



## Cooperative Ideas for New Communication & Conference Processes in the Middle East/Gulf Getting Started with Two Expert Panels at the First NPT PrepCom in Vienna

Bernd W. Kubbig and Marc Finaud

*In our new Track II initiative we will present, discuss, and disseminate Cooperative Ideas jointly developed at two International Expert Conferences in Frankfurt and Berlin (see issue No. 1 of this New Publication Series at [academicpeaceorchestra.com](http://academicpeaceorchestra.com)). The aim is to help establish promising focal points around which especially the relevant regional actors in the disarmament & non-proliferation area can rally. They may ultimately lead to constructive and sustainable dialogue mechanisms which are so rare – and so needed – in the Middle East/Gulf. The Two Expert Panels in Vienna are our starting point with a Third Panel envisaged for the Second NPT PrepCom in Geneva as a follow-up event. They are presented in this POLICY FORUM No. 2.*

### Overview

Business as usual will be difficult to justify especially after the failure of the 2015 NPT Review Conference in New York. Therefore, we take the view that

- a comprehensive approach to the entire Middle East/Gulf with its old and new security challenges is essential. They are related to two centers of gravity: the first is the traditional Egypt-led/Arab-Israeli antagonism, with its focus on creating a regional Zone Free of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) and their Delivery Vehicles (DVs) such as missiles (WMD/DVs Free Zone). The second center of gravity relates to the sub-region of the Gulf;
- weapons of mass destruction and their delivery vehicles should be seen as the nucleus of ultimately all-inclusive security arrangements;
- we should make use of positive factors and developments such as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, i.e., the JCPOA/Accord concluded on July 14, 2015 between the E/EU 3 + 3 and Iran; and
- we should look for potentially unifying topics that could facilitate the merging of the technical nuclear community and the disarmament & non-proliferation community. We suggest dealing with CBRN in the hands of terrorist organizations in the entire region.

Our approach of – hopefully! – choosing the ‘right’ topics and hand-picking the ‘right’ experts is basically a pragmatic one. For Vienna, we have deliberately opted for an extra-regional composition of experts: committed but non-partisan. Representatives from the region, our main addressees, will of course have a chance during the Q&A session to make their views known. As in our previous initiatives, in all our future activities we will of course reach out to Track I and II experts from the Middle East/Gulf.

### The First Expert Panel on Paving the Way for the Resumption of an Effective Communication and Conference Process

*Vienna, VIC, Scheduled for May 8, 2017, 13.15 – 14.45 pm in Room M 3*

*Moderators: Bernd W. Kubbig, APOME  
& Marc Finaud, GCSP*

By addressing the specific audience, *the two moderators* will set the stage for the presentation of the Cooperative Ideas by emphasizing the need for a *non-business-as-usual* approach to this Track II endeavor with the conceptual novelties and objectives mentioned above. The extra-regional moderators will (like all the other panelists) avoid finger-pointing and one-sided statements. Instead, they will refer to the divergent assessments in the literature on the two failures, i.e., the 2015 NPT Review Conference and the international gathering on discussing a WMD/DVs Free Zone which did not take place in Helsinki.

*First Cooperative Idea: Exploring a Substantive and Political Alliance between the Supporters of the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons by Alyn Ware, PNND*

*Second Cooperative Idea: Testing a Nuclear-Test-Free Zone as a Building Block toward a WMD/DVs Free Zone by Marc Finaud, Geneva Centre for Security Policy*

*Third Cooperative Idea: Two Ready-to-Start Gradual Measures – Establishing a Comprehensive Expert Group on Verification Measures; Creating a Regional Security Center by Nilsu Gören, Center for International and Security Studies, University of Maryland*

*Fourth and Fifth Cooperative Idea: A UN Envoy Replacing the Position of the Canceled Facilitator – A Dual-track Approach of Simultaneously Pursuing a Disarmament Approach and Regional Security by Marc Finaud, GCSP, and Bernd W. Kubbig, APOME*

*Sixth and Seventh Cooperative Idea: How to Build a WMD Free Zone on the Existing Treaties (NPT) and Conventions (BTWC, CWC) – and in View of Terrible Events such as the Poison Gas Attack on the Town of Khan Sheikhun in Idlib in Early April 2017 Killing More Than 80 People? By Jean Pascal Zanders, The Trench*

*Eighth Cooperative (Flanking) Idea: Exploring Multilateral Environmental Cooperation in Transboundary Water Conflicts between Israel and Its Neighbors – Can a Positive Spill-over Be Expected for Disarmament & Non-proliferation? By Inga Schierholz, University of Manitoba and the University of Winnipeg*



*Ninth Cooperative (Flanking) Idea: Positive Economic Impact of the JCPOA for Iran and the Region – Can a Positive Spillover Be Expected for Disarmament & Nonproliferation? By Bijan Khajepour Khoei, Managing Partner, Atieh Capital, Vienna*

## The Second Expert Panel on Assessing the Transformative Potential of the JCPOA

*Vienna, VIC, Scheduled for May 10, 2017, 13.15 – 14.45 pm in Room M 3*

*Moderators: Bernd W. Kubbig, APOME & Marc Finaud, GCSP*

In their introductory remarks the two moderators will emphasize that the E/EU 3+3 Accord with Iran is not a panacea. It should be explored, however, as an essential focal point for increasing stability in the Gulf (including better communication especially between Riyadh and Tehran), and for inspiring constructive debates on disarmament & non-proliferation in the Egypt-led/Arab-Israeli antagonism – in this sense it could help re-launch a Communication & Conference Process in and after Vienna; it is also hoped that the Cooperative Ideas presented will help overcoming major disagreements in the traditional center of gravity.

*First Cooperative Idea: Reviving the Concept of the Gulf Free of Nuclear Weapons Plus Biological and Chemical Weapons for (Sub-)regional Disarmament by Christian Koch, Gulf Research Council Foundation/Bernd W. Kubbig, APOME (presenter)*

*Second Cooperative Idea: The Role of the International Atomic Energy Agency in Monitoring Compliance of the Nuclear Part of the JCPOA as a Way of Confidence Building by Technical Means with the Aim of Reducing Saudi Arabia's Interest in Nuclear Weapons by Tariq Rauf, formerly with Stockholm International Peace Research Institute*

*Third Cooperative Idea: The Possibility of Applying Elements of the Incentive-based JCPOA-Mechanism to the Arab-Israeli Arms Control Dispute by Daniel Müller, Peace Research Institute Frankfurt*

*Fourth Cooperative Idea: A Missile Free Zone in the Gulf and beyond – Extending the Nuclear Dimension by Benjamin Hauteconverture, Fondation pour la Recherche Stratégique*

*Fifth Cooperative Idea: Concretizing the Transformative Power of the JCPOA and Its Limits Concerning the Relaxing of the Saudi-Iranian Rivalry for Regional Hegemony/Supremacy by Dr. Ali Fathollah-Nejad, Associate Fellow, German Council on Foreign Relations/Kennedy School's Belfer Center, Harvard University*

*Sixth Cooperative Idea – Outlook for Geneva: First Steps for Bringing the Technical and the Disarmament & Non-proliferation Communities together – Radiological Weapons in the Hands of Non-state/Hybrid Actors such as ISIL as the Case in Point by Nilsu Gören, Center for International and Security Studies, University of Maryland*

## Outlook for Geneva: Creating an Additional Region-wide Dialogue Mechanism – Rallying the Technical and Disarmament & Non-proliferation Communities around the Specter of CBRN-possessing Non-state/Hybrid Actors such as ISIL

*Moderators: Bernd W. Kubbig, APOME, Marc Finaud, GCSP, and Nilsu Gören, CISS*

*A panel/working group with a focus on illicit trafficking could include the following dimensions:*

*Taking stock of the state of the art/expertise – even if an emphasis on illicit trade/smuggling of radiological/nuclear material were opted for – the insights gained for instance in the areas of biosafety, biosecurity, and biotechnology would be relevant, too.*

*Discussing analytically sound concepts of terrorism-related threats/risks (for instance the “Design Basis Threat” concept – this could be done in combination with identifying possible loopholes in existing security measures at the (inter)national level, and conversely, with creating new regional mechanisms, e. g. for combating illicit trade.*

*Benefiting from concrete examples of regional co-operation (for instance the first Falcon inter-Arab nuclear detection and response exercise in Abu Dhabi in February 2016, and the ongoing Khalifa University Reachback Program).*

*Concretizing the increased role of civil-society organizations as requested for example in the context of the Review Conference Process of UNSCR 1540 as probably the center piece of measures against material/weapons of*

terror in the hands of terrorist organizations such as ISIL (this would include our ACADEMIC PEACE ORCHESTRA's activities as well as a greater involvement of industry, in which the so-called Wiesbaden Process has been instrumental.) Other tools should be assessed, too, among them the *Nuclear Security Contact Group* as new element of the global nuclear security architecture since the final Nuclear Security Summit held in Washington, D. C., in April 2016.

*Designing an efficient dual-use export program – with the ongoing EU efforts as an important point of reference.*

*Bringing in the broader context of disarmament & non-proliferation by assessing the relevant Treaties (NPT) and Conventions (BTWC, CWC) – again in combination with identifying possible loopholes especially in the NPT which does not address sub-state/hybrid actors; this may lead from this angle, too, to focus on UNSCR 1540.*

*Analyzing radicalization as well as approaches to de-radicalizing extremists – presenting examples and results from pertinent projects.*

## Opting for a New Cycle of Workshops in Vienna and beyond

We suggest convening a small ‘meeting of the willing’ from among Track I decision-makers and Track II experts, especially those from the conflict region after our Two Expert Panels toward the end of the First PrepCom in Vienna. They could assess the Vienna event and also discuss the outlook for the Second NPT PrepCom in Geneva, including our Track II activities. Here, the following questions could be relevant:

- *Prioritizing the Cooperative Ideas:* Has a kind of consensus evolved that supports one concept or a clear set of Cooperative Ideas? Which ideas should be given more weight, altered or dropped?
- *Checking the connectivity of Cooperative Ideas:* Which ideas discussed in the First Expert Panel are compatible with and/or complementary to proposals presented in the Second Expert Panel?
- *Examining obstacles and supporting (f)actors:* Are the traditional players dominating the discourse and/or have new surprising actors/alliances favoring more compromise-oriented solutions emerged? ■