



Sven-Eric Fikenscher, Bernd W. Kubbig, Roberta Mulas, and Martin Senn

Presentation of the Study

Arms Control and Missile Proliferation in the Middle East

edited by Bernd W. Kubbig and Sven-Eric Fikenscher

and of the Series of

*Policy Briefs for the Middle East Conference on a
WMD/DVs Free Zone*

co-edited by Bernd W. Kubbig, Roberta Mulas, and Christian Weidlich

Wednesday, June 27, 2012

12:30 – 14:30

(a light lunch will be served at 12:00)

Conference Room of the Vienna Center for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation
(VCDNP)

The conflict-ridden region of the Middle East/Gulf has the highest density of weapons, including missiles. The authors of "*Arms Control and Missile Proliferation in the Middle East*" - 39 in total, most of them originating from within the region - analyze this volatile security situation and outline the conditions under which a gradual missiles reduction might be achieved in the Middle East. They argue that an optimized and complemented *Missile Technology Control Regime* and *Hague Code of Conduct Against the Proliferation of Ballistic Missiles* constitute the main stepping stones leading to a Missile-Free Zone in the Middle East. Beyond that, the authors also suggest measures aimed at the reduction of existing missile stockpiles. These recommendations and the broader results of their analysis, which build upon the findings generated by several working groups in the period 2007-2011, will be presented and discussed within the framework of a seminar to be held at the Vienna Center for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation (VCDNP) on 27 June 2011, 12:30 - 14:30 (refreshments will be served at 12:00).

Along with this, the Project Group of the Academic Peace Orchestra Middle East at the Peace Research Institute Frankfurt will present its new series of Policy Briefs devoted to the Middle East Conference on a zone free of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery vehicles, to be convened in 2012.

Both the study and the policy briefs will be distributed to seminar attendees.

The presenters are:

Dipl. Pol. Sven-Eric Fikenscher, Goethe University Frankfurt

Adj. Prof. Dr. Bernd W. Kubbig, Peace Research Institute Frankfurt

Roberta Mulas, M.A., Peace Research Institute Frankfurt

Ass. Prof. Dr. Martin Senn, Innsbruck University

For additional information or if you have difficulty registering on-line, please contact the VCDNP by email at info@vcdnp.org.

This event is generously sponsored by:





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In a Nutshell

Presentation of the Study

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Who we are: The 39 Authors of the Study “Arms Control and Missile Proliferation in the Middle East” published with Routledge

- We are mostly non-governmental experts from some 14 countries (mainly from the Middle East) which in some cases have no official contacts.
- We are a typical track-two initiative that generates and disseminates academically sound ideas, concepts, and background information.
- The study is the result of discussions held within working groups during a series of workshops from 2005 to 2011 on a gradual reduction path towards a Missile Free Zone.

Our Current Context: The planned Middle East Conference

- In May 2010, the state parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty endorsed the goal of holding the Middle East Conference (MEC) in 2012. The objective of the MEC is to contribute to the creation of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction (WMD, i.e. nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons) and of their delivery vehicles (DVs) such as missiles and aircraft.
- If it had not been agreed upon, this conference would have to be invented: A direct communication forum among the countries of the Middle East is badly needed. In our earlier drafts, we had urged the convening of such a conference.
- Outlining the path to a Missile Free Zone in the Middle East on the basis of a step-by-step approach, we hope to present ideas and concepts that can be transferred to the much more demanding objective of a WMD/DVs Free Zone in the region.

Our Starting Point: The Security Dilemma in the Middle East/Gulf

- The volatile security situation in the region is analytically best described by the term “security dilemma”. This is characterized by strong mutual threat perceptions, intense

arms build-ups, competitive efforts to cope with the security situation, and a permanent zero-sum thinking.

- The conflict situation (and the accompanying alliances) are paramount, but weapons and delivery vehicles matter, too. Some – like missiles – are more dangerous than others being possible carriers of WMD. Weapons do not exist in a vacuum, but are perceived as a threat if the country in question is an adversary. Weapons in the Middle East/Gulf are an expression of fear and mistrust, and they can exacerbate the spiral of fear and mistrust.
- Missiles are the stepchild of international arms control and non-proliferation. They operate in a virtually norm-free zone. Also, our focus on missiles allows us to take the complex conflict structures into account and include all relevant state and non-state actors such as Hezbollah and Hamas (*The study's chapter on Hamas was jointly written by an Israeli and a Palestinian colleague under the editorship of a German fellow expert*).

Our Overall Aim: To Offer a Realistic Alternative to the Current Situation

- We take the view that a cooperative security approach in the region can reduce the security dilemma. Cooperative security rests on the acceptance of two main assumptions by the countries in question: First, the security of a country is best guaranteed when its neighbors feel secure, too. Second, less weapons can entail greater security.
- The gradual path towards a Missile Free Zone as part of such a cooperative security concept can only be pursued if the countries in the region expect such a system to add to their security. Under any circumstances, such a system will not emerge over night but require sustained efforts over a long period of time.
- This approach assumes that trade-offs – titts for tats, give a little, take a little – among the conflicting parties are possible within the various categories of huge weapons arsenals that exist in the region – be it among the WMD or among the delivery vehicles such as missiles and aircraft.

Our Three-Milestones-Approach: Gradually towards a Regional Missile Free Zone

First Milestone – Military Transparency:

- A promising starting point for the control and eventual elimination of delivery vehicles such as missiles and aircraft is the establishment of a certain degree of military transparency. In this regard, the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms (UNROCA) is a fruitful point of reference, since it covers both categories: missiles and aircraft.
- However, the UNROCA only lists imported items and therefore needs to be revised and expanded. UNROCA should cover all stockpiles of conventional military capabilities and procurement from own production. Unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) need to be included as well.
- The revised UNROCA can create the political will needed to embark on the gradual reduction path towards a Missile Free Zone.

Second Milestone – Reconciling an Enhanced Export Control Regime (MTCR) with Confidence Building (HCoC):

- Export Controls within the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) have had a limited and in fact a decreasing effect, especially in the Middle East. They can reduce incentives for proliferation if the MTCR members abandon the “my missiles are good,

yours are bad” attitude. Also, the MTCR members should reward good missile behavior with increased technical cooperation in the space sector. Possible cooperative approaches should also include flight test bans. The states in the Middle East/Gulf, which so far have only undertaken minor missile transfers within and outside the region, may want to subscribe to the controls of the MTCR without formally joining it. In fact, a regional MTCR variant is recommended.

- The Hague Code of Conduct Against the Proliferation of Ballistic Missiles (HCoC) is a weak regime designed as a confidence-building measure. The 134 member states are only required to annually report their missile and space activities as well as to notify other countries before they test a missile or launch a space vehicle.
- The potential for taking these two minimalist requirements seriously *and for expanding them* is gigantic. Ironically, the weakness of the HCoC could be attractive for the missile-relevant Middle Eastern/Gulf countries, none of which is a member. To join the HCoC could show that regional cooperation is possible in the security sector.

Third Milestone – Capping and Banning Missiles and Missile Defense within a Three-Phase-Approach:

- *Phase 1:* Based on experiences made within the region and in the East-West context, we recommend the adoption of certain stabilization measures. They can include efforts to *cooperatively* agree on fixed numbers for missiles and/or other weaponry, possibly at higher levels.
- *Phase 2:* A reduction and prohibition both of offensive weaponry as well as of so-called defensive weapons would be pursued. Missile defense is basically not ‘purely defensive’. Our argument is that reductions in weaponry and greater stability can be pursued and achieved in tandem.
- *Phase 3:* Comprehensive bans would be in place along with a Missile Free Zone established. There would be two major challenges to cope with: First, effective verification measures would have to be applied in order to deter and detect potential cheaters and to reassure those abiding by the regime. Second, certain safeguards, excluding missile defense, would be required to prevent a reversal of commitments and capabilities in crisis times.

After all, the way to a Missile Free Zone and the zone itself, are a tool – not an end in themselves. They are to increase the security for all in the region. To this end, it might also be necessary and helpful to involve external actors in the process of establishing more comprehensive security arrangements.

Transferring the Concept of the Study to the Planned Middle East Conference: The Policy Briefs on a WMD/DVs Free Zone

- Aside from our efforts to contribute to the creation of a Missile Free Zone in the Middle East, we also provide ideas, concepts, and background information on the planned Middle East Conference on the establishment of a WMD/DVs Free Zone. Bearing in mind that the MEC is badly needed to foster communication among the countries of the region, we are eager to provide our support to make the MEC happen, successful, and sustainable. Again, it goes without saying that the states will participate in a constructive manner and agree on follow-on steps only if they expect the Conference to bolster their security. We are of the opinion that holding the Conference with an inclusive participation could already contribute to reducing tensions in the region.

- Our focus is twofold: On the one hand, we consider the weapons-related agenda. We are convinced that the above-mentioned promising approach – tit for tat, give a little take a little – can work in the context of the MEC, too. All weapons are to be discussed en bloc, and all decisions are to be arrived at freely. We trust that the experienced Facilitator, Finnish Under-Secretary of State, Jaakko Laajava, will create an overall constructive atmosphere conducive to dialogue and compromises.
- Our second focus is on putting weapons into the regional context which is currently characterized by the so-called Arab Spring and its repercussions. We therefore try to identify actors and factors which may facilitate or impede the holding of the Middle East Conference scheduled for the end of 2012.