A Eurasian Charter of Diversity and Multipolarity in the 21st Century

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Abstract
A *Eurasian Charter of Diversity and Multipolarity in the 21st Century*, proposed by Belarus, seeks to consolidate and integrate Eurasia in the interests of all its countries and peoples. The initiative could help Eurasian states forge a regional order with effective cooperation in security, economic, humanitarian, and other domains at a time when globalization is disintegrating and regionalism is rising. In contrast to past failed attempts to consolidate part or all of Eurasia in the interests of non-Eurasian actors, the proposed Eurasian Charter is an indigenous effort driven by Eurasian players. Moreover, given the continent's profound impact on global affairs, a Charter could link the continent with other regions through positive partnerships and thus help forge a fairer global order.

Keywords: Eurasia, Charter, diversity, multipolarity, supercontinent, Eurasian countries, order, institutions, security, development.

At the October 2023 International Conference on Eurasian Security in Minsk, Belarus suggested developing a *Eurasian Charter of Diversity and Multipolarity in the 21st Century* "as guidance for our own consolidation and common progressive development."

This initiative, which has recently attracted much interest, did not emerge out of the blue. Rather, it was brought into existence by real geopolitical needs and aspirations arising from the ground. Moreover, it followed logically from another long-standing initiative of Belarus, voiced by President Alexander Lukashenko at the 2005 World Summit, which called upon the world's countries to recognize a diversity of paths towards progressive development. That initiative came at a time of global uncertainty resulting from the so-called 'unipolar moment' with its concomitant unilateralism and disregard for international law. The initiative sought to support the forging of a fair international order, in which nations would be able to live in peace and realize their aspirations.

Today's world, however, is more uncertain than the Unipolar Moment. In fact, it is even more unstable than the world of four decades ago, because for all their ideological and geopolitical rivalry, the Soviet Union and the United States managed to co-exist in a kind of equilibrium that provided the stability and predictability necessary for peace and development. But the mess created during the Unipolar Moment—wars, conflicts, grave violations of international law, massive human displacement—is still with us, due to Western countries' perpetuation of unilateral foreign policies.

Against this background and grounded in Belarus's diversity initiative and other efforts—such as President Lukashenko's recent call for a global security dialogue in the true spirit of San Francisco—that seek to make Eurasia and the world a safer and better place, Belarus proposed devising a Eurasian Charter.

Many may wonder why the Charter is linked to *diversity* and *multipolarity*. This is because the two notions are the defining features of our time.

In fact, diversity has always been present in the world, but today its importance is becoming increasingly evident with the rapid spread

of information and communication technology, as people everywhere become aware of their civilizational differences. As a result, they demand greater respect for diversity, which has been threatened over the past few decades by policies of diktat, violence, sanctions, color revolutions, and similar attempts by Western countries to impose alien pseudo-universal forms of governance on indigenous institutions and ways of life.

As for multipolarity, there is ever-growing global consensus that multipolarity is already an objective reality. The demise of the 'unipolar moment' inaugurated the emergence of multiple power centers—or poles—that define our international life. What is more, we are absolutely convinced of the need to strengthen multipolarity, as it is essential for effective multilateralism, whereby all countries can engage in win-win cooperation.

The idea of a Charter has already been discussed in some international forums and triggered further interest. Importantly, the Presidents of Belarus and Russia have publicly supported it.

Belarus and Russia drafted their "preliminary views" on a Charter in the Common Vision of a *Eurasian Charter of Diversity and Multipolarity in the 21st Century.* In this 21-paragraph-long document, the two countries outlined their views of diversity and multipolarity, their assessments of Eurasia's importance and worldwide impact, and their commitments to act to realize their vision.

Despite these Charter-related activities, Minsk cannot escape the feeling that our Eurasian partners would like to see greater clarity about the initiative and, specifically, its geopolitical rationale, objectives, process, etc. While the *Common Vision* provides some clues to these issues, we agree that a more substantive and elaborate response is indeed required, particularly through the lens of evolving geopolitical developments in Eurasia.

EURASIA: EUROPE FINALLY MEETS ASIA, OR DISTANCES ITSELF FROM IT?

The notion of Eurasia is in vogue nowadays. Indeed, it is a supercontinent that covers much of the globe and is home to some 70 percent of the world's population. Eurasia is a very diverse region

in terms of civilizations, races, cultures, religions, values, countries, their political, economic, and social systems, etc. Importantly, it is also the key driver of global economic development today, as it hosts the fastest-growing countries and their vibrant regional economic blocs.

Yet until some decades ago, the notion of Eurasia was not so fashionable. Indeed, until recently, it would have been viewed as a paradox, because Eurasia was a continent containing two essentially separate worlds: Europe and Asia. While the border between them was always uncertain and illusory, the two regions were genuinely separated politically, temporally, and to some extent spatially (given weak physical infrastructure and cooperation mechanisms).

The political separation between Europe and Asia was established by Western Europe's past predation, subjugation, and pillaging of Asian nations. Interestingly, European attitudes towards Asia have not significantly changed since then, as the current European Union still views Asia as a challenger and danger to its own interests, while Asian nations have never seen Europe in a similar light.

For a number of fundamental and proximate reasons, Europe was able to gain a significant head start against Asia. The Industrial Revolution enabled European countries to develop and modernize themselves, and then to rapidly militarily subjugate Asia, which kept to its 'traditional ways' and missed the initial stages of the Industrial Revolution. As a result, a gap in development between Europe and Asia emerged and widened throughout the 19th and much of the 20th centuries.

But there was hope that, due to rising nationalism and general technological development in Asia, it would catch up with Europe at some time in the future. The collapse of European empires in Asia after WWII was the first step in that direction. It was soon followed by the rise of some Asian countries, which began working together to advance their common developmental priorities. The most prominent example was the 1967 establishment of ASEAN, now a 10-member body, which has excelled in accomplishing its objectives.

The end of the Cold War and the onset of globalization—accompanied by the rapid proliferation of free trade, knowledge, finance, investment, and technology—has been another powerful

tailwind in Asia's catch-up effort. Indeed, advanced countries' industrial outsourcing enabled many Asian states to run double-digit growth figures for decades, and lift hundreds of millions of their people out of poverty.

Moreover, in recent decades, Europe and Asia have become interconnected by a multitude of supply chains, transport corridors, air, land, and sea traffic, banks, cultural exchanges, etc. These developments dramatically and unrecognizably transformed Asia—and Europe, too, as its global standing declined and it became increasingly dependent on other powers in Eurasia.

The past three decades have also been marked by vigorous integration and development in the post-Soviet space. Some former Soviet states took European integration as a model, though the Europeans today disregard this when they reject cooperation with the Eurasian Economic Union and other regional structures. With some of the EU's members, this reaches the point of absurdity, e.g., when one of Belarus's Baltic neighbors deliberately set itself on a path of straining relations with China. In all, the new post-Soviet integration structures fit well into Asia's growth and became part of the incipient Eurasian model of cooperation.

So, the two-century-old Europe-Asia development gap has been steadily narrowing and today has become much less consequential than it was. This permits discussion of Europe and Asia as one continent, as a unified structure stretching from Lisbon to Manila. One of the best and most effective manifestations of the new Eurasian reality is China's Belt and Road Initiative, designed to revive the ancient Silk Road by connecting dozens of Eurasian countries so that all share the fruits of economic development and prosperity. Belarus, like some other European countries, is benefiting from this vital pan-continental initiative.

Due to the previous unequal development of Europe and Asia, their nations and peoples have generally not been able to make full and efficient use of the continent's enormous resources. Nor have they ever enjoyed continent-wide security to realize their development priorities. Instead, the Eurasian security landscape has been consistently divided

and fragmented, as under the CSCE/OSCE framework (see below). As a consequence, hardly any continent has witnessed as many armed conflicts and as much human suffering as Eurasia has.

So, today, Eurasia offers immense opportunities to its countries and peoples. These opportunities should be realized through comprehensive approaches that account for Eurasia's wholeness, uniqueness, complexity, and diversity, and that would also help consolidate and integrate the supercontinent in the interests of its inhabitants. Belarus believes that the above task can be realized by means of a *Eurasian Charter for Diversity and Multipolarity in the 21st Century*.

But before laying out some specifics of the Charter, it is worth reviewing some past efforts to consolidate part or all of Eurasia. This should help us to better grasp the Charter's rationale and perceive ways to advance it.

THE CSCE/OSCE EXPERIMENT: THE WEST'S SECRET WEAPON?

The last half-century has seen an interesting experiment in Eurasia to consolidate just part of it. The Conference for Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), followed by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), was a Eurocentric or Euro-Atlantic experiment that attested to the separation of Europe and Asia that existed five decades ago.

Initially, it was a pragmatic and mutually-beneficial experiment that brought important positive results: reducing the threat of nuclear or conventional war in Europe; establishing mechanisms for arms control; nurturing trust and understanding between the parties.

Indeed, the process was based on a belief in the possibility of reconciling the two ideological camps in Europe, and of forging pragmatic, predictable, and trust-based interaction. The Soviet leadership deserves full credit for formulating the idea, which it began to raise with the West in the mid-1960s.

The initiative found a sympathetic ear in the West's decision-making circles a few years later, in the early 1970s, when the U.S. came to embrace the politics of détente and when politicians with the "outside the box" mindset, like West Germany's Willy Brandt, came to power

in some key Western countries. The 1975 Helsinki Final Act and the CSCE can be rightly called children of détente.

In retrospect, the Helsinki Final Act must be credited with two achievements. First, it set forth ten pragmatic principles (the so-called Decalogue), formulated in a very balanced way that allowed the two camps to embrace them in their entirety. Second, the Act offered a new concept of security with its three baskets: the politico-military, the economic-ecological, and the humanitarian, which helped the opposite sides to stop viewing each other exclusively through a military and political lens.

The Decalogue and the comprehensive security concept provided the framework that helped to guide, maintain, and normalize relations between the Participating States at a time of Cold War enmity and uncertainty. Regular contacts, exchanges, confidence-building measures, etc. helped to "manage" the Cold War and diminish the threat of a nuclear Armageddon.

This forward-looking initiative certainly could have outlasted the Cold War. Unfortunately, it did not live up to the high promises of the post-Cold-War historic moment, because a group of its members decided to advance their own selfish agenda at the others' expense.

So, after the Cold War the CSCE needed to adapt to the new realities. The early 1990s was a period of détente, but different from that of the 1970s: an incipient strategic partnership, as called for in the CSCE's 1990 Paris Charter.

As a result, the early 1990s saw the CSCE's rebranding into the OSCE, and the emergence of some new institutions within it: the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), the High Commissioner on National Minorities, and field missions. As the OSCE focused on advancing democratization and good governance, human and minority rights, election monitoring, and conflict prevention and resolution, its new institutions—especially its field missions—fixated on these sensitive political issues, negatively distinguishing the OSCE from its predecessor.

The field missions distinguished the OSCE from other regional organizations and set it on a path to ultimate irrelevance. Missions

were established in participating states that were allegedly experiencing problems in their domestic development. Notably, missions were set up exclusively east of Vienna, as if Western European countries had never experienced challenges with human or minority rights, etc. With this approach, the OSCE has essentially introduced a ranking of its Participating States, which did not exist under the CSCE.

In theory, the OSCE missions were supposed to helped to host countries to implement various kinds of reforms. In practice, relying on the OSCE humanitarian mandate, the missions interfered in the hosts' internal affairs in pursuit of Western members' agendas and narratives, including those of other key Western institutions like NATO, the EU, and the OECD. The OSCE thus became a biased international player, not the neutral regional organization that it was mandated to be.

Belarus was among those that had the misfortune of experiencing this process. Indeed, we agreed to receive an OSCE Mission in Minsk in 1998, with the mandate to consult and assist the government with democratization and development of national institutions. But the Mission evolved into a biased party as its head, German Ambassador Hans-Georg Wieck, actively engaged with the opposition to bring it to power in the 2001 presidential election. Belarus had no choice but to ask for Wieck's recall. Some years later, we decided to close down the Mission altogether, seeing in its work no added value for our domestic development.

Thus, paradoxically, the CSCE succeeded in a highly tense international and regional environment, while the OSCE failed to tackle the challenges of its time, despite a seemingly benign international and regional environment.

Is the OSCE capable of changing itself for the better? We in Belarus doubt it very much. The OSCE has lost the CSCE's key advantage: it has become a place for politicized debate rather than political dialogue, a tool of pressure and influence used by some Participating States against others. No wonder, then, that the OSCE's recognition of the indivisibility of security in Europe, as set forth in the Helsinki Final Act, proved hollow. The OSCE failed to prevent European security

from unraveling over the past few decades, resulting in the ongoing conflict in Ukraine.

It is necessary to acknowledge that the OSCE was essentially highjacked by its Western Participating States as just another tool for encroaching into, and forcing political change in, those Participating States that refused to embrace Western 'prescriptions' for domestic development. What is more, the OSCE has essentially helped the West to expand NATO eastward, not least through its negative involvement in the internal affairs of countries comprising the former Yugoslavia. These policies plunged the OSCE into an identity crisis and deprived it of a strategic orientation shared by all Participating States. Therefore, trust among the Participating States has been lost, and the Organization is becoming increasingly irrelevant.

KEY POST-COLD-WAR STRATEGIES FOR EURASIA

While the CSCE/OSCE experiment represents a failed attempt to consolidate part of Eurasia, the immediate post-Cold-War period has witnessed the emergence of some ideas and strategies to shape Eurasia in its entirety. Interestingly, some of the most influential and consequential of those ideas actually came from an outside power, the United States.

The end of the Cold War left the U.S. as the sole global superpower. It sought a new strategic orientation, as Cold-War-style containment was not useful for the new era. This new strategic orientation was soon presented in a famous speech by the Clinton Administration's National Security Advisor, Anthony Lake, in September 1993, titled "From Containment to Enlargement."

Posited as a successor to containment, enlargement sought to expand the "world's free community of market democracies." In this, the strategy was clearly based on Francis Fukuyama's famous thesis about the End of History, discarding the world's political, socio-economic, and cultural diversity on the presumption that every country around the globe either wanted—or had to be compelled to embrace—so-called democracy and a market economy.

Lake's speech essentially became spiritual guidance for the U.S.'s post-Cold-War policies. The idea of enlargement drove the eastward

expansion of NATO, interference in the domestic affairs of many countries, and attempts at forced 'democratization' and 'color' revolutions that sparked numerous wars and conflicts. It has led to the destruction of countries, uprooting of societies, displacement of tens of millions of people, and many other related woes of the post-Cold-War period.

The strategy was not specifically invented for Eurasia, but undoubtedly was most diligently implemented there, especially in places—the Balkans, Iraq, Afghanistan, and Ukraine—of overriding importance to the U.S.'s long-standing pursuit of dominance over Eurasia. Seen in retrospect, the strategy also served to anchor Europe firmly and consistently in the U.S.'s sphere of influence in Eurasia.

Like many other Eurasian countries, the Republic of Belarus has also found itself a target of this strategy, which is typically applied most vigorously during elections, most recently the presidential election of 2020. Yet all such attempts against Belarus failed miserably, for the simple reason that the Belarusian people stood firmly behind their elected leadership and refused to be manipulated by external forces.

Another contribution to the external effort to consolidate Eurasia was made by the Carter Administration's National Security Advisor, Zbigniew Brzezinski. In 1997, *Foreign Affairs* published his extremely provocative piece "A Geostrategy for Eurasia." Brzezinski's key point was that America's endurance as the sole global superpower required the development and implementation of an integrated and comprehensive strategy for Eurasia. With this, the American political thinker essentially admitted that the U.S.'s global primacy greatly depended on developments far away from its shores.

Brzezinski viewed Eurasia as the world's axial continent, exerting huge influence over other regions, and believed that a country dominant in Eurasia would automatically control the Middle East and Africa. Therefore, separate strategies for Europe and Asia would not suffice. Only an integrated and comprehensive American strategy could prevent the emergence of a hostile coalition in Eurasia that could challenge U.S. global primacy. According to Brzezinski, the U.S. must dominate and control Eurasia and indefinitely perpetuate its decisive role as the supercontinent's arbitrator.

But how to achieve those goals? By establishing a transcontinental Eurasian security system. At its core: Europe and NATO, as a U.S. bridgehead into Eurasia. America's central goal was to continue expanding the democratic European bridgehead. As for Russia, Brzezinski clearly saw it as a potential future rival due to its central position in Eurasia. Hence his 'solution' for Russia was a loosely confederated state consisting of a European Russia, a Siberian Russia, and a Far Eastern Russia.

In hindsight, it seems that Brzezinski's prescriptions have been diligently implemented by U.S. policymakers. Indeed, NATO enlarged exactly as suggested by Brzezinski in *Foreign Affairs*.

So, if Anthony Lake's 'enlargement' was the spiritual guidance for the U.S.'s policies to shape Eurasia in its own interests, Brzezinski's suggestions were a practical guide for such policies. Needless to say, both proved to be extremely harmful for the supercontinent, its countries and its population.

But on one point Brzezinski appears to have been right, namely, in suggesting that "defining the substance and institutionalizing the form of a trans-Eurasian security system could become the major architectural initiative of the 21st century."[1]

NEED FOR EURASIAN ORDER

So, as demonstrated in the previous sections, attempts undertaken in the past 50 years, to consolidate part or all of Eurasia, failed. Actually, they were doomed to go awry, because their key objective was to shape Eurasia or its parts in accordance with the wishes and visions of external rather than indigenous actors. It should come as no surprise that external prescriptions failed to take root in an environment that was alien to them. This is true of both the CSCE/OSCE experiment and the U.S.'s post-Cold-War policies.

In retrospect, however, these failures served a purpose of their own, in that they helped many Eurasian states to shake off the illusion that they would benefit from a purportedly benign U.S.-led liberal global

[1] Brzezinski, Z., 1997. A Geostrategy for Eurasia. *Foreign Affairs,* 76(5), September-October, p. 64.

order, and to instead see the need for indigenous solutions to their contemporary challenges.

As a result, many Eurasian states began to coalesce around resistance to external pressure and to work together to advance their common cause in their own huge region. A strategic partnership between China and Russia, Eurasia's key powers, has been indispensable for propelling these indigenous dynamics, as these two countries have driven numerous initiatives and ideas for Eurasia's integration and consolidation.

Importantly, these developments in Eurasia have been taking place at a time of globalization's general decline. Indeed, the world has not become flat, as American writer Thomas Friedman famously predicted (*The World is Flat*, 2005). Instead, it has become a bumpy road in economic terms.

Indeed, economic globalization began to unravel in 2008 with the onset of the global economic and financial crisis, which exposed the nature of U.S.-led unregulated and predatory capitalism with its adverse effects on the global economy. In the years following the crisis, it became increasingly evident that economic globalization, driven by that type of capitalism, was not a "wave that lifted all boats," as global inequality steadily rose.

Moreover, it is not just developing countries that have lost faith in economic globalization, it is also globalization's traditional ardent proponents, like the U.S. itself. Indeed, this longtime champion of open markets and laissez-faire economics now shuns its commitments to free trade and multilateral cooperation, turns inward, seeks to reindustrialize, introduces sweeping tariffs on nearly all countries, speaks of "decoupling and de-risking," and shapes its foreign policy around the interests of its own middle class.

If the U.S. is indeed turning inward and abandoning its quest for global hegemony, that would certainly constitute a very positive development. Such a step would essentially mark a belated recognition of reality, namely of the fact that the U.S.-led liberal international order has been crumbling under the weight of its own contradictions and is being increasingly replaced by regional dynamics.

These developments were well anticipated a decade ago by the world's foreign policy doyen Henry Kissinger in his book *World Order* (2014). Kissinger argued that a universal order is impossible because "no single society has ever had the power, no leadership had the resilience, and no faith had the dynamism to impose its writ enduringly throughout the world."[2] Thus, it would be sensible to establish an order for each region, and "to relate these regional orders to one another."[3]

We in Belarus share the Kissingerean idea that all regions need to establish their internal orders and work to connect them with each other. This belief comes from our conviction that, with the demise of the liberal international order, the world will lack any hierarchical system with a single dominant center.

A EURASIAN CHARTER TO FORGE EURASIAN ORDER

So, what Eurasia needs is a regional order that would help Eurasian states to steer clear of the present global disorder. But how to build it? Belarusian idea of a *Eurasian Charter of Diversity and Multipolarity in the 21st Century* may be timely and helpful in this regard. As we see it, the Charter can indeed provide useful guidance to Eurasian states in their effort to establish Eurasian order and, given the importance of the supercontinent for the entire globe, to connect Eurasian order to orders in other regions.

Essentially, we view the Charter as a kind of a holistic and coherent long-term geostrategy for our supercontinent in all its dimensions—security, economics, science, technology, culture, civilizational, and others. Like any strategic document, it should be built on certain principles.

First and foremost, the ***Charter should be a constructive effort***, in that it would not be directed against any country or a group of countries, nor would it strive to benefit some countries at the expense of others. In that sense it would represent a drastic departure from past adversarial and confrontational strategies for Eurasia. Moreover, the Eurasian Charter should be based on the norms and principles of

[2] Kissinger, H., 2014. *World Order.* Penguin Press, p. 105.

[3] Ibid, p. 371.

international law as set forth in the United Nations Charter and other international legally-binding documents.

Second, the ***Charter should be an indigenous effort***, i.e., involve only Eurasian countries, because indigenous actors know best their own interests, can identify common objectives and means to achieve them, and can then diligently realize these commonly-agreed commitments. The past is good guidance here, as it has amply demonstrated that solutions for Eurasia, invented and imposed by external actors, did not and inherently cannot take root.

Third, the ***Charter should be a collective effort***, meaning that it should be drafted and negotiated collectively by Eurasian states. We are absolutely convinced that each and every country in Eurasia must feel ownership of this document and see its position and preferences reflected in the Charter. In this case, every state would have reason to uphold the Charter's provisions.

Fourth, the ***Charter should be an inclusive effort***, meaning that the negotiations should be open to all Eurasian states. The reason is straightforward: all of them should have a stake in a peaceful and prosperous supercontinent. At this moment, however, it appears doubtful that European NATO countries and their partners would be willing to engage in the work on the Charter. But these potential holdouts should ask themselves where such a rejectionist stance will ultimately leave them, in a context of rapid global and regional changes.

True, Europe presents a very successful experiment of integration and consolidation. In some respects, it was close to becoming a United States of Europe, a notion that Victor Hugo famously invoked at the International Peace Congress in Paris in 1849. But the European experiment succeeded in the past because of a specific enabling environment: enormous wealth accumulated over centuries of exploiting others, a U.S. security umbrella provided since WWII, and free trade and ample access to cheap resources to its east. These factors have nearly all disappeared now. Instead, Europe is being flooded with challenges like mass migration from the Global South, loss of economic competitiveness, increased indebtedness, rising societal inequality, dysfunctional multiculturalism, and rapidly ageing societies. Some of

these challenges were generated by Europe itself, through involvement in lop-sided policies that violated international law.

Incidentally, similar factors affect some advanced Eurasian countries in the supercontinent's eastern rim. Both groups will ultimately find themselves in the position of agents no longer needed by the external player that once relied on them and backed their development, but now turns inward.

The Brussels machinery is currently refusing to engage with Eurasian integration mechanisms out of an unjustified sense of superiority. As Samuel Huntington put it, "The West won the world not by the superiority of its ideas or values or religion but rather by its superiority in applying organized violence. Westerners often forget this fact, non-Westerners never do."[4]

Europe should put its superiority complex aside, and stop viewing others in Eurasia as modern-day barbarians. Instead, Europe and those advanced countries in East Asia would be well-advised to embrace the Eurasian concept, as it provides a way for them to address their mounting challenges. Just one example: Europe's migration crisis can be successfully handled only through concerted efforts by both European and Asian countries.

Fifth, the ***Charter should be an engaging effort*** in the sense that the negotiating parties would solicit advice from relevant Eurasian regional organizations and integration mechanisms: the Eurasian Economic Union, ASEAN, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, the Commonwealth of Independent States, the League of Arab States, the Gulf Cooperation Council, the Collective Security Treaty Organization, the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia, the Union State of Belarus and Russia, etc. It goes without saying that, if Europe gets on board, then Western European institutions—the European Commission, the Council of Europe, and some others—would also be welcome to engage in the Charter process.

Sixth, the ***Charter should be a comprehensive effort***, covering all areas of potential cooperation: security, economics, humanitarian

[4] Huntington, S., 2002. *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order.* Simon and Shuster, p. 51.

issues, civilizational exchanges, etc. Naturally, however, the topic of Eurasian security should be of paramount importance in the Charter. The Charter should essentially help establish a new architecture of Eurasian security. This kind of pan-continental security is needed because previous attempts at security provision—under the CSCE/OSCE or post-Cold-War NATO—failed, not least because they sought security for some countries at the expense of others.

With this experience in mind, the principle of indivisible security should lie at the core of the new security architecture. The idea of indivisible security per se was present in the Helsinki Final Act, but not in the Decalogue of principles, only in the preamble. This time around, the principle should be put front and center in the Charter. Importantly, erecting a Eurasian security architecture would be vital for generating a new concept of global indivisible security, given Eurasia's central role in global affairs.

Economically, the Charter should help Eurasian states to move away from Western-centric economic interdependence, which has been weaponized by the West against its opponents, and instead to spur further economic integration and connectivity in Eurasia. Successful economic processes in Eurasia, in turn, could help revive the idea of fair economic globalization.

Seventh, the ***Charter should be a well-conceived procedural effort***. Eurasian states negotiating the Charter's text should have a clear understanding of their end game. We in Belarus believe that the Charter's development may look much like that of the Helsinki Final Act five decades ago. If so, the latter may serve as a useful point of reference for planning the forthcoming negotiations on the Charter. In particular, we believe that it would make sense to replicate the rather successful CSCE by setting up a similar conference that covers the entire supercontinent.

Finally, the ***Charter should be a forward-looking effort***. In our view, it should seek not only to establish principles whose implementation throughout the continent would bring about a safer, stabler, and more prosperous Eurasia, but also to reach beyond the region to establish partnerships with other regions. The gist of such thinking was well

captured in the 2024 Annual Report of Russia's Valdai Discussion Club: "Eurasia's connection to the rest of the world is so deep that Eurasian processes will have a decisive impact on the other parts of the planet and on approaches to addressing crucial security and sustainability issues, such as food, energy, and the environment."[5]

So, all in all, the *Eurasian Charter of Diversity and Multipolarity in the 21st Century* should help establish a system of pan-continental security that would enable the region's stable and progressive development, which, in turn, would help shape a global system capable of addressing the planet's complexity and diversity, thereby transforming the globe into a better place for everyone.

We are convinced that, with the idea of the Eurasian Charter, we have chosen (and suggested to other Eurasian countries) a path in the right direction. Note that Belarus does not claim a prerogative over understanding how to improve matters in Eurasia. In fact, we support any such effort, such as President Vladimir Putin's 2015 idea of a Great Eurasian Partnership. In the meantime, we are ready for the work lying ahead of us on the Charter, and call upon our Eurasian partners to join us in this endeavor.

[5] Annual Report of the Valdai Discussion Club, 2024. *The World from the Bottom Up or the Masterpieces of Eurasian Architecture*, p.6.