

Bring the Adapted CFE Treaty into Force

International Appeal

This appeal was initiated by former diplomats and senior research associates from different nations and research institutions in Europe and North America in order to support the ratification of the Adapted Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe. The treaty is a key element of the European security structure and an indispensable political symbol of security cooperation which should not be destroyed.

It is with great concern that we, the undersigned, note the Russian Federation's announcement that it intends to suspend implementation of the 1990 Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE) Treaty on December 12, 2007. We fear that such a move could not only doom the CFE Treaty, but that it also could prevent the entry into force of the 1999 Adapted CFE Treaty, thus risking a collapse of the entire CFE regime. Such a development would undermine co-operative security in Europe and lead to new dividing lines and confrontation.

The CFE Treaty is a cornerstone of European security and the key element of the co-operative approach to security as agreed upon in the Charter of Paris of November 1990. The accord's invaluable verification regime, including regular information exchanges and on-site inspections, has shown that confidence and security can be better achieved through cooperation and openness than by competition and secrecy. Additionally, stability throughout Europe is increased by adherence to specific limitations.

But now, due to disagreements between NATO and Russia, the whole regime is in serious danger. Russia asserts that the combination of NATO expansion and the alliance's failure to ratify the Adapted CFE Treaty threaten Russian security. NATO states claim that the continued presence of Russian forces in Georgia and Moldova, despite a prior commitment by Moscow that they will be withdrawn, does not permit ratification of the revised accord. We firmly believe that all the states-parties should abide by the core CFE principles and that current disagreements must not be allowed to erode or destroy a regime fundamental to the security of the whole of Europe.

The CFE Treaty made a substantial contribution to ending the Cold War, enabling the peaceful unification of Germany and the peaceful transformation of the states of Central Europe and the successor states of the Soviet Union, and preventing inter-state conventional war in Europe. Indeed, the treaty resulted in the destruction of more than 60,000 heavy conventional weapons and the elimination in Europe of capabilities for large-scale offensive action and surprise attack. Conventional stability also contributes to making nuclear weapons in Europe unnecessary.

Beyond that, the CFE Treaty has contributed to stabilizing sub-regional military power relations and to limiting sub-regional arms races. The treaty also has provided a model for regulating the military aspects of violent conflicts in Southeast Europe. If the CFE regime is maintained, it can serve as a model for other regional peace and stability processes.

Bringing the Adapted CFE Treaty into force is an important means to include more states in an integrated European arms control regime and thus maintain and extend key elements of security co-operation in Europe. Entry into force of the Adapted CFE Treaty also is necessary to ensure that the instruments of European security co-operation keep pace with the global challenges to European security today, including the new threats posed by transnational terrorist actors. It's loss will resurrect past problems and yesterday's mistrust.

We therefore appeal to the governments of all CFE states-parties to preserve the CFE regime and bring into force the Adapted Treaty as early as possible. Ratification by those who have not yet done so should go hand in hand with constructive new approaches to resolve current disputes.

All states and peoples of Europe would lose if the CFE regime, an unprecedented instrument for the preservation of peace and with greatest importance to Europe's future, would now be destroyed.