

Diplomatic Dialogue

Building Peace Through Dialogue





Diplomatic Dialogue

In light of the growing global geopolitical tensions in an increasingly multipolar world, the GCSP discreetly engages conflict stakeholders to help them identify solutions that will peacefully address their grievances. Through its diplomatic dialogues, the GCSP offers a neutral and safe space for exchanges between government representatives and experts, and supports them in the development of concrete and viable alternatives to conflict. Two departments, International Security Dialogue and Mediation and Peace Support, open and facilitate channels of communication at the unofficial level with a view to identifying paths towards a gradual return to normalised diplomatic relations.

To this end, the GCSP mobilises its extensive experience in dialogue and mediation; its in-house expertise; and its vast network of specialists, government officials, and conflict stakeholders. Our strategic placement in

International Geneva, the “Capital of Peace”, ideally positions us to facilitate confidential discussions. Our diplomatic dialogue initiatives are thus designed not only to gradually rebuild trust and confidence among conflict stakeholders in an increasingly polarised world, but also to find common ground so that the rationale for resumed cooperation becomes clear.

The GCSP believes that discreet informal diplomacy can directly contribute to official processes or help establish the framework for official talks and thus stimulate meaningful debate and new thinking on security, as opposed to the zero-sum thinking that often pervades current public discourse. Track 1.5 and Track 2 discussions can help to keep the threads of communication alive and promote constructive engagement where it is currently not possible at the official level.

International Security Dialogue Department

Aligned with Switzerland’s and Geneva’s long-standing tradition of hosting high-level meetings and discreet negotiations, the International Security Dialogue Department (ISDD) offers a secure and inclusive space for dialogue among both likeminded and non-likeminded stakeholders on a range of security-related issues. The department keeps channels of communication open, builds confidence among key actors, and generates policy recommendations aimed at advancing European and global security.

While the war in Ukraine and the future of the European security order remain central to the ISDD’s agenda, its dialogue tracks extend beyond Europe to include initiatives on the Middle East, North-East Asia, and geopolitical challenges such as outer space security and nuclear non-proliferation.



ISDD



www.gcsp.ch/international-security-dialogue-department



The ISDD leads several Track 1.5 and Track 2 dialogue initiatives, including, but not limited to:

Conversations on the Future of European Security

This Track 2 dialogue brings together experts from the United States, Europe, Ukraine, Russia and China, with the aim of identifying possible building blocks needed to reconstruct European security after the war in Ukraine. Initiated in 2023, this dialogue resulted in the publication of a Peace Matrix in 2025, which explores steps that can contribute to security and cooperation in Europe on three levels of conflict: between the United States and Russia, Europe and Russia, and Ukraine and Russia. This Peace Matrix is a modular tool and serves as a policy recommendation to policymakers to reduce tensions on the continent. The GCSP is working on the dissemination of the Peace Matrix to key stakeholders in Europe, the United States, Ukraine and Russia.



OSCE Focus Conference

As Switzerland prepares to chair the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) in 2026, the GCSP will support it in this role with the Centre's extensive expertise. In particular, the OSCE Focus Conference – a Track 1.5 dialogue – which brings together high-level OSCE representatives, ambassadors, and representatives of participating states and subject-matter experts to discuss how to revive the OSCE as a unique platform for dialogue. In autumn 2025, the next roundtable in Geneva will address the priorities of the next chairpersonship and what role the OSCE can play in fostering European security and dialogue among participating states.



Space Security Dialogue

In light of expanding activity and growing geopolitical competition in outer space, the GCSP launched this Track 2 dialogue in 2024 to address key related issues, including threat perceptions and strategic stability, international coordination on space traffic management, legal frameworks, dual-use technologies, and verification mechanisms. In 2025, the GCSP will again convene experts from spacefaring nations, academia, the private sector, and international organisations to advance shared understanding of and cooperation on outer space governance.



Mediation and Peace Support Department

In an era of increased tensions between great powers at the multilateral level, the Mediation and Peace Support (MPS) Department identifies opportunities for re-establishing communication flows at the unofficial level, works to build trust and confidence between conflict parties, and generates creative and policy-oriented approaches to resolving conflicts. After first carefully assessing the GCSP’s potential dialogue niche in terms of a particular problematic issue, the MPS Department follows a holistic approach to network building, shuttling between key state capitals, facilitating the dialogue process, and conveying key ideas to relevant policymakers. Using the tools of dialogue, the department works to help states, international organisations, conflict parties, and other relevant stakeholders to manage diplomatic tensions and find peaceful alternatives to conflict or mitigate its worst consequences.



MPS



www.gcsp.ch/mediation-and-peace-support-department



These dialogues illustrate a part of the expanding portfolio of our dialogue activities:

To ensure confidentiality, other more discreet initiatives and assessments are not mentioned in this section.

Bridge States Dialogue

The Bridge States Dialogue explores how smaller states in Eurasia that are vulnerable to the knock-on effects of the war in Ukraine could strategically position themselves in a way that would maximise both their security and economic potential. This dialogue allows for a meaningful exchange of experience and ideas on balancing geopolitical interests among these stakeholders without the undue pressure of the great powers being part of the conversation.

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[The] EMI plays a critical role in fostering forward-thinking approaches to emerging security threats, ensuring that policymakers and experts remain ahead of the curve.

Ambassador Karim Haggag, Director, SIPRI

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The GCSP's High North Talks have played an instrumental role in maintaining a channel of communication on Arctic geopolitics, governance, and security in the context of increasing global disorder. They offer a unique space for keeping lines open between Western and Russian experts, scientists, and policy practitioners, continuing open and honest discussions, and developing ideas for resuming constructive cooperation across borders in the Arctic region. The talks have created mutual confidence and respect among the participants.

Professor Lassi Heininen, Professor (emeritus) of Arctic Politics, University of Lapland; Visiting Researcher at Aleksanteri Institute, University of Helsinki; Editor of The Arctic Yearbook; Director, Calotte Academy; and Leader of UArctic TN on Geopolitics & Security, Finland

Eastern Mediterranean Initiative

The Eastern Mediterranean Initiative (EMI) brings together experts – former officials and academics – from littoral countries of the eastern Mediterranean region and third-country observers. Initiated in 2020 by the GCSP as a Track 2 dialogue, it contributes to fostering a conducive environment for the resolution of conflicts in the region and the development of a sense of common regional interests and purpose.

High North Talks

The High North Talks dialogue is a platform that allows for discreet discussions on some of the most pressing challenges confronting the Arctic, ranging from security risks and governance issues to the current pause in environmental/scientific cooperation resulting from the war in Ukraine. It brings together representatives from the key states that have a stake in the region, with a view to devising creative ideas for addressing some of these urgent questions.



MENA Dialogue Portfolio

The MPS Department facilitates and engages in a variety of discreet dialogues relating to the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, focusing on both specific geographical contexts and transversal themes and issues. It brings together credible security and policy officials and experts from the region and beyond to identify common ground and produce creative and actionable policy recommendations that are conveyed to decision-makers for their consideration.



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Having had the privilege of experiencing the GCSP firsthand, I see it as an organization that boldly engages with challenging, niche topics, often stepping into areas where others hesitate. What I truly appreciate about the GCSP's approach is its dedication to exploring specific issues within a broader context, fostering freedom and flexibility rather than imposing a predetermined narrative. It creates an environment where participants are encouraged to contribute, challenge, and refine ideas, ensuring that discussions lead to meaningful insights and tangible outcomes. In doing so, the GCSP doesn't just facilitate dialogue – it empowers those involved to shape the future of security policy.

Rusif Huseynov, Director,
Topchubashov Center, Baku

Engage With Us

International peace and security are currently fragile. Trust is eroding, divisions are deepening and misunderstandings are on the rise. The GCSP's work is critical in response to this situation.

The support of partners and donors is vital for us to offer activities that unite diverse stakeholders to develop ideas, policy options, and solutions. Thus, we can all contribute to shaping a resilient global order to advance peace, cooperation and sustainable security.

The roles of partnerships and donors are closely interlinked. Partners commission and fund specific projects, while other donors may direct their contributions to be used more broadly to financially support individuals or activities. We work carefully to ensure we meet all partner and donor priorities to maximise the impact of their support in a variety of ways.

How will you support our mission and advance global peace, cooperation, and security?



The Global Scholarship Fund: Empower future leaders by sponsoring their participation in our transformative courses.



Fellowships: Nurture the innovative thinking of emerging and established professionals through our Fellowship Initiative.



Programmes: Opportunity to fund a tailored programme through a strategic partnership or through one of our departments.



Projects: Support our ongoing initiatives with your targeted or broadly applicable donations.



Publications: Advance research on global security by contributing to and supporting the production and dissemination of our publication series.



Events: Partner with us in providing venues, experts or other contributions to our events such as our Geneva Security Debates series.

