

2012/1/4 Abstract: Disarmament, arms control of nuclear weapons of mass destruction, non-proliferation; the role of the BMLVS in the overall national perspective

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Disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction as well as of their carrier systems are important elements of a cooperative security policy geared towards confidence-building and prevention. On the basis of balance, mutuality and verifiability, they considerably contribute to security and stability in both the regional and global frameworks. Changes of the security-political environment, such as the end of the East-West-Conflict or the development of international terrorism, however, have led to a general set-up which has required an adaptation and renovation of the existing instruments of arms control. By the end of the 1980ies something happened nobody would have imagined after four decades of system-political confrontation: The Cold War came to an end, the Eastern military alliance disappeared, and the Soviet empire collapsed. Arms control had been an integral component of the conciliatory policy between the West and the East for stabilizing the uneasy balance between the two nuclear super powers. Due to the decline of the bipolar world, today disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction are subject to a different security-political general set-up than at the time of the Cold War. The bipolar "order" of the Cold War has been replaced by a new "disorder of the world". Threats and risks by proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, international body trade and drug trafficking, organised crime, international/transnational terrorism, and transboundary mass migration characterize the security-political situation, represent the real threats of the 21st century, and have removed the old confrontation scenarios. The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction is just one part of the negative consequences of globalisation and requires of the international community to adapt to these new crisis potential. International disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation require strict normative regulations - for this reason, it will be necessary in the near future to implement the existing commitments and recommendations without additional demands in the near future. On considering the security-political development of the EU of the latest years one will find out that all matters concerning disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction have increasingly been given attention. Here Austria with Vienna as a nerve centre of international dialogue on arms control has special responsibilities. As Austria as the seat of all these committees concerned with disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation, has taken special responsibilities upon itself, one can expect that Austria will continue putting much time and energy into this subject. In order to prevent proliferation of nuclear weapons, carrier systems, and goods which can be used for producing weapons of mass destruction, it is conceivable in the near future that the EU will plan common action including military components. In order to be equal to this task and to be able to take the necessary steps for training and missions timely, the Austrian Ministry of Defence and Sports as well as the Austrian Armed Forces will have to deal with the complex field of arms control permanently.

