

Co-operative Security in Southeast Europe

What is Co-operative Security?

The term Co-operative Security has become popular since the end of the Cold War. Although it does not yet have a generally accepted definition, it has been widely used to herald a new approach to international relations. It appeared to offer an escape from narrow Cold War “zero-sum” strategies into the broad sunlit vistas of international peace and harmony. However, as is often the case in life, events in the Balkans have demonstrated that this early burst of optimism was, at best, premature.

This paper proposes a model of Co-operative Security that encompasses the traditional international security arrangements of Collective Security and Collective Defence and adds two new elements, Individual Security and Promoting and Projecting Stability. It then explains how this concept could be extended to the countries of Southeast Europe.

Birth of a Concept

In the early 1990s, many strategic thinkers were caught up in a tide of optimism generally hailed as the New World Order. The term Co-operative Security became a catch phrase for a rather idealistic approach to the swiftly changing international climate. In 1992, three leading American strategists – Ashton Carter, William Perry, and John Steinbruner – spoke of Co-operative Security in terms of providing new avenues toward world peace: “Organising principles like deterrence, nuclear stability, and containment embodied the aspirations of the cold war. Co-operative Security is the corresponding principle for international security in the post-cold war era”.¹ In 1994, writing in *Foreign Policy*, former Australian Foreign Minister Gareth Evans described Co-operative Security as tending “to connote consultation rather than confrontation, reassurance rather than deterrence, transparency rather than secrecy, prevention rather than correction, and interdependence rather than unilateralism.”²

These attempts to define and shape the concept of Co-operative Security generally reflect a liberal/idealistic view of the future of world security. Unfortunately, this vision has been rudely jolted by an unwelcome “return of history” in the Balkans, in parts of the former Soviet Union, and elsewhere.

It seems to me that a more pragmatic approach to Co-operative Security is necessary if the concept is to be of real use in an unstable and dangerous world. In other words, we must seek a way of „operationalising“ the term.

But before we look at how to construct a realistic and effective approach to Co-operative Security, it might be helpful to briefly examine two of the other major security concepts that came into prominence in the 20th century.

¹ Ashton B. Carter, William J. Perry, and John D. Steinbruner, *A New Concept of Cooperative Security*, Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution Press, 1993.

² Gareth Evans, “Cooperative Security and Intra-State Conflict,” *Foreign Policy*, No. 96, Fall 1994.

Collective Security and Collective Defence

Though the concept of Cupertino and alliances between families, tribes, and states, in peace, but more generally in war, has been a common feature of the history of mankind, the terms Collective Security and Collective Defence are inventions of the last century. Both concepts imply a long-term, formal commitment between groups of states to protect the security interests of individual members within their common spheres.

Collective Security. Collective Security looks inward to attempt to ensure security within a group of sovereign states. The first modern Collective Security organisation was the League of Nations founded in the aftermath of World War I. At the end of World War II, the newly formed United Nations (UN) took up the mantle of Collective Security from the League of Nations. In the 1970s, the Conference on Cupertino and Security in Europe (CSCE), now the Organisation for Cupertino and Security in Europe (OSCE), was formed to provide Collective Security to virtually all of the states of the Eurasian-Atlantic region. At best, however, these organisations have been only partially effective.

Collective Defence. A Collective Defence organisation looks outward to defend its members from external aggression. Collective Defence organisations blossomed during the days of the Cold War. The North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), the Western European Union (WEU), the Central Treaty Organisation (CENTO), the Southeast Asia Treaty Organisation (SEATO), and the Warsaw Pact, all designed to provide Collective Defence to their members, were founded in the aftermath of World War II.

Co-operative Security: Two New Elements

To be both useful and effective, Co-operative Security must look both ways, inward and outward. But it also must incorporate two further dimensions not covered explicitly by either Collective Security or Collective Defence. The first of these is the concept of Individual Security and the second is the Active Promotion and Projection of Stability into areas adjacent to the Co-operative Security space where instability and conflict might adversely affect the security of its members.

Individual Security. Individual Security, or what former Canadian Foreign Minister Lloyd Axworthy, has popularised as “Human Security,”³ stands at the centre of any real international security system built around liberal democratic ideals. The furtherance and protection of the basic freedoms of the individual is the nucleus from which all other forms of security must radiate. Damage to the security of individuals in one country, by external or more often by internal forces, now means that other peoples and their governments feel that their own security is diminished.

Recent gross violations of the individual security of large numbers of human beings in such widely flung countries as Rwanda, Kosovo, and East Timor have had a dramatic impact on the international community. These examples and others are clear illustrations of what we might call the „globalisation of concern.“ Individual Security is now at the heart of the international agenda.

³ Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, *Human Security: Safety for People in a Changing World*, Ottawa: Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, April, 1998.

Promoting Stability. The second new component of Co-operative Security is the active promotion of stability outside the boundaries of the states forming the Co-operative Security system. Stability may be upset by the danger of conflict between states, but also by mass violations of individual security within neighbouring states, such as that which occurred in Kosovo in 1998 and early 1999.

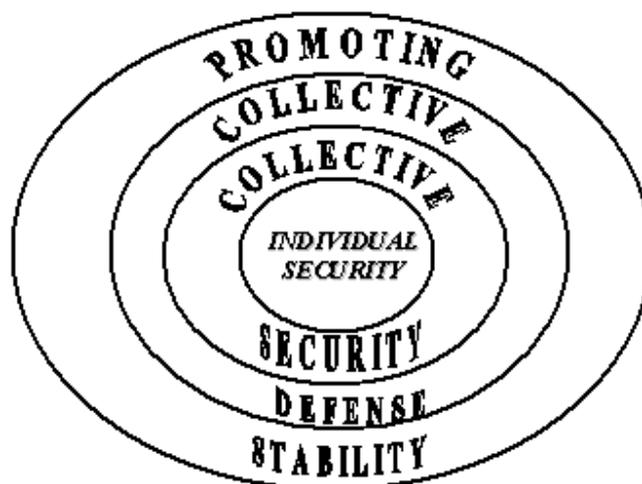
Here we must sound a word of caution. Promoting Stability could be seen as a license for unwarranted intervention by larger powers or international organisations in the legitimate internal affairs of other, mainly smaller states. Active intervention – diplomatic, economic, or military – must, therefore, be very carefully sanctioned and monitored in accordance with international law and clear and widely accepted humanitarian norms.

NATO's intervention in Kosovo, in 1999, was an example of an attempt to restore and then to promote stability in an area dangerously close to its borders. In Kosovo, massive violations of individual security were an important factor in swinging public opinion behind the NATO action. No less important was the fact that the organised and widespread persecution of ethnic Albanians by the Yugoslav government risked destabilising the region and threatened NATO members Hungary, Greece, and Turkey, as well as NATO Partners Albania, Macedonia, Romania, and Bulgaria. This fear of destabilisation and the spread of conflict were certainly the determining factors in the decision to use military force, once political, diplomatic, and economic tools proved ineffective.

The following model of Co-operative Security (see Figure 1) is built on a series of widening concentric circles, or rings. It attempts to bring together the four elements of Co-operative Security in a practical framework to form a real and effective security system:

Figure 1

Cooperative Security
The Four Rings



Co-operative Security is a strategic system which forms around a nucleus of liberal democratic states linked together in a network of formal or informal alliances and institutions characterised by shared values and practical and transparent economic, political, and defence co-operation. In a Co-operative Security system, individual states' national security objectives are linked by four reinforcing rings of security:

Ring One: Promoting and protecting human rights within their own boundaries and further afield (Individual Security)

Ring Two: Maintaining peace and stability within their common space (Collective Security)

Ring Three: Mutual protection against outside aggression (Collective Defence)

Ring Four: Actively promoting stability in other areas where conflict could threaten their shared security, using political, informational, economic, and, if necessary, military means (Promoting Stability)

Institutionalising Co-operative Security

As we have seen, Co-operative Security must be built around a strong institutional framework. Figure 2 attempts to match the current leading international security organisations with the characteristics of the Co-operative Security system that we have described above. This chart is based on the perceived effectiveness of the institution in a particular role rather than on its formal organisational commitment to one security role or another. "Yes?" indicates, at best, only partial effectiveness in fulfilling a particular role:

Figure 2

Institution	Ring One: Individual Security	Ring Two: Collective Security	Ring Three: Collective Defence	Ring Four: Promoting Stability
United Nations	Yes?	Yes?	No	Yes?
OSCE	Yes?	Yes?	No	Yes?
EU	Yes	Yes	No	Yes?
NATO	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

We can see from this table, that according to the model of Co-operative Security we have just described, for the moment at least, NATO is the world's only working example of a Co-operative Security system.

NATO – A Practical Example of Co-operative Security

It can be reasonably argued that although the large majority of NATO's 19 member states qualify as liberal democracies and upholders of Individual Security and human rights within their own borders, the record is not perfect. However, in an imperfect world, most reasonable observers would agree that NATO members come close to the championing of Individual Security, which stands at the core of a Co-operative Security system.

For many years NATO has been held up as a successful example of a Collective Defence organisation. Article 5 of the Washington Treaty of 1949, NATO's founding document, put this

role firmly at the centre of the Alliance's core functions. However, even during the Cold War, the Alliance served as an unofficial, yet de facto, guarantor of the security of its individual member states against threats from fellow members. We can, therefore, claim that NATO has also been particularly successful as a Collective Security body.

In the years since the end of the Cold War, NATO has vigorously pursued the fourth dimension of Co-operative Security, Promoting Stability, in the states adjacent to the territory of its members. Crisis Management has become NATO's operational tool for the promotion and maintenance of stability in areas on its periphery. Crisis Management includes Conflict Prevention (active diplomacy and preventive deployments) and Crisis Response operations, like Bosnia and Kosovo.

Crisis Management was adopted as a "fundamental security task" in the new NATO Strategic Concept approved at the Washington summit of April 1999.⁴ Crisis Management seeks to include NATO partner states whenever possible. It, together with the NATO enlargement process, Partnership for Peace (PfP), and the Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) Initiative, have become major vehicles for promoting stability outside the traditional NATO area as originally defined by Article 6 of the Washington Treaty.

NATO, therefore, embodies the description of Co-operative Security that we describe above. This model depicts the concept:

Figure 3
Co-operative Security
A NATO Model



⁴ North Atlantic Council, *The Alliance's Strategic Concept*, Washington, DC: April 24, 1999, paragraph 10.

The European Union and Co-operative Security

As the European Union moves somewhat unsteadily toward a Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), prospects for extending Co-operative Security in Europe beyond the NATO space look hopeful. If EU declarations of intent are indeed turned into substance, a true CFSP will herald, probably unannounced, a de facto mutual defence arrangement between members of the Union, including the so-called "neutral" nations of Sweden, Finland, Austria, and Ireland. The EU would then move into the Third Ring of Co-operative Security, Collective Defence.

If a capable European Force becomes a reality, the EU will join NATO in occupying the Fourth Ring of the Co-operative Security model, Promoting Stability outside its territory. It would then effectively operate in all four Rings of the Co-operative Security system.

Assuming that NATO and the EU come to satisfactory operational and institutional arrangements, this would broaden and strengthen the Co-operative Security space now occupied only by NATO. In addition, the parallel enlargements of both the EU and NATO will further expand the circle of states within the Co-operative Security system.

The "Fourth Ring" States

What of the states which presently lie outside both the NATO and EU areas? Many have expressed a wish to become members of these organisations either by taking an active role as candidates in NATO's Partnership for Peace as Membership Action Plan (MAP) members and/or by being on the EU's official list of candidates for early accession. In Southeast Europe, Romania, Bulgaria, and all the successor states of the former Yugoslavia, except for Croatia (the most recent member of PFP), Bosnia and Serbia, fall within this category. Are these states and those who are not at present moving toward membership of NATO or the EU excluded from the benefits of the Co-operative Security system?

It seems clear, by virtue of their active candidacy and/or their increasingly close Cupertino with NATO and the EU, that these states in the „Fourth Ring“ have gained implied, but not guaranteed, security commitments from the states within the Co-operative Security space. During the crisis in Kosovo and NATO's air campaign against Serbia, Romania, Bulgaria, Albania and Macedonia were all extended de facto security guarantees by the Alliance.

The Balkans: Co-operative Security on the Firing Line

NATO operations in Southeast Europe are clearly an important test of Co-operative Security in action. The air attacks on Yugoslavia, the NATO-led humanitarian missions in Albania and Macedonia, the KFOR mission in Kosovo, and the SFOR mission in Bosnia, are part of a co-ordinated effort to re-establish stability in this sensitive part of Europe. NATO and other international institutions have made a long-term commitment to Balkan stability. If the situation in Bosnia and in Kosovo can be stabilised and if Serbia can continue its progress toward democracy and improving relations with its neighbours, then Co-operative Security in the region, and further afield, will be enormously strengthened.

It is possible that the SFOR/KFOR international operations in Bosnia and Kosovo and the EU-led Stability Pact for Southeast Europe will ultimately fail to bring a measure of stability and

reconciliation to the Balkans. Such a failure would be the result of a loss of interest and determination on the part of NATO, the EU, and the international community to persevere despite the difficulties and setbacks. If this does happen, the concept of Co-operative Security will be dealt a severe blow. It will be seen to have fallen short of the hopes and expectations of its creators. Such a development would not necessarily invalidate the concept altogether. But it would mean that the Co-operative Security model we have discussed had failed to clear the obstacles of indecisive political leadership, insufficient military capabilities, and the inevitable compromises inherent in any co-operative and consensual relationship between states.

Conclusion

Co-operative Security, as we have described it, can become the basis for a more peaceful and harmonious future. It combines four basic arrangements: Individual Security, Collective Security, Collective Defence, and Promoting Stability in widening rings of security. A Co-operative Security system requires from the democratic states that form it a willingness to closely co-operate with each other and to reach out, if necessary, to intervene in areas outside their territories that might affect their common peace and security.

NATO provides a real-life model for such a Co-operative Security system. It embodies, however imperfectly, all four of the basic functions. The EU is in the process of enlarging this NATO core into a wider and deeper Euro-Atlantic Co-operative Security space.

Most of the countries of Southeast Europe already benefit from the security stability provided within the „fourth ring“ of the Co-operative Security space. In the longer term, it is probable that all the countries of the region will become formal members of NATO and/or the EU and will take their places firmly within the circle of Co-operative Security. This development may herald, at last, real and enduring peace and prosperity in a region which has been deprived of both for many years.

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