Preface

The past decades have witnessed a steady growth of regional security fora and institutions in Asia and Europe, working together for the prosperity and stability of their member states. However, with the emergence of new security threats and precarious security concerns, there is a need to re-examine the security architectures in both regions. Through a realistic review of the current network of multilateral initiatives, the most effective and viable approach to address the rapidly changing global security order can be identified.

Mulitlateral fora have been playing an essential role in building confidence as well as promoting accepted norms, rules, and peaceful dispute settlement. They thereby reduce strategic disagreements. While there is no continent-wide organisation like the Organisation of Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) in Asia, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) has been seen as a driver of many preventive diplomacy initiatives, such as the East Asia Summit, ASEAN Regional Forum and ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting. These fora have helped to spread cooperative security norms, engaged the major powers and contributed to the strengthening of the security architecture in the region. However, overlaps between the fora, the changing global security landscape and the shifting balance of power in East Asia have hindered the processes from achieving their full potential, ultimately resulting in the failure to build a stable institutionalised Asian security architecture.

Although new security threats have emerged in Europe and the continent is faced with a deterioration of the security in its immediate neighbourhood, the arrangements already in place can be viewed as a good example of the practice of conflict prevention and management. The North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), OSCE, Council of Europe and a series of collaborative measures on the European Union-level have shaped the security landscape in Europe and provided the much-needed stability that enabled the continent to become the economic powerhouse it is today. Yet, recent developments have highlighted the still existing challenges and the lack of effective harmonisation and integration of security and defence matters in the European Union. The Russian activities in Ukraine and in cyber space have raised questions on how effective the security arrangements are in reality. The increasing unpredictability resulting from the announced changes in the new US administration's foreign policy, especially with regard to NATO, also raise questions on how ready Europe is to ensure its own security and stability.

Growing maritime and territorial disputes, and increasing armament, terrorism, nationalism as well as non-traditional threats underline the need for robust and multipronged cooperation approaches on security issues. These challenges affect Asia and Europe alike, which makes it imperative for countries from both regions to work together to build a stable security order. In the context of the return of great-power

politics and a general shift towards unilateral actions, European and Asian countries should work collaboratively and embrace multilateral as well as regional solutions.

In this issue of our biannual journal *Panorama: Insights into Asian and European Affairs*, the authors discuss the current security challenges in the realm of the new global security landscape. Based on analyses of the different threats and dynamics, the papers look at ways to strengthen cooperative security arrangements. They argue that such collaborative initiatives are ultimately the most promising avenues to contain the transnational insecurities and build trust in order to develop a regional security architecture that will ensure regional stability and peace.

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