. Hans-Joachim Giessmann, Research Fellow at the Institute for International Politics and Economics in Berlin, outlines the dangers of a qualitative arms race and sets forth proposals for controlling the development of technology in his essay on "Technology and Conventional Arms Control." Reductions and restructuring of military forces in Europe, he maintains, is not plausible without restricting the research and development of military technologies. To this end, Dr. Giessmann proposes making the future development of weapons technologies itself a subject for negotiations, in addition to increased international intervention in military research and development and the creation of attractive economic and research alternatives.

The concluding chapter, written by the two co-editors, Ian M. Cuthbertson and Peter M. E. Volten, examines the prospects for conventional disarmament in Europe and the future of military force on the continent in view of the sweeping changes already witnessed in Eastern Europe and the continued pressure for reform in the Soviet Union. As all of the chapters in this volume underline, it is this political process which dominates all discussions on the future of military power in Europe. Political and economic reform in the East has forced both East and West to rethink both their military strategies and their force structures. This is a process which shows not only every sign of continuation but, indeed, acceleration. If stability and security are to be maintained in Europe, all of the countries involved in this process, not just the 23 nations of the CFE negotiations, but also the 35 of the CSCE process, must begin to grapple with the fundamental questions which all of these changes raise. Only then will it be possible to begin to construct a new security system in Europe.



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The Democratic Revolution in Eastern Europe and the Defense of Europe

STEPHAN KUX

■ *Introduction*

Six years of *perestroika* in Soviet foreign and security policy and the democratic revolutions in the East European countries have produced a radical revision of the military-strategic situation in Central Europe. The old front-lines, war plans, images of the enemy and alliances have become victims of a peaceful, democratic *blitzkrieg*. For years, military planners, civilian defense experts and arms controllers have been preoccupied with the Central Front, in particular the situation along the inner-German border. Today, it can be disputed whether this very specific military confrontation is at all in Europe and whether the potential area of conflict is to be located along the Elbe-Werra, the Oder-Neisse, in Kaliningrad or Leningrad. Traditional patterns of East-West relations—a term which becomes increasingly meaningless with the transformation in the ideological and political composition of the East—are increasingly being replaced by features of North-South relations. Democratization, institutional and constitutional reforms, economic development, structural inequalities, dependency, debt, migration, environmental issues and nationalities problems have become as relevant for European security and stability as conventional, chemical and nuclear arms control and confidence- and security-building measures. The traditional landmarks of security and stability are disappearing, but new ones are not yet visible. Europe is covered by a fog of peace.

It is still too early to declare perpetual peace and to reject military factors as irrelevant for maintaining security and stabil-

ity in Europe. Many of the old military structures remain in place and obstruct the formation of new relationships. Traditional military thinking is hard to change. Many strategists seek reassurance in the certainties of the past and continue to address European security issues in the traditional bipolar framework, defend the validity of existing alliance structures, and adhere to the bloc-to-bloc approach of the negotiations on Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE). Others express their concern over emerging vulnerabilities which provide new rationales for military preparedness, such as the potential threats posed by a reunified Germany or by growing ethnic tensions in the Soviet Union and the Balkans. So far, little progress has been made in the enormous task of removing the debris of the old strategic order and adjusting the security framework to new political realities.

This paper focuses on five aspects of the changing European strategic landscape:

1. the implications of democratization for European security and stability, i.e., the political dimension of non-offensive defense;
2. the growing priority of national over collective security interests and the changing role of military-political alliances;
3. the problem of managing preemptive and unilateral disarmament;
4. the changing strategic role of Eastern Europe; and
5. the implications of all of these issues for conventional arms control.

■ ***Democratization and Security***

The radical changes at the international level are driven and reinforced by changes at the national level. Democratization has a much more radical effect on the European military status quo than any proposal for the reduction or restructuring of forces, however daring, might achieve. Historical experience suggests that 1) stable democratic states tend not to fight wars against each other and 2) there is a significant correlation between the absence or breakdown of democratic institutions and a country's aggressive behavior.¹ The democra-

1. Immanuel Kant first formulated these controversial hypotheses in his treatise *Perpetual Peace*. See Michael Doyle, "Liberalism and World Politics," *American Political Science Review* 80, No. 4 (December 1986), pp.