



Prague Security Studies Institute

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MESSAGE FROM THE CO-FOUNDER

Dear Friends,
 Since its inception, PSSI has sought to bring together senior, security-minded policy-practitioners from around the world with students and young professionals to advance the development of democratic institutions and values in Central Europe and globally. Together with our Israeli and Spanish partners (Institute for Strategic Studies at the Shalem Center in Jerusalem and Foundation for Social Analysis and Studies in Madrid), we convened an international conference on Democracy and Security in early June 2007 that took this mission to a new level.

“Recently, I traveled to Prague, the Czech Republic, where I spoke to a conference of dissidents and democratic activists from 17 nations on five continents. I was proud to represent our country at that historic meeting. I was proud to tell those brave souls that America stands with them in their struggle for liberty, because we believe in the universality of liberty...”

President G.W. Bush,
*July 4th address,
 Martinsburg, West Virginia*

for 150 dissidents, opposition leaders, academics, business executives, journalists and public policy experts from Europe, Russia, the US, Asia and the Middle East to share their experiences and forge new relationships. Not surprisingly, this unusual gathering also

stimulated a great deal of global media attention.

My fellow Co-Founder Olda Černý, our Program Director Jiří Schneider and my other PSSI colleagues take pride in the Institute’s role in creating this unique forum for debate and discussion concerning the nexus between democracy and international security, particularly in the context of dramatic new challenges to our common security interests.

The choice of Prague as the venue for the conference helped underscore the relevance of this subject for the region and once again displayed the city’s unique ability to attract a broad spectrum of high-level international participants. The presence of renowned policy-makers and opinion leaders, featuring the President of the United States, created a special opportunity

We would like to share with you in this brief document a number of the key findings and recommendations of this distinguished gathering. It is also our intention to follow-up on the substantial momentum generated by the conference with future events of this kind.

Roger W. Robinson Jr.
Co-Founder



Chairman of the Ibn Khaldun Center for Development Studies Saad Eddin Ibrahim and President of the Reform Party of Syria Farid Ghadry

CONFERENCE SUMMARY

The Democracy and Security Conference, convened in Prague on June 5-6, 2007, was an impressive gathering of leading dissidents, human rights activists, academics, business executives and world leaders. The conference was a joint initiative of three long-time champions of human rights, democracy and liberty: former President of the Czech Republic and leader of the “Velvet Revolution,” Václav Havel; human rights activist, author, political leader and founding Chairman of the Institute for Strategic Studies at the Shalem Center, Natan Sharansky; and former Spanish Prime Minister José María Aznar. The Prague Security Studies Institute, the Institute for Strategic Studies at the Shalem Center, and the Foundation for Social Analysis and Studies in Madrid organized and hosted this first-ever event to create a forum for dissidents, leading politicians and public policy practitioners to discuss the positive dynamics of democracy and focus on new ways to advance freedom in totalitarian and authoritarian regimes. The conference also

addressed the challenges and pitfalls of democratization, the current threats posed by a deteriorating global security environment and the troubling developments in Russia and the implications for Europe and the surrounding region.

Following an opening reception by the Lord Mayor of Prague the participants attended a dinner featuring the US Senator Joseph Lieberman and the Estonian President Toomas Hendrik Ilves. The conference began on June the 5th with a welcoming address by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic, Karel Schwarzenberg. His opening remarks helped frame the objectives of the conference and posed provocative questions about the prospects and modalities for implementing democratic systems of government. Richard Dearlove, Bassem Eid, Herbert London, Bruce Jackson, Daniel Polisar and Kanan Makiya were speakers on this first panel that focused on the democratization process and its current successes and failures. The consensus view of the speakers was that unfortunately the democratic

process in the Middle East is not progressing positively and that an assessment of its shortfalls is in order.

The second panel included Michael Žantovský, Joshua Muravchik, Josef Janning, Mohsen Sazegara, Mudawi Ibrahim Adam and Martin Kramer, each of whom discussed their views concerning whether or not the process of democratization contributes to security. A number of speakers raised the current drama in the Middle East and the lack of adequate security in Iraq and elsewhere in the region. Martin Kramer described the issue as a struggle between democracy and “consensual authoritarianism.” He opined that democracy is presently losing this fight largely because democracies tend to only react to external threats, while nations such as Iran, Syria and North Korea are proactive in exporting insecurity to the rest of the world.

Jorge Moragas, Garri Kasparov, Marc Plattner, Christian Schmidt, Junning Liu and Richard Perle comprised the conference’s third panel. This panel explored alternative models of making the transition from a totalitarian or authoritarian regime to a democratic society. Marc Plattner argued that while there is “no right way to sequence a democratic transition,” elections should be given priority with the rule of law and securing of fundamental rights to follow. Christian Schmidt, added that democracy cannot be “packaged,” but that coalitions among free world nations can offer transitional countries greater security and prosperity. The final speaker, Richard Perle, offered his view of the present dialogue between democratic leaders and dictatorial regimes. He concluded that such dialogues can often legitimate and embolden dictatorships and that much greater outreach is necessary to the powerless victims of such regimes.

Following the third panel the President of the United States, George W. Bush, addressed the conference participants with a strong speech summarizing American involvement and policy goals with respect to the global progression of democracy and freedom. President Bush remarked, “the United States is committed to the advance of freedom and democracy as the great alternatives to repression and radicalism.” The President stated his support for the Prague Charter and sought



President of the We Remmber Foundation Irina Krasovskaya, President of the Political Council of Democratic Forces Aliaksandr Milinkevich and chessplayer and politician Garri Kasparov

to remind his critics that seeking the growth of democracy is not a pretext for any form of neo-colonialism or imperialism. He stated that this frequent charge “is refuted by the fact that every time people are given a choice, they choose freedom.”

The first working day of the conference was concluded by a dinner with remarks by the former Canadian Minister of Justice Irwin Cotler, Chairman of Freedom House Peter Ackerman, and Josef Joffe, the editor of *Die Zeit*.

The final day of the conference opened by a roundtable discussion about the role of dissidents and freedom fighters in repressive societies. This session was hosted by Jose María Aznar, Václav Havel and Natan Sharansky. The speakers were in agreement that considerably more support of dissidents across the globe is needed, including greater support for non-governmental organizations in fledgling democracies. During the discussion, Václav Havel observed that, “we have to take the risk to support peace movements or else we will witness the deterioration of the world situation.” Former President Havel also criticized the EU’s present appeasement policy towards Cuba.

The fourth panel of the conference included David Bercuson, Tod Lindberg, Chin-mo Cheng, Stefano Silvestri,

Jamie Shea, Walid Phares, Eli Khoury, Zainab Al-Suwaij and Anne Bayefsky. The panelists discussed the various roles of democratic states, international institutions and the media in today’s global security environment. Several speakers called for a fundamental reassessment of the aims and strategies of the international community with regard to the spread of democracy to countries with little, if any, experiences with a free society. David Bercuson, Anne Bayefsky and Tod Lindberg even suggested a new treaty or organization among democratic nations dedicated to this type of endeavor.

The fifth and final panel was comprised of Fraser Cameron, Ludmilla Alexeeva, Eugeniusz Smolar, Alexandr Vondra, Karl-Theodor von und zu Guttenberg and Irina Krasovskaya. These panelists had an exchange about the role of Central Europe in EU-Russia relations. The view of most speakers was that a more candid dialogue between the EU and Russia is required and that European nations should not shy away from identifying and discussing the glaring limitations of “democracy” in Russia today. Karl-Theodor von und zu Guttenberg offered a German perspective on EU-Russia relations, stating, “We must convince Russia that democratization is

the most effective way to generate trust, set free the most creative and constructive forces in their country and to attract foreign investments. Additionally, we must convince Russia that nothing will threaten its security less than democratic states in its neighborhood.”

In closing remarks Jiří Schneider, PSSI’s Program Director, and Natan Sharansky warmly thanked the participants and audience for their dedication to these ideals. Mr. Sharansky commented on how remarkable it is that people of such strong beliefs and different backgrounds and cultures were able to gather in such harmony. He concluded that the common denominator for this level of harmony and consensus was a love of freedom and the willingness to sacrifice greatly to achieve it.

The conference succeeded in providing a platform for more than 150 dissidents, oppositions leaders, policy makers, academics, business executives, journalists and public policy experts from Europe, Russia, the US, Asia and the Middle East. A summary document, entitled “Prague Charter,” was adopted by the distinguished attendees and will be widely disseminated.

All the conference materials can be found at www.democracyandsecurity.org

“Democratic countries with accountable governments, rule of law and strong civil societies as a rule do not pose a threat either to their own citizens, or their neighbors.”

Karel Schwarzenberg

“We will observe significant advances towards democracy and the construction of civil society, but it will take time.”

Richard Dearlove

“The double standards of the free world become the real oppressors of democracy and the supporters of autocracy.”

Bassem Eid

“It is absolutely impossible to work on democracy if you do not have a Russia policy.”

Bruce Jackson

“The ability to stay the course is a crucial aspect of any democratic process.”

Michael Žantovský

“Freedom fighters need to know they are not alone.”

Richard Perle

“I strongly support the Prague Charter ...which states that ‘the protection of human rights is critical to international peace and security.’”

President George W. Bush

“Our idea is global freedom. Global freedom requires global answers and global responsibility.”

José María Aznar

“We have to take the risk to support peace movements or else we will witness the deterioration of the world situation and end up spending billions on defense systems.”

Václav Havel

“Today’s terrorists are out to attack whole societies and possibly raise the authoritarian specter in liberal democracies.”

David Bercuson

“The most dangerous thing for a dissident is to be ignored; only the solidarity of the world makes it possible for dissidents to continue their



Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic Karel Schwarzenberg

FROM THE REMARKS BY PRESIDENT TOOMAS HENDRIK ILVES

“In general, we are loath to get too involved in the internal affairs of other countries. The second half of the 20th Century saw a welcome diminution of this three hundred year old Westphalian principle: human rights came to be seen as something that is not simply an internal matter of a nation state. Notions of sovereignty can change and today, how a government treats its subject is no longer something to be passed over in silence. We have not yet, however, been able to extend the idea that human rights are no state’s internal matter to the broader issue of democracy in general...”

“I believe that the time has arrived to understand that democracies need to be defended. Yes, those of us in the EU and NATO feel more secure than we did as democracies outside their shield of solidarity. But what about democracies not in either organization, Georgia, for example, or Ukraine or Moldova? What if by some small miracle a country even further afield in say Central

Asia, opts for democracy? How do we defend their democratic choices? What can we do that democracies outside the fold of institutionalized solidarity can be as secure in their democratic choice as those on the inside?”

FROM THE OPENING REMARKS BY MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS KAREL SCHWARZENBERG

“I think the interrelation between democracy and security is an extremely interesting topic. Not surprisingly, there is a whole myriad of opinions on the subject. Does democracy strengthen security or is it the other way around? What if democracy gives rise to undemocratic forces, which can destabilize whole countries and regions and thus undermine security substantially?”

“First of all, there are certain human rights that are unalienable and universal in nature. Freedoms, such as freedom of expression, freedom of worship, the right for a due process of law or protection of life, cannot only be limited to certain geographic ar-



President of the United States George W. Bush addressing the conference

eas. Moreover, it is true, that democratic societies tend to spread stability and security, since their development and survival depend on them. That is why spreading democratic principles does increase security in the wider sense.

But how do we increase the overall level of democracy in the world without throwing parts of it into chaos, caused by formally democratic victories of undemocratic forces – unaccountable and out of control?”

“...most importantly, we should be very careful in choosing the right strategy for introducing democratic elements in undemocratic countries. Maybe, before rushing into free elections, which usually terrifies the ruling elites and provokes often very problematic counter-reactions, we might first try to concentrate on the process of institution-building – let us start with promoting a strong civil society, independent media, the rule of law and later proceed to establishing genuinely democratic political mechanisms.

The institute of rule of law is particularly important. I would even call it a precondition for democracy. The de-

velopment of England into a cradle of democracy might have started with the trial of the Black Prince in the Middle Ages. Strong and independent judiciary as one of de Montesquieu’s branches of power has been an essential element of American democracy since its very birth. Similarly, it was a stable and predictable legal environment with enforceable laws that led to the development of first democratic elements in Central European societies...”

“In recent years, we often repeat the word ‘values’. But values without strictly abiding by a set of rules can be an excuse for trespassing these rules and we can easily find ourselves on a highway to hell.”

FROM THE KEYNOTE SPEECH BY PRESIDENT GEORGE W. BUSH

“Expanding freedom is more than a moral imperative – it is the only realistic way to protect our people in the long run. Years ago, Andrei Sakharov warned that a country that does not respect the rights of its own people will not respond to the rights of its neighbors.

History proves him right. Governments accountable to their people do not attack each other. Democracies address problems through the political process, instead of blaming outside scapegoats. Young people who can disagree openly with their leaders are less likely to adopt violent ideologies. And nations that commit to freedom for their people will not support extremists – they will join in defeating them...”

“There are many dissidents who couldn’t join us because they are being unjustly imprisoned or held under house arrest. I look forward to the day when a conference like this one includes Alexander Kozulin of Belarus, Aung San Suu Kyi of Burma, Oscar Elias Biscet of Cuba, Father Nguyen Van Ly of Vietnam, Ayman Nour of Egypt. The daughter of one of these political prisoners is in this room. I would like to say to her, and all the families: I thank you for your courage. I pray for your comfort and strength. And I call for the immediate and unconditional release of your loved ones...”

“Still, some argue that a safer goal would be stability, especially in the

struggle. Today there are dissidents in many different contexts but the underlying battle is the same — freedom versus fear. We improve our influence by uniting as dissidents against totalitarian regimes.”
Natan Sharansky

“In the end people are willing to pay the price of freedom, all the leaders of the free world need to do is pay a little attention.”

Eli Khoury

“Putin must be sent a message that he cannot act like Alexander Lukashenko or Robert Mugabe and be treated like a democrat. The ruling elites are listening.”

Garri Kasparov

“As freedom fighters we ask you to stop supporting dictators in our countries; we ask Western democracies to stop supporting dictatorships and the darkness of theocrats in the name of stability and continuity.”

Saad Eddin Ibrahim

„It is not true that there are some places in the world where only authoritarianism is possible. We have people at this conference from China, from Iran, all these people who are connected by their desire to lead a dignified life. By democracy we can understand the conditions that respect this desire.“
Václav Havel, from the interview with Wall Street Journal, June 2007



Senator Joseph Lieberman and Speaker of the Czech Senate Přemysl Sobotka

Middle East. The problem is that pursuing stability at the expense of liberty does not lead to peace – it leads to September the 11th, 2001. The policy of tolerating tyranny is a moral and strategic failure. It is a mistake the world must not repeat in the 21st century.

Others fear that democracy will bring dangerous forces to power, such as Hamas in the Palestinian Territories. Elections will not always turn out the way we hope. Yet democracy consists of more than a single trip to the ballot box. Democracy requires meaningful opposition parties, a vibrant civil society, a government that enforces the law and responds to the needs of its people. Elections can accelerate the creation of such institutions. In a democracy, people will not vote for a life of perpetual violence. To stay in power, elected officials must listen to their people and pursue their

desires for peace – or, in democracies, the voters will replace them through free elections.

Finally, there’s the contention that ending tyranny is unrealistic. Well, some argue that extending democracy around the world is simply too difficult to achieve. That’s nothing new. We’ve heard that criticism before throughout history. At every stage of the Cold War, there were those who argued that the Berlin Wall was permanent, and that people behind the Iron Curtain would never overcome their oppressors. History has sent a different message...”

“I leave Prague with a certainty that the cause of freedom is not tired, and that its future is in the best of hands. With unbreakable faith in the power of liberty, you will inspire your people, you will lead your nations, and you will change the world...”



President of the FAES Foundation José María Aznar, Former Czech President Václav Havel and Chairman of the Institute for Strategic Studies at the Shalem Center Natan Sharansky at the press conference

PRAGUE CHARTER

Whereas we believe that all people have the right to live in free societies, that free societies are anchored in freedom of thought and expression, and that institutions such as a free press, representative legislatures, accountable executives, independent judiciaries and market economies protect this core freedom, as well as many other freedoms;

Whereas we recognize that there is a profound moral difference between free societies and societies ruled by fear and repression where human rights are systematically abused and where there is no recourse to correct those abuses;

Whereas we recognize that the protection of human rights is critical to international peace and security and that countries that do not respect the rights of their people are unlikely to respect the rights of their neighbors;

Whereas we are committed to building and maintaining free societies through non-violent, democratic means;

Whereas we believe that the free world can play a critical role in helping those who are struggling for freedom in non-democratic countries;

We, the undersigned, have gathered together in Prague in the spring of 2007 in order to call upon governments and peoples throughout the free world to help those trying to build

free societies elsewhere by doing the following:

1. To demand the immediate unconditional release of all non violent political prisoners in their respective countries.
2. Instructing diplomatic emissaries to non-democratic countries to actively and openly seek out meetings with political prisoners and dissidents committed to building free societies through non-violence.
3. Raising public awareness, through institutions in their own countries and through international bodies, of human rights abuses under non-democratic regimes.
4. Raising the question of human rights in all meetings with officials of non-democratic regimes.
5. Seeking national and international initiatives, in the spirit of the Helsinki Accords, that link bilateral and international relations to the question of human rights.
6. Exerting pressure, through peaceful diplomatic, political and economic means, on governments and groups abusing human rights to discontinue their practices.
7. Providing incentives, through diplomatic, political and economic means, to governments and groups willing to improve the human rights record in their countries and to embark on the road to liberal democracy.
8. Isolating and ostracizing governments and groups that suppress their peaceful domestic opponents by force, violence or intimidation.
9. Holding accountable governments and groups that threaten other countries and peoples with genocide or annihilation.
10. Promoting best human rights and governance practices that have been found effective and beneficial in other countries, in particular in new and recent democracies.

*Václav Havel, Natan Sharansky,
José María Aznar*

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Estonian President Toomas Hendrik Ilves, Senator Joseph Lieberman, Speaker of the Czech Senate Přemysl Sobotka and President of the Political Council of Democratic Forces Aliaksandr Milinkevich



Deputy Prime Minister for European Affairs Alexandr Vondra



Group photo of the dissidents with the organizers of the conference (from left): Karinna Moskalenko, Ludmilla Alexeeva, Irina Krasovskaya, Mudawi Ibrahim Adam, Zainab Al-Suwaij, Olga Kozuina, Václav Havel, Saad Eddin Ibrahim, Rafael Rubio, Natan Sharansky, José María Aznar, José Brechner, Michael Žantovský, Mohamed Eljahmi, Oldřich Černý, Jon Juaristi

ABOUT PSSI

PSSI's mission is to help build an ever-growing group of informed and security-minded policy-makers dedicated to the development of democratic institutions and values in the Czech Republic and its regional neighbors. PSSI offers programs that meet the critical requirement to equip new generations of young leaders to manage the complex, security-related challenges of the 21st century. PSSI also aims to identify and analyze foreign policy and security-related issues in the area of transatlantic relations, and to propose practical and prudent policies to address these and other security challenges.

To fulfill its mission, PSSI undertakes to organize a variety of activities under its Security Scholars Program; Program of Atlantic Security Studies; Corporate Council Program; and other outreach projects and training courses.

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Queries about PSSI activities and projects can also be directed to Petr Lang (lang@pssi.cz), Program Coordinator.

Your Support is Appreciated

As PSSI is rapidly expanding its programs, we would welcome your support for our efforts. Tax deductible contributions can be made to PSSI through the Atlas Economic Research Foundation: Atlas Economic Research Foundation, 2000 North 14th Street, Suite 550, Arlington, VA 22201, U.S.A., phone: (703) 934-6969, fax: (703) 352-7530. Our primary contact at the Foundation is Mr. Bradley Lips, Chief Operating Officer (brad.lips@atlasusa.org).

Bank Account

Our direct PSSI Account is located at the Komerční banka, a.s. (Na Příkopě 33, 11407 Prague 1, Czech Republic): IBAN CZ740100000512281850237 | BIC/SWIFT Code: KOMBCZPP