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Provoking Debate on Central European Security

The PPSY International Seminar “Challenges of Security in Central Europe”. Toruń (February 21, 2017). The Editorial Board of *Polish Political Science Yearbook*, Professor Czesław Mojsiewicz International Cooperation Fund & Adam Marszałek Publishing.

Abstract: The seminar focused on Security Challenges in Central Europe organised by PPSY was held in Toruń on February 21, 2017. The leading topic of this event could not have been apter as the last years in the region brought back serious questions about stability and security of the region. From the domestic challenges – like the rise of populist movements; to more resurgent foreign policy of Russian Federation; instability of so-called Eastern flank; through the questions about coherence of both NATO and the European Union – Central European states found themselves in a situation unprecedented since the end of the Cold War. It can be even argued that Central Europe come to strategic crossroads that would determine future of the regions and its countries in particular.

Keywords: *Central Europe; security studies; cybersecurity; energy security; national security*

In such geopolitical circumstances, there was little doubt why organised received different and up-to-date papers and presentations. Scholars hailed from institutions from five different countries: Poland, Azerbaijan, Hungary, Turkey and the United Arab Emirates. The scope of topics ranged from papers on weakened hegemonic leaders: *Germany Compared with Current Terrorist Threats*, *Energy Security of Visegrád Group Countries: Current Situation and Prospects*, *Analytical Futurology as a Tool for Strategic Planning in Social War Games* to *Polish Foreign Policy and the Failures of the Eastern Partnership Initiative*. The organisers divided panels according to the scope and level of analysis offering sections on national perspectives and doctrines (i.e. paper on *The Perception of Security in the Programs of Czech Political Parties*), refugees and migrations (including

paper on *Existential Threat? The Securitization of Asylum-Seekers and Migration: Cases of Poland and Hungary*), regional security threats and challenges (i.e. presentation about *Combating Cybercrime in the EU: National Practices of Poland and Estonia*); international dimensions of the Central European security (for instance paper titled: *From Geopolitical Chance to Security Threat: Polish Discourses on the One Belt One Road Initiative*). There was a poster session also displayed during the seminar with thought-provoking presentations (including one titled *Cybersecurity in Central European Countries*).

The variety of topics mentioned above guaranteed that seminar benefited from interdisciplinary academic perspectives and interesting discussions among scholars. First of all, academics represented different sub-disciplines of social sciences and humanities. Some of them adopted classical political science, international relations, security studies; others used crossover approaches combining IR theory, Strategic Studies, Sociology and Public Policy Analysis. All these resulted in the second strong element of the PPSY seminar: lively discussions among scholars. From debates about the current state of Polish foreign policy and its regional and international dimensions; through the nature of terrorist threat in Europe (vide paper titled: *Sleeper Cells, Lone Wolves Attacks or Armed Struggle in Syria and Iraq: An Analysis of Manuals and Instructions for Radical European Supporters of ISIS and al-Qaeda*), choices for regional cooperation, to uncertainty of the American foreign policy towards Central Europe under new administration of President Donald Trump.

Overall, the Third PPSY International Seminar underlined a growing need among scholars interested in the regional security of Central Europe to confront and discuss their research ideas. The results of those efforts will be strengthened by peer-reviewed publications and future joint research projects¹.

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¹ **Editor's Note:** the *Polish Political Science Yearbook* has already published some of papers presented during the Seminar, including: Babula, 2017; Baraniuk, 2017; Czyżniewski, 2017; Gomółka, 2017; Lubina, 2017; Piątek, 2017; Piątkowski, 2017; Podgórskańska, 2017; Wicznanowska, 2017; Wojtasik, 2017.

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