

democracy & security

PRAGUE, JUNE 5–6, 2007

The conference is held under the auspices of
Minsiter of Foreign Affairs Karel Schwarzenberg
Lord Mayor of Prague Pavel Bém

Draft Program

As of May 16, 2007

June 4

18:30 Welcoming Reception (By special invitations only)
Venue: Lord Mayor's Residence
Welcoming remarks: TBD

20:00 Opening Dinner (By special invitations only)
Venue: Mlýnec Restaurant
Introductory Remarks: TBD
Keynote address: TBD

June 5

Conference - Day 1
Venue: Czernin Palace – Ministry of Foreign Affairs

09:00 Conference opening
Welcoming remarks: TBD

09:15 Panel 1 - Has the democratization process reached an impasse?

Attempts to establish democracies in Iraq, Afghanistan and the Palestinian Authority have encountered numerous obstacles and difficulties. Many view this as a failure of the very concept that maintains that democracy is feasible everywhere in the world. Is this indeed so? Is this a fundamentally flawed concept, or is it perhaps the implementation of the concept that is fraught with error? Is democracy the exclusive birthright of the West, and consequently an unnatural form of government for other nations? How universal is the Western model of democracy? Is democracy currently in retreat, or is it perhaps just the opposite? Does this mean that there are nations which are not ready for democracy and that any attempt to implement it by force is doomed to failure, which has an adverse effect primarily on the West? Can oppressed societies free themselves without a significant degree of foreign assistance or intervention? Which forms of external policy are likely to be the most conducive to democracy promotion?

11:00 Panel 2 - Does the process of democratization contribute to security?

Do we believe that democratization enhances security, that democracy brings more security? Many people in the free world believe, that attempts to establish a democratic society in countries such as Iraq, Afghanistan and the Palestinian Authority have led to instability and anarchy, ultimately strengthening the radicals. As a result, the dangers for the free world have increased. Does this mean that the free world should aspire primarily to the attainment of stability and consequently, support friendly tyrants because they are the only ones capable of imposing and enforcing order in their countries? Do not “fear” societies provide only an illusion of stability? Are there circumstances when a democracy should cooperate with a dictatorship? Who is more effective in the war on terror – a strong dictator or a democracy? Can international stability be built and maintained between states, some of which are free and democratic and some of which are not?

12:30 Buffet luncheon

13:30 Panel 3 - What are the right ways to make the transition from a totalitarian/authoritarian regime to a democracy?

What are we really promoting: freedom, democracy or both? Which is more important? What institutions, standards and procedures are indispensable for building a democratic society? Many in the West believe that elections are the foundation for the building of a democratic society, and that the democratization process starts with and rests on democratic elections. Is this so? Is it necessary first to build the infrastructure for a free civic society to be followed by democratic elections, or should the order be the other way around? Should elections be the beginning or rather the end of the process? What is a realistic timeframe? Why did the elections held recently in various countries paradoxically culminate in the victory of the enemies of democracy? Do elections provide democratic legitimacy, or just legality? Is the absence of the rule of law the most serious obstacle on the way to democracy? What lessons should be learned from the transition to democracy in Eastern Europe, Russia, Asia and the Middle East? What should be done to enable societies to make a smooth transition from a society based on fear to one that is free and democratic? What happened to human rights? Is the respect for basic human rights a prerequisite for democracy? How can we reconcile massive violations of human rights with claims to democratic legitimacy?

16:00 Keynote address: George W. Bush, President of the United States
Venue: TBD

20:00 Gala dinner (By special invitations only)
Venue: Kampa Museum
Keynote address: TBD

June 6 Conference - Day 2
Venue: Czernin Palace - Ministry of Foreign Affairs

09:00 Roundtable - The role of dissidents in society

Unlike political and religious leaders, dissidents do not lead popular movements. What is their most effective role? What real ability do they have to influence events? Can they bring about significant change? Should the free world support them? Dissidents do not wage their struggles against totalitarian regimes in a vacuum. They are not alone. Also fighting with them are other movements, which are often undemocratic, even antidemocratic. To what extent is cooperation between these movements and dissidents necessary? To what extent is it feasible? What alliances can be made? What policy should be followed vis-à-vis these movements? How can cooperation between dissidents from different countries be fostered and strengthened? How can their influence in their own countries be increased? What is more important: to support reforms or the people that demand them?

11:00 **Panel 4 - The role of democratic states, international institutions and media in the global security environment**

What is the role of the United Nations, NGOs, human rights organizations? What policy should the free world, democratic governments, organizations and movements adopt vis-à-vis dissidents? What is the role for the EU and NATO? What is the role of the media in the dissidents' struggle? Who will guarantee the integrity of the global democratic process: a benevolent empire, an international community, or an alliance of democracies? When, if at all, are various players (individuals, states, international organizations) entitled to question or reject results of an electoral process, albeit conducted under democratic rules? Who will "shave the barber"?

12:30 **Buffet luncheon**

13:30 **Panel 5 - The role of Central Europeans in EU-Russia relations**

How does Russia relate to the democracy and security nexus? What has EU to do to shape its policy towards Russia in terms of "value-based" approach instead of pure Realpolitik driven by energy sector? And what should be the role of CEE states in EU's Eastern Policy? Can we find a common understanding with current Russian leadership on democracy? Will Russia perceive democratization in the post-Soviet space as detrimental to its security?

15:00 *Adjourn*