

SECURITY CULTURE AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF SECURITY PARTNERSHIPS: THE EUROPEAN UNION AND CHINA COMPARED

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Important transformations are taking place in the security of states. Among these transformations, the formation of a new security culture at the single state and group-of-state level and the construction of a new generation of regional security arrangements are of great importance. The new security culture is based on the concepts of co-operative and comprehensive security. The new generation of regional arrangements is based on the substitution of military alliance alignments with security partnership agreements. In this paper, the focus is on the new security cultures of Europe and China and on the role of the European Union and China in the present state of the construction of the regional security systems of Europe and Asia.

1. Introduction

Over the past few years, the world has been changed into *a single geostrategic space* (Held and McGrew, 1999: 88) and is presently characterized by a process of military globalisation and a state of global pacification. Patterns of arms trade and expenditures, linkages among national defence industries, and the multilateral pattern of military intervention are some indicators of the growing military relations among all the states of the world in the present international system. This military globalisation frames a state of global pacification. In fact, the expectancy of war between the major powers sharply decreased after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the number of wars between minor powers has been decreasing for the past thirty years (Zangl and Zurn, 1999: 140).

Since 1945, the processes of disintegration and unification, not military aggression, have been responsible for ending particular

states. In past international systems, the security of the single state was grounded in the national military power and/or the formation of military pacts and alliances. But in the present world, the number of states in military alliances is decreasing and the formation of new alliances is less frequent.

All these changes suggest that important transformations are taking place in the security of states. Among these transformations, the substitution of military alliance alignments by regional security partnership agreements (Attinà, 2001) is one of the most important. In this paper, we focus on some conditions of this change. Our main concern is the role of the European Union and China in the present state of the building of the regional security systems of Europe and Asia. But, in a constructivist perspective to the analysis of regional security, we firstly account for the security cultures of Europe and China.

Security culture is made up of

"those enduring and widely-shared beliefs, traditions, attitudes, and symbols that inform the ways in which a state's/society's interests and values with respect to security, stability and peace are perceived, articulated and advanced by political actors and élites" (Krause 1999: 14).

Our assumption is that political leaders and people respond to the challenges changes in their security environment and adapt their security conceptions to different conditions of international relations. In addition, shifts in security culture frameworks bring about shifts in the selection of new security policies.

The current debate on regional security agreements is concerned with the relative importance of two factors in the promotion of security building: multilateral international institutions and the internal security culture of nation-states. We share in common with some analysts of security building the view that multilateral security institutions have an effect on the security culture of concerned states, because security culture is not static in nature. According to Adler (1998: 120), the relationship between multilateral institutions and security communities is based *"on agency, that is, the catalytic function of institutions to promote, induce, and socially construct community by means of community-building practices"*. He believes that multilateral institutions activate the practices and conditions for peaceful change. These conditions are:

- a. Cognitive and material structures.
- b. Transactions between states and societies, and
- c. Collective identity or 'we-feeling'.

2. European security culture

The security culture of European countries has been forged in the bipolar context of the nuclear deterrence strategy and the multilateral context of the Helsinki Process. Arms control negotiations aimed at coping with the risk of the nuclear arms race were as important as the progress made by West and East European countries in the context of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE, today OSCE).

In the 1960s, Western policy-makers focused on arms control to stabilise the East-West confrontation, halt the nuclear arms race and, above all, reduce the risk of war between the two superpowers and allied countries. The fact that this goal has been reached over time convinced the Western public concerned with security and defence that arms control can be used as "*management tool*" of conflict relations between antagonist countries. In the early 1960s, scientists, professionals and experts of the two blocs started to organise conferences, have regular meetings and create networks to debate arms control issues on a regular base. Over time, this *arms control community* – as Krause and Latham (1999) call it – acquired importance in the development of arms control and nuclear non-proliferation agreements. Its importance led to its replication in posterior negotiation processes. The *seminar diplomacy* practice of the Helsinki Process and the *expert networks* practice of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership are the repetition in other contexts of the *arms control community* of the bipolar strategic dialogue context. Trans-national co-ordination of experts was soon considered an essential condition for carrying out the wide regional co-operation programme of the three functional baskets of the Helsinki Final Act. In CSCE/OSCE's idiom, a number of words – such as meeting of experts, seminar, workshop, conference, round table, forum – is used to name direct interaction between the experts (diplomats, practitioners, civil servants, academics and scientists) of the member countries. Adler (1998: 138-142) adopts the term "seminar diplomacy" because those meetings have taken the form of "*for a modeled after university seminars*". Like university seminars, they are "*socialization*

mechanisms that, based on interaction and dialogue, promotes the development of common meanings, innovative ideas, and cooperative solutions". Adler observes also that

"in addition to their results coming to the attention of the OSCE's policy-making units, delegates will later disseminate the ideas raised at the seminar in their respective political systems, thus spreading the seeds of shared understandings across national borders. This is why NGOs can and do play an important role in seminar diplomacy; they are an invaluable conduit of information from the OSCE seminar to civil societies, and from civil societies, through the seminars, to OSCE authorities and OSCE governments."

The members of the *arms control community* of the Cold War analysed the implications of important arms limitation concepts and arms control measures. Krause and Latham (1999: 30-32), for example, underline the importance of the invention of intrusive measures of 'verification' aimed at increasing the effectiveness of arms control agreements. Regarding the right of foreign powers and international bodies to control compliance with an arms agreement, it was acknowledged and agreed that arms control agreements and treaties between enemies are useless without appropriate measures to reduce uncertainty about the enemy's compliance with agreed norms. Acceptance of the verification clause, developed in the dialogues of the arms control community of the 1960s, eased the way to the adoption of the concept of confidence and security building measures. This concept was created by the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe and is considered by European military experts as the essential element of any project of regional security partnership. In the 1992 Vienna Document of the CSCE, confidence and security building measures were taken as a compulsory instrument of the European security system. Military information and personnel exchanges were designed to regulate by mutual consent various aspects of military power, such as size, technical composition and operational practices of national armed forces (Krause and Latham, 1999: 32-34).

The early conception of confidence and security building measures (CSBMs) was limited to voluntary notifications of military activities and other forms of voluntary *transparency*, such as invitation of

foreign observers to military manoeuvres and reciprocal visits of military personnel. The object of these measures is to avoid misperceptions and make military intentions explicit.

The consequences of the adoption of confidence and security building measures are not restricted to the achievement of narrow strategic aims, such as avoiding surprise attack and inadvertent escalation. Implementation of confidence measures causes the transformation of the security relations of the countries involved in the mechanism. In fact, the acceptance of CSBMs changed the security conception of policy-makers, defence specialists and people in Europe. Security was seen as the product of mutual confidence and the effect of dialogue and transparency. Co-operative and multilateral approaches were acknowledged as more efficacious methods to attain peace and security than national threats and unilateral approaches. The *"most important legacy of the East-West CSBM experience was a modification of the Western realpolitik tradition"* (Krause and Latham 1999: 33).

As the Soviet Union accepted Western ideas of arms control and security measures, European governments believe that other states can join regional projects of security system construction which are grounded on mechanisms of mutual and co-operative security. European security culture today assumes that the security culture of states and societies can go through a process of change; security ideas can be learned; and security practices born in a particular culture can be shared with actors of different cultures. Adler's remarks on the importance of the experience matured by OSCE members is particularly illuminating in this regard:

"When assessing and measuring the influence of OSCE's practises, we cannot simply look at this institution's regulatory tasks or short-range activities, because what matters most is the long-range effectiveness of its practices and activities as constitutive of community identity and bonds. For example, when the OSCE sends a mission to Tajikistan or to Estonia, organizes a seminar on military doctrines or confidence-building measure (CBMs), or, as part of its CBM regime, requires states to open up their military activities for inspection, what matters most is not the short-range success of the mission, seminar, or inspection, but the construction of a foundation for

*community practice and behaviour. Moreover, one needs to assess whether OSCE innovative practices and activities have contributed to the collective understanding of the OSCE as a "region" and to changing the way that peoples in this region collectively think about their security. (1998: 121)"*¹

The CSCE/OSCE model of international security is intimately linked to the conception of comprehensive and co-operative security. It has a strong demilitarised component and includes economic, environmental, political and human factors as maintained by the school of widening security agenda. The rationale of the political and human dimension, in particular, is that peaceful international relations depend on domestic conditions of all concerned countries. These conditions are, for example, justice and rule of law, democracy and pluralism, human and minority rights, free and autonomous civil society, individual freedom, market economy. The crisis of communism, increasingly manifest over the years of the Helsinki process, facilitated acceptance of the comprehensive security concept by people and governments of Eastern and Central Europe. In addition, practices and initiatives to socialize states to OSCE's norms and familiarize societies and individuals with political and human norms have been explicitly worked out and applied in Central and Eastern Europe and former Soviet countries. The aim of these practices was to learn how to become member of an enlarged community of states and institutionalise the norms of the community however distant some of the admitted members were from community norms (Flynn and Farrell, 1999). This was especially the case in the incorporation without assessment of congruity of the post-Soviet states in order to avoid the danger of leaving them outside and "against" (Adler, 1998: 133-134).

OSCE practices and mechanisms of comprehensive and co-operative security – like early warning, conflict prevention, protection of human and minority rights, and confidence and security building measures – have been designed to institutionalise collective (i.e. regional) solutions to conflicts and disputes, be they inter-state

¹ This chapter owes much to Adler's study (1998).

conflicts and disputes or domestic ones. The expected result of these practices and mechanisms has been the grounding of conflict resolution on a trans-national conception – or regional identity – of security. Initially aimed at reducing the danger of surprise attack by transparency of military apparatus, CBSMs and co-operative security became – under the effect of the norms of comprehensive security – also a tool to enhance mutual trust in general and community-building in particular.

Being the first ones to opt for co-operative security due to the awareness of the destructiveness of contemporary war fought with powerful, technological armaments, the Europeans do not exclude that people in other parts of the world could attain to the same end but – according to Krause and Latham – perceive themselves as the only rational and self-contained actor in international security among an array of aggressive and irrational enemies. The self image of the West as a rational and self-contained actor in international security changed with the disappearance of Soviet Union only to give the place of the Soviet Union to a small number of Third World countries, named *rogue states*. Krause and Latham point out two explanations of this conception: the “*uncomfortable position*” of military planners and foreign policy makers of

“having no embodied enemy and no clear conceptual framework to guide strategic conduct, and the centuries-old western symbolic cultural representation of non-Western societies as ‘irrational’, ‘dangerous’, impervious to the logic of reason and ultimately respectful only of superior military force” (1999: 36-37).

Since the anti-Western attitude of Third World countries did not grow after the end of the Cold War and no radical change in the behaviour of these countries occurred, Krause and Latham conclude that the present Western security culture “*has been shaped largely by the convergence of a deeply embedded Cold War arms control culture and a new discourse of threat and danger*” (1999: 39).

It is not hard to find Krause and Latham’s argument correct and to agree with two *supplementary elements* of the present Western security thinking that they point out: the focus on proliferation as the principal threat to global security and the belief that Western preponderance is the key of international peace and stability. But Krause and Latham’s interpretation is also partial and unsatisfactory

because it leaves aside the second element of the European security culture of the 1990s, i.e. co-operative defence, common security and comprehensive security. The correct presentation of the European security culture must account for both sides of the coin, that is the construction of the new enemies and the new discourse of threat and danger (that is, rogue states and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction) on one side, the conception of co-operative and comprehensive security on the other.

3. Chinese security culture

For the past fifty years, China's attitude towards the international system has been inspired by the aim of removing the economic and political effects of the oppression and abuse of the Imperialists of the colonisation and pre-decolonisation era. For this reason, economic development is the priority concern of the country and, differently from the past, in the last twenty years, openness to the outside world has been acknowledged as a condition for economic development. From the political point of view, the aim of removing the past condition has been always concerned with safeguarding national sovereignty and independence. Today, this concern is moderated by the acknowledged advantage of political interdependence and multilateralism.

Past oppression of sovereignty and independence by western imperialists explains why China believes that the national sovereignty of any country is always at risk in a world controlled by hegemonic powers. The experience of the Cold War and the division of the countries of the world into two hierarchical blocs has made the Chinese political élite oppose to the existence of leadership in any group of states [see Selected works of Deng Xiaoping as cited in Liang 1997, footnote no. 7]. However, China defines itself as a member of the group of Third World countries and is resolved to play the role of the big political power because it is a permanent member of the U.N. Security Council: not an economic and military power but *"one pole in the multi-polar world,"* China *"inevitably occupies a significant position [in the international society] and is playing an important role in shaping its future development"* (Liang 1997: 33).

Contrary to the Western conceptualisation of international power, which conceives of military strength and national and domestic

product (GNP/GDP) as the source of the power of the state, Chinese culture has developed the concept of 'comprehensive national strength'. Comprehensive national strength is

"the accumulation of such considerations as a country's population, geographical size and natural resources, advancement in science and technological research, economy, its membership in formal international political institutions such as the United Nations, and military power" (Zha 1997: 73).

The building-up of comprehensive national strength will be conducive to maintaining political stability, supporting domestic cohesion, improving China's external environment, and dealing with territorial threats.

In Chinese culture, the international system is a web of state-to-state relations. In this system, national sovereignty means the state's reliance on its own means and independent participation in inter-state relations. Accordingly, international conflicts are managed through the use of force. This belief has come to be called the *parabellum* or *realpolitik* view of the world: *"conflicts are perennial and zero-sum, and the use of force [is] the only effective means to ensure security, stability and peace"* (Yuan 1999: 87).

The Soviet Union's collapse placed the United States in the position of the sole super-power of the world, China's strength in world politics is credited by Chinese political thinkers and professionals with being the condition for multi-polarity in world politics. China's comprehensive national strength and her resolve to use this strength for the purpose of being *one pole in the multi-polar world* is the greatest check on the hegemonic aspiration of the United States and the risk this aspiration poses to the sovereignty and security of states².

Opposition to hegemony has been the basic theme of China's foreign policy since the 1950s but its origins are bound to the traditional Chinese view of international life (On this point see, for example, Bleiker 1993; Shambaugh 1991; Song 1997, Yuan 1999).

² See more on the 1998 official document China's National Defence (especially p.5), Beijing, Information Office of the State Council of the People's Republic of China.

These origins are seen in the period between the 8th and 5th B.C. century, when a series of rising and falling hegemonies dominated China (the Spring and Autumn Period), and in the 3rd B.C. century when the philosopher and Confucius' disciple, Mencius, distinguished the legitimate benevolent ruler from the illegitimate one that needs to be opposed because he employs coercion and force to rule.

Understandably, the Gulf War and U.S. intervention in the Yugoslav conflict (and, recently, the NMD project, the national missile defence system) have enlarged the Chinese portrait of the United States as the global hegemon bent on extending domination on distant regions at the cost of violating the sovereignty and security of local powers. The expansion of American alliances and security partnerships since the end of the Cold War are interpreted as a move to create an international security order based on NATO enlargement and the use of the alliance for humanitarian intervention (as in the Kosovo war).

Chinese security thinking takes a zero-sum view of alliances. Mutual security pacts have no reason to exist unless they have an explicitly identified enemy. The notion that military alliance pacts and, most of all, security partnership agreements could be signed for preserving stability and deterring aggression seems alien to Chinese security thinking.

"Chinese analysts strongly suspect that these alliances (at least those in the Asia-Pacific region) are aimed at China. This is certainly true of Chinese perception of the U.S.-Japan alliance and the extension of Partnership for Peace to Central Asia, the reactivation of the Five-Power Defense Pact, as well as the recently enhanced U.S. security ties with Australia, Thailand, the Philippines, and Singapore" (Shambaugh 1999: 66).

The view of the international system based on the principles of equality and non-interference in internal affairs – always expressed and preferred as a model of the world order in the past by the Chinese political leaders and the majority of the Chinese scholars in the field of International Relations – is similar to the Western image of the state system known as the 'billiard balls model'. In the Fifties and Sixties, Western scholars very commonly used the 'billiard balls' image to represent the realist theory of international relations.

In recent years, Chinese political leaders and scientists have been changing their view taking into consideration important changes of the international system. In particular, they admit that no country can survive and develop without contacts with the rest of the world (internationalism). These changes are mostly attributed to the development of the world economy. For this reason, respect for national sovereignty and multipolarism (as opposed to hegemonism) are not the only priority means for the purpose of building security in the international system. Overall economic development through internationalism and also involvement in the globalization process are seen as a fundamental means of building peace and security in the international system. Chinese leaders admit that the current process of growing economic interdependence has reinforced the requisite of national economic growth and imposed on states the condition of giving up portions of national sovereignty to achieve fast and strong development. Similarly, some Chinese analysts believe that traditional exclusive notions of sovereignty, should be subject to overall national interests (Yan 1996). In respect of the principle of sovereignty orthodox thinkers require that partial devolution of sovereignty should occur on a voluntary basis and on condition that portions of sovereignty are ceded for mutual benefits (Liang 1997: 34). In fact, overall development is fundamental to international security and peace. As the violation of national sovereignty, the violation of the right to wealth and economic development is the content of power politics and causes the interruption of peace and security. In the current stage of world politics the building of security is effective only when reforms are introduced in the unjust and unreasonable models which govern the world economic order.

Chinese thinking on current international politics, then, admits that *"global interdependence is a give-and-take process and that further integration in world affairs is inevitable"* (Chan 1997: 11).

In terms of the IR methodological debate known as the agent-structure debate, the recent Chinese approach to the analysis of the international system neither seems to favour the realist perspective nor Waltz's neo-realist perspective that the international structure shapes the behaviour of the states. It prefers the structure-agent perspective which sustains the theory of interaction between the

agent (the state) and the system with influence working in both directions³.

This perspective is used also in Chinese research on the current state of the international political economy. After the end of the Cultural Revolution, China's opening to the capitalist world market has imposed a revision of the traditional Chinese interpretations of international capitalism and its decadent nature (see more in Zha 1997: 64-73). Economic connections with the rest of the world and membership in world and regional economic organisations are imposed on the sovereign state to increase economic development. At the same time, these connections and membership are means to strengthen State's claim to sovereignty.

On the ground of the structurationist approach developed by Western scholars, Zha's (1997: 75) negative interpretation of the Chinese claim to reinforce state sovereignty by fostering economic linkages with the rest of the world is not fully correct. Keohane and Nye's well-known research on *Power and interdependence* made the same point in 1976. Just as Keohane and Nye acknowledged the inevitable reduction of sovereignty in the interdependent world, Chinese thinkers and political leaders acknowledge the inevitable loss of portions of sovereignty as the state decides to achieve greater economic development by engaging itself in world economic institutions. The negotiation for the accession of China to the World Trade Organisation supports this assertion.

Chinese civilian and military analysts demonstrate interest in the potential of regional co-operative security mechanisms. Shambough (1999: 75) mentions the appreciation of Chinese military analysts for the concepts of co-operative and comprehensive security. Multilateral security mechanisms are praised for increasing the security conditions of concerned countries and countering external powers' presence. In particular, the ASEAN states' project – known as ARF (Asian Regional Forum) – aimed at building a co-operative security system attracts China's interest. However, China's attitude towards cooperative security arrangements in the Asia-Pacific region

³ Wang Yizhou is cited as the most concerned Chinese scholar on the need to develop the study of IR in China along this perspective. See citations of Wang's works in Chan (1997: 12 and 18).

is defined as *conditional multilateralism*. Yuan (1999:99) gives the following definition:

- a. A multi-channel approach. *Regional security issues should be dealt with through a variety of channels, including bilateral, multilateral, and sometimes unilateral approaches at governmental levels. Indeed, China's approach to regional security issues can be seen as distinctly bilateral.*
- b. A multilateral approach. *Beijing continues to emphasize the importance of major powers in managing regional security issues.*
- c. A gradualist approach. *The regional security building process should begin with bilateral dialogues, moving to sub-regional, and then region-wide ones. Issues should be dealt with from an order of ascendance (i.e. from the relatively easy to the more difficult).*
- d. An Asia-Pacific approach to consensus building. *The region, because of its special characteristics – history, culture, economic development, political systems, religion, etc. should not blindly copy the CSCE model; substance is more important than form. Dialogues and confidence-building measures should serve to enhance political trust, which is the basis of stable security relationships.*

The conditional support of China to emerging regional security dialogues is explained by its interest in retaining the largest possible ability to manoeuvre and avoiding as much as possible any constraints on national actions. At the same time, China wants to be a player in the process of building regional security mechanisms and regimes and also to influence the agenda, because it recognizes the importance of regional security dialogues in avoiding uncertainties of unrest and conflict and enhancing reliance on self-organized arrangements against external interference.

Cultural experiences (the Mencian approach to order and morality and the realist perspective on the use of force to maintain peace) and the recent experience of imperialist humiliation made China less receptive to multilateralism and security through cooperation. For example, China was hostile to United Nations peace-keeping operations and demanded the reduction of the number of such U.N. operations. In many United Nations peace missions, China saw violation of the national sovereignty of the target country and

external interference in its domestic affairs. However, this hostile attitude to UN peacekeeping has significantly changed, particularly since the end of the Cold War (Gill and Reilly 2000). According to Yongjin Zhang (1998: 139), by 1980s and 1990s, China has reached a level of active cooperation with UN peacekeeping. Since the 1990s, China has sent 500 military observers to the relevant UN peacekeeping operations. It sent an engineering team of 800 people to Cambodia and 55 civilian policemen to the UN administrative authorities in East Timor. In January 2000, the Chinese government again sent five civilian peacekeeping policemen to the UN mission in Bosnia-Herzegovina. The decision of supporting U.N. peacekeeping missions and also of enlarging the budget of these forces has been attributed to the consolidation of a political group favourable to developing the openness of the country to multilateralism and world political institutions (Tassé 1999: 311). No doubt, the change of policy in relation to U.N. peace-keeping operations credits the country with determination to act as both responsible power and an effective pole in international politics.

The Chinese position on arms control has also changed over the years. During the 1960s and 1970s, China rejected US/Soviet arms control activities and proposals, regarding them as superpower propaganda and collusion aimed at maintaining the military monopoly of the nuclear power. China's argument was that nuclear arms control measures were aimed at freezing the military status of the nuclear powers, while condemning others to nuclear deterrence. For this reason, China did not accept to put its nuclear weapons programme development under any multilateral control. China's attitude shifted during the 1980s, when the Chinese government began to participate in the U.N. Conference on Disarmament in Geneva and other UN-based arms control forums. Finally, China's policy towards nuclear arms control turned to positive consideration at the end of the Cold War with accession to the TNP and other treaties on nuclear armaments test ban. China's policy on nuclear armament measures is aimed at complete destruction of these war instruments but makes this goal conditional to the need to remove the root causes of global and regional conflicts which are also economic and political. Yuan (1999: 121) points to the constitution of a Chinese arms control community which acknowledges that superpower nuclear arms negotiations to some extent contributed

to the reduction of East-West tensions and stabilized the European continent. The signature of the INF (Intermediate-Range Nuclear Force Treaty) is explicitly praised for inducing *détente* and stability.

4. Europe's and China's security cultures compared

A growing number of scholars is concerned with the importance of culture as determinant of national foreign and security policies. The definition of national interests, perception of security problems and management of external relations depend on the views of the political leaders and the culture of the country. For the past hundred years or so, in Europe and the Western world, liberal idealism and pragmatic realism have been both cultural traits and political approaches to solve international problems. Dualism is present also in China with the Confucian-Mencian cultural tradition and the *parabellum* paradigm. In the West, the League of Nations and the policy of appeasement have been the effect of idealism, while their failure has been the reason to opt for the realist policy of containment and the creation of the 'hierarchical' body of the Security Council in the United Nations. In China, the decline of the Qing Dynasty and the onset of "*a hundred years of humiliation*" caused the loosening of the national power view on the Mencian world order view (Yuan 1999: 90-91).

In the presentation of the security cultures of Europe and China, this paper has presented two different pictures and pointed to the *movement* and change of these cultures under the effect of external constraints and action of international institutions. It is apparent that the distance between these two different security cultures is not as large as it was in the past because the current process of interdependence and multilateralism affects the security culture of Europe and China in the same way. Interdependence is responsible for introducing in both cultures the multi-dimensional approach to security problems. The balance of economic, political and security matters is increasingly perceived by both sides as the key to achieve peace and stability in the international system. Multilateralism is responsible for the introduction of growing reliance on international institutions to build global and regional security arrangements based on cooperative and comprehensive security.

5. The construction of security partnerships

The construction of security partnerships can be the most important innovation in the security practices of states in the post-Cold War era. The definition of security partnership is close to the definition of security community, but security partnerships and security communities are different cases of security building. In Deutsch's terms, a security community is "*a group of people which has become integrated*" [Deutsch et al., 1957: 5] and, therefore, constitutes a group of countries among which war is obsolete as an instrument of conflict resolution. A security community is brought into existence by transaction and communication flows which binds a group of people together, enabling them to think of themselves as a community and producing the condition for the establishment of institutions of peaceful conflict resolution. Security partnership agreements, instead, are formed within groups of countries characterized by conflict division and small flows of transactions and communications but disposed to manage their conflict divisions by making steps towards the reduction of the risk of violent confrontation and allowing the development of increasing flows of communication and transactions among themselves (See also Attinà, 2001).

The building of a security partnership is also different from the building of military alliances. A military alliance is based on the traditional conception of state security as the condition reached by pooling national military forces to dissuade potential aggressors by means of threatening the use of violence. The building of a regional security partnership, instead, is based above all on the conception of security as developed in Europe during the Helsinki Process. According to this conception, a group of coherent international and internal measures must be created to improve the security conditions and defend the geopolitical stability of the region. The dissuasion of the expansionist design of (potential) aggressor states and the avoidance of international violence in a region are believed to be *better* obtained when a security system is built by embracing all or almost all of the states in the region and also extra-regional powers, rather than by pooling national forces in opposed military alliances.

In formal terms, a security partnership arrangement is based on a set of accords including one or few fundamental agreements and a number of related operative agreements. In the fundamental

agreements (like the 1975 Helsinki Final Act and the 1990 Charter of Paris for A New Europe; the 1995 Barcelona Declaration on the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership; and the 1994 Chairman's Statement at the First ASEAN Regional Forum), shared principles of peaceful relations are proclaimed and issues of conflict, tension and instability are also made public. In the operative agreements, measures directed to manage both international and internal problems are arranged by the governments and international organisations of the region in order to prevent the risk of conflict that can break down the stability of the region. The fundamental agreements are the initial step in the process of partnership building, but a regional security partnership really comes to life only when some operative agreements are put on the ground.

6. Security partnership building in Europe and the role of the EU

The construction of the European security partnership started in 1975 by the fundamental agreement named the Final Act of the Helsinki Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), signed by 35 governments. This accord was redefined by the 1990 CSCE Charter of Paris which also opened the decisive phase of the making of operative agreements of security building in Europe. Since that year, a series of treaties and programmes has been produced to put in place a panoply of international and internal measures of security. This series includes the creation of the OSCE's *machinery* of offices and mechanisms. NATO's initiatives and programmes towards the former Soviet states and the Eastern and Central European states, the EU's common defence policy, and TACIS, PHARE and similar programmes directed to assisting the rehabilitation of the post-Soviet states and societies, along with the many initiatives and programmes for the Balkans in the 1990s.

The traditional security model of dissuasion of the potential aggressor by means of threatening the use of all-out military means has not been abandoned in Europe. Direct deterrence is the intact instrument of the collective defence of the NATO alliance under the United States leadership. However, it has also been agreed that the regional security partnership model is the preferred model of security for moral, cultural, economic and social reasons.

In the 1990s, the Atlantic Alliance has moved towards the

security partnership model negotiated in the long Helsinki process which contemplates security as being a cooperative, comprehensive and gradual process. In this decade, NATO has adopted many decisions to make its traditional strategy compatible with the new conditions of international security in Europe, taking into account the collapse of the Warsaw Pact and the violent disintegration of Yugoslavia.

Immediately after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact, the United States and NATO decided how to deal with former enemies. The decision involved dialogue with former enemies on security issues, turning a past hostile relationship into a friendly relationship. To this end, a dialogue forum, the NACC (North Atlantic Cooperation Council), was convened in 1992. In the following years, this early decision was adapted to cater for the different problems of the different groups of countries in which the former Soviet and Central-Eastern Europe countries divided in the new circumstances of the post-cold war Europe. In 1994, the Partnership for Peace (PfP) was offered to the former Warsaw Pact's members which agreed to take part in NATO's programmes tailored to their individual requirements. These programmes include different activities such as military exercises and civil emergency operations. In 1997, NACC was closed and substituted with the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC), a forum of political dialogue among 44 NATO Allies and Partners. In addition, two bilateral dialogue frameworks have been created: the NATO Joint Permanent Council with Russia and the NATO-Ukraine Commission. Lastly, NATO's enlargement policy has brought Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic into the group of NATO's member countries and the door has been kept open to other countries wishing to become NATO members.

In addition to NATO's transformation, defence is the real object of the action of the EU governments and institutions today on the model of the ESDP, the common European Security and Defence Policy. Since the Amsterdam Treaty of the European Union entered in force in May 1999, decisions have been made to create common institutions in Brussels to carry out the project of creating a rapid intervention force of 60.000 soldiers within a wider European structure of crisis management including military and civilian capabilities.

Briefly, the security culture of post-Cold War Europe prompts European governments to adopt a variety of instruments, measures

and agreements which are rather different from the traditional security instruments, measures and agreements.

7. Security partnership building in Asia and the role of China

The construction of security partnerships in Asia is quite a new practice, compared with that in Europe. It started with the inaugural meeting of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) in Bangkok in July 1994.

The ARF is the only official forum for multilateral dialogue on security issues in the Asia-Pacific region. It has been established with the aim of managing the transition from the period of the Cold War to the new realities in the Asia-Pacific region today. Its objectives, which were outlined in the First ARF Chairman's Statement in 1994, are to:

- a. Foster constructive dialogue and consultation on political and security issues of common interest and concern, and to
- b. Make significant contributions to efforts towards confidence-building and preventive diplomacy in the Asia-Pacific region. Its membership has increased from an initial 18 to 23 member nations following North Korea's participation in July 2000. It is evolving from confidence-building to preventive diplomacy. Many efforts have been made to explore the concept and the principles of preventive diplomacy in the ARF recently.

The ARF seeks to build mutual confidence and trust among its members through regular consultations at the ministerial, senior officials and experts levels, and joint activities. It also seeks to develop a capacity to prevent conflict through diplomacy. Meanwhile, confidence-building measures of the ARF, such as the publication of defence white papers, a regional registry of conventional arms, joint training in disaster relief, de-mining, and search and rescue, exchanges between defence colleges, and visits by high-ranking defence and military officials, help to strengthen security and stability in the Asia-Pacific region.

The ARF is proceeding at a pace comfortable to all participants, which have diverse interests, capabilities, and expectations thus making it very difficult to move forward at a faster pace. Its process is characterised by informality: it has no collective bureaucratic apparatus, and even no secretariat. Its decision-making procedures

are based on consensus and its agreements have no legally binding force on its members. Still, most of the decisions are implemented by its members on a voluntary basis. It has no resource and ability to resolve a conflict when it emerges.

These features of the ARF have created some discontent and criticisms from inside and outside of the ARF. However, it should be pointed out that these features are vital to the existence and sound development of the ARF in this region. Obviously, these features make the ARF unique and different from European security partnership buildings. It is true that the ARF is not anywhere near the OSCE, but this does not mean that it can not achieve the same effects in building regional security. In fact, just as Friedberg observes, "*Less highly structured, bureaucratic and visible than their European counterparts, Asian institutions may nevertheless turn out to be equally effective in achieving their objectives, perhaps even more so.*" (Friedberg 2000, pp.152-153)

China has attended every meeting of the ARF since 1994. This includes about twelve meetings each year at the level of ministerial, senior official, and ARF-designated track two sessions. Since 1997, China has hosted several ARF meetings and seminars, such as the ARF Professional Training Program on China's Security policy, the 4th ARF Meeting of Heads of Defence Colleges, and the Seminar on Defence Conversion Cooperation. China began to accept the view of warfare indivisibility and to acknowledge the virtue of transparency measures in the ARF and other processes through sharing defence and defence policy information and by exchanging white papers and policy papers with other member states. Every year China submits to the forum a statement on national defence policy. China has also attended every meeting of the Council for Security Cooperation in Asia Pacific (CSCAP), which is closely connected to the ARF, since China joined it in December 1996. According to Johnston and Evans (1999, p.256), Chinese participants in the ARF and the CSCAP have been increasingly pro-active in advancing specific approaches and positions, and are in the mainstream of the discussion. The number of Chinese participants in these fora has greatly expanded. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China established a special unit within the Asia Department to manage regional cooperation fora including the ARF, the CSCAP, and other track two channels in Asia in 1996.

Apart from the ARF, other examples of security partnership building are conducted at the sub-regional level in Asia. The

“Shanghai Five” mechanism which originated from the summit meeting of five states (China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan) held in Shanghai in April 1996, has proved a successful regional security partnership building. Since the first summit meeting in April 1996, a series of agreements among the five states have been concluded and practical measures have been adopted and effectively implemented to construct security partnership. The Agreement on Confidence-Building in the military Field Along the Border Areas and the Agreement on Mutual Reduction of Military Forces in the Border Areas, signed in 1996 and 1997 respectively, were the most important agreements to the security partnership building among the five countries. Practical measures to crack down on international terrorism, drug trafficking, arms smuggling, illegal immigration and other forms of cross-border crimes have been included in the security partnership building measures. (Zhang, 2001)

The development of “Shanghai Five” mechanism has been regarded as an important practice in international relations, which initiated a new type of security conception featuring mutual trust, disarmament and cooperative security. The “Shanghai Five” mechanism also enriched the brand new inter-state relationship jointly initiated by China and Russia with the core of non-alignment, and created a new regional cooperative mode featuring joint proposition, priority of security, mutual benefit and friendly cooperation. The “Shanghai Five” mechanism has played an active role in stimulating and deepening mutual trust, good-neighboring and friendly relations among the member states, strengthening regional security and stability, and promoting common development since its establishment.

The “Shanghai Five” mechanism was transformed into a higher level of cooperation with the declaration of the establishment of Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) on June 15, 2001. This indicated that the “Shanghai Five” mechanism has developed from an early consultation mechanism for cooperation in solving boundary issues into an organization of extensive cooperation in the economic, political and security fields. The SCO has six member states with the admission of Uzbekistan. According to the Declaration of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, the SCO has characterized its aims as strengthening mutual trust and good-neighbourly friendship among member states and their effective cooperative cooperation in various fields so as to make concerted efforts to safeguard and

guarantee peace, security and stability in the region and the world at large. It also plans to organize annual formal meetings of heads of states of the member states and regular meetings of heads of governments to be hosted by its members in turn. The first summit meeting of the heads of government of the SCO will be held in Alma-Ata, Kyrgyzstan. The Shanghai Spirit, a result of the Shanghai Five process with mutual trust, reciprocity, equality, consultation, respect for multifarious civilizations and seeking common development as the basic content, is the experience accumulated and treasure gained by states in the region in their cooperation in the past few years, and it will continue as a guiding norm for relations between SCO member states. The pact on battling terrorism, separatism and extremism signed by the six heads of state has shown that these countries have made concrete steps in their cooperation, making a breakthrough from political documents to legal documents. It set up the Council of Coordinators of Member States to coordinate cooperation among the member states. It also established an anti-terrorism centre in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, to coordinate between member states.

The SCO attaches special importance to make every effort to ensure regional security and sets the deepening of their cooperation in security as a top priority. The SCO, which grew out of the "Shanghai Five" mechanism, successfully created a regional security framework among nations that have different backgrounds of religions, cultures, social systems and ideologies and that once had severe hostility against each other and military confrontation. Not only do many Chinese analysts view the SCO as the model of the future new Asia-Pacific security system. Russian analysts also hold the same idea and argue that the dynamics of the SCO deserves attention as an example of setting up multilateral security arrangements.

China's active participation in the construction of security partnerships shows that its traditional ways of dealing with security are changing. China came to realize the utility of the building of security partnerships. These security innovations have provided China with good opportunities to increase its international status as a responsible regional big power, and improve the external security environment which is important for China to focus on its economic development and internal affairs. More importantly, the principles of security partnership building in Asia (known as the "ASEAN Way,"

"Asian Way," or "Asia-Pacific Way") are in line with China's basic foreign policy, known as the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, and the new security concept, which has been advocated by China recently and elaborated in its National Defense Paper in 2000. This convergence of principles can guarantee that China will be more cooperative in building regional security and further integrated into the construction of security partnerships.

8. Conclusions

The construction of security partnerships is gaining momentum both in Europe and Asia. The development of the OSCE, the creation of the ESDP, and the adaptation of NATO to the new security environment are the chief evidence of the development of security partnership construction in Europe. In Asia, the development of the ARF, the establishment of the SCO, and the proliferation of multilateral security dialogues are cases in point. It is not coincidental that both the European Union and China are playing an important role in the construction of regional security partnerships. Just as we analysed in the first part in this paper, European security culture and Chinese security culture are converging on similar positions under the effect of the current changes in international politics and security. The construction of security partnerships in Europe and Asia is a reflection of this tendency.

However, the convergence of the security cultures of Europe and China does not mean that their security partnerships are constructed in the same manner and following the same model. On the contrary, they may be quite different in many specific aspects. Security partnerships are constructed in the specific regional context and influenced by political, social and cultural traditions. This is why the security partnership buildings in Europe and in Asia have taken on distinctive scenarios. In Europe, the conditions for security partnership buildings are much more favourable than those in Asia. The influence of the OSCE's practises on member states has laid the basis for further cooperation in security affairs. The process of European integration and NATO have linked the European states more closely and made them more interdependent. Further-more, the common values, similar political and economic systems, and shared identity among European states have made the security partnership buildings in Europe more stable and more

institutionalized. The construction of security partnerships in Europe has already moved beyond the CBMs.

Asia does not enjoy these favourable conditions. The history of cooperative security in Asia is less than a decade old. Many countries, including China, in the Asia-Pacific region lack experience and habits of consultation and cooperation on security issues. The general diversity of the region has decelerated the process of the construction of security partnerships. The military alliances, hostility and misunderstanding among some countries, and the security flashpoints in Asia have hampered the process of cooperative security. For these reasons, the construction of security partnerships in Asia is still in a nascent stage. Building confidence and understanding among regional states through the implementation of CBMs is still, and will continue to be, the primary focus of Asian security partnership construction. It goes without saying that in the absence of a universally, high degree of confidence and understanding, the real security partnerships cannot be realized. Mutual confidence and understanding is necessary but not enough for building regional security. The construction of security partnerships in Asia needs to go further. Just as the concept paper of the ARF in 1995 has stated, *"If the ARF is to become, over time, a meaningful vehicle to enhance the peace and prosperity of the region, it will have to demonstrate that it is a relevant instrument to be used in the event that a crisis or problem emerges"*. The ARF has no enforcement action capability at present. However, without this capability, the security partnerships will be fragile and can easily be damaged by an incident. Therefore, the ARF must develop its own mechanisms to carry preventive diplomacy and conflict-resolution. This will be an evolutionary process which cannot be realized in a short time.

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